

Ditransitives in Faroese: The Distribution of IO/DO and PP¹

Abstract

This paper examines the acceptability of the double object and prepositional frames for ditransitives in Faroese. We build on previous literature which has discussed various factors which may influence speakers' use of one frame over the other. We report the findings of a judgment study in which we examined the degree to which semantic properties of verbs and length of the indirect object affect speakers' acceptability of each frame. Our findings suggest that verbal semantics affect the acceptability of the prepositional construction, but not the double object construction. Our findings, however, do not directly support a heavy-late effect, unlike what has been reported in previous literature on Faroese (most notably by Fiebig 2012).

Keywords: Faroese, ditransitives, verbal semantics, drift

¹We would like to thank the following people for assistance with this article: Jóhannes Gísli Jónsson at the University of Iceland for helpful conversations; Einar Freyr Sigurðsson at the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies for generous feedback; Kate Richardson, Kyra Wilson, and Lazar Zamurovic at Carleton College for data entry; Alec Shaw at the University of Iceland for assistance with data analysis; the audience at the 10th Meeting of Frændafundur (Tórshavn, Faroe Islands, August 2019); two anonymous reviewers and the editors of the volume for thoughtful feedback; and especially, the students at the University of the Faroe Islands who participated in the survey. This research is supported, in part, by the Icelandic Research Fund, Rannís, grant number 195926-051, for the project Ditransitives in Insular Scandinavian. All errors are ours.

1 Introduction

This paper examines ditransitives in Faroese and attempts to gauge the acceptability of double object constructions such as (1) versus the acceptability of prepositional constructions such as (1) by means of a judgment task.

- (1) a. Double Object (IO/DO) Construction

at geva fiskimonnum skattalætta

to give fishermen.Dat tax-relief.Acc

‘to give fishermen a tax relief’

- b. Prepositional Construction

at geva skattalætta til fiskimenn

to give tax-relief.Acc to fishermen.Acc

‘to give a tax relief to fishermen’

The examples in (1) form part of the title of Fiebig’s (2012) thesis, which reports the findings of corpus research on the distribution of these two patterns in Faroese. As documented in Fiebig’s (2012) work and other research, e.g. Malmsten (2015), the double object construction is widespread, but there is no common agreement on the extent of use of the prepositional construction in Faroese. For example, Thráinsson et al. (2004,

2012) report that the prepositional (PP) frame is marginally acceptable to ungrammatical with verbs that have certain semantic properties, such as a ‘giving’ interpretation. Other work reports that the prepositional frame is acceptable with ‘giving’ verbs, with the choice between the patterns depending on a variety of factors (Henriksen 2000; Petersen 2010; Fiebig 2012; see also Kholodova and Allen, this volume, on a similar discussion for Modern German). However, most research so far (except Petersen 2010) has either been based on insufficient empirical evidence or has focused on corpus data. We build on and add to previous research by taking a different methodological approach. We report the findings of a judgment survey conducted in December 2017 at the University of the Faroe Islands. On the basis of these results, we aim to provide a description of the distribution of each frame and discuss the theoretical implications of our findings. It should, however, be noted that the study was restricted to speakers between 18 and 25 years, meaning that our conclusions may not be generalisable beyond this age group.

Given the discussion in previous work regarding the factors that might condition the use of one frame over the other, we tested the acceptability of double object and prepositional constructions across a variety of semantic categories and with indirect objects of varying phrasal length. This paper reports four main findings. First, speakers rate the double object construction as more acceptable than the prepositional construction across the board. The difference between the mean rating for the double object

construction and the prepositional construction is statistically significant ($p < .01$) within each of the five semantic categories tested – benefactive, communication, giving, future possession, and sending. Even though our overall findings suggest that speakers prefer the double object construction, the prepositional construction is still rated as acceptable. In fact, no speakers completely rejected the prepositional construction, which means that no informant gave *all* PP examples a consistent score of 5 (which was totally ungrammatical). Our findings are, thus, consistent with Henriksen (2000) and Petersen (2010), who also report that PPs are found in younger speakers' speech.

Second, our findings suggest that verbal semantics affect the acceptability of the prepositional construction. We show that 'sending' verbs are generally rated more acceptable with the PP frame and that the difference between the average PP-rating for sending verbs versus verbs of communication, giving, and future possession is significant ($p < .01$). This finding is intriguing because it relates to debates in the literature about the degree to which either the syntactic structure or verbal semantics interacts with interpretation.

According to the Alternative Projection approach (found in Collins and Thráinsson 1996; Harley 2002; Beck and Johnson 2004; Bruening 2010a, 2010b; Harley and Jung 2015; Bruening 2018, among others), the double object construction has a caused possession interpretation and the prepositional construction has a caused motion interpretation. The Verb Sensitive approach (Rappaport Hovav and Levin 2008) also argues that the

double object frame maps to possession. However, on this account the PP frame encodes *either* a caused motion or caused possession interpretation, depending on the verb. The fact that PP constructions with verbs of sending, i.e. a verb class that is clearly associated with motion, are generally rated somewhat better than PP constructions with other verbs, corroborates that verbal semantics is a relevant factor with this frame. At the same time, we do not find evidence which suggests that verbal semantics affects the acceptability of the double object construction. Taken together, our findings indicate that the properties of individual verbs matter more for the PP frame than for the double object frame, which is in line with the Verb Sensitive approach.

The third finding relates to phonological heaviness. In the discussion of her corpus examination of written Faroese, Fiebig (2012) states that there is a heavy-late effect. Fiebig (2012) illustrates that heavier NP objects of the preposition are more prevalent than lighter prepositional objects. However, our findings do not directly support a heavy-late effect. Prepositional phrases with heavy NPs are not rated significantly better than shorter (non-pronominal) NPs in any semantic category. Nonetheless, we do find that speakers generally dislike a heavy indirect object in the double object construction. For every semantic category except communication, speakers gave double object constructions with heavy indirect objects a statistically significant lower acceptability score than constructions with shorter NPs or with pronominals. Further, we find that speakers disprefer pronouns with

the PP construction. Within each semantic category, double objects with pronominal indirect objects are rated significantly higher than prepositional constructions with pronouns. Yet, the latter kind of construction is not rejected completely, which is in accord with Petersen's (2010) finding that pronouns are used with the PP construction. While our findings do not provide positive support for a heavy-late effect, they do demonstrate that speakers have a dispreference for a heavy phrase in a sentence-medial position and a dispreference for a phonologically light item in a sentence-final position (cf. also Dubois, this volume, whose investigation of the effect of different measures of 'complexity' on the choice between nominal and prepositional patterns in Dutch and English yields similarly mixed results). Taken together, these results suggest that while the prepositional construction is present in Faroese, its availability is restricted in various ways. This is particularly interesting when comparing Faroese with both the other Insular Scandinavian language Icelandic and with the mainland Scandinavian language Danish. In the syntactic literature, Icelandic is often discussed alongside Faroese because the two languages share many properties. However, as the Faroe Islands remain a Danish territory, there continues to be sustained contact between Danish and Faroese, as discussed in detail in Petersen (2010). With respect to ditransitives, Faroese can be placed between Icelandic and Danish. Icelandic has retained rich case morphology and has restrictions on the availability of the PP frame based on both case pattern and semantic interpretation. Danish, on the other hand,

does not have case (except on pronouns) and fairly freely allows the prepositional frame (Hansen and Heltoft 2011:1315; also Nielsen and Heltoft, this volume). While no longer as robust as in Icelandic, case morphology remains present in Faroese. Even though the restrictions on the PP construction are not as rigid as in Icelandic, the construction is not as freely available in Faroese as it is in the relatively case-less Danish – and the relatively case-less English, which is increasingly being spoken in the Faroe Islands.

