



Thursday 19th November – 17:30 CET
68. StuTS Online

Exploring apparent V2-violations in Norwegian



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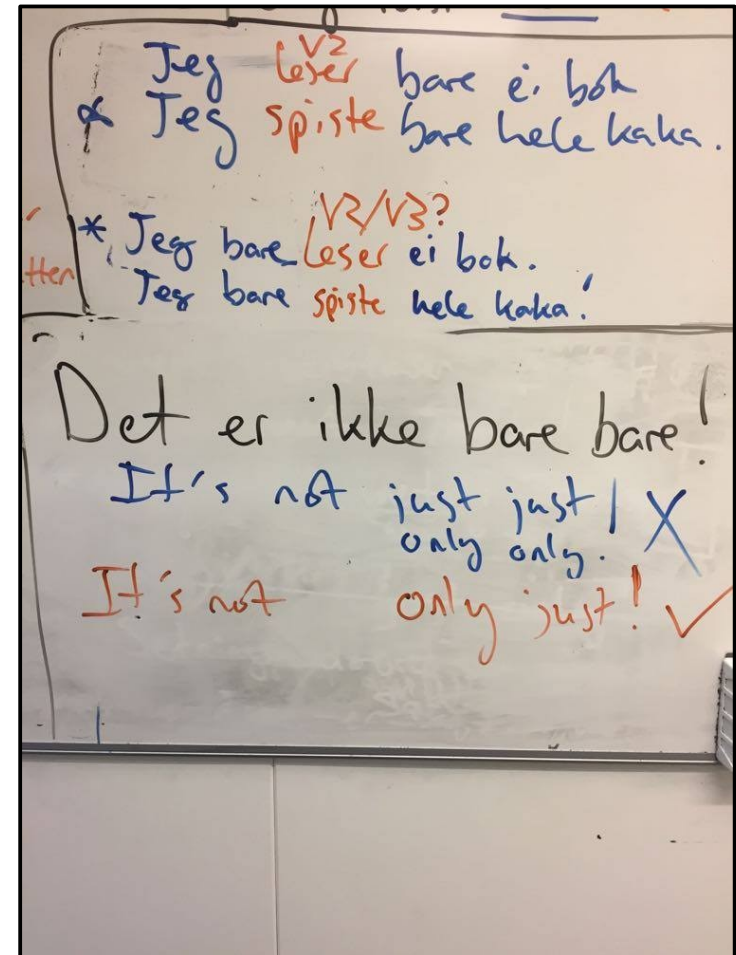
About me

- 32, from the UK, lived in Norway for 4.5 years.
- Final year undergraduate in *European Language* at the University of Oslo.
- Study subjects: Linguistics (theoretical), German, English.
- Recently became a Norwegian language teacher at a language school for non-native speakers who have moved to Norway (teaching A1-A2 level conversation and grammar classes).



How did this topic come about?

- Spring semester 2020 I took the module “bachelor thesis” in linguistics (10 ECTS).
- A 10-page concise piece of work.
- I wanted to use Norwegian as the object language and was interested in looking at something to do with V2.
- Had access to corpora with Norwegian data.
- Experiences from exposure to Norwegian through the years.
- V2-violations!!

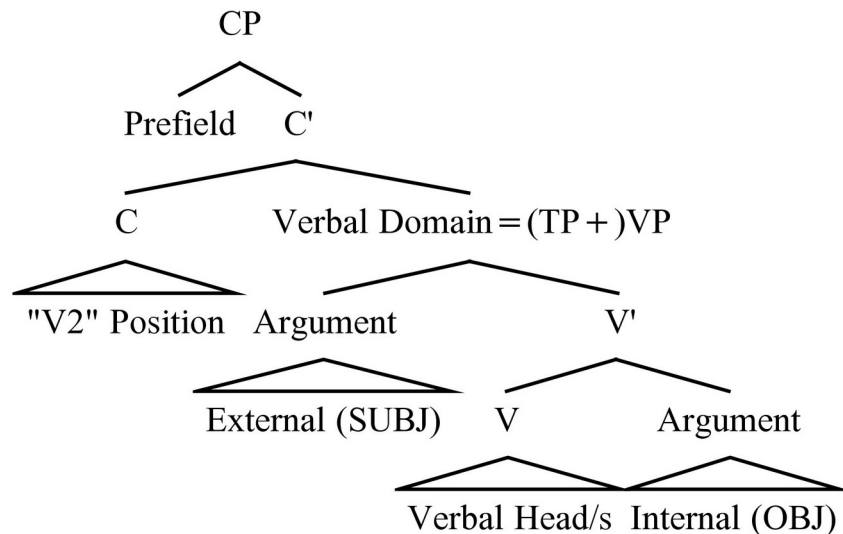




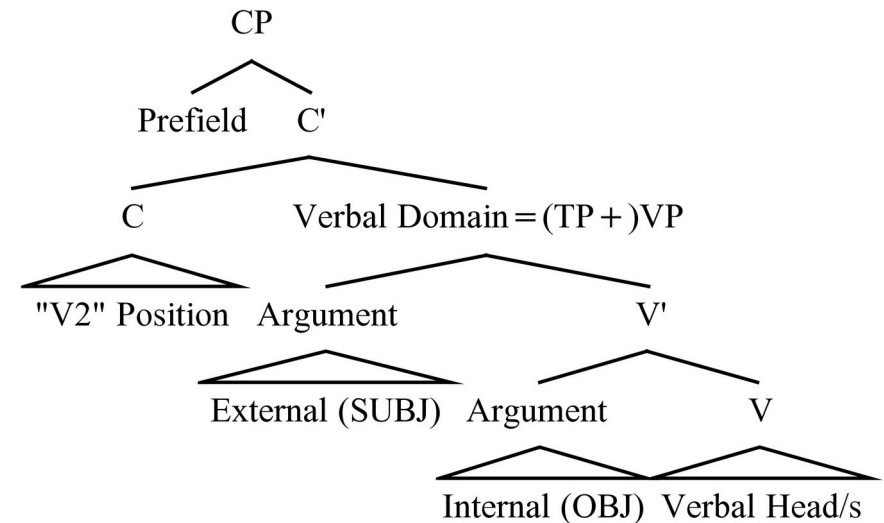
Norwegian

- A North-Germanic language, which like most other Germanic languages with the notable exception of English, is said to be a 'verb-second' (V2) language (Holmberg and Platzack 2005)
- V2 language: Verb as the second constituent in main clauses via V-T-C movement (Holmberg 2015:343, Vikner and Schwartz 1996).
- V2 phenomenon has a long history in the literature (see Holmberg 2013 for an overview).
- Norwegian is a C-V2 language, as opposed to I-V2 languages such as Yiddish and Icelandic, which are traditionally said to have V2 in all finite clauses (Holmberg 2015:343)

