

Why Object Shift does not exist in Övdalian*

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Abstract

I discuss the absence of Object Shift in Övdalian from the perspective of the Övdalian intonational properties by presenting experimental data of the constructions relevant to Övdalian non-Object Shift. I argue that the reason why Object Shift does not exist in Övdalian lies in the intonational properties peculiar to this Scandinavian variety that the final H peak occurs on the sentence-penultimate position in the short domains that consist of a main verb and the following weak element(s). I account for the fact that Övdalian is not subject to Holmberg's Generalization as follows: movement of a focus-accented main verb provides the sentence-penultimate position on which the final H peak occurs for the element immediately to its left; this forces weak object pronouns not to move across that element so that they themselves might not occupy the sentence-penultimate position.

1. Introduction

Object Shift OS is a movement phenomenon observed in the Scandinavian languages, where a weak, unstressed object pronoun moves across a sentential

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adverb like the negation (Holmberg 1986).¹ Below, the weak object pronouns, *henne* in Swedish (1a), *den* in Norwegian (1b), *ham* in Danish (1c), and *hann* in Icelandic (1d), all move across the negation.

- (1) a. Jag kysste henne inte [_{VP} kysste henne]. (Swe.)
 I kissed her not
 ‘I didn’t kiss her.’
- b. Jon sparket den ikke [_{VP} sparket den]. (Nor.)
 Jon kicked it not
 ‘Jon didn’t kick it.’
- c. Peter mødte ham ikke [_{VP} mødte ham]. (Dan.)
 Peter met him not
 ‘Peter didn’t meet him.’
- d. Jón keypti hann ekki [_{VP} keypti hann]. (Ice.)
 Jón bought it not
 ‘Jón didn’t buy it.’

In Danish, Icelandic, and most varieties of Norwegian OS is obligatory in simple tense forms, whereas in most of the Swedish dialects and some of the Norwegian varieties OS is optional (2a). An object pronoun cannot move when main verb movement does not take place, i.e. in complex tense forms that contain a finite Aux(iliary) verb (2b) and in embedded clauses in which a main verb does not move (2c). This fact is called *Holmberg’s Generalization* (Holmberg 1986): OS can occur only when main verb movement takes place.

¹ In this work the terminology *Object Shift* is exclusively used to refer to weak pronoun shift/cliticization. I do not discuss full NP shift observed in Icelandic in this paper.

- | | |
|--|---|
| (2) a. Jag såg <i>den</i> inte.
I saw it not
'I didn't see it.' | Jag såg inte <i>den</i> . (Swe.)
I saw not it |
| b. Jag har inte sett <i>den</i> .
I have not seen it
'I haven't seen it.' | *Jag har <i>den</i> inte sett.
I have it not seen |
| c. ... att jag inte såg <i>den</i>
that I not saw it
'... that I didn't see it.' | *... att jag <i>den</i> inte såg
that I it not saw |

Though (either obligatory or optional) OS is observed in most of the Scandinavian languages/dialects, OS never occurs in Övdalian (or the Älvdalen dialect of Swedish) even when verb movement takes place (Hellan and Platzack 1999, Garbacz 2009).² The fact that OS does not exist in Övdalian was first pointed out by Levander (1909:124): '[n]egationen *inte* sättes alltid före objektet' ('the negation *inte* is always placed before the object').³ Unlike the other Scandinavian varieties as illustrated in (1a-d), a weak object pronoun *mig* does not move across the negation (3).⁴

- | | |
|---|--------|
| (3) a. An såg it mig.
he saw not me
'He didn't see me.' | (Övd.) |
|---|--------|

² According to Broekhuis (2008), Finland-Swedish and Falster-Danish do not have OS either. According to Anders Holmberg (p.c.), OS is optional in Finland-Swedish. As there is no information available to me concerning Falster-Danish, I make no comments on this Scandinavian variety here.

³ The translation is by the author.

⁴ According to Garbacz (2009:116-118), the negation *inte* changes its form depending on the environments in which it appears. I turn to this point in section 2.

- b. *An såg mig inte.
 he saw me not
 (Garbacz 2009:64,(10c))

A main verb can freely move across the negation in Övdalian embedded clauses (4a). Thus, the negation directly precedes an object pronoun in embedded clauses (4b) in the same way as in main clauses.

- (4) a. Eð ir biln so an will it åvå. (Övd.)
 it is the-car that he wants-to not have
 ‘This is the car that he doesn’t want to have.’
 (Garbacz 2009:150,(12b))

- b. Ig sagd at ig tjsst it an.
 I said that I kissed not him
 ‘I said that I didn’t kiss him.’