Faroese also diverges from Icelandic and Danish with respect to benefactives (e.g. *bakaði Fríðu eina køku* ‘baked Frida.Dat a cake.Acc’), and this brings us to our fourth main finding. Within the prepositional frame, benefactives received the highest acceptability rating when compared with every other category, and the second highest rating for the double object frame. As discussed in Section 4, the findings are mixed with respect to statistical significance when compared to every other category, but the overall pattern supports previous work which has noted the prevalence of double object benefactives in Faroese as compared to Icelandic (Holmberg and Platzack 1995 and Thráinsson 2007:230) and as compared to Danish (Hansen and Heltoft 2011:1313-1314; also see Nielsen and Heltoft, this volume, who specifically address the heavily restricted use of benefactive “free” indirect objects in present-day Danish).

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 provides background context on ditransitives in Insular Scandinavian. Section 3 discusses

previous research and observations that have been made about the double object and the prepositional frames in Faroese. In Section 4 we present the findings of our study in more detail, i.e. we will elaborate on the four major findings outlined above. Section 5 concludes the chapter with a brief summary of the main results of the empirical investigation.

2 Ditransitives in Insular Scandinavian

Faroese is usually classified together with Icelandic as an Insular Scandinavian language, in contrast to the Mainland Scandinavian languages Danish, Norwegian and Swedish. Considering the comparatively limited research tradition on the Faroese language, this section contextualises ditransitives in Faroese by comparing their features to their correspondents in both Icelandic as well as Mainland Scandinavian.

Among the syntactic features that Insular Scandinavian languages share in contrast to Mainland Scandinavian is that the former reportedly do not allow the prepositional complement with verbs of the *geva*-‘give’ class (Holmberg and Platzack 1995:12). However, while this observation holds in Icelandic

(Thráinsson 2007), the situation in Faroese is more complex, as we outlined in the introduction.²

In Icelandic, there is variation in the case patterns available for the double object frame of ditransitive verbs. While the subject is always nominative, the direct and indirect objects appear in various combinations of dative, accusative, and genitive case – with the dative indirect object followed by an accusative direct object being the predominant pattern. The range of case patterns is illustrated below. According to Jónsson (2000), the distribution of each pattern is the following, with the numbers in parentheses indicating the approximate total number of verb types attested in the patterns: NDA (>220); NAD (37); NDD (29); NDG (28); NAG (21).³

- (2) a. Ég sagði þér söguna. NDA
I.Nom told you.Dat the story.Acc
'I told you the story.'
- b. Þeir leyndu Ólaf sannleikanum. NAD
they.Nom concealed Olaf.Acc the truth.Dat
'They concealed the truth from Olaf.'

² There is a caveat regarding Icelandic. The prepositional construction is more acceptable when the recipient is interpreted as an institution as opposed to an individual. (Höskuldur Þráinsson, p.c.)

³See the appendix in Jónsson (2000) for a complete list of ditransitive verbs that these categories comprise. This list is based on verbs listed in dictionaries and handbooks of both Modern and Old Icelandic.

- c. Ólafur lofaði Maríu þessum hring. NDD
 Olaf promised Mary.Dat this ring.Dat
 ‘Olaf promised Mary this ring.’
- d. María óskaði Ólafi alls góðs. NDG
 Maria.Nom wished Olaf.Dat everything good.Gen
 ‘Mary wished Olaf everything good.’
- e. Jón bað mig bænna. NAG
 Jon.Nom asked me.Acc a favor.Gen
 ‘John asked me a favor.’
- (Zaenen et al. 1985, ex 37)

Only verbs that have the NDA or NDD case pattern allow for the prepositional frame with *til* ‘to’, and even then, it is generally restricted to verbs that express physical motion of the direct object, as shown by the contrast between (3) and (4) and between (5) and (6).

- (3) a. Haraldur sendi mér ost.
 Harold.Nom sent me.Dat cheese.Acc
 ‘Harold sent me (some) cheese.’
- b. Haraldur sendi ost til mín.
 Harold.Nom sent cheese.Acc to me.Gen
 ‘Harold sent (some) cheese to me.’

- (4) a. María gaf Haraldi bókina.
 Mary.Nom gave Harold.Dat the book.Acc
 ‘Mary gave Harold the book.’
- b. *María gaf bókina til Haraldar.
 Mary.Nom gave the book.Acc to Harold.Gen
 ‘Mary gave the book to Harold.’
 (Thráinsson 2007:173-174)

- (5) a. Hún skilaði mér bókinni.
 she.Nom returned me.Dat the book.Dat
 ‘She returned the book to me.’
- b. Hún skilaði bókinni til mín.
 she.Nom returned the book.Dat to me.Gen
 ‘She returned the book to me.’

- (6) a. Ég lofaði henni því.
 I.Nom promised her.Dat it.Dat
 ‘I promised her it.’
- b. *Ég lofaði því til hennar.
 I.Nom promised it to her.Gen
 ‘I promised it to her.’
 (Thráinsson 2007:177-178)

Much more research is needed, but given that the PP frame seems to predominantly encode motion, Icelandic fits with theoretical approaches that argue for a frame-to-meaning correspondence, such as the Alternative Projection approach discussed in the introduction (though we would need to confirm that the double object construction encodes caused possession).⁴ Even though Faroese does not display the same restrictions as Icelandic, the double object construction is still preferred to the prepositional construction. Despite case morphology being less robust than in Icelandic, Faroese has three productive cases - nominative, accusative, and dative. There are relics of the genitive which exist only in a limited range of constructions, as with pronominal objects of *til*. In the ballad language, there are vestiges of the genitive, e.g. *njóta guls og landa* ‘enjoy gold-Gen.sg. and countries-Gen.pl’ (Weyhe 2011:92), but usually the accusative (and sometimes the dative) is found in its place, as shown by Weyhe (2011:92) and Jónsson (2017). In modern Faroese, no verb has a genitive object.⁵ For instance, the historical construction *bíða mín* ‘wait me-Gen.’ has changed to *bíða mær* ‘wait me-Dat.’ or *bíða eftir mær* ‘wait after me-Dat.’ (all meaning ‘wait for me’). This puts modern Faroese in stark contrast to Icelandic, which has genitive direct objects for some verbs, as shown above in (2).

⁴See Ussery (2017) and Ussery (2018) for a discussion of case and word order patterns in Icelandic ditransitives.

⁵See Jónsson (2000:83-84) for suggestions about why there are no genitive indirect objects in Icelandic.

Within the cases that are productive in Faroese, the dative has been losing ground to the accusative in various constructions, see e.g. Jónsson (2009) and Petersen (2017, 2020). Even though the dative is slowly diminishing in Faroese, our study, as well as others (Petersen 2010; Fiebig 2012; Malmsten 2015), reveal that the dative case stands strong in double object constructions. Unlike parallel constructions in Icelandic, Faroese almost exclusively exhibits the NDA case frame, as shown in (7) - (9), where double object patterns are given in examples (a), while (b) illustrate the prepositional construction.⁶

(7) a. Freya sendi sjeikinum eina gávu.

Freya.Nom sent boyfriend.the.Dat a gift.Acc

‘Freya sent the boyfriend a gift.’

b. Freya sendi eina gávu til sjeikin.

Freya.Nom sent a gift.Acc to boyfriend.the.Acc

‘Freya sent a gift to the boyfriend.’