Norwegian Clausal Architecture



German Clausal Architecture





V2-violations? Apparent?

- A matter of constituency!
- A question of whether the apparent divergence of (1) from (2) can be classified as a genuine V2-violation or not is a matter of constituency, theories of movement, and the notion of V2.

(1) Jeg lure-r bare på en ting. *Norwegian*
 I wonder-PRES just on a thing.
 ‘I am just wondering/I just wonder about something.’ (N#1826990)

V2

(2) Jeg **bare** lure-r på en liten ting. *Norwegian*
 I just wonder-PRES on a small thing.
 ‘I am just wondering/I just wonder about a small something.’ (N#26597)

V3

(1) [CP Jeg^{t2} [C lurer^{t1}] [TP ^{t2} [T ^{t1} ...] [VP ^{t2} [V ^{t1} ...]]]]

(2) ???



What are the questions?

- 1) Is there (a lot of) evidence of apparent V2-violations in Norwegian?
- 2) What words can occur in apparent V2-violation contexts?
- 3) Which words occur more frequently than others?
- 4) Investigate the semantics of any word/s that have the highest absolute frequencies. Why do they appear in these V3 contexts?
- 5) How can we syntactically model and account for apparent V2-violations within the theoretical frameworks?



NoWaC (Norwegian Web as Corpus): Determining the search criteria

- The search criteria below was used in order to reveal which adverbs can occur between the pre-V2 constituent and the V2-verb in Norwegian. The criteria limited the search to human pronouns for the pre-V2 constituent, one intervening adverb, and the V2 finite verb.
- Subject-initial main clause (SIMC)

Element 1: *Human Pronoun (sentence initial)*. Element 2: *Adverb*. Element 3: *Verb*.

The screenshot shows the NoWaC search interface with the following settings:

- Language: Glossa
- Corpus: Norwegian Web As Corpus (NoWaC)
- Buttons: Reset form, Search
- Query type: Simple | **Extended** | CQP query
- Search criteria:
 - Element 1: Lemma, Start, End, max, Sentence initial, **Pronoun human x**
 - Element 2: Lemma, Start, End, max, **Adverb x**
 - Element 3: Lemma, Start, End, max, Sentence final, **Verb x**

The results were checked and pruned for false-positives, leaving a total of **7156** sentence examples of the V3 context.

/



NoWaC (Norwegian Web as Corpus): Results (1)

- 63 different adverb types were found in this V3 context.
- The absolute and relative frequencies of adverbs occurring 28 times or more are presented in the table below.

Adverbs occurring between the pre-V2 constituent and the V2-verb in Norwegian.

Total entries: 7156.

Adverb	English Translation	Abs. Frequency	Rel. Frequency (%)
<i>bare</i>	just	5657	79.05
<i>også</i>	also	410	5.73
<i>derimot</i>	on the contrary	298	4.16
<i>ikke</i>	not	82	1.15
<i>simpelthen</i>	simply	76	1.06
<i>rett og slett</i>	quite simply	74	1.03
<i>formelig</i>	actually, positively	62	0.87
<i>for eksempel</i>	for example	55	0.77
<i>alene</i>	alone	51	0.71
<i>nesten</i>	almost	45	0.63
<i>nå</i>	now	31	0.43
<i>kanskje</i>	maybe, perhaps	30	0.42
<i>heller</i>	rather	28	0.39
<i>OTHERS (51 types)</i>		285	3.98

- All examples were produced by native speakers.
- It still remains to be seen whether the examples are accepted by a large majority of native Norwegian speakers, and there would also presumably be ranging levels of acceptability for different adverbs.
- What is apparent, though, is that there is a seemingly sizeable amount of types of adverbs that can occur between the pre-V2 constituent and the V2-verb, if they are deemed acceptable.



NoWaC (Norwegian Web as Corpus): Results (2)

- Examples of the three adverbs with the frequency are given below; *bare* 'just', *også* 'also', *derimot* 'on the contrary'.

Adverb	English Translation	Abs. Frequency	Rel. Frequency (%)
<i>bare</i>	just	5657	79.05
<i>også</i>	also	410	5.73
<i>derimot</i>	on the contrary	298	4.16

Jeg bare går rett på sak, jeg;...	Norwegian
I just go straight on case, I;...	
'I am simply/just getting straight to the point;...' (N#112812)	
Jeg også synes dette var vanskelig!	Norwegian
I also think this was difficult!	
'I also think this was difficult!' (N#1690121)	
Dere derimot burde vite bedre enn å komme med en slik kommentar som den ovenfor.	Norwegian
You.3PL on the contrary should know better than to come with a such comment as that above.	
'You on the contrary should know better than to make such a comment as the one above.' (N#4933791)	

- The relative frequency of *bare* 'just' accounts for almost 79% of all SIMC V3 contexts found in NoWAC. The other 62 adverbs make up the remaining 21%. This is rather striking!



Semantics of *bare* 'just' between the pre-V2 constituent and the V2-verb: Oslo Multilingual Corpus (OMC)

- The corresponding English word for *bare* was recorded and tabulated below. 19 of the cases are Norwegian translations, the remaining 26 are Norwegian originals.

