

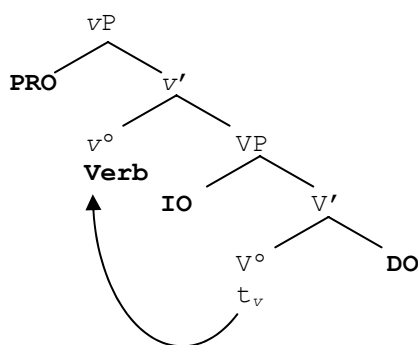
Negation and Infinitives: *att inte vara or að vera ekki*

1 Preliminaries

Within the VP-domain, V^0 -to- v^0 movement is obligatory, at least with ditransitive verbs in order to precede the indirect object. Even though this movement is string-vacuous, I will assume that the verb always raises to v^0 with mono- and intransitive verbs as well.

- (1) Da: a. *at nogen give noget
 b. at give_v nogen t_v noget
- (2) En: a. *to someone give something
 b. to give_v someone t_v something

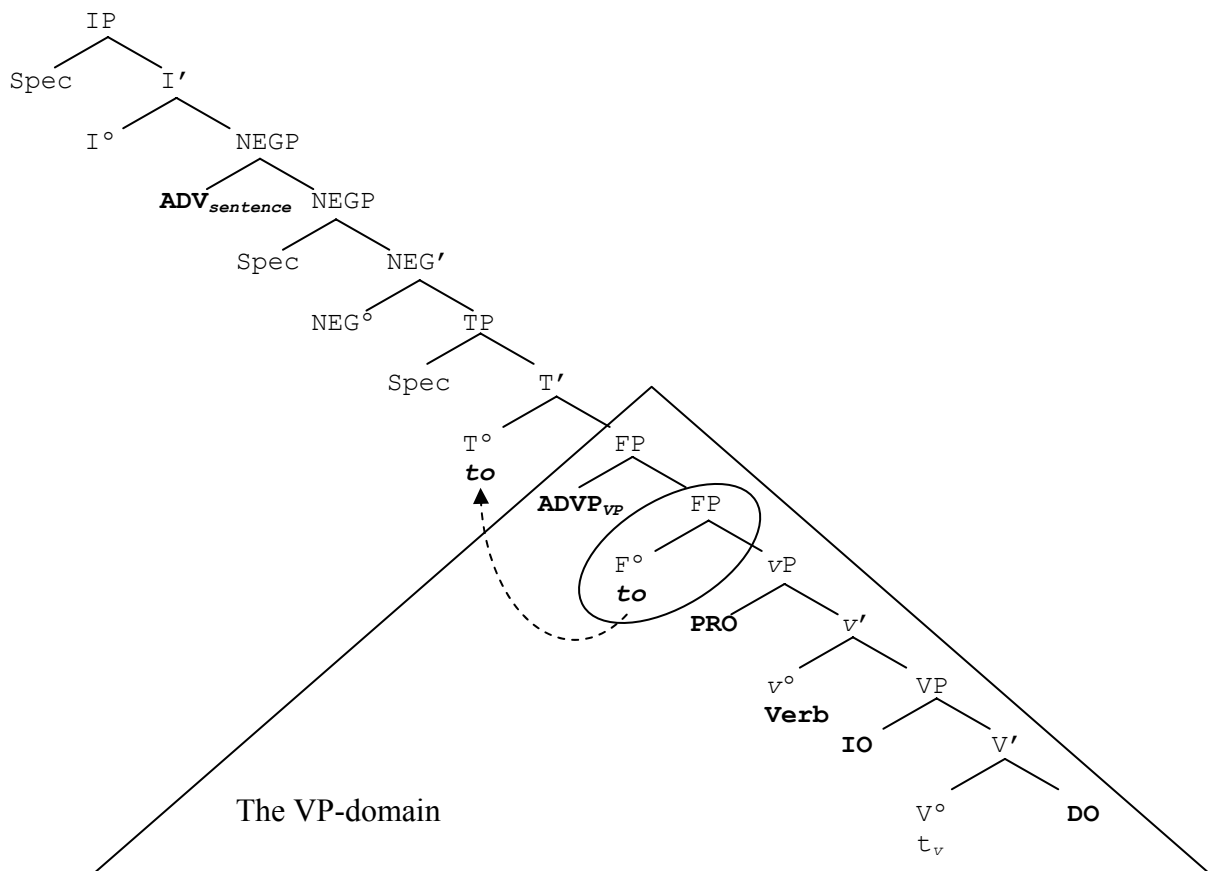
(3) Obligatory V^0 -to- v^0 movement:



The question is then where the infinitive marker is base-generated. There are (at least) four logically possible answers:

- I. It is inserted/base-generated in V° together with the verb as [$to+V$]. However, **excorporation** would subsequently be necessary. After the obligatory movement in (3), e.g. English *to* would have to excorporate from the verb and move to T° to precede adverbials like for example *boldly* in the famous phrase from Star Trek: *to boldly go where no man has gone before*.
- II. It is base-generated in v° . This analysis would also have to admit the unwanted process of **excorporation** as the complex head [$to+V$] that results from the obligatory V° -to- v° movement would have to be split up again in order to get the split infinitive.
- III. It is base-generated in T° . This is problematic as examples where *to* follows VP-adverbials, as in e.g. *the snails were beginning slowly to move in all directions*, would have to involve **rightward movement** or **lowering** of *to* from T° to v° across the VP-adverbial adjoined to vP .
- IV. In the analysis adopted here, the infinitival marker is base-generated in a functional projection FP above vP (and auxiliary VP-shells) but below TP as it may follow VP-adverbials, which are then adjoined to FP. This analysis raises none of the problems associated with excorporation and lowering. Optional movement from the base-position in F° to T° to precede VP-adverbials is illustrated in (4):

