

# The Alternating Behavior of the Verb ‘Like’ in Old Norse-Icelandic: Facts or Fiction?\*

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## Abstract

In a recent article, Sigurðsson & Viðarsson (2020) put forward the hypothesis that the Modern Icelandic Dat-Nom verb *lika* ‘like’ may have been an alternating Dat-Nom/Nom-Dat verb in Old Icelandic, based on two subject tests, word order and control. While we do not question the analysis of their control examples, we still have doubts about the quality of their dataset, which mostly stems from translated texts. In order to verify Sigurðsson & Viðarsson’s claims, we collect ca. 200 tokens of *lika* from Old Norse-Icelandic texts, involving both native texts and translations, and we compare these with corresponding numbers of tokens of *lika* in Modern Icelandic. This comparison reveals a major difference between native and translated texts, with native texts clearly preferring the Dat-Nom word order. When peeling away the effect of topicality by excluding examples with nominative demonstrative pronouns, the difference between the word order statistics for *lika* in Old Norse-Icelandic and Modern Icelandic become negligible, indeed speaking against an alternating analysis of *lika* in Old Norse-Icelandic.

## 1 Introduction

In a recent article, Sigurðsson & Viðarsson (2020) claim that the verb *lika* ‘like’ in Old Norse-Icelandic is an alternating Dat-Nom/Nom-Dat verb, as opposed to Modern Icelandic where this same verb is uncontroversially a non-alternating Dat-Nom verb. The difference between the two is that alternating verbs may instantiate two diametrically opposed argument structures, i.e. Dat-Nom and Nom-Dat, while non-alternating Dat-Nom verbs only instantiate one of these, namely the Dat-Nom argument structure (Bernóðsson 1982, Barnes 1986, Jónsson 1997–98,

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Barðdal 1999, 2001, 2023: Ch. 3, Barðdal, Eythórsson & Dewey 2014, 2019, Platzack 1999, Rott 2013, 2016, Wood & Sigurðsson 2014, Somers & Barðdal 2022, Somers, Jensen & Barðdal 2024, inter alia).

One set of examples for each of these two types, alternating and non-alternating ones are given in (1–2) below, in that order:

Alternating *falla* ‘like, please’

**Dat-Nom**

- (1) a. Það var auðsæilegt að **honum** hafði ekki fallið **svarið** sem ...  
it was obvious that him.DAT had not liked answer.the.NOM which  
‘It was obvious that he had not liked the answer that ...’

**Nom-Dat**

- b. Það var auðsæilegt að **svarið** hafði ekki fallið **honum** sem ...  
it was obvious that answer.the.NOM had not liked him.DAT which  
‘It was obvious that the answer had not been to his liking, which ...’

Non-alternating *líka* ‘like’

**Dat-Nom**

- (2) a. Það var auðsæilegt að **honum** hafði ekki líkað **svarið** sem ...  
it was obvious that him.DAT had not liked answer.the.NOM which  
‘It was obvious that he had not liked the answer that ...’

**\*Nom-Dat**

- b. \*Það var auðsæilegt að **svarið** hafði ekki líkað **honum** sem ...  
it was evident that answer.the.NOM had not liked him.DAT which  
Intended meaning: ‘It was obvious that the answer had not been to his liking, which ...’

The examples in (1) with the verb *falla* ‘like, be to sb’s liking’ shows that either word order, the dative-before-nominative and the nominative-before-dative, are equally good in Modern Icelandic. In fact, native speakers of Icelandic agree that either order is equally neutral, meaning that no topicalization or movement of any kind has taken place. Note that there is a slight nuance in meaning between the two word orders, as *falla* means ‘like’ in the Dat-Nom argument structure in (1a), but ‘be to sb’s liking’ in the Nom-Dat argument structure in (1b).

In contrast, *líka* ‘like’ may only have the meaning ‘like’ and not ‘be to sb’s liking’ in Modern Icelandic, also evident from the fact that only the dative-before-nominative word order is grammatical with *líka*. Of course, this does not exclude the nominative object from being topicalized to first position, although notice that this triggers a subject-verb inversion of the dative and the verb, as the example in (3) below reveals, again corroborating the uncontroversial status of the dative as a subject and the nominative as the object of *líka* in Modern Icelandic:

- (3) Svarið **hafði honum** ekki líkað sem ...  
answer.the.NOM had him.DAT not liked which  
‘The answer, he had not liked, that ...’

