

# **SCOPE IN FAROESE DITRANSITIVES:**

## **THE INTERPLAY OF SYNTACTIC STRUCTURE AND QUANTIFIER ORDER**

Hjalmar P. Petersen, University of the Faroe Islands (Tórshavn, Faroe Islands)  
Cherlon Ussery, Carleton College (Minnesota, USA)



1. Introduction
2. Background on ditransitives in Faroese
3. Background on quantifiers Faroese
4. Theoretical and experimental background on scope
5. Ditransitives and scope in Faroese
6. Conclusion and future research



# ROADMAP

# 1. INTRODUCTION and KEY QUESTIONS

- Do scope interpretations vary in DO versus PP ditransitives in Faroese?
  - Prediction: DO should favor surface scope and PP should have ambiguous scope (based on observations in theoretical syntax literature)
- Do scope interpretations vary according to the ordering of quantifiers?
  - Prediction: *a...every* sentences favor surface scope more than *every...a* sentences (based on observations in experimental literature)
    - In *every...a* sentences, the inverse scope interpretation is a subset of the surface scope, so speakers may not tease the two readings apart

## Initial Observations (**a...every/ein...hvör**)

DO:surface

PP: ambiguous, strong preference for inverse

(1a) **DO: *ein...hvör*** ‘a...every’

Timburmaðurin lænti einum starvsfelaga hvørt einasta skrúvublað.  
the carpenter lent a coworker every single screwdriver

**Surface: a > every**

There is one coworker and that person is lent every screwdriver

(1b) **PP: *ein...hvör*** ‘a...every’

Timburmaðurin lænti eitt skrúvublað til hvønn einasta starvsfelaga.  
the carpenter lent a screwdriver to every single coworker

**Ambiguous: a > every/every > a; strong preference for inverse**

- Surface: There is one screwdriver that is lent to each coworker
- Inverse: For each coworker, that person is lent a (possibly) different screwdriver

## Some Initial Observations (*every...a/hvør...ein*)

DO: ambiguous, strong preference for surface

PP: ambiguous, strong preference for inverse

(2a) **DO:** *hvør...ein* ‘every...a’

Timburmaðurin lænti hvørjum starvsfelaga eitt skrúvublað.  
the carpenter lent every coworker a screwdriver

**Ambiguous: every > a/ a > every; strong preference for surface**

- Surface: Every coworker is lent a (possibly) different screwdriver
- Inverse: There is one screwdriver and every coworker is lent that screwdriver

(2b) **PP:** *hvør...ein* ‘every...a’

Timburmaðurin lænti hvørt tað einasta skrúvublað til ein starvsfelaga.  
the carpenter lent every single screwdriver to a coworker

**Ambiguous: every > a/ a > every; strong preference for inverse**

- Surface: Every screwdriver is lent to a (possibly) different coworker
- Inverse: There is one coworker and that person is lent every screwdriver

DO constructions prefer surface for both quantifiers order

PP constructions prefer inverse for both quantifiers order

- Suggests that syntactic structure matters more than quantifier order
- It's more complicated

Where we're headed:

When we examine more examples, we find a continuum:

DO with *ein...hvør* 'a...every' order  
most amenable to surface scope



PP with *hvør...ein* 'every...a' order  
most amenable to inverse scope



Norrønt	<b>D+G</b>	<b>D+D</b>	<b>A+D</b>	<b>A+G</b>	<b>A+D</b>	<b>A+G</b>
Føroyskt	<b>D+A</b>	<b>D+A</b>	<b>D+A</b>	<b>A+A</b>	<b>A+FH</b>	<b>A+FH</b>
	<i>unna</i>	<i>lova</i>	<i>nema, læra</i>	<i>biðja,</i> <i>spyrja</i>	<i>halda,</i> <i>loyna,</i> <i>ræna</i>	<i>dylja,</i> <i>eggja,</i> <i>fylla,</i> <i>krevja,</i> <i>minna.</i>

## Structural Case

Structural Accusative  
(Sandøy 2012)



- **Faroese** easily allows BENEFACTIVE IOs.

