

On the Syntax of Adverbial Clauses in Icelandic

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Abstract

The goal of this paper is to provide a systematic overview and analysis of the syntax of Icelandic adverbial clauses in terms of whether they do or do not allow so-called main clause phenomena. The classification of adverbial clauses follows the typology of Haegeman (2012) where adverbial clauses are divided into two classes: central adverbial clauses that resist main clause phenomena and peripheral adverbial clauses that may permit such phenomena (XP-fronting etc.). It turns out that fronting is possible in a subset of adverbial clauses exactly as predicted by Haegeman's typology and such examples are found in both in judgement data and written sources. Further, this initial work shows that there appears to be a distinction between argument fronting (less free) and adjunct fronting (more free) in Icelandic and this is a distinction that has not previously been systematically examined.

1 Introduction¹

It has long been observed that adverbial clauses exhibit variable word order. In English for example, some adverbial clauses allow argument and adjunct topicalization whereas other resist such fronting. Here, we are concerned with similar word order variation in adverbial clauses in Icelandic primarily and data from other Scandinavian languages is presented briefly for comparative purposes. This paper is largely descriptive, however it can be taken as a first step towards a typology of adverbial clauses in Scandinavian more generally.

The framework adopted here is the typology of adverbial clauses set out in Haegeman (2012, and much previous work) where adverbial clauses are divided into two groups: those that allow main clause phenomena and those that do not. Further, Haegeman distinguishes between adverbial clauses that she terms 'peripheral' or 'central' to capture the degree of integration of adverbial clauses with respect to the clause that they modify. For Scandinavian verb second languages then, we might expect that adverbial clauses that are 'peripheral' in Haegeman's sense may allow main clause word order whereas such orders are resisted in central adverbial clauses. The second part of the paper presents an overview of Haegeman's typology as applied to adverbial clauses in English. The third part of the paper discusses data from both written and spoken Icelandic. In the fourth section, we provide comparative data from other Scandinavian languages showing that adverbial clauses can be analyzed with respect to the possibility of main clause phenomena as predicted by Haegeman's typology. This is followed by a short discussion.

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According to Haegeman's typology, central adverbial clauses (henceforth CACs) are those that disallow argument fronting in English while some permit adjunct fronting. Peripheral adverbial clauses on the other hand (henceforth PACs) allow both argument and adjunct fronting. The following table illustrates these two adverbial clause types.

Table 1: *Adverbial clause types (based on Haegeman 2012: 163, Table 4.3)*

CACs		PACs	
<i>before/after/until</i>	(event time)	--	
<i>when</i>	(event time)	<i>when</i>	(contrast)
<i>since</i>	(event time)	<i>since</i>	(premise/cause)
<i>while</i>	(event time)	<i>while</i>	(concessive)
<i>if</i>	(event condition)	<i>if</i>	(conditional assertion)
<i>although</i>	--	<i>although</i>	(concessive)
<i>whereas</i>	--	<i>whereas</i>	(concessive)
<i>so that</i>	purpose	result	
<i>because</i>	event cause/reason	rationale	

2 Adverbial clauses in English

The following examples show contrasts that hold for English where adverbial clauses that are CACs resist argument topicalization as in examples (1) to (5).

- (1) CAC a. I read her second book **before** I finished the first one.
 b. *I read her second book **before** the first one I finished.
- (2) CAC a. **When** she began to write her regular column again, I thought she would be OK.
 b. ***When** her regular column she began to write again, I thought she would be OK. (Haegeman 2012: 155, ex. 17a,b)
- (3) CAC a. **Since** I ate that fish, I have felt sick.
 b. ***Since** that fish I ate, I have felt sick.
- (4) CAC a. He looked at the headlines **while** he made the coffee.
 b. *He looked at the headlines **while** the coffee he made.
- (5) CAC a. I've been trying to finish this article **since** I wrote the previous one last year.
 b. *I've been trying to finish this article **since** the previous one I wrote last year.

