

Mainland Scandinavian Stylistic Fronting

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Abstract

This paper reports on the existence of Stylistic Fronting in the modern Mainland Scandinavian languages, i.e. Danish, Norwegian and Swedish. Contrary to the claim that “SF is no longer part of the MSc languages” (Thráinsson 2007:376; see also Angantýsson 2011:183), it is shown that SF-like expressions can be found, not only in Swedish, as pointed out by Engdahl (2012), but also in Norwegian and Danish, although such constructions are heavily restricted. The central research questions regard (i) the extent to which SF still exists in Mainland Scandinavian, (ii) what kind of judgements it receives in different clause types, (iii) how it appears in written and spoken corpora, and (iv) how it compares to SF in Icelandic and Faroese. The overall data presented and discussed here suggest that the (limited) possibility of SF in the modern Mainland Scandinavian languages is partly conditioned by the clause type and the nature of the element fronted by SF, and partly by lexical/idiomatic, and socio-linguistic factors.

1 Introduction

Stylistic fronting (SF) is today found in the Insular Scandinavian languages, Icelandic and Faroese, most typically in embedded clauses in formal registers but also in main clauses, in which case it has an even more archaic or stylistic flavor (see Angantýsson 2017 and references there). Examples of SF are also known in early 20th century Norwegian dialects (Iversen 1957:233 ff.) and in Övdalian (Levander 1909:122), but recent studies indicate that it is heavily restricted in modern Övdalian (Garbacz 2010, Angantýsson 2015) and in modern Norwegian dialects (Garbacz 2014). As regards the standard modern Mainland Scandinavian languages, the general view in the literature has been that SF is absent (Falk 1993:178, Holmberg 2000, Thráinsson 2007:376).

However, Engdahl (2012) points out that Swedish actually exhibits some “more or less frozen SF expressions”, and that “anaphoric temporal and locative adverbs are often fronted”, as in (1). Citing Teleman, Hellberg & Andersson (1999), she claims that such adverbs “may be contrastively stressed, but not necessarily so”.

- (1) a. Om **så** sker, måste man dra i nödbromsen.
if so happens must one pull in emergency.break.DEF.
‘If this happens, use must use the emergency break.’
b. Det beror på vad som **då** händer.
it depends on what that then happens
‘It depends on what happens then.’

Engdahl (2012) also shows that PPs can be fronted “in order to prevent an unintended attachment”, as in (2):

- (2) Den tystnad som rörelsen satt sig i sinnet att bryta är
 the silence that movement.the put REFL in mind.the to break is
 den tystnad som **i Israel** omger ockupationen av palestinska områden.
 the silence that in Israel surrounds occupation.the of Palestinian areas
 ‘The silence that the movement is determined to break is the silence which in
 Israel surrounds the occupation of Palestine areas.’

According to Engdahl (2012), the fronting of *i Israel* “makes it clear that the writer is talking about ‘the silence that prevails in Israel’. Furthermore, she says that “if ‘in Israel’ had appeared in the usual place for locative adjuncts at the end of the VP, then it would most naturally have been interpreted as modifying ‘Palestinian areas’.” Based on examples like this, we will explore the possibility of SF in Swedish in section 4.

There are also examples of what seems to be frozen SF expressions reported from a number of Norwegian dialects in dialect studies from the 20th century.¹ A century earlier, Aasen (1848:203) states that the finite verb can be placed after an adverb or a complement in relative clauses, providing examples as (3)-(5):

- (3) Baa'den, som **ut** hade gjeve, aa den som **mot** hadde tekje.
 both the-one that out had given and the-one that against had taken
 ‘Both the one that has given and the one that has received.’
- (4) Alt dæ, som **i Husom** kann finnast
 everyting it that in houses.DAT can be
 ‘Everything that could be found in the houses.’
- (5) Dæ va dei, som **Magt'a** hadde
 it was they that power.DEF had
 ‘It was they who had the power.’

One can interpret the passage in Aasen (1848:203) as if SF was still productive in the beginning of 19th century in Norwegian dialects, although it was restricted to relative clauses. The fronted element could be both a head, as in (3), and a phrase, as in (4) and (5). Modern Norwegian is claimed to have “a marginal possibility of fronting similar to wedge fronting in Old Norwegian” (Laake 2017:196).²

Furthermore, some results from previous studies on modern Danish, indicate that certain SF-like constructions receive more positive reactions than one might expect. Thus, surprisingly many either accept or put a question mark on example (3c) in Tallai’s (2022) survey on SF.

¹ The SF-like constructions were found at the following locations: Valdres, Nordland, Kleiven (Iversen 1957:234), Tromsø (Iversen 1918:81), Salten (Brekke 2000:152), Kristiansand (Johnson 1942:162-163), Stavanger (Svendsen 1931:138), and Oppdal (Haugen 1982:156). Those examples are all found in short relative clauses.

² Laake (2017:196) is basing her conclusion on Garbacz (2014): “in some present-day Norwegian dialects a predicative adjective can precede the finite verb in subordinate clauses. This is restricted to copula verbs in relative sentences and is by no means frequent (Garbacz 2014a:156).”

- (3) a. Der er bevis på, at det er bedst at bo så langt mod nordøst
 there is evidence for that it is best to live in the far northeast
 i Danmark, hvis man gerne vil have så meget sol som muligt.
 of Denmark if one would want have as much sun as possible
- b. Der er bevis på, at __ er bedst at bo så langt mod nordøst
 there is evidence for that __ is best to live in in the far northeast
 i Danmark, hvis man gerne vil have så meget sol som muligt.
 of Denmark if one would want have as much sun as possible
- c. Der er bevis på, at **bedst** er at bo så langt mod nordøst
 there is evidence for that best is to live in the far northeast
 i Danmark, hvis man gerne vil have så meget sol som muligt.
 of Denmark if one would want have as much sun as possible

The sentence in (3a) is fully accepted by 49 informants, while 14 put a question mark in front of it and one rejects it. (3b) is mostly rejected, as 52 informants mark it as unacceptable, 11 as doubtful and one accepts it. These results are expected. (3c) is however accepted by three informants and as many as 21 mark it as questionable, but do not reject it completely. Still, the same sentence is rejected by 40 informants.

Although 60–70% of the 63 participants fully rejected the SF construction in (3c), around 30% of them thought it was only an unusual sentence, and some 4 speakers fully accepted it. Similarly, some 3 out of 24 speakers of Western-Jutlandic, reported on in Angantýsson (2011: 178), fully accepted SF of an adverb in relative clause, and 3 others put a question mark. Despite the low acceptance rate, these results give rise to questions regarding the possibility of SF in modern Danish.

The main objective of this paper is to investigate the extent to which SF still exists in Mainland Scandinavian and how it compares to SF in Icelandic and Faroese. In section 2, we will review the basic properties of SF, based on the previous literature on the Insular Scandinavian languages. In section 3, we give a brief overview of the development and (alleged) disappearance of SF in the Mainland Scandinavian languages. Section 4 presents new data on SF-like orders in modern Danish, Norwegian and Swedish. The overall data presented and discussed here suggest that the limited possibility of SF in the modern Mainland Scandinavian languages is partly conditioned by the clause type and the nature of the element fronted by SF, and partly by lexical/idiomatic and socio-linguistic factors. We then conclude the paper in section 5, summarizing and discussing the results from these diverse sources of data.

2 The basic properties of Stylistic Fronting

2.1 SF and expletive insertion

Stylistic Fronting (SF) is “a phenomenon where a syntactic constituent is moved to what looks like the subject position in finite sentences with a subject gap, that is subject relatives, embedded subject questions, other embedded sentences with the subject extracted, and various types of impersonal sentences” (Holmberg 2006:532). Examples (4-6) show the interplay between clauses with empty subject positions, stylistically moved constituents and expletives in Icelandic.