(5) bakaði **Fríðu** eina køku.  
baked Fríðu-BENEFACTIVE-DAT a cake-ACC

(6) **Icelandic**

??Ég bakaði mömmu minni köku.  
I.Nom baked mother.Dat my cake.Acc  
'I baked my mother a cake'. (Thráinsson 2007: 230)

- In Faroese, PP ditransitives are accepted to a larger extent than earlier presumed with verbs of *giving*, contra (Holmberg & Platzack 1995: 12; Thráinsson et al. 2004[2012]), which leads us to next slide:

## 2. BACKGROUND ON FAROESE DITRANSITIVES

## Faroese

(7a) Sølumaðurin **gav** tí unga bóndanum kraftfóðrið.  
the salesperson **gave** the young farmer the grain mixture

(7b) Sølumaðurin **gav** kraftfóðrið **til** tann unga bóndan.  
the salesperson **gave** the grain mixture **to** the young farmer

## Icelandic

(8a) Sölumaðurinn **gaf** unga bóndanum kornblönduna.  
the salesperson **gave** the young farmer the grain mixture

(8b) \*Sölumaðurinn **gaf** kornblönduna **til** unga bóndans.  
the salesperson **gave** the grain mixture **to** the young farmer

## 2. BACKGROUND ON FAROESE DITRANSITIVES

- Faroese allows the PP frame more freely than Icelandic.
- In Icelandic, the PP frame is often tied to physical movement of the DO.  
The grain mixture could remain in the same location even though ownership is transferred.

## Faroese

(9a) Teir umhugsnu leiðararnir **sendu** tí raska skrivaranum  
the thoughtful managers **sent** the hard working secretary  
eina føðingardagsgávu.  
a surprise birthday present

(9b) Teir umhugsnu leiðararnir **sendu** eina føðingardagsgávu  
the thoughtful managers **sent** a surprise birthday present  
**til** tann raska skrivaran.  
**to** the hard working secretary

## 2. BACKGROUND ON FAROESE DITRANSITIVES

- Faroese and Icelandic pattern alike with ‘send’.
- DO and PP allowed.

## Icelandic

(10a) Hugulsömu framkvæmdastjórnir **sendu** duglega ritaranum  
the thoughtful managers **sent** the hard working secretary  
óvænta jólagjöf.  
a surprise birthday present

(10b) Hugulsömu framkvæmdastjórnir **sendu** óvænta jólagjöf  
the thoughtful managers **sent** a surprise birthday present  
**til** duglega ritarans.  
**to** the hard working secretary

## 2. BACKGROUND ON FAROESE DITRANSITIVES

- Faroese and Icelandic pattern alike with ‘send’.
- DO and PP allowed.

- Work in this area is interesting because PP ditransitives are increasingly available alongside DO ditransitives in Faroese. (Fiebig 2012; Henriksen 2000; Petersen 2010; Ussery & Petersen, to appear)

- Various factors might affect the choice between DO and PP.

Semantic properties of verbs

Phonological heaviness of the indirect object

Generational variation

(Fiebig 2012; Henriksen 2000; Petersen 2010; Thráinsson et al. 2004/2012)

- (A very initial speculation: Scope flexibility of the PP construction might contribute to its rise.)

## 2. BACKGROUND ON FAROESE DITRANSITIVES

(11a) Jón gav mér ein hund.  
Jón gave me a dog

**DO: pronoun**

(11b) Jón gav ein hund til mín.  
Jón gave a dog to me

**PP: pronoun**

(11c) Jón gav börnunum bomm.  
Jón gave the children sweets

**DO: full NP**

(11d) Jón gav bomm til börnini.  
Jón gave sweets to the children

**PP: full NP**

(11e) Jón gav börnunum, sum kláraðu seg væl í skúlanum, bomm.  
Jón gave the children who did well in school sweets

