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'Not': Not Non-projecting

Abstract

This paper argues for a unified perspective on constituent negation and sentential negation as involving a projection of the functional head Neg, with languages differing with regard to the position occupied by the negation particle: the Neg-head position or SpecNegP. Sentential negation features an abstract negation operator ($\bar{\neg}$), with scope over the entire proposition (except illocutionary force). Constituent negation involves occurrences of NegP not paired with the abstract negation operator.

Keywords: constituent negation, sentential negation, negation operator, NegP

1 Preamble

Following up on his (2014a) analysis of preverbal operators, including sentential negation, and his (2014b) treatment of constituent negation and predicate negation, Laczkó (2015a) presents an integrated perspective on Hungarian negation particles in the theoretical framework of Lexical-Functional Grammar. A key ingredient of the approach is the assumption that Neg is 'a uniformly non-projecting word (capable of occurring in both X^0 and XP positions)' (Laczkó 2015a: 168): even though he recognises that it would technically be possible in his framework to allow Neg to project a phrase (NegP), Laczkó is 'not aware of any phrasal projection property of the negative particle; that is why I treat it uniformly as a non-projecting word' (pp. 184-5). In this paper, I will argue that it is beneficial to treat both sentential and constituent negation in terms of a phrasal category NegP — with languages differing on whether the negation particle is the head projecting this NegP or its specifier. Far from undermining Laczkó's careful and explicit analysis, this note aims to make a small contribution to our understanding of what remains a highly complicated topic: the syntax of negation.

2 Negation and NegP

2.1 *The big picture*

The statements in (1) frame the perspective on negation subscribed to in this paper.

- (1) a. negation particles are represented in NegP, either as NegP's head or as its specifier
- b. Neg⁰ takes as its complement the negated constituent

- c. morphosyntactic negation is material occupying the head or specifier position of NegP
- d. semantic sentential negation involves an abstract negation operator \neg adjoined to TP
- e. constituent negation involves a NegP that is not paired with the negation operator \neg

Negation particles (English *not* and *n't* and their ilk in other languages) mark morphosyntactic negation. These particles are part of a functional phrase NegP in BOTH sentential AND constituent negation constructions. NegP is projected by a head (Neg⁰) which systematically takes the negated constituent as its complement. Languages differ with respect to whether the negation particle lexicalises the Neg-head or occupies the specifier position of NegP. Morphosyntactic negation is to be distinguished from semantic negation: the locus of the former is NegP while the latter arises via an abstract negation operator (\neg) marking the scope of negation. The distributions of NegP and \neg are in principle independent of one another. A clause in which \neg is adjoined to TP and T takes NegP as its complement represents a structure with semantic and morphosyntactic sentential negation: (2).¹

¹ The complement of Neg in sentential negation constructions is some extended projection of V, annotated as 'xVP'. For our purposes, it does not matter exactly how large this extended projection is. The location of NegP *vis-à-vis* tense varies cross-linguistically (Zanuttini 1997); in English, TP is outside NegP: modals (T) and the structural subject (SpecTP) are to the left of the locus of morphosyntactic negation (*he will not come*, **not he will come*).

It is generally (though not systematically) impossible for \neg to license NPIs in the structural subject: **anyone didn't come to the party*. This could be taken to indicate that \neg is adjoined to T' rather than to TP; alternatively, it could lend credence to the idea that the subject of most clauses in English is in a position higher than SpecTP (what Rizzi & Shlonsky 2006, 2007 call the specifier position of 'Subj(ect)P'). The difficulty of licensing NPIs in the structural subject is likely a function of the *information-structural* properties of the subject: subjects are usually topics, which are interpreted outside \neg (e.g., in Rizzi & Shlonsky's SpecSubjP); when they are not topical (in SpecTP or lower), subjects can host an NPI licensed by \neg (as in *doctors who knew anything about acupuncture weren't available*; Linebarger 1981).

Hankamer (2011) argues that in English infinitival clauses with the order (*for DP*) *not to VP*, the infinitival marker *to* is the lexicalisation of T, and *not* finds itself in a position adjoined to T' (or TP, again depending on where the structural subject is). From the perspective of the present paper, this opens up the intriguing possibility that *not* in infinitives with *not to VP* order is an actual spell-out of \neg . In the alternative *to not VP* order, *not* may still spell out the Neg-head of the NegP in T's complement, as usual for sentential negation; but it may alternatively be the case that, cases of constituent negation aside, *to not VP* is always the result of raising *to* above *not*, with sentential *not* in a position adjoined to a projection of T throughout in English infinitives (the fact that *n't* cannot be used in infinitives is a potential indication to this effect; see Beukema & Den Dikken 1989 for discussion). If *not* is sometimes, or even consistently, the spell-out of \neg in a position adjoined to a projection of T in infinitives, this raises the question of why English would ever bother to accommodate the negation particle in a NegP in T's complement. There can be very little doubt that sentential *not* and *n't* in English finite clauses are in NegP: with these elements in an adjunction position, the need for *do*-support would be entirely mysterious. A suggestion I could offer here, very tentatively, is that the language learner, confronted with abundant evidence that both sentential-negation *not* and constituent-negation *not* can spell out Neg⁰, takes as the null hypothesis that *not* is uniformly the lexicalisation of Neg⁰, and will resort to an alternative treatment of *not* only in circumstances in which a Neg⁰ analysis of it is inadequate (i.e., in infinitival clauses with the word order (*for DP*) *not to VP*). This predicts that if at some point the evidence in the primary linguistic data for *not* being Neg⁰ should start to wane while the evidence for *not* being able to spell out \neg in a position adjoined to a projection of T remains strong, the child should adopt the latter analysis of *not* as his/her null hypothesis.

- (2) *the structure of morphosyntactic sentential negation*
 [ForceP Force [TP \neg [TP Spec [T' T [NegP Spec [Neg' Neg [_XVP ... V ...]]]]]]]]

Cases of constituent negation involve a NegP that is not in the complement of T and not paired with \neg . A third logical possibility is for \neg to be present on TP *without* there being a NegP in T's complement: semantic sentential negation in the absence of morphosyntactic negation. This possibility, while rare, is attested in a variety of idiomatic cases, which I will review below.

2.2 NegP and morphosyntactic versus semantic negation²

NegP is a syntactic projection representing morphosyntactic negation (which I will occasionally refer to as ' μ -neg(ation)'). It plays a role on the morphosyntactic side of the grammar. Morphosyntactic negation expressed in NegP is typically paired with the semantics of negation; but semantic negation (sometimes abbreviated hereinafter as ' σ -neg(ation)') is independent of morphosyntactic negation, in both directions: (a) morphological material representing Neg⁰ or SpecNegP (i.e., material expressing μ -neg) does not necessarily give rise to σ -neg, and (b) σ -neg is not necessarily expressed by morphological material representing Neg⁰ or SpecNegP. Let me illustrate each of these mismatches between μ -neg and σ -neg with the aid of a few simple and telling examples.

That morphological material expressing syntactic negation does not always give rise to semantic negation is familiar from the existence of what is often called expletive or pleonastic negation, found, for example, in exclamatives of the type in (3a) (which Horn 2009: 405 attributes to Jespersen, and finds 'somewhat quaint' in present-day English) and (3b) (from Dutch, where this is perfectly normal), or in examples such as (4a) (a 'standard weather warning' which Horn 2009: 406 judges to be 'alive and well in colloquial speech'), which can mean what (4b) means.

- (3) a. how often have I not watched him!
 b. wat je tegenwoordig al niet moet doen om aan een baan te komen!
 what you nowadays all not must do COMP to a job to come
 'the things you have to do nowadays to get a job!'
- (4) a. don't be surprised if it doesn't rain
 b. don't be surprised if it rains

The flipside of (a), just illustrated (instantiating Horn's 2009's 'hypernegation'), are cases of σ -neg not accompanied by μ -neg. That semantic sentential negation is not necessarily morphologically marked is revealed by the fact that negation can be silent in sentential negation constructions under certain circumstances — cases of what Horn (2009) calls 'hypo-negation'.³ One such case is illustrated in (5a), which is equivalent to explicitly negative (5b).

² This section empirically draws extensively on Horn (2009) and analytically owes much to the work of De Clerq (2011, 2013), where the distinction between syntactic and semantic negation is carefully investigated on the basis of a detailed inspection of the facts and the literature. I refer the reader to Horn's and De Clerq's work for more background and references. The most salient difference between De Clerq's approach to negation and mine is that the former mobilises an unvalued interpretable polarity feature on C while the latter employs an abstract negation operator \neg .

³ A remarkable case of hyponegation is instantiated by what Sailor (2015) calls '*fuck* inversion', found in varieties of British English (see (i)). Sailor's analysis involves movement of an abstract negative operator to

- (5) a. he could care less about any of these things
 b. he couldn't care less about any of these things

A second case of hyponegation occurs in constructions of the type in (6a), semantically equivalent to (6b) (Lawler 1974; Horn 2009: 417-8):

- (6) a. that'll teach you to do anything to my daughter
 b. that'll teach you not to do anything to my daughter

A third mini-universe for hyponegation involves taboo-word minimisers, referred to by Horn (2001) as 'squatitive negation' (after one of their representatives, American English (*diddly-/jack-*)*squat*; see also Postal 2004): (7a) is equivalent to overtly negative (7b). Both sentences express the negative proposition that they did not say anything to anyone all night, but only in (7b) do we see an explicit expression of negation; in (7a) semantic negation is morphologically abstract.