Element 1: *Human Pronoun (sentence initial)*. Element 2: *bare*. Element 3: *Verb*.

The English equivalents of *bare* between the pre-V2 constituent and the V2-verb in the OMC.

Adverb	Abs. Frequency	Rel. Frequency (%)
<i>just</i>	22	48.89
<i>simply</i>	7	15.56
<i>merely</i>	5	11.11
<i>only</i>	2	4.44
null (not translated)	6	13.33
insufficient data	3	6.67
TOTAL	45	100

- The results appear to suggest that the English adverbs *just*, *simply*, *merely* and *only* are all potential counterparts of *bare* in the position between the pre-V2 constituent and the V2-verb.
- One of these is much more preferred than the others: the *only* reading occurs twice, with *just* accounting for just under 50% of the 45 results, and 61% of the 36 with English *bare* equivalents.
- A rather small corpus sample, added to the fact that translations (as opposed to just originals) were used. Despite this, a total of 36 examples with English equivalents of *bare* certainly provided something to work with. /



Just as a mask for *simply* and *only*!

- *Just* can be considered as a kind of mask for *simply* and *only*, in that *just* can potentially mean either *simply* or *only*, or even allow for both readings.
- *Simply* does not mean *only* (Beltrama 2018:324), whereas *just* can mean both *simply* and/or *only*.
- 17 of the English translations with *just* were judged for how natural they would be when *just* is exchanged with *simply* and *only*.
- The aim of this was to try and further tease out the meaning of *bare* in apparent V2-violations.
- Are all those instances of *bare* which are translated as *just* ultimately instances of *only*, or in fact instances of *simply*, or perhaps a mixture of both.
- An example of the methodology used is shown below in (1).

(1a) Norwegian original

(1) a. Derfor tok hun seg fri en formiddag og oppsøkte henne. «Vi var ikke presentert» sa Celia. «Jeg *bare* ringte på og buste inn.» Mrs Hawthorne tok kjølig imot henne. (O#AH1TN.2.2.s324)

(1b) English translation

(1) b. Therefore, in the daytime when Sam Hawthorne was at Felding-Roth, Celia went to see his wife at home. “I’d never met her,” Celia told Andrew. “I had no appointment. *I just rang the bell and barged in.*” The reception was hostile. (O#AH1E.2.3.s207)

(1c) The example with *bare* replaced by *only*

(1) c. ? ... “I had no appointment. *I only rang the bell and barged in.*” The reception was hostile.

(1d) The example with *bare* replaced by *simply*

(1) d. √ ... “I had no appointment. *I simply rang the bell and barged in.*” The reception was hostile.



Just as a mask for simply and only!

Judgements on the readings of 17 appropriate OMC sentences containing *just* as either an original or translation for *bare*, whereby *just* is replaced with *only* and *simply*

	Very natural (5)	Natural (4)	Unsure/OK (3)	Unnatural (2)	Very unnatural (1)
<i>just</i> replaced with <i>only</i>	0	0	2	9	6
<i>just</i> replaced with <i>simply</i>	17	0	0	0	0

- (1b) can be said to have the *simply* reading, and not the *only* reading.

(1a) Norwegian original

(1b) English translation

(1c) The example with *bare* replaced by *only*.
Very unnatural reading
(#1 on a scale of 1-5)

(1d) The example with *bare* replaced by *simply*.
Very natural reading
(#5 on a scale of 1-5)

- (1) a. Derfor tok hun seg fri en formiddag og oppsøkte henne. «Vi var ikke presentert» sa Celia. «Jeg *bare* ringte på og buste inn.» Mrs Hawthorne tok kjølig imot henne. (O#AH1TN.2.2.s324)
- (1) b. Therefore, in the daytime when Sam Hawthorne was at Felding-Roth, Celia went to see his wife at home. “I’d never met her,” Celia told Andrew. “I had no appointment. *I just rang the bell and barged in.*” The reception was hostile. (O#AH1E.2.3.s207)
- (1) c. ? ... “I had no appointment. *I only rang the bell and barged in.*” The reception was hostile.
- (1) d. √√ ... “I had no appointment. *I simply rang the bell and barged in.*” The reception was hostile.



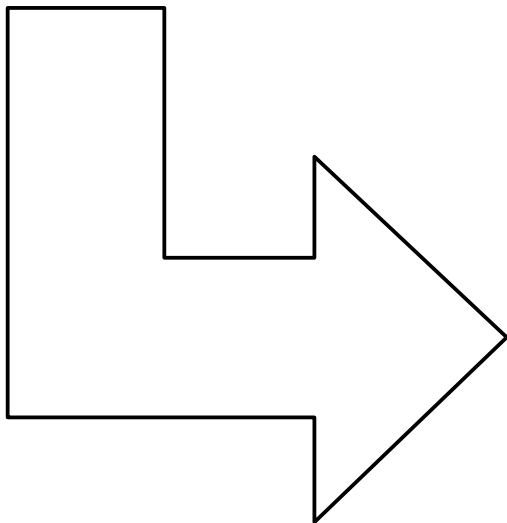
Just as a mask for *simply* and *only*!

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The English equivalents of *bare* between the pre-V2 constituent and the V2-verb in the OMC.

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- The *only* reading of *just* for *bare* is either unnatural or very unnatural between the pre-V2 constituent and the V2-verb in a SIMC.
- On the other hand, the reading of *simply* for *just* is very natural for all cases.
- It is possible to reanalyse the table on the left to the one below
- The *simply/merely/just* (*just as simply*) reading is natural/very natural in all cases, with the *only* reading being natural/very natural twice. Potential reasons for these two readings are discussed later.



English equivalents of *bare* between the pre-V2 constituent and the V2-verb:
Examples with a natural/very natural reading.