**DO: heavy NP**

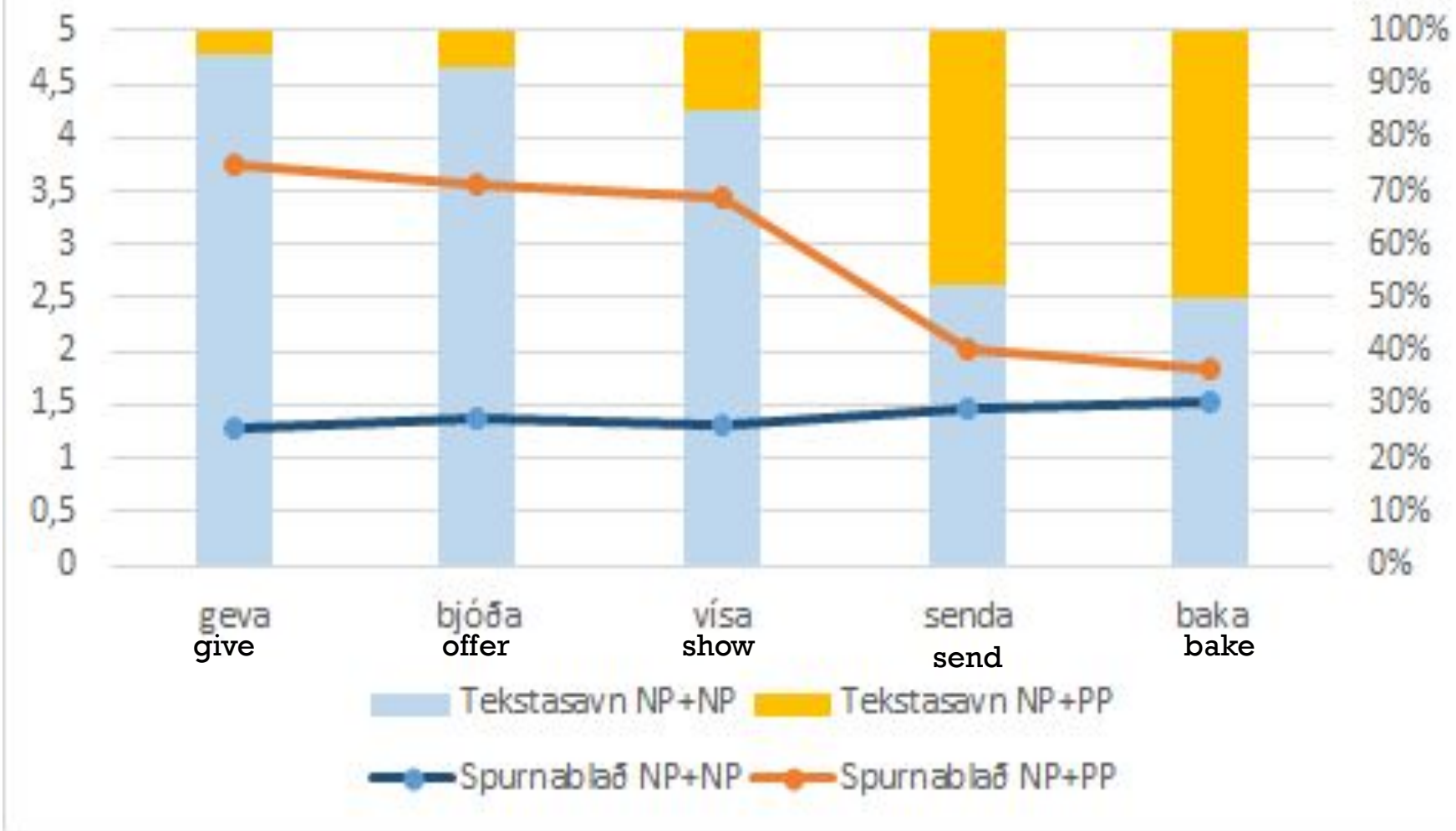
(11f) Jón gav bomm til börnini, sum kláraðu seg væl í skúlanum.  
Jón gave sweets to the children who did well in school

**PP: heavy NP**

## Ussery & Petersen (to appear)

- Tested verbs with different semantic properties and with varying lengths of the indirect object NP
- 50 speakers ages 18-25
- **DO construction judged better than the PP version for every semantic category.**
- **But, no speaker rejects the PP construction.**