- (4) a. Þetta er mál sem ___ hefur verið rætt um.
 this is matter that has been discussed about
- b. Þetta er mál sem **rætt** hefur verið ___ um. SF
 this is matter that discussed has been about
- c. *Þetta er mál sem **það** hefur verið rætt um. Expl
 this is matter that there has been discussed about
 ‘This is a matter that has been discussed.’
- (5) a. ?Ég held að ___ hafi verið rætt um málið á fundinum.
 I think that has been discussed about matter-the at meeting-the
- b. Ég held að **rætt** hafi verið ___ um málið á fundinum. SF
 I think that discussed has been about matter-the at meeting-the
- c. Ég held að **það** hafi verið rætt um málið á fundinum. Expl
 I think that there has been discussed about matter-the at meeting-the
 ‘I think that the matter has been discussed at the meeting.’
- (6) a. Þeir sem ___ hafa verið í Ósló segja að ...
 those that have been in Oslo say that
- b. Þeir sem í **Ósló** hafa verið segja að ... PP fronting
 those that in Oslo have been say that
- c. *Þeir sem **það** hafa verið í Ósló segja að ... Expl
 those that there have been in Oslo say that

A comparison of the (a) examples indicates that some subject gaps can be left empty while others preferably need to be filled. Sentences (4b) and (5b) are typical examples of SF. The (c) examples show that expletive insertion is not always an alternative to SF. Example (6b) features SF-like movement of an XP within an embedded clause which has a subject gap.

2.2 Locality issues

Maling (1980) observed that if there is more than one potential candidate for SF in a clause, it is typically only the leftmost one in the following accessibility hierarchy that can be stylistically fronted:

(7) sentential adverb > predicative adjective > past participle/verbal particle

This is illustrated in (8–10), also with examples from Icelandic (for a detailed and critical discussion see Franco 2009:22–29 and references there):

- (8) a. Þetta er glæpamaðurinn sem__ hefur ekki verið dæmdur.
 this is criminal-the that has not been convicted
 b. Þetta er glæpamaðurinn sem **ekki** hefur __ verið dæmdur. Adv.
 this is criminal-the that not has been convicted
 c. *Þetta er glæpamaðurinn sem **dæmdur** hefur ekki verið .Past part.
 this is criminal-the that convicted has not been
 d. *Þetta er glæpamaðurinn sem **verið** hefur ekki__ dæmdur. Past part.
 this is criminal-the that been has not convicted
 ‘This is the criminal that has not been convicted.’
- (9) a. Þetta er glæpamaðurinn sem __ hefur verið dæmdur.
 this is criminal-the that has been convicted
 b. Þetta er glæpamaðurinn sem **dæmdur** hefur verið. Past part.
 this is criminal-the that convicted has been
 ‘This is the criminal that has been convicted.’
 c. *Þetta er glæpamaðurinn sem **verið** hefur dæmdur. Past part.
 this is criminal-the that been has convicted
- (10) a. Fundurinn sem __ hafði farið fram í Osló var skemmtilegur.
 meeting-the that had gone forth in Oslo was fun
 b. Fundurinn sem **fram** hafði farið í Osló var skemmtilegur. Particle
 meeting-the that forth had gone in Oslo was fun
 c. Fundurinn sem **farið** hafði fram í Osló var skemmtilegur. Past prt.
 meeting-the that gone had forth in Oslo was fun
 ‘The meeting that had taken place in Oslo was fun.’

In (8), only the negation can be fronted but not the other potential candidates for SF. The examples in (9) show that in a sentence with a predicative adjective and a verbal participle, only the adjective can be stylistically fronted. The examples in (10) show that if both a past participle and a verbal particle occur in the same clause, either one can be fronted.

2.3 Heads and maximal projections

If SF is an instance of head movement, one would expect it to obey the Head Movement Constraint (HMC) which can be stated informally as follows (see Travis 1984:131, Rizzi 2001):

- (11) A moved head cannot skip an intervening head between its base position and its landing site.

Examples like the following seem to suggest that SF violates the HMC since the non-finite verb appears in front of the finite verb:

- (12) Þetta er mál sem **rætt** hefur verið ___ um
 this is matter that discussed has been about
 á mörgum fundum.
 at many meetings

A possible way to avoid this problem is to say that the non-finite verb “first” moves and adjoins to the finite verb in V and “then” moves along with it to the I domain. In this way it has not really skipped the head occupied by the finite verb but adjoined to it (Jónsson 1991, Thráinsson 1993:194).

SF obeys the “clause-boundedness condition” (see Thráinsson 1993:193–194 and references there):

- (13) a. Þetta er stelpa sem ___ sagði að þú hefðir stolið bókinni.
 this is girl-the that said that you had stolen book-the
 b. *Þetta er stelpa sem **stolið** sagði að þú hefðir ___ bókinni.
 this is girl-the that stolen said that you had book-the
- (14) a. Þetta er maðurinn sem ___ spurði hvort ég hefði séð myndina.
 this is man-the that asked whether I had seen movie-the
 b. *Þetta er maðurinn sem **séð** spurði hvort ég hefði_ myndina.
 this is man-the that seen asked whether I had movie-the

Assuming (some kind of) a head movement account, one can say that the non-finite verb has skipped the head positions occupied by the finite verbs *hefðir* ‘had’ and *hefði* ‘had’ in (13b) and (14b). Therefore, the derivation crashes.

The conditions on head movement and XP movement across negation differ, as shown below (based on examples from Thráinsson 2007:311):

- (15) a. að það hafði ekki komið fram í umræðunum að ...
 that it had not come forth in discussions-the that
 b. að ekki hafði ___ komið fram í umræðunum að...
 that not had come forth in discussions-the that
 c. ?*að fram hafði ekki komið ___ í umræðunum að...
 that forth had not come in discussions-the that
 d. að í umræðunum hafði ekki komið fram ___ að...
 that in discussions-the had not come forth that

The comparison of (15b) and (15c) shows that the PP *í umræðunum* ‘in the discussion’ does not obey the same constraints as the particle *fram* ‘forth’, which suggests that stylistically fronted heads and SF-like maximal projections should be distinguished.

2.4 An overview of some previous accounts

Stylistic Fronting has been discussed extensively in the syntactic literature, but the kind of data which are taken to be representative of SF vary from paper to paper (for a recent overview, see Sigurðsson 2017). Consequently, there are various approaches to SF and its interaction with expletive insertion. SF has been analysed as:

- (16) a. Movement to subject position (Maling 1980, Platzack 1987, Ottósson 1989, Rögnvaldsson and Thráinsson 1990, Holmberg 2000, Håkansson 2008, 2011).
- b. IP-adjunction (Jónsson 1991, Poole 1992, Thráinsson 1993, Poole 1996).
- c. PF-merger above IP (Bošković 2001, 2004).
- d. Focus movement (Hrafnbjargarson 2004).
- e. One way of satisfying “Fill the left edge requirement” (Sigurðsson 2010).
- f. Remnant movement (Müller 2004, Franco 2009, Ott 2017).

The motivation for analyzing SF as movement to an empty subject position (Spec-IP) is to explain the subject gap that SF requires. In such analyses the movement is triggered by some kind of EPP-feature checking. The main problem for this theory is that it presupposes that heads can move to a specifier position, which at least within the GB framework used to be prohibited. A possible way to avoid this problem is to assume that ‘heads’ moved by SF are in fact phrases that have been emptied of all material except for the head (see Ott 2017 and references there).