Adverb	Abs. Frequency	Rel. Frequency (%) of 31 instances
<i>simply/merely/just</i>	31 (of 31)	100
<i>only</i>	2 (of 31)	3.23



Disambiguation and the Effect of *bare*

- The fact that Norwegian, as a V2 language, allows SIMCs with *bare* between the pre-V2 constituent and the V2-verb should be for a reason, and especially at such a relatively high frequency compared to other adverbs.
- The results in the previous section can lead us to assume that *bare* between the pre-V2 constituent and the V2-verb in SIMC is a case of disambiguation.
- The adverb *bare* was shown to have at least 4 different meanings/readings when compared to its equivalents in English; *simply/merely/just/only*. *Bare* has therefore several meanings. It is also syntactically very flexible in that it can occur clause initial, the position investigated in this thesis, and positions in the middle-field.
- The use of *bare* in the apparent V2-violation context is a case of disambiguating its several meanings. The key effect is making the *only* reading seem unnatural or very unnatural. This then leaves the *simply/merely/just (just as simply)* reading.

What do the examples with the *simply/merely/just (just as simply)* reading in the OMC corpus have in common? Beltrama (2018:311) alludes to the terms “unexplanatory” and “indifference-marking” to describe the effect of these operators. The examples below are taken directly from Beltrama (2018:311).

- a. The vase just/simply/#only broke. = **Unexplanatory**
- b. Alfonso just/simply/#only grabbed whatever tool was handy. = **Indifference**



Disambiguation and the Effect of *bare*

- The table below contains a small sample from all the OMC instances and covers the following; the effect of the apparent V2-violating adverb, the English adverb equivalent of *bare* that was originally used, a comparison of 3 of the equivalents to confirm which readings are natural. The effect of the equivalent of *bare* between the pre-V2 constituent and the V2-verb in an SIMC is unanimously that of an indifference-marking one.
- Norwegian SIMCs with human pronouns as the first constituent and *bare* between the pre-V2 constituent and the V2-verb result in *bare* having mostly an indifference-marking effect.
- Indifference is the quality of detachment and being unconcerned, whilst implying neutrality and a feeling of potential disinterest in the action/focus/thing. This also helps us better understand why we do not get the unnatural *only* reading of *bare*, as *only* denotes more of a feeling of interest on the focused action/thing, it denotes less neutrality, and also more of a sense of concern and attachment.

The emphatic effect of the *bare*'s equivalent adverbs on sentence semantics.

Corpus Entry #	Effect of Adverb	Original Adverb	Comparison of Adverbs
(O#AH1E.2.3.s207)	indifference-marking	<i>just</i>	I <i>simply/merely/?only</i> rang the bell and barged in.
(O#CL1TE.1.3.21.s6)	indifference-marking	<i>simply</i>	You <i>simply/merely/?only</i> walked toward the door in order to go out.
(O#EHA1TE.2.2.s67)	indifference-marking	<i>just</i>	She <i>simply/merely/?only</i> stared at me with wide-open eyes and walked past me without a word.
(O#EHA1TE.2.3.s194)	indifference-marking	<i>just</i>	I <i>simply/merely/?only</i> walk, <i>simply/merely/?only</i> amble along, and feel that everything is just right.
(O#JB1E.2.s51)	indifference-marking	<i>just</i>	We <i>simply/merely/?only</i> decided and that was it.
(O#JG3TE.2.4.s280)	indifference-marking	<i>simply</i>	I <i>simply/merely/?only</i> leant across to the bottle and said, " I'm a bit of a connoisseur of reptiles, you know ..."



Focus (1)

There were however two examples where the *only* reading was deemed natural. What is it that makes these readings seem natural or very natural?

(a) Norwegian original

a. ... “Har du ennå ikke forstått det?” sa han, og nå var han oppriktig forundret. *Jeg bare ristet på hodet*. Han sa, «det er en gave, men det er også en byrde. ...»
(O#JG3N.2.10.s784)

(b) English translation

b. ... “Haven't you understood yet?” he said, and now he was genuinely astonished. *I could only shake my head*. “It's a gift, but it's also a burden. ...”
(O#JG3TE.2.10.s741)

(c) Alternative English translations with *only*

c. √?... “Haven't you understood yet?” he said, and now he was genuinely astonished. *I only [shook] my head*. “It's a gift, but it's also a burden. ...” (O#JG3TE.2.10.s741)

(d) Alternative English translations with *simply*

d. √√... “Haven't you understood yet?” he said, and now he was genuinely astonished. *I simply [shook] my head*. “It's a gift, but it's also a burden. ...”
(O#JG3TE.2.10.s741)



Focus (2)

That is to say, that for *bare* to mean *only* in an apparent V2-violation position, the focus needs to be on *bare* itself.

(a) German original

a. Entgegen ihren Erwartungen zeigte er sich nicht begeistert. ***Er [lachte] nur.***
(O#ERH1D.2.s219)

(b) Norwegian translation

b. Stikk i strid med hva hun forventet, var han ikke begeistret. ***Han [bare] lo.***
(O#ERH1TN.2.s254)

(c) English translation

c. Contrary to her expectations, he was not enthusiastic. ***He [only] laughed.***
(O#ERH1TE.2.s231)

Thus the following proposals are made for *bare* and its meaning depending on focus.