## Questionnaire vs. Text-corpus



Fieldwork, Uni  
Johannesen (2019)

Tekstasavn = Text Corpus

Spurnarblað = Questionnaire  
(62 speakers across  
generations)

1=totally acceptable

5 = totally unacceptable

light blue vertical bar = % of DO in corpus

dark blue plot line = speaker rating of DO

yellow vertical bar = % of PP in corpus

orange plot line = speaker rating of PP

Even though the acceptability and distribution of the PP frame has been questioned in the literature on Faroese, there is enough evidence to suggest that PP ditransitives:

- Exist
- Are accepted by speakers
- Have fewer restrictions than in Icelandic



**Universal** quantifiers: *allir* ‘all’, *ein og hvør* ‘every (one), any’, *hvør (einasti)* ‘every (one)’.

(12) Hann lovaði eina viðgerð til **hvønn einasta** sjúkling  
he promised a treatment to every single patient

- Not natural without ‘einasta’.
- ‘hvør’ (object animate).

**Existential** quantifiers: *ein* ‘a’, *summi* ‘some’, *eihnvør* (< Dan. enhver) = *onkur* ‘some (one)’, *nakar* ‘anyone’.

- We will not use ‘onkur’, as it does not have specific reference.

### 3. BACKGROUND ON FAROESE QUANTIFIERS

Very little work has been done on Faroese quantifiers - Sandøy (1992, 2014); Lindstad (2009), Petersen (2020).

FYI:

Mid Scalar quantifiers: *fáir* ‘few’, *mangur* ‘many’, *nógvur* ‘many’.

Negative quantifiers: *eingin* ‘no one’, *hvørgin* ‘neither’.

### 3. BACKGROUND ON FAROESE QUANTIFIERS

#### SCOPE IN TRANSITIVE SENTENCES

*ein...hvør* ‘a...every’  
surface scope

*hvør...ein* ‘every...a’  
ambiguous scope

(13a) *ein...hvør* ‘a...every’

Ein søgufrøðingur las hvørja einastu bók um natúrvanlukkur.  
a historian read every single book about the natural disaster

**Surface:** a > every

A certain historian read each and every book.

(13b) *hvør...ein* ‘every...a’

Hvør einasti søgufrøðingur las eina bók um natúrvanlukkur.  
every single historian read a book about the natural disaster

**Ambiguous:** every > a/a > every

**Surface:** Each and every historian read some random (possibly different) book.

**Inverse:** There is a particular book that each historian read.  
(This is a possibility with surface scope.)

(14a) I gave *a* different child *every* candy bar.

**Surface: a > every**

There is a different child, and that child was given every candy bar.

(14b) I gave *every* child *a* different candy bar.

**Surface: every > a**

For every child, that child got a different candy bar.

(Bruening 2010b, EX 12b/13b)

## 4.1 THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT SCOPE IN DITRANSITIVES

For English, it has been observed that the **DO construction** has a **surface scope** interpretation.

(15a) I gave *a* different candy bar to *every* child.

**Ambiguous:**  $a > \text{every}/\text{every} > a$

**Surface:** There is some different (kind of) candy bar, and that candy bar was given to every child

**Inverse:** For each child, that child got a different candy bar

(15b) I gave *every* candy bar to *a* different child.

**Ambiguous:**  $\text{every} > a/a > \text{every}$

**Surface:** For each candy bar, it was given to a different child

**Inverse:** There is a different child, and that child got every candy bar

(Bruening 2010a, EX 12b/13a)

