

## Variation in Mainland Scandinavian Object Shift: A prosodic analysis

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**Issue.** Despite a long research history, there are still ongoing debates on the ‘correct’ analysis of Object Shift (OS) in Mainland Scandinavian (MSc). Despite many efforts, all syntactic and information-structural accounts have run into empirical/and or conceptual problems. We argue that this debate can be resolved by recognizing that OS is, in fact, a prosodic phenomenon. Our analysis builds on the observation that varieties with optional OS (most Swedish dialects, southern Danish dialects (e.g. *Ærø* dialect)) also have a tone accent contrast. We argue that the in-situ word order in these varieties is licensed because tonal accent creates a prosodic domain that makes the incorporation of weak pronouns possible.

**Data.** Pronominal OS in the Mainland Scandinavian languages refers to the placement of a weak object pronoun to the left of an adverb (1a), instead of in the canonical position for objects to the right of the sentence adverb (1b).

- (1) a. *Jeg mødte ham ikke.* Standard Danish  
I met him not  
b. \**Jeg mødte ikke ham.*  
I met not him  
'I didn't meet him.'

**Analysis.** Weak pronouns must prosodically incorporate (e.g. Selkirk, 1996). Verbs, Prepositions (and in MSc also Nouns) are legitimate hosts for incorporation, adverbs are typically not. Following Chomsky (2001, 2004), we propose that adverbs are adjoined on a separate plane (‘3D-adjoined’). Using Match Theory (Selkirk, 2009, 2011), we linearize 3D-adjoined adverbs as part of Spell Out, which predicts that phonological considerations can influence the linearization of adverbs. In addition to an alignment constraint LEFTMOST that linearizes the adverb leftmost in an IP (but not higher than TP, following from interactions with word order constraints), following Åfarli, 2010 we propose the constraint \*MULTIPLE in (2) to account for the preference of pronouns to be incorporated into a host from the same syntactic dimension. This is why adverbs are dispreferred hosts, which in turn causes OS.

- (2) \*MULTIPLE: Assign one violation mark for every prosodic word that contains elements from different dimensions of the syntactic representation.

We argue that OS is optional in some varieties with tonal accent because prosodic phrasing is influenced by the presence of tonal accent; the unifying character of tonal accent makes it possible to incorporate a weak pronoun from one dimension into a preceding tone-accent adverb from another dimension. In the OT analysis developed here, this means that the constraint \*MULTIPLE, which outranks LEFTMOST in dialects with obligatory OS, becomes violable. Since OS is optional, however, the analysis also has to incorporate the possibility of shift. We achieve the desired result by arguing that in *Ærø* Danish and Swedish, \*MULTIPLE and LEFTMOST (the OT constraint which aligns adverbs to the left, rendering the non-shifted default order with full DPs) are unranked, which correctly derives both shifted and unshifted candidates as legitimate output forms. In that sense, tonal accent is best understood as an enabling property because of its unifying character, rather than a direct force acting in the grammar. This captures Haugen’s (1967: 198) observation that “tone serves to join successive elements more closely than would otherwise be the case”; it also correctly predicts that not all varieties with tonal accent will necessarily have optional OS (like most Norwegian dialects).

Our proposal accounts for Holmberg’s generalization and also explains seeming exceptions: Both the Lolland-Faster Danish dialect and Fenno-Swedish have been noted to allow the unshifted order although they do not have tonal accent. As it turns out, Lolland-Faster Danish allows this order only when the adverb itself is a clitic and forms a clitic cluster with the pronoun, and in the Fenno-Swedish, weak pronouns are fully pronounced and therefore do not require incorporation.