(4) Base-position of the infinitive marker:



2 Movement of the Infinitival Marker

2.1 Danish

In Danish, the infinitive marker *at* optionally moves to T° where it precedes left-adjoined VP-adverbials like *bare* ‘just’, as in (5)b. It can’t move to I° as it can’t precede negation, cf. (5)c (at least this is very marked and significantly worse than (5)b):¹

(5) Da. Vi overtalte dem til ...
We persuaded them to

- a. ikke **bare** at prøve igen
 - b. % ikke at **bare** prøve igen
 - c. ??at ikke **bare** prøve igen
- to not just try again*

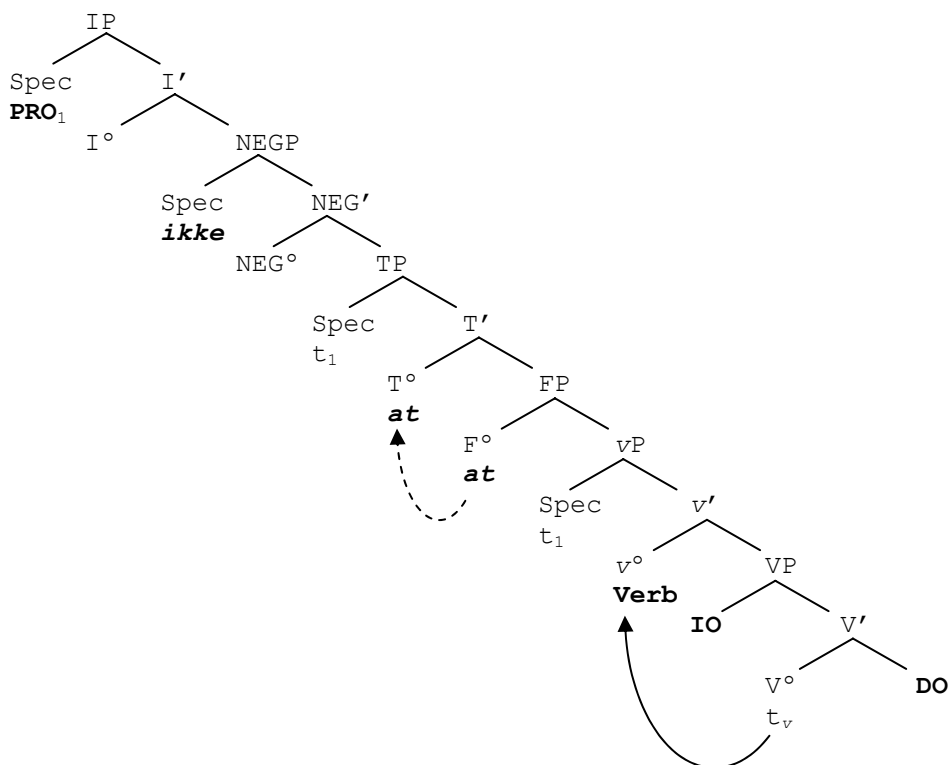
(6) Da: Vi er for glade for klubben til **bare** at give slip.
We are too happy for club.the to just to give slip
 “We are too fond of the club to just let it go.”

(Korpus 2000)

(7) Da: Mest for at **bare** holde folket underrettet ...
Mostly for to just hold people.the informed

(Korpus 2000)

(8) Danish:



¹ Examples (6) and (7) are taken from Korpus 2000, Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab, DSL, <http://korpus.dsl.dk/>.

2.2 English

English *to* may optionally move to T° to precede VP-adverbials, as the examples in (9) and (9) show. Examples (11) and (12) shows that it may also optionally move to I° to precede negation (see also Greenbaum & Quirk 1990:162, Radford 1997: 29):

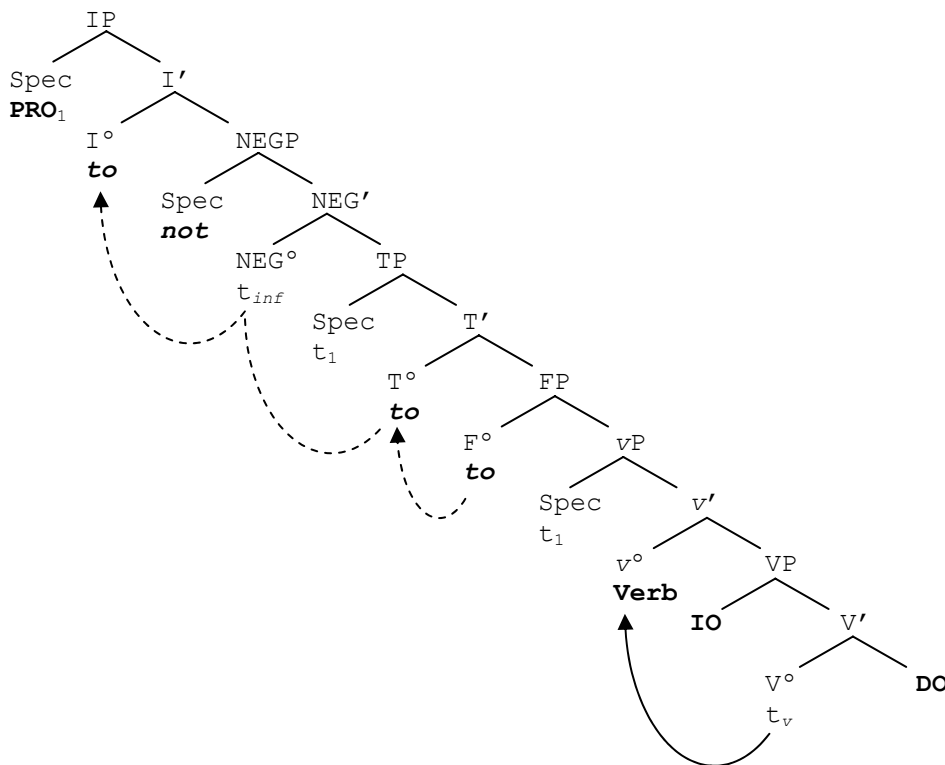
(9) En: If we are ever **fully** to understand consciousness...
 (<http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2003/03/31/1048962697709.html>)