The fact that Övdalian is not subject to Holmberg’s Generalization has not been extensively discussed despite much literature on OS (Diesing 1992, 1997; Holmberg and Platzack 1995; Holmberg 1999; Chomsky 2001; Sells 2001; Vikner 2001; Josefsson 2003; Fox and Pesetsky 2005; Erteschik-Shir 2005a,b; Broekhuis 2008; among others). Since most of the literature seek the derivational mechanism of OS, it has not been clarified what factors prevent OS in Övdalian.⁵

Hosono (2010a,c) suggests that the presence of OS in the Scandinavian languages is closely related to their intonational properties. In this paper I discuss the absence of OS in Övdalian from the perspective of its intonational

⁵ See Hosono (2010a,c) for the argument against the derivational mechanism of OS proposed by Chomsky (2001).

properties by presenting experimental data. I argue that the absence of OS in Övdalian is accounted for with the intonational properties peculiar to this variety taken into consideration.

The paper is organized as follows. In section 2 I introduce the intonational properties of Övdalian. I present experimental data of the constructions relevant to Övdalian non-OS. In section 3, I argue that the reason why OS does not exist in Övdalian lies in the intonational properties peculiar to this Scandinavian variety that the final H peak occurs on the sentence-penultimate position in the short domains that consist of a main verb and the following weak element(s). I account for the fact that Övdalian is not subject to Holmberg's Generalization as follows: movement of a focus-accented main verb provides the sentence-penultimate position on which the final H peak occurs for the element immediately to its left; this forces weak object pronouns not to move across that element so that they themselves might not occupy the sentence-penultimate position. In section 4 I briefly conclude this paper.

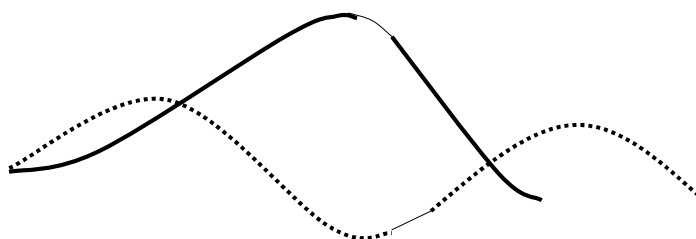
2. The Intonational Properties of Övdalian Non-Object Shift Constructions

Most of the Swedish dialects maintain a distinction between word tone accents, accent 1 and accent 2, each of which is associated with the tonal pattern of High-Low HL (Bruce 1977). Accent is associated with L for accent 1 and with H for accent 2. To realize accent 2, a stressed syllable must be followed by another syllable. This indicates that all monosyllabic words have accent 1. One of the Swedish intonational properties is that the focus of a sentence is realized by the focal H contour. It overlaps the pitch contour of a focus-accented word for

accent 1, which produces a single-peaked pitch contour. For accent 2 it is added to the HL contour of a focus-accented word in so-called ‘double-peaked’ dialects such as the EAST dialect represented by Stockholm Swedish.

According to Kristoffersen (2008), Övdalian maintains the difference in word tone in the same way as most of the Swedish dialects. Övdalian accent 1 words have a stressed syllable that consists of L and the following H. For sentence-final monosyllabic words the H peak occurs in the center of a stressed syllable, which is followed by a final L. For sentence-final disyllabic words the H peak occurs in the final part of the stressed syllable, which is followed by L on the next, final syllable. For sentence-final tri- and multi-syllabic words the H peak occurs early in the second syllable, with L coming on the final syllable. Thus, for a disyllabic accent 1 word *skenet* [stʃ:neð] ‘the shine’ in sentence-final position the H peak occurs in the final part of the stressed syllable *sken-*, which is followed by L on the next syllable *-et*. The Övdalian accent 2 is classified into the same group as the EAST dialect, but has a complex melodic tone. The pitch contour of sentence-final disyllabic accent 2 words is like L-H-L-H(-L), in which each syllable is associated with H. Thus, when a disyllabic accent 2 word *skina* [skaina] ‘to shine’ comes to sentence-final position, both the stressed first syllable *skin-* and the following syllable *-a* consist of rise, a H peak, and fall. The pitch contours of accent 1 and accent 2 disyllabic words are illustrated below.

(5) Pitch contours of Övdalian accent 1 and accent 2 disyllabic words⁶:



—— : (vowel of) accent 1; : (vowel of) accent 2;

thin line: consonant

(From Kristoffersen 2008:137, Fig.19)

A word is necessary concerning the negation *inte*, a typical diagnosis of the presence or absence of OS. It is an accent 2 word and normally appears in a sentence-internal position in Övdalian (Garbacz 2009).⁷ The final vowel [e] appears when it is in sentence-final position or before a pause. It is reduced to either *int* or *it*, the latter of which cannot be stressed.