Now, Sigurðsson & Viðarsson (2020) base their claims on both language internal Old Norse-Icelandic evidence and on the comparative evidence from the other early Germanic languages (Fischer & van der Leek 1983, Allen 1986, 1995, Barðdal 1998, Eythórsson & Barðdal 2005). Starting with the comparative evidence, it has been argued for Old English that *lician* is an alternating verb in that language (Allen 1995: 141) and the same has been argued for *galeikan* in Gothic (Eythórsson & Barðdal 2005: 833).

Turning to the language internal evidence for an alternating analysis of *lika* in Old Norse-Icelandic which Sigurðsson & Viðarsson introduce, this consists of data involving two subject tests, i) control infinitives and ii) word order. Sigurðsson & Viðarsson (2020: 53) present several examples of control infinitives with the verb *lika* where it is indeed the nominative and not the dative that is left unexpressed in such structures. A few of these are shown in (4) below:

- (4) a. þu girnizt þeim ath \_\_\_ lika, en ek girnumzt  
 you.NOM wish.2SG them.DAT to PRO.NOM like.INF but I.NOM wish.1SG  
 guði einum at \_\_\_ lika  
 God.DAT alone.DAT to PRO.NOM like.INF  
 ‘you wish to please them, but I wish to please only God’  
 (Luc 434.24, ca 1425–1445)
- b. sua at hann girnez enskiss nema \_\_\_ lika guðe  
 so that he.NOM wishes.3SG nothing.GEN except PRO.NOM like.INF God.DAT  
 ‘so he wishes for nothing except for pleasing God’ (Thom 144.16, ca 1300)
- c. þvi at umattolect er at \_\_\_ lika guði fyrri utan trv  
 because that unfitting is to PRO.NOM like.INF God.DAT for out faith  
 ‘because it is unfitting to please God without faith’ (Alk 53.3, ca 1200–1225)

While we agree with Sigurðsson & Viðarsson on their analysis of the relevant control infinitives in (4) above, in that there is no doubt that these examples show that it is indeed the nominative that is left unexpressed and not the dative, we still call into question the relevance of their dataset. As they acknowledge themselves, all their examples of control infinitives are from translated texts, although they argue that this is a direct consequence of the fact that the earliest Old Norse-Icelandic texts are translations of religious nature, older than the Old Icelandic Sagas. Thus, Sigurðsson & Viðarsson claim that the alternating character of *lika* in Old Norse-Icelandic is a genuine property of this verb, with the Nom-Dat alternant having fallen into disuse, at least before the recording of the Old Icelandic Sagas, since no examples of this type are found in the medieval Saga texts.

Of course, translated examples may well be taken to speak for authenticity, but for examples of this type, we believe that the relevant translations are most likely word-for-word glosses of the Latin verb *placere* ‘like, please’, as is implicit in Fritzner’s (1883–1896: 520) claims that Old Norse-Icelandic *lika* corresponds to Latin *placere*. This is also acknowledged by Sigurðsson & Viðarsson who disclose that *lika* in (4a) above is a direct translation of Latin *placere*. While Sigurðsson & Viðarsson have not scoured for the Latin originals of all their

control infinitives, they do point out that at least one of their examples, (4b) above, does not have an equivalent in the Latin source text.

Recently, however, Cluyse, Somers & Barðdal (2024) have argued that Latin *placere* is also an alternating Dat-Nom/Nom-Dat verb, with either the meaning ‘like’ or ‘please’, depending on its argument structure. The two word orders, representing the two argument structures, Dat-Nom and Nom-Dat, are shown in (5) below (cf. Cluyse, Somers & Barðdal 2024: 2):

#### Dat-Nom

- (5) a. At **mihi** iam puero **caelestia sacra** placebant  
 and I.DAT even boy.DAT mystic.NOM services.NOM liked.IMPF.3PL  
 ‘And I, even as a boy, liked the mystic services’  
 (Ov. *Tr.* 4,10,19, 1c. BC–1c. A.D.)

#### Nom-Dat

- b. Si **mos** antiquis placuisset **matribus** idem  
 if practice.NOM of.olden.times.DAT pleased.SBJV.3SG mothers.DAT same.NOM  
 ‘If the same practice had pleased mothers of olden times.’  
 (Ov. *Am.* 2,14,9, 1c. BC–1c. A.D.)

