

On the distribution and illocution of V2 in Scandinavian *that*-clauses*

Anna-Lena Wiklund^{ab}, Kristine Bentzen^{ac}, Gunnar Hrafn Hrafnbjargarson^{ad} and Þorbjörg Hróarsdóttir^{ae}

^aDepartment of Language and Linguistics (CASTL/NORMS), Faculty of Humanities, University of Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø, Norway. Telephone: +47 77 64 55 56

^banna-lena.wiklund@uit.no

^ckristine.bentzen@uit.no

^dgunnar.hrafnbjargarson@uit.no

^ethorbjorg.hroarsdottir@uit.no

This paper investigates the distribution of embedded verb second in Faroese, Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish. Two conclusions can be drawn from the study. First, none of the Scandinavian languages can be said to display generalized embedded verb second across the board. There are varieties of Faroese and Icelandic that display restrictions of the kind found in the other Scandinavian languages. In these varieties, non-subject initial verb second is dispreferred in environments that are known to resist root phenomena. Second, it is shown that the definitions of *assertion* proposed in the literature cannot discern V2 from non-V2 word orders.

Keywords: assertion, illocutionary force, Scandinavian, verb movement, verb second.

1. Introduction

The common view of the Scandinavian languages has long been that the Mainland Scandinavian languages and Faroese have limited embedded verb second (henceforth V2), while Icelandic has generalized embedded V2, in the sense that both the V>Neg word order and non-subject topicalization followed by subject-verb inversion are possible under all kinds of predicates, see e.g. Vikner (1995). On this view thus, Icelandic constitutes an exception to the pattern observed in the other Scandinavian languages, where the availability of V2 seems to correlate with illocutionary force. The present paper shows that a more nuanced description is called for. There are variants of Icelandic that conform to the general pattern. In these variants, non-subject initial V2 is either impossible or marked in environments that are known to resist root phenomena cross-linguistically.

(1) *Claim 1:*

None of the Scandinavian languages display generalized embedded V2 across the board.

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Since Hooper and Thompson (1973), it has been known that there is a connection between the possibility of root phenomena in embedded clauses and *assertion*. This has been discussed extensively for V2 in the Germanic languages, see e.g. Andersson (1975); Green (1976); den Besten (1977/1983); Wechsler (1991); Holmberg and Platzack (1995); Haegeman (2006); Heycock (2006); Truckenbrodt (2006); Julien (2006, 2007), and Brandtler (2009). The relevant hypothesis may be loosely formulated as in (2).¹

(2) *The Assertion Hypothesis:*

The more asserted (the less presupposed) the complement is, the more compatible it is with V2 (and other root phenomena).

The notion of *assertion* has been left vague in much of the relevant literature but may roughly be described as that illocutionary force which has the effect of making the addressee accept the content of an utterance and take it as part of the “common ground”. In this connection, two notions have been referred to in attempts to define contexts that support root phenomena: (i) *proposition* (content of the assertion that may be questioned or denied) and (ii) *main assertion* (the proposition whose truth is at stake in the discourse), see e.g. Hooper and Thompson (1973). We will show that (a variant of) the latter notion (*main point of utterance*; Simons 2007) appears to correlate with the option of applying V2 in Faroese, Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish. However, none of the notions distinguish V2 from non-V2 word orders.

(3) *Claim 2:*

The proposed definitions of *assertion* cannot discern V2 from non-V2 word orders.

2. Embedded verb second

We apply two tests to identify embedded V2: Availability of the word order *verb_{finite} > negation* in subject-initial clauses, as in (4a), and availability of non-subject topicalization, as in (4b). A corpus based application of the first test has been carried out for Norwegian and Swedish *that*-clauses, see Julien (2006, 2007). The two options are illustrated by Swedish in (5) in complements of the verb *säga* ‘say’.

- (4) a. *He said that* [Subject **V_{Fin} Neg**] (subject-initial V2)
 b. *He said that* [**Non-Subject** V_{Fin} Subject (Neg) ____] (non-subject initial V2)
- (5) a. *Han sa att Lisa hade inte läst boken.* (Sw.)
 he said that Lisa had not read book-the
 ‘He said that Lisa hadn’t read the book.’
 b. *Han sa att den här boken hade Lisa läst.*
 he said that this here book-the had Lisa read
 ‘He said that this book Lisa hadn’t read.’

¹The availability of embedded verb second has also been linked to *bridge verbs*, originally referring to verbs that allow extraction from their complement. At least for Scandinavian, this description is incorrect on the original definition since counterexamples exist in both directions; there are verbs that allow extraction but not V2 (infinitive selecting verbs) and there are verbs that disallow adjunct extraction but are compatible with V2 (e.g. counterparts of English *know*). See also Vikner (1995, 70, fn. 7) and Julien (2006) for similar conclusions. “Bridgeness” and its relation to V2 will therefore not be discussed here.

Example (6) shows the corresponding (more common) non-V2 word order in Swedish, where the finite verb follows sentential negation in embedded clauses.

- (6) *Han sa att Lisa inte hade läst boken.* (non-V2)
 he said that Lisa not had read book-the
 ‘He said that Lisa hadn’t read the book.’

In Icelandic, the word order V>Neg is found also in contexts where the same word order is impossible in the Mainland Scandinavian languages, e.g. in embedded *wh*-questions, see (7). Faroese has been noted to display variation in this respect (Jonas 1996; Petersen 2000; Thráinsson 2001, 2003; Thráinsson et al. 2004; Bentzen et al. to appear).

- (7) a. *Ég veit [af hverju Hedda {les} ekki {*les} bækur].* (Ic.)
 I know why Hedda reads not reads books
 b. *Jeg vet [hvorfor Hedda {*leser} ikke {leser} bøker].* (No.)
 I know why Hedda reads not reads books
 ‘I know why Hedda doesn’t read books.’

Since topicalization is impossible in these clauses (therefore, traditionally, called *non-V2 clauses*) across Scandinavian, Icelandic and varieties of Faroese have been claimed to display independent verb movement to the IP domain of the clause (see e.g. Holmberg and Platzack 1995 and Vikner 1995). This conclusion rests on the assumption that verb movement targets the CP domain of the clause only in clauses where non-subject topicalization is a possibility. Thus, on this view, the V>Neg word order is not necessarily a diagnostic for verb movement to the CP domain of the clause in Icelandic and Faroese (since this word order is found also in traditional non-V2 contexts), consequently not necessarily a candidate for embedded root phenomena.

Recently, we have questioned the above background assumption. In Wiklund et al. (2007) and Hróarsdóttir et al. (2007), we provide arguments against the traditional analysis of Icelandic non-V2 verb movement as being to the IP domain. One of these concerns ECM-clauses. In such clauses, verb movement is impossible in Icelandic, even though an inflectional domain is present (evidenced by the possibility of inserting adverbs like *sennilega* ‘probably’, *ekki* ‘not’, and *alltaf* ‘always’):²

- (8) a. Verb_{matrix} [ECM-infinitival (*verb) NEG (*verb) ADV **verb**] (Ic.)
 b. *Ég hafði aldrei talið Jón ekki elska Maríu.*
 I had never considered John not love Maria
 ‘I had never considered that John didn’t love Mary.’

In this sense, ECM infinitives contrast with control infinitives where verb movement is obligatory:

²According to Sigurðsson (1989), negation is excluded from ECM infinitives. Other sentential adverbs are restricted to clause final position, see also Johnson and Vikner (1994). Evidently, there is variation in Icelandic in this regard, cf. Hrafnbjargarson (2004) and Thráinsson (2007).

- (9) a. Verb_{matrix} [Control infinitival **verb** NEG (*verb) ADV (*verb)] (Ic.)
 b. *Ég reyndi að gráta ekki á jarðarförinni.*
 I tried to cry not at funeral-the
 ‘I tried to not cry at the funeral.’

While these facts require extra assumptions on the verb-to-IP analysis, they follow from an analysis of Icelandic non-V2 verb movement as targeting the CP domain of the clause.³

Importantly, the verb must move past *all* sentential adverbs, including negation, in control infinitivals, see (9) above. The same is true of e.g. embedded *wh*-questions. Thus, there is an adjacency requirement between the subject and the verb in (the so-called) non-V2 clauses with verb movement, (10), on a par with subject-initial V2 clauses, cf. (11).⁴ The latter have been argued to involve displacement of the verb to the CP domain in main clauses, see e.g. Vikner (1995) and Schwartz and Vikner (1996) for Icelandic and van Craenenbroeck and Haegeman (2007) for Dutch. We adopt that analysis for embedded clauses as well.

- (10) Verb_{matrix} [non-V2 clause subject (*XP) verb ... t_{verb}] (Ic.)