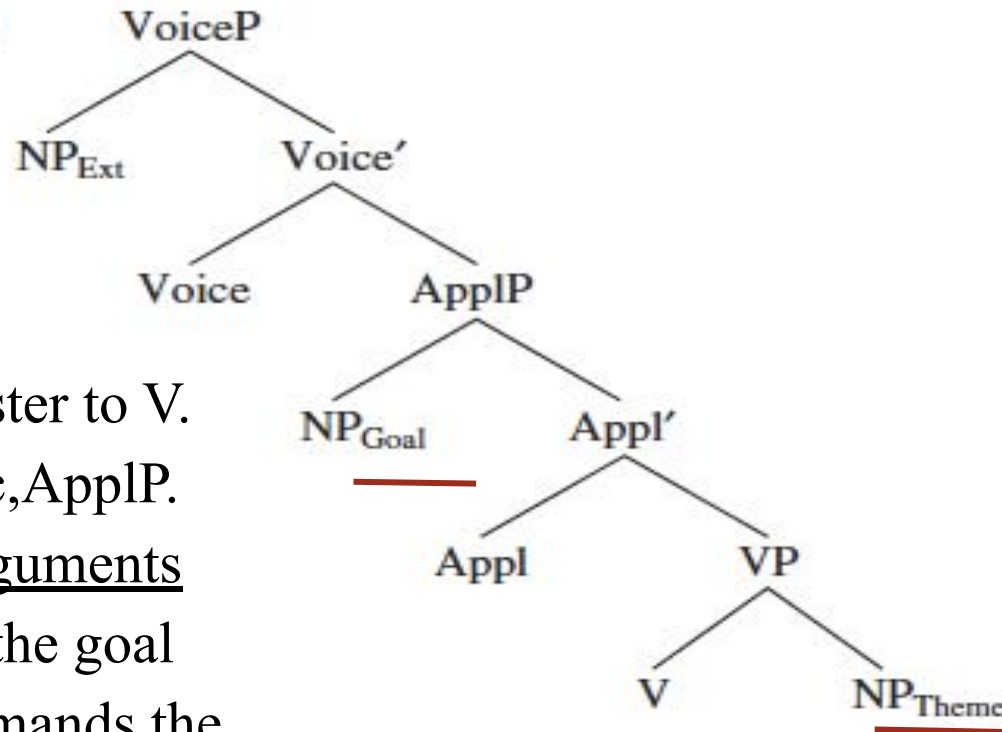
## 4.1 THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT SCOPE IN DITRANSITIVES

The **PP construction** has been observed to have **ambiguous scope**.

We saw earlier with Faroese:

**DO = surface scope**

**PP = inverse scope**



## DO Structure

- Theme is merged as sister to V.
- Goal is merged in Spec,ApplP.
- Theme and goal are arguments of different heads and the goal asymmetrically c-commands the theme.
- The goal will move first in scope-movement operations.

## Surface Scope

(Bruening 2010b, ex 6, also discussed in Bruening 2001. See also Ussery 2018 for extensions to Icelandic.)

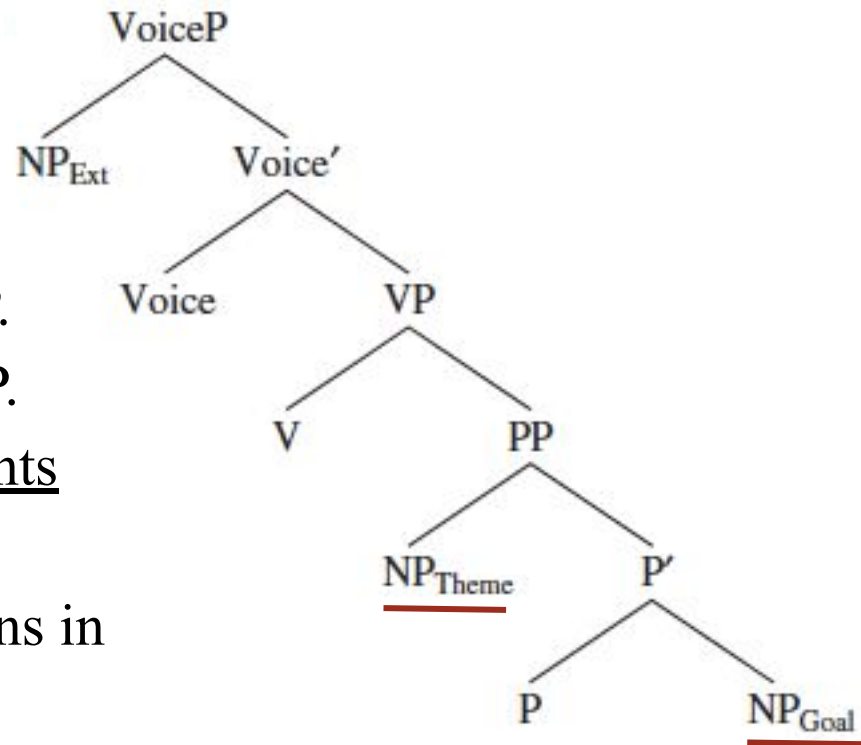
## BRUENING'S (2010) ANALYSIS OF SCOPE ASYMMETRY

At this time, we are not making a claim about the structure of the DO construction in Faroese.