⁶In addition to the typical NDA case pattern in Faroese, Henriksen (2000:80) mentions the NAA case frame, shown in (i), in which the latter object is semantically related to the verb.

(i) a. Hon kysti hann so søtan koss.
she.Nom kissed him.Acc so sweet kiss.Acc
‘She gave him such a sweet kiss.’

b. Eg biði teg eina bøn afturat.
I.Nom ask you.Acc one request.Acc more
‘I ask one more request of you.’
(Henriksen 2000:79)

According to Henriksen (2000:80) only four verbs occur in the NAA case frame in Faroese – *kysa* ‘to kiss’, *læra* ‘teach’, *biða* ‘ask’, *spyrja* ‘ask’, with the indirect object having the thematic role of theme as in (i), or source in (i) (‘you’ is the source of whatever is requested).

- (8) a. Mamman lovaði henni ein kjóla.
 the mother.Nom promised her.Dat a dress.Acc
 ‘The mother promised her a dress.’
- b. Mamman lovaði ein kjóla til hennara.
 the mother.Nom promised a dress.Acc to her.Gen
 ‘The mother promised a dress to her.’
- (9) a. Uni fortaldi gentuni eina søgu.
 Uni.Nom told the girl.Dat a story.Acc
 ‘Uni told the girl a story.’
- b. Uni fortaldi eina søgu fyri gentuni.
 Uni.Nom told a story.Acc before/in front of the girl.Dat
 ‘Uni told a story in front of the girl.’

There are several points that are of particular interest in this context. The first is that, unlike in Icelandic, the accusative has replaced the genitive as the case for non-pronominal objects of *til*; only (8), which features a pronominal object, still has the genitive. This change does not parallel the case patterns for objects of transitive verbs, which are restricted to dative and accusative (approximately 120 verbs govern a dative direct object, see Petersen 2020:164-165). The change also marks an instance of structural accusative increasingly making its way into Faroese.

The second way in which Faroese clearly differs from Icelandic, which is most relevant to the current discussion, is that Faroese allows the PP frame with verbs that do not express physical movement. The sentences in (8)/(9) would be ungrammatical in Icelandic. Icelandic does allow the PP frame with some non-movement verbs, but in such instances, a preposition other than *til* ‘to’ is sometimes used, as shown in (10) and (11). Additionally, in Icelandic the semantic interpretation is not always parallel to the standard PP frame. For instance, the direct object in (11) cannot be the object of the preposition in (11).

(10) a. Icelandic

Þeir leyndu hana sannleikanum.

they.Nom concealed her.Acc the truth.Dat

‘They concealed her the truth.’

b. Þeir leyndu sannleikanum fyrir henni.

they.Nom concealed the truth.Dat from/for her.Dat

‘They concealed the truth from her.’

(Thráinsson 2007:175)

(11) a. Icelandic

Hann krafði hana sagna.

he.Nom demanded her.Acc stories.Gen

‘He asked her to reveal the information.’

- b. Hann krafði hana um peningana/ *um
 he.Nom demanded her.Acc about the money.Acc/*about the
 sagnirnar
 stories.Acc
 ‘He demanded the money from her/ *‘He demanded the
 stories from her.’
 (Thráinsson 2007:177)

We see that *fyrir* ‘for’ is also used in the Faroese example in (9), while *til* ‘to’ is used in (7b) and (8). In his discussion of *fyrir* ‘before, in front of’, Barnes (2001[1981]) suggests that there is a semantic role PRESENCE associated with this preposition, in which the object of the preposition is animate and the activity is done in the physical company of and directed at the animate object.⁷ Therefore, (9) has an interpretation in which the telling of the story is done in the presence of the girl and is directed at her.

The third point of interest is that Icelandic and Faroese differ with respect to benefactives. Benefactives are more widely used in Faroese than in Icelandic, as pointed out by Holmberg and Platzack (1995) and Thráinsson

⁷Barnes (2001:37) defines PRESENCE as follows: “Presence comprises those examples in which something is uttered or done in the presence of (i.e. before) an animate being (occasionally an inanimate object), originally presumably with the implication, now with the additional sense that what is uttered or done is addressed to or directed at the animate being (or object).” An example from Barnes (2001) is *tú skuldi heldur lisið hatta brævið fyrir mér hin sorgardagin ...* ‘you should rather (i.e. it would have been better if you had) read this letter to me [on] that day of sorrow’.

(2007:230). While the example in (12) is grammatical in Faroese, it is marginal or even ungrammatical in Icelandic, shown in (12):

(12) a. Faroese

Eg bakaði mammu míni eina køku.

I.Nom baked mother my.Dat a cake.Acc

‘I baked my mother a cake.’

b. Icelandic

??Ég bakaði mömmu minni køku.

I.Nom baked mother.Dat my cake.Acc

‘I baked my mother a cake.’

(Thráinsson 2007:230)

However, if the indirect object is coreferential with the subject, benefactives are possible in Icelandic, as in *Ég bakaði mér køku* ‘I baked myself a cake’ (Thráinsson 2007:230). Icelandic also allows the PP frame with benefactives, typically involving the prepositions *handa* ‘for’ or *fyrir* ‘for’. In Faroese PP-benefactives, there is more variation concerning the preposition used (and correspondingly, the precise semantics). For example, in (13), *fyrir* is used and the sentence has the PRESENCE interpretation discussed above, while *til* is used in (14), yielding a caused possession

interpretation (see Nielsen and Heltoft, this volume, on similar instances with *til* in Danish).

- (13) a. Lena sang mær ein sang.
Lena.Nom sang me.Dat a song.Acc
'Lena sang me a song.'
- b. Lena sang ein sang fyri mær.
Lena.Nom sang a song.Acc for me.Dat
'Lena sang a song for me.'

- (14) a. Jón keypti konuni ein bil.
Jon.Nom bought the wife.Dat a car.Acc
'John bought his wife a car.'
- b. Jón keypti ein bil til konuna.
Jon.Nom bought a car.Acc to the wife.Dat
'John bought a car for his wife.'

All of the benefactives that we tested in our study had *til* 'to' in the prepositional construction. As mentioned in the introduction, in our study, speakers rated benefactives higher than most other kinds of verbs in both the double object and the prepositional constructions, which may be attributed to the general prevalence of benefactives in Faroese.

In sum, we see that while Faroese and Icelandic have some common properties, the two languages are not identical when it comes to ditransitives. In particular, Icelandic has a wider range of case patterns but is far more restrictive in its use of the PP frame, whereas Faroese displays less variation in its ditransitive case patterns but is more tolerant of PP patterns. Benefactive constructions (both prepositional and non-prepositional) are especially common in Faroese. In the next section, we provide some more details on the availability of the prepositional frame in Faroese.

3 Overview of previous observations about Faroese

Although the literature is far from extensive, there have been some observations made about the use of the double object frame versus the prepositional frame in Faroese. Thráinsson et al. (2004/2012:261) report that the double object frame is the default for verbs meaning ‘sell, lend, give, send’ and deem prepositional sentences with these types of verbs as marginally acceptable to ungrammatical, as shown below.

- (15) ?*Hon gav telduna til gentuna
she.Nom gave the computer.Acc to the girl.Acc
‘She gave the computer to the girl.’
(Thráinsson et al. 2004/2012:264)

A large text-based study (an examination of written essays) by Malmsten (2015) confirms that the double object construction is prevalent in Modern Faroese. However, Henriksen (2000:68) writes in his syntax of Faroese that PP complements are possible in the speech of the younger generations, giving the examples in (16).

