Bachelor's project

NTNU
Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Faculty of Humanities
Department of Language and Literature

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A comparison of Heavy NP Shift in English and Norwegian

Bachelor's project in English
Supervisor: Christopher Wilder
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I. Introduction

In English, it is customary for the direct object noun phrase, or NP, to be directly preceded by a verb, following the standard subject-verb-object order, presented in example (1a) with a prepositional phrase (PP) modifying the verb phrase (VP). This VP-modifier cannot ordinarily be moved to a position before the sentence's direct object NP without becoming unacceptable to the vast majority of English native speakers, as shown in (1b). For emphasis, the relevant phrases being shifted are marked with square brackets in the example sentences.

(1) a. John left [the dog] [with his mother].
b.*John left [with mother] [the dog].

When comparing the example above with its Norwegian equivalent, the same rules regarding word order seems to apply. The grammatical word order commonly used by native speakers places the direct object immediately post-verbally (2a), and it would be difficult to find a native speaker that would accept (2b) as a 'correct' Norwegian sentence.

(2) a. Johan forlot [hunden] [hos sin mor].
John left dog-the at his mother
'John left the dog with his mother.'

b. *Johan forlot [hos sin mor] [hunden].
John left at his mother dog-the
'John left with his mother the dog.'

However, if the direct object NP were to be *heavier*, the shift of the direct object NP to the right of the PP suddenly becomes acceptable. (3a) and (3b) are both generally thought of as acceptable alternatives to the same semantic phrase for most native English speakers.

(3) a. John left [the limping dog which he had recently adopted from the local shelter] [with his mother].
b. John left [with his mother] [the limping dog which he had recently adopted from the

local shelter].

With this heavy NP shift being acceptable in English, a question arises of what the implications are when looking at it from the Norwegian language perspective, with it also being an SVO language. The following thesis will attempt to answer this question by comparing Norwegian within the framework of the established analysis of rightward movement in English, with the objective of examining the phenomenon of heavy NP shift in Norwegian. The English description of heavy NP shift which will be utilized, functioning as a theoretical base for this comparison, will be framed within Chomsky's theory of generative grammar. I will therefore not delve into the newer leftward movement hypothesis of heavy NP shift for my thesis.

Section II contains an overview of the standard analysis given to explain the phenomenon as it occurs in English. In section III, the notion of heaviness and other possible factors related to the acceptability of heavy NP shift in English are discussed. Section IV will explore heavy NP shift in Norwegian through comparison with the English variant as described in section II and III, as well as a discussion of the findings. The final section gives some concluding remarks as to what the result of the comparison might reveal about the phenomenon in Norwegian.

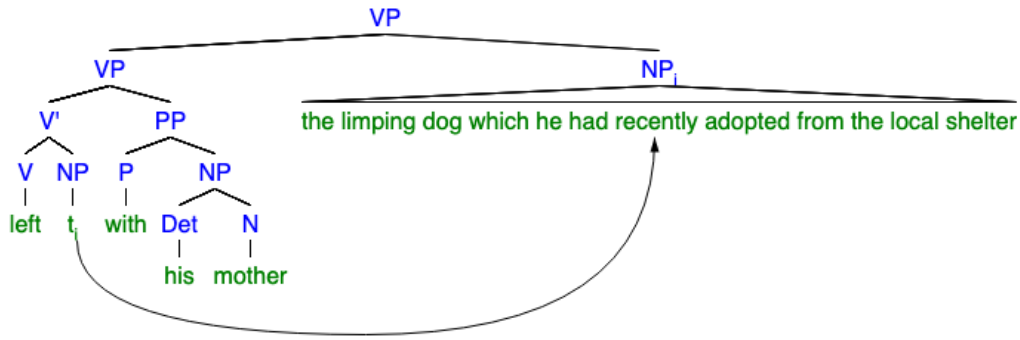
II. The standard approach and shift restrictions

II.I The standard approach

The normal English word order requires the direct object NP to be directly following or, at the very least, adjacent to the verb in question. Naturally, there have been attempts at explaining how this shift altering the standard order is possible while still being considered grammatical by English speakers. The standard approach, according to Haegeman & Guéron (1999, pp. 221-224) places heavy NP shift in the same category as *wh*-movement and as thus, they postulate that an A'-movement is behind the shift. They reason this with the landing site of the moved NP, which does not have a canonical object position, and because the position it moves to does not assign case, as it does with A-movement. In this theory, the NP is moved to the right, with the position it moves from containing a trace of the move. (4) shows a tree

representation of the VP that has undergone shift in (3b), with the NP moved to an adjoined position at the far right, leaving a trace (*t*) in its canonical position. The heavy NP is abbreviated to a triangle in the tree to better illustrate the movement in question.