Holmberg (2000) offers a unified account of SF and expletive insertion. According to his analysis, the I (of IP) has a nominal feature [D], which is checked by the verb if there is no subject in the sentence. There is also another feature [P], which can be checked by any phonologically visible category moved to or merged in Spec-IP. The idea is that “something” must precede the finite verb: an overt subject, an expletive, a trace, or a fronted element. However, the fact that the apparent subject position must sometimes be filled and sometimes needs not be makes this analysis, and in fact all phonological approaches, in our view quite problematic (Poole 1992, 1996, Bošković 2001, 2004, see also Sigurðsson 2010, Wood 2011). Moreover, it seems that while the [P] feature can sometimes be checked by an expletive, or an element that has undergone SF, occasionally the expletive is ungrammatical. For example, expletive insertion is optional in impersonal constructions and sentences with postposed subjects while it is very hard or impossible to apply it to constructions with extracted and relativized NPs. Nevertheless, the latter type of constructions allows SF. This contradicts the idea that any phonologically visible category can check the feature in question.

Hrafnbjargarson (2004) claims that SF moves both heads and XPs to FocP (Foc and Spec-Foc respectively) in a split CP-domain. While some SF-like constructions have focusing effects, as he shows, it is problematic that fronting of elements that are clearly no bigger than heads (verbal particles for instance) does not have any focusing effects (see discussion in Thráinsson 2007:387–389). It can even be argued that SF-like constructions that have focusing effects are in fact not SF but topicalization.

As discussed in 2.3, at least certain subsets of the data can be properly treated under a head movement approach (cf. Jónsson 1991, Thráinsson 1993). The motivation for analyzing SF as an adjunction to I rests on the prohibition of head movement to a specifier position. This

analysis also explains the absence of focus effects, and it accounts for the relation between verb movement and SF (Icelandic vs. Mainland Scandinavian), i.e. that V-to-I movement is a necessary condition for SF although it is presumably not a sufficient condition. Under Jónsson's (1991) analysis of SF, the subject gap condition is accounted for in terms of feature checking. The SF-element is head-adjoined to the finite verb and moves along with it to I. As a result, the finite verb is "too low" in the structure to check the relevant features with a lexical subject. Therefore, only "null subjects" can be in the subject position. There are two problems with this analysis, however: first, it does not account for the SF-like movements of XPs; second, there is no obvious trigger for the SF. Perhaps SF should be viewed as an optional, stylistic operation, although it is not obvious how, or even to what extent, such phenomena should be accounted for in the syntax. However, it is clear that SF has syntactic effects (e.g., it precludes the appearance of the expletive) and obeys syntactic principles (e.g., it depends on subject gaps). Angantýsson (2017) considers the possibility that SF is restricted to cases of head movement in operator environments and that "stylistically fronted" XPs should be accounted for as topicalization in clauses with a subject gap.

In the following discussion, we use the term SF in a broad sense and include "borderline cases" of SF and Topicalization as in (6b) above.

3 The (alleged) disappearance of SF in Mainland Scandinavian

Previous studies have shown that Stylistic Fronting existed in the older Mainland Scandinavian languages (see Falk 1993:178–187, Delsing 2001, Thráinsson 2007:376–377, and references there). Below we present examples from Old Swedish, Old Danish, and Old Icelandic.

- (17) a. ...han som **thik** kastadhe ___ aff himerike. (Swed., 1385)
 he who you.ACC threw.out of heaven
 'the one who had thrown you out of paradise.'
- b. ...swo sum **førre** er melt ___. (Danish, around 1240)
 so that earlier is said
 '...as it was said earlier.'
- c. ...og sú sveit, er **honum** hafði fylgt ___. (Old Ice., 1230)
 and the retinue who him.DAT had followed
 '...and the people who had followed him.'

Examples (17a–c) show instances of SF from Old Swedish (17a), Old Danish (17b), and Old Icelandic (17c). Similar examples are known in the history of Swedish, Danish and Norwegian (e.g. Platzack 1987, Pettersson 1988, Christoffersen 2000, 2002, Sundquist 2002, Faarlund 2004:236–238, Hrafnbjargarson 2004, Håkansson 2011). Classical Övdalian also exhibits SF (Levander 1909:122) but recent studies show that it is not productive in Övdalian any longer (Garbacz 2010, Angantýsson 2011).

There is an old thought that the main and embedded clause word order is the same in Old Norse, this is already articulated by Nygaard (1905:371) and later by Hanssen, Mundal &

Skadberg (1975:117). Christoffersen (2002) has examined *that*-clauses, conditional clauses and relative clauses in the Old Norwegian state law of Magnus Lagabøte (issued in 1270's) and concludes that there is no structural asymmetry between main and embedded clauses in the text.³ Her examples of what other scholars divide into SF and embedded topicalization are taken from all the three clause types. This approach differs from those of Platzack (1987), Pettersson (1988), Sundquist (2002), and Hrafnbjargarson (2004), in which SF is understood more narrowly and is sharply distinguished from embedded topicalization. When investigating SF in the history of Swedish, Falk (1993:180) has only taken clauses with a subject gap and excluded examples with preverbal adverbials, examples with preverbal oblique noun phrases, examples with final verb(s), and examples with so called VP-raising (a structure where the object or an adverbial is placed between the finite and the infinite verb(s) in an embedded clause). These restrictions reduce the number of possible examples of SF/no SF and they draw a sharp line between SF and phenomena as verb in situ, embedded topicalization, OV word order and verb final structures. Christoffersen (2000, 2002), on the contrary, sees all these structures as proof of no structural asymmetry between main clause and embedded clause.

As for the loss of SF, the following has been shown. In the written Swedish sources, SF disappears at the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century and onwards (Falk 1993:326). In Norwegian, both embedded topicalization and SF start to disappear in the 16th century, though it takes two centuries before they are lost completely. Christoffersen 2000:163). In Danish, SF is lost during the Early Modern Danish period (Sundquist 2002:309). Interesting data are given by Sundquist (2002), who charts the elements fronted by SF both in Old Swedish (2002:259) and in Early Modern Danish texts (2002:310). In Old Swedish, the most fronted category is sentential negation (32%) followed by NP-objects (23%), other adverbials (13%), past participles (11%), preposition phrases (9%), predicative adjectives (6%), and verbal particles (6%). These data correlate with those given by Pettersson (1988:169) from three Swedish law texts written in 1280, 1350, and 1440: negation is the most-frequently fronted element, followed by objects, predicative adjectives, other adverbials, and nonfinite verbs. In Early Modern Danish, a few centuries later, adverbials (29%) and negation (24%) are the most frequently fronted categories followed by noun phrases (15%), preposition phrases (12%), past participles (10%), and predicative adjectives (10%) (Sundquist 2002:310). As for Norwegian, Laake (2017: 194): shows that negation was the most frequently fronted element by SF in Old Norwegian (87%), but she does not give data on the other elements fronted by SF in her material.

The letters of princess Anna Vasa written between 1591 and 1612 (published in Dumanowski et al. 2002) give an interesting insight into which elements are fronted by SF during the period when SF is disappearing from Swedish: Negation aside, objects are the most frequently fronted elements (14 out of 27) followed by predicative adjectives (7 out of 27), predicate adverbs (5 out of 27) and a verb particle (1 out of 27). This pattern is reminiscent of the one found in Norwegian dialects in the 19th and the 20th century: both the objects and predicative adjectives seem to be the most prone to fronting (although one also finds instances

³ “Setningsledd av alle typer kan spisstilles i leddsetninga så vel som i hovedsetninga, og et ‘subject gap’ er ikke noen nødvendig forutsetning for en slik spisstilling.” [All types of clause elements can be fronted to the initial position in an embedded and in a main clause and a ‘subject gap’ is not a necessary prerequisite for such a fronting.] (Christoffersen 2002:153).

of adverbs, infinite verbs, preposition phrases, verb particles, and predicative nouns).⁴ In the LIA Corpus,⁵ SF-like constructions found are restricted to adjectival subject predicatives, adverbs (*her* ‘here’ and *der* ‘there’) followed by a copula verb and to infinitives in (medio)passive (*tenkjast* ‘think’, *gjerast* ‘do’) followed by modal verbs, all of them occurring in short relative clauses (complementizer - fronted element - finite verb). In the Nordic Dialect Corpus⁶, the language of which represents the last stage, we only find fronting of adjectival subject predicatives followed by a copula verb in short relative clauses (complementizer - fronted element - finite verb).