- (11) Verb_{matrix} [V2 clause subject (*XP) verb ... t_{verb}]

This parallelism between verb movement in the so called non-V2 contexts and verb movement in the classical V2 environments in Icelandic is an old observation (see e.g. Holmberg 1986; Vikner 1995, and the more recent Koenenman 2000 for reviews of the debate) and our proposal has been to take it seriously. Unless we find any differences between verb movement in non-V2 clauses and verb movement in V2 clauses, the working hypothesis should be that the two are the same verb movement. If (11) involves verb movement to the CP domain, then (10) involves verb movement to the CP domain (and vice versa).⁵ In this spirit, *non-V2 clause* may be a misnomer for e.g. embedded *wh*-questions. These are clauses that do not support topicalization across Scandinavian. However, they are compatible with subject-initial V2 in Icelandic and varieties of Faroese.

Although admittedly, none of our arguments can be said to be conclusive, our analysis is the simplest analysis of what we see; whenever the verb appears displaced from its base position in Icelandic, the verb is in a position above all visible elements in the IP domain. In this paper, V2 refers to cases where the verb may not be preceded by more than one constituent (disregarding the complementizer in embedded clauses), either a subject or a non-subject. On

³We adopt the standard GB/minimalist assumption that control but not ECM infinitives contain the CP domain of the clause.

⁴On the possibility of leaving the verb low/in situ in Icelandic non-V2 environments, see Wiklund et al. (2007).

⁵An anonymous reviewer is worried that Icelandic embedded clauses may show an adjacency requirement that main clauses lack, which would refute our argument from simplicity to give main and embedded clauses the same analysis. The question is whether V3 word orders of the kind found in main clauses are also possible in embedded clauses. They indeed are, see Maling (1980, 1990); Sigurðsson (1986); Thráinsson (1986); Rögnvaldsson and Thráinsson (1990), and Angantýsson (2007). Crucially, they are also found in non-V2 clauses, see (i), a fact that strengthens our argument from simplicity. Verb movement in embedded clauses patterns with verb movement in main clauses in Icelandic and the two are therefore likely to target the same domain.

- (i) *Hann spurði af hverju hún bara gæfist ekki upp á manningum.* (Ic.)
 he asked why she just gave not up on man-the
 ‘He asked why she didn’t just give up on the man.’

this definition, thus, embedded *wh*-questions (traditional non-V2 clauses) with verb movement in Icelandic display V2. The >Neg word order is therefore taken to be a diagnostic for V2 (which in our analysis always implies displacement of the verb to the CP domain), in main as well as in embedded clauses across Scandinavian. If the verb is preceded by a subject, we label this *subject-initial* V2. If the verb is preceded by a non-subject, we label this *non-subject initial* V2. Throughout, we will use V2 as a cover term for both types of V2 patterns and specify when we refer to only one of the types.⁶ Moreover, our use of *non-subject topicalization* is neutral between topic and focus fronting. Before we go on to test the possibility of V2 word orders in different environments, we would like to stress that for the two main contributions of this paper, our assumptions about the analysis of verb movement in Icelandic and Faroese have little importance. It will be shown shortly that – regardless of analysis – none of the Scandinavian languages can be said to display generalized V2 across the board and we are not aware of any clear definition of assertion that discerns V2 from non-V2 word orders.

3. The distribution of embedded V2

Following many of our predecessors (Andersson 1975; Meinunger 2004, 2006; Julien 2006, 2007), we will make use of the verb classification put forth in Hooper and Thompson (1973) for the purpose of studying the distribution of embedded V2 (see also Hooper 1975). We restrict our attention to *that*-clauses throughout the study. There are five predicate classes which will be introduced in turn below: Class A (strongly assertive – *say*), Class B (weakly assertive – *believe*), Class C (non-assertive – *deny*), Class D (factive – *regret*), and Class E (semi-factive – *discover*). The relevant classes are defined mainly in terms of the semantic notions of *assertion* and *presupposition*, which we will discuss in some detail as we proceed. We have tested at least two predicates from each class for each language with regard to compatibility with embedded V2. For reasons of space, only one of these is used in the examples:⁷

Table 1
Predicate classes

Class A	Class B	Class C	Class D	Class E
<i>say</i>	<i>believe</i>	<i>doubt</i>	<i>regret</i>	<i>discover</i>
<i>claim</i>	<i>think</i>	<i>deny</i>	<i>be sad about</i>	<i>understand</i>

⁶Two anonymous reviewers object to the present use of the term V2 and either implicitly or explicitly argue that subject/non-subject substitutability or subject-verb inversion has to be part of the definition. Such a definition can only make sense in a framework where the CP domain (or whatever one labels the target of V2 verb movement) consists of one and only one head, c-commanded by one and only one specifier; it is precisely this part of the old framework that is supposed to explain V2. We believe that such a reduced CP domain is not maintainable, given the empirical facts discovered during the last decades (see e.g. Rizzi 1997 and Westergaard and Vangsnes 2005). Unless there are other reasons to define V2 using substitutability or possibility of subject verb inversion, we will adhere to the simplest definition: the finite verb may only be preceded by one constituent.

⁷The data presented here are mainly based on the judgments of the authors (who are native speakers of Icelandic, GHH & PH, Norwegian, KB, and Swedish, A-LW) and on the judgments of Victoria Absalonsen, Kirsti Hansen, and Zakaris Hansen for Faroese. In the more controversial case concerning topicalization of non-subjects in Class C and D in Icelandic, we have consulted additional speakers (§4). In the examples that follow, ‘*’ means ungrammatical or highly marked.

3.1. Class A: Strongly assertive predicates

Class A predicates embed complements that are cited or reported assertions in the discourse (*indirect assertions* in Hooper and Thompson 1973). These have been noted to allow root phenomena, including V2. The class includes *say*, *claim*, *report*, and *assert*. The (a)-examples below show compatibility with V>Neg word order, the (b)-examples compatibility with non-subject topicalization:

- (12) a. *Hann segði at hann fekk ekki sungið hetta lagið.* (Fa.)
 he said that he could not sung this song-the
 ‘He said that he could not sing this song.’
 b. *Hann segði at hetta lagið fekk hann ekki sungið.*
 he said that this song-the could he not sung
 ‘He said that this song he could not sing.’
- (13) a. *Hann sagði að hann gæti ekki sungið í brúðkaupinu.* (Ic.)
 he said that he could not sung in wedding-the
 ‘He said that he could not sing at the wedding.’
 b. *Hann sagði að þetta lag gæti hann ekki sungið í brúðkaupinu.*
 he said that this song could he not sung in wedding-the
 ‘He said that this song he could not sing at the wedding.’
- (14) a. *Han sa at han kunne ikke synge i bryllupet.* (No.)
 he said that he could not sing in wedding-the
 ‘He said that he could not sing at the wedding.’
 b. *Han sa at denne sangen kunne han synge i bryllupet.*
 he said that this song-the could he sing in wedding-the
 ‘He said that this song he could sing at the wedding.’
- (15) a. *Han sa att han kunde inte sjunga på bröllopet.* (Sw.)
 he said that he could not sing on wedding-the
 ‘He said that he could not sing at the wedding.’
 b. *Han sa att den här sången kunde han sjunga på bröllopet.*
 he said that this here song-the could he sing on wedding-the
 ‘He said that this song he could sing at the wedding.’

As can be seen from the examples, there are no restrictions on V2 under Class A predicates. Both the V>Neg word order and topicalization of non-subjects are allowed under these verbs in all languages. Note that in German, Dutch, Frisian, and Afrikaans, embedded V2 and overt complementizers tend to be in complementary distribution (see e.g. de Haan 2001 and Biberauer 2002). In contrast, the Scandinavian languages allow V2 to co-occur with a lexical complementizer (cf. the study of Teleman 1967, summarized in Andersson 1975). In fact, the complementizer is obligatory in non-subject initial V2 clauses and preferred in subject-initial V2 clauses (disregarding cited assertions).

3.2. Class B: Weakly assertive predicates

Class B verbs include *believe*, *think*, and *mean*. Like Class A predicates, these embed assertions and have been noted to be compatible with root phenomena in the embedded clause. They can be said to differ from Class A predicates in that they indicate a weaker commitment to the

truth of the embedded statement on the part of the speaker:⁸

- (16) a. *Hann heldur at hann syngur ekki væl.* (Fa.)
 he believes that he sings not well
 'He believes that he doesn't sing well.'
 b. *Hann heldur at **hetta lagið** syngur hann væl.*
 he believes that this song-the sings he well
 'He believes that this song he sings well.'
- (17) a. *Hann hélt að við hefðum ekki séð þessa mynd.* (Ic.)
 he believed that we had not seen this film
 'He believed that we hadn't seen this film.'
 b. *Hann hélt að **þessa mynd** hefðum við ekki séð.*
 he believed that this film had we not seen
 'He believed that this film we hadn't seen.'
- (18) a. *Han trodde at vi **hadde ikke** sett denne filmen.* (No.)
 he believed that we had not seen this film-the
 'He believed that we hadn't seen this film.'
 b. *Han trodde at **denne filmen** hadde vi ikke sett.*
 he believed that this film-the had we not seen
 'He believed that this film we hadn't seen.'
- (19) a. *Han trodde att vi **hade inte** sett den här filmen.* (Sw.)
 he believed that we had not seen that here film-the
 'He believed that we hadn't seen this film.'
 b. *Han trodde att **den där filmen** hade vi inte sett.*
 he believed that that there film-the had we not seen
 'He believed that this film we hadn't seen.'