(10) En: I want you to **fully** understand the gravity of the situation.
 (Radford 1997: 29)

(11) En: I want you **not** to see anyone.
 (Bolinger 1977: 38)

(12) En: "Neither a borrower, nor a lender be" says that it is best to **not** lend [money] to other people and to **not** borrow from other people.
 (<http://www.goenglish.com/NeitherABorrowerNorALenderBe.asp>)

(13) English:



2.3 Swedish

In Swedish, the infinitive marker *att* obligatorily precedes negation (Holmes & Hinchliffe 2003: 476) and therefore it must move to I⁰. That split infinitives are not limited to negative adverbials is shown in the example (16) (cf. Holmes & Hinchliffe 2003: 508).

(14) Sw: vi uppmanade dem att **aldrig** göra om det
We encouraged them to never do again it
(Holmes & Hinchliffe 2003: 476)

(15) Sw: För att **inte** tala om alla dessa kvinnor
For to not talk about all these women
(Title of a 1964 screenplay by Ingmar Bergman)

(16) Sw: Att **verklig** kunna läsa innebär att man kan följa ett
To really be.able.to read entails that one can follow an
intellektuellt resonemang och uppleva en seriös skönlitterär text
intellectual reasoning and experience a serious literary text
(Göteborgs-Posten 97²)

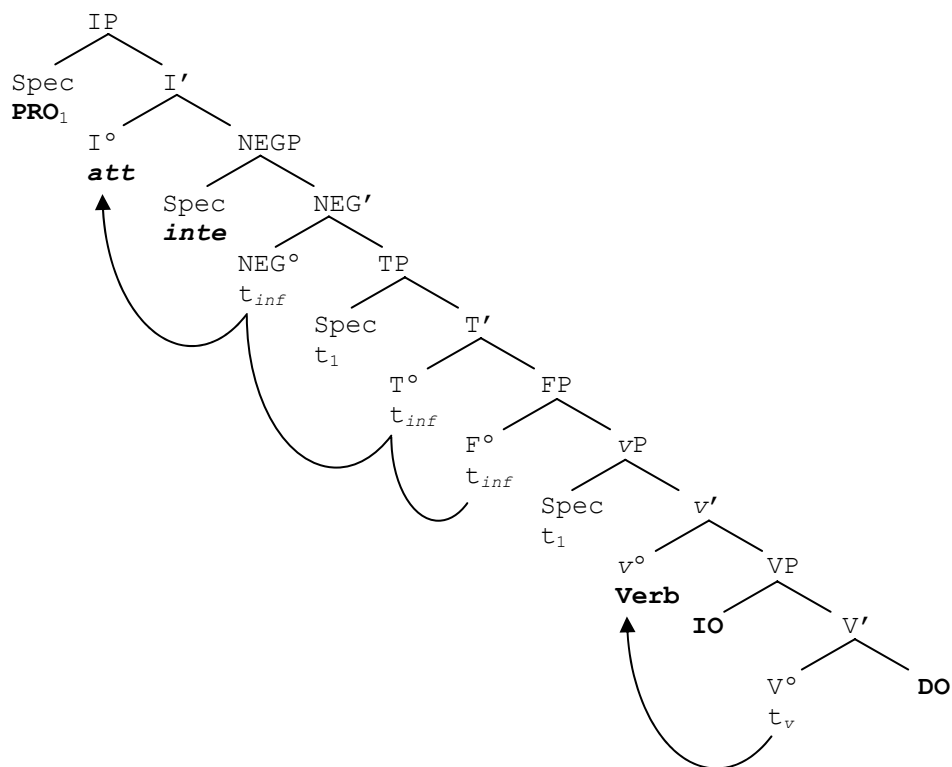
This is also found in **Early Modern Danish** (EMD) where, according to Falk & Torp (1900: 300), the infinitive marker “often” precedes negation and other adverbials:

(17) EMD: at **iljde** brwge rigdom [VP-adv]
to badly use riches
(1526, Poul Eliesen, Falk & Torp 1900: 300)

(18) EMD: at **lettelige** foracte
to easily despise
(1575, Anders Sørensen Vedel, Falk & Torp 1900: 300)

² From the Språkbanken corpus, University of Gothenburg, <http://spraakbanken.gu.se/>.