In the following examples, which are all PACs by Haegeman's typology, argument fronting is possible.² Such adverbial clauses have readings such as contrast (6a,b) or premise (6c) rather than temporal readings.

- (6) PAC a. The students ordered new copies **when** the old ones they could easily have used.
 PAC b. **While** these problems Bill can't solve, I think Susan can.
 PAC c. **Since** these problems I can't solve on my own, I will need to ask them for help.

Conditional clauses that are event conditionals resist argument fronting as in (7a,b) whereas argument fronting is possible in so-called conditional assertions as in (7c).

- (7) CAC a. **If** you fail this exam, then you can't finish the course.
 CAC b. ***If** this exam you fail, then you can't finish the course.
 PAC c. **If** this particular exam Harold fails, why would he go on?

Concessive clauses freely allow argument fronting as shown in (7).

- (8) PAC I did not finish her second book **although/whereas** the first one I really enjoyed.

One of the clearest contrasts can be seen between purpose and result clauses. This is shown in the following examples where a contrast can be seen between purpose (CACs) and result clauses (PACs) as in (9a-c).

- (9) CAC a. I read her second book carefully **so that** I could understand the first one.
 CAC b. ??I read her second book carefully **so that** the first one I could understand.
 PAC c. I lost contact with my college friends **so that** most of them I never saw again.

In addition, purpose and result clauses in English can also be distinguished by so-called comma intonation as in (10).

- (10) PAC a. He hurried, so he wasn't late. *result*
 CAC b. He hurried so he wasn't late. *purpose*

² Not all speakers of English find topicalization acceptable in adverbial clauses. There are varieties of English where topicalization in general is more acceptable than it is in what can be termed General American English. Such varieties include Australian English, the Celtic Englishes, and Yiddish influenced New York English for instance.

3 Adverbial clauses in Icelandic

In general, adverbial clauses in Icelandic are known to be resistant to argument and adjunct fronting, but there are exceptions to this as noted in Rögnvaldsson and Thráinsson (1990:25), Magnússon (1990), and Angantýsson (2011), among others. However, examples of non-subject fronting in adverbial clauses provided by Rögnvaldsson and Thráinsson (1990), for instance, all seem to involve Stylistic Fronting, as Jónsson (1996:37) points out. Some examples of non-subject initial order in adverbial clauses taken from Rögnvaldsson and Thráinsson (1990:25) that involve stylistic fronting are given in (11).

- (11) a. **Þegar** komið var til Reykjavíkur ...
 when arrived was to Reykjavík ...
 ‘When one arrived to Reykjavík ...’
- b. **Ef** gengið er eftir Laugaveginum ...
 if walked is along the Laugavegur ...
 ‘If one walks along the Laugavegur ...’
- c. Ég fer, **nema** komið verði til móts við óskir mínar
 I leave, unless fulfilled will be my wishes
 ‘I will leave unless my wishes will be fulfilled’

However, given that stylistic fronting targets Fin on the border of the TP/CP domain as argued in Sigurðsson (2010), it should not be surprising that it appears to be quite free in adverbial clauses in Icelandic as the contrasts we are concerned with here in a subset of adverbial clauses, namely PACs, involve movement of non-subjects into the C-domain and do not involve a subject gap or low indefinite subject as stylistic fronting does.

Further observations have been made with respect to the resistance of fronting in adverbial clauses in Icelandic. For instance, Franco (2010:146) concludes that XP-initial order is not possible in adverbial clauses. Hrafnbjargarson and Wiklund (2009:28, examples (10b,c)) give the following examples to show that adjunct fronting is not possible in conditional and temporal clauses. Both examples are arguably CACs and therefore this is not unexpected.

- (12) CAC a. *Hann kemur bara heim **ef** á morgun hefur hann tíma til þess.
 he comes only home if tomorrow has he time to it
- CAC b. *Hann sá hana **þegar** í gær fór hún út.
 he saw her when yesterday went she out

However, there are extensive examples given in Magnússon (1990) that show fronting of arguments in adverbial clauses of various types. Not all speakers of Icelandic agree with Magnússon’s judgements, but we will take the data presented in his work as a starting point. Below is a range of examples all taken from Magnússon (1990) and each is classified by the authors as to whether the adverbial clause is a CAC or PAC and labeled as such.