We may conclude that Class B behaves like Class A with regard to V2; V2 is unrestricted in all four languages under predicates of this class.

3.3. Class C: Non-assertive predicates

Class C predicates embed complements that are neither asserted nor presupposed. These include *doubt* and *deny*. Root phenomena are normally not possible in complements of these verbs:

- (20) a. *Hann ivast í at hon syngur **altíð** væl.* (Fa.)
 he doubts in that she sings always well
 'He doubts that she always sings well.'
 b. **Hann ivast í at **hetta lagið** syngur hon **altíð** væl.*
 he doubts in that this song-the sings she always well

⁸As noted by Simons (2007), it is not clear that an embedded clause is ever asserted. With a few exceptions, the function of the matrix verb is to indicate the weakness of the speaker's commitment to the truth of the complement. Also Class A predicates may be used to qualify assertions in this sense. For our purpose, Class A and B could just as well be collapsed into one class of assertive predicates, but see Hooper and Thompson (1973) and Hooper (1975) for further differences between the two.

- (21) a. *Hann efast um að hún **hafi ekki** hitt þennan mann.* (Ic.)
 he doubts about that she has not met this man
 ‘He doubts that she hasn’t met this man.’
 b. **Hann efast um að **þennan mann** hafi hún ekki hitt.*
 he doubts about that this man has she not met
- (22) a. **Han tvilte på at hun **hadde ikke** møtt denne mannen.* (No.)
 he doubted on that she had not met this man-the
 b. **Han tvilte på at **denne mannen** hadde hun ikke møtt.*
 he doubted on that this man-the had she not met
- (23) a. **Han tvivlar på att hon **har inte** träffat den här mannen.* (Sw.)
 he doubts on that she has not met this here man-the
 b. **Han tvivlar på att **den här mannen** har hon inte träffat.*
 he doubts on that this here man-the has she not met

As can be seen from the above examples, Swedish and Norwegian disallow both the V>Neg word order and topicalization of non-subjects (i.e. V2 in general) under Class C predicates. Icelandic and Faroese allow V>Neg. This is expected on the traditional assumption that these languages display generalized embedded V2. What is surprising is that topicalization of non-subjects is either disallowed or marked also in Icelandic and Faroese. In Faroese, this holds for both *doubt* and *deny*. In Icelandic, non-subject topicalization is bad in the complement of *doubt* but possible (although somewhat marked) in the complement of *deny* for the relevant speakers. As we will see below, the next class behaves in a similar way.

3.4. Class D: Factives

Class D predicates embed facts. They express some emotion or subjective attitude about an event, the existence of which is presupposed. The class includes *be proud of*, *be ashamed*, *be annoyed*, and *regret*. Root phenomena are normally not possible in complements of these verbs:⁹

- (24) a. *Hann angraði at hann **hevði ekki** sungið.* (Fa.)
 he regretted that he had not sung
 ‘He regretted that he hadn’t sung.’
 b. **Hann angraði at **henda sangin** hevði hann ekki sungið.*
 he regretted that this song-the had he not sung
- (25) a. *Hann sá eftir að hann **hafði ekki** sungið.* (Ic.)
 he regretted that he had not sung
 ‘He regretted that he hadn’t sung.’
 b. **Hann sá eftir að **þetta lag** hafði hann ekki sungið.*
 he regretted that this song had he not sung
- (26) a. **Han angret på at han **hadde ikke** sunget.* (No.)
 he regretted on that he had not sung

⁹Finite clauses embedded under *sjá eftir* ‘regret’ are not accepted by all speakers of Icelandic. For those that allow this, non-subject topicalization is not possible. On the problematic aspects of Icelandic *harma* ‘regret’, see §4 below.

- b. **Han angret på at denne sangen hadde han ikke sunget.*
 he regretted on that this song-the had he not sung
- (27) a. **Han ångrade att han hade inte sjungit.* (Sw.)
 he regretted that he had not sung
- b. **Han ångrade att den här sången hade han inte sjungit.*
 he regretted that this here song-the had he not sung

We may conclude that Class D patterns with Class C in the varieties investigated. In all four languages, Class C and D contrast with A and B in displaying restrictions on V2 word orders. Norwegian and Swedish displays restrictions on subject-initial as well as non-subject initial V2, whereas Faroese and Icelandic only display restrictions on non-subject initial V2.

3.5. Class E: Semi-factives

Class E predicates are verbs of perception and knowledge and include *discover*, *understand*, *realize*, and *know*. These pattern with the D predicates just described in embedding complements that are facts. However, their complements differ from truly factive complements in that they may lose their factivity in questions, if embedded in the antecedent of a conditional, and under certain modals Karttunen (1971). This class has been noted to pattern with Class A and B in more than one respect. We will return to this shortly. Noteworthy here is the fact that root phenomena, including V2, have been observed to be possible under these predicates:

- (28) a. *Eg varnaðist at eg hevði ikki lisið hana.* (Fa.)
 I discovered that I had not read it
 'I discovered that I hadn't read it.'
- b. *Eg varnaðist at hesa bókina hevði eg ikki lisið.*
 I discovered that this book-the had I not read
 'I discovered that this book I hadn't read.'
- (29) a. *Ég uppgötvaði að ég hafði ekki lesið hana.* (Ic.)
 I discovered that I had not read it
 'I discovered that I hadn't read it.'
- b. *Ég uppgötvaði að þessa bók hafði ég ekki lesið.*
 I discovered that this book had I not read
 'I discovered that this book I hadn't read.'
- (30) a. *Jeg oppdaget at jeg hadde ikke lest den.* (No.)
 I discovered that I had not read it
 'I discovered that I hadn't read it.'
- b. *Jeg oppdaget at denne boka hadde jeg ikke lest.*
 I discovered that this book-the had I not read
 'I discovered that this book I hadn't read.'
- (31) a. *Jag upptäckte att jag hade inte läst den.* (Sw.)
 I discovered that I had not read it
 'I discovered that I hadn't read it.'
- b. *Jag upptäckte att den här boken hade jag inte läst.*
 I discovered that this here book-the had I not read
 'I discovered that this book I hadn't read.'

As can be seen from the above examples, this is also true for the languages investigated here. All four languages allow both V>Neg and topicalization of non-subjects under Class E predicates. Class E thus patterns with Class A and B.

3.6. Summary

Summing up, all four languages conform to the well-known cross-linguistic pattern: V2 is unrestricted under assertive and semi-factive predicates (Class A, B, and E) but restricted under non-assertive and truly factive predicates (Class C and D). With regard to the restrictions under Class C and D predicates, our data yield two classes of languages. Norwegian and Swedish disallow both V2 word orders (V>Neg and non-subject topicalization) under these predicates. In Faroese and Icelandic, on the other hand, only non-subject topicalization is restricted.¹⁰

Table 2
The distribution of embedded V2 word orders

		Swedish	Norwegian	Faroese	Icelandic
Class A	V>Neg	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Top	✓	✓	✓	✓
Class B	V>Neg	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Top	✓	✓	✓	✓
Class C	V>Neg	*	*	✓	✓
	Top	*	*	*	*
Class D	V>Neg	*	*	✓	✓
	Top	*	*	*	*
Class E	V>Neg	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Top	✓	✓	✓	✓

Our data confirms the standard assumption that subject-initial V2 is derived differently in the two groups of languages. In view of our assumption that Icelandic verb movement always targets the CP domain of the clause (see §2), also in subject-initial V2 clauses (including subject-initial embedded *wh*-questions), verb movement has to target a different projection in the CP domain in such clauses in Norwegian and Swedish.¹¹ For a detailed analysis of verb movement in Scandinavian, see Hrafnbjargarson et al. (2007); Hróarsdóttir et al. (2007), and Wiklund et al. (2007).

4. Embedded non-subject topicalization in Icelandic

Our investigation reveals that Faroese and Icelandic (or at least varieties of these languages) are subject to restrictions on V2 word order of the kind seen in the other Scandinavian languages. None of the Scandinavian languages can therefore be said to display generalized embedded

¹⁰Petersen (2000); Thráinsson (2001) and Thráinsson et al. (2004) point out that some speakers of Faroese are very reluctant to accept subject-initial V2 in non-root environments (i.e. under non-bridge verbs in their terminology). This variety of Faroese appears to exhibit the pattern seen in Mainland Scandinavian in this respect.

¹¹As pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, one possibility is to assume that also the complementizer occupies different positions depending on context, which may account for the interaction between complementizer deletion and V2 word orders. This is an interesting proposal but we need to leave the structural details for future research.

