

Who invokes silent negation?
The view from a hybrid negative concord language
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Abstract

In seminal work, Zeijlstra has proposed that the sentential negative marker in strict negative concord languages is a meaningless particle (uNeg) that invokes a silent negative operator (iNeg) at the periphery. Negative concord items (NCI) are also supposed to have uNeg.

This paper puts forth new arguments to the effect that the Hungarian negative marker NEM has uNeg, but NCIs do not. Their relation to negation is indirect; they are existentials that need to be exhaustified, which in turn requires an intervening negation to maintain logical coherence (Chierchia 2013). This eliminates the appearance of redundancy in the negative marker co-occurring with NCIs.

The analysis combines features of Zeijlstra's proposal for strict NC and Chierchia's proposal for non-strict NC. Hungarian is a true NC hybrid that has an overt counterpart (SEM) of Chierchia's NEG. Hybridity proves that these features can coexist.

Background

Part One

1. How do we know that Hungarian NEM is uNeg? Three arguments.
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Background

Italian (non-strict NC)	Czech (strict NC)	(Zeijlstra 2004—2022)
non iNeg \neg	ne uNeg	
nessuno uNeg \exists	nikdo uNeg \exists	
Op \neg iNeg \neg	Op \neg iNeg \neg	

Two critical points: Strict/non-strict NC differ wrto Negative Markers (NM)
NCIs are invariably uNeg (invoke Op \neg)

Hungarian is a “true hybrid NC” language.

The NM, NEM is never optional, unlike in Catalan, Russian SL, Modern Greek...

If the preverbal NCI is bare SENKI, NEM must follow (strict NC).

If preverbal SENKI is in the spec of SEM, NEM must not follow (non-strict NC).

(1) a.	Nikto	ne	videl	nichego.	* w/o <i>ne</i>	‘No one saw anything’
(2) a.	Nessuno		ha visto	niente.	* with <i>non</i>	‘No one saw anything’
(3) a.	Senki	nem	látott	semmit.	* w/o <i>nem</i>	‘No one saw anything’
(4) a.	Senki sem		látott	semmit sem.	* with <i>nem</i>	‘No one saw anything’
(1) b.	Marija	ne	videla	nichego.	* w/o <i>ne</i>	‘M didn’t see anything’
(2) b.	Maria	non	ha visto	niente.	* w/o <i>non</i>	‘M didn’t see anything’
(3) b.	Mari	nem	látott	semmit.	* w/o <i>nem</i>	‘M didn’t see anything’
(4) b.	Mari	nem	látott	semmit sem.	* w/o <i>nem</i>	‘M didn’t see anything’

Postverbally, all combinations are available:

{Sen-ki / Mari}	{nem / sem}	látott	se-hol (sem)	sem-mit (sem).
{N-one / Mari}	{NM / NOR}	saw	N-place (NOR)	N-thing (NOR)

Questions

- The hybrid system requires a single unitary NM. Should it be uNeg or iNeg?
- Should NCIs be uNeg?

Proposed answers for the hybrid system

- NM is uNeg. (as in Zeijlstra for strict-NC)
- NCIs are not uNeg. Their relation to \neg is indirect. They are exhaustified, and an independently supplied intervening \neg ensures logical coherence. (as in Chierchia 2013 for non-strict NC)
- Therefore, the uNeg NM is not redundant is the presence of NCIs.
- Hungarian SEM is an overt counterpart of Chierchia’s null head NEG, which invokes a silent \neg . NCIs do not “self-license.” (as in Szabolcsi 2017, 2018a,b)

This proposal builds on, but differs from, Surányi 2006 and Kenesei 2009. It differs from Szabolcsi 2018a,b in that the unitary NM NEM is uNeg, not iNeg. The analysis of NCIs is the same as in Szabolcsi 2018a,b.

Part One: The Hungarian NM is uNeg

1. How do we know that Hungarian NEM is uNeg? Three arguments

- Argument from **fragment NCI answers**, à la Zeijlstra

Everybody assumes that (unless NCIs are themselves negative), fragment NCI answers need a deleted uNeg element and a null [iNeg, ¬] it invokes.

Szabolcsi 2018a, with NM=[iNeg, ¬] cannot account for the strict-NC case. (How would this NM scope over SENKI? How is it elided in positive context? This problem was recognized but not taken very seriously in my earlier work.)

