

On the Syntax of Verbal Mood and LDR in Icelandic

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Background Verbal mood alternation as well as long-distance (i.e. non-clause-bounded) reflexivisation (LDR) must be syntactically restricted in some way, since they are subject to parametric variation, cf. (1-a vs. b) and (2-a vs. b).

(1) Mood choice under non-factive sentence embedders

- a. Jón segir að jörðin *er/sé flöt.
John says that earth.DEF is.IND/SBJV flat
'John says that the earth is flat.'

Icelandic
(Sigurðsson 1990: 323)

- b. Johannes sagt, dass die Erde flach ist/sei.
John says that the earth flat is.IND/SBJV
'John says that the earth is flat.'

German

(2) Immediate LDR from concessive adverbial clauses

- a. María_i er hér enn þó að ég skammi *sig_i/hana_i.
Mary is here still although that I scold.SBJV REFL.ACC/her
'Mary_i is still here although I scold her_i.'

Icelandic
(see Sigurðsson 1990: 311)

- b. Hann_i elskar Fríðu, sjálvt um henni ikki damar seg_i/hann_i.
he loves Frída even though she not likes REFL/him
'He_i loves Frída although she doesn't like him_i.'

(a dialect of) Faroese
(see Strahan 2009: 129)

In Icelandic, the syntactic restrictedness of both phenomena is evident from various syntactic interactions. The verbal mood of an adverbial clause, for example, may determine what negation can scope over: the subjunctive in (3) forces a reading where negation scopes over the adverbial. Since scope differences are attributed to differences in syntactic structure (May 1977; Reinhart 1978), these data provide insights into the syntactic constraints on mood choice. LDR from most types of adverbial clauses in Icelandic is peculiar (compared to e.g. Faroese) in that it seems to obey a certain antilocality constraint: While the subject of the immediately embedding clause is not a possible antecedent for the reflexive, (2-a), the subject of a higher predicate selecting a complement clause containing the adverbial is, see (4).

- (3) Jón fór ekki af því að hann var/væri reiður.
John left not of that.DAT that he was.IND/SBJV angry
John didn't leave because he was angry.'

(see Sigurðsson 1990: 327)

- a. 'John did not leave, and the reason for that was that he was angry.
b. 'John left, but the reason for that was not that he was angry.'

← **Indicative**
← **Subjunctive**/(Indicative)

- (4) Ólafur_i segir að María sé hér enn þó að ég skammi sig_i/hann_i.
Olaf says that Mary is.SBJV here still although that I scold.SBJV REFL.ACC/him
'Olaf says that Mary is still here although I scold him.'

(see Sigurðsson 1990: 311)

Furthermore, since Thráinsson (1976) it has been a well-known observation that LDR in Icelandic is mainly restricted to subjunctive distributions (although subjunctive is not a sufficient condition for LDR, see (4)), which can be observed especially in connection with the *Domino Effect* (ibid.) or rather its absence. This has been interpreted either as a direct syntactic connection between the subjunctive and LDR (e.g. Anderson 1986; Pica 1987; Reuland and Sigurjónsdóttir 1997; Reuland 2001) or as subjunctive being a semantic/pragmatic licensing condition for logophoricity or at least a marker of it (e.g. Thráinsson 1990; Sells 1987; McKeown 2013; Charnavel and Sportiche 2017). Both of these views are challenged by the observation that there are speakers of Icelandic who systematically allow LDR with indicative complements of certain semifactive verbs, see (5), although they still systematically differentiate between indicative and subjunctive mood.

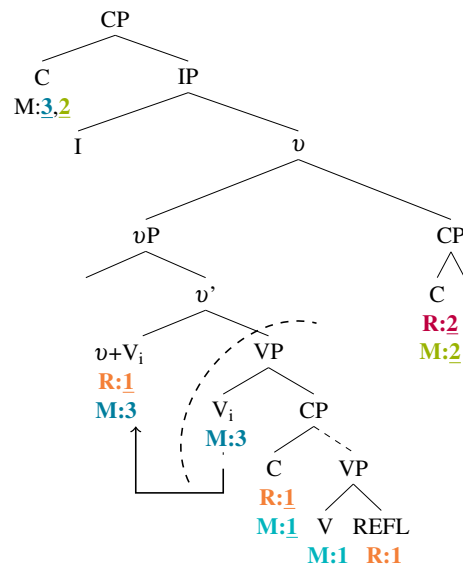
- (5) Jón_i veit að María elskar sig_i/hann_i.
 John knows that Mary loves.IND REFL/him.
 ‘John_i knows that Mary loves him_i.’

(see Sigurðsson 1990: 313)

Such data suggest that the apparent connection between the subjunctive and LDR in Icelandic is of a more indirect but still systematic nature, resulting from the respective syntactic configuration of the two separate phenomena, the exact description of which remains to be determined.

Contribution I will argue, first, for considering the subjunctive mood as a morphosemantic reflex of default valuation in syntax, and, second, for thinking of local and long-distance reflexivisation as the single phenomenon of reflexivising predicates, and I will demonstrate how this view identifies the apparent restriction of LDR to subjunctive distributions in Icelandic as an epiphenomenon: it arises from the fact that subjunctive marks one kind of dependency, while LDR presupposes another, the two kinds of dependency being only partially congruent in distribution. The proposed formalism derives dependent mood choice (1-a) and interactions with negational scope (3), the *Domino Effect*, the confined occurrence of immediate LDR from adverbial clauses (4) and the aforementioned dialectal variation wrt LDR with semifactives (5).

Sketch of the formalism Indicative morphology is the result of a feature on a verbal head valuing, via cyclic Agree (Legate 2005), a mood feature (M:_) on the C-head of the root. In order (6) for a reflexive pronoun to establish a reflexive predicate (and thus induce coreference with its subject), it must value a reflexive feature (R:_) on the respective *v*, for LDR via cyclic Agree. Possible and impossible agreement paths are sketched in the simplified structure in (6). Cyclic Agree is blocked (i) in the absence of c-command, (ii) if a c-commanding complementiser lexically lacks the required feature, or (iii) if a phase barrier intervenes. The latter can be circumvented by movement: either of the verbal head or by CP-raising with right adjunction. In the case of mood, blocked Agree leads to subjunctive morphology by default. Dialectal variation wrt reflexivisation of semifactives is derived from ‘timing’ effects resulting from ordered features (Koizumi 1995).



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