

Quantifier movement

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1. Introduction

Negative quantified objects may precede the infinite verb in main clauses and the finite verb in embedded clauses in Swedish (Teleman et al. 1999:3:16:§15), Norwegian (Faarlund et al. 1997:712), Danish (Christensen 2005:83), Faroese (Thráinsson et al. 2004:246-247), and Icelandic (Thráinsson 2007:83); see (1). This pattern, sometimes called Negative Scrambling (Thráinsson 2007:83), is however often regarded as archaic or stylistically marked, at least in Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish (Engels 2011:137).

- (1) a. Eftersom jag **inga vänner** har sett. (Swedish)

Since I no friends have seen

'Since I haven't seen any friends.' (Teleman et al. 1999:3:16:§15)

- b. Han har **ingen penger** fått. (Norwegian)

he has no money got

'He has not got any money.' (Faarlund et al. 1997:712)

- c. Han har **ingen bøger** fået. (Danish)

he has no money got

'He has not got any books.' (Christensen 2005:83)

- d. Tey høvdu **ongan mann** hitt. (Faroese)

they have no man met

'They had not meet anybody.' (Thráinsson et al. 2004:246)

- e. Ég hef **engar bækur** lesið. (Icelandic)

he has no books bought

'I haven't bought any read.' (Thráinsson 2007:82)

In Icelandic, both negative quantified objects and other quantified objects may precede the verb, the latter phenomenon is called Quantifier Scrambling (Thráinsson 2007:36,84); see (2).

- (2) Jón hefur **ýmsar** **bækur** lesið. (Icelandic)

Jón has various books read

'Jón has read various books.' (Thráinsson 2007:84)

2. Results

2.1 Nordic Syntax Database (NSD)

In the Swedish and Norwegian parts of the ScanDiaSyn survey, placement of negative and quantified objects has been tested by means of the three sentences shown in (3) and their Swedish counterparts.

- (3) a. Per har **ingen** **bøker** lest. (#928) (Norwegian)

Per has no books read

'Per hasn't read any books.'

- b. Per har **få** **bøker** lest. (#929) (Norwegian)

Per has few books read

'Per has read few books.'

- c. Per har **mange** **bøker** lest. (#930) (Norwegian)

Per has many books read

'Per has read many books.'

In Norway, Negative Scrambling is rejected almost without exception (only in the village of Stamsund, Lofoten, the informants judge the construction as marginally possible). In Sweden, Negative Scrambling is judged as grammatical in a number of locations in the north, in Västerbotten (Burträsk) and Norrbotten (Piteå, Kalix, Arjeplog), as well as in the west, in Halland (Våxtorp) and Västergötland (Floby and Torsö). It further receives a medium score in a couple of places in the south, in Skåne (Bara and Löderup) and in Småland (Torsås, Asby, Ankarsrum). In Finland, Negative Scrambling is always rejected. The results are shown in Map 1.



Map 1: Negative Scrambling in Norway, Sweden, and Finland.
 (#928: *Per har ingen bøker lest. 'Per hasn't read any books.'*)
 (White = high score, grey = medium score, black = low score).

Quantifier Scrambling with an object quantified by *få* 'few' is accepted as fully grammatical only at one location in Norway, in Oppland (Vestre Slidre) and at two locations in Sweden, in Norrbotten (Piteå and Kalix). It receives an intermediate score at a couple of locations in Western and Southeastern Sweden, in Halland (Våxtorp), Västergötland (Floby), Örebro (Viby), and Blekinge (Torhamn). In Finland, the construction is never accepted as fully grammatical. This is shown in Map 2.



Map 2: *Quantifier Scrambling with få 'few' in Norway, Sweden, and Finland.*

(#929: *Per har få bøker lest. 'Per has read few books.'*)

(*White = high score, grey = medium score, black = low score*).