Ki szólt?	Senki	[nem szólt].	Hungarian strict-NC
who spoke	N-one	NM spoke	

The non-strict case was okay, b/c SEM (like Chierchia's NEG) is uNeg:

Ki szólt?	Op¬	Senki sem	[szólt].	Hungarian non-strict NC
who spoke		N-one NOR	spoke	

- Argument from **¬ scoping over material preceding the NM**, à la Zeijlstra

If [...] is in Spec, NegP by remnant movement, NM=[iNeg, ¬] scopes over it:

[Senki egy szót _____ nekem]	nem szólt.
N-one one word-acc to.me	NM spoke
'Nobody said one word to me'	

But consider KATI IS 'Kati too'. It has no reason to be in Spec, NegP. It is in its canonical IsP position (a subtype of DistP); it is not a contrastive topic, and it does not reconstruct. If NM is ¬, it is not predicted to scope over 'Kati too'.

(Mari segít, de ez nem elég). Ha KATI is nem segít, baj lesz.
 Mary helps but this not enough if Kati too NM helps trouble will-be
 '... If it is not the case that Kati helps too, there will be trouble.'

The plain meaning can only be computed if NM scopes over 'Kati too'.
 Note: The conditional is needed, b/c IS 'too' is a PPI (needs to be "rescued").

- **A new argument from 'neither... nor' constructions: see Section 10.**

2. How general? Does the NM have uNeg in just the NC languages that are “basically” strict, or in all NC languages, or in all languages? The main evidence for Italian NON having iNeg seems to be the one type *Molto non...* *¬ > much.

Mne mnogo ne nuzhno.
to.me much NM needed
¬ > much: ‘I don’t need much’

Molto (pizza) non ha mangiato.
much (pizza) NM has eaten
* ¬ > much: ‘She hasn’t eaten much’

But even non-NC English allows negation to scope over preceding material:
‘if it were not the case that even/also the Newtonian philosophy is permitted...’

“If *even the Newtonian philosophy were not* permitted to be questioned, mankind could not feel as complete assurance of its truth as they now do.”
(J S Mill 1859, On Liberty, Chapter II <https://www.utilitarianism.com/ol/two.html>)

More fine-grained research is needed to determine when the NM can scope over various kinds of preceding material.

3. Why is NM mandated in strict-NC sentences?

If NCIs are uNeg, they already suffice to invoke silent Op¬.
Zeijlstra doesn’t give a robust answer to why NM is still mandated.

Op¬ [iNeg] Senki[uNeg] nem[uNeg] látott semmit[uNeg].
N-one NM saw N-thing

If, however, NCIs are not uNeg and their relation to ¬ is indirect, then uNeg NM can be mandatory, because it is the only thing that invokes silent [iNeg, ¬]:

Op¬ [iNeg] Senki ∃ nem[uNeg] látott semmit ∃.

If NCIs can demand being in the immediate scope of negation without them being uNeg, then the question “Why NM in strict-NC?” receives a satisfactory answer.

4. Why must NCIs be in the immediate scope of negation?

Chierchia 2013 argues that NCIs are strong NPIs. In his theory, all NPIs have grammaticized active domain-alternatives, which must be exhausted.
(Different kinds of NPIs and NCIs differ as to how they must be exhausted.) Exhaustification amounts to negating non-entailed alternatives. This means that if a positive NPI-sentence (p) is exhausted, we get a contradiction, #.

With a vanilla NPI: # Op-EXH (There is **any** cookie in the kitchen) =
There is a cookie in the kitchen but
there is no cookie on the kitchen table and
there is no cookie in the kitchen cupboard and ...

If ($\neg p$) is exhausted, the alternatives are not entailed, so Op-EXH is vacuous. The intervention of \neg between Op-EXH and NPI/NCI prevents contradiction:

With a vanilla NPI: Op-EXH (There isn't **any** cookie in the kitchen) =
There isn't any cookie in the kitchen

Turning to NCIs, let **uX** be "has active alternatives, needs to be exhausted."
(Expository only; I am not committed to [uX]-[iX] feature checking.)

Op[iX, EXH] Op[iNeg, \neg] Mari nem[uNeg] látott semmit[**uX, \exists**] (Hung.)

Op[iX, EXH] Op[iNeg, \neg] Maria non[uNeg] ha visto niente[**uX, \exists**] (Ital. AS)

Big gain: If the relation of NCIs to (overt or silent) negation is always indirect, then it is explained why [uNeg] NM is mandatory in strict-NC systems. Only it can invoke Op \neg . NCIs cannot.

Part Two: The other face of the hybrid: Non-strict NC in Hungarian

The belief that NCIs are uNeg is based on the view that in languages like Italian, preverbal NCIs are "self-licensors." Chierchia offers a different story in terms of NEG, and Hungarian supports that: SEM is an overt counterpart of NEG.