4)



Syntax tree generator provided by Miles Shang (2011)

Haegeman also specifies that, unlike A-movement, A'-movement involves movement to a previously unoccupied position (1994, pp. 418-421). This would mean that the NP in question is adjoined to the end of the clause. She further notes that with the NP adjoined to a VP, like with *wh*-movement, the moved NP then c-commands its trace, which is when every node dominating the NP also dominates the trace, and neither of them is dominating the other (Frank, Hagstrom, Vijay-Shanker, 2002, p. 109). This becomes clear when examining (4). In addition to this, Haegeman brings up the subjacency condition, a constraint described in *wh*-movement of binding theory, stating that links next to each other in a movement-formed chain, cannot have more than one barrier situated between them, i.e., the moving NP cannot cross more than one bounding node (Haegeman, 1994, & Santorini, 2006). This as a test of the empty category in the standard object position being a trace created by a movement, i.e. heavy NP shift.

Brooke (2008) makes a compelling case justifying the application of generative syntax to the analysis of object shift in English, of which the heavy NP shift theory is a subcategory. His three arguments are the previously mentioned syntactic binding theory, where a reversal of post-verbal word order results in reverse binding facts; the fact that nothing, heavy NPs included, can be placed to the left of a CP complement, and finally; the fact that heavy NP shift and *wh*-movement cannot both occur together, which is reasonable if they are indeed the same movement.

Haegeman proposes this rightward shift might be a form of focalization, giving the heavy NP a more notable position within the sentence. Regardless, the conclusion as to why some NPs are grammatically accepted as moveable, seems to depend on their appearance as *heavy*. The concept of heaviness and what factors might lie behind this notion is discussed in further detail in section III.

II.II Restrictions

Heavy NP shift in English, as interpreted through this standard approach, does not function without its restrictions, of course. Below are some of the instances in which shifting of the heavy NP is restricted, and the respective reasoning behind why that is. When showing examples of restrictions, I have added the sentence with the NP unshifted for clarity, even if they are not always referred to specifically.

A restriction that has perhaps become apparent at this point is that the English NP undergoing movement will almost always be a direct object. This is particularly interesting when looking at English double object constructions, where (5a) is a standard positioning of the indirect object, whilst the unacceptable movement is shown in (5b). As Huang (2011, p. 4) notes, this order is only acceptable with the use of overt prepositions, known as a dative alternation (5c).

5) a. He showed [the girl he met at school] [his new watch].
   b.*He showed [his new watch] [the girl he met at school].
   c. He showed [his new watch] to [the girl he met at school]

If the particular NP functions as a predicate in a sentence with a copula verb (6a), it does not function as an argument with a theta role in generative grammar, and as such, does not appear to be accepted as movable through heavy NP shift (6b).

6) a. Mary became [the youngest physician in the local hospital] [after John resigned].
   b.*Mary become [after John resigned] [the youngest physician in the local hospital].

In instances where the NP in question is a pronoun (7c), a shift is not possible, due to an obligatory restriction of the pronoun to be directly following the object (Wasow & Arnold, 2003, p. 127). Although this should not come as a surprise, given that pronouns are rather

light in nature, it is interesting to note how substituting an acceptable shifting NP (7b) with a pronoun (7d) will render the shift ungrammatical.

7) a. She put [her brand-new coat] [on].
   b. She put [on] [her brand-new coat].
   c. She put [it] [on].
   d.*She put [on] [it].

Huang (2011, pp. 3-6) gives some further restrictions on heavy NP shift in his senior essay, these are outlined below:

While discussing particle-verb constructions, it seems that adding a modifier between the verb and particle (8a) will make heavy NP shift impossible in a sentence where this would otherwise be permitted, or in fact even preferred (Wasow & Arnold, 2003, p. 123).

8) a. *She looked [right up] [her new classmate's phone number].
   b. She looked [her new classmate's phone number] [right up].

An NP will never be shifted if it acts as an agent argument of an unergative or transitive verb, with (9a) being an example of both. This because the agent argument is an external one not in the maximal VP projection, which would be necessary for a heavy NP shift to be a possibility. According to Huang (2011), this remains unchanged with the addition of a sentence-initial expletive *there* (10), with the exception of indefinite theme NPs (11), although these are fairly uncommon and considered somewhat strange to use in modern English.

9) a. [The newest employee of the corporation] [talked to the boss].
   b. *[Talked to the boss] [the newest employee of the corporation].