I carried out an experiment to observe the intonational properties of the constructions relevant to Övdalian non-OS. The constructions investigated are simple tense forms (6a), complex tense forms (6b), and embedded clauses in which verb movement takes place (6c). *Verb Topicalization* (6d), a contrastive verb-focus construction, was added due to the theoretical significance related to this construction (Holmberg 1999, Chomsky 2001). In Verb Topicalization a past participle moves to sentence-initial position. OS does not occur in Övdalian but can occur in the other Scandinavian varieties.

⁶ The accent 1 word is *skenet* ‘the shine’; the accent 2 word is *skina* ‘to shine’.

⁷ Övdalian has another negative form *itjä*, which appears only in either sentence-initial or sentence-final position (Garbacz 2009). I leave this form aside in this paper.

(6) a. Simple tense forms:

E.g. Ig tjöpt it åna.
I bought not it
'I didn't buy it.'

(Övd.)

b. Complex tense forms:

E.g. Ig ar it si'tt an.
I have not seen it
'I haven't seen it.'

c. Embedded clauses:

E.g. Ig sagd at ig tjysst it an.
I said that I kissed not him
'I said that I didn't kiss him.'

d. Verb Topicalization:

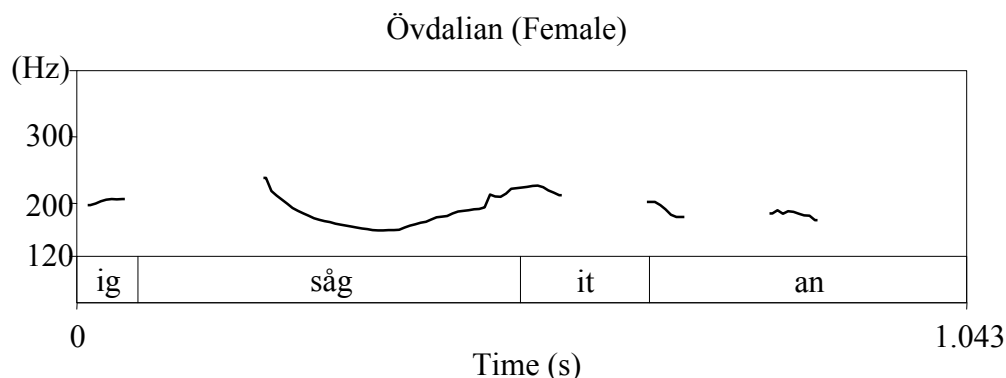
E.g. Tjysst ar ig it an.
kissed have I not him
'I haven't KISSED him.'

Test sentences contain either a monosyllabic pronoun (e.g. *an* 'it, him') or a disyllabic pronoun (e.g. *åna* 'it, her'). On the basis of the literature on information structure (Lambrecht 1994, Vilkuna 1995, Kiss 1998), appropriate contexts were built with a question and the answer, the latter of which corresponds to each relevant construction: e.g. polarity-focus: *tjöpt du buotjē?* (bought you the-book 'did you buy the book?') – *näj, ig tjöpt it åna* (no I bought not it 'no, I didn't buy it'). Data were collected from three informants (two female and one male). They were asked to read each question-answer pair in an appropriately rapid speech, in such a way as they speak in real-life conversation. The test sentences presented to the female informants were

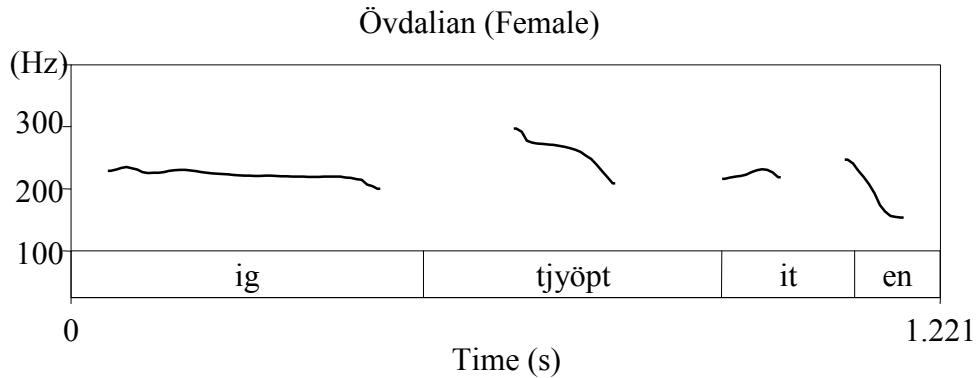
slightly different from the ones presented to the male informant in order to trigger more real imagination and natural reading. The forms of person pronouns and the negation can differ depending on the villages where the informants come from (Garbacz 2009). They were asked to choose the forms that they prefer. See Appendix for the material used. PRAAT was used for recording. With the age of the informants taken into consideration (the male informant and one of the female ones were 65, the other female informant in her late fifties), two recordings were done for each sentence pair.

