

Negation and CP Cartography

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1. Introduction: In this paper, I argue in the cartographic framework that (i) there are two syntactic positions of negation (TP & CP layer), (ii) the CP-layer negation is realized in FocusP of Rizzi's (1997) split projections, and (iii) these two types of negation neatly correspond to the dual function of negation (descriptive & meta-linguistic) proposed by Horn (1985).

Traditionally, it is said that English sentences including negation and reason-clause as in (1) have the notorious scope-ambiguity and can be interpreted as (2) BEC > NEG or (3) NEG > BEC:

(1) I was not going out for dinner because he was cooking.

(2) It is because he was cooking that I was *not* going out for dinner. [matrix is negated]

(3) It is *not* because he was cooking that I was going out for dinner. [reason is negated]

Several previous studies (e.g. Lasnik 1972, Linebarger 1980, Larson 2004 etc.) have treated this ambiguity but their mechanisms are not enough to map information structure onto syntax and explain discourse-related factors syntactically. That is, the NEG > BEC reading has strong presupposition(4):

(4) I was going out for dinner.

2. Observation: Once we look at Japanese counterparts, however, we can shed a new light on this scope-ambiguity problem. Japanese examples (5) and (6) have two different negative forms (*-nai* & *-no-de-wa-nai*) and are interpreted as (2) and (3) respectively. And (6), but not (5), holds presupposition (4):

(5) kare-ga ryori-o si-tei-ta kara boku-wa yusyoku-ni dekake *nakat*-ta.
he-nom cook-acc do-prg-pst BEC I-top dinner-for go out Neg-pst

(6) kare-ga ryori-o si-tei-ta kara boku-wa yusyoku-ni dekake-ta no-de-wa-*nai*.
he-nom cook-acc do-prg-pst BEC I-top dinner-for go out-pst nml-cpl-foc-Neg

Interestingly, on NPI licensing, English and Japanese behave similarly. In English, Linebarger (1980) observes that when NPIs occur in the matrix, the scope ambiguity in (1) disappears and only the matrix-negation reading can be allowed as shown in (7):

(7) John is not going *anywhere* because Mary is cooking. BEC > NEG / *NEG > BEC

Also in Japanese, matrix-negations can license NPIs while reason-negations cannot trigger NPIs as in (8) and (9) respectively:

(8) kare-ga ryori-o si-tei-ta kara boku-wa *dokonimo* dekake *nakat*-ta.
he-nom cook-acc do-prg-pst BEC I-top *anywhere* go out Neg-pst

(9) *kare-ga ryori-o si-tei-ta kara boku-wa *dokonimo* dekake-ta no-de-wa-*nai*.
he-nom cook-acc do-prg-pst BEC I-top *anywhere* go out-pst nml-cpl-foc-Neg

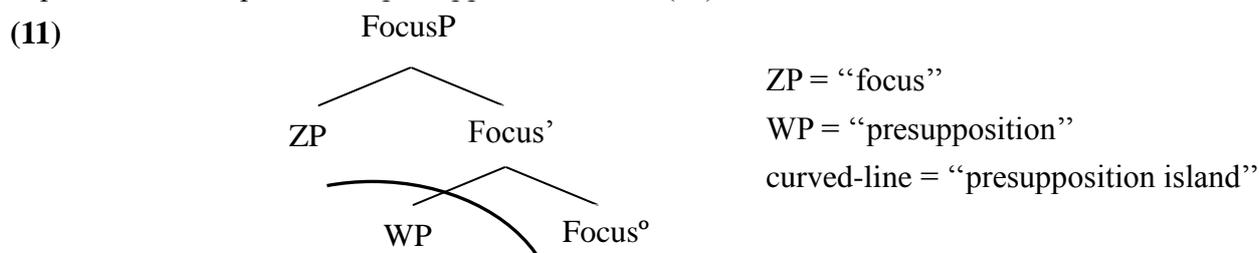
3. Proposal: In order to explain these observations, I propose the syntactic structure (10) where two negations stand in TP & CP layer:

(10) [[[[[... VP ...] Neg1] T] Fin] Focus (Neg2)] (head-final ordering)

Neg1 is the position used for matrix-negations (BEC > NEG), whereas Neg2 is for reason-negations

(NEG > BEC). I assume that reason-clauses are adjoined to TP. According to Rizzi's (1997) system, CP projections split only when Fin activates optional projections indirectly or some elements activate them by direct movement. Thus, as for the derivation, in Japanese CP negation (Neg2) is base-generated in FocusP after Fin (-no) activates the optional Focus projection, while in English the optional FocusP is directly activated by the movement of a null negative operator.

Rizzi (1997) also proposes that Focus⁰ instructs to LF that its Spec is interpreted as “focus” and its Complement is interpreted as “presupposition” as in (11):



Thus, in reason-negation readings, the reason clause is bound locally by the negative Op and thus it can be the target of negative focus. Then, the rest of the sentence is interpreted as presupposition as in (4). At the same time, the impossibility for NPIs in WP to be licensed in this reading can be accounted for by the so-called “presupposition island.”

4. Implication: Given this proposal is on the right track, Horn’s (1985) duality of negation, Descriptive Negation (DN) & Meta-linguistic Negation (MN), pops up into the range of my analysis. Some of diagnostics of this distinction are: (i) MN does not trigger NPIs while DN does license NPIs and (ii) MN occurs in contrastive environments. I suggest that DN and MN distinction corresponds to TP and CP negations respectively as listed in the table (12) below:

(12)

	NPI licensing	contrastive environments
Neg1(TP)	OK	not Necessary
Neg2(CP)	NOT(except modal-flavored NPIs)	Necessary (co-occur with the contrastive marker <i>-wa</i> in Japanese)

If this argument is correct,

- (i) some aspects of DN and MN are the reflections of Syntax, not Pragmatics, against Horn’s (1985) “Pragmatic Ambiguity” argument.
- (ii) the central maxim of cartographic framework “one (morphosyntactic) property – one feature – one head” is toward the valid direction.

References

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