10)*There [talked to the boss] [the newest employee of the corporation].

11) There happen things on a daily basis.

Adding an expletive *there* to the start of a sentence can, however, make a shift of a subject of a passive construction (12c) possible, as long as said subject is indefinite and has the theta role of theme. Otherwise a shift will not be permitted (12b).

12) a. [A charismatic and passionate dictator] [was overthrown].
b.*[Was overthrown] [a charismatic and passionate dictator].
c. There [was overthrown] [a charismatic and passionate dictator].

An NP that is considered heavy within a prepositional phrase that also includes a sentence-final adverb cannot be shifted. This is reflected in (13b), where the result creates a semantically difficult and unacceptable sentence.

13) a. I did not see [the bird at the top of the tree] [before it disappeared].
b.*I did not [before it disappeared] [see the bird at the top of the tree].

III. Weight and other factors

III.I Length and complexity

Now, for heavy NP shift to be possible in the first place, it would obviously require the NP to be considered heavy. But what makes a phrase heavy and what does this heaviness entail? This discussion will look at some of the possible factors involved, which are mainly related to the intentional shift of traditional constituent ordering, production based on language competence, rather than speech disfluency, which is a fairly normal occurrence in the relatively spontaneous nature of performing oral speech or dialogue, or other possible factors strictly related to instantaneous oral performance.

Behaghel is said to be the first to have observed “the principle of end-weight”, where longer elements are placed at the end of a sentence, following the shorter elements. This was further developed by John Hawkins, who gave the explanation of processing constraints to account for this preference (Wasow & Arnold, 2003, p. 120).

Length, however, has proven to not be the only factor involved in the perceived heaviness of the NP. Chomsky objected to this idea already in 1975, providing an example of heavy NP shift where complexity appeared to trump length in what he called the "naturalness of the transformation". But what determines this complexity and how to measure it was apparently not defined by Chomsky (Indriðadóttir, 2017, p. 133).

When Wasow tried to pinpoint a single weight criterion in 1997, he did find length to be a decent working factor for judgement, not surpassed by any other methods of measurement (Wasow & Arnold, 2003, pp. 120-121). Later, in 2003, Wasow, together with Arnold, would work on the hypothesis that length and complexity could be factors both influencing order of the constituents. Their study aimed to investigate what factors are involved in perceived weight through a questionnaire and subsequent corpus analysis. For the complexity factor, they created examples of heavy NP shift, as well as ones of dative alternation and verb-particle construction, with NPs of same length, but differing in their complexity. Complexity in the NP was in this case measured by the phrase containing, or consisting of, a clause. The answers given showed a higher preference for heavy NP shift when the NP was complex compared to its "simple" alternative, which could indicate that complexity is in fact a contributing factor on its own, unrelated to NP length. Data dealing with verb-particle construction also appeared to provide much the same results, with the difference being a greater *lack* of preference for splitting the verb and particle, i.e. not shifting the NP (Wasow & Arnold, 2003, pp. 121-125).

Wasow & Arnold further examined whether complexity and length both impact the constituent order or simply appear this way due to a correlation with each other. They tested this through logistic regression using the Aligned-Hansard corpus, finding that there was indeed a co-contribution of the two, albeit with a difference of function. With both heavy NP shift and dative alternation, the length of both object constituents relative to each other were shown to be a better prediction of the order than just one, but it was only the direct object NP's complexity that played a notable part in the sentence's constituent ordering.
Likewise, with both heavy NP shift as well as dative alternation, the direct object NP was more likely to be in its standard verb-adjacent position when containing fewer words than the sentence's prepositional phrase, or the goal thematic role, and when the constituent was considered simple (Wasow & Arnold, 2003, pp. 125-128).

When using corpora to analyze 2367 verb-particle constructions with direct object NPs, Wasow and Arnold separated the data by three properties: constructions with joined or split verb-particle; object NPs containing a verb, containing a prepositional phrase but no verb, or containing neither verb nor PP; and object NP length. The analyses showed that while length of the object NP impacted the order, complexity was not a factor, with all of the complex NPs being found in a joined construction. The NPs in joined constructions were mostly phrases with a length of more than three words. Wasow and Arnold hypothesize this is due to the lightness of the particle, seemingly making complexity an irrelevant factor in verb-particle constructions (Wasow & Arnold, 2003, pp. 126-128).

Overall, the study strongly suggests that complexity does have an effect on weight, which is particularly noticeable when length is controlled, lending credence to Chomsky's theory from 1975 (Wasow & Arnold, 2003, pp. 122-125). Both complexity and length appear to be relevant factors regarding heavy NP shift and dative alternation, while verb-particle constructions are mostly sensitive to heaviness in regard to word amount.