- (7) a. they said squat to anyone all night
 b. they didn't say squat to anyone all night

I argue here that in cases of hyponegation (as in (5a), (6a) and (7a)), the semantics of negation is contributed by an abstract negation operator, represented as \neg , often but not always in combination with a polarity-sensitive expression (*less*, *squat*).⁴ The sentences in (5a), (6a) and (7a) are semantically negative (or downward entailing), as is clear from the fact that negative polarity items such as *any* and *ever* are licensed;⁵ but they are not morphosyntactically

SpecFocP, going hand in hand with subject–aux inversion (i.e., T-to-Foc movement). If the abstract negative operator Sailor postulates for 'fuck inversion' is the same as the abstract \neg operator that this note exploits for semantic negation, this inversion construction shows that the abstract operator is eligible in principle for syntactic movement, under circumstances that require further study: plainly, it is not generally possible to front a sentential negation operator by itself, not even when overt (**not do I consider him to be a nice guy!* (recall fn. 1), **could he care less!*, **did he say squat all night!*).

- (i) A: John's a nice guy
 B: is he fuck (a nice guy)! (i.e., he isn't a nice guy at all)

⁴ A general question is why morphologically unmarked sentential negation is so rare. Certain polarity-sensitive expressions, though obviously by no means all, have the ability to recover the silent \neg operator. In the absence of such a polarity item or a morphological negation marker, it is usually impossible to postulate \neg . But though an appeal to recoverability is plausible, it is not sufficient: the *that'll teach you to VP* idiom features no polarity-sensitive element. Moreover, logically speaking, prosody or linear order should be able to help us recover \neg : for instance, it is imaginable that a language would systematically have a particular pitch accent on the verb or the final word in the sentence in negative statements, or would position the verb in initial position only in negative sentences; but no language seems to mark sentential negation purely in prosodic or linear terms. (Contrast this with root yes/no-questions: in languages such as English, these are marked entirely by a combination of linear order and prosody rather than by a particular morphological particle.) Why prosody or linear order, or a combination of the two, cannot recover abstract \neg is a question beyond the scope of this paper.

⁵ Postal (2004: 361) explicitly denies that *could care less*, or even *couldn't care less*, can license NPIs, and Lawler (1974) states that NPIs are not licensed in *that'll teach you to VP* constructions in the absence of negation. But Horn (2009: 417-8) points out that 'a quick googling disconfirms [both of these] claim[s]': when he checked, there were well over a thousand hits for *any* and/or *ever* in the scope of *could(n't) care less* and in the non-negative VP of *that'll teach you to VP*, including the ones in (i)–(ii).

negative: unlike (5b), (6b) and (7b), which have both \neg and NegP, the examples in (5a), (6a) and (7a) do not feature NegP. Concomitantly, they do not give rise to a positive checking tag or to parenthetical *I don't think*:⁶

- (8) a. he could care less, couldn't/*could he?
 he could care less I (*don't) think
 b. he couldn't care less, could/*couldn't he?
 he couldn't care less I don't think
- (9) a. they said squat all night, didn't/*did they?
 they said squat all night I (*don't) think
 b. they didn't say squat all night, did/*didn't they?
 they didn't say squat all night I don't think

English checking tags are characterised by polarity reversal: a positive statement combines with a negative tag; a negative statement combines with a positive tag. Parenthetical *I don't think* is licensed just in case the matrix clause is negative. Importantly, in both cases, this polarity sensitivity is about syntactic sentential negation, not semantic negation — i.e., to the presence of a NegP on the main projection spine of the sentence, immediately below TP. For tags, when NegP is present immediately below TP in the preamble clause, the tag will lack NegP; when a sentential NegP is absent in the preamble clause, the tag will have a NegP in the complement of T. This generalisation can be made to follow from a syntactic analysis of tag questions in English (see Den Dikken 1995 for a specific proposal). Space prevents me from laying this out here, but the details do not matter for present purposes: what is important to bear in mind is that polarity reversal in English checking tags, and polarity matching in *I don't think* parentheticals, is sensitive to syntactic sentential negation (NegP right below T), not to semantic negation.⁷ Since there is no NegP in the preamble clause in (8a) and (9a), the tag is negative and parenthetical *I don't think* is not licensed in these examples.

Hyponegation with polarity-sensitive expressions (*care less*, *squat*) never gives rise to a positive checking tag or an *I don't think* parenthetical. No matter what the grammatical function or syntactic position of *squat*, the tag will always feature *n't* and parenthetical *I don't think* will always be ruled out. Thus, (10a), in which *squat* is the object, and (10b), where *squat* occupies the structural subject position, behave entirely on a par:

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- (i) a. I could care less about anyone else's sexual fantasy
 b. EOM staffers could care less about ever again hearing anything about the Department of Justice's Executive Office for Immigration Review
- (ii) a. that'll teach you to do anything without a spreadsheet
 b. that'll teach him to ever say anything degrading about girls in your presence

⁶ For the *that'll teach you to VP* case this cannot be demonstrated. It is important here to confine attention to *checking* tags. English also has a tag questions in which the tag has the same polarity as the preamble clause. These are typically sarcastic, and do not ask for confirmation of the content of the preamble clause. Checking tags (with polarity reversal), on the other hand, merely request confirmation and carry no affective load.

⁷ For the fact that (i) gives rise to a positive tag despite the fact that the preamble clause does not deny that John drives a car (see Zeijlstra 2015: 795), this analysis provides a straightforward explanation on the assumption that *seldom* is like *never* (see section 2.3) in occupying the specifier position of NegP but differs from *never* in not being paired with the abstract negation operator \neg : the presence of NegP in the syntax leads to a positive tag; the absence of \neg is responsible for the fact that *John seldom drives a car* is not interpreted as a denial.

- (i) John seldom drives a car, does he?

- (10) a. they said squat, didn't/*did they?
 they said squat I (*don't) think
 b. squat happened, didn't/*did it?
 squat happened I (*don't) think

Morphologically negative pronouns (*nothing*, *nobody*) and noun phrases introduced by *no*, *not a single* and *not Q* (where *Q* is a quantifier) are different from squatitives in this respect, giving rise to an empirical picture in which the grammatical function of the negative expression plays a key role:

- (11) a. they said nothing, didn't/?*did they?
 b. nothing happened, did/*didn't it?
 (12) a. they bought no/not a single book, didn't/?*did they?
 b. no/not a single/not every book was sold, was/*wasn't it?

The behaviour of *n*-words and *no/not a single/not Q*-phrases can be understood if we take these expressions to be able, when they are subjects, to activate a NegP on the main projection spine, i.e., a sentential NegP in the complement of T: *n*-words like *nothing* and *no/not a single/not Q*-phrases, when they serve as subjects, move to SpecTP via SpecNegP in the overt syntax, as in (13):⁸

- (13) $[_{TP} \neg [_{TP} [no\ NP/not\ a\ single\ NP/not\ Q\ NP]_i [_T\ T\ [_{NegP}\ t_i\ [_{Neg'}\ Neg\ [_{xVP}\ t_i\ \dots\]]]]]]$

Objects never raise this high in English, so only morphologically negative *subjects* have the ability to give rise to a positive tag. Squatitives cannot license a positive tag even as subjects because squatitives are not morphologically negative: only negative-marked phrases can move through SpecNegP on their way to SpecTP.

2.3 *NegP and do-support*

Though *n*-words and *no/not a single/not Q*-phrases license a positive tag when they serve as subjects, they do not give rise to *do*-support. In this latter respect, they behave like the negative adverb *never*: though both *not*, *never* and *n*-words and *no/not a single/not Q*-phrases can all be morphological expressions of sentential negation, they go separate ways in the distribution of the dummy auxiliary *do*.

- (14) a. women *(do) not hold senior government posts in this country, do they?
 b. no women (*do) hold senior government posts in this country, do they?
 c. women (*do) never hold senior government posts in this country, do they?

The distribution of *do*-support in English is strictly sensitive to the occupancy of Neg⁰, not to the presence or absence of NegP *per se*. It is only when Neg⁰ is lexicalised by the negation particle that the presence of NegP on the main spine of the clause prevents the verb from establishing a featural relationship with T: the negation particle makes it impossible for T to engage in an Agree relation with the finite verb. As a consequence, in cases in which Neg⁰ is

⁸ The internal structure of the various phrases in SpecTP in (13) involves a NegP on a left branch in the extended projection of N (*xNP*): $[_{xNP} [_{NegP}\ no/not\ a\ single/not\ every] [N]]$. The *xNP* is eligible to serve as the subject of a clause.

spelled out by negation, the verb cannot be inflected for tense. In clauses in which T is represented by morphology that needs to be expressed on a verbal element, this leads to a last-resort strategy — in English, this is *do*-support. The fact that English is a language which cannot tense-inflect the main verb in (14a) and must resort to *do*-support is a consequence of the fact that the negation particle of English is the spell-out of Neg. In the examples in (14b) and (14c), though NegP is present in the complement of T (as is clear from the fact that the tags in these examples are positive, just as in (14a)), no *do*-support is triggered because the Neg-head is unoccupied. In both (14b) and (14c) the negative-marked constituents are phrasal expressions — this is obvious in the case of *no women*, but also demonstrably true for *never*: *he [absolutely never] reads any books* is grammatical, and contrasts with **he does [absolutely not] read any books*. When nothing occupies Neg⁰, the verb manages to check its features against T thanks to the fact that an Agree chain can be wrought between V and T; Neg does not break this chain when it is not lexicalised.⁹

In the other Germanic languages (and well beyond), the presence of a sentential negation particle does not interfere with the verb's ability to be inflected for tense: *do*-support is not triggered by sentential negation in these languages. The logic of the preceding discussion suggests that in languages that have a sentential negation particle and in which the presence of this particle is no impediment to tense inflection, the negation particle is located in SpecNegP rather than in the Neg-head. This will come to play an important role later in this paper.