The direction of the loss of SF in Mainland Scandinavian could in a way seem the reverse of Maling’s (1980) hierarchy: fronting of past participles/verbal particles is lost before fronting of predicative adjectives and the fronting of sentential adverbs has been grammaticalized in Mainland Scandinavian.⁷ In the following section, we will examine both the occurrences of SF-like constructions and the judgements of SF in modern Mainland Scandinavian languages.

4 SF-like orders in Mainland Scandinavian

4.1 SF in Danish

4.1.1 The data

The questionnaire data presented in this subsection was collected online by Tallai (2022) in April 2022 (63 speakers of various ages). The questionnaire consisted of 67 sentences in total. The survey was completed online, and the link was distributed on a number of social platforms. Participation took approximately 10–15 minutes.

In preparing the questionnaire, 21 sentences with embedded clauses were chosen from the corpus database of KorpusDK (<https://ordnet.dk/korpusdk>) where stylistic fronting would theoretically be possible in line with the criteria put forward by Maling (1990). The sentences were to in most cases presented as found in the database, though some adjustments were made if they were deemed unsuitable. However, we aimed to preserve the syntactic structure and only substituted words when necessary. The questionnaire was constructed so that each sentence was given with slight modifications in their syntax; in one, the subject gap was left open, in a second the expletive pronoun was inserted, and in a third an element was moved leftwards to the subject place. In some cases, a fourth option was given, either when the gap was filled by a

⁴ Interestingly, both heads and phrases can be fronted. Besides of fronting of infinite verbs, perfect participles, prepositions, direct objects, one also finds fronting of prepositional phrases like *i veigje* ‘in the way’, *i brura-prydna ’m* ‘in the bride ornament’ and nominal subject predicatives with omission of the complementizer in relative clause. *Hr. N. N., professor hev vore* ‘Sir N. N. who has been professor’, *Sigrid, kona mi skal verta* ‘Sigrid, who is going to become my wife’. In Övdalian, fronting of phrases is also reported by Levander (1909:122): *Oller so ogu og neveð åvå* ‘Everybody that has eyes and nose’ [i.e. every human].

⁵ A corpus of dialect recordings made between 1937 and the 1990’s: <https://tekstlab.uio.no/LIA/korpus.html>

⁶ A corpus of dialect recordings made between 1998 and 2015: <http://www.tekstlab.uio.no/nota/scandiasyn/>

⁷ Two interesting examples of so-called pronominal SF are given by Iversen (1957:234): *Gjør som best du synes* ‘Do what you think is best’ and *...som best dei kan* ‘...what they can best.’ It shows that SF of adverbs in the presence of pronominal subject is recorded from Mainland Scandinavian quite late and that the hypothesis of SF being the cause of the development of embedded V3 (Pettersson 1988) may be strengthened by such examples.

postposed NP or when it was occupied by another constituent because of V3 word order in dependent clauses.

For each sentence there were three possible responses:

- Ja = Sådan kan jeg sige det. (Yes, I could say it like that).
 ? = Tvivlsom formuleringstype. Jeg tror at jeg har hørt sætningen blive brugt af andre, men jeg ville ikke selv bruge den. (A doubtful way of expression. I think I have heard others use it, but I myself would not use it).
 Nej= Nej sådan kan jeg ikke sige det. Sætningen er grammatisk forkert. (No, I cannot say that. The sentence is ungrammatical).

As the wording of the alternatives show, the questionnaire included a mixture of self-reporting and community-reporting questions (see discussions on the different nature of such questions in Dollinger 2015: 234-236). This should be kept in mind when the results are interpreted.

4.1.2 Different types of subject gaps and expletives

As we have seen for Icelandic, subject gaps naturally occur in embedded clauses when the subject of the sentence is preposed as in embedded subject questions, *wh*-extraction clauses, and other types of relative clauses. In addition, Icelandic and Faroese also allow for subject gaps in expletive constructions, extraposed clauses, and sentences introduced by a grammatical subject when another element, such as an adverbial, is fronted as in (18) below (Maling 1980, Holmberg 2005):

- (18) a. Það rigndi í gær.
 it rained yesterday
 a. Í gær rigndi (*það).
 yesterday rained
 c. Í gjár regnaði (tað). (Faroese)
 yesterday rained it

In Icelandic the use of the expletive *það* is only possible in the preverbal position. When preceded by the finite verb of the sentence, it is dropped in Icelandic, while this operation is facultative in Faroese (18c) (Platzack 1987).

Subject gaps in Mainland Scandinavian similarly occur in *wh*-extraction and embedded clauses when they are referencing a preposed subject. Expletive constructions are, however, generally introduced by the pronoun *der/det*⁸ and either variety requires the use of an expletive, be it either before or after the finite verb:

⁸ Here an explanation is due, as Danish differs from both Swedish and most varieties of Norwegian in the choice of expletive pronoun. In Danish, *der* is used with impersonal passives as well as sentences with a postposed indefinite-NP. The pronoun *det*, in contrast, appears in impersonal predicative sentences (cf. 12 – 13). The other Mainland Scandinavian varieties do not differentiate in the use of expletives in such way, thus while a sentence like *Það var dansað heila nóttina* in Icelandic translates to Swedish and Norwegian quite the same way (*Det blev dansat hela natten / Det ble danset hele natten*) the Danish version would use the expletive *der* instead (*Der blev danset hele natten*). While constructing the survey we aimed at taking this into account, hence the two expletives in the example sentences.

- (19) a. Det regnede i går.
it rained yesterday
b. ?*I går regnede *(det).
- (20) a. Nu er *(det) helt klart at John har slået Maria.
now is (it) completely clear that John has hit Maria
b. Nú er (*það) augljóst að Jón hefur barið Maríu. (Platzack, 1987:387)
now is (it) clear that John has hit Maria

With regard to stylistic fronting, this means that subject gaps are not present in impersonal passives and lexically impersonal predicative clauses in Mainland Scandinavian, and they must be filled by either an expletive pronoun or a fronted element. This assumption checks out in light of the data collected.

Table 1: Subject gaps in different types of subordinate clauses

	Ja	?	Nej
(21) a. Butiksassistenten ved ikke hvem __ havde shop assistant.the knows not who had lagt smykkerne i indkøbsvognen. put jewellery in trolley.the	1	25	38
b. Butiksassistenten ved ikke hvem der havde shop assistant.the knows not who that had lagt smykkerne i indkøbsvognen. put jewellery in trolley.the	51	9	4
(22) a. Ingen af de fire ved, hvem __ har smadret none of the four know who has broken ruderne på deres skole. window panes.the at their school	6	29	29
b. Ingen af de fire ved, hvem der har smadret none of the four know who that has broken ruderne på deres skole. window panes.the at their school	63	1	0
(23) a. Indonesien er det land, hvor __ lever det Indonesia is the country where live the største antal muslimer. greatest number Muslims	0	11	53
b. Indonesien er det land, hvor der lever det Indonesia is the country where there live the største antal muslimer. greatest number Muslims	57	7	0