- (13) CAC a. ?Skúli ætlar að útskrifast í júní **ef ritgerðina** getur hann klárað fyrir
event cond. Skúli plans to graduate in June if thesis-the can he finish before
 mánaðamótin.
 end-of-month-the
 ‘Skúli expects to graduate in June if he can finish the thesis before the
 end of the month.’ (p.102, 5-70a)
- premise* PAC b. **fyrst hurðina** getum við ekki opnað verðum við að brjóta gluggann
 since door-the can we not open must we to break window-the
 ‘Since we can't open the door, we will have to break the window.’
 (p.104,5-75,a)
- temporal* CAC c. ?Ég get ekkert skrifað **meðan hendina** verð ég að hafa í fatla.
 I can nothing write while hand-the must I to have in sling
 ‘I can't write while the hand is still in a sling.’ (p.107,5-86,a)
- temporal* CAC d. Það er langt **síðan þessar buxur** hef ég getað notað
 It is long since these trousers have I could used
 ‘I haven't been able to use these trousers for a long time’
 (p. 113,5-106,a)
- temporal* CAC e. Það leið ekki langur tími frá slysinu **uns fingurna**
 it passed not long time from accident-the until fingers-the
 gat ég farið að nota á ný.
 could I start to use again
 ‘It was not long since the accident until I was able to use (my) fingers.’
 (p.113,5-108,a)
- temporal* CAC f. ?Skúli ætlar að taka sér langt frí **þegar ritgerðinni**
 Skúli plans to take himself long pause when thesis-the
 verður hann búinn að skila.
 will he finished to submit
 ‘Skúli is going to take a long break when he is finished with the thesis.’
 (p. 114, 5-110,a)
- concessive* PAC g. Stína sagði að bókin í heild væri frekar leiðinleg
 Stína said that book-the in whole was rather boring
jafnvel þótt/þótt einstaka kafla gæti hún alveg hugsað sér
 although some chapters could she well think herself
 að lesa aftur.
 to read again
 ‘Stína said that the book as a whole was rather boring although she
 could imagine herself reading some selected chapters again.’
 (p.114, 5-112,14a)

In the following table, we contrast Magnússon's judgements with those of Angantýsson. First, Magnússon appears to accept more examples of CACs with argument fronting than with adjunct fronting, for instance for temporal clauses introduced by *síðan* 'since' and *uns* 'until', which is unexpected under our analysis and these examples are noted as highly questionable

here. In addition, he accepts argument fronting in PACs introduced by *fyrst* 'since' and *þótt* 'although' and this is entirely to be expected under the framework adopted here. When the judgements of Magnússon are compared with those of Angantýsson, we find a clear contrast. For Angantýsson, argument fronting is highly dispreferred for all the clauses discussed in the table (PACs and CACs) with the exception of concessive clauses (13g), and adjunct fronting is more acceptable, but not for all clauses where we might expect it to be so. Further judgement data collection must be done of course, but we can make a tentative initial conclusion here that there appears to be a contrast between the acceptability of adjunct and argument fronting, with adjunct fronting preferred. This is not surprising, as corpus examples of argument fronting in general in Icelandic embedded clauses are very difficult to find (Rögnvaldsson 2007).

Table 2: Comparison of data judgements in Magnússon (1990) with Angantýsson (2016)

		Magnússon (1990)		Angantýsson (2016)	
		Adjunct fronting	Argument fronting	Adjunct fronting	Argument fronting
<i>ef</i> 'if'	CAC	OK (5-70b,c)	? (5-70a)	OK (5-70b,c)	* (5-70a)
<i>fyrst</i> 'since' (premise)	PAC	? (5-75b)	OK (5-75a)	OK (5-75b)	* (5-75a)
<i>meðan</i> 'while'	CAC	? (5-86b)	? (5-86a)	? (5-86b)	* (5-86a)
<i>síðan</i> 'since' (temporal)	CAC	? (5-106b)	OK (5-106a)	* (5-106b)	? (5-106a)
<i>uns</i> 'until'	CAC	? (5-108b)	OK (5-108a)	* (5-108b)	? (5-108a)
<i>þegar</i> 'when'	CAC	? (5-110b)	? (5-110a)	* (5-110b)	* (5-110a)
<i>þótt</i> 'although'	PAC	OK (5-112b)	OK (5-112a)	OK (5-112b)	OK (5-112a)