- (16) a. Kongur skrivaði honum bræv.
king.Nom wrote him.Dat letter.Acc
'The king wrote him a letter.'
- b. Kongur skrivaði bræv til hansara.
king.Nom wrote letter.Acc to his.Gen
'The king wrote a letter to him.'
- (Henriksen 2000:68)

As we will show below, our findings are consistent with those by Henriksen; our participants were younger speakers and they indeed allow PP complements to a large extent. (Note, however, that Petersen 2010 reports that older speakers do, in fact, also accept the PP frame; see discussion below.)

The most extensive work on ditransitives in Faroese to date is Fiebig's (2012) MA thesis. Her corpus study examined the distribution of 81 ditransitive verbs in articles which appeared in the first three months of

1998 in the newspaper *Dimmalætting*. Her main conclusion is that the PP frame does exist in Faroese, even with *geva* ‘to give’, but that the double object frame is still the most common pattern, as also pointed out by Petersen (2010:120-129) and Malmsten (2015). Fiebig (2012) categorizes verbs according to the semantic classes in Barðdal, Kristoffersen, and Sveen (2011:67). These macro-categories include verbs of: actual transfer (*geva* ‘give’), intention (*lova* ‘promise’), creation (*gera sær* ‘make something for oneself’), mode of communication (*skriva* ‘write someone something’), enabling (*loyva* ‘permit’), retaining (*banna* ‘forbid’), mental processes (*fyrigeva* ‘forgive’), and possession (*goyma sær* ‘save something for oneself’); cf. also Valdeson, this volume, who uses similar categories to semantically classify Swedish ditransitives.^{8,9}

The results of Fiebig’s (2012) study show that the PP construction is used with a variety of semantic categories. In particular, the ‘actual transfer’ class, which includes *geva* ‘give’, usually takes the double object form, but PPs are not completely ruled out. Additionally, Fiebig (2012) reports that PPs are found with other semantic classes as well. In the ‘intention’ class, PPs are found with the verbs *at játta* ‘grant’ and *at ætla* ‘intend’.

Prepositions are also robustly found in the ‘communication’ category with

⁸Fiebig also has a category for opaque or unclear ditransitives such as *kyssa* ‘kiss’.

⁹It should be noted that Barðdal, Kristoffersen, and Sveen (2011) provide a finer grained subcategorization for some of the macrocategories. For example, the ‘actual transfer’ category is comprised of verbs of giving/delivering, lending, paying, sending, bringing, obtaining. By contrast, the ‘intention’ category is only comprised of the verbs of future transfer.

verbs such as *boða* ‘announce’, *forklára* ‘explain’, *fortelja* ‘tell’, *sigja* ‘tell’, *skriva* ‘write’ and *vísa* ‘show’ and in the ‘possession’ category with *spara* ‘to save.’ Within the ‘retaining’ category, prepositions were only found within the ‘constraining’ subcategory, e.g. *seta e-m e-t* ‘to give someone an order’. In the ‘creation’ class, PPs are found with *reisa* ‘to raise’, *skapa* ‘to create’ and *útvega* ‘get’. No prepositional constructions were found in the ‘enabling’ and ‘mental processes’ categories. Additionally, the prepositional construction may involve prepositions other than *til* ‘to’. For instance, in the ‘communication’ category, *biðja* ‘ask’ uses the preposition *um* ‘about’. Even though the PP construction appears to be fairly widespread, Fiebig (2012) suggests that its use is determined by certain factors, in particular phonological heaviness (Fiebig 2012:82-83). PPs are generally not found if the indirect object is a pronoun. However, if the object is a bare noun, a noun that is modified in some way, or is phonologically heavy, a PP is possible. As we will discuss in Section 4, participants in our study rated PP constructions with a pronominal prepositional object worse than constructions with a regular NP and worse than constructions with a heavy NP. However, the relative absence of the preposition plus pronoun pairing from the corpus does not perfectly map to acceptability; pronouns are not completely ruled out with PPs in our study.

Additionally, argument structure interacts with the availability of the double object and the prepositional frames in Faroese. That is, Fiebig (2012)

demonstrates that PPs are not found in patterns in which the indirect object is a reflexive, as shown in (17).¹⁰

- (17) a. Hann átti sær hús í Danmark.
 he.Nom owned SELF.Dat house in Denmark
 ‘He owned a house in Denmark.’
- b. *Hann átti hús til sín í Danmark.
 he.Nom owned house to SELF in Denmark
 ‘He owned a house in Denmark to himself.’

Another interesting observation is that, in Fiebig’s (2012) study, PPs were not found to co-occur with verbs that are only used ditransitively, and never appear as monotonatives – e.g., verbs such as *ímynda* ‘imagine’, *misunna*

¹⁰In fact, a subset of verbs of ‘obtaining’ and ‘creation’ in Faroese (and Icelandic) are only felicitous with a reflexive indirect object, shown in (ii), and the PP frame is not allowed. Barðdal, Kristoffersen, and Sveen (2011) and Nielsen and Heltoft, this volume, discuss similar V+REFL+NP examples in Norwegian and Danish, respectively.

- (ii) a. Hann tók sær altíð eina øl eftir arbeiðið.
 he.Nom took SELF.Dat always a beer.Acc after work
 ‘He always had a beer after work.’
 (Petersen 2020:178)

However, we note that reflexives are allowed with the PP variant of verbs of sending, as in (iii).

- (iii) a. Hann sendi sær sjálvum ein teldupost
 he.Nom sent SELF.Dat an e-mail.Acc
 ‘He sent an e-mail to himself.’
- b. Hann sendi ein teldupost til sín sjálvan/sjálvs
 he.Nom sent an e-mail.Acc to SELF.Acc/Gen.
 ‘He sent an e-mail to himself.’

‘envy’ and *unna* ‘not envy’. In Faroese, ditransitive verbs generally have monotransitive variants, some of which are illustrated in (18).

- (18) a. Jón lænti ein bil.
John.Nom borrowed a car.Acc
‘John borrowed a car.’
- b. Forhoyrsleiðarin loyvdi ein steðg.
the interrogator.Nom allowed a break.Acc
‘The interrogator allowed a break.’
- c. Jóna fortaldi eina søgu.
Jóna.Nom told a story.Acc
‘Jona told a story.’
- d. Freya sendi eina gávu.
Freya.Nom sent a gift.Acc
‘Freya sent a gift.’
- e. Jón keypti ein bil.
John.Nom bought a car.Acc
‘John bought a car.’

For the purpose of consistency with Fiebig’s (2012) findings, all of the verbs that we examined also have monotransitive variants.

While Fiebig's work is based on written Faroese, a judgment study conducted by Petersen (2010:120-129)¹¹ highlights the complexity of the distribution of pronouns with PP constructions. In his study, he shows that some speakers accept sentences such as *Jón gevur bókina til mín* 'John gives book-the.Acc to me.Gen'. In this judgment test, the oldest male and female speakers accepted the PP constructions most readily, while the young female speakers and the mid-age male speakers were more reluctant. The young male informants accepted PPs 52.2% of the time; for details see Petersen (2010:125). It might be surprising to see that the oldest speakers are those who accept the construction with the PP most readily, as it is usually young speakers who initiate language change (presuming that greater acceptability of PPs reflects an increased use of PPs). However, this can be explained by taking the linguistic background of the older speakers into account. These speakers typically had an extensive amount of exposure to Danish in their youth; for instance, all their school books were in Danish. Today the younger speakers are certainly also exposed to Danish (and English), but they may show some bias against the PP construction as a result of teaching in schools: the PP construction is taught as prescriptively incorrect in Faroese. The findings of Petersen's (2010) judgment study illustrate the benefits of collecting speaker judgments. That is, asking

¹¹The judgment test was administered to 198 informants, male and female from three generations (15-35; 36-55 and 56+). They came from different parts of the Faroe Islands, more specifically from Vágar, Eysturoy-Norðoyggjum, Suðuroy and Tórshavn.

speakers to evaluate constructions may provide additional valuable insights into subtle aspects of speakers' linguistic knowledge and that information can be used to complement evidence from corpus research.