5. Hungarian SEM `nor' is an overt counterpart of Chierchia's null NEG head.

Chierchia says NCIs must be exhausted by the operator that he calls O_{ALT} . In addition, he introduces a null syntactic head NEG with feature $[[n-D]]$ that (i) needs an agreeing NCI in its specifier, and (ii) requires an abstract negation, \neg to scope right above its projection. Note that the $[[n-D]]$ feature corresponds to Zeijlstra's [uNeg] – in effect, though not in content. $[[n-D]]$ is checked by the exhaustifier O_{ALT} , not by \neg .

Nessuno ha telefonato. `No one called'

	Op[iNeg, \neg] nessuno[uNeg] ha telefonato	Zeijlstra
O_{ALT}	\neg (nessuno[[[+n-D]]] NEG [[[+n-D]]] ha telefonato)	Chierchia

Szabolcsi 2018a,b argued that Hungarian preverbal SEM `nor' head is an overt counterpart of Chierchia's NEG. The n-word SENKI is in its specifier:

O_{ALT} \neg (senki[**[[+n-D]]**] **sem**[**[[+n-D]]**] telefonált)

The received wisdom in the literature on Hungarian:

IS `too' is a focus-associating head on the clausal spine, and SEM is its counterpart in the immediate scope of negation.

This makes for a natural connection with Chierchia's NEG, with one difference.

IS/SEM needs a focus-accented phrase in its specifier. It accommodates a variety of such elements, including lexical expressions and quantifiers. SEM doesn't specialize in hosting NCIs, unlike Chierchia's null NEG.

6. IS has a sparse semantics: it just activates alternatives

Recall: the head SEM = IS within the immediate scope of clause-mate negation.

Szabolcsi 2017 argues that Hung. IS, Serbo-Croatian I, and Hindi BHII are “TOO-particles” that build additives, NPIs, NCIs, and FCIs, often aided by other particles. In Fox/Chierchia style theories these all involve exhaustification.

Hungarian	Serbo-Croatian	Hindi	English
Mari is	i Josip	Raam bhii	X too
még Mari is	(čak) i Josip	Raam bhii	even X
Mari sem	ni Josip	Raam bhii	X either
Hungarian	Serbo-Croatian	Hindi	English
valaki is	i -(t)ko / [bilo (t)ko]	koi bhii	anyone, NPI
még/akár csak Mari is	(čak/makar) i Josip	Raam bhii	even X, NPI
akár Mari is	(čak) i Josip	(koi bhii)	even X, FCI

E.g., consider the teamwork that builds the NPI *még/akár csak Mari is*.

Kevesen/*Sokan gratuláltak *még/akár csak Marinak is*.

‘Few/*Many people congratulated even Mari (let alone others)’

(i) Abrusán 2007 argued that *még* and *akár* are *even*-style exhaustifiers.

(i) Unlike the indefinite *valaki*, *Mari* does not inherently fall at the low end of any scale. The presence of *csak* brings that about; here *csak* is similar to Dutch scalar *slechts* ‘mere(ly)’, see Szabolcsi 1994.

(iii) Finally, the particle IS is absolutely critical here. *Valaki*, by itself, is ‘someone,’ a PPI, not an NPI. *Még/akár (csak) Mari*, by itself, is a word salad.

Since IS plays a critical role in building as different things as additives, NPIs, FCIs and NCIs, it must have a sparse semantics: just what is common to them.

Chierchia assumes that it is a lexical property of some expressions that they have obligatorily active alternatives. The Hungarian/Serbo-Croatian/... data suggest that activating alternatives is a function that can be delegated to a separate morpheme. Active alternatives then must be figured into the meaning of the sentence, e.g. by exhaustification, performed by a separate operator.

In sum, SEM (i) activates the specifier’s alternatives and, like Chierchia’s NEG, (ii) calls for an exhaustifier, and (iii) invokes an abstract negation.

O_{ALT} → ((még) “Mari **sem**[[+n-D]] telefonált))
 ‘Mari didn’t call either / Even Mari didn’t call’

7. Matters related to locality (phases and intervention)

Postverbal SemPs are located in reiterating lower fseqs:

VALAKI IS/SENKI SEM and MARI IS/MARI SEM can occur post-verbally:

Ha láttam valakit is / Marit is, ...
 `If I saw anyone(lit. someone IS) / Mary too, ...`

Nem láttam senkit sem / Marit sem.
 `I didn't see anyone / Mary either`

Following Hallman 1997, Szabolcsi 1997 and Brody & Szabolcsi 2003 propose that the same sequence of operator heads that is clearly visible in the preverbal field reiterates postverbally, above each inflectional head that will be suffixed onto V. The only exception is Neg, which only occurs in the preverbal field. The low fseqs host all manner of quantifiers. IS and SEM heads happily occur there.