In (5a) we find the dative-before-nominative word order, while (5b) represents the nominative-before-dative word order. Cluyse, Somers & Barðdal (2024) show that either argument of *placere*, the dative or the nominative, passes the six subject tests established by Barðdal et al. (2023) for Latin, while the other argument behaves syntactically as an object. Thus, it can by no means be excluded that the alternating behavior of *placere* in Latin may have influenced the apparent alternating behavior of *lika* in Old Norse-Icelandic, as at least a part of that verb’s native Old Norse-Icelandic behavior, i.e. its occurrence in the Dat-Nom argument structure construction, would have been shared with Latin *placere*.

Likewise, Sigurðsson & Viðarsson (2020: 47–49) also present a handful of examples involving word order distributions, which are incompatible with a Dat-Nom analysis of the argument structure of *lika*, and call instead for a Nom-Dat analysis of the relevant structures. All four of their examples are given in (6) below:

- (6) a. ok líkaði **þat** **öllum** vel  
 and liked.3SG it.NOM all.DAT well  
 ‘and everybody liked it.’ (Njáls saga, Ch 6, ca. 1300)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sigurðsson & Viðarsson (2020: 47) state that Kálfalækjarbók, the manuscript in which this example from Njála stems, is from ca. 1350. However, Lassen (2021) claims that Kálfalækjarbók is older than that, namely from around 1300.

- b. þa likar **hon** **mer.** yuir allar þær er ec heui  
 then likes.3SG she.NOM me.DAT over all.ACC them.ACC which I.NOM have  
 fyr seet oc høyrtt  
 earlier seen or heard  
 ‘then she is pleasing to me, more than all of those whom I have heard or seen  
 earlier’ (Barl 68.12, ca 1275)
- c. Hvenær likadi **Abraham** **gudi** ...  
 when liked.3SG Abraham.NOM God.DAT  
 ‘When was Abraham to God’s liking ...’ (Silv 263.17, ca 1425–1445)
- d. En **maþr** **eN** má a engalund líca **guþe** nema fyr trv  
 but man.NOM one.NOM may.3SG on no.way like.INF God.DAT unless for faith  
 ‘But a man may not in any way be pleasing to God unless due to faith’  
 (ÍslHóm 98r13, ca 1200]

It is interesting that the first three examples all involve the midfield, i.e. the position immediately following the finite verb, which is well known to be subject to different types of restrictions in several (early) Germanic languages, in particular when it comes to pronouns (Delsing 1999, Kroch & Taylor 2000, Haugan 2001, Hinterhölzl 2010, Jónsson 2018, inter alia). Starting with (6a), it is well known that quantifiers like *ǫllum* ‘all’ may occur later in the clause than definite pronouns. It is also well known for the earlier Germanic languages that light pronouns precede heavier ones, although this would not explain (6b) as both pronouns there are light. Since the dative in (6c), *gudi* ‘God’, is indefinite, it naturally follows the nominative, *Abraham*. The example in (6d), in contrast, is an instance of a raising-to-subject structure where it is the nominative, *maþr* ‘man’ and not the dative, *guþe* ‘God’, that is raised to subject, a clear-cut behavioral subject test which Sigurðsson & Viðarsson, however, fail to mention.

To conclude, the only native Old Norse-Icelandic example in Sigurðsson & Viðarsson’s dataset is (6a), where the dative is a quantifier, *ǫllum* ‘all’, thus naturally occurring later in the clause than otherwise. As Sigurðsson & Viðarsson also acknowledge themselves, the remaining word order examples, compatible with a Nom-Dat analysis, are all from translated texts. Therefore, in order to shed light on this issue, the remainder of this article is dedicated to a study on the word order of *lika* in Old Norse-Icelandic.

## 2 Methodology

In addition to gathering material for *lika* in Old Norse-Icelandic, we have also gathered material for another verb which is an alternating Dat-Nom/Nom-Dat verb in Modern Icelandic, and presumably also in Old Norse-Icelandic, i.e. *duga* ‘suffice’; this in order to provide a baseline to which *lika* may be measured. Thus, a total of 1260 clauses containing either *lika* or *duga* have been collected from two Icelandic historical corpora and one Old Norse-Icelandic dictionary. The historical corpora, the *Saga Corpus* and *Íslenskt Textasafn*, are both hosted at

the Árni Magnússon Institute at the University of Iceland, while the Old-Norse-Icelandic dictionary, *the Dictionary of Old Norse Prose*, is hosted at the University of Copenhagen. Each of these is now described in turn:

The *Saga Corpus* is a historical corpus which consists of two collections of Icelandic Sagas: Íslendingasögur I (Torfason, Tómasson & Thorsson 1985) and II (Halldórsson et al. 1986) in which a total of 46 sagas are published. The Saga Corpus also includes Heimskringla (Kristjánssdóttir et al. 1991), Sturlunga saga (Thorsson et al. 1988) and Íslendingabók–Landnámabók (Benediktsson 1968). The corpus is annotated and lemmatized, allowing for both word form and dictionary form to be searched, and it is automatically tagged with an accuracy of 92.7% (Rögnvaldsson & Helgadóttir 2011). All the texts in the Saga Corpus use Modern Icelandic spelling.