2.4 Sentential negation and NegP: Summary, and a question

I have argued for the following major claims regarding sentential negation:

- (15)
- a. MORPHOSYNTACTIC SENTENTIAL NEGATION (μ -Sneg) involves a NegP in the immediate complement of T
 - b. SEMANTIC SENTENTIAL NEGATION (σ -Sneg) involves an abstract negation operator \neg adjoined to TP
 - c. negative polarity items are licensed in all sentences with semantic sentential negation
 - d. the presence of NegP in syntax is justified iff something occupies either the head or the specifier of this NegP by Spell-Out¹⁰
 - e. positive checking tags and parenthetical *I don't think* are licensed only in the presence of a NegP in the complement of T

⁹ For the negative element *ne* of French *ne ... pas* 'not', three logically possible treatments present themselves which are compatible with the text discussion. One is to analyse it as an element attached directly to the inflected verb and travelling with it to T, through null Neg. A second possibility is to take *ne* and *pas* to form a complex constituent in SpecNegP, with *ne* cliticising upwards. The third option (see e.g. Pollock 1989) is to treat *ne* as a filler of Neg⁰ that can receive the inflected verb as the latter raises up, via Neg, to T. For finite sentential negation constructions, these analyses all deliver the same results. But the first approach does not succeed in capturing the facts of non-finite sentential negation in French: in negated infinitival clauses, *ne* shows up to the immediate left of the particle *pas* (*ne pas être heureux* 'not to be happy'), not to the immediate left of the infinitive (**pas n'être heureux*). Regarding the third analysis, the fact that French *ne* and English *n't* differ in that the latter is unable to receive inflected lexical verbs follows from the general inability on the part of English lexical verbs to raise out of *xVP* (see Pollock 1989 for extensive discussion).

¹⁰ The restriction 'by Spell-Out' is important in theories which postulate general movement to SpecNegP of all negative expressions in sentences with sentential negation (e.g., theories based on the Neg Criterion; Haegeman & Zanuttini 1991, Haegeman 1995).

- f. *do*-support occurs only when the head of the NegP in the complement of T is occupied (by *not* or *n't* in English)

By the logic of this approach, we obtain the following classification of the sentences in (16), all reviewed in the foregoing:

		μ -neg	σ -neg	
(16)	a.	he didn't say anything/squat to anyone, did he?	✓	✓
	b.	nothing happened to anyone, did it?	✓	✓
	c.	he said nothing/no word to anyone, didn't he?	–	✓
	d.	squat happened to anyone, didn't it?	–	✓
	e.	he said squat to anyone, didn't he?	–	✓
	f.	how often have I not watched him!	✓	–

A question raised by the discussion of μ -negation and σ -negation in this section is what the role of morphological negation is in contexts in which σ -Neg (i.e., \neg) is present. The perspective that I would like to present on the function of overt morphosyntactic negation in the presence of \neg is that it is similar, perhaps even identical, to the role played by the focus particle *only*, which marks exhaustivity. I will briefly (and somewhat tentatively) elaborate on this in the remainder of this section.

It is well known that natural languages have purely syntactic devices at their disposal to signal that a particular constituent is exhaustively focused. In Hungarian, the immediately pre-finite position is almost exclusively reserved for exhaustive foci (see esp. the work of Horvath 2000, 2007); in English, the post-copular position in an *it*-cleft is almost uniquely the privilege of exhaustive foci. Yet, although both languages have syntactic ways of signalling exhaustive focus, English and Hungarian both possess a focus particle (*only*, *csak*) whose lexical meaning also signals exhaustivity — though not in exactly the same way as do the syntactic strategies: in *only John went away*, it is presupposed that John went away, and it is asserted that nobody else did, whereas in *it was John who went away*, it is presupposed that somebody went away, and asserted that the one who went away was John (and not anybody else). What is particularly interesting for our present discussion is that both English and Hungarian allow the two strategies for marking exhaustivity to combine:

- (17) a. it was only John who went away
 b. csak János ment el
 only János went away

For μ -negation, a similar approach suggests itself. Though sentential negation is encoded in the syntactic structure by \neg , and \neg by itself should in principle suffice for the purpose of negation, the particle *not* (and its ilk in other languages) combines with it to express negation explicitly in the morphosyntax. That the μ -neg particle can be used as a focus particle is argued explicitly in Den Dikken (2016) (to which I refer for details which space does not allow me to reproduce here) in connection with Dutch examples of fronting of the negation particle by itself:

- (18) ik had wel gezien dat Jan aankwam, maar niet had ik gezien dat Piet vertrok
 I had AFF seen that Jan arrived but not had I seen that Piet left
 'I did see that Jan arrived, but I didn't see that Piet left'

But it is not just in these rather unusual 'negation fronting' constructions that the μ -neg particle is associated to focus. In (19), the sentential μ -neg particle *n't* has a variety of different focus candidates to link up to (with the small capitals in a–f marking the locus of the focal pitch accent):

- (19)
- | | | |
|----|--|-----------------------------------|
| a. | John didn't introduce Bill to Sue | |
| b. | John didn't introduce Bill to <small>FOCUS</small> Sue | (focus on <i>Sue</i>) |
| c. | John didn't introduce <small>FOCUS</small> Bill to Sue | (focus on <i>Bill</i>) |
| d. | John didn't <small>FOCUS</small> introduce Bill to Sue | (focus on the verb) |
| e. | John didn't <small>FOCUS</small> introduce Bill to Sue | (focus on the VP) |
| f. | <small>FOCUS</small> John didn't introduce Bill to Sue | (focus on the subject) |
| g. | <small>FOCUS</small> John didn't introduce Bill to Sue | (focus on the entire proposition) |

In all of (19a–f), *n't* is a sentential μ -neg particle. That sentential negation is involved in all of these cases is clear from the fact that they all take *did he?* as their tag and *I don't think* as a parenthetical. I thus agree with Szabolcsi (1980) in treating focus-associated negation in such examples as sentential negation, with \neg present in the structure and taking scope over the entire proposition. (The term 'focus-associated negation' should not be taken to be co-extensive with 'constituent negation' (*pace* Vu 2017): we are not dealing with constituent negation in (19).) The μ -neg particle *n't* not only helps us understand a TP with \neg adjoined to it as a negative statement (apart from μ -neg English does not have a reliable morphological, overt-syntactic or prosodic cue to signal that \neg is present in the structure), but in (19a–e), where the focus is narrower than the proposition as a whole, it also plays a key role in the information-structural articulation of the sentence.

3 Sentential negation *versus* constituent negation

3.1 Morphological and syntactic identity

For sentential negation, the idea that it is syntactically represented by a NegP on the main spine of the clause has a venerable tradition (see Pollock 1989, Laka 1990, Progovac 1994, Haegeman 1995, Zanuttini 1997, etc.). Sentential NegP, in languages such as English, serving as the complement of T and takes some extended projection of the main predicate (typically a verb) as its complement, as in (2), repeated here.

- (2) *the structure of morphosyntactic sentential negation*
 [_{ForceP} Force [_{TP} \neg [_{TP} Spec [_{T'} T [_{NegP} Spec [_{Neg'} Neg [_{xVP} ... V ...]]]]]]]]

With *xVP* sitting in the complement position of Neg, the negation particle has a choice between the Neg⁰ position and SpecNegP — a parameter that we already saw at work in section 2.3, on *do*-support, and which I will return to again later. Outside NegP, towards the top of the clause (with scope over the entire proposition except for its illocutionary force¹¹), is the abstract sentential negation operator, represented as an adjunct to TP in (2).

¹¹ That the abstract sentential negation operator does not have scope over illocutionary force is clear from the fact that *didn't he go to the party?* cannot be interpreted in such a way that the interrogativity of the utterance is negated — this sentence means 'I am asking if he didn't go to the party', NOT 'I am not asking whether he went to the party'.

Though NegP as such is a well-established ingredient of the syntactic toolkit, its distribution is customarily confined to just sentential negation. The literature on negation is often not particularly explicit on the syntactic representation of constituent negation; but the majority view seems to be that constituent negation involves the adjunction of the negation particle directly to the constituent that is negated. I will argue here that this null hypothesis is untenable, and that constituent negation, like sentential negation, involves NegP, a projection of the Neg-head.

An initial argument for a syntactic assimilation of sentential and constituent negation is the fact (very well known but not often taken cognizance of) that in language after language, constituent negation and sentential negation involve exactly the same negation particle — English *not*, Dutch *niet*, Hungarian *nem*, to mention just a few examples. What further strengthens the case for syntax treating sentential and constituent negation as fundamentally similar is the realisation that an *a priori* simple analysis of the string *not a book* in (20) involving adjunction of *not* to the noun phrase *a book*, as in (21a), is arguably ungrammatical: the DP *a book* in (20) is an argument (of the verb *read*), and adjunction to arguments is forbidden (Chomsky 1986, McCloskey 1992, 2006).¹² With (21a) hereby off the table as a representation of constituent negation (at least for categories that are selected by a higher predicate), the alternative is a NegP, as in either (21b) or (21c): the negation particle is either a head that lexicalises Neg⁰ or a phrase located in SpecNegP (in which case NegP has a phonologically silent head).