So, post-V occurrence is not an obstacle for the SEM \approx NEG correspondence.

Postverbal SEM heads cannot invoke Op \neg . This is clear from the fact that they require an overt NM or a preverbal SEM. I assume this is because Op \neg can only show up in the same high phase as the overt NM, and postverbal SEM is too far below (inside vP).

Hungarian has at least two distinct NegPs (Koopman & Szabolcsi 2000, App. B)

[NegP2 Nem [FocP "**Mari** [NegP1 nem [TP telefonált]]]].
 `It is not Mary who didn't call' (absolutely not Double Negation)

The pre-focus Neg supports preverbal NCIs, but not postverbal NCIs:

Senkinek nem "**Mari** nem telefonált.
 `For no one was it Mary who didn't call him/her`
 * It was not Mary who didn't call anyone`

Nem "**Mari** nem telefonált senkinek.
 `It was not Mary who didn't call anyone`
 * For no one was it Mary who didn't call him/her` (unless *senkinek* scopes up)

Facts first observed and analyzed in Szabolcsi 1981 (assumed NCI= \forall).
 Kenesei 2009 revisits this, with NCI= \exists ; attributes missing readings to phases.
 Szabolcsi 2018a proposes, instead, that the exhaustive operator of contrastive focus intervenes between pre-focus NEM and low-scoping SENKI. Compare:

* Nem mindenki látott senkit.
 * Not everyone saw anyone

Part Three: Two types of SEM

8. Two types of quantifier particles: SEM occurs in both types (Szabolcsi 2018b)

Descriptive diagnostics:

Head on the clausal spine:

IS, SEM

Particle follows host.

Need not be part of a tuple.

Tuple-internal connective: ÉS 'and'.

Doesn't build quantifier words.

Builds non-strict NCIs.

Quantifier-phrase internal:

MIND, VAGY, AKÁR, **SEM**

Particle precedes host.

Must be part of a tuple.

Tuple-internal connective: PEDIG.

Builds quantifier words.

Builds strict NCIs.

- (a) X **is** `X too'
X **sem** `nor X'
- (b) X **is**, Y **is** `X as well as Y'
X **sem**, Y **sem** `not X, nor Y'
- (c) *is-ki

- (d) * **vagy** X
* **sem** X
- (e) **vagy** X, **vagy** Y `either X or Y'
sem X, **sem** Y `neither X nor Y'
- (f) **vala**-ki `someone'
sen-ki `n-one'

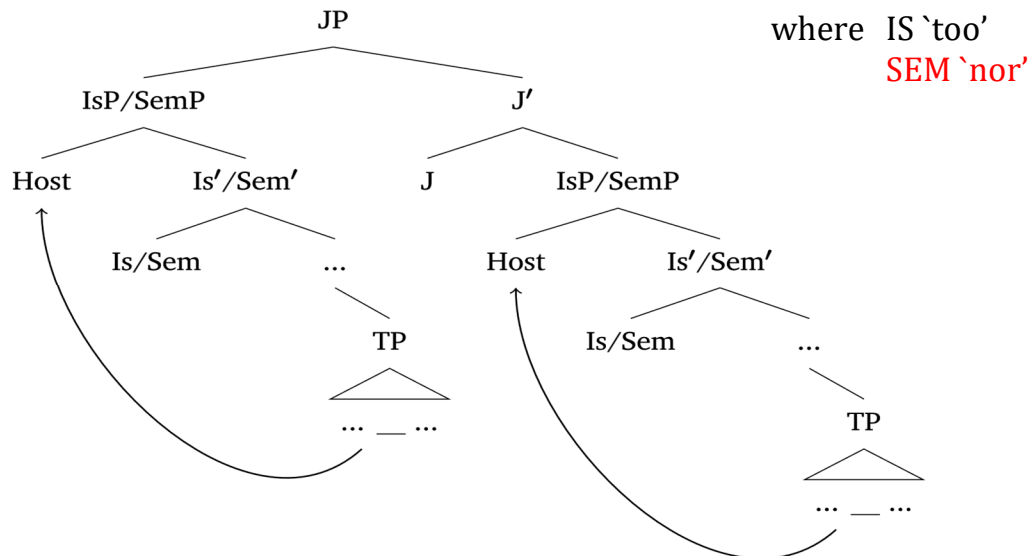
We have already encountered SEM as a head on the clausal spine – it is the counterpart of Chierchia's NEG.

In Section 10, we will use SEM as a quantifier-phrase internal particle to build a new argument that the NM, NEM invokes silent negation.