V2 in the sense that both V>Neg word order and non-subject topicalization are possible across the relevant environments. Our observations, therefore, expose a pattern quite different from that reported in Rögnvaldsson and Thráinsson (1990), Vikner (1995), and subsequent works on Icelandic, where it is claimed that topicalization is possible under both Class C and Class D predicates. The examples below are from Rögnvaldsson and Thráinsson (1990, 23):

- (32) a. *Jón efast um að á morgun fari María snemma á fætur.* (Ic.)
 John doubts that tomorrow get Mary early up
 ‘John doubts that Mary will get up early tomorrow.’
 b. *Jón harmar að þessa bók skuli ég hafa lesið.*
 John regrets that this book shall I have read
 ‘John regrets that I read this book.’

There are two possible reasons for the discrepancy. Either there is variation among speakers of Icelandic in this respect or independent factors are involved in the judgments of the relevant examples. Starting with the latter possibility, it is worth noting that the factive verb *harma* ‘regret’, often cited as evidence that Icelandic has generalized V2, differs (just like English *regret*) from the corresponding Swedish and Norwegian versions of *regret* (*ångra* and *angre*, respectively) with regard to presuppositional properties. For the Icelandic authors of the present paper, the content of the embedded clause in (32b) above need not be presupposed in the strict sense, even though it represents a fact; the content may be new information to the addressee, indicating a weaker kind of presupposition. In this sense, *harma* resembles semi-factive verbs (Class E), which makes the possibility of non-subject topicalization less surprising. As we have seen, V2 is unrestricted under semi-factive predicates.¹²

Turning to the possibility of language variation, we decided to consult additional Icelandic informants and increase the number of predicates from each class. The result is represented by Table 3 below. All in all, six informants are consulted, all of whom are linguists with Icelandic as their mother tongue. ‘✓’ represents the judgment that non-subject topicalization is fine, given the right context, ‘*’ represents the judgment that non-subject topicalization is bad regardless of context, and ‘?’ the judgment that non-subject topicalization is possible but marked in some (unspecified) sense. Before we go on to discuss the conclusions that we can draw from Table 3, we would like to point out a couple of factors that are relevant to this investigation.

¹²Thráinsson (2007, 400, fn. 3) notes that *harma* is frequently used by politicians and public figures to express dissatisfaction/dismay/regret and provides the example in (i) below. For the authors of this paper, the factive implication is not absent. The crucial factor is that the embedded clause need not be presupposed in the sense of being known to or taken for granted by both speaker and hearer. In this sense, *harma* is not a clean Class D predicate. Nor does it belong to Class E (factivity is not context dependent).

(i) *Forsætisráðherrann harmaði [að fólkið skyldi hafa farist].* (Ic.)
 prime.minister-the expressed regret that people-the should(sbj) have perished
 ‘The prime minister regretted that the people had perished.’

Table 3
Topicalization of non-subjects in Icelandic

		1	2	3	4	5	6
Class A	<i>fullvissa um</i> ‘assure’	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<i>halda fram</i> ‘claim’	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓
	<i>segja</i> ‘say’	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓
Class B	<i>halda</i> ‘believe’	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Class C	<i>efast um</i> ‘doubt’	*	*	?	✓	✓	✓
	<i>neita</i> ‘deny’	?	✓	*	✓	Ø	✓
	<i>vera ekki sammála um</i> ‘not agree’	*	*	*	*	✓	✓
	<i>vera ekki viss um</i> ‘not be sure about’	*	*	*	✓	?	?
Class D	<i>furða sig á</i> ‘be surprised’	?	✓	?	?	✓	✓
	<i>sjá eftir</i> ‘regret’	*	*	*	*	Ø	✓
	<i>vera ánægður með</i> ‘be content with’	*	?	?	✓	?	✓
	<i>vera leiður yfir</i> ‘be sad about’	?	?	*	✓	Ø	✓
	<i>vera stoltur yfir</i> ‘be proud of’	?	✓	✓	✓	Ø	✓
Class E	<i>átta sig</i> ‘realize’	✓	✓	?	?	✓	✓
	<i>finna út</i> ‘find out’	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<i>minnast</i> ‘recollect’	✓	✓	?	?	Ø	✓
	<i>muna</i> ‘remember’	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<i>skilja</i> ‘understand’	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓
	<i>uppgötva</i> ‘discover’	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<i>vita</i> ‘know’	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

With some predicates, speakers vary with regard to possibility of finite complementation, notably with *sjá eftir* ‘regret’, *vera leiður yfir* ‘be sad about’, *vera stoltur yfir* ‘be proud about’, and *minnast* ‘recollect’. This factor is controlled for in the investigation; impossibility of finite complementation is indicated by ‘Ø’ in the table. Secondly, in all of the sentences given to the informants, the fronted constituent is a demonstrative DP of the kind *þessar bækur* ‘these books’, e.g.: *Hún fullvissaði þau um að þessar bækur hefðu nemendurnir lesið áður* (She assured them that these books had the students read already). For some speakers, acceptability of embedded topicalization may depend on the kind of embedded subject involved and on the type of the fronted constituent, see Rögnvaldsson and Thráinsson (1990) and Magnússon (1990) for hints along these lines.¹³ A more thorough investigation of the more complex factors restricting fronting lies outside the scope of the present paper. Finally, it has recently been observed that

¹³As an anonymous reviewer points out, fronting of PPs seems easier for some speakers than fronting of DPs. Nevertheless, it is easy to find examples where also PP fronting is impossible regardless of environment. Possibility of non-subject topicalization in clauses other than *that*-clauses is investigated in Magnússon (1990). According

modals interact with the possibility of unrestricted V2 in the sense that the presence of certain modals in the embedded clause override the tendency of restricting non-subject initial V2 under factive and non-assertive predicates, see Hrafnbjargarson (2008). Therefore, sentences containing modals are excluded from the results represented by Table 3.

Although great variation is indeed confirmed by Table 3, there is a pattern. All embedded topicalizations that have been judged as ungrammatical regardless of context involve predicates from Class C and D. Embedded topicalization under predicates from Class A, B and E on the other hand are flawless for speakers 1, 2, 5, and 6 and either perfect or possible but marked for speakers 3 and 4. Thus, even though we find examples of good scores with all kinds of predicates, the stars indicating ungrammaticality are located in Class C and D alone in the table. This is also the location of most of the question marks.¹⁴ Speaker 6 is the most liberal one, accepting finite complements and topicalization under virtually all predicates tested. It must be on the basis of such varieties that Icelandic has been referred to as a language displaying generalized embedded V2. A second variety has been identified in the literature; some speakers are reluctant to embedded topicalization regardless of context, see Ottósson (1989), Vikner (1995, 160, fn.7), and Jónsson (1996). Our contribution is to point to the existence of a third variety, one that allows embedded topicalization but exhibits restrictions similar to those seen in the other Scandinavian languages where embedded topicalization is banned under predicates of Class C and D. The existence of this third variety has been confirmed independently by the results of a large-scale study within the Icelandic Dialect Syntax project, see Angantýsson (2008). According to that study, there are generational differences as younger speakers seem more prone to reject topicalization in non-root environments.

5. Assertion and V2

Consider the Assertion Hypothesis again, repeated below:

- (33) *The Assertion Hypothesis:*
The more asserted (the less presupposed) the complement is, the more compatible it is with V2 (and other root phenomena).

Looking at the first four classes of predicates, the hypothesis seems to be supported by our data. Complements under Class A and B predicates are asserted and allow both the V>Neg word order and topicalization of non-subjects in the four varieties of Scandinavian investigated here. Complements under Class C and D predicates are not asserted and although V>Neg is allowed in Faroese and Icelandic, topicalization of non-subjects is impossible or marked in all four varieties.

Complements under semi-factives (Class E), however, appear problematic. These are well-known for sharing properties both with asserted complements (Class A and B) and with complements of factive predicates (Class D), which are presupposed (e.g. Hooper and Thompson 1973; Hooper 1975). If the existence of the event referred to by the complement is presupposed, it is not entirely clear in which sense it can also be asserted. We have seen that – despite this – V2 is unrestricted under semi-factive verbs, a fact noted also by our predecessors. In all four

to him, embedded topicalization is most difficult in relative clauses, interrogative clauses, and many adverbial clauses.

¹⁴For a brief note on the good or relatively good examples of topicalization under Class C and D, see §7 below.

languages, both the V>Neg word order and topicalization of non-subjects are unproblematic under predicates of Class E, in line with Class A and Class B complements.

Recall that one characteristic of semi-factives is that they may lose their factivity in certain contexts. In questions, under certain modals, and if embedded in the antecedent of a conditional, semi-factives are ambiguous between a factive and non-factive reading. One important thing to investigate is thus whether or not these predicates are indeed used factively in the contexts where unrestricted V2 is a possibility. For this purpose, we adopt the entailment preservation under negation test from Kiparsky and Kiparsky (1970). The conclusions drawn in this and the following section hold for Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish. Icelandic and Norwegian examples are given in appendices A and B. Faroese has not been investigated yet.