(24)	a.	Hvem tror du ___ har stjålet cyklen? who think you has stolen bicycle	45	17	2
	b.	Hvem tror du der har stjålet cyklen? who think you that has stolen bicycle	49	13	2
(25)	a.	Alle vidste, at ___ havde været stjålet smør. everyone knew that had been stolen butter	0	6	58
	b.	Alle vidste, at der havde været stjålet smør. everyone knew that there had been stolen butter	58	4	2
(26)	a.	World Wildlife Fund sørgede for, at ___ blev oprettet et naturreservat i Coto Donana. World Wildlife Fund arranged for that was established a nature reserve in Coto Donona	0	9	55
	b.	World Wildlife Fund sørgede for, at der blev oprettet et naturreservat i Coto Donana. World Wildlife Fund arranged for that there was established a nature reserve in Coto Donona	63	0	1
(27)	a.	Hun har altid vidst at ___ lå et langt arbejdsliv foran sig. she has always known that was a long career before her	0	8	56
	b.	Hun har altid vidst at der lå et langt arbejdsliv foran sig. she has always known that there was a long career before her	30	12	22

Table 1 contains different types of subject gaps in subordinate clauses with varying results of expletive inversion. In the relative clauses in (21)–(22) the examples with the subject gap left open are rejected by the majority of speakers, although 6 respondents consider (22a) a well formed sentence. (23a) is fully rejected by most respondents. The judgments are somewhat different with the *wh*-extraction clause in example (24); here, neither sentence is rejected by an overwhelming number of respondents, making it conceivable that there is syntactic variation between expletive insertion and open subject gaps in the case of subject relative clauses. Leaving the subject gap open in the *at*-clause with the postposed NP, however, is rejected by all informants in examples (25a–27a).

In some instances, experiments were made with fronting of an originally postposed NP into the place of the subject gap, substituting the expletive. These sentences received varying results from speakers.

Table 2: *Fronting of NPs*

		Ja	?	Nej
(28)	Indonesien er det land, hvor det største antal muslimer lever. Indonesia is the country where the greatest number Muslims live	44	18	2
(29)	World Wildlife Fund sørgede for, at et naturreservat blev oprettet i Coto Donana. World Wildlife Fund arranged for that a nature reserve was established in Coto Donana	59	5	0
(30)	Hun har altid vidst at et langt arbejdsliv lå foran sig. she has always known that a long career was before her	16	26	22

Example (28) receives mostly positive judgements. However, despite the similar syntactic environment in (29)–(30), the fronting of the NP is viewed differently; most informants accept (29) while (30) gets divided scores: only 16 respondents fully accept it.

4.1.3 Verb-adverb placement

Icelandic differs from Danish, Norwegian and Swedish in that adverbs and negation usually follow the finite verb, both in main clauses and embedded clauses, while the mainland languages are asymmetric in that the subject-initial V2 word order is inverted in embedded clauses where the sentence adverb precedes the finite verb.). In our discussion, we do not regard the preverbal position of sentence adverbials as evidence of stylistic fronting. Thus, an example like (31) would simply be analyzed as lack of V^o-to-I^o movement.

Table 3: *Verb-adverb placement in Danish*

		Ja	?	Nej
(31) a.	Hun kunne se at her var en stor idé som ikke blev realiseret rigtigt. she could see that here was a great idea that not was implemented correctly	55	9	0
b.	Hun kunne se at her var en stor idé som blev ikke realiseret rigtigt. she could see that here was a great idea that was not implemented correctly	4	10	50
c.	Hun kunne se at her var en stor idé som der ikke blev realiseret rigtigt. she could see that here was a great idea that which not was implemented correctly	20	24	20

d.	Hun kunne se at her var en stor idé	0	10	54
	she could see that here was a great idea			
	som der blev ikke realiseret rigtigt.			
	that which was not implemented correctly			

Table 3 shows four sentences in which the position between the complementizer and the finite verb is either filled in by the expletive *der* or the negation *ikke*. In line with the default V3 order in non-V2 subordinate clauses, only (31a) and (31c) would be acceptable. This is confirmed if we take into account that 55 of all respondents accept (31a) as correct and nobody fully rejects it. Example (31c), with expletive insertion, gets somewhat more negative judgements, but it is still more readily accepted than (31b) and (31d) where it is filled in by *der* and *ikke* appear to the right of the finite verb. Since an overwhelming number rejects these varieties, we may infer that fronting of negation and adverbs should not be viewed as evidence of stylistic fronting in Danish.

Adverbials, however, seem to satisfy the prerequisites for SF as they are usually found in a postverbal position in dependent clauses but may appear before the finite verb. As Engdahl (2012) argues, stylistic fronting of this kind is found in Swedish in a few instances (see example (2) above). In contrast, sentences of this type seem very scarce in DanishKorpusDK gives no equivalent examples.

4.1.4 Stylistic fronting of predicative adjectives

Let us now consider the possible fronting of next elements in Maling's hierarchy subject to SF, i.e., predicative adjectives, past participles and verbal particles.

Table 4: *Fronting of predicative adjectives in subordinate clauses*

		Ja	?	Nej
(32) a.	Der er bevis på, at deter bedst at bo	49	14	1
	there is evidence for that it is best to live			
	så langt mod nordøst i Danmark, hvis man gerne			
	in the far northeast of Denmark if one would			
	vil have så meget sol som muligt.			
	want have as much sun as possible			
b.	Der er bevis på, at ___ er bedst at bo	1	11	52
	there is evidence for that is best to live			
	så langt mod nordøst i Danmark, hvis man gerne			
	in the far northeast of Denmark if one would			
	vil have så meget sol som muligt.			
	want have as much sun as possible			
c.	Der er bevis på, at bedst er at bo	3	21	40
	there is evidence for that best is to live			
	så langt mod nordøst i Danmark, hvis man gerne			
	in the far northeast of Denmark if one would			
	vil have så meget sol som muligt.			
	want have as much sun as possible			

(33)	a.	Han er en mand som deter muligt at stole på.	58	4	2
		he is a man that it is possible to rely on			
	b.	Han er en mand som ___ er muligt at stole på.	3	17	44
		he is a man that is possible to rely on			
	c.	Han er en mand som muligt er at stole på.	0	15	49
		he is a man that possible is to rely on			

Sentences (32c) and (33c) with the predicative adjectives fronted are mostly rejected although 21 of all speakers find (32c) doubtful and 3 consider it grammatical. The case of (33c) is also curious if we consider that the previous examples have shown that subject gaps may be left open in relative clauses introduced by the complementiser *som*. As pointed out by one of Tallai's (2022) informants, Gyimóthy Mørup-Petersen, the fact that (33a) most widely accepted may relate to semantics and what the adjective *muligt* 'possible' refers to; if it appears in the neuter form, it relates to the pronoun *det*, which is left out from the clause. The complementiser *som*, however, refers to the NP *mand* 'man' in the main clause, which therefore cannot occur in the neuter form, but only with the common gender *mulig*. Despite the subject relative clause, however, the dependent clause is an impersonal predicative sentence, hence the expletive insertion (personal communication, April 26, 2022).⁹

On the whole, the two sentences with a fronted predicate receive rather low scores; at best they are seen as questionable which indicates that SF-like fronting of predicative adjectives is heavily degraded in Danish.