Having said this, it is clear that there are examples of argument fronting in Icelandic adverbial clauses that are completely natural as shown in the example repeated below as (14) and taken from Magnússon (1990). The fronting of the argument *einstaka kafla* 'certain chapters' in the concessive clause is perfectly fine.

- (14) Stína sagði að bókin í heild væri frekar leiðinleg **jafnvel þótt/þótt**
 Stína said that book-the in whole was rather boring although
einstaka kafla gæti hún alveg hugsað sér að lesa aftur.
 some chapters could she well think herself to read again
 'Stína said that the book as a whole was rather boring although she could imagine
 herself reading some selected chapters again.'

(p.114, 5-112,14a)

In addition, a quick Google search immediately turns up a number of examples with adjunct fronting in clauses that are all arguably PACs. In the first example, we have a concessive clause, a result clause in the second, a *because* clause in the third, and finally a contrastive *while* clause. All of these clauses can be readily classified as PACs and thus the adjunct fronting that we find here is entirely to be expected. None of the fronting in these examples is due to stylistic fronting as each has a high definite subject.

- (15) a. Hann er mjög fagur og einkennilegur, þótt eigi sje hann
 he is very beautiful and strange although not is he
 vatnsmikill.
 water-much
 ‘He is very beautiful and strange although he is not very rich if water.’
 (*Unga Ísland* – 1905. árgangur 1905, 4. tölublað, Page 30)
- b. Þau settu upp fiskbúð við Sogavegin og raunar víðar,
 they set up fish store at Sogavegur and also other places, so
 svo að enn sóttu Reykvíkingar matvæli til þeirra hjóna
 so that still sought R.ers food to that couple
 ‘They established a fish store by Sogavegur and also in other places so that the
 inhabitants of Reykjavík still got food from them.’
 (*Morgunblaðið* - 3. nóvember 1993, 250. tölublað, Page 38)
- c. Gera þetta eins og var á sjöundu öld af því að þá var
 do this as was on the seventh century because then was
 gullöldin glæsilega.
 golden age-the magnificent
 ‘do this as they did on the seventh century because the magnificent golden age was
 then’ (*Fréttablaðið* - 16. January 2016, árgangur 2016, 13. tölublað, Page 90)
- d. Í ensku eru sterkbeygðar sagnir taldar óreglulegar, á meðan
 in English are strong verbs assumed irregular while
 í fornensku eru þær taldar reglulegar.
 in Old-English are they assumed regular
https://is.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%93regluleg_s%C3%B6gn

In the following sections we will examine Icelandic further and provide some comparative data from Faroese and other Scandinavian languages.

4 Main clause phenomena in central vs. peripheral adverbial clauses in Icelandic and related languages

In this section, we provide an overview of the possibility of argument fronting in central versus peripheral adverbial clauses in Icelandic, with some comparison to Faroese. These two closely related languages behave differently with respect to verb/adverb placement in embedded clauses in the way that subject-initial V2 is always the default word order in all types of embedded clauses in Icelandic whereas it is the marked option in embedded clauses in Faroese, to varying

degrees depending on the type of embedded clause (see Thráinsson et al. 2004, Thráinsson 2010, Bentzen et al. 2007, 2009, Heycock et al. 2010, 2012, and Angantýsson forthcoming). On the assumption that subject-initial V2 is a main clause phenomenon in Faroese, it is interesting to see if the two languages also vary with respect to the possibility of argument fronting in adverbial clauses or if the restrictions are similar.