Quantifier Scrambling with an object quantified by *många/mange* 'many' is not judged as grammatical in any of the locations where it was tested, see Map 3.

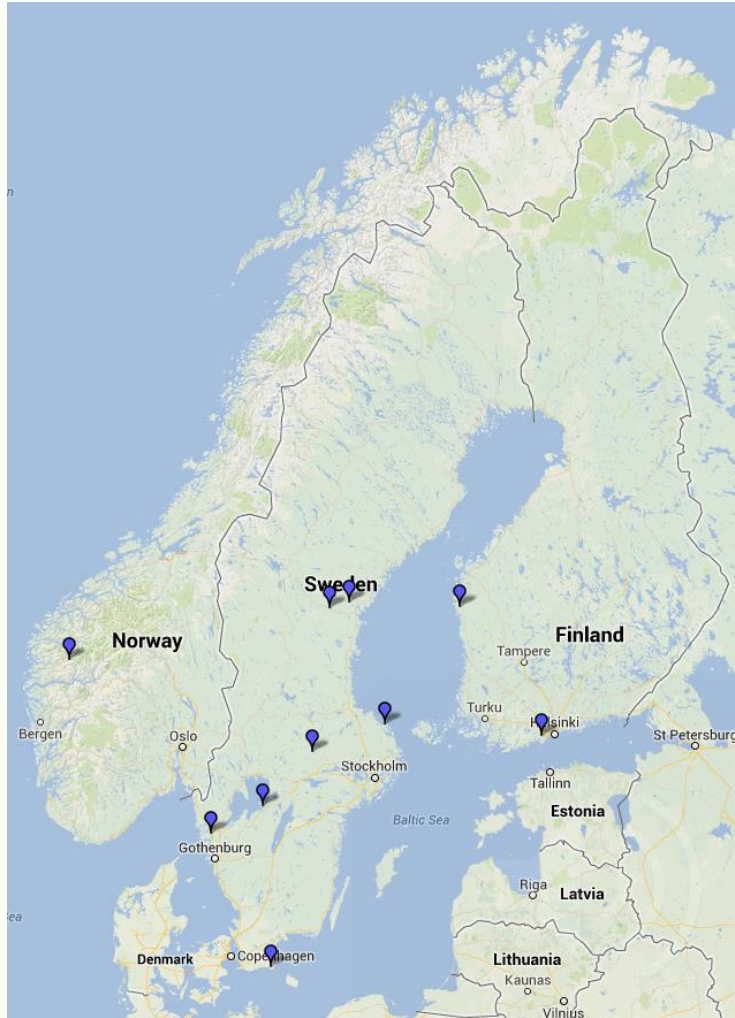


Map 3: *Quantifier Scrambling with många/mange 'many'.*

(#930: *Per har mange bøker lest. 'Per has read many books.'*)

(*White = high score, grey = medium score, black = low score.*)

In a couple of locations, there is variation between speakers as to whether #930 is grammatical or not. This is especially the case in the Swedish provinces of Uppland, (Gräsö), Skåne (Löderup), Västmanland (Skinnskatteberg), Västra Götaland (Orust and Torsö), Medelpad (Indal), Västernorrland (TorpsHAMMAR), in the Finnish provinces of Österbotten (Närpes) and Nyland (Kyrkslätt) as well as in the Norwegian location in Sogn og Fjordane (Jølster). In these places, either the younger informants (Jølster, Indal, Orust, Skinnskattebergor, and TorpsHAMMAR) or the older informants (Gräsö, Löderup, Närpes, Kyrkslätt, Torsö) accept the test sentence #930. The locations are shown on Map 4.



Map 4: Places where quantifier scrambling with *många/mange* 'many' (#930) gets a high score (blue)

2.2 Nordic Dialect Corpus (NDC)

Negative objects preceding a non-finite main verb are attested a couple of times in the NDC, see Map 5 and the examples in (4) (6) below.