Consider the Swedish sentences in (34). (34a) exemplifies a clause with non-V2 word order embedded under semi-factive *discover*, (34b) a V2 clause (non-subject topicalization) under the same verb. Both sentences entail (34c).

- (34) a. *Vi upptäckte att han inte läste den bloggen varje dag.* (Sw.)
 we discovered that he not read that blog-the every day
 ‘We discovered that he didn’t read this blog every day.’
 b. *Vi upptäckte att den bloggen läste han inte varje dag.*
 we discovered that that blog-the read he not every day
 ‘We discovered that this blog he did not read every day.’
 c. *Han läste inte den bloggen varje dag.*
 he read not that blog-the every day
 ‘He didn’t read this blog every day.’

If the matrix predicate presupposes the existence of the event in the embedded clause, the entailment relations above should not be altered by the presence of sentential negation in the matrix clause. And they are not. (35a) and (35b) below both entail (34c), repeated in (35c).¹⁵

- (35) a. *Vi upptäckte faktiskt inte att han inte läste den bloggen varje dag.* (Sw.)
 we discovered actually not that he not read that blog-the every day
 ‘We actually didn’t discover that he didn’t read this blog every day.’
 b. *Vi upptäckte faktiskt inte att den bloggen läste han inte varje dag.*
 we discovered actually not that that blog-the read he not every day
 ‘We actually didn’t discover that this blog he didn’t read every day.’
 c. *Han läste inte den bloggen varje dag.*
 he read not that blog-the every day
 ‘He didn’t read this blog every day.’

¹⁵For speakers that have trouble finding an appropriate context for (35b), where sentential negation is present both in the matrix and in the embedded clause, the example below shows the same pattern, (ia) entails (ib).

- (i) a. *Vi upptäckte faktiskt inte att den bloggen läste han varje dag.* (Sw.)
 we discovered actually not that this blog-the read he each day
 ‘We didn’t actually discover that he read this blog each day.’
 b. *Han läste den bloggen varje dag.*
 he read this blog-the every day
 ‘He read this blog every day.’

This entailment is maintained also with a 2nd and 3rd person subject in the matrix clause.

In this sense, *upptäcka* ‘discover’ (Class E) behaves like *ångra* ‘regret’ (Class D) for which the same pattern can be replicated. Both presuppose the existence of the event referred to by the embedded clause. The difference between them is that the latter predicates do so under all conditions, whereas the former are ambiguous under certain conditions (Karttunen, 1971). What is relevant to us is the fact that Class E predicates may select clauses with V2 word order (subject- as well as non-subject initial) when they are used factively, as shown above. Thus, factivity is irrelevant to V2. For this reason, the assertion hypothesis seems to need some qualification.

Note that an old observation is that matrix negation restricts V2 in the embedded clause (Blümel 1914, see also Meinunger 2006). Although this is true for many contexts also in Scandinavian, it is not true for semi-factives, as can be seen in (35b) above.¹⁶ We disregard the possibility of interpreting the matrix negation in (35) and similar examples as presupposition canceling negation. This is a use of negation that we take to involve rejection of an utterance on any grounds, even style or phonetic realization, see Horn (2001) for discussion.¹⁷

Since the selected clause is a fact under the relevant predicates, we expect it to be impossible to deny the truth of the embedded clause alone. This expectation is met. Adding the tag corresponding to English *but he did not* to sentences of the kind *They discovered that he read that blog every day* yields a rather odd result:¹⁸

- (36) a. *De upptäckte att han läste den bloggen varje dag,* (Sw.)
 they discovered that he read that blog-the every day
#men det gjorde han inte.
 but that did he not
 ‘They discovered that he read this blog every day #but he didn’t.’
 b. *De upptäckte att den bloggen läste han varje dag,*
 they discovered that that blog-the read he every day

¹⁶ Another example is (i):

- (i) *Jag visste inte att såna hus säljer de faktiskt varje dag på den mäklarfirman.* (Sw.)
 I knew not that such houses sell they actually every day on this real.estate.agency
 ‘I didn’t know that they sell such houses every day at this real estate agency.’

As pointed out by Björn Lundquist (personal communication), it is in fact possible to find contexts where non-subject topicalization is fine also under matrix negation with *say*:

- (ii) *Men mäklaren sa inte att såna hus säljer han regelbundet.* (Sw.)
 but broker-the said not that such houses sells he regularly
 ‘But the broker didn’t say that he sells such houses on a regular basis.’

(ii) is fine e.g. in the context where a particular type of house is being discussed and the speaker wants to inform the listener that the broker has withheld information about his sale activity regarding such houses. The negation *inte* ‘not’ can also be replaced by *aldrig* ‘never’. Icelandic and Norwegian examples are given in appendices A and B, respectively.

¹⁷ Under such a reading (which we take to be irrelevant here), matrix negation in example (34) could e.g. be interpreted as a rejection of the choice of the word “blog” rather than “masterpiece” in the embedded clause.

¹⁸ Hooper and Thompson (1973) note that there is some variation concerning the possibility to negate or question the complement of a semi-factive verb in English. The authors of this paper all agree that this is not possible in their respective varieties of Scandinavian with verbs like *discover*.

#*men det gjorde han inte.*
 but that did he not
 ‘They discovered that this blog he read every day #but he didn’t.’

Note the clear contrast between (semi-)factives and assertives such as e.g. *say* from Class A. The latter embed statements, which can be denied without producing the oddity seen above:

- (37) a. *De sa att han läste den bloggen varje dag,* (Sw.)
 they said that he read that blog-the every day
men det gjorde han inte.
 but that did he not
 ‘They said that he read this blog every day, but he didn’t.’
 b. *De sa att den bloggen läste han varje dag,*
 they said that that blog-the read he every day
men det gjorde han inte.
 but that did he not
 ‘They said that this blog he read every day, but he didn’t.’

Recall from the introduction that two senses of assertion have been referred to in attempts to define contexts that support root phenomena. Hooper and Thompson (1973, 473) define the *assertion* of a sentence roughly as:

- (38) a. That part which can be questioned and denied.
 b. The core meaning or *main assertion* of a sentence.

We take (38a) to mean that an assertion must be a proposition. (38b) is usually taken to mean that proposition whose truth is at stake in the discourse. We take the strict sense of assertion to make reference to both properties. From (36), we may conclude that semi-factives do not embed assertions in the former sense and from (36b) that this sense is not relevant to V2 (be it subject- or non-subject initial):

- (39) V2 word order \nrightarrow Proposition

Julien (2007) opposes to this test. According to her, it cannot be part of the definition of *assertion* that it should be possible for the speaker to deny the assertion, as soon as she has made the assertion. This is not what we or Hooper and Thompson (1973) are saying of course. Our point is that the first definitional component of assertion in Hooper and Thompson (1973, 473) does not identify complements of semi-factive verbs and therefore identifies only a subset of the contexts where unrestricted V2 is possible. The same test, but here avoiding that the speaker denies the content of the embedded clause, is given below:

- (40) A: *De upptäckte att den bloggen läste han varje dag.* (Sw.)
 they discovered that that blog-the read he every day
 ‘They discovered that this blog he read every day.’
 B: #*Men det är ju inte sant!*
 but that is indeed not true
 ‘#But that’s not true!’

To the extent that the dialogue in (40) is possible on the reading where speaker B does not deny the discovery event, speaker B rejects the presupposition that the subject referent read that blog every day. This is not the case in (41) where speaker B rejects the assertion of the embedded clause, on the relevant reading.

- (41) A: *De sa att den bloggen läste han varje dag.* (Sw.)
 they said that that blog-the read he every day
 ‘They said that this blog he read every day.’
 B: *Men det är ju inte sant!*
 but that is indeed not true
 ‘But that’s not true!’

Turning to the latter sense of assertion, consider a complex sentence involving a Class A predicate:

- (42) *Han sa att hon hade kommit hem.* (Sw.)
 he said that she had come home
 ‘He said that she had come home.’

The sentence has two readings. Either the whole sentence *He said X* is the main assertion, or the complement *She had come home* is the main assertion. The latter reading of *say* has been called a *parenthetical* reading (Urmson, 1952). Hooper and Thompson (1973) observe that semi-factives (Class E) behave like assertive predicates (Class A and B) in that they have parenthetical uses; their complement may be the main assertion of the sentence. Anticipating conclusions to be drawn shortly, it is the availability of a parenthetical reading of this kind that appears to correlate with unrestricted V2. Note that the possibility of interpreting a verb parenthetically does not always correlate with the possibility of using the verb in a syntactic parenthetical of the kind *She had come home, he said*. Absence of a syntactic parenthetical use, therefore, does not necessarily imply unavailability of a parenthetical reading in the sense relevant here. We refer the reader to Simons (2007) for examples showing this.

