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## The recalcitrant Icelandic left edge

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After more than a quarter of a century's research (Andrews 1976, Thráinsson 1979, Bernóudsson 1982, Zeaenen et al. 1985, Sigurðsson 1989, 1991-2, 1996, in press a, b, c, Jónsson 1996, Boeckx 2000, Chomsky 2001, and *many* others), the problem of quirky subjects and quirky agreement haven't really received any standard solution within generative syntax. Theoretically, it is still a puzzle that Icelandic quirky subjects behave syntactically like ordinary subjects, while they have morphological properties that are typical of non-subjects:

- (1) a. **Henni** höfðu líkað athugasemdirnar.  
her.DAT had.3pl liked comments.the.NOM  
'She had liked the comments.'
- b. Ég mundi telja [**henni** líka svona athugasemdir].  
I would.1SG believe her.DAT like such comments.NOM  
'I would believe her to like such comments.'

The easy way out is of course to stipulate that quirky subjects are assigned invisible structural case on top of their inherent case (Belletti 1988 and many others), but that 'shortcut' is empirically refuted by the straightforward fact that quirky subjects *do not* interfere with or 'absorb' nominative case, as seen in (1) (Faroese and Tamil, very interestingly, behaving differently). Moreover, 'low nominatives', morphologically unrelated to tense, are abundantly attested in many languages (Sigurðsson 1989, Menching 2000 and many others), (1b) illustrating but one of many types.

Interestingly, however, quirky subjects *do* interfere with person matching:

- (2) Henni líkuðu þær. / \*Henni líkuðu þið. / \*Henni líkuðum við.  
her liked.3PL they / her liked.2PL you / her liked.1PL we

On the basis of these and related facts I argue:

- A. Structural case *is* interpretable hence vP-internally licensed.
- B. Case is not even indirectly related to vP-external NP-movement.
- C. *Two* 'high' NP-movements must be distinguished, one driven by Person and a still higher one driven by Fin(iteness), Fin being the 'mysterious' EPP feature.

That the 'EPP position' is higher than and distinct from the 'NP-movement position' is supported by two phenomena that have, much like quirky subjects, been unresolved mysteries in for a quarter of a century (Thráinsson 1979, Maling 1980, Platzack 1987, Magnússon 1990, Holmberg 2000, and *many* others):

- the SUBJECT GAP CONDITION on Stylistic Fronting
- the FIRST POSITION CONSTRAINT, FPC, on both expletive *það* 'there/it' insertion and Stylistic Fronting

The present analysis has radical consequences for our understanding of clausal architecture and the nature of syntactic computation. If time permits, some of these consequences will be discussed.