To summarize, even though the prepositional form of ditransitives is less prevalent in Faroese than the double object construction, the PP construction is certainly not totally ruled out and is acceptable with verbs in a variety of semantic classes. Even though PPs are more acceptable when the complement is phonologically heavy, PPs are sometimes allowed even with pronouns. The results of the judgment survey discussed in the following section lend additional support to many of the observations from previous research discussed above. However, we paint a more nuanced picture of how the double object and prepositional constructions interact with semantic categories and phonological heaviness.

4 Methods and results

4.1 Methods

In order to assess speakers' preferences, we designed a Likert scale survey that was administered in two parts in December 2017. Participants were 50 students at the Teachers' College at the University of the Faroe Islands

(Námsvísindadeildin) and were between 18 and 25 years old.¹² Verbs were divided into five semantic categories – *giving*, *future having*, *communication*, *sending*, and *benefactive* – based on the categorization in Rappaport Hovav and Levin (2008).¹³ There were three verbs in each category and six different conditions for each verb, for a total of 90 examples under investigation. The verbs are listed in (19).

- (19) a. Giving: *geva* ‘give,’ *læna* ‘lend,’ *selja* ‘sell’
b. Future having: *bjóða* ‘offer,’ *lova* ‘promise,’ *loyva* ‘allow’
c. Communication: *forklára* ‘explain,’ *fortelja* ‘tell,’ *vísa* ‘show’
d. Sending: *maila* ‘mail,’ *senda* ‘send,’ *smsa* ‘sms/text’
e. Benefactive: *baka* ‘bake,’ *binda* ‘knit,’ *keypa*, ‘buy’

For both the double object and the PP frames, there was a condition in which the goal NP was a pronoun, a full (but short) NP, or a phonologically heavy NP which contained a relative clause. The six conditions are illustrated for *geva* ‘give’ below in (20) and *senda* ‘send’ in (21), representing the two most prototypical ditransitive verbs. For each double

¹² As discussed above, previous studies have revealed generational variation. Because we wanted to control for this, our participants are the same age group. With regard to the sociolinguistic variables of class and gender, we did not control for these in any principled way, as previous research has never found any significant impact of such factors on linguistic variation on the Faroe Islands.

¹³ See Kholodova and Allen’s contribution in this volume for a comparable approach.

object (IO) example, the case frame is nominative-dative-accusative and for each prepositional example, the subject is nominative and the direct object is accusative. Pronominal objects of the preposition *til* ‘to’ are genitive, as in (20)/(21); otherwise the object of *til* is accusative.

(20) a. IO: pronoun

Jón gav mér ein hund.

John.Nom gave me.Dat a dog.Acc

‘John gave me a dog.’

b. PP: pronoun

Jón gav ein hund til mín.

John.Nom gave a dog.Acc to me.Gen

‘John gave a dog to me.’

c. IO: full NP

Jón gav börnunum bömm.

John.Nom gave the children.Dat sweets.Acc

‘John gave the children sweets.’

d. PP: full NP

Jón gav bömm til börnini.

John.Nom gave sweets.Acc to the children.Acc

‘John gave sweets to the children.’

e. IO: heavy NP

Jón gav børnunum, sum kláraðu seg væl
John.Nom gave the children.Dat who did well
í skúlanum, bomm.
in school sweets.Acc

‘John gave the children who did well in school sweets.’

f. PP: heavy NP

Jón gav bomm til börnini, sum kláraðu
John.Nom gave sweets.Acc to the children.Acc who did
seg væl í skúlanum.
well in school

‘John gave sweets to the children who did well in school.’

(21) a. IO: pronoun

Freya sendi teimum eina gávu.
Freya.Nom sent them.Dat a gift.Acc

‘Freya sent them a gift.’

b. PP: pronoun

Freya sendi eina gávu til teirra.
Freya.Nom sent a gift.Acc to them.Gen

‘Freya sent a gift to them.’

c. IO: full NP

Freya sendi sjeikinum eina gávu.

Freya.Nom sent boyfriend.the.Dat a gift.Acc

‘Freya sent the boyfriend a gift.’

d. PP: full NP

Freya sendi eina gávu til sjeikin.

Freya.Nom sent a gift.Acc to her boyfriend.Acc

‘Freya sent a gift to her boyfriend.’

e. IO: heavy NP

Freya sendi sjeikinum, sum búði yviri í

Freya.Nom sent her boyfriend.Dat, who lived over in

Kanada, eina gávu.

Canada a gift.Acc

‘Freya sent her boyfriend who lived over in Canada a gift.’

f. PP: heavy NP

Freya sendi eina gávu til sjeikin, sum

Freya.Nom sent a gift.Acc to her boyfriend.Acc who

búði yviri í Kanada.

lived over in Canada

‘Freya sent a gift to her boyfriend who lived over in Canada.’

Participants were asked to rate each sentence on a scale of 1 (totally good) to 5 (totally bad). That is, participants had a scale from 1 to 5, and were told that if they thought that the sentence was 100% correct, they should use 1; if completely wrong 5. Including fillers, there was a total of 148 items, divided between two surveys that were administered two days apart. Each participant took both surveys. For each survey, participants were instructed that we were interested in their assessment of the examples as they would be used in every-day speech, and not in what they may have been taught about ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ uses of the Faroese language.

4.2 Results

We conducted two-tailed t-tests between isolated pairs of different categories and our results reveal four findings. First, even though no speakers completely reject the prepositional construction, the double object construction is preferred for each semantic category. Speakers rated the double object construction more acceptable than the prepositional construction across the board. Second, we find some tentative support for the idea that verbal semantics interacts with the prepositional construction more than with the double object construction. Sending verbs are generally rated more acceptable with the PP frame and the difference between the average PP-rating for sending verbs versus verbs of communication, giving,

and future having is significant ($p < .01$). Third, there is some effect of heaviness of the indirect object. While speakers still prefer the double object construction to the prepositional construction even when the indirect object is phonologically heavy, within the double object macro-category, constructions with a phonologically heavy indirect object are rated least acceptable. This suggests that speakers generally dislike a heavy phrase in a sentence-medial position. As we discuss below, the findings for the prepositional construction are not as clear-cut. Fourth, while benefactive constructions receive the highest acceptability rating in both the double object and the prepositional construction, the results are statistically significant only for PPs. That is, when the PP rating for benefactives is compared to the PP rating for every other semantic category, the difference is significant. Even though this is not the case for double objects, the overall high acceptability rating for benefactives may reflect their general prevalence in Faroese, as discussed in Section 1.

Table 1 shows the average ratings for each kind of sentence tested in each semantic category. As we can see, the double object version is judged better (it has the lower score) than the PP version for every semantic category. This is our most robust finding: the difference between the indirect object mean and the PP mean for each category of verb is $p < .01$.