# BRUENING'S (2001/2010) ANALYSIS OF SCOPE ASYMMETRY

## PP Structure

- Goal is merged as sister to P.
- Theme is merged in Spec,PP.
- Theme and goal are arguments of the same head and are equidistant to higher positions in the structure
- Either theme or goal can move first in scope-movement operations.



(Bruening 2010b, ex 7, also discussed in Bruening 2001)

## Surface or inverse scope

Anderson 2004

“The results of the experiments presented here show that assigning an inverse scope interpretation to a doubly quantified sentence consumes more processing resources than assigning surface scope...”

(Anderson 2004, p. 25-26)

- Examined transitive doubly quantified sentences
- Series of experiments using different tasks/set-ups
- Forced choice, Likert scale, reading time
  - With and without context for the target sentence

Inverse scope incurs a processing cost, but the ordering of quantifiers matters.

## 4.2 EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH ON SCOPE

See also:

- Chemla & Bott (2015) for experimental findings which suggest that inverse scope is not susceptible to priming.
- Feiman, Maldonado, and Snedecker (2020) for a rebuttal to some of Chemla & Bott’s findings.

(16) *An* experienced climber scaled *every* cliff.

Surface follow-up: The climber was very skilled.

Inverse follow-up: The climbers were very skilled.

(Anderson 2004, EX 65-66)

### *a...every* Reading Time

Follow-up with plural subject **(inverse) read significantly more slowly** than follow-up with singular subject (surface).

(17) *Every* historian examined *a* document.

Surface follow-up: The documents were in good condition.

Inverse follow-up: The document was a stirring speech.

(Anderson 2004, EX 67-68)

### *every...a* Reading Time

No evidence for difference in reading time between follow-ups;  
**inverse is not read significantly more slowly.**

## Reading Time Results

(Anderson 2004)

**Inverse scope with *every...a* incurs less processing cost than inverse scope with *a...every*.**

With *every...a*, both singular and plural continuations could be surface scope.



Based on the theoretical and experimental literature, we expect both syntactic structure and quantifier order to play a role in interpreting ditransitives in Faroese with quantifiers.

We predict a continuum:

- **DO** with **a...every/ein...hvør** should be most amenable to surface scope.
- **PP** with **every...a/hvør...ein** should be most amenable to inverse scope.

This is what we find!

## PREDICTIONS

**Note:** We are not taking prosodic factors into account at this time.

## 5. SCOPE INTERPRETATIONS IN FAROESE

**DO** with *handa*  
'award'

*a...every*: ambiguous

*every...a*: ambiguous

(18a) Nevndin handaði einum tónleikara hvørja einastu virðisløn.  
the school awarded *a* musician *every* single honor.

**Ambiguous:** *a* > *every/every* > *a*

**Surface:** There is a certain musician and that person was awarded each honor.

**Inverse:** Each honor was awarded to a (possibly) different musician.

(18b) Nevndin handaði hvørjum einasta tónleikara eina virðisløn.  
the school awarded *every* single musician *a* honor.

**Ambiguous:** *every* > *a* / *a* > *every*

**Surface:** Each musician was awarded a (possibly) different honor.

**Inverse:** There is a particular honor and that honor was awarded to each musician.

(19a) Læknin lovaði einum sjúklingi hvørja einastu viðgerð.  
the doctor promised *a* patient *every* single treatment

**Ambiguous: a > every/every > a**

**Surface:** There is particular patient who was promised each kind of treatment.

**Inverse:** For each kind of treatment, it was promised to a (possibly) different patient.

(19b) Læknin lovaði hvørjum tí einasta sjúklingi eina viðgerð.  
the doctor promised *every* single patient *a* treatment.