First, we discuss Icelandic examples in (15–22) that are directly comparable to the English data that we discussed in section 2. Let us first consider argument fronting in temporal central adverbial clauses conjoined with *áður en* ‘before’ and *þegar* ‘when’ (15–16a/b) compared to such fronting in a contrastive peripheral adverbial clause conjoined with *á meðan* ‘while’ (16c):

- (16) CAC a. *Ég las aðra bókina hennar áður en ég kláraði þá fyrstu.*
temporal I read second book her before I finished the first one
 ‘I read her second book before I finished the first one.’
- b. **Ég las aðra bókina hennar áður en þá fyrstu kláraði ég.*
 I read second book her before the first one finished I
- (17) CAC a. *Þegar hún byrjaði að skrifa reglulega pistla aftur hélt ég*
temporal when she began to write regular column again thought I
að hún yrði ánægðari.
 that she would be more glad
 ‘I thought she would be more glad when she started to write her regular column again.’
- b. **Þegar reglulega pistla byrjaði hún að skrifa aftur hélt*
 when her regular column began she to write again thought
ég að hún yrði ánægðari.
 I that she would be more glad
- PAC c. *Stúdentarnir pöntuðu ný eintök á meðan þau gömlu hefðu þeir*
contrast the students ordered new copies when the old ones had they
auðveldlega getað notað.
 easily could used
 ‘The students ordered new copies when they could easily had used the old ones.’

The central temporal adverbials in (15b) and (16b) disallow argument fronting, as they did in English, while the peripheral contrastive adverbial in (16c) allows it. The central temporal clause conjoined with *síðan* ‘since’ in (17) also prohibits argument fronting and the contrastive peripheral is questionable. Similar holds true for the sentence pair in (18):

- (18) CAC a. *Síðan ég át þennan fisk hef ég verið lasinn.*
temporal since I ate that fish have I felt sick
 ‘I have felt sick since I ate this fish.’
- b. **Síðan þennan fisk át ég hef ég verið lasinn.*
 Since that fish ate I have I felt sick

PAC c. ?**Úr því að** þessi vandamál get ég ekki leyst verð ég
contrast since these problems can I not solve need I
 að biðja um hjálp.
 to ask for help
 ‘Since I cannot solve these problems I need to ask for help.’

(19) CAC a. *María sótti tíma **á meðan** ÞÍNA bók voru þeir að nota
temporal Mary attended classes while your book were they using
 en ekki á meðan MÍN var notuð
 but not while mine was used

PAC b. ?**Á meðan** ÞÍNA bók eru þeir að nota í tveimur námskeiðum
contrast while your book are they using in two courses
 hafa þeir ekki einu sinni pantað MÍNA á bókasafnið
 have they not even ordered mine at the library
 ‘While they are using your book in two courses they haven’t
 even ordered mine.’

In (20) we have *if*-clauses where argument fronting is not possible in the event conditional whereas it improves in the conditional assertive, although it is not perfect, at least not this particular example. The concessive adverbial clause in (21) allows argument fronting very easily and so does the purpose clause in (22b) as in the result clause in (23).

(20) CAC a. **Ef** þú fellur á þessu prófi geturðu ekki klárað námskeiðið.
event cond. if you fail on this exam can you not finish course-the
 ‘You cannot finish the course if you don’t pass the exam.’

b. ***Ef** á þessu prófi fellurðu geturðu ekki klárað námskeiðið.
 if this exam you fail, then you can’t finish the course

PAC c. ?**Ef** á þessu tiltekna prófi fellur Haraldur, af hverju ætti hann
cond. assertion if this exam fails Harald, why would he
 þá að halda áfram?
 then go on

(21) PAC Ég kláraði ekki aðra bókina hennar þó að fyrstu bókina hafi ég
concessive I finished not her second book although the first one had I
kunnað vel að meta.
 enjoyed well
 ‘I didn’t finish her second book although I really enjoyed the first one.’

(22) CAC a. Ég las aðra bókina hennar vandlega svo að ég gæti
purpose I read her second book carefully so that I could
 skilið þá fyrstu almennilega
 understand the first one properly
 ‘I read her second book carefully so that I could understand the first one
 properly.’