6. Main point of utterance and V2

The notion of *main assertion* in Hooper and Thompson (1973) seems to correspond closely to what Simons (2007) labels the *main point of utterance* (henceforth MPU). We adopt this label rather than *main assertion* for two reasons. First, complements of semi-factives may be “main assertions” but are still not assertions in the strict sense, as we have shown in the above section. For this reason, *main assertion* is a misnomer. Second, Simons (2007) uses question/response sequences as a diagnostic for MPU, which we find useful. For our purpose this means that whenever the content of an embedded clause alone can constitute the answer to a question, the embedded clause has the possibility of being the MPU. Applying this diagnostic to the five predicate classes we have been using, we find that those predicate classes which may embed a potential MPU in the above sense are exactly those that are compatible with subject-initial as well as non-subject initial V2 in the embedded clause (Class A, B, and E). Those predicate classes which may not embed an MPU are exactly those that impose restrictions on V2 in the embedded clause (Class C and D). In other words, MPU-compatible environments correspond to environments where V2 is unrestricted in all four varieties of Scandinavian investigated here:

(43) Possibility of being MPU \leftrightarrow Possibility of displaying unrestricted V2

Starting with semi-factive predicates (Class E), the problems of which we left unsolved in the preceding section, it is possible to formulate a question such that the clause embedded under a semi-factive constitutes the answer to that question. The clause may thus contain new information to the listener.¹⁹ The exchange below is exemplified by Swedish:

- (44) Q: *Varför kom han inte på mötet igår?* (Class E)
 why came he not on meeting-the yesterday
 ‘Why didn’t he come to the meeting yesterday?’
 A₁: *Vi upptäckte att han tyvärr inte hade fått på vinterdäcken* (non-V2)
 we discovered that he unfortunately not had got on winter.tires-the
ännu.
 yet
 ‘We discovered that he unfortunately hadn’t changed to winter tires yet.’
 A₂: *Vi upptäckte att tyvärr hade han inte fått på vinterdäcken* (V2)
 we discovered that unfortunately had he not got on winter.tires-the
ännu.
 yet
 ‘We discovered that unfortunately he hadn’t changed to winter tires yet.’
 A₃: *Han hade tyvärr inte fått på vinterdäcken ännu.*
 he had unfortunately not got on winter.tires-the yet
 ‘He had unfortunately not changed to winter tires yet.’

A₁, A₂, and A₃ are all possible responses to the question in (44). In A₁ and A₂, the answer is contained in the embedded clause; that is where the main information of the whole clause is (MPU). The reason he did not come to the meeting yesterday was not the fact that we discovered something, but that he had not changed to winter tires on his car yet. In this respect, Class E predicates pattern with Class A and B predicates. These may also embed complements that constitute the MPU:

- (45) Q: *Varför kom han inte på festen?* (Class A)
 why came he not on party-the
 ‘Why didn’t he come to the party?’
 A₁: *Hon sa att han inte hade tid.*
 she said that he not had time
 ‘She said that he didn’t have time.’
 A₂: *Han hade inte tid.*
 he had not time
 ‘He didn’t have time.’

¹⁹That new information may be found under Class E predicates may seem paradoxical at first. Note however that complements of semi-factives need not be presupposed in the sense of being common ground/known to both speaker and addressee. Only the speaker is committed to the truth of the embedded clause, cf. the observation of Simons (2007) that factivity and presuppositionality comes apart in semi-factives.

- (46) Q: *Varför avbokade hon flygbiljetten?* (Class B)
 why cancelled she flight.ticket-the
 ‘Why did she cancel the flight ticket?’
 A₁: *Han trodde att hon inte hade tid till att åka ändå.*
 he believed that she not had time to to go after.all
 ‘She believed that she didn’t have time to go after all.’
 A₂: *Hon hade inte tid till att åka ändå.*
 she had not time to to go after.all
 ‘She didn’t have time to go after all.’

In (45), the reason he did not come to the party was either that she said that he did not have time or that he did not have time. Likewise in (46), the reason she cancelled her flight ticket was either because of his belief that she did not have time to go or because she did not have time to go. The availability of the second readings shows that both Class A and B complements can constitute the MPU.

In contrast, complements of Class C and D predicates may not on their own constitute MPUs. The A₁ answers below are thus not appropriate ways of responding to the relevant questions:

- (47) Q: *Varför måste han i fängelse?* (Class C)
 why must he in jail
 ‘Why does he have to go to jail?’
 A₁: *#Han förnekade att han aldrig hade betalat skatt.*
 he denied that he never had paid tax
 ‘#He denied that the never had paid taxes.’
 A₂: *Han hade aldrig betalat skatt.*
 he had never paid tax
 ‘He had never paid taxes.’
- (48) Q: *Varför köpte du ingenting på rean?* (Class D)
 why bought you nothing on sale-the
 ‘Why didn’t you buy anything at the sale?’
 A₁: *#Jag ångrade att jag hade spenderat alla mina pengar för jul.*
 I regretted that I had spent all my money before Christmas
 ‘#I regretted that I had spent all my money before Christmas.’
 A₂: *Jag hade spenderat alla mina pengar för jul.*
 I had spent all my money before Christmas
 ‘I had spent all my money before Christmas.’

In (47), the reason he had to go to jail is that he did not pay taxes, not that he denied this. In (48) the reason I did not buy anything at the sale is that I had spent all my money before Christmas, not that I regretted this. The expected answers to the relevant questions are not accessible when constituting the content of a clause embedded under Class C and D predicates.²⁰

²⁰New information can in fact be introduced under truly factive predicates via the presupposition. These cases differ from those involving semi-factives in that the speaker acts as if something is common ground with the intention of providing new information. We have disregarded special cases of this kind here. These are incompatible with unrestricted V2 in our varieties.

Before drawing conclusions, it is worth noting that both V2 and MPU seem independent of mood selection in Icelandic. This is unlike e.g. Romance where there is a correlation between selection of the subjunctive mood and non-root environments, see Meinunger (2004) for discussion. In the exchange below, we see that non-subject topicalization is possible in both indicative (A_1) and subjunctive (A_2) environments. Moreover, it is the embedded clause that constitutes the MPU in both answers. The reason no one was at work was that all Norwegians go skiing in such weather:²¹

- (49) Q: *Afhverju var enginn í vinnunni í gær?* (Ic.)
 why was no one in work yesterday
 ‘Why was there no one at work yesterday?’
 A₂: *Ég frétti að í svona veðri fara allir Norðmenn á skíði.*
 I heard that in such weather go.ind all Norwegians on skis
 A₂: *Ég frétti að í svona veðri færu allir Norðmenn á skíði.*
 I heard that in such weather go.subj all Norwegians on skis
 ‘I heard that in such weather, all Norwegians go skiing.’

Having said this, we may confidently conclude that the possibility of being MPU goes hand in hand with unrestricted V2 in the environments investigated. Clauses selected by Class A, B, and E predicates may constitute the MPU and display both V2 word orders. Clauses selected by Class C and D predicates may not constitute the MPU and are incompatible with one of the two V2 word orders in Faroese and Icelandic (non-subject topicalization) and both V2 word orders in Norwegian and Swedish.

A natural question to ask at this point is whether V2 is a prerequisite for an MPU-reading of the clause, given its purported relation to the illocutionary force of assertion. The answer is no. The embedded clause of A1 in the exchange given in (48) constitutes the MPU but does not display V2. The next question is whether the property of being a MPU is a prerequisite for V2. That is, do all clauses with V2 word order yield an unambiguous MPU-reading? Again, the answer is no. Consider the following exchange from Swedish, the answer involving embedded V>Neg word order:

- (50) Q: *Varför kom han inte på festen?* (Sw.)
 why came he not on party-the
 ‘Why didn’t he come to the party?’
 A: *Kristine sa att han fick inte.*
 Kristine said that he got not
 ‘Kristine said that he wasn’t allowed to.’

In the above answer, either the whole sentence or the embedded clause alone may constitute the MPU. That is, the reason why he did not come to the party is either because Kristine said something (that he did not have permission to go there) or because he did not have permission to go there (a piece of information that we got from Kristine). Given that the embedded clause

²¹ An anonymous reviewer points out that there is an interrelationship between mood and presupposition in Icelandic in the sense that indicative clauses tend to be read as facts, see Thráinsson (2007, 397ff). In light of the fact that mood selection is irrelevant to V2, this is further evidence that also factivity is irrelevant to V2, cf. §5 above. For many speakers, sequence of tense is necessary on subjunctive complements, hence the past subjunctive form of *fara* ‘go’.

in the answer above displays V2 and given that a non-MPU reading is available for that clause, MPU is not a necessary condition for V2. In other words, V2 does not yield an unambiguous MPU reading of the embedded clause. Somewhat surprisingly, the same seems to be true in clauses with non-subject topicalization:

- (51) Q: *Varför köpte Jon inte SAG?* (Sw.)
 why bought Jon not Swedish.Academy.Grammar
 ‘Why didn’t John buy the Swedish Academy Grammar?’
 A: *Hans pappa menade att såna böcker hade Jon inte råd att köpa.*
 his father thought that such books had Jon not means to buy
 ‘His father thought that John didn’t have the means to buy such books.’