Table 1: Double Object vs PP, by verbal category and length of object
(lower score = higher acceptability)

	Benefactive	Communication	Giving	Future Having	Sending	mean
IO.pronoun	1.47	1.40	1.45	1.61	1.55	<i>1.50</i>
IO.regular NP	1.23	1.44	1.23	1.63	1.65	<i>1.43</i>
IO.heavy NP	1.82	1.59	2.17	2.19	2.06	<i>1.96</i>
<i>mean</i>	<i>1.51</i>	<i>1.48</i>	<i>1.62</i>	<i>1.81</i>	<i>1.75</i>	
PP.pronoun	2.41	3.09	3.43	3.47	2.42	<i>2.97</i>
PP.regular NP	1.75	2.50	2.83	2.80	2.05	<i>2.39</i>
PP.heavy NP	2.07	2.45	2.81	2.77	2.44	<i>2.51</i>
<i>mean</i>	<i>2.08</i>	<i>2.68</i>	<i>3.02</i>	<i>3.01</i>	<i>2.30</i>	

Further evidence that speakers prefer double object constructions to prepositional constructions is found when we compare the average rating for double objects to the average rating for PPs within each semantic category and for each of the three kinds of NPs. With the exception of benefactive constructions with heavy NPs, for every other phrasal length within every other semantic category, the difference is significant: all but one comparisons are $p < .01$ and the remaining one is $p < .05$. This means that the double object construction is generally preferred across semantic

categories and across phrasal lengths of the goal NP. The overall preference for the double object construction is consistent with observations made in previous literature.

There is an abundance of literature on ditransitives in English, and given the increasing contact between English and Faroese, English is worth discussing here. One of the most-discussed issues in this body of literature relates to whether the double object and prepositional frames (illustrated in 22a-b) have unique interpretations that are encoded in the structures. As briefly discussed in the introduction, various accounts (Harley 2002; Beck and Johnson 2004; Bruening 2010a, 2010b; Harley and Jung 2015; Bruening 2018) adopt some version of an Alternative Projection approach, which argues that the double object frame encodes caused possession and the prepositional frame encodes caused motion. This strand of analysis provides an explanation for the contrast between the double object constructions in (22) and (22).

- (22) a. The editor sent the article to Sue.
b. The editor sent the article to Philadelphia.
c. The editor sent Sue the article.
d. ??The editor sent Philadelphia the article.

(Harley 2002:35)

The sentence in (22) is grammatical only on an interpretation in which Philadelphia is representative of a group of people and, therefore, animate. An animate indirect object can possess the direct object, while an inanimate indirect object cannot.¹⁴

Similar animacy restrictions are found in Icelandic, as evidenced by the contrast between the sentences in (23) and (23).

- (23) a. Bankinn veitir fátækum þjóðum aðstoð.
the bank.Nom gives poor nations.Dat assistance.Acc
'The bank gives poor nations assistance.'
- b. ?Lögreglan veitir gangandi vegfarendum aðstoð.
the police.Nom gives pedestrians.Dat assistance.Acc
'The police give pedestrians assistance.'
- (Jónsson 2000:87)

As noted by Jónsson (2000), (23) is felicitous when describing a situation which involves a tangible transfer, such that poor nations come to possess money, while (23) is infelicitous because such scenarios do not generally result in pedestrians coming to possess something that is transferred from the police.¹⁵ Given that the prepositional construction is generally restricted

¹⁴These examples capture well-known observations found in Green (1974) and Oehrle (1976).

¹⁵Consultation with native speakers reveals that (23) is fine when there is actual transfer, such as the police giving the pedestrians a map. These judgments were gathered during linguistics

to verbs which involve physical movement, as discussed in Section 1, an Alternative Projection approach seems to fit Icelandic – such a proposal is also found in Collins and Thráinsson (1996).

Even across approaches, there is general consensus that the double object construction maps to a caused possession meaning. Following Rappaport Hovav and Levin's (2008) Verb Sensitive Approach as outlined in Section 1, the prepositional construction, by contrast, maps to either a caused possession or a caused motion interpretation: for 'give'-type verbs the PP construction encodes possession, whereas with verbs from other semantic subclasses, it encodes either possession or motion, depending on the individual verb class. While our judgment task was not designed to test the degree to which the different frames map to different interpretations, our results still yield some tentative insights on the question.

Our second finding relates to the acceptability of the different semantic categories within each syntactic frame. Following benefactives, sending verbs are rated most acceptable with PPs, with an average score of 2.30.

When we compare the rating for the PP condition in the sending category against the PP condition in the communication, giving, and future having categories, the results are significant: $p < .01$ for each comparison.

Benefactives, with a score of 2.08, are rated more acceptable than sending verbs and that difference is significant ($p < .05$), so benefactives are, indeed,

colloquium talks (Málvísindakaffi) given by the first author at the University of Iceland in September 2017.

more acceptable with prepositional phrases (we discuss benefactives in more detail below). Since sending verbs are generally rated more acceptable than other semantic categories for the PP construction, our findings suggest that the semantic properties of sending verbs are more amenable to the PP construction.

If we consider the semantic properties of other categories of verbs, we might expect that verbs in the giving, future having, and benefactive categories are most compatible with the double object construction (all of the benefactive sentences that we tested have a ‘future having’ interpretation), since these verbs involve an actual or prospective transfer of possession (we discuss the issue of ‘prospective possession’ below). When we conducted a two-tailed t-test comparison between pairs of semantic categories, we did not find consistently significant results. Compared against communication and sending verbs, the difference between the average rating for giving, future having, and benefactive verbs is not necessarily significant. In fact, only the comparison of benefactive vs sending and the comparison of future having vs communication yielded a significant difference: within the double object construction, benefactives are rated more acceptable than sending verbs and future having verbs are rated more acceptable than communication verbs ($p < .01$ for each of these comparisons). Comparing giving to communication verbs yielded a marginally significant difference ($p = .05$). The results were not significant for the following comparisons: benefactive vs communication; giving vs sending; and future having vs sending. In sum,

we can say that our findings suggest that while verbs of sending are more compatible with the prepositional construction than non-sending verbs, verbs of possession are not more compatible with the double object construction than non-possession verbs. As the Verb Sensitive approach argues that verbal semantics interacts with the prepositional construction, our findings provide some very general support for this line of analysis.

There are two additional factors related to interpretation that bear discussion here. The first relates to the issue of actual versus intended possession. Harley and Jung (2015) adopt the idea of prospective possession, as discussed in Beavers (2011). On this proposal, the double object construction need not entail a successful transfer of possession; rather, a possession interpretation can arise as long as the possession holds in some possible world. For verbs such as ‘offer’ (*bjóða* in Faroese), the intended possession holds in a future world. A more fine-grained study might reveal whether speakers differentiate between double object constructions which involve actual versus prospective possession. Second, for verbs in the communication category, possession, whether real or prospective, can only hold in an abstract sense. For verbs such as *forklára* ‘explain’, *fortelja* ‘tell’, or *vísa* ‘show’, there is a transfer of information, as opposed to transfer of a physical object. As discussed above, when we compared the ratings for double objects for communication verbs against every other category, the results are mixed. A future study aimed at comparing tangible versus abstract possession might reveal a difference.

Our third finding relates to phonological length. Work by Bresnan (2007), Bresnan et al. (2007), and Bresnan and Nikitina (2009) proposes that factors related to pragmatics, information structure, and prototypical use determine whether the double object or the prepositional construction is used. Such factors include givenness, animacy, definiteness, phrasal length, and whether one of the objects is a pronoun or a full NP (cf. also Dubois, Gerwin and Röthlisberger, and Röthlisberger, this volume). One intriguing observation that emerges is that some previously observed restrictions on the prepositional construction vanish when the goal is phonologically heavy. For instance, while (24) is ungrammatical for many English speakers, the sentence in (25) is just fine.