III.II Additional factors

In addition to the major factors of length and complexity, other factors can influence the order patterns in a sentence, and therefore also whether heavy NP shift is likely to take place. Some of these are briefly explained below.

The semantic connection of the verb and its modifier might be a factor influencing constituent order, if the proximity of the two is pertinent to the clarity of the sentence's semantic meaning, which can become muddled by the interference of a heavy NP. Wasow tested this in 1997, examining idiomatic vs. non-idiomatic expressions containing pairs of verbs and prepositions. Idioms had a significantly higher shift frequency, likely due to an increase in context needed for idioms to be semantically clear. In 2000, Hawkins tested the dependency of the prepositional phrase and verb on each other, finding that semantically independent parts were more likely to be shifted than those that were dependent, although weight could override this (Wasow & Arnold, 2003, pp. 130-132).

When analyzing 100 samples with verbs allowing either dative alternation or double object construction, found in *The New York* Times, Wasow and Arnold found that different verbs appear to have a preference of occurrence that may also impact constituent ordering.
They also mention a tendency to give information that is deemed new after already stated information This might alter constituent order, something of which Behaghel had already generalized in 1932 (Wasow & Arnold, 2003, pp. 132-134). This could also imply heavy NP shift is a way of focalizing this particular information, similar to what was suggested by Haegeman in 1994.

IV. Comparison

With the English version of heavy NP shift established and discussed, the question remains of how this can be applied to Norwegian. The first thing to verify is whether heavy NP shift is indeed accepted in Norwegian. Looking back to the introductory example of heavy NP shift in English, (3a) and (3b), these two sentences can be replicated into semantically equivalent Norwegian sentences, (14a) and (14b), respectively, in order to test this. The resulting shift of the heavy object (14b), although somewhat of an awkward sentence, is generally deemed acceptable among native speakers. This gives credence to the notion that heavy NP shift is indeed present in Norwegian. When the preference of native speakers is mentioned, this refers to my personal native speaker intuition, as well as the intuition of a small group of native speakers, between three and seven people, whose individual interpretation were acquired separately. I have chosen to include the unshifted version of the example sentence, in the same manner as section II examples of restrictions.

3) a. John left [the limping dog which he had recently adopted from the local shelter] [with his mother]
   b. John left [with his mother] [the limping dog which he had recently adopted from the local shelter]

14) a. Johan forlot [den haltende hunden som han nylig hadde adoptert fra den lokale
   John left the limping dog-the which he recently had adopted from the local
   dyrevernorganisasjon] [hos sin mor].

animal organization-the at his mother

'John left the limping dog which he had recently adopted from the local shelter with his mother.'

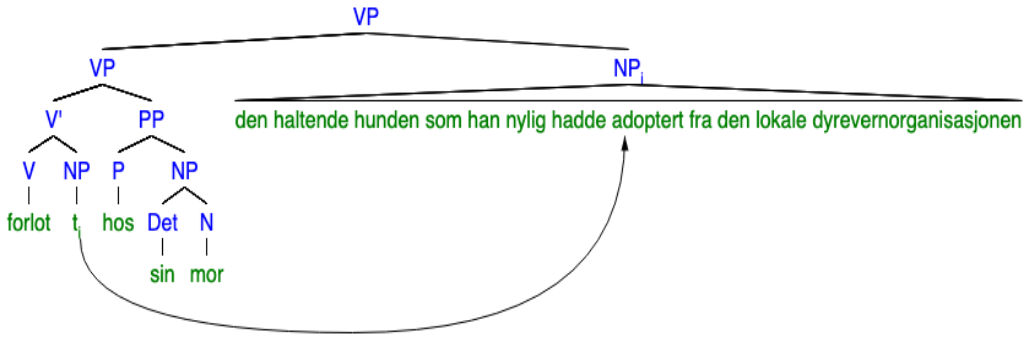
b. Johan forlot [hos sin mor] [den haltende hunden som han nylig hadde adoptert fra den
John left with his mother the limping dog-the which he recently had adopted from the
lokale dyrevernorganisasjonen].
local animal organization

'John left with his mother the limping dog which he had recently adopted from the local shelter.'

IV.I Restrictions

Comparing with the English standard approach presented in section II, the Norwegian heavy NP shift in (14b) also appears to land in a non-canonical object position that does not assign case and is adjoined to, rather than pre-existing in, the clause. Following this line of thought, it would stand to reason that heavy NP shift in Norwegian may also be considered an A'-movement. (15) shows that the tree representation of the Norwegian shifted NP, again abbreviated for visual clarity, mirrors the English version. This heavy NP also c-commands its trace, a point Haegeman (1994) used to further the argument that the shift is in the category of A'-movement.