4.1.4 Stylistic fronting of participles and particles

The last group of elements to look at is that of past participles and particles. Table 5 below presents the results regarding the last category in Maling's hierarchy (in Icelandic, stylistic fronting of either element would be equally acceptable):

Table 5: Fronting of participles and particles

			Ja	?	Nej
(34)	a.	I samlingen indgår også de næsten 300 år	56	6	2
		in collection.the included also the almost 300 year			
		gamle myrter, som ___ er kommet frem i			
		old myrtles that have come forward into			
		lyset efter at have levet i de kongelige driverier.			
		light.the after to have lived in the royal greenhouses			

⁹ In light of this, whether (33) should be considered an instance of SF is questionable, as it arguably violates the subject gap condition. The Icelandic version would, however, display a subject gap which can be filled in by the fronting of the predicative adjective:

- (1) a. Hann er maður sem ___ er hægt að treysta á.
 b. Hann er maður sem hægt er að treysta á.

	b.	I samlingen indgår også de næsten 300 år in collection.the included also the almost 300 year gamle myrter, som frem er kommet i old myrtles that forward have come into lyset efter at have levet i de kongelige driverier. light.the after to have lived in the royal greenhouses	1	21	42
	c.	I samlingen indgår også de næsten 300 år in collection.the included also the almost 300 year gamle myrter som kommet er frem i old myrtles that come have forward into lyset efter at have levet i de kongelige driverier. light.the after to have lived in the royal greenhouses	2	6	56
(35)	a.	Så var der høstgudstjeneste i kirken, hvor __ so was there harvest service in church.the where blev takket for høsten. was thanked for harvest.the	0	12	52
	b.	Så var der høstgudstjeneste i kirken, hvor so was there harvest service in church.the where takket blev for høsten. thanked was for harvest.the	1	18	45
	c.	Så var der høstgudstjeneste i kirken, hvor so was there harvest service in church.the where der blev takket for høsten. there was thanked for harvest.the	64	0	0

In (34b) and (34c) examples of a fronted participle and a verbal participle are given respectively. Among the Danish speakers, they receive negative judgements; only one participant accepts the fronting of the participle and some 21 speakers put a question mark while two speakers consider the sentence with the fronted participle grammatical. Example (35b), where the participle fills in the subject gap, similarly receives low scores, although one participant accepts it as a well-formed sentence.

Table 6 shows experiments with SF of participles in various other environments:

Table 6: *Fronting of participles in wh-extraction clauses, relative clauses and at-clauses*

		Ja	?	Nej
(36)	Butiksassistenten ved ikke hvem lagt havde shop assistant.the knows not who put had smykkerne i indkøbsvognen. jewellery in trolley.the	0	8	56
(37)	Hvem tror du __ stjålet har cyklen? who think you stolen has bicycle	2	5	57

(38)	Ingen af de fire ved, hvem smadret har none of the four know who broken has ruderne på deres skole. window panes.the at their school	0	8	56
(39)	Det var i Assens, hvor bygget blev nyt hus it was in Assens where built was new house med udstilling og værksted. with exhibition hall and workshop	0	11	53
(40)	Engang i tresserne tog partiledelsen once in sixties.the took partyleadership.the initiativ til, at dannet blev retspolitiske initiative in to formed were legal policy udvalg i kredsorganisationerne. committees in local organisations.the	0	16	48
(41)	De ville vide hvad drøftet blev i they wanted know what discussed was at konferencen. conference.the	1	10	53
(42)	Alle vidste at stjålet havde blevet smør. everyone knew that stolen had been butter	0	7	57

As expected, the fronted participle is not well received in *at*-clauses, *wh*-extraction clauses, and subject relative clauses. The majority of the speakers fully reject all the examples or estimate them questionable at best.

4.1.4 Interim summary

The classical examples of fronted participles, particles and predicative adjectives corresponding to SF in Icelandic are fully rejected by most of the Danish participants. Occasional instances of fronted elements receiving higher acceptability rates can be found, but they are nonetheless quite sporadic, and no stringent patterns could be established as to why these elements could be subject to SF. While some speakers view them as possible alternatives in certain syntactic environments the same syntactic operations is rejected in others. In most cases, Danish seems to avoid leaving subject gaps open in relative clauses, while they are permitted in *wh*-extraction clauses (although expletive inversion is obviously preferred by all speakers).

4.2 SF in Norwegian

The Norwegian dialect material gathered in two corpora, LIA corpus¹⁰ and the Nordic Dialect Corpus¹¹, provides some examples of SF-like orders in Norwegian dialects. As the LIA corpus includes older dialect recordings (made between 1937 and the 1990's), there are more such examples in the corpus, compared to the Nordic Dialect Corpus (containing recordings made between 1998 – 2015). The pattern is however quite clear: in both corpora the SF-like

¹⁰ <https://tekstlab.uio.no/LIA/korpus.html>

¹¹ <https://www.hf.uio.no/iln/tjenester/kunnskap/sprak/korpus/talesprakskorpus/nordisk-dialekt/index.html>

constructions imply fronting of a predicative adjective or an infinite verb in mediopassive in a short relative clause, like *som sant er* (lit. which true is), *som sant var* (lit. which true was), *som sagt er* (lit. which said is), *som laust var* (lit. which loose was), *som betre er* (lit. which better is), *som oftast er* (lit. which most-often is), *som naturleg var* (lit. which natural was), *som vanleg var* (lit. which usual was), *som gjerast kan* (lit. which be-done can), *som tenkjast kunne* (lit. which be-thought could), *som verre er* (lit. which worse is). One interesting case is the fronting of an adverb uttered by a male informant from Åsnes (the county of Innlandet in Eastern Norway) born in 1897, recorded in 1971, see the example in (43) below:

- (43) fe denn somm **messt** er ___ i bruk ennå, de er
 for that which most is in use still it is
 dønn såkallte kasstemassjin
 that so-called throwing-machine
 ‘Beacuse the one that is mostly still in use, it is the so called throwing machine.’

In other Norwegian corpora, as the TAUS corpus including Oslo speech from the 1970’s, one will find two examples of the phrase *som verre er* (lit. which worse is) uttered by two younger informants, one by a 22 year old male from eastern Oslo and one by a 24 year old female from western Oslo. The same phrase is found in the quite big (700 M tokens) NOWAC corpus giving 692 hits for “som verre er” (lit. which worse is) and 93 hits for “som verre var” (lit. which worse was). On Google, the phrase *som verre er* gives 172 000 hits and the phrase *som er verre* 801 000 hits.

In order to obtain elicited data on Stylistic Fronting in Norwegian, we replicated the survey made by Tallai (2022) for Danish on 24 Norwegian informants aged between 19 and over 60. The majority of the informants were aged 19-49 (18 respondents between 19-29 and 5 respondents between 30-49) and one was over 60. The test sentences used were the translations of the Danish sentences in Tallai’s (2022) survey. For each sentence, there were three possible responses: (Ja) *Sånn kan jeg si det.* (Yes. I could say like that), (?) *Tvilsom formuleringsmåte* (A doubtful way of expression), and (Nei) *Setninga er grammatisk feil.* (No. The sentence is ungrammatical). The results are divided in the following parts: (1) acceptance of Stylistic Fronting of predicative adjectives, past participles and verbal particles, (2) acceptance of different types of subject gaps in subordinate clauses vs. expletive inversion, (3) acceptance of fronted NP’s, and (4) acceptance of postverbal adverb placement in relative clauses.

4.2.1 Fronting of predicative adjectives, past participles and verbal particles

Since the older dialect examples mentioned above (and in section 1) most often consist of predicative adjectives and nonfinite verbs in relative clauses, we have tested such examples as well as an example of verb particle fronting. The results are shown below.