The argument is based on the fact that SEM X, SEM Y is a strict-NC construction. In the absence of ellipsis, both X and Y must contain their own NMs – but the whole sentence has just one high-scoping negation.

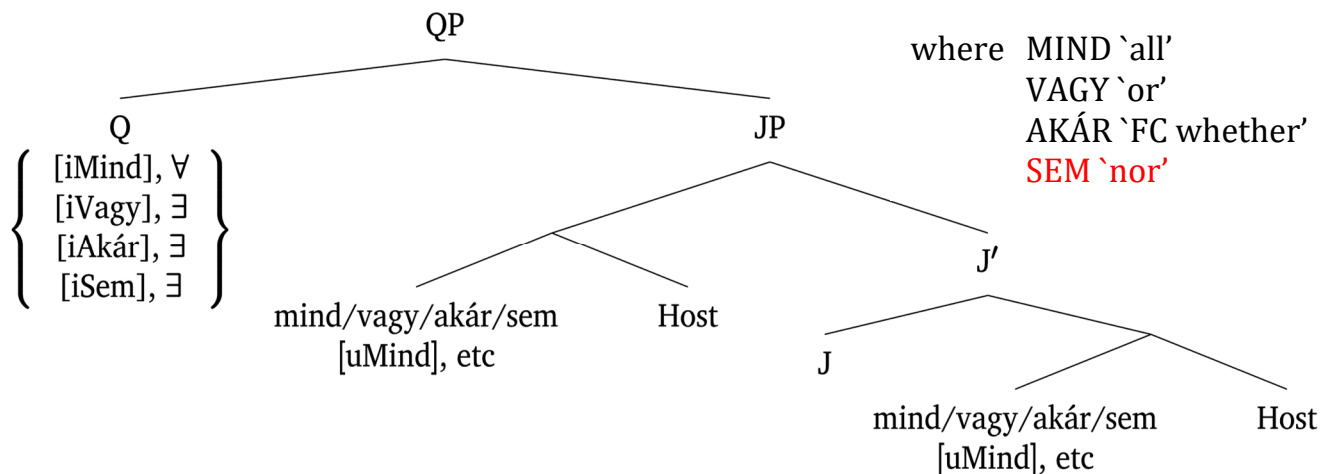
9. Heads on the clausal spine vs. quantifier-phrase internal particles

- In the first construction, each particle is a head on the clausal spine, with a focus-accented constituent of the complement moved to its specifier. The reiteration is in fact a coordination of self-contained propositions.



A hó **is/sem** esik, (és) a szél **is/sem** fúj.
 the snow **too/nor** falls and the wind **too/nor** blows
 'The snow is falling, likewise the wind is blowing'
 'The snow isn't falling, likewise the wind isn't blowing'

- In the second, truly reiterated construction, the particles precede their hosts. The overt particles are uninterpreted and merely signal the presence of a contentful but unpronounced propositional quantifier at the periphery, cf. Kratzer & Shimoyama 2002.



Sem a hó nem esik, **sem** a szél nem fúj.
nor the snow NM falls **nor** the wind NM blows
 'Neither the snow is falling, nor the wind is blowing'

10. A new syntactic argument in favor of the Hungarian NM being uNeg

The QP-internal `neither_nor' takes the shape SEM S_a , SEM S_b .

This is a strict-NC construction: it mandates the presence of the NM, NEM.

- (a) Sem Mari **nem** evett, sem Kati **nem** evett/ivott. (NM in pre-V NegP1)
 NOR Mari NM ate, NOR Kati NM ate/drank
 `Neither did Mari eat, nor did Kati eat/drink'

Ellipsis is possible when both juncts have the same predicate:
 Sem Mari [~~nem evett~~], sem Kati nem evett.