a. *Han bare [lo].* Natural reading/s = *simply/merely/just (just as simply)*

b. *Han [bare] lo.* Natural reading/s = *only*

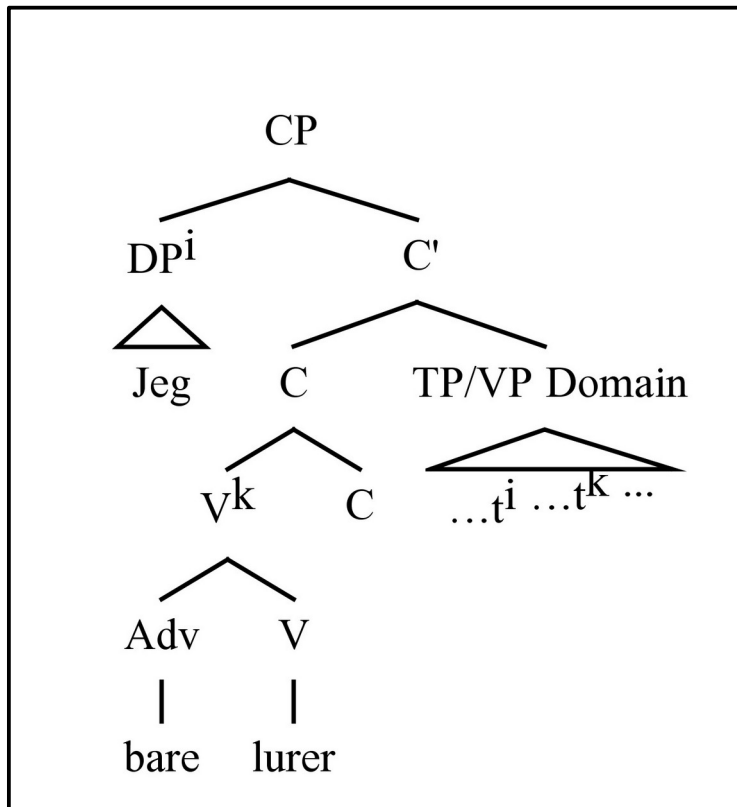
c. *Han [lo] bare.* Natural reading/s = *only/simply/just/merely*



The syntax of apparent V2-violations:

(1) Head-adjunction to the verb (Brandtler and Håkansson 2017:17)

- (2) Jeg **bare** lure-r på en liten ting. *Norwegian*
 I just wonder-PRES on a small thing.
 'I am just wondering/I just wonder about a small something.' (N#26597)



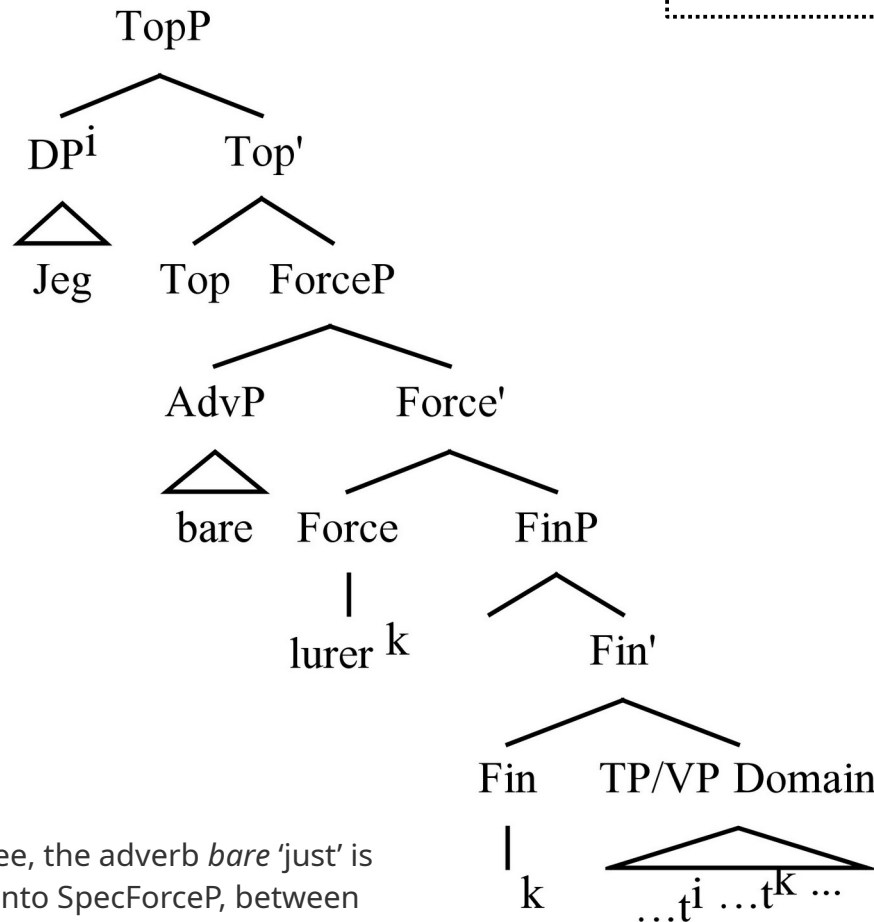
- Brandtler and Håkansson (2017:17) argue that Swedish V3 examples corresponding to the Norwegian example in (2) represent cases of structural V2 in that the word order is derived from adverbial head-adjunction to the finite verb in C.
- This assumption, shown in the tree to the left, removes the need for an articulated left-periphery in such V3 instances.
- There are two moved elements into the C-domain; the subject XP and the V-head. The adverb adjoins to the V-head after these movements have taken place.



The syntax of apparent V2-violations:

(2) External merge into the CP-zone (Julien 2015:150-151)

(2) Jeg **bare** lure-r på en liten ting. Norwegian
 I just wonder-PRES on a small thing.
 'I am just wondering/I just wonder about a small something.' (N#26597)



In this tree, the adverb *bare* 'just' is merged into SpecForceP, between the fronted XP in SpecTopP and the verb in Force-head (Julien 2015:150-151).

- Since and during the cartographic developments of the left-periphery (Rizzi 1997, Rizzi and Cinque 2009, Rizzi and Cinque 2016:144-147), interpretations of an articulated Norwegian left-field have become frequent in the literature (Holmberg and Platzack 2005, Wiklund et al. 2007:205).
- The expanded CP-domain in the Rizzian spirit has helped proponents of the traditional head-movement approach explain apparent deviations to V2 in Scandinavian, providing further projections for the external merge of elements that intervene the first constituent (be it SIMCs or not) and the finite verb (see Julien 2015, 2018).
- In this sense, the occurrence of V3/V4 relates solely to the linear position of the verb in the matrix clause, not the fact that the notion of V2 has been violated (Holmberg 2015:342).



