

Icelandic V-to-I movement reconsidered

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Icelandic is standardly assumed to have independent verb movement to the IP domain (V-to-I movement) in so-called non-V2 contexts, such as relative clauses and embedded *wh*-questions. In this paper we present some new data which question the empirical part of the standard assumption. Angantýsson (2001) has shown that verb movement past adverbs and negation is in fact optional, rather than obligatory, in non-V2 contexts (from Angantýsson 2001):

- (1) Ég veit [hvaða mynd Jón {hefur} **ekki** {hefur} séð].
I know which film Jón has not has seen
'I know which film Jón has not seen.'

The data suggest that verb movement in Icelandic interacts with the CP domain of the clause. In some varieties, verb movement is obligatory in the presence of *að*, see (2). Taking this interaction seriously, we put forth the hypothesis that verb movement, when it occurs, always targets the CP domain of the clause, rather than the IP domain. The hypothesis is supported by the following empirical facts. (i) When the verb moves, it obligatorily crosses all adverbs, as well as negation. The verb can therefore not intervene between these, see (3). This indicates that there are no intermediate projections in the IP domain that are potential landing sites for the verb. (ii) The verb follows all adverbs in ECM infinitives, which are standardly assumed to lack a CP domain, see (4). This fact is unexpected on V-to-I analyses of verb movement in Icelandic but is captured on our hypothesis that the relevant verb movement always targets the CP domain of the clause.

- (2) Hann spurði hvort að hún {hafi} **alltaf** {*hafi} sungið í sturtunni.
he asked whether that she had always had sung in shower.the
'He asked whether she always had sung in the shower.'
- (3) Hann spurði hvort hún {hafi} **ekki** {*hafi} **sennilega** {*hafi} **oft** {hafi} sungið
he asked whether she had not had probably had often had sung
í sturtunni.
in shower.the
'He asked whether it was not the case that she probably often had sung in the shower.'
- (4) Hann taldi hana {*syngja} **alltaf** {syngja} í sturtunni.
he believed her sing always sing in shower.the
'He believed her to always be singing in the shower.'

We propose a remnant movement account of verb movement in Icelandic, where non-V2 contexts involve movement of a remnant *vP* containing the subject and the verb to the CP domain. The remnant *vP* targets either of two positions, Spec,FinP or Spec,TopP.

References

Angantýsson, Ásgrímur. 2001. Skandinavísk orðaröð í íslenskum aukasetningum. *Íslenskt mál* 23: 95–122.