15)



Syntax tree generator provided by Miles Shang (2011)

Testing the English restrictions outlined in section II, it becomes apparent that the indirect object cannot undergo a shift in Norwegian either, as proven in (16b), showing the same result found in English. A dative alternation is also necessary here (16c).

16. a. Han viste [jenta han møtte på skolen] [klokka si]
He showed girl-the he met at school-the watch-the his
He showed the girl he met at school his watch.'

b.*Han viste [klokka si] [jenta han møtte på skolen]
He showed watch-the his girl-the he met at school
'He showed his watch the girl he met at school.'

c. Han viste [klokka si] til [jenta han møtte på skolen]
He showed watch-the his to girl-the he met at school
'He showed the watch to the girl he met at school.'

In Norwegian, "å være" (to be) and "å bli" (to become) are the verbs traditionally considered copular verbs, when not used as modal auxiliaries.
Using the example case of the copula verb *become*, the Norwegian equivalent does not stray from the English restriction, leaving the shifted sentence unacceptable (17b).

17) a. Marie ble [den yngste legen på det lokale sykehuset] [etter at Johan sluttet].
Mary was the youngest doctor at the local hospital-the after that John quit
'Mary was the youngest physician at the local hospital after John resigned.'

b. *Marie ble [etter at Johan sluttet] den yngste legen på det lokale sykehuset].
Mary was after that John quit the youngest doctor-the at the local hospital-the
'Mary was after John resigned the youngest physician at the local hospital.'

Pronouns behave slightly different in Norwegian compared to their English counterparts. One notable difference is the pronominal object shift found in Mainland Scandinavian languages, Norwegian included, in which the pronominal object typically requires a shift across negation

and other adverbs (Bentzen, 2014). However, this does not appear to affect the heavy shift process, as (18b) shows. Both language versions see an acceptable shift.

18) a. Jeg hadde ikke [telefonnummeret til min eldste tante] [for hånden].
I had not phone number-the to my oldest aunt by hand
'I did not have the phone number of my oldest aunt available.'

b. Jeg hadde ikke [for hånden] [telefonnummeret til min eldste tante].
I had not by hand phone number-the to my oldest aunt
'I did not have available the phone number of my oldest aunt.'

When discussing particle-verb constructions in Norwegian, it is of interest to note that the middle region dialect of Norway differs somewhat from the majority of the country in the interpretation of these. While (20b) is not unacceptable per se, it is a less pleasing alternative in standard written Norwegian and most dialects.
Concerning the dialect in question, however, it is accepted and commonly used when spoken (Bentzen, 2014), due to a cliticization of the word "den" in speech. Hence, while (19a) and (19b) function in the same manner as in English, there is a slight divide in Norwegian with (20a) and (20b).

19) a. Hun tok [på seg] [den splitter nye kåpen sin].
She put on herself the brand-new coat-the her
'She put on her brand-new coat.'

b. Hun tok [den splitter nye kåpen sin] [på seg].
She put the brand-new coat-the her on herself
'She put her brand-new coat on.'

20) a. Hun tok [den] [på seg].
She put it on her
'She put it on.'

b. Hun tok [på seg] [den].
She put on her it
'She put on it.'

Testing with a modifier between the verb and connected particle (21b), the result, while not favored by native speakers, receives an assumed higher rating than its English counterpart, with a rating of one to two out of four among native Norwegian speakers, one being deemed completely unacceptable and four completely acceptable. This suggests that there might be some variation of native speakers' perceived acceptability. While (21b) was definitely not fully approved by Norwegian speakers, the modifier does not appear to block a heavy NP shift to the same extent in Norwegian, as in the case of English versions of the construction.

21) a. Hun tenkte [raskt ut] en plan [for å løse problemet fra læreren].
She thought quickly out a plan for to solve problem-the from teacher-the
'She quickly thought out a plan to solve the problem from the teacher.'

b. Hun tenkte en plan [for å løse problemet fra læreren] [raskt ut].
She thought a plan for to solve problem-the from teacher-the quickly out
'She thought a plan to solve the problem from the teacher quickly out.'

A sentence-final adverb makes a shift of the heavy NP impossible in Norwegian. (22b) shows this shift, rendered unacceptable by native speakers' judgement.