- (24) a. The noise gave Terry a headache.
b. *The noise gave a headache to Terry.

(Rappaport Hovav and Levin 2008, ex 5)

- (25) a stench or smell is diffused over the ship that would give a headache to the most athletic constitution.

(Bresnan and Nikitina 2007, ex 15)

The observation in (25) is in line with Fiebig's (2012) corpus study which finds a heavy-late effect in Faroese. The prepositional construction is primarily found with phonologically heavy goal objects – that is, nouns that

are modified by one or multiple adjectives or by a relative clause. We find that within the PP frame, pronominal objects are least acceptable (mean = 2.97), but this does not directly translate into support for a heavy-late effect. Prepositional phrases with heavy NPs (mean = 2.57) are not rated significantly more acceptable than smaller (non-pronominal) NPs (mean = 2.39) across semantic categories. For benefactive and sending verbs, regular NPs are rated best and the difference between regular NPs and heavy NPs is significant ($p < .05$). For communication, giving, and future having, heavy NPs are actually rated best with PPs, but the difference between heavy NPs and regular NPs is not significant for any of these semantic categories. By contrast, we do find that speakers generally dislike a heavy indirect object in the double object construction. For every semantic category except communication, speakers gave double object constructions with heavy indirect objects a statistically significant lower acceptability score when compared with double object constructions with pronouns or regular NPs. Further, we find that speakers disprefer pronouns with the PP construction. Within each semantic category, double object constructions with pronominal indirect objects are rated significantly more acceptable than prepositional constructions with pronouns. Yet, the latter kind of construction is not completely rejected, which is in accord with Petersen's (2010) finding that pronouns are used with the PP construction. While our findings do not provide clear positive support for a heavy-late effect, they do suggest that speakers have a dispreference for a heavy phrase in a

sentence-medial position and a dispreference for a phonologically light item in a sentence-final position.¹⁶

Finally, returning to benefactives, two interesting findings emerge. The first is that, along with the communication category, the double object frame is rated as quite good for benefactives, with a score of 1.51. However, the difference between the benefactive rating and the communication rating is not significant. Within the prepositional frame, benefactives receive the highest acceptability rating (mean = 2.07) when compared with every other category and each of those differences is significant ($p < .05$). Taken together, these results suggest that speakers find benefactives quite acceptable in both double object and PP constructions. This finding coalesces with the literature which reports that benefactives are far more widespread in Faroese than in Icelandic, as discussed in Section 2. Interestingly, Hansen and Heltoft (2011:1313-1314) report that the double object frame is not allowed with benefactives in Modern Danish, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (26).

(26) a. *Han bagte Lene en kage.

He.Nom baked Lene.Obl. a cake.Obl.¹⁷

‘He baked Lene a cake.’

¹⁶See Indriðadóttir (2017) for a discussion of the contrast between heavy-shifting subjects versus objects in Faroese and Icelandic.

¹⁷OBL stands for oblique case, as is the common notation in Danish grammars.

- b. Han bagte en kage til Lene.
He.Nom baked a cake.Obl. to Lene.Obl.
'He baked a cake to Lene.'

This construction was, however, possible in Older Danish (or rather *ældre nydansk* = lit.: older new Danish) as recently as in the 19th century. When speakers of Danish use benefactives today, Hansen and Heltoft (2011) suggest that the usage is in the spirit of a more archaic style or possibly influenced by English (but see Nielsen and Heltoft, this volume, for a somewhat different proposal).

In summary, our findings are consistent with some of the previous work which has documented the use of the prepositional frame in Faroese. As in the present study, Henriksen (2000) reports that PPs are found in younger speakers' speech. Our study is also in line with work which has noted the widespread presence of benefactives in Faroese (Holmberg and Platzack 1995; Thráinsson 2007:230). With respect to phonological heaviness, we find mixed results but a clear dispreference for heavy phrases in sentence-medial position. Finally, we have some general support for the Verb Sensitive proposal that verbal semantics interact with the prepositional frame, which is a novel finding.

In sum, this section has provided new insights into the distribution of the double object frame and the prepositional frame in Faroese. At the same time, it has also become clear that there is much work still to be done in this

area. In particular, the next stage of our research involves examining the degree to which there is a frame-to-meaning correspondence. We are presently conducting an experiment in which speakers will be asked to rate the acceptability of sentences such as the following.

(27) Double object

Granskingarráðið **veitti studentinum granskingarstuðul**, men
Granskingarráðið fann útav, at hann hevði falsað kanningarúrslitini,
so tey afturkallaðu stuðulin.

‘The university granted the PhD student research funding, but the university found out that he faked the data so he never received his funding.’

(28) Prepositional

Granskingarráðið **veitti granskingarstuðul til studentin**, men
Granskingarráðið fann útav, at hann hevði falsað kanningarúrslitini,
so tey afturkallaðu stuðulin.

‘The university granted research funding to the PhD student, but the university found out that he faked the data so he never received his funding.’

In both (27) and (28), the follow-up clause denies that the participant denoted by the indirect object/object of the preposition comes to possess the

direct object. If speakers associate a possession interpretation with double objects to a greater extent than with prepositional constructions, then they should be bothered when the possession is denied. The prediction, then, is that sentences such as (28) will be rated higher than sentences such as (27). We are examining the same sentences in Faroese, Icelandic, and English, which will provide a cross-linguistic comparison of the three languages.¹⁸ One might furthermore wonder whether the general acceptability of the prepositional frame is partially due to influence from Danish and/or English. There has been an intense contact between Faroese and Danish for centuries. Even though Faroese speakers have been bilingual, with Danish as their L2, for centuries, code-switching between Faroese and Danish has been quite rare (Petersen 2010). Yet, Danish influence on the use of the prepositional frame in ditransitives can definitely not be ruled out, as also discussed in Petersen (2010). Further, in the past 10 to 20 years English has become increasingly present on the Faroe Islands. Very little has been done yet to thoroughly study the use of English on the Faroe Islands. Regarding the generally high acceptability of double object benefactives, it is possible that this is a feature that has been preserved from Old Norse (Jóhannes G. Jónsson, p.c.), even though it has been largely lost in Icelandic and Danish.

¹⁸Consistent with observations reported earlier about physical movement licensing the PP construction, (28) is marginal in Icelandic, but not completely ungrammatical. The study is also designed to capture judgments about the grammaticality of ditransitive sentences independent of the denial of possession follow-up.

5 Conclusion

This brief paper has shown that while there is a clear preference for the double object construction in Faroese, the prepositional construction is also acceptable, and that this frame interacts with verbal semantics. Furthermore, we found that even though speakers disprefer a phonologically heavy indirect object in the double object construction and disprefer light, pronominal PP-objects, this does not necessarily translate into a preference for phonologically heavy objects in the PP pattern. Finally, our study suggests that benefactive constructions are well accepted in both the double object construction and prepositional frames, in line with previous work which commented on the widespread use of benefactives in Faroese.

References

- Barðdal, Jóhanna. 2001. "Case in Icelandic – A Synchronic, Diachronic and Comparative Approach." Doctoral dissertation, Lund: Lund University.
- Barðdal, Jóhanna. 2008. *Productivity: Evidence from Case and Argument Structure in Icelandic*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Barðdal, Jóhanna, Kristian Emil Kristoffersen, and Andreas Sveen A. 2011. "West Scandinavian Ditransitives as a Family of Constructions: With a Special Attention to the Norwegian 'V-REFL-NP' Construction." *Linguistics* 49 (1): 53–104.
- Barnes, Michael. 2001. *Faroese Language Studies*. Oslo: Novus.