The *Íslenskt Textasafn* is a collection of Icelandic texts. Apart from the íslendingasögur, Heimskringla and Sturlunga saga, all of which also appear in the *Saga Corpus*, the *Íslenskt Textasafn* also includes standardized versions of some legendary sagas, sagas of saints, some Old Icelandic tales and poems. Only the Old Icelandic texts which are not a part of the Saga Corpus are included in our data collection. While the *Íslenskt Textasafn* is not annotated, it still allows for the inclusion of all word forms of a specific lemma in their searches.

The *Dictionary of Old Norse Prose* includes various types of Old Icelandic prose texts. It is not limited to the Old Icelandic sagas, but also includes biblical and scholarly texts. Whereas the aforementioned corpora are limited to Old Icelandic texts, the dictionary includes texts which are translated from Latin into Old Norse-Icelandic. The relevant source texts are mostly edited versions of the Old Norse-Icelandic manuscripts.

The data gathering has yielded a total of 201 tokens of *líka* in finite clauses, of which 161 stem from native texts, while 40 come from translated texts. For *duga* ‘suffice’, in contrast, we have only been able to recover 96 tokens, of which 67 are from native texts and 30 from translated texts. Each clause has been annotated for word order, case marking and parts of speech, i.e. whether the argument is a full NP or a pronoun, in addition to native vs. translated texts.

### 3 Findings

We start by introducing statistics for *líka* and *duga* in Modern Icelandic, based on a dataset gathered by Somers & Barðdal (2022) and Somers, Jensen & Barðdal (2024). Their material is collected from the Icelandic Web 2020 Corpus (isTenTen20, Jakubíček et al. 2013), which consists of 520 million words. The dataset gathered contains 200 examples of each of the two verbs, annotated according to the same principles as described in Section 2 above for Old Norse-Icelandic.

**Table 1:** The distribution of *líka* and *duga* across word orders in Modern Icelandic

|             | DAT-NOM |       | NOM-DAT |       |
|-------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| <b>LÍKA</b> | 193     | 96.5% | 7       | 3.5%  |
| <b>DUGA</b> | 20      | 10.0% | 180     | 90.0% |

In Modern Icelandic the verb *líka* instantiates the dative-before-nominative order in 96% of the cases, which supports a Dat-Nom analysis of *líka*, with the nominative-before-dative order being a topicalization. The numbers for *duga* ‘suffice’ are very different, as is shown in Table 1, where only 10% of the tokens instantiate the Dat-Nom order and 90% the Nom-Dat order. These numbers might suggest that *duga* is not an alternating verb in Modern Icelandic, as 10% is well within the topicalization limit of 20% which Barðdal & Eythórssón (2012) establish on the basis of counts from the diachronic IcePaHC corpus (Rögnvaldsson et al. 2012). However, native speakers confirm that either word order with *duga*, given in (7) below, is equally neutral in Modern Icelandic:

- (7) a. Segir að **orkan** hefði átt að duga **Jóni**.  
 says that energy.the.NOM had.3SG should.PP to suffice.INF John.DAT  
 ‘Says that the energy should have been sufficient for John.’
- b. Segir að **Jóni** hefði átt að duga **orkan**.  
 says that John.DAT had.3SG should.PP to suffice.INF energy.the.NOM  
 ‘Says that John should have found the energy sufficient.’

Compare the numbers in Table 1 from Modern Icelandic with the corresponding numbers in Old Norse-Icelandic given in Table 2, again for the same two verbs, *líka* and *duga*. Once more, the Nom-Dat tokens are in majority for *duga* and the Dat-Nom tokens in majority for *líka*, although the numbers are considerably more even in Old Norse-Icelandic than in Modern Icelandic. It is particularly interesting that the numbers for *líka* are fairly even, namely 56% Dat-Nom and 44% Nom-Dat, which, at first sight, appears to corroborate Sigurðsson & Viðarson’s claims that *líka* is an alternating Dat-Nom/Nom-Dat verb in Old Norse-Icelandic.