(20) he was reading *not* a book but a magazine

¹² The prohibition of adjunction to constituents that receive a θ -role played an instrumental role in the theory of successive-cyclic movement developed in *Barriers*, and was primarily conceived at the time as a ban on adjunction to arguments *in the course of the derivation*, not as an injunction against adjunction to arguments *tout court*. The rationale given by Chomsky (1986) (attributed to Kyle Johnson) was based on a particular interpretation of the θ -Criterion, and also specifically targeted transformational adjunction, not base adjunction. The leading idea was that an argument, which is assigned its θ -role in its position of first Merge ('at D-structure', in classic generative parlance), needs to be recognised as such at LF — but adjunction to the argument in the course of the derivation interferes with this because it changes the argument into something that the predicate had not 'ordered' originally. An analogy may help here. Imagine an Italian paying a visit to Starbucks and placing an order for a cappuccino. When presented with a concoction with a load of whipped cream, cinnamon and colourful candy-coated chocolate sprinkles on top, the Italian will likely look surprised, and say to the barista: 'That's not what I ordered!' — the Italian (the 'predicate') had selected a cappuccino 'at D-structure' (i.e., when he placed his order), but does not recognise as a cappuccino the beverage that the barista handed him 'at LF', which has all manner of things 'adjoined' to it that he did not order. Similarly, when a linguistic predicate, by way of its θ -grid, orders an argument of a certain sort at D-structure, it expects to find in the relevant argument position at LF a constituent that meets its selectional restrictions, not something that has stuff adjoined to it that the verb does not select for. It is not obvious, however, that this rationale for the ban on adjunction to arguments goes through as stated: it is inconceivable that adjunction to an argument affects the nature of its θ -role. Adjunction does not change the category of the argument either, so subcategorisation should be satisfiable as well. I will not adopt the Johnson/Chomsky line on the adjunction prohibition, therefore. Rather, I will exploit the segment/category distinction of May (1985) and Chomsky (1986), and assume that in a structure of the type [V [_{XP} α [_{XP} ...]], V can only see the outer segment of the bi-segmental XP category, and hence can only assign its θ -role to that outer segment. Since θ -roles do not 'percolate' (whether upwards or downwards), this leaves the inner segment of XP as well as the bi-segmental XP category as a whole uninterpretable for the θ -Criterion. This way of deriving the prohibition on adjunction to arguments makes this ban cover base-adjunction. The structure in (21a) is thereby excluded from serving an argument function.

- (21) a. * $[_{DP} not [_{DP} a book]]$
 b. $[_{NegP} [_{Neg'} Neg=not [_{DP} a book]]]$
 c. $[_{NegP} not [_{Neg'} Neg\emptyset [_{DP} a book]]]$

For English *not*, (21b) is arguably the right approach. For sentential negation, we had already come across an argument to this effect in the discussion of *do*-support in section 2.3. In the next section, we will see that the *not*-as-Neg⁰ analysis is also highly advantageous in the analysis of constituent negation.

The interim conclusion is that sentential and constituent negation are fundamentally the same in their involvement of NegP. This is not to say, of course, that there are no differences between sentential and constituent negation.¹³ The two differ in two respects: (a) the location of NegP in the syntactic structure (sentential negation always involves a NegP in the immediate complement of T), and (b) the presence of the abstract semantic negation operator \neg (only sentential negation has \neg).

3.2 Constituent negation and the subject

I argue in this paper that the constituent [*not a book*] found in (20) is a NegP headed by *not*. The element *not* is a lexical item that is not endowed with or specifiable for ϕ -features; and the functional head Neg⁰ is not in possession of ϕ -features either. This severely curtails the distribution of constituent-negated noun phrases in English: since their NegPs are ϕ -featureless, they are expected to be unable to value the inherently unvalued ϕ -features of functional

¹³ It is well known that the *not* of (ia) and the *not* of (ib) diverge when it comes to weakening of *not* to *n't* and concomitant contraction onto the preceding verb — see the right-hand examples. But this has more to do with the host of *n't* than with the negation particle itself: *n't* can only be contracted onto finite auxiliaries and the finite copula, and past-participial *had* in (ib), though sounding just like finite *had*, does not fall into that category. The structural description of the rule of *n't* contraction makes reference first and foremost to finiteness. In (ib), that structural description is not met; hence the right-hand example fails. But in (iib) it is — and what we find (as the right-hand examples show) is that contraction of *n't* onto *are* is as grammatical here as it is in (iia).

- | | | | |
|------|----|--|--|
| (i) | a. | he had <i>not</i> had any trouble | he had <i>n't</i> had any trouble |
| | b. | he had had <i>not</i> a stroke but a heart attack | *he had had <i>n't</i> a stroke but a heart attack |
| (ii) | a. | there are <i>not</i> arriving any new guests today | there are <i>n't</i> arriving any new guests today |
| | b. | there are <i>not</i> two but three men at the door | there are <i>n't</i> two but three men at the door |

Relatedly, for the reading of (iiia) in which it is equivalent to (iiib), Cirillo (2009: 119-20) suggests that it is derived by contracting *not* onto the finite auxiliary from the base position of the constituent-negated phrase [*not everybody*].

- (iii) a. everybody didn't read the book
 b. not everybody read the book

It is true that contraction of *not* in constituent negation contexts is sometimes blocked even when *not* is immediately adjacent to a finite auxiliary or copula — for instance, contraction in (ivb) loses us the litotes reading ('quite significant, non-trivial') available for (iva), which is associated with constituent negation. This is arguably caused by the fact that the structural distance between *not* and *are* is too large: in [*not insignificant*] *problems*], there are too many left brackets between *not* and *are* to facilitate contraction.

- (iv) a. there are not insignificant problems with this proposal
 b. there aren't insignificant problems with this proposal

In light of the material presented in this footnote, I dismiss *n't* contraction as a reliable diagnostic for the sentential *vs* constituent negation distinction.

heads such as finite T — finite T always has a bundle of ϕ -features, and these features are valued in an agreement relationship with a local noun phrase that has a matching set of ϕ -features; in the absence of a match, T's ϕ -features will remain unvalued, which causes the derivation to crash at the interfaces. The prediction, then, is clear: given that English *not* is a Neg-head, and given that it lacks ϕ -features, it should be impossible in this language to use a constituent-negated noun phrase as the subject of a finite clause.¹⁴

This prediction is borne out by the ungrammaticality of the sentences in (22) and (23):

- (22) a. *Bob solved the problem; not Bill solved it
 b. *Bob is going to Bristol; not Bill is going there
 (23) a. *Bob solved the problem; not Bill did (so)
 b. *Bob is going to Bristol; not Bill is

The examples in (22) are somewhat awkward even with sentential negation in the second clause, because of the redundancy of repetition of the VP: *Bob solved the problem; Bill didn't solve it* or *Bob is going to Bristol; Bill isn't going there*. But (22) is sharply worse than this, so redundancy *per se* is not the root cause of the ill-formedness of (22). This is confirmed by the fact that (23), which eliminates the redundancy by performing VP ellipsis or *do so* replacement, remains hopeless — again in stark contrast to the counterparts with sentential negation, *Bob solved the problem; Bill didn't (do so)* and *Bob is going to Bristol; Bill isn't*. The ill-formedness of (22) and (23) lends credence to an approach to English constituent negation along the lines of (21b), with *not* as the head of NegP: on this analysis, the ungrammaticality of (22) and (23) falls out from the fact that the T-head of the second clause in these examples is unable to value its ϕ -features because the subject (a NegP with *not* as its head) does not possess any such features.

Interestingly, so-called 'stripping', as in (24), delivers a fine result with a constituent-negated DP that functions as the subject of the elliptical clause. On assumptions that are well established in the literature, the syntax of the second clause of (24) contains a TP of which [*not Bill*] is the subject. But though [*not Bill*] was unable to serve as the subject of (22) and (23), it somehow does manage this in (24). That is because in (24) the entire TP is stripped away: [*not Bill*] is placed in the focus position of the clause (SpecFocP), and TP is marked for ellipsis. With the ellipsis of TP, the unvalued ϕ -features of T vanish as well, and as a result these features cannot pose a problem at the interfaces.¹⁵

¹⁴ The text discussion confines itself to ϕ -features. But T also has a Case feature that needs to be matched. Neg=*not* is unspecified for Case, so Case checking with constituent-negated subjects fails as well. In light of the fact that objects check structural Case, too, this entails that [*not x*] should also be impossible in object position. This is correct: **John kissed not Mary yesterday; he kissed Sue* is ungrammatical. See Den Dikken & Griffiths (2018) for discussion.

Note that 'a constituent-negated noun phrase' should be taken to strictly mean 'a noun phrase that is itself constituent-negated', *not* as 'a noun phrase that has a constituent negation inside it'. It is perfectly fine to use such DPs as *a not unreasonable suggestion* and *not a few people* (Klima 1964) as structural subjects (or objects): here Neg=*not* combines with the AP *unreasonable* or the QP *a few*, which are *subconstituents* of the DPs in question; these DPs themselves are specified for ϕ - and Case features in the usual way, and therefore distribute like any ordinary argumental DP.