**Ambiguous: every > a/ a > every**

**Surface:** Each patient was promised a (possibly) different kind of treatment.

**Inverse:** There is a particular treatment and it was promised to each patient.

## 5. SCOPE INTERPRETATIONS IN FAROESE

**DO with *lova***  
**‘promise’**

***a...every*: ambiguous**

***every...a*: ambiguous**

(20a) Arbeiðsgevarin sendi einum skrivstovufólki hvørt tað einasta skjal.  
the employer sent *an* employee each and *every* document.

**Ambiguous, but preference for surface: a > every**

**Surface:** There is a particular employee and that person was sent each document.

(20b) Arbeiðsgevarin sendi hvørjum einasta arbeiðstakara eitt skjal.  
the employer sent *every* single employee *a* document

**Ambiguous, but preference for surface: every > a**

**Surface:** Each employee was sent a (possibly) different document.

**General Pattern for DO: Ambiguous → Surface**

## 5. SCOPE INTERPRETATIONS IN FAROESE

**DO with *senda* ‘send’**

***a...every*: preference for surface**

***every...a*: preference for surface**

(21a) Nevndin handaði eina virðisløn til hvønn einasta tónleikara.  
the school awarded *an* honor to *every* single musician.

**Ambiguous: a > every/every > a**

**Surface:** There is a particular honor and that honor was awarded to each musician.

**Inverse:** Each musician was awarded a (possibly) different honor.

(21b) Nevndin handaði hvørja einastu virðisløn til ein tónleikara.  
the school awarded *every* single honor to *a* musician.

**Inverse: a > every**

There is a particular musician and that person was awarded each honor.

## 5. SCOPE INTERPRETATIONS IN FAROESE

PP with *handa*  
'award'

*a...every*: ambiguous

*every...a*: inverse

(22a) Læknin lovaði eina viðgerð til hvønn tann einasta sjúkling.  
the doctor promised *a* treatment to each and *every* patient.

**Ambiguous: a > every/every > a**

**Surface** There is a particular kind of treatment and each patient is promised that treatment.

**Inverse:** Each patient was promised a (possibly) different kind of treatment.

(22b) Læknin lovaði hvørja einastu viðgerð til ein sjúkling.  
the doctor promised *every* single treatment to *a* patient.

**Ambiguous, but preference for inverse: a > every**

**Inverse:** There is particular patient who was promised each kind of treatment.

## 5. SCOPE INTERPRETATIONS IN FAROESE

PP with *lova*  
'promise'

*a...every*: ambiguous

*every...a*: preference  
for inverse

(23a) *Arbeiðsgevarin sendi eitt skjal til hvørt einasta skrivstovufólk.*  
the supervisor sent *a* document to *every* single employee.

**Ambiguous: a > every/every > a**

**Surface:** There is a particular document and that document was sent to each employee.

**Inverse:** Each employee was sent a (possibly) different document.

(23b) *Arbeiðsgevarin sendi hvørt einasta skjal til eitt skrivstovufólk.*  
the supervisor sent *every* single document to *an* employee.

**Ambiguous: every > a/ a > every**

**Surface:** Each document was sent to a (possibly) different employee.

**Inverse:** There is a particular employee and that person was sent each document.

General Pattern for PP: Ambiguous → Inverse

## 5. SCOPE INTERPRETATIONS IN FAROESE

PP with *senda* ‘send’

*a...every*: ambiguous

*every...a*: ambiguous

## Syntactic Frame and Quantifier Order Comparison

	<b>DO CONSTRUCTION</b>	<b>DO CONSTRUCTION</b>	<b>PP CONSTRUCTION</b>	<b>PP CONSTRUCTION</b>
	<i>ein...hvør</i> 'a...every'	<i>hvør...ein</i> 'every...a'	<i>ein...hvør</i> 'a...every'	<i>hvør...ein</i> 'every...a'
<i>handa</i> 'award'	ambiguous	ambiguous	ambiguous	<b>inverse</b>
<i>lova</i> 'promise'	ambiguous	ambiguous	ambiguous	<b>inverse</b>
<i>senda</i> 'send'	<b>surface</b>	surface	ambiguous	ambiguous
<i>læna</i> 'lend'	<b>surface</b>	ambiguous → surface	ambiguous → inverse	ambiguous → inverse

We see a continuum!