22) a. Jeg så ikke [den sjeldne fuglen i toppen av treet [før den forsvant].
I saw not the rare bird-the in top-the of tree-the before it disappeared
'I did not see the rare bird at the top of the tree before it disappeared.'

b. Jeg så ikke [før den forsvant] [den sjeldne fuglen i toppen av treet].
I saw not before it disappeared the rare bird-the in top-the of tree-the
'I did not before it disappeared see the rare bird at the top of the tree.'

Revisiting the unergative and transitive verb with an agent argument as subject, seen in (9a) and (9b), rendered below, it is a clearly unacceptable sentence in English. A semantically similar Norwegian sentence (22b) offers much the same result of unacceptability. However,

testing the use of a sentence-initial *there* is dependent on which translation is chosen. If translated as "der" (23a), it becomes an informal speech phrase sometimes used but regarded as incorrect. If interpreted as the Norwegian "det" (24b), it becomes fully accepted.

9) a. [The newest employee of the corporation] [talked to the boss].
b.*[Talked to the boss] [the newest employee of the corporation].

22) a. [Den nyansatte mannen i firmaet] [snakket med sjefen].
The new-employed man-the in company-the talked with boss-the
'The newly employed man in the company talked to the boss.'

b. *[Snakket med sjefen] [den nyansatte mannen i firmaet].
Talked with boss-the the new-employed man-the in company-the
'Talked to the boss the newly employed man in the company.'

23) a. Der skjer ting på daglig basis.
There happen things on daily basis
'There happen things on a daily basis.'

23) b. Det skjer ting på daglig basis.
There happen things on daily basis
'There happen things on a daily basis.'

Indefinite theme theta role with an introductory *there* in Norwegian works very well shifted (24b). In fact, it could be argued that it is even more acceptable than the corresponding English construction.

24) a. [En karismatisk og lidenskapelig diktator] [ble styrtet].
A charismatic and passionate dictator was overthrown
'A charismatic and passionate dictator was overthrown.'

b. Det [ble styrtet] [en karismatisk og lidenskapelig diktator].
There was overthrown a charismatic and passionate dictator
'There was overthrown a charismatic and passionate dictator.'

IV.II Weight

Testing all the possible weight factors discussed in section III into Norwegian will unfortunately not be possible, due to a lack of data to make a quantitative study, as well as the time and length restrictions. The weight factors that are available for comparison, are examined below, in a much smaller and less extensive scale than Wasow and Arnold's paper, naturally.

When testing complexity vs. length, Wasow and Arnold used the definition of complex as a phrase consisting of or containing a clause. To replicate this, I present two sentences of fixed length, one simple (25a) and one complex (25b). As they did not mention syllable length in this section, I chose to use the number of words as indicator of length. The complex heavy NP was slightly favored over the simple one, but both were deemed more acceptable when the heavy NP was in the shifted position, (26a) and (26b).

25) a. Jenta leste [den nyeste boken av hennes ultimate favoritt-forfatter] [intenst].
Girl-the read the newest book-the by her ultimate favorite author intensely
'The girl read the newest book by her ultimate favorite author intensely.'

b. Jenta leste [den nyeste boken skrevet av hennes favoritt-forfatter] [intenst].
Girl-the read the newest book-the written by her favorite author intensely
'The girl read the newest book written by her favorite author intensely.'

26) a. Jenta leste [intenst] [den nyeste boken av hennes ultimate favoritt-forfatter].
Girl-the read intensely the newest book-the by her ultimate favorite author
'The girl read intensely the newest book by her ultimate favorite author.'

b. Jenta leste [intenst] [den nyeste boken skrevet av hennes favoritt-forfatter].
Girl-the read intensely the newest book-the written by her favorite author
'The girl read intensely the newest book written by her favorite author.'

Verb-particle constructions with an NP of more than three words were, according to Wasow and Arnold, found to be in the joined position the majority of times in English, meaning the NP is shifted. (27a) shows the adjoined construction, while (27b) is a split of verb and particle. (28a) and (28b) show a similar semantic meaning with a light NP, in the split and joined position, respectively. Norwegian native speakers appear to prefer the joint, or shifted, position, with the heavy NP, while the light NP showed a mixed preference of both shifted and unshifted. The light NP version would seem to have a slightly higher unshifted preference among the broader middle Norwegian dialect speakers, although the answers were too few as to be able to make any specific generalization about this.

27) a. Hun har [på seg] [den nedarvede kjolen til sin mormor].
She has on herself the down-inherited dress-the to her grandmother
'She has on the inherited dress of her grandmother.'

b. Hun har [den nedarvede kjolen til sin mormor] [på seg].
She has the down-inherited dress-the to her grandmother on herself
'She has the inherited dress of her grandmother on.'