¹⁵ Note that this confirms that the problem with (22) and (23) arises at the interfaces: the unvalued ϕ -features of T cannot be interpreted there. For more discussion of the nature of stripping and the licensing conditions imposed on ellipsis (not relevant here), I refer the interested reader to Den Dikken & Griffiths (2018).

- (24) a. Bob solved the problem; not Bill
b. Bob is going to Bristol; not Bill

Stripping aside, English speakers are quite generally unhappy with constituent-negated DPs as subjects of finite clauses. Thus, not just (22a,b) but (25a,b) as well are deemed quite poor by the majority of English speakers — in clear contrast to their counterparts in the primed examples.

- (25) a. ^{(?)?}not Bill solved the problem but Bob
a'. not Bill but Bob solved the problem
b. ^{(?)?}not Bill is going to Bristol but Bob
b'. not Bill but Bob is going to Bristol

The deviance of (25a,b) gets stronger in subject–auxiliary inversion contexts. I will demonstrate this in two different ways. First, consider the examples in (26).

- (26) a. *how didn't Bill solve the problem?
b. *how did not Bill solve the problem but Bob?
b'. how did not Bill but Bob solve the problem?

Here, (26a) serves as a baseline: it establishes that *wh*-extraction of *how* across a sentential negation gives rise to an 'inner island' effect (Ross 1984): this question is very awkward (unless there is a fixed repertoire of ways of solving the problem at hand, in which case *how* is 'D-linked'). Ungrammaticality persists in (26b), but (26b') is okay. The well-formedness of (26b') tells us that [*not Bill but Bob*] can serve as a constituent in the structural subject position, SpecTP: the negation particle *not* is part of this coordinate subject, and no inner island effect arises because there is no sentential negation (i.e., (26b') is equivalent to *how did Bob solve the problem?*). In light of this, the fact that (26b) remains ungrammatical indicates that [*not Bill*] cannot by itself be the constituent-negated structural subject in SpecTP.

This is confirmed by the examples in (27). Note that in highly formal and mostly written registers, *what has not Bill solved?* and *where is not Bill going?* are grammatical with sentential *not*; but in (27), featuring contraction of the finite auxiliary onto the *wh*-word (a hallmark of informal spoken registers), *not* cannot be construed as sentential negation. The fact that the sentences in (27) are ungrammatical, in contradistinction to their counterparts without *not* and *but Bob*, then tells us reliably that it is impossible for [*not Bill*] to be placed in the structural subject position.

- (27) a. *what's not Bill solved but Bob?
b. *where's not Bill going but Bob?

The fact that (25a,b) are comparatively better than (26b) and (27a,b) falls out if we make the following assumptions (see Den Dikken & Griffiths 2018): (a) the subject of (25a,b) is not just [*not Bill*] but the entire *but*-coordination (*not Bill but Bob*, which we know can serve as a subject integrally: (25a',b')¹⁶), and (b) 'extraposing' the *but*-conjunct to sentence-final

¹⁶ The string *not Bill but Bob* in (25a',b') is a coordination phrase headed by the conjunction *but* (so-called 'corrective *but*', as opposed to 'counterexpectational *but*'). This conjunction, like other conjunction particles, is not inherently endowed with ϕ -features; but as is well known, coordination phrases are nonetheless

position is impossible if the coordination structure finds itself in SpecTP but relatively easy when this structure is situated in a left-peripheral focus position.¹⁷ While (25a,b) is open to a parse in which [*not Bill*] is a focus in the left periphery, for the subject–aux inversion constructions in (26b) and (27) it must be the case that [*not Bill*] is in SpecTP. If (by hypothesis) extraposition of *but Bob* is impossible from SpecTP, (26b) and (27) cannot be derived via extraposition — and since we know already from (22) and (23) that [*not Bill*] cannot be the subject of a finite clause all by itself (because the NegP headed by *not* lacks ϕ -features suitable for valuing T's unvalued ϕ -features), there is no hope for (26b) and (27).¹⁸

The facts of Dutch introduce an interesting twist to this picture. Not only does Dutch show a much greater degree of tolerance towards sentences of the type in (25a,b), as shown in (28a), the language also allows subject– V_{fin} inversion constructions of this type, as in (29a). The b-examples are provided in order to show that the entire string [*niet x maar y*] 'not x but y' can also be placed in immediately pre- or post- V_{fin} position in root clauses.

- (28) a. niet jij was de winnaar maar ik
 not he was the winner but I
 b. niet jij maar ik was de winnaar
 not you but I was the winner
- (29) a. waarom was niet ik de winnaar maar jij?
 why was not he the winner but you
 b. waarom was niet ik maar jij de winnaar?
 why was not I but you the winner

The combination of (28) and (29) leads us to the possibility to have the post-finite constituent-negated subject of the first conjunct serve as an ellipsis remnant, followed by a clausal (rather than nominal) *but*-conjunct. In English, such is completely impossible (see the prose translation of (30)) — not surprisingly, in light of the ungrammaticality of (26b) and (27). But in Dutch this works.¹⁹

specified for ϕ -features and manage to serve as grammatical subjects. See Toosarvandani (2013) for important discussion (*contra* Vicente 2010) supporting the hypothesis (adopted here) that corrective *but* can coordinate subclausal constituents (including DPs).

¹⁷ For the first part of (b), there is plenty of support — in fact, not only is extraposition of a subpart of the constituent in SpecTP impossible, it is even ungrammatical to extrapose the structural subject integrally (see Rizzi 1990, for instance). For the second part of (b), support may be derived from the observations in Guéron (1980) about the distribution of extraposition from subjects in English. The fact that *a letter just arrived from China* is much better than **a letter was confiscated from China* or **a letter caused major upheaval from China* can be understood from the perspective of the text discussion in light of the fact that *a letter from China just arrived* (a thetic judgement) does not have the topic–comment articulation of *a letter from China was confiscated* or *a letter from China caused major upheaval* (both categorical judgements, with the subject as the topic): it is plausible to assume that in *a letter from China just arrived*, the noun phrase of *letter* sits in a focus position in the left periphery, and is eligible for extraposition of the PP as a result. That extraposition is involved in (25a,b) (for speakers who accept these) is supported by Right Roof Constraint effects: see Den Dikken & Griffiths (2018). If such effects can be derived from an analysis involving clausal coordination *cum* ellipsis along the lines of Toosarvandani (2013: 853), such an analysis will serve as an alternative to the proposal in (b).

¹⁸ The examples in (22) and (23) remain ungrammatical because nothing can value T's ϕ -features: [*not Bill*] by itself cannot, for reasons discussed; and here, unlike in (25a,b), we cannot assume that [*not Bill but Bob*] is the underlying subject because *but Bob* is altogether absent from these sentences.

¹⁹ In (i)–(iii) are just a few attested examples culled from the internet. The grammaticality of (30) and (i)–(iii) indicates that corrective *but* can in principle conjoin two clauses with ellipsis taking place in the first conjunct. Langacker (1969: 171) claims that such ellipsis is blocked by the Backwards Anaphora Constraint;

Hungarian is not a *do*-support language either. So it makes sense to hypothesise that the Hungarian negation particle *nem* is like Dutch *niet* in being located in SpecNegP rather than in Neg⁰. For Hungarian, therefore, I postulate the structure in (33).²¹

(33) [NegP *nem* [Neg' Neg \emptyset [DP *x*]]] (Hungarian)

If (33) is correct, and if I am right in arguing that silent Neg can agree in ϕ - and Case-features with the DP in its complement, it should be possible for [*nem x*] to serve as the structural subject of a non-elliptical finite clause in Hungarian. The grammaticality of (34a) is an immediate indication that [*nem x*] can be nominative and control ϕ -feature agreement with the finite verb.²² But (34a) does not tell us whether [*nem x*] can occupy the structural subject position (SpecTP): the constituent-negated focus is arguably in the focus position here.²³

feature agreement that is responsible for the ill-formedness of these sentences. What this factor might be is something I do not know at this time.

- (i) *Bob heeft het probleem opgelost; niet Bill heeft het opgelost
Bob has the problem solved not Bill has it solved
- (ii) *Bob heeft het probleem opgelost; niet Bill heeft dat gedaan
Bob has the problem solved not Bill has that done
- (iii) Bob heeft het probleem opgelost; niet Bill
Bob has the problem solved not Bill

²¹ Placing the sentential negation particle *nem* in SpecNegP is able to structurally assimilate the word-order facts of sentential negation constructions and sentences with a fronted focus: in both, the finite verb raises to the head of the relevant functional projection (NegP and FocP, respectively). A reviewer asks what happens in sentences that have both a fronted focus and sentential *nem*, as in *JÁNOS nem ment ki* 'it is János who didn't go out', where *ment* surfaces to the immediate right of *nem*, not in between the focus and the negation particle. Apparently the finite verb raises up only to the lower of the two functional heads in the FocP-over-NegP structure. A possible explanation for this that readily comes to mind is that 'criterial freezing' leaves the finite verb stuck in Neg after having made its first 'criterion-driven' move.

²² Hungarian corrective *hanem*, like Spanish corrective *sino*, consists of the equivalents of *if* and *not*. Although *ha* by itself can only introduce clauses, in line with Toosarvandani (2013) (and *contra* Vicente 2010) I allow *hanem* to coordinate subclausal constituents, for reasons discussed in connection with (35b), below.