The pitch pictures of simple tense forms with monosyllabic weak object pronouns are illustrated in (7). A main verb is focus-accented. In the case of accent 1 verbs (7a) pitch falls and rises inside the main syllable of *såg*. The pitch peak comes on the main syllable of the negation *it*, and pitch falls finally on the main syllable of the object pronoun *an*. In the case of accent 2 verbs (7b) pitch falls on the main syllable of *tjyöpt* and rises (or maintains the level in some cases) on the main syllable of *it*. Pitch falls finally on the main syllable of the object pronoun *en*.

- (7) a. Ig såg it an.
 I saw not him
 ‘I didn’t see him.’



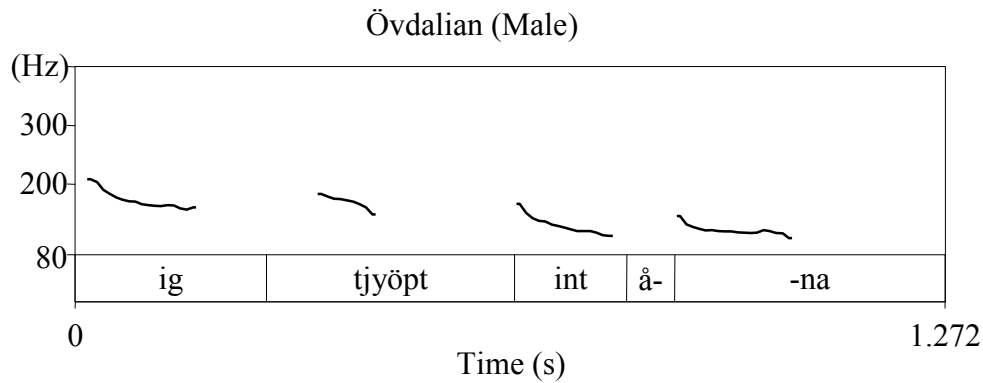
- b. Ig tjyöpt it en.
 I bought not it.
 ‘I didn’t buy it.’



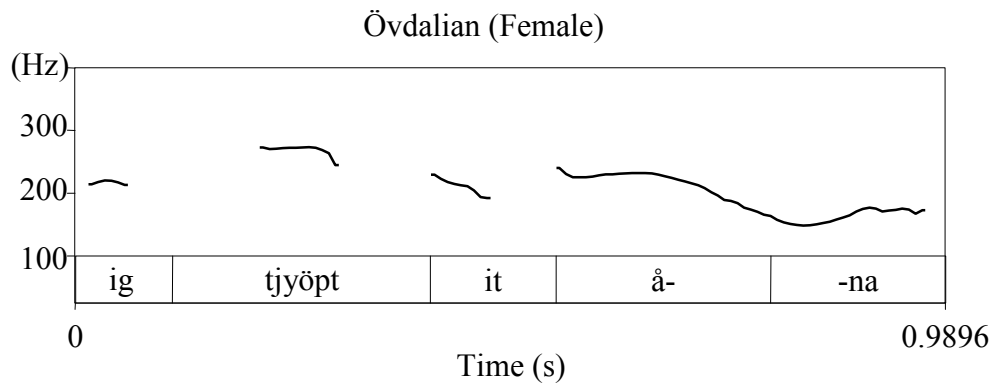
The pitch pictures of simple tense forms with disyllabic weak object pronouns are illustrated in (8). The first pattern is (8a). Pitch falls on the main syllable of a focus-accented main verb *tjyöpt*. Pitch level gradually lowers until the second, final syllable *-na* of the object pronoun *åna*. The first syllable *å-* of *åna* is always dropped when it is weak. The second pattern is (8b). Pitch falls from the main syllable of *tjyöpt* to the main syllable of the negation *it*. Pitch slightly rises and falls on the first syllable *å-* of *åna*. Pitch slightly rises and falls again on its second syllable *-na*.

- (8) Ig tjyöpt it/int åna.
 I bought not it
 ‘I didn’t buy it.’

a.