**Table 2:** The distribution of *líka* and *duga* across word orders in Old Norse-Icelandic

|             | DAT-NOM |       | NOM-DAT |       |
|-------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| <b>LÍKA</b> | 112     | 55.7% | 89      | 44.3% |
| <b>DUGA</b> | 34      | 35.0% | 63      | 65.0% |

However, when divided into native and translated texts, the picture emerging is somewhat altered, as is shown in Table 3, where 63% of the native Old Norse-Icelandic tokens of *líka* instantiate the Dat-Nom word order, while 37% instantiate the Nom-Dat order. This distribution, however, is still compatible with an alternating Dat-Nom/Nom-Dat analysis of Old Norse-Icelandic *líka*. For the translated texts, the distribution is exactly the opposite, namely showing an overwhelming Nom-Dat order of 75%, while the Dat-Nom order only amounts to 25%. There is thus no doubt that within the category of translated texts, the Nom-Dat word order is highly preferred, while the situation is the opposite in native Old Norse-Icelandic texts.

**Table 3:** The distribution of *lika* across word orders in native vs. translated texts in Old Norse-Icelandic

|                     | DAT-NOM |     | NOM-DAT |     |
|---------------------|---------|-----|---------|-----|
| <b>NATIVE TEXTS</b> | 102     | 63% | 59      | 37% |
| <b>TRANSLATIONS</b> | 10      | 25% | 30      | 75% |

Calculating significance levels for the distribution of *lika* tokens across the two types of texts, native texts and translations, using chi square, reveals the following:  $\chi^2 = 17.58$ ;  $df = 1$ ;  $p < 0.001$ , which means that the differences between the two categories, native and translated texts, are significant.

Consider now Table 4, where the corresponding numbers for *duga* in Old Norse-Icelandic are given. The distribution across the two word orders is relatively even for the tokens belonging to native texts, i.e. 45% Dat-Nom and 55% Nom-Dat, while the distribution is considerably skewed towards 87% Nom-Dat for the translated tokens. These numbers indeed corroborate an alternating Dat-Nom/Nom-Dat analysis for *duga* in Old Norse-Icelandic, exactly as has been shown for its descendant in Modern Icelandic.

**Table 4:** The distribution of *duga* across word orders in native vs. translated texts in Old Norse-Icelandic

|                     | DAT-NOM |       | NOM-DAT |       |
|---------------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| <b>NATIVE TEXTS</b> | 30      | 44.8% | 37      | 55.2% |
| <b>TRANSLATIONS</b> | 4       | 13.3% | 26      | 86.7% |

Even though there are considerably fewer tokens of *duga* in the Old Norse-Icelandic dataset, the difference between native texts and translations is still significant against the 1% level:  $\chi^2 = 7.67$ ;  $df = 1$ ;  $p < 0.006$ .

One of the findings of Somers & Barðdal (2022) and Somers, Jensen & Barðdal (2024), following Barðdal (2001: 65), is that discourse factors, or rather *topicality*, is one of the major factors affecting native speakers when choosing between the Dat-Nom and Nom-Dat word orders for alternating verbs. Since Old Norse-Icelandic is well known to be considerably more sensitive to information structure than Modern Icelandic (Haugan 2001, Jónsson 2018, Booth & Beck 2021), it is reasonable to assume that information structure may have a greater effect on the numbers in Tables 2–3, than on the numbers for Modern Icelandic in Table 1. In order to address this issue, compare the word order statistics of *lika* in Old Norse-Icelandic in Table 5, with examples involving nominative demonstrative pronouns excluded from the statistics, irrespective of text type.

**Table 5:** The distribution of *lika* across word orders in native vs. translated texts in Old Norse-Icelandic, excluding nominative demonstrative pronouns

|                     | DAT-NOM |     | NOM-DAT |     |
|---------------------|---------|-----|---------|-----|
| <b>NATIVE TEXTS</b> | 102     | 90% | 11      | 10% |
| <b>TRANSLATIONS</b> | 10      | 31% | 22      | 69% |

There is no doubt that controlling for the issue of topicality by excluding examples with nominative demonstrative pronouns shows, once and for all, that *lika* is not an alternating verb in Old Norse-Icelandic, as the Dat-Nom word order goes up from 63%, for all configurations including full NPs and pronouns, to 90% in the category of native texts when controlling for topicality. In contrast, there is a slight increase from 25% to 31% Dat-Nom word order for the translated texts. In other words, these numbers support a Dat-Nom analysis for *lika* in Old Norse-Icelandic and not an alternating Dat-Nom/Nom-Dat analysis, contra Sigurðsson & Viðarsson’s claims.

