Wh and Gmtcl Functions, p. 1

based on Ronald M. Kaplan and Annie Zaenen (1987)

In English, extraction from arguments is grammatical and extraction from adjuncts is not.

(1) a.   Who did Bill claim [that Mary had seen ___] ?
     b.   *Which picture did they blush [when they saw ___] ?

This is true in Icelandic too.

(2) a.   Þessi bréf var Jón   að hugsa [um   að   María hefði líklega   skrifað ___]
             this   letter was John at think   about that Mary had   probably written
             'This letter John was thinking that Mary had probably written.'

     b.   *Þessi bréf var Jón   að þvo   golfið   [eftir að   María hafði skrifað ____].
             this   letter was John at wash floor.the after that Mary had   written
             'This letter John was washing the floor after Mary had written.'

The Condition on Extraction Domains, originally proposed by James Huang in 1982, accounts for such facts in the GB framework in terms of the structural concept of government.

(3)   No element can be extracted from a domain that is not properly governed.

Alternatively, in LFG we can state the extraction path in the functional uncertainty equation to not include the grammatical function ADJ for both English and Icelandic.
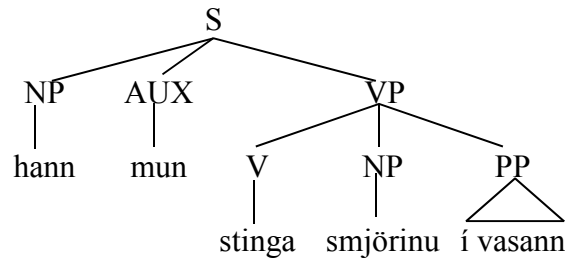
Since government is defined in structural terms, the GB approach will work only if arguments and adjuncts occupy distinct structural positions, as they do in English. The LFG approach will work regardless of constituent structure.

In Icelandic, the structural distinction between arguments and adjuncts which exists in English can be argued against. Thráinsson argues that the following sentences, one with an auxiliary and one without an auxiliary, have different structures. The structures are shown here without $\overline{\text{X}}$ niceties.
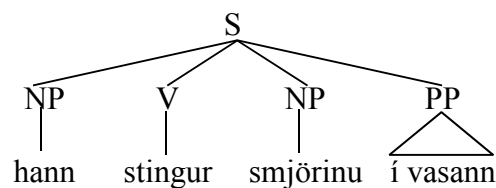
(4) a.   Hann mun stinga smjörinu í   vasann.
             he   will put   butter.the in pocket.the
             'He will put the butter in his pocket.'

     b.   Hann stingur smjörinu í   vasann.
             he   puts   butter.the in pocket.the
             'He puts the butter in his pocket.'

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(5)   a.

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                        S
            ┌───────┬──────────┴────┐
           NP      AUX            VP
            │       │      ┌───────┼───────┐
           hann    mun     V      NP       PP
                           │       │      ╱╲
                        stinga  smjörinu  í vasann
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    b.

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                        S
            ┌───────┬───┴────┬──────────┐
           NP       V       NP          PP
            │       │        │         ╱╲
           hann  stingur  smjörinu   í vasann
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There are various phenomena that can be used to argue for these structures. One is the "wandering" adverb. It can appear anywhere under S (as long as the finite verb/aux is in second position). In the sentence without the auxiliary, it can intervene between the verb and object, and between the object and PP. Neither of these positions is possible in the sentence with the auxiliary. (Note that while a V-to-I analysis might account for the difference in the position between the verb and object, it would not account for the position between object and PP.) This is exemplified in the following sentences, using the adverb *sjaldan* 'seldom'.

(6)   a.   Hann mun sjaldan stinga smjörinu í vasann.
       b.   *Hann mun stinga sjaldan smjörinu í vasann.
       c.   *Hann mun stinga smjörinu sjaldan í vasann.
       d.   Hann mun stinga smjörinu í vasann sjaldan.

(7)   a.   Hann stingur sjaldan smjörinu í vasann.
       b.   Hann stingur smjörinu sjaldan í vasann.
       c.   Hann stingur smjörinu í vasann sjaldan.

These structural positions for PP can be shown to be the same whether the PP is an argument or an adjunct.

Conclusion: The structural position of the PP cannot be responsible for the difference in extractability of arguments and adjuncts. Instead, the difference is in the grammatical functions: the two functions may be on opposite sides of argument grammatical functions like OBL_{Loc} but not the grammatical function ADJ (adjunct). More generally, constraints on *wh* constructions are not structural in nature.