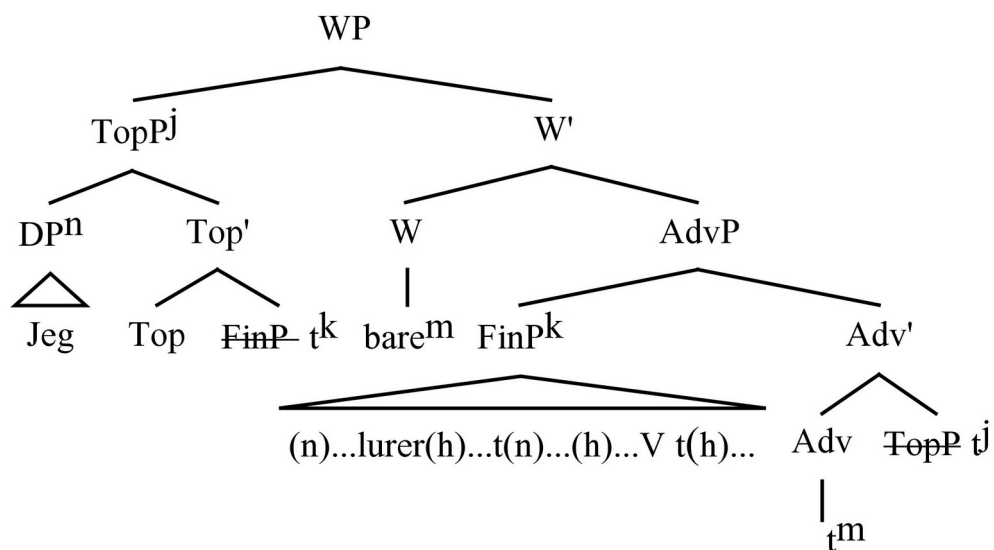
The syntax of apparent V2-violations:

(3) Phrasal movement #1 (Bentzen 2005, Kayne 1998, Nilsen 2003)

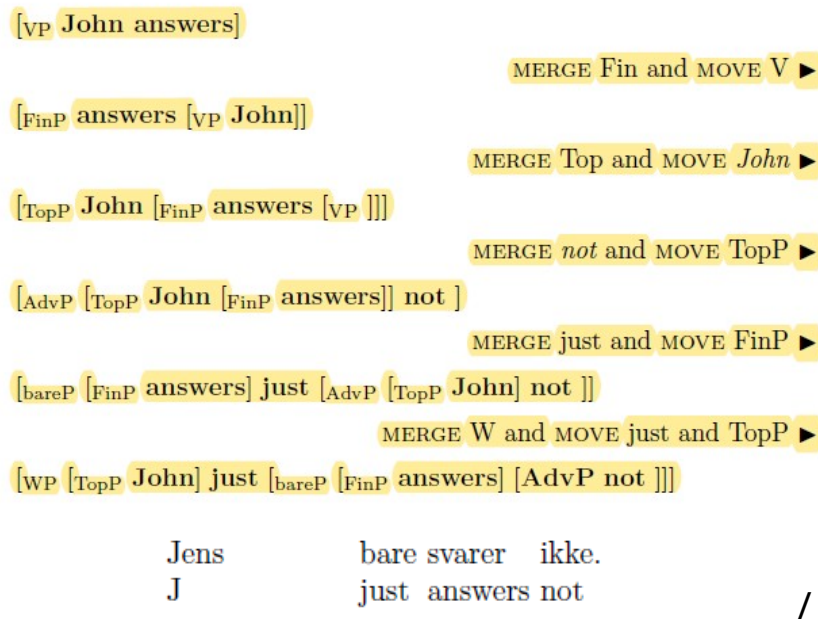
- The tree below shows a (predominately) phrasal movement approach for (2). The derivation (3.9) by Nilsen (2003:92), based on work by (Kayne 1998:165), and supported further by Bentzen (2005), is able to account for the word order found in (2).
- The more traditional functional positions/hierarchy found in the previous models are not seen here (at least in a similar order).
- The theory assumes phrasal movement containing the finite verb, and relies on the use of Kayne's (1998:165) WPs as adverb attractors above AdvPs together with verb attractors, which Bentzen (2005:173-174) refers to as VP and AdvP lifters.

(2) Jeg **bare** lure-r på en liten ting. Norwegian
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 'I am just wondering/I just wonder about a small something.' (N#26597)

Tree derivation: the V-head moves to an XP (here FinP) above the vP/VP followed by movement of the subject XP into an XP (here TopP) above FinP. The adverb *bare* 'just' heads its own projection above FinP and TopP, and above that is the adverb attractor phrase, WP. FinP then moves into SpecAdvP, followed by movement of *bare* 'just' from Adv-head to W-head, and lastly TopP to SpecWP.



