

The Middle Field

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1. Introduction

This section covers a wide range of phenomena that are related to what we can call the middle field of the clause. We have included chapters that deal both with the placement of arguments in the middle field (excluding argument structure inside the verb phrase, which is dealt with in the section on the verb phrase, see [Lundquist 2014a](#)), and chapters about auxiliaries and verb-morphology. The topic of verb-placement is discussed in a separate section ([Bentzen 2014](#)), since this topic is not restricted to the middle field. Below we will briefly discuss the major issues in argument placement (section 2) and verbal morphology and auxiliaries (section 3).

2. Subject placement, object shift and quantifier movement

Most main clauses in the Scandinavian languages are subject-initial. However, in embedded clauses without verb movement in Mainland Scandinavian, as well as in non-subject-initial matrix clauses, the position of the subject may interact with the position of sentential adverbials and negation. In Norwegian and Swedish, nominal subjects may either precede or follow adverbials and negation, as in (1), while (unstressed) pronominal subjects are strongly preferred in a position preceding such elements, as in (2) (cf. e.g. Holmberg 1990, 1993, Faarlund et al. 1997, Nilsen 1997, Telemann et al. 1999, Svenonius 2002):

(1) Denne boka leser {studentene} ikke {studentene} lengre. (Nor.)
this book.DEF read student.DEF.PL not student.DEF.PL longer
'The students don't read this book anymore.'

(2) Denne boka leser {de} ikke {*de} lengre. (Nor.)
this book.DEF read they not they longer
'They don't read this book anymore.'

In Danish, on the other hand, the only possible position for a subject is preceding adverbs/negation, regardless of whether the subject is a nominal or a pronominal element (cf. e.g. Holmberg 1993, Svenonius 2002). Thus, only the word orders in the a-examples above are supposed to be possible in Danish. However, there is more variation within Mainland Scandinavian than this general picture indicates.

²⁶⁷ Object Shift is another widely debated phenomenon in Scandinavian syntax (see e.g. Holmberg 1986, 1999, Holmberg & Platzack 1995, Thráinsson 2001, Vikner 2006). The traditional view concerning Object Shift in Mainland Scandinavian is that weak pronominal objects obligatorily shift across negation, as in (3), while nominal objects remain in situ, as in (4).

(3) Jeg så {den} ikke {*den}. (Nor.)
I see.PAST it not it
 'I didn't see it.'

(4) Jeg så {*boka} ikke {boka}. (Nor.)
I see.PAST book.DEF not book.DEF
 'I didn't see it.'

In contrast, in Icelandic, nominal objects may also occur in a shifted position, and such object shift often has an interpretational effect:

(5) Jón las {bókina} aldrei {bókina}. (Ice.)
Jón read.PAST book.DEF.ACC never book.DEF.ACC
 'John never read the book.'

Also with respect to Object Shift, several people have recently argued that there is much more variation both within and across the Scandinavian languages (see e.g. Josefsson 2003, 2010, Andréasson 2008, 2009, 2010, Anderssen & Bentzen 2012).

Three chapters in this section address the placement of subjects and objects with respect to negation and sentence adverbials based on the material from the Scandinavian dialect syntax investigations:

1. Subject placement with respect to negation in main clauses: [Bentzen \(2014b\)](#)
2. Subject placement with respect to negation in embedded clauses: [Garbacz \(2014a\)](#)
3. Object shift: [Bentzen \(2014c\)](#)

In addition, one chapter discusses the placement of negated or quantified objects. As is discussed in the section about the verb phrase, the Nordic languages in general have strict VO-order (i.e., the object follows the verb). However, in certain dialects, it is marginally possible to place a negated or quantified direct object in the middle field, to the left of a non-finite verb:

(6) Han har inga pengar fått. (Swe.)
He have.PRES no money got.PART
 'I didn't get any money/he has not got any money.'

This word order pattern is discussed in [Garbacz \(2014b\)](#).

3. Auxiliaries, serial verbs and verbal inflection

When it comes to the morphological marking of verbs, there is a big split between the mainland Nordic languages and the insular Nordic languages. Finite verbs in Icelandic and Faroese agree

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with the subject in person and number, while finite verbs in Swedish, Norwegian and Danish rarely show any overt agreement. At earlier stages, person and number agreement on verbs was found all over mainland Scandinavia, but today, agreement is found only in some small dialectal areas, most prominently in Älvdalen and surrounding areas (both person and number agreement), but also in Northern Sweden (mainly Västerbotten and Norrbotten, only number agreement). The following two examples show the number agreement for the verb *komma* 'come' in the in the dialect spoken around Skellefteå ("skelleftemål" or "skelleftebondska") in Västerbotten (example from two older informants obtained during field work):

(6) N'Gösta kom hem imorgon. (Swe.)
 ART.MASC.Gösta come.PRES.SG home tomorrow
 'Gösta comes home tomorrow/Gösta will come home tomorrow.' (Skelleftemål)

(7) N'Gösta a a'Mai komma hem imorgon (Swe.)
 ART.MASC.Gösta and ART.FEM.Mai come.PRES.PL. home tomorrow.
 'Gösta and Mai come home tomorrow/Gösta and Mai will come home tomorrow.' (Skelleftemål)

Verbal agreement was not explicitly investigated in the ScanDiaSyn-project, since the isoglosses for verb-agreement are fairly well known. Further, plenty has been written about the correlation between rich verbal agreement and certain syntactic properties, like verb-placement and transitive expletive constructions, see e.g. Holmberg & Platzack (1995) and Thráinsson & Bobaljik 1998. Some of these issues are also touched upon in the section on verb placement ([Bentzen 2014](#)). In this section however, the agreement pattern of participles in expletive constructions is discussed, with a focus on both the form of the expletive, and the syntactic position of the agreement-triggering associate (see [Larsson 2014a](#)).

The remainder of the chapters discuss different aspects of the auxiliary system, and expressions for tense, mood, modality and aspect:

1. *Bliva* and *varda* as passive auxiliaries and copulas: [Lundquist \(2014b\)](#)
2. Choice of future auxiliary: [Lundquist \(2014c\)](#)
3. Conditional clauses and the shape of *have*: [Larsson \(2014b\)](#)
4. Double supine: [Larsson \(2014c\)](#)
5. Tensed modal forms in non-finite contexts: [Larsson \(2014d\)](#)
6. Serial verbs construction: [Larsson \(2014e\)](#)
7. *Have* and *be* followed by participle of unaccusative verb: [Larsson \(2014f\)](#)
8. Omission of the auxiliary *have*: [Garbacz and Larsson \(2014\)](#)

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