²³ See also Mycock (2010) and Laczkó (2015b) on (i), with its characteristic focus word order. They take the focus position in Hungarian to be SpecVP; I label it SpecFocP and assume it to be outside TP, with *János* in the topic position. On the syntax of (ii), Mycock (2010) and Laczkó (2015b) part ways, with Mycock treating *nem mindenkit* as the occupant of *mindenkit*'s usual quantifier position and Laczkó identifying the position of *nem mindenkit* as the focus position: Laczkó (2015b: 203) states, in line with his earlier work (esp. Laczkó 2014b), that 'a universal QP can be negated in its canonical position iff there is a focused constituent in [the preverbal focus position]'.

- (i) János nem Mari-t hívta fel
János(NOM) not Mari.ACC called up
- (ii) nem mindenkit hívott fel János
not everyone.ACC called up János(NOM)

I agree with É. Kiss (2015) and Vu (2017) in treating every instance of the negation particle *nem* combining directly with a focus as a case of constituent negation. But the grammaticality of (iii) (Laczkó 2015b: 203), with *János* as the focus and *nem mindenkit* in a non-focal quantifier position in the higher left periphery, shows that constituent negation in Hungarian cannot be equated with the recipe '*nem*+focus' (*contra* É. Kiss 2015).

- (iii) nem mindenkit János hívott fel
not everyone.ACC János(NOM) called up

- (34) a. nem te voltál a győztes, hanem én
not you were.2SG the winner but I
b. nem te, hanem én voltam a győztes
not you but I was.1SG the winner

To test whether [*nem x*] can be in SpecTP, we would need examples involving subject– V_{fin} inversion, such as (35a).

- (35) a. %miért voltam nem én a győztes, hanem te?
why was.1SG not I the winner but you
a'. miért nem én voltam a győztes, hanem te?
why not I was.1SG the winner but you
b. *miért voltam nem én, hanem te a győztes?
why was.1SG not I but you the winner
b'. (?)²⁴miért nem én, hanem te voltál a győztes?
why not I but you were.2SG the winner

The judgements on (35a) are variable. This is related to the degree to which it is possible in general to place a focused subject in post- V_{fin} position in Hungarian, independently of the presence or absence of constituent negation: sentences like %*miért vagyok (csak) én a győztes?* ‘why am (only) I the winner’ give rise to variable responses as well, and these responses seem correlated with the judgements on (35a). Speakers who do not like these sentences do accept their alternatives in which the pronominal subject (whether constituent-negated or not) is placed between *miért* and the finite verb, in SpecFocP (just as in (34)): see (35a') and *miért (csak) én vagyok a győztes?*. So it seems to me safe to say that for speakers who allow focused pronominal subjects to the right of the finite verb in the first place, (35a) is grammatical. This confirms, for these speakers, that [*nem x*] can occupy the structural subject position (SpecTP) in Hungarian.

A complication in comparison to the English and Dutch facts reviewed previously arises from the fact that Hungarian [*nem x, hanem y*] ‘not x but y’ cannot be in the post- V_{fin} structural subject position as a unit: (35b) is uniformly deemed ungrammatical. It improves somewhat with [*nem x, hanem y*] between *miért* ‘why’ and the finite verb, as in (35b') — but even (35b') does not have status of (35a').²⁴ This can be understood in light of É. Kiss's (2012) observations about coordination with *és* ‘and’ of ϕ -distinct personal pronouns:

- (36) a. *melyik alakok a képen vagytok [te és ő]?
which figures the picture.in are.2PL you_{SG} and he
‘which figures in the picture are you_{SG} and he?’

²⁴ In (35b'), ϕ -feature agreement is with *te* ‘you’. This could be treated as a case of closest conjunct agreement: when the pronouns are flipped, the finite verb must be *voltam* — *miért nem te, hanem én voltam a győztes?* ‘why not you but I was.1SG the winner’. (Note for completeness' sake that (35b) remains ungrammatical with *voltál* replacing *voltam* — **miért voltál nem én, hanem te a győztes?* ‘why were.2SG not you but I the winner’.) As the editors have pointed out to me, however, closest conjunct agreement is impossible in cases of coordination of two participant pronouns with *és*: **miért én és te voltál a győztes?* is ungrammatical; instead we need *miért én és te voltunk a győztesek?* ‘why you and I were.1PL the winners.PL’ (which is transparently unavailable for *nem én, hanem te*). This may suggest that (35b') involves clausal coordination instead of subject coordination. See the discussion in the text around (35b'''), below.

- b. ^(?)ezek az alakok a képen [te és ő] vagytok
 these the figures the picture.in you_{SG} and he are.2PL
 'these figures in the picture are you_{SG} and he'

The feature conflict that arises when the two conjuncts are ϕ -distinct cannot be resolved in Hungarian when the coordinate subject finds itself in clause-internal position.²⁵ The coordinate structure cannot participate in ϕ -feature agreement, barring it from the post- V_{fin} structural subject position (see (36a), which I constructed based on (36b)), and placement of the coordinate subject in the immediately pre- V_{fin} focus position does not bring a major improvement — (36b) remains 'rather marginal' with coordinated ϕ -distinct pronouns (É. Kiss 2012: 1052). The facts in (35b,b') are thus an integral part of a more general problem arising with ϕ -heterogeneous coordinate subjects in Hungarian, which makes their deviance irrelevant to the analysis of (constituent) negation *per se*.²⁶

The account of (35b,b') given in the previous paragraph rests on the assumption that in these examples [*nem x, hanem y*] is a constituent formed by direct coordination of [*nem x*] and *y*: only then can we link (35b,b') to (36), cases of pronominal coordination. A logical alternative, however, would derive (35b,b') via clausal coordination, with ellipsis in the first conjunct (cf. fn. 19). The reader will recall that Dutch allows a clausal coordination parse for strings of the type in (35b,b'). The example in (30) (repeated here) can *only* be analysed in these terms: DP-level *maar*-coordination would be unable to accommodate the second token of the finite verb (*waren*).

- (30) waarom was niet ik maar waren jullie de winnaar?
 why was not I but were you_{PL} the winner

In the previous discussion, I pointed out that the fact that Dutch allows (30) but English does not (**why was not I but were you the winner?*) falls out from the fact that Dutch [*niet x*] is a NegP with a silent Neg-head that, via agreement, is specified for the ϕ -features of its pronominal complement, and can therefore serve as the subject of a finite clause by itself. For Hungarian, I have argued on the basis of (34a) that [*nem x*] likewise has an empty head and is capable of checking structural Case and ϕ -feature agreement. In light of this, we expect Hungarian to be able to mimic Dutch (30). This expectation is fulfilled — though (35b''), with the finite verbs in front of their pronominal subjects, is impossible, (35b'''), in which the finite verbs follow the pronouns, is by and large okay:

- (35b'') *miért voltam nem én, hanem voltál te a győztes?
 why was.1SG not I but were.2SG you_{SG} the winner
 (35b''') [?]miért nem én voltam, hanem te voltál a győztes?
 why not I was.1SG not I but you_{SG} were.2SG the winner

²⁵ When the subject is a topic, no problem arises: the structural subject position is then filled with a *pro* whose feature content is based on the referent of the coordinate topic. See É. Kiss (2012) for discussion, irrelevant here.

²⁶ That ϕ -heterogeneity is at the root of the problem with (25b,b') is confirmed by the fact that when the two contrastive foci have identical ϕ -features, the result is much better: ^(?)*miért költözött ki nem János, hanem Béla a házból?*, *miért nem János, hanem Béla költözött ki a házból?* '(both) why didn't János but Béla move out of the house?'

The fact that (35b'') is woeful is due to the fact, noted earlier, that many speakers do not like a focused pronominal subject to be placed in post- V_{fin} position. (35b'') aggravates the problem with (35a) because it trespasses against the 'no focus in post- V_{fin} position' rule twice: with *voltam nem én* and again with *voltál te*. So (35b'') is comparatively worse than (35a) because of a cumulativity effect. We can safely set this example aside, therefore: it tells us nothing we did not know already. The grammaticality of (35b'''), by contrast, is interesting confirmation of the conclusion, drawn earlier on the basis of (34a), that [*nem x*] can be the subject of a clause by itself. This is possible thanks to the negation particle *nem* occupying SpecNegP, leaving Neg^0 empty and able to 'adopt' *x*'s ϕ - and Case-features.

At the conclusion of this discussion of Hungarian, let us return to main message emerging from our mini-comparative investigation of constituent-negated subjects. Constituent negation involves a projection of the functional head Neg, and is no different in this respect from sentential negation. Universal Grammar offers the negation particle a choice between two positions: it can occupy either the Neg-head position or SpecNegP. It appears that languages differ on this point. For English, the discussion of sentential negation in section 2 had established that *not* is in Neg^0 (breaking the Agree chain between T and V, and hence giving rise to *do*-support when there is no finite auxiliary). The facts of constituent-negated subjects for English fall neatly into place on the assumption that the negation particle is in Neg^0 in these cases as well. In particular, it correctly follows from this assumption that [*not x*] cannot have ϕ -features or Case and therefore cannot participate in a feature-valuation relationship with finite T. Dutch [*niet x*] and Hungarian [*nem x*], by contrast, CAN be structural subjects because they can control ϕ -feature agreement with the finite verb — thanks to the fact that the silent Neg-head of their NegP is capable of agreeing with the DP in its complement. Correlatively, Dutch and Hungarian differ from English in the realm of sentential negation as well: in neither language does Neg^0 break the Agree chain between T and V because Neg^0 is silent and transparent; the negation particle in these languages is the occupant of SpecNegP.