On one reading of the above answer, the reason why Jon did not buy the grammar was because his father thought he could not afford it. Thus, the embedded clause does not necessarily constitute the MPU, despite involving topicalization. At this point we know the following:

(52) MPU \nrightarrow V2

(53) V2 \nrightarrow MPU

MPU clauses are compatible with either of the two V2 word orders but crucially, such clauses do not necessarily display V2. Conversely, both V2 word orders are compatible with an MPU reading but crucially, a V2 clause does not require such a reading. Although neither of the two root phenomena imply the presence of the other, they are selected by the same set of predicates.

(54) Possibility of being MPU \leftrightarrow Possibility of displaying unrestricted V2

It seems intuitive to propose that MPU and possibility of non-subject topicalization (indicating unrestricted V2) are licensed by the same structural domain. In Hrafnbjargason et al. (2007), we proposed that the relevant part of the structure is ForceP; Class A, B, and E predicates select Force(P), whereas Class C and D predicates select a smaller clause.

Returning to the illocutionary force of assertion finally, we may ask what is left of the Assertion Hypothesis in (33) given our findings. We have seen that clauses with V2 word order are not necessarily assertions in the strict sense of the term. We have also seen that even if we restricted the term *assertion* to *main point of utterance* (or *main assertion*), V2 may occur independently of assertion and vice versa. It is important to stress that the relation between unrestricted V2 and MPU is indirect in this sense. The only thing unrestricted V2 and assertion qua MPU have in common is that both are root phenomena and therefore confined to the same environment. The relevant environment seems to correspond to something that can constitute new information to the listener (and therefore can constitute the MPU), a conclusion that bears similarities to the conclusion drawn in Meinunger (2006).

7. Loose ends

Returning briefly to Icelandic and the good or relatively good examples of non-subject topicalization that we still find under Class C and D predicates, cf. Table 3 above, it is natural to ask at this point whether these are compatible with MPU readings. A systematic investigation of this remains to be performed but the two Icelandic authors of this paper judge MPU readings

as possible although a bit marked with some of the relevant predicates:²²

- (55) Q: *Hvaða bók keyptu flestir?* (Ic.)
 which book bought most
 ‘Which book did most people buy?’
 A₁: (?) *Ég furðaði mig nú á að flestir keyptu Egils sögu.*
 I surprised myself indeed on that most bought Egils saga
 ‘I was actually surprised that most people bought Egils saga.’
 A₂: (?) *Ég furðaði mig nú á að Egils sögu keyptu flestir.*
 I surprised myself indeed on that Egils saga bought most
 ‘I was actually surprised that most people bought Egils saga.’

It is noteworthy that we have encountered examples of non-subject topicalization under Class C and D predicates also in varieties of Norwegian (for Swedish, cf. Julien 2007). These speakers do not allow this across the board for these predicate classes and intonational factors that are not present with topicalization under Class A, B, and E predicates seem relevant. Although admittedly, these facts require further investigation, they hint that non-subject topicalization in non-root environments may differ from topicalization in root environments for some speakers in ways yet to be determined.

8. Conclusion

We have investigated the distribution of embedded V2 in Faroese, Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish. Our findings conform to those of earlier studies of V2 and other root phenomena. There is a division between clauses selected by so-called assertive and semi-factive predicates on the one hand (Class A, B, and E) and clauses selected by non-assertive and factive predicates on the other (Class C and D). V2 is unrestricted in the former and restricted in the latter clauses and contrary to standard assumptions, this holds also for varieties of Faroese and Icelandic. None of the Scandinavian languages display generalized embedded V2 across the board. The fact that the V>Neg word order is possible under all predicates in Icelandic and varieties of Faroese, but impossible under Class C and D predicates in Norwegian and Swedish, suggests that this word order is a root phenomenon in Norwegian and Swedish alone.

In our discussion of the assertion hypothesis and its relevance for V2, we have shown that there is no proposed definition of *assertion* that also discerns V2 from non-V2 word orders. Our conclusion is that even though one sense of *assertion* – namely *main point of utterance* – seems to be capable of picking out the set of contexts where V2 is unrestricted, both subject-initial and non-subject initial V2 may occur independently of an MPU-reading and vice versa.

²²With *neita* ‘deny’, an MPU reading of the embedded clause is impossible. This is expected because the matrix verb serves to deny the content of the embedded clause. What is unexpected is its good score regarding topicalization for some speakers.

A. Icelandic

A.1. Assertion and V2

Entailment preservation under negation:

- (56) a. *Við uppgötvuðum að hann las þetta blogg ekki á hverjum degi.*
 we discovered that he read this blog not on every day
 ‘We discovered that he didn’t read this blog every day.’
 b. *Við uppgötvuðum að þetta blogg las hann ekki á hverjum degi.*
 we discovered that this blog read he not on every day
 ‘We discovered that this blog, he didn’t read every day.’
 c. *Hann las þetta blogg ekki á hverjum degi.*
 he read this blog not on every day
 ‘He didn’t read this blog every day.’
- (57) a. *Við uppgötvuðum reyndar ekki að hann las þetta blogg ekki á hverjum degi.*
 we discovered actually not that he not read this blog on every day
 ‘We actually didn’t discover that he didn’t read this blog every day.’
 b. *Við uppgötvuðum reyndar ekki að þetta blogg las hann ekki á hverjum degi.*
 we discovered actually not that this blog read he not on every day
 ‘We actually didn’t discover that this blog he didn’t read every day.’
 c. *Hann las þetta blogg ekki á hverjum degi.*
 he read this blog not on every day
 ‘He didn’t read this blog every day.’
- (58) *Pau vissu ekki að svona mat borðaði hann bara á þorranum.*
 they knew not that such food ate he only on þorri.month
 ‘They didn’t know that he only ate such food during January and February.’
- (59) *Pau sögðu ekki að svona mat borðaði hann bara á þorranum.*
 they said not that such food ate he only on þorri.month
 ‘They didn’t say that he only ate such food during January and February.’

It is impossible to deny the truth of the embedded clause alone:

- (60) a. *Pau uppgötvuðu að hann las þetta blogg á hverjum degi #en það gerði hann ekki.*
 they discovered that he read this blog on every day but that did he
 not
 ‘They discovered that he read this blog every day #but he didn’t.’
 b. *Pau uppgötvuðu að þetta blogg las hann á hverjum degi #en það gerði hann ekki.*
 they discovered that this blog read he on every day but that did he
 not
 ‘They discovered that this blog he read every day #but he didn’t.’
- (61) a. *Pau sögðu að hann læsi þetta blogg á hverjum degi en það gerði hann ekki.*
 they said that he read this blog on every day but that did he not
 ‘They said that he read this blog every day but he didn’t.’

- b. *Þau sögðu að þetta blogg læsi hann á hverjum degi en það gerði hann ekki.*
 they said that this blog read he on every day but that did he not
 ‘They said that this blog he read every day but he didn’t.’

The same test with a different subject:

- (62) A: *Þau uppgötvuðu að hann las þetta blogg á hverjum degi.*
 they discovered that he read this blog on every day
 ‘They discovered that he read this blog every day.’
 B: *#Nei, það er ekki satt!*
 no that is not true
 ‘#No, that’s not true!’
- (63) A: *Þau sögðu að þetta blogg læsi hann á hverjum degi.*
 they said that this blog read he on every day
 ‘They said that this blog he read every day.’
 B: *Nei, það er ekki satt!*
 no that is not true
 ‘No, that’s not true!’

A.2. Main point of utterance and V2

MPU reading of the embedded clause is possible under a Class E (semi-factive) predicate:

- (64) Q: *Afhverju kom hann ekki á fundinn í gær?* (Class E)
 why came he not on meeting-the yesterday
 ‘Why didn’t he come to the meeting yesterday?’
- A₁: *Við uppgötvuðum að hann hafði því miður ekki enn* (V2)
 we discovered that he had unfortunately not yet
skipt um dekk.
 changed tires
 ‘We discovered that he had unfortunately not changed tires yet.’
- A₂: *Við uppgötvuðum að því miður hafði hann ekki enn skipt um dekk.* (V2)
 we discovered that unfortunately had he not yet changed tires
 ‘We discovered that unfortunately he hadn’t changed tires yet.’
- A₃: *Hann hafði því miður ekki enn skipt um dekk.*
 he had unfortunately not yet changed tires
 ‘He had unfortunately not changed tires yet.’

In this sense, Class E predicates pattern with Class A and B predicates:

- (65) Q: *Afhverju kom hann ekki í partíð?* (Class A)
 why came he not in party-the
 ‘Why didn’t he come to the party?’
- A₁: *Hún sagði að hann hefði ekki tíma.*
 she said that he had not time
 ‘She said that he didn’t have time.’