Table 7: *Fronting of predicative adjectives in subordinate clauses in Norwegian*

		Ja	?	Nej
(44)	a. Det er bevis på at det er best å bo så langt there is evidence for that it is best to live in the mot nordøst i Norge, hvis man helst vil far northeast of Norway if one rather wants ha så mye snø som mulig. have as much snow as possible	12	10	2
	b. Det er bevis på at __ er best å bo så langt there is evidence for that is best to live in the mot nordøst i Norge, hvis man helst vil far northeast of Norway if one rather wants ha så mye snø som mulig. have as much snow as possible	2	2	20
	c. Det er bevis på at best er å bo så langt there is evidence for that best is to live in the mot nordøst i Norge, hvis man helst vil far northeast of Norway if one rather wants ha så mye snø som mulig. have as much snow as possible	1	2	21
(45)	a. Han er en mann som det er mulig å stole på. he is a man that it is possible to rely on	23	1	0
	b. Han er en mann som __ er mulig å stole på. he is a man that is possible to rely on	12	7	5
	c. Han er en mann som mulig er å stole på. he is a man that possible is to rely on	2	4	18

Table 8: *Fronting of participles and verb particles in subordinate clauses in Norwegian*

(46)	a. I samlinga inngår også de nesten 300 år in collection.the included also the almost 300 year gamle myrtene som __ er kommet fram old myrtles.the that have come forward i lyset etter å ha levd i de kongelige into light.the after to have lived in the royal drivhusa. greenhouses.the	24	0	0
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	b.	I samlinga inngår også de nesten 300 år gamle myrtene som fram er kommet i lyset etter å ha levd i de kongelige drivhusa. greenhouses.the	0	8	16
	c.	I samlinga inngår også de nesten 300 år gamle myrtene som kommet er fram i lyset etter å ha levd i de kongelige drivhusa. greenhouses.the	0	0	24
(47)	a.	Så var det høstgudstjeneste i kirka, hvor__ ble takka for høsten. where was thanked for harvest.the	0	1	23
	b.	Så var det høstgudstjeneste i kirka, hvor takka ble for høsten. where thanked was for harvest.the	0	2	22
	c.	Så var det høstgudstjeneste i kirka, hvor det ble takka for høsten. where there was thanked for harvest.the	24	0	0
(48)		Butikkmedarbeideren vet ikke hvem lagt hadde smykkene i handlekurven. jewellery.the in trolley.he	0	2	22
(49)		Hvem tror du stjålet har sykkel? who think you stolen has bicycle	0	0	24
(50)		Ingen av de fire vet hvem smadra har rutene på skolen deres. window panes.the at school.the their	0	0	24
(51)		Det var i Assens hvor bygd ble nytt hus med utstilling og verksted. with exhibition hall and workshop	0	0	24

(52)	En gang på 1960-tallet tok partiledelsen once in sixties.the took party leadership.the initiativ til at danna ble rettspolitiske initiative in to formed were legal policy utvalg i kretsorganisasjonene. committees in local organisations.the	0	2	22
(53)	De ville vite hva drøfta ble på they wanted know what discussed was at konferansen. conference.the	0	2	22
(54)	Alle visste at stjålet hadde vært smør. everyone knew that stolen had been butter	0	1	23

As one can see, the SF of the predicative “best” is mostly rejected, although two informants judge it as marginally possible, and one informant even accepts it. Also a subject gap in the same sentence is accepted by two informants and not fully rejected by another two, but we think this may depend on the fact that the expletive *det* is phonetically reduced in this environment, being realized as a single dental, which is difficult to separate from the /t/ in *at: at det er* [at: t e(:)] > [at: e(:)]. Fronting of the verb particle *fram* is judged as marginally possible by 8 out of 24 informants, a surprisingly high number, while fronting on nonfinite verbs are almost completely rejected. Subject gap with the predicative *mulig* is judged as fully possible, but as Norwegian does not display any morphological difference between masculine, feminine and neutral singular form of the adjective *mulig* ‘possible’, the reading of the sentence is ‘who is possible.MASC to rely on’ and hence the sentence is judged as grammatical. In sum, there is no evidence for SF in the above-mentioned contexts being productive; at best it is not fully rejected.

4.2.2 Subject gaps in subordinate clauses vs. expletive insertion

Subject gaps have been tested in embedded *wh*-questions and in *that*-clauses together with corresponding sentences without subject gap. The results are shown in Table 9 below.

Table 9: *Subject gaps in different types of subordinate clauses*

		Ja	?	Nej
(55)	a. Butikkmedarbeideren vet ikke hvem __ hadde shop assistant.the knows not who had lagt smykkene i handlekurven. put jewellery.the in trolley.the	1	5	18
	b. Butikkmedarbeideren vet ikke hvem som hadde shop assistant.the knows not who that had lagt smykkene i handlekurven. put jewellery.the in trolley.the	23	1	0

(56)	a.	Ingen av de fire vet hvem ___ har smadra none of the four know who has broken rutene på skolen deres. window panes.the at school.the their	1	5	17
	b.	Ingen av de fire vet hvem som har smadra none of the four know who that has broken rutene på skolen deres. window panes.the at school.the their	24	0	0
(57)	a.	Indonesia er det landet hvor ___ lever det største Indonesia is the country where live the greatest antallet muslimer. number Muslims	0	0	24
	b.	Indonesia er det landet hvor det lever det Indonesia is the country where there live the største antallet muslimer. greatest number Muslims	16	6	2
(58)	a.	Alle visste at ___ hadde vært stjålet smør. everyone knew that had been stolen butter	0	1	23
	b.	Alle visste at det hadde vært stjålet smør. everyone knew that there had been stolen butter	24	0	0
(59)	a.	World Wildlife Fund sørga for at ___ ble World Wildlife Fund arranged for that was oppretta et naturreservat i Coto Donana. established a nature reserve in Coto Donana	1	0	23
	b.	World Wildlife Fund sørga for at det ble World Wildlife Fund arranged for that there was oppretta et naturreservat i Coto Donana. established a nature reserve in Coto Donana	23	1	0
(60)	a.	Hun har alltid visst at ___ lå et langt she has always known that was a long arbeidsliv foran henne. career before her	0	1	23
	b.	Hun har alltid visst at det lå et langt she has always known that there was a long arbeidsliv foran henne. career before her	22	1	1

Subject gaps in both embedded *wh*-questions and *that*-clauses are generally rejected by the informants, although some of them do not completely reject subject gaps in one of the embedded questions, see the example (*Ingen av de fire vet hvem ___ har smadra rutene på skolen deres*) above and one even accepts the subject gap there.

4.2.3 Fronting of NPs

Fronting of NPs has been tested in one embedded *wh*-question and two *that*-clauses, see Table 10 below.

Table 10: *Fronting of NPs*

		Ja	?	Nej
(61)	Indonesia er det landet hvor detstørste Indonesia is the country where the greatest antallet muslimer lever. number Muslims live	20	3	1
(62)	World Wildlife Fund sørga for at World Wildlife Fund arranged for that et naturreservat ble oppretta i Coto Donana. a nature reserve was established in Coto Donana	22	1	1
(63)	Hun har alltid visst at et langt arbeidsliv she has always known that a long career lå foran henne. was before her	22	1	1

Both definite and indefinite NPs can be placed between the complementizer and the finite verb in Norwegian, according to our informants. The scores are very similar, although the first example, fronting of an definite NP in an embedded *wh*-question, is judged as questionable by a few more informants, compared to the rest.

4.2.4 Placement of finite verb and adverb in embedded context

Finally, we tested the placement of adverbs in embedded clauses in non-V2 contexts, in order to see if the subject gap can be empty and if the sentential adverb can be placed post verbally (such postverbal placement in embedded non-V2 contexts is known from Norwegian dialects of the 20th century, cf. Garbacz 2013:75).

Table 11: *Verb-adverb placement in Norwegian*

		Ja	?	Nej
(64) a.	Han kunne se at her var det en stor idé he could see that here was there a great idea som ikke var blitt realisert riktig. that not had been implemented correctly	21	2	1
b.	Han kunne se at her var det en stor idé he could see that here was there a great idea som ble ikke realisert riktig. that was not implemented correctly	3	2	19

c.	Han kunne se at her var det en stor idé	1	7	16
	he could see that here was there a great idea			
	som det ikke ble realisert riktig.			
	that which not was implemented correctly			
d.	Han kunne se at her var det en stor idé	1	0	23
	he could see that here was there a great idea			
	som det ble ikke realisert riktig.			
	that which was not implemented correctly			

The results show that both the postverbal placement of the adverb and the unfilled subject gap are ungrammatical for the majority of informants, although the sentence in (*Han kunne se at her var det en stor idé som ___ ble ikke realisert riktig.*) gets a surprisingly high number of accepts (three out of 24) and two (out of 24) judgements as marginally possible.