For a final comparison, consider the statistics for both *lika* and *duga* in Modern Icelandic native texts, given in Table 6, when excluding nominative demonstrative pronouns. The numbers for *lika* increase from 96.5% Dat-Nom in Table 1 to 99% Dat-Nom in Table 6. Clearly, the effect of nominative demonstrative pronouns in Modern Icelandic is marginal, as would be expected since *lika* is not an alternating Dat-Nom/Nom-Dat verb in Modern Icelandic, but a fixed non-alternating Dat-Nom verb.

**Table 6:** The distribution of *lika* and *duga* across word orders in Modern Icelandic, excluding nominative demonstrative pronouns

|             | DAT-NOM |     | NOM-DAT |     |
|-------------|---------|-----|---------|-----|
| <b>LÍKA</b> | 193     | 99% | 1       | 1%  |
| <b>DUGA</b> | 17      | 12% | 124     | 88% |

The corresponding numbers for the alternating *duga* in Modern Icelandic also reveal a slight increase from 10% Dat-Nom in Table 1 to 12% in Table 6, thus confirming only a marginal effect of nominative demonstrative pronouns for that verb as well.

To conclude, this study has shown that *lika* is not an alternating Dat-Nom/Nom-Dat verb in Old Norse-Icelandic, as Sigurðsson & Viðarsson conjecture. When peeling away the effect of translated texts and the effect of information structure, which is considerably stronger in Old Norse-Icelandic than Modern Icelandic, the word order statistics for *lika* do not deviate notably between the two periods of Icelandic.

## 4 Summary and Conclusions

In a recent study, Sigurðsson & Viðarsson (2020) put forward the claim that the Modern Icelandic verb *lika*, which is an uncontroversial Dat-Nom verb, was most likely an alternating Dat-Nom/Nom-Dat verb in Old Norse-Icelandic. They present two types of language-internal evidence for this claim, examples involving control infinitives and a handful of word order examples which clearly suggest that the nominative behaves syntactically as a subject and the dative as an object. The legitimacy of these examples would certainly support an alternating analysis of *lika* in Old Norse-Icelandic.

In this paper, we have called into question the validity of Sigurðsson & Viðarsson’s analysis, due to doubts about the quality of their dataset, as all their control examples are from

translated texts and the same is true for all but one of their word order examples. In order to investigate this issue, we compare word order statistics for the verbs *lika* and *duga* across Modern Icelandic and Old Norse-Icelandic, as *duga* is, uncontroversially, an alternating Dat-Nom/Nom-Dat verb in both stages of Icelandic.

It turns out that there is a major divide between native and translated texts. This means that in texts originally written in the Old Norse-Icelandic vernacular, *lika* prefers a Dat-Nom order, unless the nominative contains a demonstrative pronoun, then the Nom-Dat word order is preferred. This suggests that *lika* could only instantiate the Dat-Nom argument structure construction in texts originally written in Old Norse-Icelandic, with the Nom-Dat word order representing topicalizations, exactly as in Modern Icelandic. In contrast, in the translated texts, the Nom-Dat word order with *lika* is the preferred word order, irrespective of parts of speech. Therefore, since any “alternating” behavior of *lika* is confined to translated texts, we conclude that this seeming behavior is a translation effect.

Our alternative analysis of the data involving Old Norse-Icelandic *lika* above makes a certain prediction, namely that the existing alternating analysis of Old English *lician* and Gothic *galeikan* may be equally faulty as the analysis provided by Sigurðsson & Viðarsson, as most if not all instances in Old English and Gothic are also translations. In other words, our analysis predicts that the apparent alternating behavior of ‘like’ in Old English and Gothic is also a translation effect. We leave this for future research.

## Corpora

Icelandic Text Archive = Stofnun Árna Magnússonar. In Íslenskt Textasafn.  
<http://corpus.arnastofnun.is/leit.pl>.

ONP = Dictionary of Old Norse Prose. In M. Arvidsson, S. Battista, H. Degnbol, P. Ellyton, Þ. Helgadóttir, B. C. Jacobsen, E. Þ. Jóhannsson, A. S. Kjeldsen, J. E. Knirk, J. Lindholm, E. Rode, C. Sanders, A. Sigurðardóttir & T. Wills (Eds.). University of Copenhagen.  
<https://onp.ku.dk/onp/onp.php>.

Saga Corpus = Stofnun Árna Magnússonar. In *Saga Corpus*.  
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