(19) Swedish and Early Modern Danish:



Interestingly, in Swedish, a negative object that has undergone NEG-shift (Christensen 2003) may also split the infinitive:³

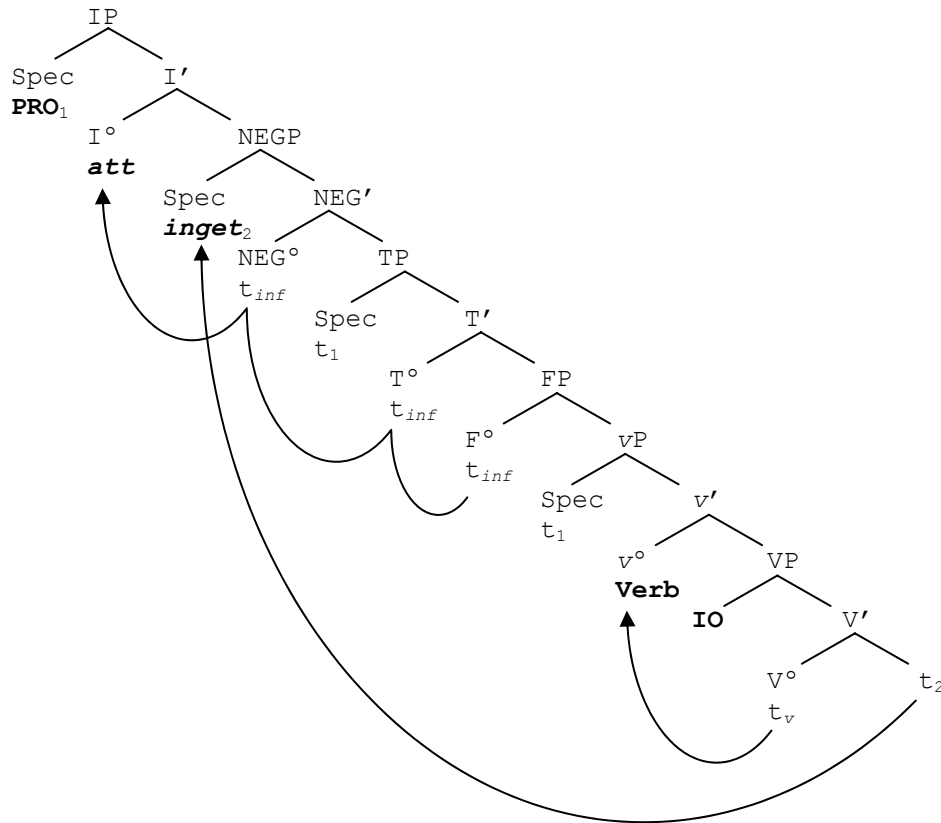
(20) Sw: Den utbredda vanmakten, känslan av att inget begripa
The widespread powerlessness, feeling.the of to nothing comprehend
 (Svenska Dagbladet)

(21) Sw: att känna hur skönt det kan vara att inget ha
To feel how wonderful it can be to none have
 (Svenska Dagbladet)

This is illustrated in (22) below:

³ Examples from the Språkbanken corpus, University of Gothenburg, <http://spraakbanken.gu.se/>.

(22) Swedish F^o-to-I^o movement and NEG-shift:



2.4 Norwegian

Like Swedish, Norwegian also allows sentential adverbials, as in (23), and negation, cf. (24), to intervene between the infinitival marker and the verb. Note that in (25) the adverb that splits the infinitive is the VP-adverbial *berre* ‘just’:⁴

(23) No: Så må du passa på å **alltid** avbestilla bøkene
Then must you mind onto always cancel books.the

(Bergens Tidende)

(24) No: Det var meininga å **ikkje** lyse ut nokon ny anbods-konkurranse
It was intention.the to not announce PRT any new tender-competition

(Bergens Tidende)

(25) No: Annleis vil det vere om dei har halde på med å **berre** slå
Different will it be of they have held on with to just hit
 “It would have been different if they had just kept hitting.”

(Lokalaviser)

⁴ All Norwegian examples are from the Nynorsk part of the Oslo Corpus of Tagged Norwegian Texts, University of Oslo, <http://www.hf.uio.no/tekstlab/>.

Unlike Swedish, in Norwegian the negation can either precede or follow the infinitive marker and or the VP-adverbial. Thus, there is optional F°-to-I° movement as well as optional F°-to-T° movement:

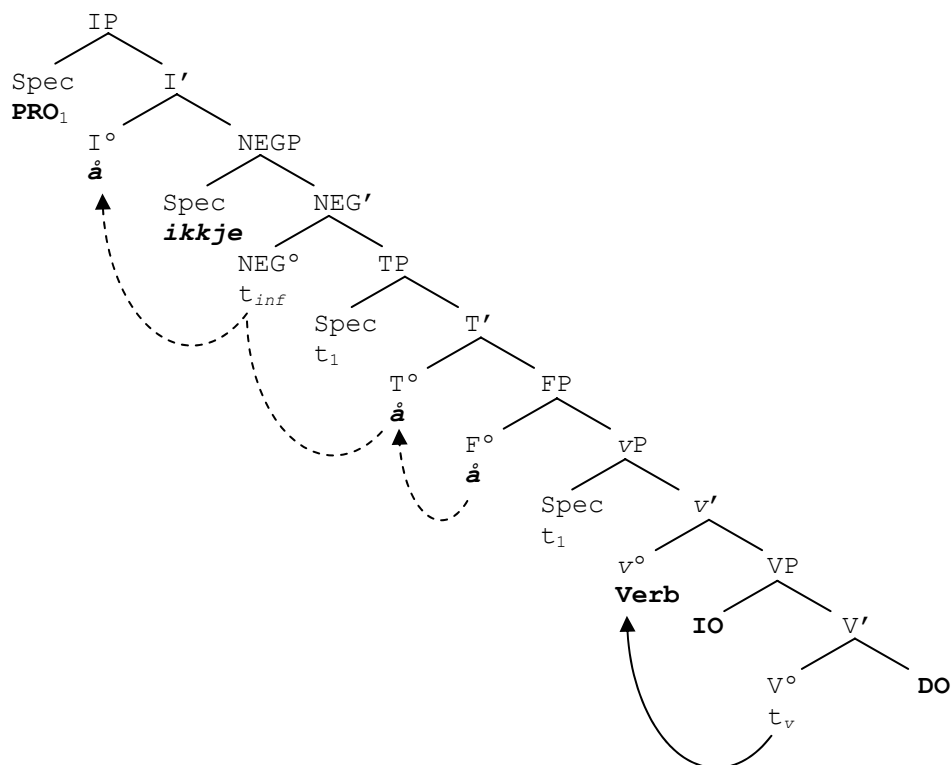
(26) No: Bjørn Eidsvåg hadde bestemt seg for **ikkje** å gje konsertar i sommar
Bjørn Eidsvåg had decided SELF for not to give concerts in summer
 (Bergens Tidende)

(27) No: Eg vil råde dei unge til **ikkje** å bli gamle.
I will advice the young to not to become old
 (Bergens Tidende)

(28) No: Dette er eit betre utgangspunkt enn **berre** å seia at ...
This is a better starting-point than just to say that
 (Bergens Tidende)

The Norwegian optional movement is illustrated in (29) below. Note that the pattern is the same as the English one in (13).

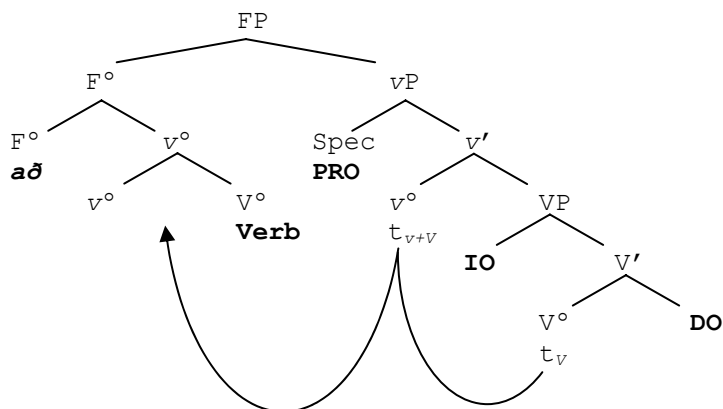
(29) Norwegian:



As Norwegian allows negation to intervene between the infinitive marker and the verb, as Swedish does, it would be expected that NEG-shift should also be able to split the infinitive. This is not

Thus, the movement pattern of *að* is the same as that for English *to* and Norwegian *á* (see (13) and (29) above). The [*að*+V] complex obligatorily moves to I°.

(34) Icelandic V°-to-F° incorporation:



When the object is negative it has to move to spec-NEGP to license sentential negation. Unlike Swedish, this operation is not allowed to split the infinitive. Instead, the [*að*+V] complex moves to I° and the object undergoes NEG-shift:

- (35) Ic: a. * [enga vini] að eiga (er ákaflega leiðinlegt)
 b. *að [enga vini] eiga (er ákaflega leiðinlegt)
 c. að eiga [enga vini] (er ákaflega leiðinlegt)
 to have no friends (is awfully boring)

