

## Syntax II (LING 610): Assignment #2

### Some Verb-Second Languages

Due Thursday February 26th.

The examples below illustrate word order patterns in embedded clauses in three Germanic languages: German, Yiddish and Icelandic (data from Vikner 1991). Yiddish and Icelandic have very similar word order in embedded clauses (for the purposes of this exercise, at least), and they have some similarities with German, but they differ from German in some other respects. A widely assumed account of word-order in German main clauses and embedded clauses is presented on pp.40-41 of Roberts' book. Describe the similarities and differences between German on the one hand and Yiddish/Icelandic on the other hand, explain whether/how the Yiddish/Icelandic facts fit with the standard analysis of German, and -- if necessary -- suggest an account of Yiddish/Icelandic word order in embedded clauses.

You may assume that if a language allows a direct object to appear in clause initial position, then the same holds for indirect objects and adverbial phrases (time, manner place): I point this out just because some of the data below shows just one kind of non-subject in initial position, but this is not representative. If there is extra data that you do feel that you would need in order to justify your analysis, then point this out.

#### German

- (1) a. Er sagt, dass die Kinder diesen Film gesehen haben.  
He says that the children this film seen have.
- b. Er sagt, die Kinder haben diesen Film gesehen.  
He says the children have this film seen.
- c. \* Er sagt, dass die Kinder haben diesen Film gesehen.  
He says that the children have this film seen
- d. Er sagt diesen Film haben die Kinder gesehen.  
He says this film have the children seen.
- e. \* Er sagt, dass diesen Film haben die Kinder gesehen.  
He says that this film have the children seen.
- 'He says that the children have seen this film.'

The examples from Yiddish and Icelandic contain just embedded clauses.

#### Yiddish

- (2) a. ...az morgn vet dos yingl oyfn veg zen a kats.  
...that tomorrow will the boy on-the way see a cat.  
'...that tomorrow the boy will see a cat on the way.'
- b. ...az dos yingl vet oyfn veg zen a kats.  
...that the boy will on-the way see a cat.

- c. \* ...az dos yingl oyfn veg vet zen a kats.  
...that the boy on-the way will see a cat.
- d. \* ...az dos yingl oyfn veg zen a kats vet.  
...that the boy on-the way see a cat will.  
  
'...that the boy will see a cat on the way.'

**Icelandic**

- (3) a. ...a Mariu hefur Helgi aldrei kysst.  
...that Maria has Helgi never kissed.
- b. ...a Helgi hefur aldrei kysst Mariu.  
...that Helgi has never kissed Maria.
- c. \* ...a Helgi aldrei hefur kysst Mariu.  
...that Helgi never has kissed Maria.
- d. \* ...a Helgi aldrei kysst Mariu hefur.  
...that Helgi never kissed Maria has.  
  
'...that Helgi has never kissed Maria.'