Map 5: Negative object preceding the infinitive verb in the NDC (White = places of attestation).

(4) vi lå jo der og kunne jo **ingenting** gøre (Danish)

we laid ADV there and could ADV nothing do

‘...so we laid there and we could virtually do nothing.’ (vestjylland5)

(5) så jag vill egentligen **inget** göra (Swedish)

so I want-to actually nothing do

‘... so actually I don't want to do anything.’ (asby_om3)

(6) vi had- kann **inngenting** jære me da (Norwegian)

we had- can nothing do with it

‘We can't do anything with it.’ (joelster_03gm)

3. Discussion

As Engels (2011: 137) states, there is considerable variation in Scandinavia as to whether Quantifier Scrambling is present, and the variation is “not only a matter of style but it is also subject to dialectal and inter-speaker variation (...)” (ibid.). This view can be confirmed in the present examination. However, there seems to be no variation depending on age and sex.

Negative Scrambling is found in contemporary Swedish (7) and Danish (8), both in literary and colloquial texts, although it is less frequent in Danish compared to Swedish. In Norwegian texts it is almost completely absent, but still attested, for instance in the *Oslo-korpuset av taggedde norske tekster*, see (9).

(7) Jag har **inga pengar** fått. (Swedish)

I have no money got

‘I haven't got any money.’

(8) Har du **ingen bøger** fået ved jordmoder? (Danish)

have you no books got with midwife

‘Haven't you got any books from the midwife?’

(9) Selv hadde han **ingen hjelp** fått i sin ungdom. (Norwegian)

self had he no help got in his youth

‘Himself, he hadn't got any help when he was young.’

Quantifier Scrambling with the quantifier *få* ‘few’ is judged as possible by a handful of Swedish informants, but it is not attested in other Swedish corpora like the Korp-corpus. As Engels (2012:138) notes, the Scandinavian language (varieties) vary especially as to which constituent the negative object can move past. The possibility of the word order Negative Object – Main Verb (in situ) is found in Icelandic, Faroese, West Jutlandic, and in some varieties of Scandinavian (ibid.). There are however varieties that typically reject this word order, as e.g. Bokmål Norwegian, but examples of this word order can also be found there, as well as in the Norwegian dialects.

3.1 Historical development

Historically, Negative Scrambling and Quantifier Scrambling may be taken for reflexes of the older OV-pattern that was present in Old Norse (Faarlund 2004:161) and in Old Swedish (Delsing 1999); cf. (10a) and (10b) respectively.

(10) a. hefir þú **nøkkura** **men** hitt í borginni? (Old Norse)

have you some men found in town.DEF

'Did you meet anybody in the town?' (Faarlund 2004:161)

b. guti al **gutland** aigha (Old Norse)

Guti shall Gotland own

'Guti shall own Gotland.' (Delsing 1999:183)

The fact that Icelandic lost the OV-pattern much later than the other Scandinavian languages could also explain quite well why Icelandic displays both Negative and Quantifier Scrambling, whereas the Mainland Scandinavian languages and Faroese only display Negative Scrambling. OV was namely still present in the 19th century Icelandic (Hróarsdóttir 2000), but it was lost in Swedish in the 17th century (Delsing 1999) and in Norwegian already in the late 15th century (Sundquist 2002:146). Cf. also [Garbacz 2014](#).

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Web sites:

- Korp-corpus: http://spraakbanken.gu.se/korp/#hpp=25&sort=&stats_reduce=word
- Nordic Atlas of Language Structures (NALS) Journal: <http://www.tekstlab.uio.no/nals>
- Nordic Dialect Corpus: <http://www.tekstlab.uio.no/nota/scandiasyn/index.html>
- Nordic Syntax Database: <http://www.tekstlab.uio.no/nota/scandiasyn/index.html>
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<http://www.hf.uio.no/iln/tjenester/kunnskap/sprak/korpus/skriftsprakskorpus/oslo/index.html>