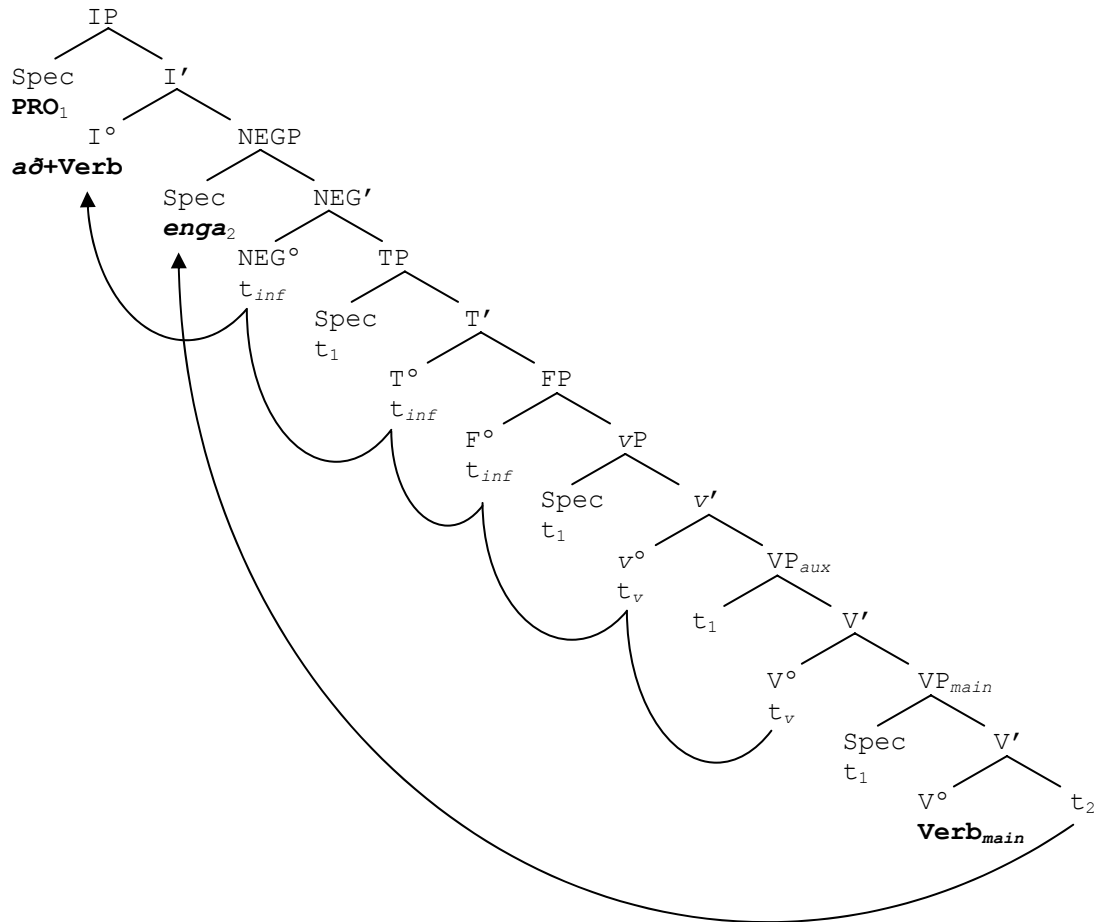
That the negative object *enga vini* ‘no friends’ in (35)c is not to be interpreted as a instance of “trifling” negation is clear in examples with auxiliary verbs. The infinitival [*að*+V] complex has moved to I° and the object has undergone NEG-shift as it precedes the main verb participle:

- (36) Ic: [að hafa [enga vini] **átt**] hefur verið ákaflega leiðinlegt
 to have no friends had has been awfully boring

- (37) Ic: [að hafa [engar bækur] **lesið**] var ákaflega vitlaust
 to have no books read was awfully stupid

This is illustrated in (38) below:

(38) Icelandic [*að*+V] movement and NEG-shift:



Interestingly, these examples show:

- a) that Icelandic allows the split infinitive with both VP-adverbials and negation,⁷
- b) that V°-to-I° is not restricted to finite verbs, but
- c) that the infinitive verb may move **with the infinitive marker** to I° as a complex head.

However, the movement of the infinitive verb is only licensed in the company of the infinitive marker *að* (regardless of subsequent OBJ-shift), as the following ECM examples show:

- (39) Ic: a. Hann sá [mig ekki lesa bókina]
 b. *Hann sá [mig lesa ekki bókina]
 c. *Hann sá [mig lesa bókina ekki]
He saw me.ACC read book.the not
 “He saw me not reading the book.”

⁷ For reasons yet unknown, sentential adverbials other than negation are not allowed to split the infinitive, as the difference in grammaticality between examples (31)b and (32)c shows.

(40) Ic: Ég tel ...
I believe

- a. [mig ekki hafa skrifað Óvininn sem blaðamaður]
b. *[mig hafa ekki skrifað Óvininn sem blaðamaður]
me.ACC have not written "The Enemy" as journalist

(a: <http://www.badabing.is/eldra/arc/002074.html>)

(41) Ic: Ég taldi ...
I believed

- a. [mig ekki hafa fengið brjóstsviða]
b. *[mig hafa ekki fengið brjóstsviða]
me.ACC have not gotten heart-burn

(a: <http://www.vitundarvakning.is/b11.html>)

(42) Ic: ... og þá sagt ...
... and then said

- a. [mig ekki hafa svarað þessu bréfi]
b. *[mig hafa ekki svarað þessu bréfi]
me.ACC have not answered this letter

(a: <http://www.bjorn.is/pistlar/1996/05/05/nr/253>)

(43) Ic: Og minn betri helmingur kvað ...
And my better half said

- a. [mig ekki hafa látið svo ófriðlega í svefni]
b. *[mig hafa ekki látið svo ófriðlega í svefni]
me.ACC have not acted so unpeacefully in sleep

(a: <http://www.armenn.is/Pdf/TBLMAI00.pdf>)

Johnson & Vikner (1998), following Sigurðsson (1989), claim that ECM constructions can't have a NEGP:

(44) *For some unknown reason, non-control infinitives in Icelandic are so anemic, that they do not allow for the kinds of adverbs usually used to determine whether verbs have moved or not.* (Johnson & Vikner 1998: 15-16)

However, the data presented above are counterexamples to such a claim. The problem appears to be the auxiliary verb in the matrix clause, **not** the negation in the embedded clause, compare (45) and (46):

- (45) Ic: a. *Pétur hafði talið [Maríu ekki hafa vaskað upp diskana]
b. *Pétur hafði talið [Maríu hafa ekki vaskað upp diskana]
c. Pétur hafði talið [Maríu hafa vaskað upp diskana]
Peter had believed Mary (not) have washed up dishes.the

(Johnson & Vikner 1998: 14, (41))

- (46) Ic: a. Pétur taldi [Maríu **ekki** hafa vaskað upp diskana]
 b. *Pétur taldi [Maríu hafa **ekki** vaskað upp diskana]
Peter believed Mary have not washed up dishes.the
 (Gunnar Hrafn Hrafnbjargarson, p.c.)