- b. Ég las aðra bókina hennar vandlega svo að þá fyrstu gæti ég
 I read her second book carefully so that the first one could I
 skilið almennilega.
 understand properly
- (23) PAC a. Ég missti samband við menntaskólavini mína svo að fæsta þeirra
result I lost contact with my college friends so that fewest of them
 sá ég aftur.
 saw I again
 ‘I lost contact with my college friends so that most of them I didn’t see
 again.’

Overall there is a clear contrast between central and peripheral clauses with respect to the possibility of argument fronting.

Now, consider V_{fin}-Adv order or subject-initial V3 which is restricted to certain types of embedded clauses in Icelandic, most typically relative clauses (see Angantýsson 2011). An interesting consequence of Haegeman’s analysis is the following: If the sentence types that prohibit Embedded Topicalization (relative clauses, indirect questions) are more likely to allow Adv-V_{fin} (V3) order in Icelandic than are complement clauses, as Angantýsson’s (2011) results indicate, then there should be a contrast between Adv-V_{fin} order in CACs and PACs in Icelandic. This seems to be borne out as the data in (24) show.

- (24) CAC a. Ef þú ekki nærð þessum prófum færðu ekki gráðuna
 (Adv-V_{fin}, V3) if you not pass these exams get.you not the.degree
 ‘If you don’t pass these exams you won’t get the degree.’
- PAC b. ?Ef við ekki getum gagnrýnt setningafræðigreininguna, getum við
 (Adv-V_{fin}, V3) if we not can criticize the syntactic analysis can we
 að minnsta kosti sagt helling um merkingarfræðigreininguna at
 ‘If we can’t criticize the syntactic analysis we can at least say something
 about the semantic analysis.’

Thus we see that Embedded Topicalization and Adv-V_{fin} V3 orders in Icelandic are, in a way, in “complementary distribution”. Further research is to be carried out in order to see if central vs. peripheral adverbial clauses show systematic differences in this respect.

We have no judgement data for the contrast between CACs and PACs in Icelandic yet, but new data from Faroese shows that there is a very clear contrast between argument fronting in CACs (table 3) and PACs (table 4) (judgements from 32 informants – a written questionnaire (Angantýsson, 2016):

Table 3: *Argument fronting in a Faroese CAC (conjoined with meðan ‘while’)*

	Yes	?	No
(25) <i>Maria lurtaði eftir útvarpinum, meðan hon gjørði døgurða.</i> Maria listened to radio-the while she made food-the	100%	0	0
(26) <i>Maria lurtaði eftir útvarpinum, meðan døgurða gjørði hon.</i> Maria listened to radio while food-the made she	0	0	100%

Table 4: *Argument fronting in a Faroese PAC (conjoined with meðan ‘while’)*

	Yes	?	No
(27) <i>Studentarnir bíløgdu nýggju útgávuna av bókini,</i> Students-the ordered the new edition of book-the <i>meðan teir lættliga høvdu kunnað brúkt ta gomlu.</i> while they easily had could used the old one	84.5%	15.5%	0
(28) <i>Studentarnir bíløgdu nýggju útgávuna av bókini,</i> Students-the ordered the new edition of book-the <i>meðan ta gomlu høvdu teir lættliga kunnað brúkt.</i> while the old one had they easily could used	25%	31%	44%

Not surprisingly, all the Faroese speakers reject embedded topicalization in the CAC (24) (Hooper & Thompson 1973 show the same for English and Vikner 1995 for the Mainland Scandinavian languages), but there is much more variation regarding embedded topicalization in the peripheral one where 8 speakers out of 32 fully accept the argument fronting (28). Argument fronting in a PAC conjoined with *hóast* ‘although’ is also possible for some Faroese speakers as shown in table 5:

Table 5: *Argument fronting in a Faroese PAC (conjoined with hóast ‘although’)*

	Yes	?	No
(29) <i>Eg kláraði ongantíð ta fyrstu bókina hjá henni,</i> I finished never the first book of her <i>hóast eg havi hildið seinnu bókina verið sera góða.</i> although I had thought the second book been very good	89.5%	3.5%	7%
(30) <i>Eg kláraði ongantíð ta fyrstu bókina hjá henni,</i> I finished never the first book of her <i>hóast seinnu bókina havi eg hildið verið sera góða.</i> although the second book had I thought been very good	24%	17%	59%

Finally, table 6 shows that adjunct fronting (33) is somewhat easier than argument fronting (32) in central adverbial clauses in Faroese (see discussions on this distinction in Icelandic in Jónsson 1996: 42–43):

Table 6: *Argument fronting vs. adjunct fronting in Faroese CACs (conjoined with meðan ‘while’)*

	Yes	?	No
(31) Poula arbeiðir í garðinum, meðan Andras bakar køkur í køkinum. Poula works in yard-the while Andras bakes cakes in kitchen-the	100%	0	0
(32) Poula arbeiðir í garðinum, meðan køkur bakar Andras í køkinum. Poula works in yard-the while cakes bakes Andras in kitchen-the	0	0	100%
(33) Poula arbeiðir í garðinum, meðan í køkinum bakar Andras køkur. Poula works in yard-the while in kitchen-the bakes Andras cakes	13%	26%	61%

This contrast also holds for written Faroese as shown by examples collected from the *Timarit.is* corpus (Jonas 2016). In Icelandic, the situation seems to be similar to Faroese in this respect although we still lack comparable judgement data.

Further comparative data from Övdalian is shown in table 7 (Angantýsson 2015):

Table 7: *Argument fronting in Övdalian PACs (conjoined with um ‘if’) – conditional assertion*

	Yes	?	No
(34) Um an ar aldri si’tt filmin ur beller an do ávå if he has never seen movie-the how can he then have nogu mieningg uman? some opinion about he ‘If he has never seen the movie how can he have any opinion of it?’	7	0	0
(35) <u>Um filmin</u> ar an aldri si’tt ur beller an do ávå an if movie-the has he never seen how can he then have he nogu mieningg um? some opinion about ‘If he has never seen the movie how can he have any opinion of it?’	0	1	6

Six out of seven Övdalian informants fully rejected the argument fronting whereas one speaker put a question mark (‘An odd sentence that I could hardly say’).

Finally, we see an example of argument fronting in Danish (Angantýsson 2011):

Table 8: *Argument fronting in Danish PACs (conjoined with hvis ‘if’) – conditional assertion*

	Yes	?	No
(36) <u>Hvis filmen</u> har han aldrig set hvordan kan han så if movie-the has he never seen how can he then udtale sig om den? express himself about it ‘If he has never seen the movie, how can he then comment on it?’	4%	58%	38%

Interestingly, the majority of the Danish informants (14 out of 26) put a question mark to argument fronting in a conditionally asserted PAC.

5 Concluding remarks

What we have found here can be seen to be an initial promising approach to word order variation in adverbial clauses when they are considered in the light of the typology argued for in Haegeman 2012 and much prior work. This appears to be a highly promising approach as a means of accounting for long observed word order variation in adverbial clauses – environments that are typically said to resist fronting of both arguments and adjuncts - in Icelandic and also in other Scandinavian languages although the latter work is more preliminary. As we have shown here, fronting is possible in a subset of adverbial clauses exactly as predicted by Haegeman's typology and such examples are both in judgement data and written sources. Further, this initial work shows that there appears to be a distinction between argument fronting (less free) and adjunct fronting (more free) in Icelandic and this distinction has not before been systematically examined. In future research, what we have found here can be supplemented by further work with speakers and this approach can be fruitfully extended to other Scandinavian varieties. However, it should be borne in mind that there may be individual speaker differences due to resistance to embedded topicalization in general, and, in addition to this, there may be age differences as shown in Angantýsson (2011:120) for other types of embedded clauses in Icelandic. The work presented here, however, is a start towards solving the long-standing question of word order variation in adverbial clauses.

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