Derivation 3.9



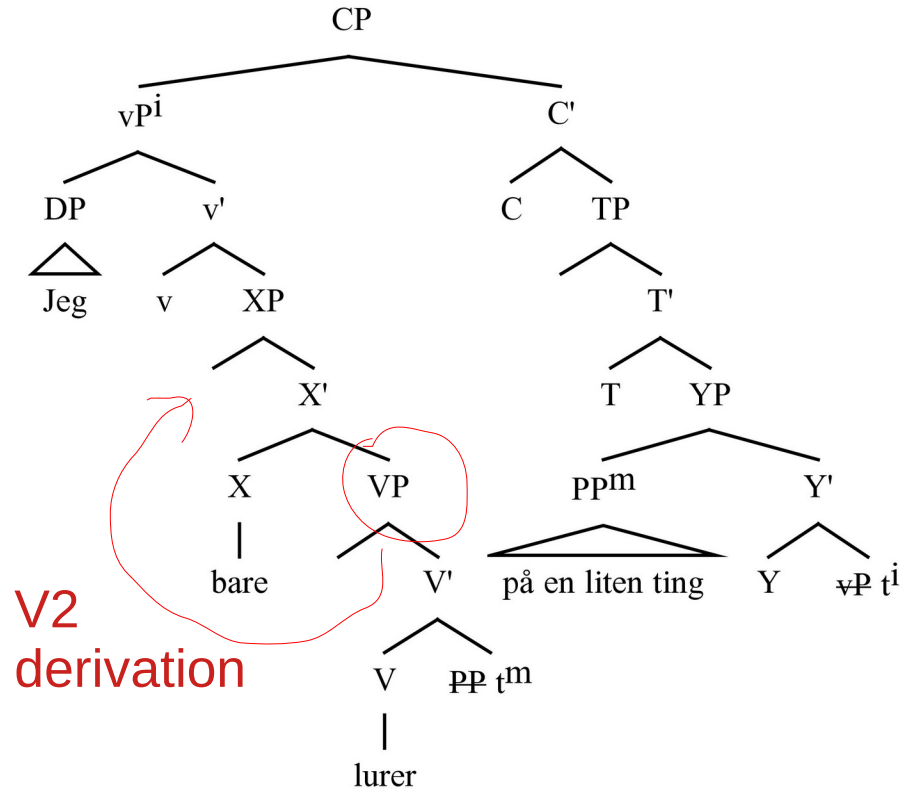
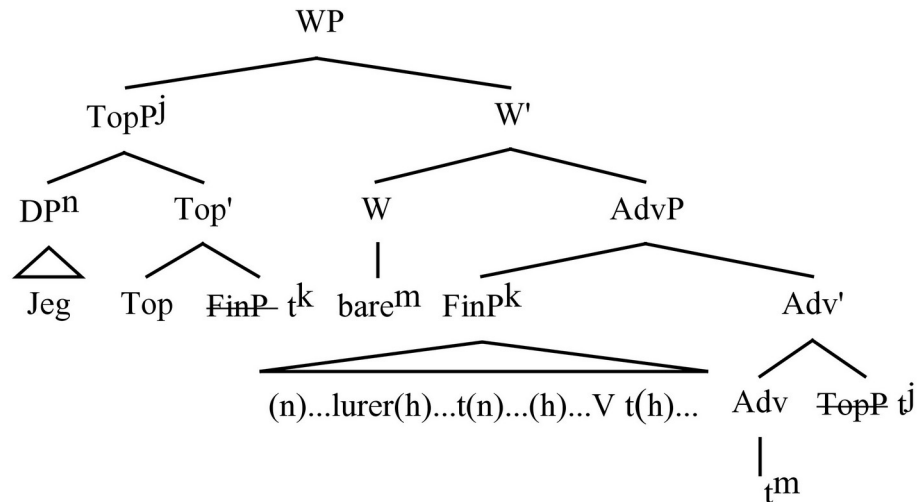


The syntax of apparent V2-violations:

(3) Phrasal movement #2 (Lundquist 2018, Wiklund et al. 2007:219)

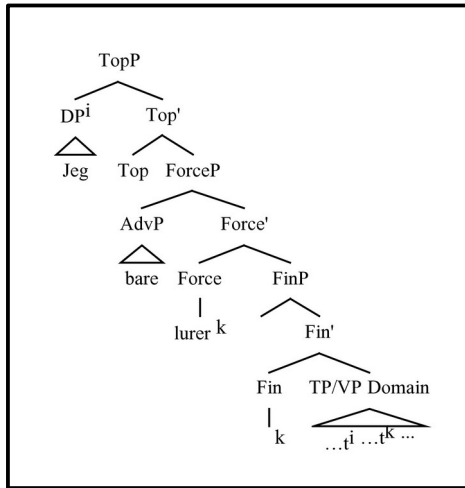
“The essential difference between these examples and ‘ordinary’ V2 sentences is thus that the verb has been pulled out of TopP (Nilsen 2003:91).”

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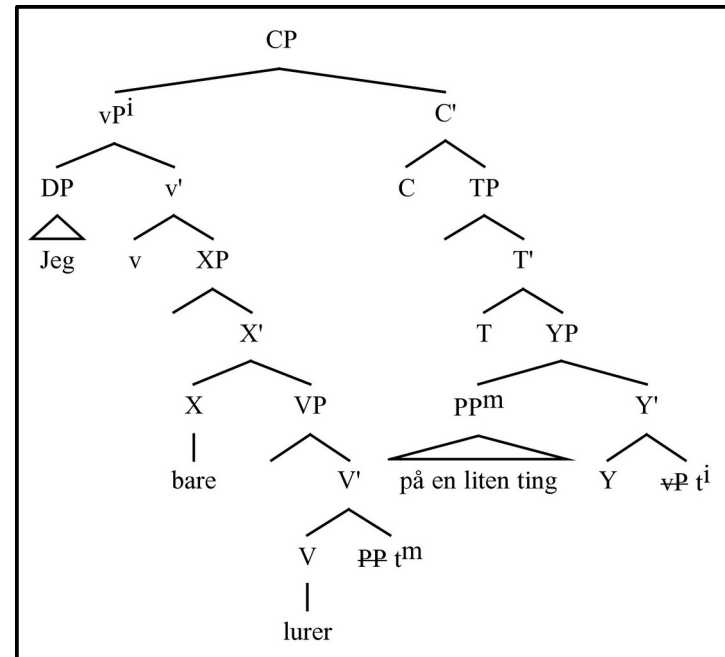
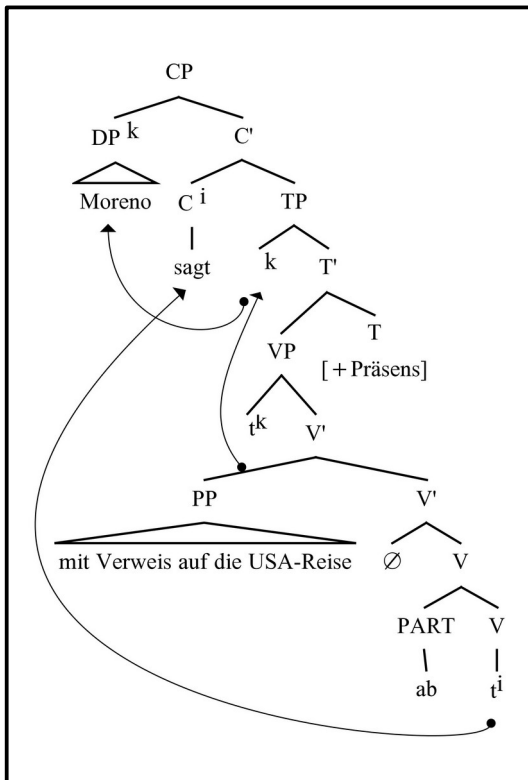