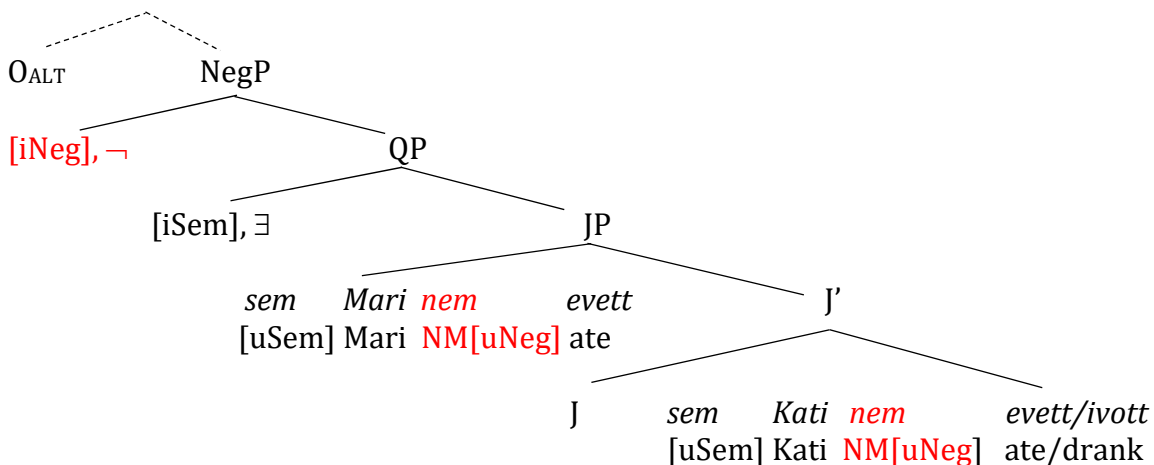
- (b) Peti sem **nem** evett, sem **nem** ivott.¹ (NM in pre-V NegP1)
 Peti NOR NM ate, NOR NM drank
 `Peti neither ate nor drank'

- (c) Sem **nem** "Mari evett, sem **nem** "Kati evett/ivott. (NM in pre-Foc NegP2)
 NOR NM Mari ate, NOR NM Kati ate/drank
 `Neither was it Mari who ate, nor was it Kati who ate/drank'

All these sentences mean, `There is no true proposition in the set {p, q}' i.e.
 $\neg \exists r : r \in \{p, q\} . r$ is true.

How come the NMs occur inside each junct, but \neg scopes highest, above \exists ?

Using (a) as an example, the only way to compose the strings and obtain the desired meaning is this, where NegP is modeled after the propositional QP:



¹ Modern Hungarian differs from Russian, discussed in Tiskin 2017. The NM-less pattern exists only in archaic, frozen expressions (É. Kiss 2015):

Petja ni (*ne) jel, ni (*ne) pil.
 Petja NOR NM ate, NOR NM drank
 `Petja neither ate nor drank'

Peti se látott, se hallott.
 Peti NOR saw NOR heard
 `Peti neither saw nor heard =
 was too excited to perceive anything'

Szabolcsi (2018a,b) assumed that the Hungarian NM, NEM is [iNeg, \neg]. That made the patterns (a)-(b)-(c) entirely puzzling. The NegP exhibited above was proposed as the only possible way to derive them, noting its unfortunate incompatibility with the assumption about NM.

Now I have argued that NEM is generally [uNeg], so the puzzle disappears. The (a)-(b)-(c) patterns offer a new argument for this, rather than pose a problem.

Finally, we now see that all three Boolean operators, \exists , \forall , and \neg present themselves in syntax in the shape of meaningless functional elements that point to silent actors at the left periphery, generalizing the picture in Szabolcsi 2015 in the spirit of Carlson 2006.

Part Four: Leftover issues

11. Impossible sequences: Minimality

Surányi 2006 observed the following facts:

Both the NM, NEM and the clausal head SEM can be preceded by multiple NCIs:

Senki soha semmit nem szólt.
 N-one N-time N-thing NM spoke
 'No one ever said anything'

Senki soha semmit sem szólt.
 N-one N-time N-thing NOR spoke
 'No one ever said anything'

But there can be no more than one clausal head SEM in the preverbal domain,

* Senki sem semmit sem szólt.
 N-one NOR N-thing NOR spoke
 Intended: 'No one said anything'

and the clausal head SEM cannot appear above NEM, either lower or higher, unless they are separated by the focus phrase:

* Senki sem nem szólt.
 N-one NOR NM spoke
 Intended: 'No one spoke'

* Senki sem nem "**Marinak** szólt.
 N-one NOR NM to.Mari spoke
 Intended: 'For no one was it not Mari to whom he spoke'

Senki sem "**Marinak** nem szólt.
 N-one NOR to.Mary NM spoke
 'For no one was it Mari to whom he did not speak'

Recall that I argue that both the NM and the clausal head SEM are [uNeg]. My descriptive generalization is this:

There cannot be more than one [uNeg] head on the clausal spine within the same phase.

I assume that such co-occurrence would interfere with the [uNeg]-[iNeg] relations. Probably, it would be a Minimality violation.

Kenesei 2009 argued that the Hungarian FocP tops off a phase. If so, when SEM and NM are separated by a focus phrase, they are not in the same phase.

Likewise, when the clausal head SEM occurs postverbally, it is inside vP and in a different phase. (The relevant discussion was in the skippable Section 7.)