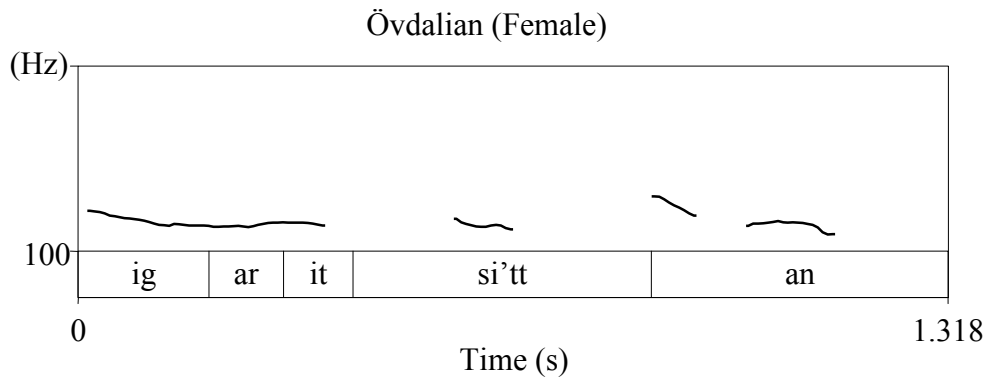


b.



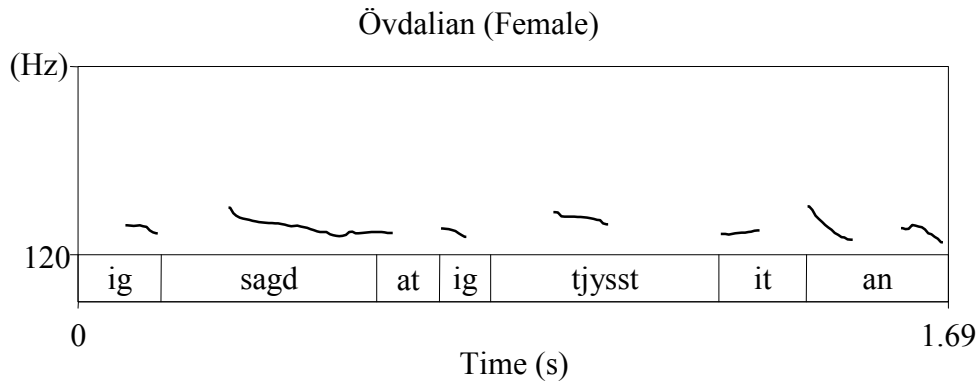
The pitch picture of complex tense forms is illustrated in (9). Pitch level is maintained until the negation *it*. Pitch falls and rises inside the main syllable of a focus-accented past participle *si'tt* that has accent 1, and falls on the object pronoun *an* in sentence-final position.

- (9) Ig ar it si'tt an.
 I have not seen it
 'I haven't seen it.'

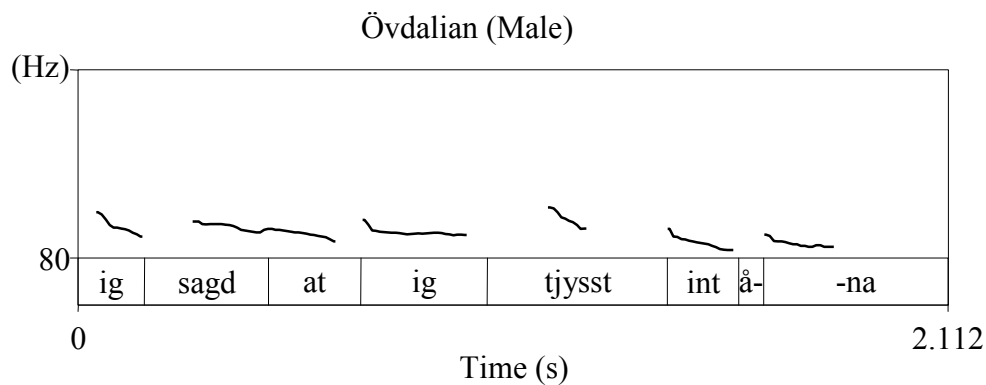


The pitch pictures of embedded clauses are illustrated in (10). In the case of monosyllabic object pronouns (10a) pitch level is kept until the subject of an embedded clause *ig*. The pitch peak comes on the main syllable of a focus-accented accent 2 main verb *tjysst*, and pitch falls from it. Pitch slightly rises on the main syllable of the negation *it*, and falls on the main syllable of the object pronoun *an* in sentence-final position. In the case of disyllabic object pronouns (10b) too pitch level is maintained until the subject of an embedded clause *ig*. The pitch peak comes on the main syllable of *tjysst*, and pitch gradually falls from it until the second, final syllable *-na* of the object pronoun *åna*. The first syllable *å-* of *åna* is dropped.

- (10) a. *Ig sagd at ig tjysst it an.*
 I said that I kissed not him
 ‘I said that I didn’t kiss him.’