The analysis of Johnson & Vikner (1998) also admittedly wrongly predicts **control infinitives** to be extraction islands. They argue that *að* is base-generated in the higher C° in a recursive CP-domain and that PRO is topicalized to avoid government by the infinitive verb which they argue is moved to the lower C°, cf. the example in (47). They thus have to make additional stipulations. The present analysis does not make such a prediction, cf. the analysis in (48):

- (47) Ic: Hvernig₁ lofaði Pétur Jóni ...
How promised Peter.NOM Jón.DAT
- [_{CP} að [_{CP} PRO fara [_{IP} til London á morgun t₁]]]?
to go to London tomorrow
- (Johnson & Vikner 1998: 31, (78b))

- (48) Ic: Hvernig₁ lofaði Pétur Jóni ...
How promised Peter.NOM Jón.DAT
- [_{CP} t₁ C° [_{IP} PRO [_{I°} að fara] til London á morgun t₁]]?
to go to London tomorrow

There are thus two versions of Icelandic *að*. One that may move alone which is slightly marked, and another one which is may be analyzed as an incorporating head which is the unmarked version.

As in Icelandic, in Early Modern Danish the infinitive marker and the infinitive (auxiliary) verb may move together as they may both precede sentential adverbs and negation:

- (49) EMD: *sinntes at haffue **aldelis** forført*
seems to have completely seduced
 (1575, Anders Sørensen Vedel, Falk & Torp 1900: 299)

- (50) EMD: *sagde sig nu at skulle **icke** lade hannem vere der lenger*
said SELF now to should not let him be there longer
 (1574-1597, Bishop Jens Nielsen, *Visitatsbog*, Falk & Torp 1900: 299)

The possibility of moving [*at+V*] in Early Modern Danish and [*að+V*] in Icelandic seems to correlate with / be licensed by V°-to-I° movement. Among the modern Scandinavian languages, only Icelandic has V°-to-I° movement while Danish lost it sometime between 1300 and 1700. The movement of the infinitive marker alone is not subject to such a licensing condition.

3 Summary

The distribution of the infinitive marker can be summed as follows:

- a. Danish *at* optionally moves to T° to precede VP-adverbials. Movement to I° is impossible as it obligatorily follows NEGP.
- b. English *to* optionally moves to T° where it precedes VP-adverbials and optionally to I° to precede NEGP.
- c. Swedish *att* always moves to I° as it obligatorily precedes NEGP which may also be targeted by NEG-shift.
- d. Norwegian *å* optionally moves T° to precede VP-adverbials and optionally to I° where it precedes NEGP. Unexpectedly, spec-NEGP may not be filled by NEG-shift in infinitival clauses.
- e. Icelandic *að* (and Early Modern Danish *at*) may optionally move to T° to precede VP-adverbials and further to I° where it precedes NEGP. The unmarked derivation, however, is the one where the verb is incorporated by *að* and this complex head moves to I°. This appears to be licensed by the ‘V°-to-I° parameter’.

(51) The variation in the position of the infinitive marker:

| | | |
|------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Optional F°-to-T° movement | En (<i>to</i>), No (<i>å</i>), Da (<i>at</i>) | [, ?Ic (<i>að</i>)] |
| Optional T°-to-I° movement | En (<i>to</i>), No (<i>å</i>) | [, ?Ic (<i>að</i>)] |
| Obligatory F°-to-I° movement | Sw (<i>att</i>) | |
| [F°+[v°+V°]] movement to I° | Ic (<i>að</i> +V) | |

(52) NEG-shift and infinitives:

| | | |
|-----------|---|--|
| Sw | ✓ | Split infinitive |
| Ic | ✓ | [<i>að</i> +V] move |
| Da | ✓ | <i>Ingen</i> ₁ <i>at</i> V t ₁ |
| No [, Ic] | ✗ | <i>Ingen</i> → <i>ikke nogen</i> |
| En | ✗ | VP-internal negation |

4 Conclusions

- a) The base-position of the infinitive marker is the same cross-linguistically, namely in a functional projection FP at the top of the VP-domain. This is different from what is assumed elsewhere. The table below shows some examples of the various positions argued for the infinitive marker (*mutatis mutandis* as some of the authors use non-split IPs). Interestingly, Beukema & den Dikken (1989) also argues for optional movement, but only for English and Norwegian:

(53) Base-positions of the infinitive marker:

| | Chomsky (1981), Radford (1997) | Haegeman & Guéron (1999) | Platzack (1986, 1998) | Johnson & Vikner (1998) | Beukema & den Dikken (1989) |
|----|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------|---|
| C° | | | Ic: <i>að</i> Sw: <i>att</i> | Ic: <i>að</i> | Ic: <i>að</i> Sw: <i>att</i> No: <i>å</i> ← |
| I° | En: <i>to</i> | En: <i>to</i> | | Sw: <i>att</i> | En: <i>to</i> ↗ |
| T° | | En: <i>to</i> | Da: <i>at</i> En: <i>to</i> No: <i>å</i> | Da: <i>at</i> No: <i>å</i> | Da: <i>at</i> En: <i>to</i> No: <i>å</i> ↘ |