Note that the SEM NEM data in Section 10 involve the NCI SEM that precedes its host, not the clausal head SEM which follows its host and which I argued was a counterpart of NEG. So, these data do not conflict with the “no more than one [uNeg] head” generalization.

12. Contentful NMs? Double Negation (DN) and lexicalizations

Puskás 2012 correctly describes the patterns that she calls strong DN and weak DN (=reconstruction) in Hungarian. But her actual examples are often unacceptable to me and to another semanticist native speaker. The main problem is, DN is really not productive in Hungarian. I am putting DN aside.

(i) The lowest scoping NCI must be SEMMIT ‘N-thing.acc’. Puskás’s examples have SENKI ‘N-one’ and they are unacceptable.

(ii) Even with SEMMIT, only a restricted set of verbs support DN. I haven’t figured out the generalization yet, but some examples:

OK as DN: “**Senki** nem mondott semmit (verum focus)
 ‘Nobody said nothing = Everybody’s speech was contentful’

OK as DN: Semmit\ / nem mondott senki (contrastive topic)
 ‘idem’

OK NC, # DN: Senki nem érzett/magyarázott el/vett észre/tört le semmit.
 ‘Nobody felt/explained/noticed/broke off nothing =
 Everybody felt/explained/noticed/broke off something’

OK NC, #/?? DN: Semmit\ / senki nem érzett/magyarázott el/vett észre/tört le.
 ‘idem’

Maybe DN is okay with some fragment answers to negative questions (see Surányi 2006 and Falaus—Nicolae 2019). I have no reliable intuitions here.

Hungarian has a very restricted set of NCI-based nouns and adjectives:

a (nagy) semmi	egy (nagy) senki
the (big) nothingness	a (big) niemand
sehonnai bitang ember	semmirekellő / semmitérő
‘person who has no homeland’	‘good-for-nothing’

13. NM inside nominalization can’t support NCI; clausal NM is needed

Semmilyen adósság ki nem fizetése *(nem) elfogadható.
 N-kind debt pfx NM paying.poss.3sg NM acceptable
 ‘The non-payment of any kind of debt is not acceptable’

Appendix A

Naturally occurring data for IS... NEM '¬ > too'

<https://mesenapok.hu/a-tyukocska-halalrol-grimm-mesek/>

Most már a kakaska egyedül maradt a tyúkocskával, ásott neki egy gödröcskét, abba beléttette, a sírt szépen felhalmozta, arra ráfeküdt, s sírt, sírt keservesen. Addig sírt, hogy meghalt ő is.

Ha a kakaska is meg nem halt volna, az én mesém is tovább tartott volna.

'If the little rooster had not died too, my tale would have been longer'

<https://www.nepmese.hu/mesetar/mesek/zoeld-peter>

Miért sírsz, te Zöld Péter? - Azért sírok - mondja -, mert a király azt mondta, hogy ha három reggel el nem bújok úgy, hogy az ő lánya ne lásson meg, akkor fejemet veszi. Kitátotta a száját a hal, és azt mondta Zöld Péternek: - Bújj be ide, Zöld Péter. Zöld Péter bebújt, és a halacska lebújt a tengernek a fenekére, még oda is a homokba beásódott. A királylány kiállott a folyosóra, megtörölte a szemét, és azt mondta: - Gyere elő, Zöld Péter, a halnak a szájából, a tengernek a fenekéről, a homokból beásódva. Meglátta. Hát Zöld Péter előjött, kijött a partra, és kiszállt a halnak a hasából nagy búsan, és elment a királyi palotába. Másnap reggel megint csak elindult nagy bánatosan, s azt mondja: - Hova bújjak én, hova bújjak én? Elébe állott a kis madár. - Miért sírsz, Zöld Péter? - Hogyne sírnék,

ha még holnap reggel is el nem bújok, hogy meg ne lásson a király leánya, akkor fejemet veszik.

'If I don't hide even tomorrow morning, so the king's daughter doesn't see me, they'll chop off my head'

Appendix B

The two kinds of negative concord have been stable in Hungarian for over 500 years.

Excerpts from K. É. Kiss (2015), A negative cycle in 12-15th century Hungarian. In Biberauer & Walkden (eds.) *Syntax over Time: Lexical, Morphological, and Information-Structural Interactions*. OUP, pp. 86-101.

“Gugán (2012) argues that the Hungarian negative particle *nem* is also the result of a negative cycle having taken place in Proto-Hungarian. Most Uralic languages have a negative auxiliary, which also existed in Proto-Ugric in the form **e ~ä ~a*. In Proto-Hungarian, however, its negative force underwent weakening, and an indefinite pronominal element reconstructed as *nēm8* was introduced to reinforce it (Sipos 1991: 395). Eventually, the negative auxiliary disappeared (except in *yes-no* questions, where it has survived as an interrogative particle), and the pronoun assumed the role of negative operator. The negative particle *nem* is the descendant of *nēm8*, hence it is cognate with the indefinite pronouns and proadverbs *né-mi* ‘some-what’, ...