Comparisons with German



- The interesting thing about German is that “*Er nur [achte]*” is ungrammatical.
- German is regarded as a strict V2 language that does not allow apparent V2-violations like in Norwegian with *bare*.
- It must then be the case that German *nur* disambiguates another way, or *einfach* is used to denote the *simply* meaning.
- The idea that German does not have an expanded left-periphery, but Norwegian does in the spirit of Julien (see 2015, 2018) also raises eyebrows. If German did, then why would adverbs be restricted from being in the expanded C-zone.

- Lundquist (2018) explains this difference by proposing that:
 - German uses **head-movement**
 - Mainland Scandinavian uses **phrasal movement**





Returning to the questions

- 1) Is there (a lot of) evidence of apparent V2-violations in Norwegian? **YES!**
- 2) What words can occur in apparent V2-violation contexts? **MANY ADVERBS!**
- 3) Which words occur more frequently than others? **BARE!**

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	Adverbial	Familjeliv	Skönlitteratur	Tidningstext
1.	<i>absolut</i>	32	0	0
2.	<i>aldrig</i>	4	0	6
3.	<i>alltid</i>	9	0	3
4.	<i>alltså</i>	10	0	0
5.	<i>bara</i>	16 834	629	2 518
6.	<i>bl.a.</i>	11	0	3
7.	<i>blott</i>	0	4	1
8.	<i>bokstavligen</i>	31	5	23
9.	<i>bokstavligt</i>	4	0	0
10.	<i>dessutom</i>	5	0	1
11.	<i>dessvärre</i>	1	0	0
12.	<i>dock</i>	5	0	2
13.	<i>egentligen</i>	4	0	0
14.	<i>enbart</i>	8	0	2
15.	<i>endast</i>	8	11	1
16.	<i>ex(empelvis)</i>	7	0	0
17.	<i>faktiskt</i>	7	1	1
18.	<i>formligen</i>	74	13	72
72.	<i>även</i>	9	1	5
		20 890	923	3 726

Brandtler (2020:91-92) found 72 adverbs in V3 contexts in Swedish.



Returning to the questions

- 4) Investigate the semantics of any word/s that have the highest absolute frequencies. Why do they appear in these V3 contexts?
- V3 position for *bare* in a subject-initial main clause is a form of lexical disambiguation between *bare*'s several equivalent English meanings; *just/only/simply/merely*.
 - If focus is to the right, *bare*'s natural reading is that of *simply/merely/just* (*just as simply*), with the *only* reading being unnatural/very unnatural.
 - For *bare* to mean *only* in an apparent V2-violation position, the focus needs to be on *bare* itself.
 - *bare* between the pre-V2 constituent and the V2-verb results in *bare* having an “indifference-marking” or “unexplanatory” effect.

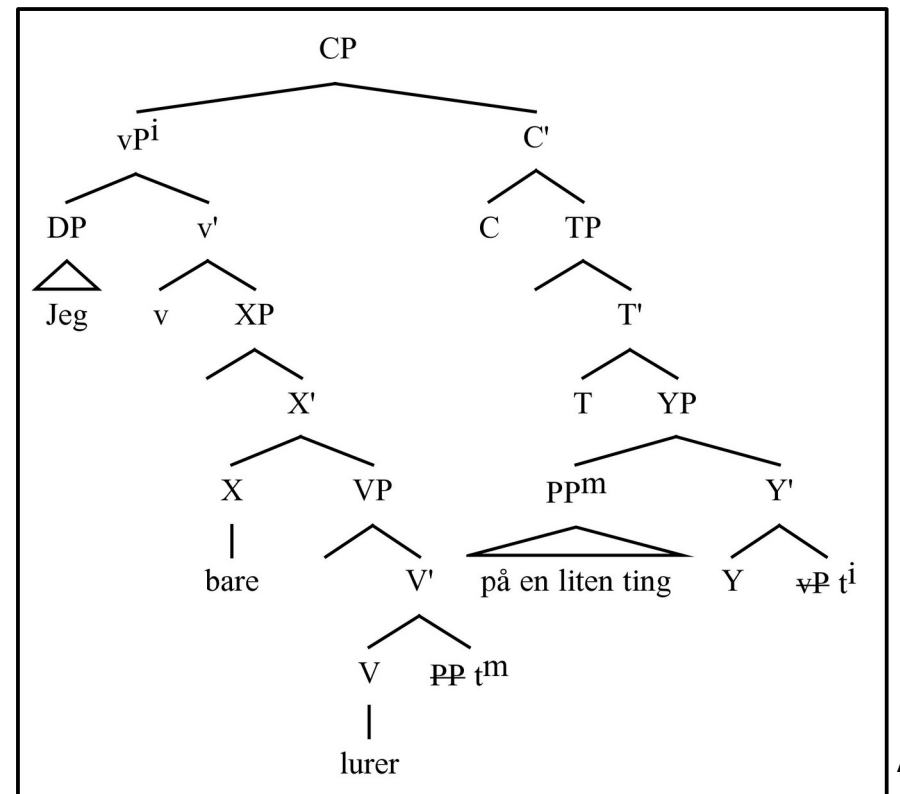


Returning to the questions

5) How can we syntactically model and account for apparent V2-violations within the theoretical frameworks?

- German uses **head-movement**
- Mainland Scandinavian uses **phrasal movement** ?

- Head-adjunction to the finite verb
- External merge into the C-domain
- Forms of phrasal/remnant movement
- Other?





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Thank you!

- Discussion