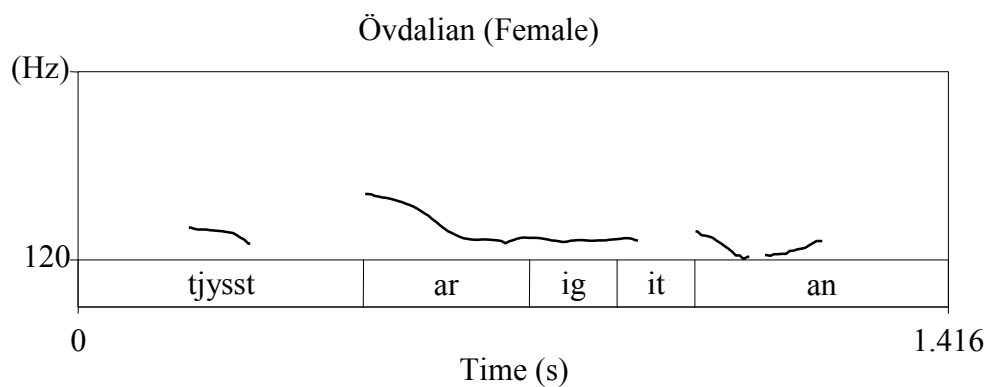
- b. Ig sagd at ig tjysst int åna.
 I said that I kissed not her
 ‘I said that I didn’t kiss her.’



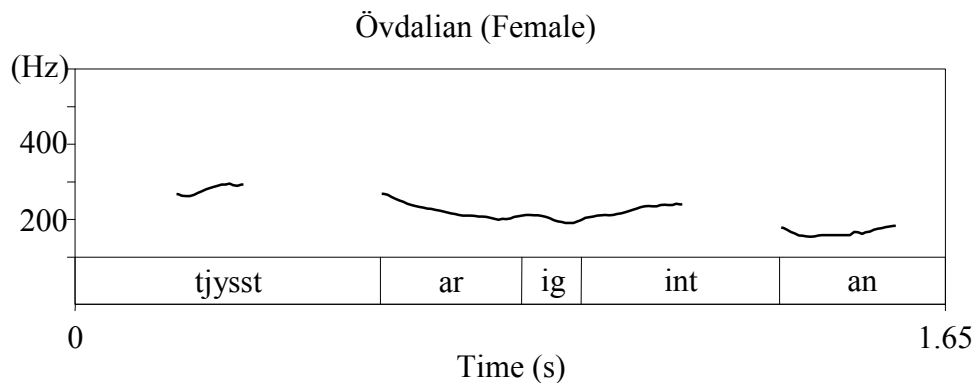
Finally, the Verb Topicalization construction shows several different pitch pictures. The sentence-initial past participle *tjysst* is focus-accented in all cases. The first pattern is (11a). After pitch falls on the main syllable of *tjysst*, its peak comes on the main syllable of the Aux *ar*. Pitch falls from it and pitch level is maintained. Pitch slightly rises on the main syllable of the negation *it* and falls finally on the main syllable of the object pronoun *an*. In the second pattern (11b) pitch peak comes on the main syllable of *tjysst*. After pitch falls from it, pitch level is maintained until the subject *ig*. Pitch rises again on the main syllable of the negation *int* and falls finally on the main syllable of *an*. In the third pattern

(11c) too pitch peak comes on the main syllable of *tjysst*. Pitch gradually falls from it until the second, final syllable *-na* of the object pronoun *åna*. The first syllable *å-* of *åna* is dropped .

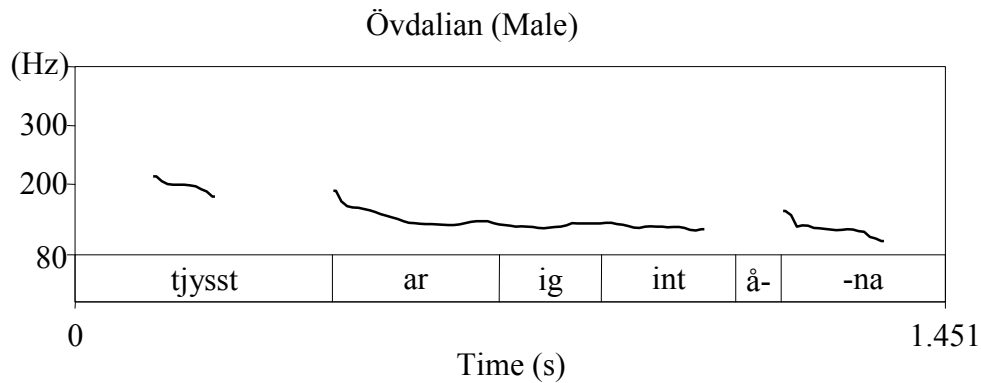
- (11) a. *Tjysst ar ig it an.*
 kissed have I not him
 ‘I haven’t KISSED him.’



- b. *Tjysst ar ig int an.*
 kissed have I not him
 ‘I haven’t KISSED him.’