In the late Proto-Hungarian period, the cycle began anew. As a first step (resulting in stage 2 of the new cycle), negated indefinites were strengthened by the emphatic/additive/distributive particle *es*, and the numeral *egy, egyik* ‘one’... Recall *es num igg ember* ‘even not one man’, an example from 1193-95 ... Negation was strengthened by *es* also in the case of indefinite pronouns in the scope of negation.

In the third stage of the cycle, the morphological fusion of *es+nem*, and, especially, the morphological fusion of *es+nem*+pronoun complexes lead to the semantic weakening of negation, and created a need for further strengthening. This was attained by the adjunction of another negative particle to the verb. The reintroduction of the negative particle was first optional. The *se*-pronouns *soha* and *senki*, whose morphological structure had become completely opaque owing to word-internal phonological processes, lost their negative force and came to require an additional negative particle prior to the Old Hungarian period. In the case of the rest of *se* expressions, the additional, V-adjoined negative particle was still optional in the first Old Hungarian documents. According to the evidence of 14th-15th century codices, the pattern without a reinforcing negative particle was becoming less and less common, and by the end of the 15th century it had disappeared completely. In stage 4 of the negative cycle, Hungarian became a strict negative concord language, where negation is conveyed by a negative particle, and *se*-expressions are negative polarity items. ...

Since the Old Hungarian negative cycle reached its final stage, only minor changes have taken place in the syntax of negation. Until the end of the 14th century, sentences could only contain a single *se*-expression, confined to the left periphery. From the 15th century on, we also find postverbal *se*-phrases, which is evidence of their analysis as negative polarity items ...

The history of negative indefinites involving *sem* and the numeral *egy* ‘one’ has been somewhat different from the history of *se*-pronouns. Both *es* and *sem* (*es+nem*) were premodifiers in the earliest Old-Hungarian documents. Later *es* also came to be used as an enclitic, and its two positions came to be associated with different functions. *És*, the

standard Modern Hungarian version of the proclitic variant, is the connective corresponding to *and*. *Is*, the descendant of the enclitic, is an additive/distributive particle today. *Sem*, incorporating the additive particle, acting as a premodifier in the early Old Hungarian period, has also become a postmodifier. Jókai Codex [14th century] contains, in addition to the regular archaic structure and the regular novel structure, two patterns which seem to anticipate the change in the position of *sem* ...

(27) a *sem egy N V*:

ew kerelmenek **sem egy haznalattyat aloytuan**
 his request-GEN not one use-POSS.3SG-ACC assuming
 'not assuming any use of his request' (Jókai 153)

b *sem egy N nem V*:

kyben **semegy nugodalmat nem akaruala** ew
 what-in not-one rest-ACC not want-3SG-PAST his
 sebynek vetny (Jókai 65)
 wound-DAT give
 'where he didn't want to give any rest to his wound'

c *sem egy N sem V*:

Es hogy ottegyel **semegy lakas semuala** holot
 and that there not-one dwelling not-was where
 feyet le haytana (Jókai 27)
 head-POSS.3SG-ACC down lay-COND-3SG
 'And that there was no dwelling where he could lay his head'

d *egy N sem V*:

az tonak... zygetebe kyben meglén **egy**
 that lake-GEN island-POSS3SG-to where still one
ember-sem lakott-uala (Jókai 26)
 man not live-PERF-3SG-PAST
 'to the island of that lake where still no man had lived'

The variants in (27a-d) may correspond to subsequent stages of a diachronic process. (27a) contains no negative particle in addition to that incorporated in the particle *sem* associated with the indefinite. In (27b) the negative particle is reintroduced in a position left-adjoined to the verb. In (27d) [*egy ember-sem lakott-uala*], which also occurs only once in Jókai Codex, but has become the winning pattern in the long run, the proclitic *sem* is missing, but the indefinite is followed by a *sem*. If the prosody of (27d) was the same as it is today, then its *sem* is not the stressed negative particle but an unstressed enclitic modifying the indefinite. ... [T]he enclitic *sem* could only retain its negative force when cliticized to a focussed, hence immediately preverbal, indefinite, where it could be reanalyzed as the occupant of the adjacent Neg position. Non-focussed, postverbal indefinites in the scope of negation require the presence of both the negative particle *nem*, and the minimizing enclitic *sem*."

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