- PP ditransitives are broadly available in Faroese
- We observe a continuum in which syntactic structure and quantifier order matter for scope interpretations. Consistent with observations in the theoretical and experimental literature.

DO with *ein...hvør* ‘a...every’ are most amenable to surface scope

PP with *hvør...ein* ‘every...a’ are most amenable to inverse scope

- PP construction allows for more flexibility of interpretation, so perhaps connected to the rise of the PP ditransitive in Faroese??

## Conclusion

## Bobaljik and Wurmbrand 2012

- Relationship between the word order options in a language and the availability of inverse scope.
- *LF First Principle*: If there is a surface order that matches a particular interpretation, then speakers should use that order.

### Possible production task

- Show a scene that maps to a particular interpretation - e.g. one screwdriver that gets passed around and lent to multiple people.
- People should produce (1b) more than (2a).

(1b) Timburmaðurin lænti eitt skúrúvublað til hvønn einasta starvsfelaga.  
the carpenter lent a screwdriver to every single coworker

(2a) Timburmaðurin lænti hvörjum starvsfelaga eitt skúrúvublað.  
the carpenter lent every coworker a screwdriver

- If (2a) produced, what is the prosodic structure?

## Next Steps

Design an experiment to test interpretations across a wide range of verbs.

## ICELANDIC

(24a) Haraldur sendi einhverjum blaðamanni öll skjölin. **DO**  
Harold sent *some* reporter *all* the documents  
'Harold sent some reporter all the documents.'

**Surface: a > every**

**Surface:** There is some reporter and that reporter received all documents.

(24b) Kennarinn sendi skjal til allra foreldra í skólanum. **PP**  
the teacher sent *a* document **to all** parents in the school  
'The teacher sent a document to all the parents in the school.'

**Ambiguous: a > every/every > a**

**Surface:** There is some (kind of) document and that document was sent to all parents.

**Inverse:** For all parents, they received some unique (kind of) document.

## Next Steps

### Compare Faroese and Icelandic across several verbs.

Examples from Tinna Frímann Jökulsdóttir. Judgments from Hlíf Árnadóttir and Einar Freyr Sigurðsson. Reported in Ussery (2018), EX 27-28.

See also Svenonius (2000), EX 53 for a brief discussion of word order and scope in DO ditransitives in Icelandic.

See also Sigurðsson, Wood, Sigurðsson (2020) EX 21-22 for examples of the morphosyntactic properties of reciprocals and distributives in DO and PP ditransitives in Icelandic.

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## References

Existential quantifiers: *ein* ‘a’, *summi* ‘some’, *eiðnvør* (< Dan. enhver) = *onkur* ‘some (one)’, *nakar* ‘anyone’.

(25a) Timburmaðurin lænti *onkrum* starvsfelaga hvørt einasta skrúvublað.  
the carpenter lent some coworker every single screwdriver

**Surface: a > every**

There is **one** coworker who is lent every screwdriver every screwdriver

(25b) Timburmaðurin lænti *okkurt* skrúvublað til hvønn einasta starvsfelaga.  
the carpenter lent some screwdriver to every single coworker

**Surface: a > every**

There is **one** screwdriver that is lent to every coworker

- *onkur* ‘some’ does not allow for ambiguous readings

## APPENDIX:

### BACKGROUND ON FAROESE QUANTIFIERS

**hvør : onkur**

*ein* ‘a certain’

(26) ... og har kom hann fram á *ein mann*, sum hevði stolið kjøt

...and there he came up on a certain man, who had stolen meat.

(27) var tað ikki *ein Poulsen*, sum *einaferð* arbeiddi her  
was it not a certain Poulsen, who once worked here?

## APPENDIX:

# BACKGROUND ON FAROESE QUANTIFIERS