- Beavers, John. 2011. "An Aspectual Analysis of Ditransitive Verbs of Caused Possession in English." *Journal of Semantics* 28: 1–54.
- Beck, Sigrid, and Kyle Johnson. 2004. "Double Objects Again". *Linguistic Inquiry* 35: 97–123.
- Bresnan, Joan. 2007. "Is Syntactic Knowledge Probabilistic? Experiments with the English Dative Alternation." In *Roots: Linguistics in Search of Its Evidential Base*, ed. by Sam Featherston and Wolfgang Sternefeld, 75–96. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Bresnan, Joan, Anna Cueni, Tatiana Nikitina, and Harald Baayen. 2007. "Predicting the dative alternation." In *Cognitive Foundations of Interpretation*, ed. by Gerlof Boume, Irene Krämer, and Joost Zwarts, 69–94. Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Science.
- Bresnan, Joan, and Tatiana Nikitina. 2009. "The Gradience of the Dative Alternation." In *Reality Exploration and Discovery: Pattern Interaction in Language and Life*, ed. by Linda Uyechi and Lian Hee Wee, 161–182. Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications.
- Bruening, Benjamin. 2010a. "Ditransitive Asymmetries and a Theory of Idiom Formation". *Linguistic Inquiry* 41: 519–562.
- Bruening, Benjamin. 2010b. "Double Object Constructions Disguised as Prepositional Datives". *Linguistic Inquiry* 41: 287–305.
- Bruening, Benjamin. 2018. "Double Object Constructions and Prepositional Dative Constructions are Distinct: A Reply to Ormazabal & Romero 2012." *Linguistic Inquiry* 49: 123–150.

- Collins, Chris, and Höskuldur Thráinsson. 1996. "VP-Internal Structure and Object Shift in Icelandic." *Linguistic Inquiry* 27: 391–444.
- Fiebig, Julika. 2012. "At geva fiskimonnum skattalætta. At geva skattalætta til fiskimenn. En undersøkelse av ditransitive konstruksjoner i færøysk skriftspråk." MA thesis, Oslo: ILN.
- Green, Georgia M. 1974. *Semantics and Syntactic Regularity*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Hansen, Erik, and Lars Heltoft. 2011. *Grammatik over det Danske Sprog III. Sætningen og dens konstruktion*. København: Syddansk Universitetsforlag.
- Harley, Heidi. 2002. "Possession and the Double Object Construction." *Yearbook of Linguistic Variation* 2: 29–68.
- Harley, Heidi, and Hyun Kyoung Jung. 2015. "In Support of the P_{HAVE} Analysis of the Double Object Construction." *Linguistic Inquiry* 46: 703–730.
- Henriksen, Jeffrei. 2000. *Orðalagslæra*. Vestmanna: Sprotin. *Hafniensia* 49: 143–159.
- Holmberg, Anders, and Christer Platzack. 1995. *The Role of Inflection in Scandinavian Syntax*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Indriðadóttir, Ingunn Hreinberg. 2017. "Weight Effects and Heavy NP Shift in Icelandic and Faroese." *Working Papers in Scandinavian Syntax* 98: 131–146.

- Jónsson, Jóhannes Gísli. 2000. "Case and Double Objects in Icelandic." *Leeds Working Papers in Linguistics* 8: 71–94.
- Jónsson, Jóhannes Gísli. 2009. "Verb Classes and Dative Objects in Insular Scandinavian." In *The Role of Semantic, Pragmatic and Discourse Factors in the Development of Case*, ed. by Jóhanna Barðdal, and Shobana Chelliah, 203–224. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Jónsson, Jóhannes Gísli. 2017. "Eignarfallsandlöl í færeysku danskvæðunum". In *Bók Jógvan*, ed. by Zakaris S. Hansen, Anfinnur Johansen, Hjalmar P. Petersen, and Lena Reinert, 199–213. Tórshavn: Faroe University Press.
- Maling, Joan. 2002. "Það rignir þágufalli á Íslandi: Verbs with Dative Objects in Icelandic." *Íslenskt mál* 24: 31–105.
- Malkien, Yakov. 1981. "Drift, Slope and Slant: Background of, and Variation upon, a Sapirian Theme". *Language* 57: 535–570.
- Malmsten, Solveig. 2015. *Dative i modern färöiska. En fallstudie i grammatisk förändring*. Uppsala Universitet: Skrifter utgivna av Institutionen för Nordiska Språk vid Uppsala Universitet.
- Oehrle, Richard T. 1976. "The Grammatical Status of the English Dative Alternation." Doctoral dissertation. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Petersen, Hjalmar P. 2010. *The Dynamics of Faroese-Danish Language Contact*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.

- Petersen, Hjalmar P. 2017. "Variation in Dative in Faroese." In *Syntactic Variation in Insular Scandinavian*, ed. by Höskuldur Thráinsson, Caroline Heycock, Hjalmar P. Petersen and Zakaris S. Hansen, 113–141. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Petersen, Hjalmar P. 2020. *Føroysk mállæra II. Grunddrøg í føroyskari syntaks*. Tórshavn: Nám.
- Petersen, Hjalmar P. 2019. "Semantisk og syntaktisk styrede forandringer i færøske præpositionsfraser." *Íslenskt mál* 40: 73-96.
- Rappaport Hovav, Malka, and Beth Levin. 2008. "The English Dative Alternation: The Case for Verb Sensitivity." *Journal of Linguistics* 44: 129–167.
- Sapir, Edward. 1921. *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace & Company.
- Svenonius, Peter. 2002. Icelandic Case and the Structure of Events. *Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics* 5: 197–225.
- Þráinsson, Höskuldur. 2007. *The Syntax of Icelandic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Þráinsson, Höskuldur, Hjalmar P. Petersen, Jógvan í Lon Jacobsen, and Zakaris S. Hansen. 2012. *Faroese: An Overview and Reference Grammar*. Tórshavn and Reykjavík: Faroe University Press and University of Iceland [published first time in 2004 by Tórshavn: Føroya Fróðskaparfelag].

- Þráinsson, Höskuldur. 2015. “Tilbrigði í færeyskri og íslenskri setningagerð.” In *Frændafundur* 8, ed. By Turið Sigurðardóttir and María Garðarsdóttir, 181–215. Tórshavn: Faroe University Press.
- Ussery, Cherlon. 2017. “Double Objects Again...but in Icelandic.” In *A Schrift to Fest Kyle Johnson*, ed. by Nicholas LaCara, Keir Moulton, and Anne-Michelle Tessier. Linguistics Open Access Publications.1. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.7275/R57D2S95>.
- Ussery, Cherlon. 2018. “Inversion as Rightward-Dative Shift in Icelandic Ditransitives.” In *Proceedings of the 48th Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society*, ed. by Sherry Hucklebridge, and Max Nelson. Amherst: University of Massachusetts. [Distributed by GLSA].
- Weyhe, Eivind. 2011. *Hentzasavn. Kvæðasavnið hjá Jóannesi í Króki frá 1819*. Tórshavn: Fróðskapur.
- Zaenen, Annie, Joan Maling, and Höskuldur Thráinsson. 1985. Case and Grammatical Functions: The Icelandic Passive. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 3: 441–483. [Also published in *Modern Icelandic Syntax*, ed. by Joan Maling and Annie Zaenen, 95–136. San Diego: Academic Press.]