28) a. Hun har [den nye kjolen] [på seg].
She has the new dress-the on herself
'She has the new dress on.'

b. Hun har [på seg] [den nye kjolen].
She has on herself the new dress-the
'She has on the new dress.'

Complexity was deemed to not be a factor influencing English verb-particle constructions by Wasow and Arnold. (29a) presents the joined position in Norwegian, while (29b) is split. In (30a), the joined position is shown accompanying a simple heavy NP, with (30b) containing the same heavy NP unshifted. While there was a clear preference for the shifted version, the Norwegian split position does not seem as unfavored as the English construction. It could be

conjectured that the reflexive pronoun necessary for this particle-verb construction, which is obligated to directly follow the particle, also aids in the overall semantic coherence, making the unshifted version slightly more comprehensible.

29) a. Hun hadde [på seg] [sjalet som moren sydde til henne som barn].
She had on herself shawl-the as mother-the sewed to her as child
'She had on the shawl that her mother sewed to her as a child.'

b. Hun hadde [sjalet som moren sydde til henne som barn] [på seg].
She had shawl-the as mother-the sewed to her as child on herself
'She had the shawl that her mother sewed to her as a child on.'

30) a. Hun hadde [på seg] [det utslitte, gamle sjalet fra sin døde mor].
She had on herself the outworn, old shawl-the from her dead mother
'She had on the worn-out, old shawl from her dead mother.'

b. Hun hadde [det utslitte, gamle sjalet fra sin døde mor] [på seg].
She had the outworn, old shawl-the from her dead mother on herself
'She had the worn-out, old shawl from her dead mother on.'

A test of semantic connection as a factor in word order relating to heavy NP shift in Norwegian reveals that moving the heavy NP to the sentence-final position does appear to somewhat increase the semantic understanding of the idiomatic expression (31a). This is in accordance with Wasow's test of idiomatic vs. non-idiomatic expressions in 1997 (Wasow & Arnold, 2003, pp. 131-132). The semantic connection might also explain why a modifier between the verb and particle would block heavy NP shift in English, as according to Huang (2011), and be unfavored in Norwegian as well.

31) a. Marie søkte opp telefonnummeret til en gammel venn fra studietiden
Mary searched up telephone number-the to an old friend from study time-the
i telefonboken.
in phone book-the

‘Mary looked up an old friend from school’s phone number in the phone book.’

b. Marie søkte telefonnummeret til en gammel venn fra studietiden opp
Mary searched number-the to an old friend from study time-the up
i telefonboken.
in phone book-the
‘Mary looked an old friend from school’s phone number up in the phone book.’

IV.III Discussion

The application of English heavy NP shift restrictions to Norwegian grammar shows the Norwegian version acts in a similar, almost corresponding manner. Whether this is a consequence of an anglicization of Norwegian cannot be said definitely, but Sunde (2018) has observed in her article on English borrowings into Norwegian that, at least among younger native speakers of Norwegian, English has influenced not only the lexical items of their language via the use of borrowing and code-switching, to note some examples, but is also capable of altering the sentence structure of Norwegian grammar. A notable example of this is the use of the infinite verb form in some *wh*-clauses, which, when structurally relayed into Norwegian, changes an acceptable “[…] who to ask for advice” into the incorrect Norwegian phrase “[…] hvem å spørre til råds” (Sunde, 2018).
Alternatively, a theory could be Norwegian’s older influence on English, as Joseph Embley Emonds and Jan Terje Faarlund (2014, pp. 59-65) propose that Middle English descended from the Scandinavian Norse and not Old English. This theory stems from Old English’s transition around 1200-1250 A.D., from a word order conforming to what is seen in modern West Germanic languages, with a verb phrase that places the verb at the far right of the clause, to having the VO order that was present in Old Norse, and still found in modern Scandinavian languages. Of this transition, they state: “It thus seems natural to conclude that Norse VO word order is the source of the innovative VO order that came to predominate in 12th-century Middle English, as there is no other plausible source for this pervasive change” (Emonds & Faarlund, 2014, p. 62). As such, they note this similarity in syntactic structure as evidence of a common origin.