- c. Tjysst ar ig int åna.
 kissed have I not her
 ‘I haven’t KISSED her.’



3. Final H Peak on the Sentence-Penultimate Position

What is noticed from the data above is that in the short domains that consist of a main verb and the following weak sentential element(s), the entire pitch contour is realized like that of a multi-syllabic verb. That is, in complex tense forms (9) pitch falls and rises inside the main syllable of a monosyllabic past participle *si'tt* that has accent 1 and falls again on the main syllable of the following object pronoun *an*. The entire pitch contour from the past participle to the object pronoun looks like that of a disyllabic accent 1 verb as illustrated in (5). This also holds for the cases that contain the negation, in which the number of syllables increases. We saw in the previous section that for sentence-final tri- and multi-syllabic accent 1 words the H peak occurs early in the second syllable, which is followed by L on the final syllable. In (7a) pitch falls and rises inside the main syllable of an accent 1 main verb *såg*; the pitch peak comes on the main syllable of the negation *it*, and pitch falls from it to the main syllable of the sentence-final object pronoun *an*. The entire pitch contour from the main verb,

through the negation, to the object pronoun looks like that of a trisyllabic accent 1 verb. Recall also that in the pitch contour of sentence-final accent 2 words the H peak occurs not only on the first stressed syllable but also on the following unstressed syllable. In (7b) pitch falls from the peak on the main syllable of an accent 2 main verb *tjyöpt*, rises on the main syllable of the negation *it*, and falls finally on the main syllable of the object pronoun *en*. The entire pitch contour from the main verb, through the negation, to the object pronoun is like that of a trisyllabic accent 2 verb.

The same holds for the case of embedded clauses. In (10a) pitch peak comes on the main syllable of an accent 2 main verb *tjysst* in the embedded clause and pitch falls from it. Pitch slightly rises on the main syllable of the negation *it* and falls on the main syllable of the sentence-final object pronoun *an*. The entire pitch contour from the main verb of the embedded clause, through the negation, to the object pronoun looks like that of a trisyllabic accent 2 verb. The same holds even for the case of Verb Topicalization. In (11b), for instance, pitch peak comes on the main syllable of the sentence-initial past participle *tjysst* that has accent 2. After pitch falls from it, pitch level is maintained until pitch rises again on the main syllable of the negation *int*. Pitch falls finally on the main syllable of the object pronoun *an*. The entire pitch contour from the past participle until the sentence-final object pronoun is like that of a multi-syllabic accent 2 verb.

These facts show that in the relevant short domains described above the final H peak occurs on the sentence-penultimate position for both accent 1 and accent 2 words in Övdalian. This is illustrated in the case of complex tense forms (9) in which the final H peak comes on the past participle *si'tt* that directly precedes the object pronoun *an*. This is also illustrated in the cases of simple

tense forms (7a-b), embedded clauses (10a), and Verb Topicalization (11b), in all of which the final H peak comes on the negation *it/int* that is followed by the final L of an object pronoun. Also in the cases (8a), (10b), and (11c), in which the first syllable *â-* of the object pronoun *âna* is dropped and the main syllable of the negation *int* is located in the sentence-penultimate position, pitch slightly rises on the negation.

I argue that the reason why OS does not exist in Övdalian lies in the intonational properties peculiar to this Scandinavian variety that the final H peak occurs on the sentence-penultimate position in the short domains that consist of a main verb and the following weak element(s). The negation reduces itself to either of the monosyllabic forms *it* and *int* when it is weak. But the reduced forms keep their word accent, which enables them to be located in the sentence-penultimate position where some prominence can be produced. However, most object pronouns are monosyllabic from their origin. Disyllabic object pronouns are reduced quite often when they are weak and do not keep their accent. Thus, weak object pronouns cannot come to the sentence-penultimate position, since they could be assigned phonological prominence by the final H peak that occurs on that position.⁸

It is predicted that in the presumed OS order such as **ig sâg an it* (I saw him not), **ig tÿöpt en it* (I bought it not), etc, in which an object pronoun would be in the sentence-penultimate position, the focusing effect on the object pronoun should be produced. This is attested by Garbacz (2009:64,ft.48): some

⁸ Disyllabic object pronouns may tolerate some prominence. This is illustrated in (8b), in which the first syllable *â-* of the object pronoun *âna* is not reduced. The first syllable is located in the sentence-penultimate position and the entire contour of the object pronoun looks like that of accent 2 words as illustrated in (5). For the nature of unshifted weak object pronouns, see Hosono (2010b).

of the Övdalian speakers accept the OS order, but they judge the shifted object pronoun as focused.⁹

