

# FOCUS NEGATION IS CONSTITUENT NEGATION IN HUNGARIAN

Mai Ha Vu (maiha@udel.edu)

University of Delaware



## DATA

### (1) Sentential negation:

*Mari nem olvasta el a Hamletet.*  
Mary NEG read PRT the Hamlet.ACC  
'Mary didn't read Hamlet.'

### (2) Focus negation:

*Mari nem a "HAMLET-ET olvasta el.*  
Mary NEG the HAMLET.ACC read PRT  
'It was not Hamlet that Mary read.'

*How should we analyze focus negation in Hungarian?*

## HYPOTHESES ABOUT FOCUS NEGATION

### 1. Sentential negation:

$[\text{NegP} [\text{Neg } \textit{nem}] [\text{FocusP } \dots]]$

- Accepted view (Szabolcsi, 1981; É. Kiss, 2002; Surányi, 2002)
- NPIs are licensed by focus negation
- Focus negation coordinates with new predicate

### 2. Constituent negation:

$[\text{FocusP} [\textit{nem } X] [\text{FocusP } \dots]]$

- Current proposal
- English constituent negation behaves similarly to Hungarian focus negation (Toosarvandani, 2013)
- Universal quantifier cannot be focused, negated universal quantifier can be

### Semantics of negation

- Negation has flexible type
- Constituent negation has the same logical interpretation as sentential negation:

$$(3) \neg X \begin{cases} \neg X, & \text{if } X \text{ is a truth value} \\ \lambda Y. \neg X(Y), & \text{if } X \text{ is a function} \\ \lambda Y. \neg Y(X). & \text{if } X \text{ is an argument} \end{cases}$$

- Semantic differences are due to focus: negated constituent is focused
- Similar to Toosarvandani's (2013) proposal for the semantics of negation

## FOCUS NEGATION IS CONSTITUENT NEGATION

### Toosarvandani (2013)

- Conjuncts with sentential negation coordinate with full clauses, conjuncts with constituent negation *may* coordinate with sub-clausal constituents
- (4)  $[\text{IP } \textit{Max } \textit{doesn't } \textit{eat } \textit{chard}]$ , but  $[\text{IP } \textit{spinach}_i \textit{Max } \textit{eats } \textit{t}_i]$ .
- (5)  $\textit{Max } \textit{eats } [\text{DP } \textit{not } \textit{chard}]$ , but  $[\text{DP } \textit{spinach}]$ .
- Supported from island effects:
- (6) \*  $\textit{Alfonse } \textit{didn't } \textit{break } \textit{the } \textit{vase } \textit{that } \textit{Sonya } \textit{bought } \textit{in } \textit{China}$ , but  $\textit{in } \textit{Japan}_i$   
 $\textit{Alfonse } \textit{broke } \textit{the } \textit{vase } \textit{that } \textit{Sonya } \textit{bought } \textit{t}_i$ .
- (7)  $\textit{Alfonse } \textit{broke } \textit{the } \textit{vase } \textit{that } \textit{Sonya } \textit{bought } \textit{not } \textit{in } \textit{China}$ , but  $\textit{Japan}$ .

### 1. First conjunct has to be full clause for sentential negation:

- (8) *Nem olvastam el a Hamletet, hanem meg néztem.*  
NEG read PRT the Hamlet.ACC, but PRT saw  
'I didn't read Hamlet, but I saw it.'
- (9) *Nem a "HAMLETET, hanem az "OTHELLÓT olvastam el.*  
NEG the "HAMLET.ACC, but the "OTHELLO.ACC read PRT  
'I read not HAMLET, but OTHELLO.'
- (10) \* *Nem olvastam, hanem meg néztem a Hamletet.*  
NEG read, but PRT saw the Hamlet.ACC  
'I didn't read Hamlet, but I saw it.'

### 2. Island effects similar to English:

- (11) \* *Alfonse nem törte el a vázát amit Sonya Kínában vett, hanem Japánban.*  
Alfonse NEG broke PRT the vase.ACC that Sonya China.in bought, but Japan.in  
'Alfonse didn't break the vase that Sonya bought in China, but the one she bought in Japan.'
- (12) *Alfonse el törte a vázát amit Sonya nem Kínában, hanem Japánban vett.*  
Alfonse PRT broke the vase.ACC that Sonya not China.in, but Japan.in bought  
'Alfonse broke the vase that Sonya bought not in China, but in Japan.'

### 3. Universal quantifier:

- (13) \* *"MINDENKI jön el.*  
everybody come PRT  
'Everybody comes.'
- (14) *Nem "MINDENKI jön el.*  
NEG everybody come PRT  
'Not everybody comes.'

## FOCUS NEGATION IS NOT SENTENTIAL NEGATION

### 1. NPI-licensing

- (15) *Senki nem olvasta el a Hamletet.*  
nobody NEG read PRT the Hamlet.ACC  
'Nobody read Hamlet.'
- (16) *Senki nem a "HAMLETET olvasta el.*  
nobody NEG the HAMLET.ACC read PRT  
'Nobody read HAMLET.'

- Depends on how we think NPIs/n-words are licensed in Hungarian
- Giannakidou (2000): n-words as  $\forall$  select for negative predicate
- Focus negation has a semantic interpretation of a negative predicate, so it can license *senki*

### 2. Coordination

- (17) *Nem a "DOBOT veri Péter, hanem az ajtó csapódott be.*  
NEG the "DRUM.ACC beat Peter, but the door shut PRT  
'Peter doesn't beat the drum, the door got shut.'

- Semantic interpretation helps again: negated predicate can be coordinated with a different predicate
- Here full clauses coordinate in the syntax

## CROSSLINGUISTIC IMPLICATIONS

I have argued that Hungarian focus negation is in fact constituent negation: the negative particle *nem* adjoins to the focused constituent, instead of it occupying NegP that selects for FocusP. I hypothesize that this is true the other direction: all constituent negation has to be focused. This is true for English:

- (18) Laura saw not "ROGUE 1, but "MOANA.

## REFERENCES

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