- b) Bobaljik & Thráinsson (1998) argue that only Icelandic has a split IP while the other Scandinavian languages and English have a simple un-split IP. The data presented here show that it cannot be correct (or at the very least, it doesn't have to be). All the languages must have more than one functional head in the IP-domain that can be targeted by movement of the infinitival marker: one preceding NEGP, i.e. I°, and one following NEGP but preceding VP-adverbials, i.e. T°. (This presumably also holds for Swedish, even though the data presented here do not show it.)
- c) The distribution of the infinitival marker and negation and sentential and VP-adverbs shows that NEGP can have the same structural position in all the languages, i.e. between IP (or AGRSP) and TP. Ouhalla (1990: 199) argues that English (and implies that Swedish (1990: 210)) NEG selects VP, while French NEGP selects TP. The present analysis shows that all of these languages (again except perhaps Swedish) may have the same "NEG-parameter" setting: NEG selects TP.
- d) Contrary to what is argued by Johnson & Vikner (1998), Icelandic infinitive verbs do not move (they argue that the verb moves through I° to C°). The infinitival marker *að* attracts and incorporates the infinitive verbs prior to movement to I°. This complex head, **not** the infinitive verb, is able to check [ϕ] features.

- e) In Icelandic ECM constructions (non-control infinitives), there is no infinitival *að* and therefore no movement to I° as the infinitival verb itself cannot check the features on I°. I have presented data that show, contrary to what is claimed by Johnson & Vikner (1998) and others, that ECM constructions may have a NEGP which makes it possible to positively identify the structural position of the verb.
- f) The analysis presented here correctly predicts that control infinitives are not extraction islands, which the analysis in Johnson & Vikner (1998) predicts them to be.

5 Appendix: A note on non-control infinitives

In **control** infinitives, PRO in spec-IP checks [EPP] on I^o, *að/att* checks [φ].

(54) Features checked by PRO and the infinitival marker (version 1):

| PRO | Icelandic <i>að</i> / Swedish <i>att</i> |
|-------|---|
| [EPP] | [INF, φ] |

I assume that **iff** I^o assigns Case, I^o has [φ] features. In other words, I^o has no [φ] features in:

- (55) a. ECM constructions
b. Icelandic clauses with DAT/ACC subjects

In **ECM constructions**, the subject DP moves to get Case. There are no [φ] features, and Icelandic *að* like Swedish *att* are not licensed as their uninterpretable [φ] features cannot be checked.

- (56) Ic: a. *Pétur taldi [að Maríu **ekki** hafa vaskað upp diskana] (ECM)
b. *Pétur taldi [Maríu að **ekki** hafa vaskað upp diskana]
c. *Pétur taldi [Maríu **ekki** að hafa vaskað upp diskana]
Peter believed Mary not to have washed up dishes.the

In **Raising constructions**, the raising subject DP checks [φ, EPP] on the embedded I^o and [EPP] on the matrix I^o. Again, *að/att* would not be able to check [φ] and is therefore not licensed.

- (57) Ic: a. *Hann virtist [að **ekki** tala fullkomna íslensku] (Raising)
b. Hann virtist [**ekki** tala fullkomna íslensku]
c. *Hann virtist [að tala **ekki** fullkomna íslensku]
He seemed to speak not perfect Icelandic

Danish *at*, English *to*, and Norwegian *å* are **obligatory** in both ECM and Raising constructions:⁸

⁸ Except ECM constructions under perception verbs, which for some reason do not license the infinitive marker in any of the languages in question:

- (i) Da: Jeg hørte [hende (*at) spille klaver]
(ii) En: I heard [her (*to) play the piano]
(iii) Ic: Ég heyrði [hana (*að) leika á pianó]

(58) Da: a. Jeg anser [hende for at være kompetent] (ECM)
 b. *Jeg anser [hende for _____ være kompetent]
I consider her for to be competent

(59) Da: a. Han synes [at tale flydende dansk] (Raising)
 b. *Han synes [_____ tale flydende dansk]
He seems to speak fluent Danish

This is summarized in the table in (60) below (see also Beukema & den Dikken 1989: 66-67):

(60) Distribution of the infinitival marker:

| Infinitival marker | Control | ECM | Raising |
|---------------------|---------|-----|---------|
| Danish <i>at</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| English <i>to</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Norwegian <i>å</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Icelandic <i>að</i> | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ |
| Swedish <i>att</i> | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ |

But why, then, are Da. *at*, En. *to*, and No. *å* obligatory in ECM and Raising? If it is assumed that there is a difference in the properties of PRO and the infinitive marker the observed variation follows. In Icelandic and Swedish, the infinitive marker checks the [φ] features (obligatory movement to F⁰-to-I⁰), while in Danish, English, and Norwegian, this is done by PRO (optional F⁰-to-I⁰). (Future research may answer the question why Icelandic and Swedish PRO can't check [φ] features.)

(61) Features checked by PRO and the infinitive marker (version 2):

| | PRO | Infinitive marker F ⁰ |
|------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Ic, Sw | [EPP] | [INF, φ] |
| Da, En, No | [EPP, φ] | [INF] |

(62) The variation in the position of the infinitive marker (repeated from (51) above):

| | |
|---|---|
| Optional F ⁰ -to-T ⁰ movement | En (<i>to</i>), No (<i>å</i>), Da (<i>at</i>) [, ?Ic (<i>að</i>)] |
| Optional T ⁰ -to-I ⁰ movement | En (<i>to</i>), No (<i>å</i>) [, ?Ic (<i>að</i>)] |
| Obligatory F ⁰ -to-I ⁰ movement | Sw (<i>att</i>) |
| [F ⁰ + [v^0 +V ⁰]] movement to I ⁰ | Ic (<i>að</i> +V) |

6 References

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