The order of the negation and the following object pronoun is produced by movement of a main verb from the position between them to a higher position. When the main verb does not move, it is located in the sentence-penultimate position on which the final H peak comes. This is illustrated in complex tense forms (9), in which the in-situ focus-accented past participle *si'tt* is located in the sentence-penultimate position. When a focus-accented main verb moves as in simple tense forms (7a-b), however, the sentence-penultimate position is vacated and the element that was located immediately to the left of the verb before verb movement took place, i.e. the negation, occupies that position on which the final H peak comes instead of the moved verb. If a weak object pronoun moved across the negation, the object pronoun itself would occupy the sentence-penultimate position instead of the negation. Thus, the fact that Övdalian is not subject to Holmberg's Generalization is accounted for as follows: movement of a focus-accented main verb provides the sentence-penultimate position on which the final H peak occurs for the element immediately to its left; this forces weak object pronouns not to move across that element so that they themselves might not occupy the sentence-penultimate position.

In my papers (Hosono 2010a,c) I have suggested that OS is caused by the interaction between syntactic word order, the information structure of an entire sentence, and the intonational properties of the Scandinavian languages.

⁹ The reduced form *it* of the negation can actually appear in sentence-final position according to the data in Garbacz (2009). Hence, the reason why OS is not allowed in Övdalian cannot be attributed to the morpho-phonological property of the reduced forms of the negation.

This argument is extended to Övdalian non-OS too. Övdalian has the intonational property that the final H peak occurs on the sentence-penultimate position in relevant short domains. When a focus-accented main verb vacates to a higher position, the final H peak comes on the element immediately to its left that occupies the sentence-penultimate position instead of the moved verb. This prevents weak object pronouns from moving across that element, since if they moved, they themselves would occupy the sentence-penultimate position. Thus, to account for Övdalian non-OS, all the three factors given above are required. I have also suggested that OS in the Scandinavian languages/dialects is a purely phonological movement. In the same way, the absence of OS in Övdalian is purely phonological, since the intonational properties peculiar to Övdalian prevent OS from taking place.

4. Conclusion

In this paper I have discussed the absence of OS in Övdalian from the perspective of its intonational properties, by presenting experimental data of the constructions relevant to Övdalian non-OS. I argued that the reason why OS does not exist in Övdalian lies in the intonational properties peculiar to this Scandinavian variety that the final H peak occurs on the sentence-penultimate position in the short domains that consist of a main verb and the following weak element(s). I accounted for the fact that Övdalian is not subject to Holmberg's Generalization as follows: movement of a focus-accented main verb provides the sentence-penultimate position on which the final H peak occurs for the element immediately to its left; this forces weak object pronouns not to move

across that element so that they themselves might not occupy the sentence-penultimate position.

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Appendix

Test Sentences for Female Informants

- A. Tjyöpt du buotjē? – Näj, ig tjyöpt it åna/en.
(‘Did you buy the book? – No, i didn’t buy it.’)
- B. Ar du si’tt filmin? – Näj, ig ar it si’tt an.
(‘Have you seen the movie? – No, I haven’t seen it.’)
- C. Såg du Jan? – Näj, ig såg it an.
(‘Did you see Jan? – No, I didn’t see him.’)

- D. Tjysst du Jan? – Näj, ig tjysst it/int an. Men ig tjysst Johan.
(‘Did you kiss Jan? – No, I didn’t kiss him. But I kissed Johan.’)
- E. Ar du tjysst Jan? – Tjysst ar ig it/int an. Men ig ar eldeð an i hand.
(‘Have you kissed Jan? – I haven’t KISSED him. But I have held him by the hand.’)
- F. Wen sagd du? – Ig sagd at ig tjysst it/int an.
(‘What did you say? – I said that I didn’t kiss him.’)

Test Sentences for Male Informants

- A. Tjyöpt du buotjē? – Näj, ig tjyöpt int åna.
(‘Did you buy the book? – No, i didn’t buy it.’)
- B. Ar du si’tt filmin? – Näj, ig ar int si’tt an.
(‘Have you seen the movie? – No, I haven’t seen it.’)
- C. Såg du Anna? – Näj, ig såg int åna.
(‘Did you see Anna? – No, I didn’t see her.’)
- D. Tjysst du Anna? – Näj, ig tjysst int åna. Men ig tjysst Lena.
(‘Did you kiss Anna? – No, I didn’t kiss her. But I kissed Lena.’)

- E. Ar du tjsst Anna? – Tjsst ar ig int åna. Men ig ar eldeð ån i and.
(‘Have you kissed Anna? – I haven’t KISSED her. But I have held her by the hand.’)
- F. Wen sagd du? – Ig sagd at ig tjsst int åna.
(‘What did you say? – I said that I didn’t kiss her.’)