What emerges from this mini-comparative study is that in each of the three languages investigated the negation particle behaves the same way in sentential and constituent negation constructions. This, it seems to me, gives us a good indication that sentential negation and constituent negation behave syntactically in the same way: in particular, both involve a projection of Neg. What makes sentential negation different from constituent negation is that, in addition to the negation particle in NegP, it also features an abstract negation operator (\neg), with scope over the entire proposition (except illocutionary force): recall (2), repeated here.

- (2) $[_{ForceP} Force [_{TP} \neg [_{TP} Spec [_{T'} T [_{NegP} Spec [_{Neg'} Neg [_{xVP} \dots V \dots]]]]]]]]]$

3.3 Double negation

Sentential negation and constituent negation can combine within a single sentence, as, for instance, in (37):

- (37) a. we can't NOT invite him
 b. we can't invite not Bill but Bob
 c. not Bill but Bob shouldn't be invited

For (37b,c), the syntax is straightforward: *n't* represents the head of the NegP in (2), which takes *xVP* as its complement, and *not* is the head of a NegP that is part of the coordinated object or subject of the sentence. For (37a), a classic case of double negation, the question is

how to fit both the sentential negation (*n't*) and the constituent negation (*NOT*) into the structure.

The NegP hypothesis gives us two logical possibilities, schematised in (38) and (39). (At the end of section 3.4, we will encounter a third possibility, actually attested, for forming double negation constructions.)

(38) [ForceP Force [TP \neg [TP *we* [T' T [NegP Spec=NOT [Neg' Neg=*n't* [_{xVP} ...]]]]]]]]

(39) [ForceP Force [TP \neg [TP *we* [T' T [NegP1 [Neg' Neg1=*n't* [NegP2 [Neg' Neg2=NOT [_{xVP} ...]]]]]]]]]]

In (38), the two negations are both accommodated within a single NegP, with *n't* as the head and *NOT* as the specifier. In (39), each negation particle is structurally represented by a NegP of its own, with the NegP of *NOT* embedded within the NegP of *n't*.²⁷

Apart from the fact that (38) would throw a bit of a wrench into the discussion in sections 2.3 and 3.2 by opening up the possibility of English *not* sitting in SpecNegP, the structure in (38) as an analysis of (37a) also faces what I think is an insuperable empirical problem: the fact that in (37a) it is possible to topicalise the string following *n't* as a constituent:

(40) [NOT invite him], we (definitely) can't

From the perspective of (39), the analysis of (40) is simple and straightforward: NegP2 is the constituent undergoing topicalisation. For (38), on the other hand, (40) is extremely difficult to handle. As things stand, there is in fact no constituent in (38) that contains *NOT* and the VP but not *n't*. We could certainly derive such a constituent by raising Neg=*n't* to T and thereby 'beheading' NegP. But topicalisation of the beheaded NegP would run afoul of a generalisation that otherwise holds robustly for the Germanic languages as a family: headless extended projections of V cannot be displaced. This is particularly clear in the context of Verb Second (which English instantiates to a very limited extent, in root *wh*-questions and Negative Inversion constructions): if it were legitimate to front a headless verb phrase, it should be possible to violate the Verb Second constraint (which says that only a single constituent can precede the finite verb) on a massive scale on the surface, as in (41):

- (41) a. *which girl which book did John give?
 *which girl this book did John give?
 *this girl which book did John give?
 b. *not a single girl not a single book did I give
 *not a single girl this book did I give
 *this girl not a single book did I give

²⁷ In (39), the two NegPs are taken to be embedded directly one inside the other, with the lower NegP taking the entire *xVP* as its complement. It is entirely possible, however, that *xVP* is the complement of Neg1, and Neg2 finds itself somewhere inside *xVP*, taking a smaller portion of the extended projection of the verb as its complement. I have not given this matter sufficient thought at this time to be able to say which of these possibilities is more plausible. The structure in (39) should be taken to abstract away from this matter.

Some or even all of the sentences in (41) would be expected to be grammatical on a derivation in which the beheaded VP (containing both objects but not the verb, which is raised to *v* or higher) is fronted. Since wherever the Verb Second constraint is in effect it is obeyed extremely strictly, opening up the door to topicalisation of a headless extended projection of V would be hazardous. I conclude, therefore, that (38) cannot be the correct analysis for (37a), and that double negation constructions of this type are represented along the lines of (39), with two NegPs, the higher of which is associated with the sentential negation operator \neg .²⁸

Now that we know that (38) is not the right approach to (37a), let us ask whether simultaneous filling of Neg⁰ and SpecNegP might be going on in other cases of double negation, in English or elsewhere. For English (37a') (an example suggested by the editors as a candidate for (38)), placing *never* (clearly a phrase) in SpecNegP and *not* in Neg⁰ in (38) would accommodate all the negation morphology and get the word order right.

(37a') I will never NOT think about you

But the contrastiveness of *not* in this sentence, on a par with (37a), suggests to me that it is not the head of the NegP in the complement of T. I would like to think that (37a') has the same structure as (37a), viz., (39): two NegPs stacked on top of one another, with *never* in the specifier position of the sentential NegP and *not* in the head of the constituent-NegP. Confirmation of an analysis of this sentence based on (39) comes from the fact that, as in (40), topicalisation of the substring *not think about you* succeeds (as long as *never* is placed to the left rather than to the right of *will*; this is a general property of VP-topicalisation in *never*-negated sentences: *kiss you, I never will/*will never*).

(40') [NOT think about you], I never will

²⁸ It is customary to say that in double negation constructions such as (37a), the two negations 'cancel each other out' so that we get a positive statement. It is true that (37a) is semantically equivalent to *we must invite him*. But this interpretation is not the result of simply 'scratching the negations off one against the other' (such would have resulted in *we can invite him*, which is not equivalent to (37a)). Moreover, and more importantly, there is reason to believe that the sentential negation operator \neg is present in the syntax of (37a): *we can't not invite anyone* is grammatical; the *any*-NPI depends for its licensing here on \neg . Baker's (1970) seminal discussion of the distribution of negative and positive polarity items (the latter called 'affirmative polarity items' by Baker) in double-negation constructions attributes a key role in the licensing of these items to entailment. (In this connection, see also Den Dikken & Giannakidou's 2002 discussion of the licensing of the polar expression *wh-the-hell* in **I know who the hell stole my bike* versus *NOW I know who the hell stole my bike*.) Thus, the fact that *there isn't anyone here who wouldn't rather be in Montpellier* entails *everyone here would rather be in Montpellier* allows the PPI *would rather* to be used in the embedded clause in the former sentence. Likewise, the fact that Jackendoff's (1969) *nobody didn't see anyone* and *nobody didn't see someone* can both be understood as the negation of *somebody didn't see anyone* allows the NPI *anyone* and the PPI *someone* to be used interchangeably in this double-negation context. This is an important insight, as is the observation (which falls out from the entailment-based approach) that **there isn't anyone here who wouldn't rather do anything downtown* is ungrammatical: the licensing of the PPI (*would*) *rather* in the subordinate clause pre-empts the licensing of *anything* in that same clause. It is important to note, however, that while positive entailment is apparently sufficient for the licensing of PPIs under double negation, it does not spoil the licensing of NPIs in the same environment (as Jackendoff's *nobody didn't see anyone* and my earlier *we can't not invite anyone* show). It is not my objective in this paper to delve into the syntax, semantics and pragmatics of double negation in any detail: the purpose of the text discussion is merely to establish (39) as the structure for (37a). For a more recent discussion of positive and negative polarity items, I refer the interested reader to Szabolcsi (2004).

- (46) a. he has (already) finished
 b. he has not (*already) finished he hasn't (*already) finished
 c. he has not already finished but given up he hasn't already finished but given up

In the c-examples we find contrastive constituent negation. Each of the conjuncts linked by *but* can be modified by *rather/far/already*, which indicates that \neg is not present in the structure. It is possible, therefore, for the single negation of a clause to be constituent negation.

The negative particle *not* in (44–6c) is in its familiar position: the head of NegP, taking the extended projection of the predicate (the primary predicate of the copular clause) as its complement. There is no structural difference, therefore, between the NegP of (44–6b) (linked to \neg) and the NegP of (44–6c). The NegP is in the same structural spot in both examples, and so is *not*. This is supported by the fact that in (44–6c), just as in (44–6b), it is possible to contract *not* onto the finite verb to form *isn't* or *hasn't* (see the right-hand examples). Realisation of the negation particle as *n't* and concomitant amalgamation of it and the finite verb is not the prerogative of sentential negation: constituent negation can do this, too (recall also fn. 13). We see this not just in copular sentences or constructions with an auxiliary, but also in clauses with a lexical main verb. The latter give rise to *do*-support, both with sentential-negation *not/n't* and with constituent-negation *not/n't*, as seen in (47).²⁹

- (47) a. he did not go out he didn't go out
 b. he did not go out but come in he didn't go out but come in

At first blush, a worrying property of the left-hand examples in (44–6c) and (47b) is that the string *not*+Pred cannot be fronted: from (48a) we cannot get to (48b), and from (49a) we cannot derive (49b) (with focus fronting and concomitant subject–aux inversion).³⁰

- (48) a. he is not rather handsome but rather smart
 b. *not rather handsome is he but rather smart

²⁹ The observations in this section about sentential and constituent negation of the main predicate of the clause carry over to metalinguistic negation (Horn 1985, 1989), seen in sentences such as those in (i) (involving pronunciation corrections; re: (ic), see <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/08/13/trump-world-knowledge-diplomatic-774801>) and (ii). The former examples highlight contraction and *do*-support; (iia,b) show that NPIs are not licensed by metalinguistic negation, and PPIs are not blocked by them. (iic) is an interesting case, its syntax probably akin to Hungarian (48), below.