A₂: *Hann hafði ekki tíma.*

he had not time
'He didn't have time.'

- (66) Q: *Afhverju afbókaði hún flugmiðann?* (Class B)
why cancelled she flight.ticket-the
'Why did she cancel the flight ticket?'

A₁: *Hann hélt að hún hefði ekki tíma til að fara þrátt fyrir allt.*

he believed that she not had time to to go after.all
'He believed that she didn't have time to go after all.'

A₂: *Hún hafði ekki tíma til að fara þrátt fyrir allt.*

she had not time to to go after.all
'She didn't have time to go after all.'

In contrast, complements of Class C and D predicates may not on their own constitute MPUs (see also §7):

- (67) Q: *Afhverju þurfti hann að fara í fangelsi?* (Class C)
why must he to go in jail
'Why did he have to go to jail?'

A₁: *#Hann neitaði að hann hefði aldrei borgað skatt.*

he denied that he had never paid tax
'#He denied that he had never paid taxes.'

A₂: *Hann hafði aldrei borgað skatt.*

he had never paid tax
'He had never paid taxes.'

- (68) Q: *Afhverju keyptirðu ekki neitt á útsölnunni?* (Class D)
why bought-you not anything on sale-the
'Why didn't you buy anything at the sale?'

A₁: *#Ég sá eftir því að ég hafði eytt öllum peningunum mínum fyrir jól.*

I regretted that I had spent all money-the my before Christmas
'#I regretted that I had spent all my money before Christmas.'

A₂: *Ég hafði eytt öllum peningunum mínum fyrir jól.*

I had used all money-the my before Christmas
'I had spent all my money before Christmas.'

V2 clauses are ambiguous, they are not necessarily MPU:

- (69) Q: *Afhverju kom hann ekki í partíið?*
why came he not in party-the
'Why didn't he come to the party?'

A: *Kristín sagði að hann mætti ekki koma.*

Kristin said that he was.allowed not come
'Kristin said that he wasn't allowed to come.'

- (70) Q: *Afhverju keypti Jón ekki alfræðiorðabókina?*
why bought Jon not encyclopedia-the
'Why didn't John buy the encyclopedia?'

- A: *Pabbi hans hélt að svona bókum hefði Jón ekki efni á.*
 father his thought that such books had Jon not means on
 ‘His father thought that John didn’t have the means to buy such books.’

B. Norwegian

B.1. Assertion and V2

Entailment preservation under negation:

- (71) a. *Vi oppdaget at han ikke leste den bloggen hver dag.*
 we discovered that he not read that blog-the every day
 ‘We discovered that he didn’t read that blog every day.’
 b. *Vi oppdaget at den bloggen leste han ikke hver dag.*
 we discovered that that blog-the read he not every day
 ‘We discovered that that blog he read every day.’
 c. *Han leste ikke den bloggen hver dag.*
 he read not that blog-the every day
 ‘He read that blog every day.’
- (72) a. *Vi oppdaget faktisk ikke at han ikke leste den bloggen hver dag.*
 we discovered actually not that he not read that blog-the every day
 ‘We actually didn’t discover that he didn’t read that blog every day.’
 b. *Vi oppdaget faktisk ikke at den bloggen leste han ikke hver dag.*
 we discovered actually not that that blog-the read he not every day
 ‘We actually didn’t discover that this blog he didn’t read every day.’
 c. *Han leste ikke den bloggen hver dag.*
 he read not that blog-the every day
 ‘He didn’t read that blog every day.’
- (73) *Jeg visste ikke at slike hus selger de faktisk hver dag på det meklerfirmaet.*
 I knew not that such houses sell they actually every day on that real.estate.agency
 ‘I didn’t know that they sell such houses every day at that real estate agency.’
- (74) *Men meklerin sa ikke at slike hus selger han regelmessig.*
 but broker-the said not that such houses sells he regularly
 ‘But the broker didn’t say that he sells such houses on a regular basis.’

It is impossible to deny the truth of the embedded clause alone:

- (75) a. *De oppdaget at han leste den bloggen hver dag, #men det gjorde han ikke.*
 they discovered that he read that blog-the every day but that did he not
 ‘They discovered that he read that blog every day # but he didn’t.’
 b. *De oppdaget at den bloggen leste han hver dag, #men det gjorde han ikke.*
 they discovered that that blog-the read he every day but that did he not
 ‘They discovered that that blog he read every day # but he didn’t.’
- (76) a. *De sa at han leste den bloggen hver dag, men det gjorde han ikke.*
 they said that he read that blog-the every day but that did he not
 ‘They said that he read that blog every day but he didn’t.’

- b. *De sa at den bloggen leste han hver dag, men det gjorde han ikke.*
 they said that that blog-the read he every day but that did he not
 ‘They said that that blog he read every day but he didn’t.’

The same test with a different subject:

- (77) A: *De oppdaget at han leste den bloggen hver dag.*
 they discovered that he read that blog-the every day
 ‘They discovered that he read that blog every day.’
 B: *#Men det er jo ikke sant!*
 but that is indeed not true
 ‘#But that’s not true!’
- (78) A: *De sa at den bloggen leste han hver dag.*
 they said that that blog-the read he every day
 ‘They said that that blog he read every day.’
 B: *Men det er jo ikke sant!*
 but that is indeed not true
 ‘But that’s not true!’

B.2. Main point of utterance and V2

MPU reading of the embedded clause is possible under a Class E (semi-factive) predicate:

- (79) Q: *Hvorfor kom han ikke på møtet igår?* (Class E)
 why came he not on meeting-the yesterday
 ‘Why didn’t he come to the meeting yesterday?’
- A₁: *Vi oppdaget at han dessverre ikke hadde fått på vinterdekkene ennå.* (non-V2)
 we discovered that he unfortunately not had got on
vinterdekkene *ennå*.
 winter.tires-the yet
 ‘We discovered that he had unfortunately not changed to winter tires yet.’
- A₂: *Vi oppdaget at dessverre hadde han ikke fått på vinterdekkene ennå.* (V2)
 we discovered that unfortunately had he not got on
vinterdekkene *ennå*.
 winter.tires-the yet
 ‘We discovered that unfortunately he hadn’t changed to winter tiers yet.’
- A₃: *Han hadde dessverre ikke fått på vinterdekkene ennå.*
 he had unfortunately not got on winter.tires-the yet
 ‘He hadn’t changed to winter tires yet.’

In this sense, Class E predicates pattern with Class A and B predicates:

- (80) Q: *Hvorfor kom han ikke på festen?* (Class A)
 why came he not on party-the
 ‘Why didn’t he come to the party?’
- A₁: *Hun sa at han ikke hadde tid.*
 she said that he not had time
 ‘She said that he didn’t have time.’

A₂: *Han hadde ikke tid.*
 he had not time
 'He didn't have time.'

(81) Q: *Hvorfor avbestilte hun flybilletten?* (Class B)
 why cancelled she flight.ticket-the
 'Why did she cancel the flight ticket?'

A₁: *Han trodde at hun ikke hadde tid til å dra likevel.*
 he believed that she not had time to to go after.all
 'He believed that she didn't have time to go after all.'

A₂: *Hun hadde ikke tid til å dra likevel.*
 she had not time to to go after.all
 'She didn't have time to go after all.'

In contrast, complements of Class C and D predicates may not on their own constitute MPUs:

(82) Q: *Hvorfor måtte han i fengsel?* (Class C)
 why must he in jail
 'Why did he have to go to jail?'

A₁: *#Han benektet at han aldri hadde betalt skatt.*
 he denied that he never had paid tax
 '#He denied that he had never paid taxes.'

A₂: *Han hadde aldri betalt skatt.*
 he had never paid tax
 'He had never paid taxes.'

(83) Q: *Hvorfor kjøpte du ikke noe på salget?* (Class D)
 why bought you not anything on sale-the
 'Why didn't you buy anything at the sale?'

A₁: *#Jeg angret på at jeg hadde brukt opp alle pengene mine før jul.*
 I regretted on that I had used up all money-the my before Christmas
 '#I regretted that I had spent all my money before Christmas.'

A₂: *Jeg hadde brukt opp alle pengene mine før jul.*
 I had used up all money-the my before Christmas
 'I had spent all my money before Christmas.'

V2 clauses are ambiguous, they are not necessarily MPU:

(84) Q: *Hvorfor kom han ikke på festen?*
 why came he not on party-the
 'Why didn't he come to the party?'

A: *Kristine sa at han fikk ikke lov.*
 Kristine said that he got not permission
 'Kristine said that he wasn't allowed to.'

(85) Q: *Hvorfor kjøpte ikke Jon store norske leksikon?*
 why bought not Jon big Norwegian encyclopedia
 'Why didn't John buy the large Norwegian encyclopedia?.'

- A: *Faren hans mente at slike bøker hadde ikke Jon råd til å kjøpe.*
 father-the his thought that such books had not Jon means to to buy
 ‘His father thought that John didn’t have the means to buy such books.’

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