4.2.5 Summary of the Norwegian judgment data

The results above clearly show that Stylistic Fronting of non-finite verbs is not grammatical for our Norwegian informants, all but one aged between 19 and 49. Fronting of a predicative (tested on only one example) has the highest number of accepts (that is one) and fronting of a verb particle is judged by as many as one third of the informants as marginally possible. The corpus data show on the other hand, that fronted predicatives are to some extent present in today's dialects and the spoken language, although they seem to be mostly frozen expressions. As for the embedded V_{fin}-ADV word order, these are not accepted in non-V2 contexts, neither are subject gaps in embedded *wh*-questions and *that*-clauses. The picture that emerges from the judgment data is coherent with the broadly accepted picture on Norwegian syntax with respect to SF, embedded word order and omission of non-referential subjects and the possibility of omitting the resumptive *som* in an embedded *wh*-clause.

4.3 SF in Swedish

In line with the data presented in Engdahl (2012) the phrase “om så sker” and similar phrases with the subjunction *om*, the adverb *så* ‘so’ and a finite verb in absence of an overt subject are numerous (more than 570 examples in a corpus collection containing 243 M tokens¹²). Otherwise, the same corpus gives no examples of fronted non-finite verbs or verb particles, with the exception of the psalm citation “som liten är” “who small am” (Psalm 493).¹³ Fronting of prepositional phrases is common, but these function mostly as time and manner adverbs and can as such be placed preverbally in Swedish embedded clauses. No instances of fronting of a prepositional phrase denoting a location, like “in Israel, in Sweden, in Stockholm” and alike was found either. The Swedish part of the Nordic Dialect Corpus is quite small (370 000) tokens, and it does not render any examples of frozen SF-expressions.

¹² <https://spraakbanken.gu.se/korp/>

¹³ The first verse of the rhymed psalm says: *Gud som haver barnen kär, se till mig som liten är. Vart jag mig i världen vänder, står min lycka i Guds händer. Lyckan kommer, lyckan går, du förbliver, Fader vår.*

Interestingly, the very small (34 000 tokens) corpus of Estonian Swedish¹⁴ has some examples of (the rests of) Stylistic Fronting.

- (65) a. he var båra GaL-Marri såmm ässenda sto itti grinndi
 it was only Old-Mari who alone stood in gate.DEF
 ‘It was only Old Mary who stood alone in the gate.’
- b. drikkstunnan somm **fårr** var kLargjord
 drinking.barrel that before was prepared
 ‘the drinking barrel that had been prepared before’
- c. å no skulld ja gjant ha vela vara mä tåmm båna
 and surely should I happily have wished be with the kids
 somm **neafårre TaLLma** hålt teLte pLassk e vattne
 who below Talma hold on to splash in water.DEF
 ‘And now I had wished to be together with these kids, who lived close to Talma, to splash with them in the water.’

We have not been able to conduct a survey on the acceptance of Stylistic Fronting in Swedish, but the data from Swedish corpora show clearly that the SF-like constructions are restricted to the phrase “om så sker” (lit. if so happens) and its variants. Peripheral varieties of East Scandinavian, like Estonian Swedish and Övdalian, seem on the other hand to have had the possibility of fronting, both of phrases and of heads until the 20th century. The possibility no longer exists in Övdalian, while Estonian Swedish is virtually extinct by now.

5 Conclusion

The sharp border between Icelandic and the Mainland Scandinavian languages when it comes to SF seems to be less sharp in the light of our results. We have not only found a number of SF-like constructions in the Mainland Scandinavian languages (or found out that these can be judged as marginally possible), but we also have found instances of Stylistic Fronting of different elements, both heads and phrases in older Norwegian dialect material and in a corpus of Estonian Swedish.

The existence of Stylistic Fronting has been indirectly attributed to verbal morphology (e.g. Holmberg 2010 traces the possibility of SF back on ϕ -features in T). Hence, the loss of Stylistic Fronting has been attributed to changes in verbal morphology, explicitly by Falk (1993: 184 f.) and indirectly by Holmberg (2010:35). Under these approaches, SF should not be possible in Scandinavian languages that do not have rich verbal morphology, i.e. verb agreement in person and number. Still, we find instances of Stylistic Fronting in Norwegian dialects from the 19th and early 20th century and in Estonian Swedish.¹⁵ Neither of the

¹⁴ <https://www.hf.uio.no/iln/om/organisasjon/tekstlab/prosjekter/estlandssvenska/>

¹⁵ A number of examples of SF-like constructions from Norwegian dialects of the 20th century is also given by Sandøy & Nesse (2016:362 f.).

languages had at this time rich verb agreement (Sandøy & Nesse 2016:262 ff. on Norwegian and Rosenkvist 2018:25 on Estonian Swedish). The diachronic link between SF and verbal agreement has been criticized by Sundquist (2002) and the data presented above are yet another counterevidence to this assumed connection.

The parametric approach to Scandinavian syntax has resulted in drawing a sharp line between Insular Scandinavian and Mainland Scandinavian (Holmberg & Platzack 1995). The number of syntactic differences between the two language groups has been discussed since then and claims have been made that some of the assumed differences are not as clear as one would like them to be. Angantýsson (2001 and subsequent works) has shown that Icelandic does display the Mainland Scandinavian word order under certain circumstances, Garbacz (2013) has given examples from Norwegian, Swedish and Danish dialects of embedded V_{fin}-ADV word order in non V2-contexts, whereas Håkansson (2017:279) has pointed out that “factors such as verb movement and verbal agreement (...) appear to be completely irrelevant to the presence of transitive expletives in Swedish, and it thus seems doubtful whether these constructions can be included in a morphology-driven parametric approach to language variation and change.” It has also been shown that changes in syntax between Old Scandinavian and modern Mainland Scandinavian are difficult to attribute directly to morphology, one of the clearest examples being Sundquist (2002).

Some other scholars have pointed out the importance of language external factors in syntactic change. One of the most interesting recent examples is van der Feest Viðarsson (2019) who showed that the embedded V3 word order (ADV-V_{fin}) was gaining ground in Icelandic from the 17th century until the mid-19th century, when the V_{fin}-ADV word order became the written norm in Icelandic (2019:58). An opposite development has taken place in Mainland Scandinavian (*ibid.* and therein cited works). In other words, the embedded V3 word order disappeared from Icelandic in the process of standardization. The situation with SF is to some extent similar: the instances of SF seem also to have been put outside of the written norm in Mainland Scandinavian, at the same time as SF seems to have been chosen as a part of the written norm in Icelandic.

There are a few other similar examples of external factors playing a role: transitive expletives in Swedish have been considered to be instances of German influence, as Håkansson (2017:279) points out, the spread of ADV-V_{fin} embedded word order in Swedish started in the spoken language within the upper class to later on become a marker of the written language (Håkansson 2011:131-134) and the omission of finite auxiliary *ha* ‘have’ in Swedish embedded clauses has started as a spoken language phenomenon in the end of the 17th century to become a marker of written formal language (Håkansson 2011:134, Bäckström 2020: 153 f.).

It may seem that many of the syntactic differences between Icelandic and Mainland Scandinavian have been strengthened during the process of standardization in the 19th century and that the syntactic structures of Mainland Scandinavian and Icelandic in the period between the 17th and the 19th century were much more similar to each other than they are today. The syntactic differences may have emerged due to a conscious process of differentiating the languages from each other rather than to language-internal factors such as e.g. verbal agreement (or morphology in general). If this line of reasoning is correct, it would also explain why the attempts to connect syntax and morphology in Scandinavian languages, e.g. Falk (1993), Platzack & Holmberg (1995), Rohrbacher (1999), Holmberg (2010), Koenenman & Zeijlstra

(2014) and many others have turned out to be difficult to defend in the light of new data: the syntactic differences are also reflexes of more or less conscious language policy and planning, not only of pure language-internal processes.

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