- (i) a. no, he did not/didn't call the POLice; he called the poLICE
 b. no, Mr President, I do not/don't oppose nuclear weapons; I oppose nuclear weapons
 c. no, Mr President, this country between India and China is not/isn't called Nipple; it is called Nepal
 (ii) a. no, he didn't eat SOME of the cake; he ate ALL of it
 b. *no, he didn't eat ANY of the cake; he ate QUITE A LOT of it
 c. no, he didn't not eat ANY of the cake; he ate QUITE A LOT of it

³⁰ In English, fronting of a negative constituent that is contrastively focused must give rise to subject–aux inversion (Negative Inversion):

- (i) a. he talked not to Mary but to Sue
 b. not to Mary did he talk but to Sue
 (ii) a. he read not just one book but two
 b. not just one book did he read but two

- (49) a. he did not go out but come in
 b. *not go out did he but come in

It is important to realise, however, that the problem with (48b) and (49b) is not due to constituent negation. For reasons that are obscure to me, English VP fronting in general is not compatible with a focus reading for the VP — irrespective of whether the VP is itself focused (as in (50)) or the locus of ‘focus projection’ from a subconstituent of the VP (as in (51); cf. *he has only read x, not y*), and regardless of whether subject–aux inversion applies or not.

- (50) a. he is reading a book, not watching a movie
 b. *reading a book {he is/is he}, not watching a movie
 (51) a. he has read *War and Peace*, not *Sense and Sensibility*
 b. *read *War and Peace* {he has/has he}, not *Sense and Sensibility*

When the VP is not the locus of contrastive focus but a contrastive topic instead, as in (52a), VP fronting delivers a grammatical output, shown in (52b).

- (52) a. he did not go out; he did come in
 b. go out, he did not; come in, he did
 c. *not go out, he did; come in, he did
 d. not go out, he didn't

In (52a), *not* is sentential negation, hence in a dependency with \neg . Fronting sentential *not* along with the VP would be entirely impossible: (52c). The ungrammaticality of (52c) can be blamed straightforwardly on the fact that the dependent (*not*) is being moved outside the c-command domain of the operator (compare **pictures of t_i, who_i would you give (to) your friends?* with *who would you give pictures of to your friends?* and ?*pictures of Mary, who would you give (to)?*). When the *not* that is included in the topic is a constituent negation and sentential negation is added in the matrix clause, the result (with double negation) is grammatical again, as (52d) (analogous to (40)) shows.³¹

So it is in fact possible to front a constituent negation attached to VP, as in (52d) and (40), cases of double negation. But for reasons independent of negation which indicate that there is something wrong with focus fronting of VP (at least, in English), attempts at fronting *not*+VP in constructions in which there is just a single negative particle that serves as a constituent-negator of the VP always fail. Nonetheless, we can be sure from the facts reviewed in (42)–(46) that the single negation of a finite clause can be a constituent negation — i.e., that the single *not* of a finite clause does not necessarily need to be linked to the abstract negative operator \neg .

It is possible in Hungarian as well to construe the single negation particle of a finite clause as constituent negation rather than sentential negation. In fact, Hungarian perhaps allows us to make this point more directly and efficiently than does English because of a syntactic

³¹ We know independently that negative constituents can in principle undergo either topicalisation or focus fronting. Classic pairs such as the following (Klima 1964) are clear evidence to this effect: in (ia), *with no clothes* is a topic (‘if she had no clothes on, she would look attractive’); in (ib), it is a focus (and concomitantly its fronting triggers subject–aux inversion; ‘there are no clothes that could make her look attractive’).

(i) a. with no clothes, she would look attractive
 b. with no clothes would she look attractive

property that clearly distinguishes sentential negation from constituent negation: preverb–verb inversion.

In a sentential negation construction in Hungarian, whenever the verb has a preverb (aka verbal modifier) associated to it, this element must show up to the right of the finite verb. Compare positive (53a) to negative (53b):

- (53) a. János kiment
János PV.ment
'János went out'
b. János nem ment ki
János not went PV
'János did not go out'
b'. *János nem kiment
János not PV.went

However, the string *János nem kiment* in (53b'), while ungrammatical in isolation, is perfectly good in a situation in which going out is contrasted to coming in:³²

- (54) János nem kiment, hanem bejött
János not PV.went but PV.came
'János did not go out but came in'

In the example in (54), the single negation particle *nem* is a constituent negation. Preverb–verb inversion does not take place because this inversion is a function of the presence in the structure of the negation operator \neg , and in constituent-negation constructions \neg is not included in the structure.

That (54) is a case of constituent negation is clear not just from the absence of preverb–verb inversion: the distribution of *n*-words and positive polarity items confirms this as well. Consider first the examples in (55) and (56), the latter from Laczkó (2015a: 175). While in the presence of preverb–verb inversion and \neg the use of an *n*-word (*sehonnan*) is required (55a), in (55b) and (56) we see that *n*-words are explicitly excluded.

- (55) a. János nem ment ki sehonnan
János not went PV *n*-word.from
'János did not go out from anyplace'
b. János nem kiment valahonnan/*sehonnan, hanem bejött
János not PV.went somewhere.from/*n*-word.from but PV.came
'János did not go out from someplace but came in'

³² In fact, in (54), not performing preverb–verb inversion is the only option: (i) is ungrammatical. But as the editors point out, the example in (ii) 'seems pretty good'. Here contrast targets the VP, whereas for (54)–(i) one could perhaps argue that contrast is confined to the preverb (*ki* versus *be*), with the verb 'flipping' from *ment* to *jött* as a function thereof ('go' and 'come', in English as well as Hungarian, are essentially identical plain motion verbs, differing only with respect to orientation *vis-à-vis* the speaker).

- (i) *János nem ment ki, hanem bejött
János not went PV but PV.came
(ii) János nem kelt fel, hanem (inkább) vissza-feküdt
János not woke up but rather back-lay
'János didn't get up; rather, he went back to bed'

If TP were merged outside the NegP of constituent negation (as in (60)³³), this would confront the grammar with non-trivial locality problems concerning (a) the relationship between \neg and the NegP of stressed *NEM* and (b) the licensing of the *n*-word (*senkit*). By organising the structure as in (59), these locality problems are straightforwardly averted.

(60) *_{[TP} \neg _{[TP} *János* _{[T'} T _{[NegP1} *nem*_{CN} _{[Neg'} Neg1 \emptyset _{[NegP2} *NEM*_{SN} _{[Neg'} Neg2 \emptyset +V_{fin}=*lát*
_[χ VP ...]

What is particularly remarkable about (58) is that it contains both two sentential negations and a constituent negation, and that the constituent negation is the highest negation in the structure, taking a very large complement. The TP in the complement of constituent negation harbours the abstract negation operator, \neg , which takes *NEM* in NegP2 (the complement of T) as its dependent; NegP1, the home for constituent negation, is the highest negation in the structure but not in the scope of \neg .

The answer to the question raised in the title of this subsection is thus clear: it is possible for the highest negation particle of a finite clause to be a constituent negation; there is no requirement that a NegP in the extended projection of the main predicate of a clause be construed with the abstract sentential negation operator \neg .

4 Concluding remarks

In this paper, I have argued that both constituent negation and sentential negation involve a projection of the functional head Neg, and that for both constituent negation and sentential negation Universal Grammar makes two possible positions available for the negation particle: the Neg-head position or SpecNegP. If what I have argued in sections 2 and 3 is correct, languages differ in the choice they make regarding the position of the negation particle — but for the very small set of three languages examined in this note (English, Dutch and Hungarian),³⁴ it appears that the choice is made uniformly for constituent and sentential negation. English places its negation particle *not* in Neg⁰, causing *do*-support at the sentential level and ruling out constituent-negated subjects of finite clauses. Dutch and Hungarian, by contrast, treat their negation particles uniformly as occupants of SpecNegP.

Sentential negation is different from constituent negation in that it features an abstract negation operator (\neg), with scope over the entire proposition (except illocutionary force). But \neg aside, it appears that sentential negation and constituent negation are syntactically and morphologically very much the same creatures: they are both represented by the same negation particle, and they both involve a projection of Neg.

³³ Now that I have reached 60 myself (in example numbers, not years spent on Earth), this is a good moment to congratulate Tibor Laczkó, for whom this paper was written and to whom the special volume of which this paper is a part is dedicated, on the occasion of his 60th birthday. Many happy returns, Tibor!

³⁴ This sample is obviously not representative. In fn. 9 I did mention French as a possible candidate for overt occupancy of Neg⁰, but since *ne* (the candidate for filling Neg⁰) does not occur in constituent negation, it is unhelpful in the quest for more languages behaving like English. Time constraints and lack of expertise on negation beyond the three languages included have prevented me from trying to broaden the sample of languages.

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