V. Conclusion

With the use of heavy NP shift within Norwegian examined, the answer to whether it also naturally occurs in Norwegian is a definitive yes. Furthermore, applying some of the common restrictions of the English phenomenon shows it behaves in an almost corresponding manner. The slight differences in restrictions appear to be mostly related to phrasing differences in the two languages, for example Norwegian speakers' common and often informal practice of introducing a sentence with the word "det" (unlike the more formal English *there*). Testing the considered weight factors gave a similar pattern of correspondence, with the most substantial deviation being a slightly higher dialectal preference for an unshifted light NP. Further study would be necessary to give a more accurate result and detail the distinctive qualities of heavy NP shift within Norwegian. However, the Norwegian interpretation appears to work well with the existing standard English approach. The underlying cause for this similar structure cannot be definitely stated, as both languages have influenced each other at different points in history. Regardless of reason, the word order patterning in English and Norwegian behave quite similarly, a fact that is further emphasized in the comparison of heavy NP shift.

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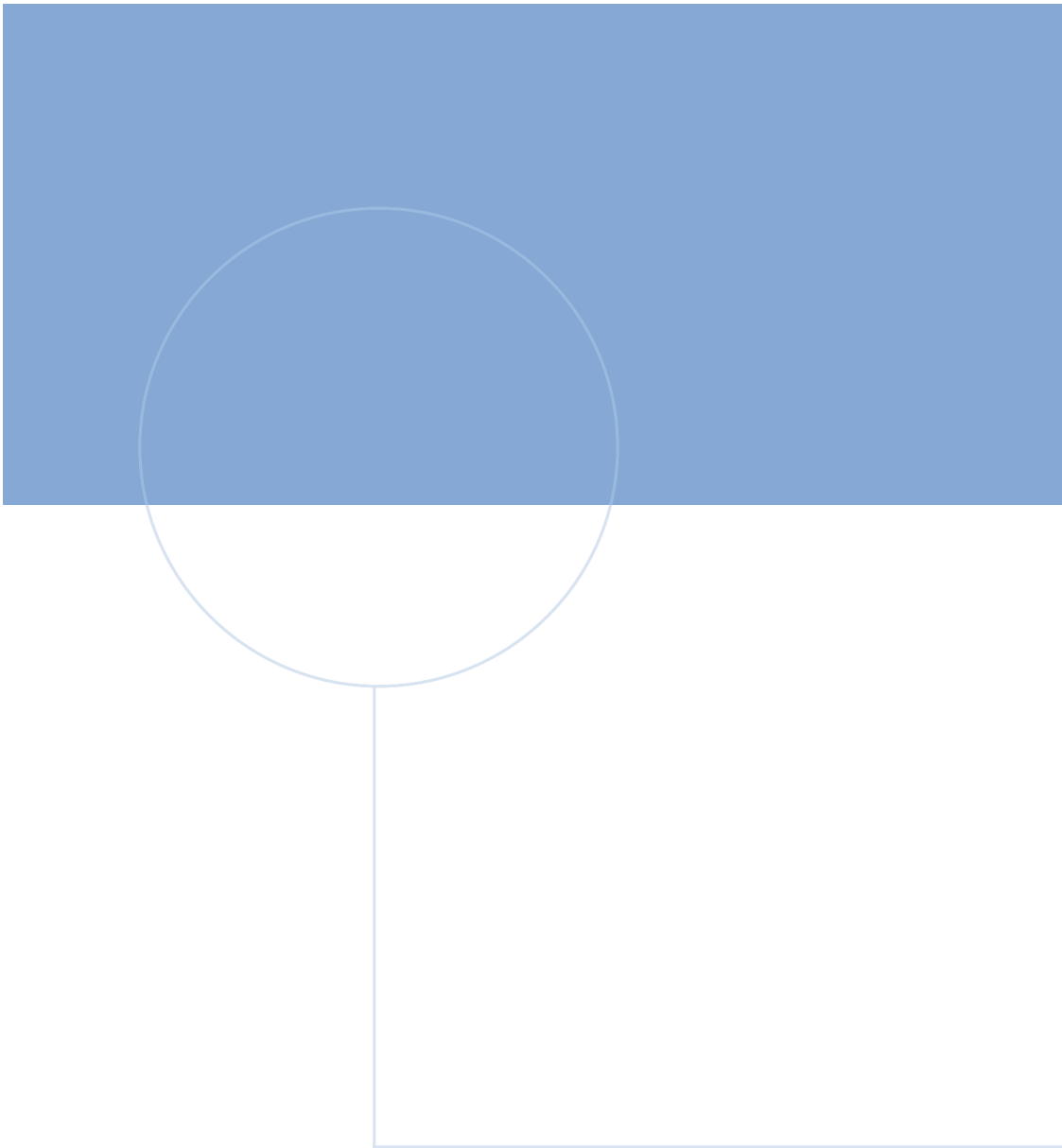

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