Analyses and history of English sentential negation

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1. Introduction: the NegP hypothesis (origin. Pollock (1989))

(1) a. Charles [I[t] [vp never knows]].
   b. *Charles [I[t] [NegP not knows]].

(2) Charles [I does] [NegP not know]. (obligatory do) (No affix lowering)

(3) HMC (Head Movement Constraint): Movement of a head X is restricted to the position of a head Y with no other head Z intervening. (origin. Travis (1984); Rizzi (1990))

(4) *Charles [I knows ] [NegP not t]. (No main V raising in present-day English)

2. Analyses of Not

2.1. Not is a head

(5) Pollock (1989):

(6) Johnson (1990):

(7) Ouhalla (1990):

(8) Iatridou (1990):

(9) Laka (1994):
(10) Zanuttini (1991):

```
AgrP
   Agr
   NegP-1 (sentential)
     Neg
     TP
     -n’t/not
     T
     NegP-2
     Neg
     VP
```


```
Agr,P
   Agr,
   NegP
     Neg
     TP
     not
     T
     Agr,P
     VP
```

(12) Pollock (1997):

```
M(ood)P
   M
   NegP
     Neg
     TP
     not
     T
     AgrP
     VP
```

(13) Cinque (1999):

```
TP
   T
   NegP
     Neg
     TP
     Asp
     Asp
     Asp prog P
     not
     T
     AgrP
     VP
     Voice
     VP
```

2.2. Not is a specifier

(14) Rizzi (1990):

```
AgrP
   Agr
   TP
   NegP
     T
     VP
     not
     T
     VP
```

(15) Belletti (1990); Rizzi (1996):

```
AgrP
   Agr
   NegP
     Spec
     Neg'
     not
     T
     VP
     Spec
     Neg'
     not
     [NE]
     M(odal)P
     M
     V
```

(16) Ernst (1992):

```
TP
   T
   VP
   AdvP
   V'
   not
   V[+AUX]
   VP
```

(17) Nomura (2003):

```
Ø
   T
   VP
   Spec
   Neg'
   not
   TP
```

(18) Roberts (1992); Haegeman (1995):

(19) Ernst (2002):

(20) Radford (2004):

(21) Zeijlstra (2004):

2.3. Neither: Not is an adverb

(22) C.L. Baker (1991):

(23) Kim (2000):

a. 

b. 

not

3. Discussion of Not on the basis of English subjunctives

(25) VPE Licensing Condition: An elided VP must be the complement of a morphologically realized head. (origin. Lobeck (1995))

(26) a. I’ll try the guacamole ice cream if I must φ.

b. A baby llama will go anywhere its mother has φ.

(27) John didn’t leave but Mary did φ.

*φ.

(28) a. Mary wants to go to the fashion show but her husband might not φ.

b. Some of the guests tried the appetizers but most did not φ.

Before concluding that not is a head, let’s examine English subjunctive clauses with an empty I:

(29) I asked that he [i φ] not take the medicine.

3.1. NegP in English subjunctives: Potsdam (1996; 1997)

(30) a. *Kim needn’t be there but it is imperative that the other organizers absolutely φ.

b. *Ted didn’t want to vacation in Hawaii but his agent suggested that he φ.

definitely φ.

c. *We think that Sam should present her case to the committee and we ask that Bill certainly φ too.

(31) a. Kim needs to be there but it is better that the other organizers never φ.

b. Ted hoped to vacation in Liberia but his agent recommended that he not φ.

*never φ.

c. We think that Sam should present her case to the committee but we will ask that Bill not φ.

*never φ.
3.2. **Not is an adverb in English subjunctives, too:** Murakami (1998; 2002; 2007)

**HMC (3):**

(33) Diana [i was] not [v t] happy.

*Cf.* Lasnik (1999: 108): “The first … possibility … is that Neg and V are heads of different sorts (A' vs. A) and that relativized minimality is even more relativized than in the original proposal of Rizzi (1990). If a head only blocks movement of a head of the same type, Neg would then not block movement of V. The second possibility is that Neg is not a head, but a modifier.” (We adopt the latter possibility.)

**I-to-C movement:**

(34) [c Could not] the President [i t] ratify the treaty?

the strict adjacency of not to do

(35) a. Rich people often do not contribute to charity.
b. Rich people do not often contribute to charity.
d. Rich people will often not contribute to charity.

the strict adjacency of not to to

(36) a. John told Mary not to take the medicine often.
b. ?John told Mary to not take the medicine often.
c. ??John told Mary not to often take the medicine.
d. ??John told Mary often to not take the medicine.
e. *John told Mary not often to take the medicine.
f. *John told Mary to often not take the medicine.


a. finite/subjective: IP

```
  ┌─ IP
  │   └─ I'
  │       └─ VP
  │           └─ Adv
  │               └─ not

  ┌─ I
  │   └─ Adv
```

b. infinitive: IP

```
  ┌─ IP
  │   └─ I'
  │       └─ VP
  │           └─ Adv
  │               └─ not
  │                   └─ to
  └─ not
```
There are two layers of the head I in structure (37a). In the subjunctive, the lower I is invisible, but the upper I (circled), namely the lower I plus *not*, is visible and overt because of the existence of *not*. This means that the complex I is partially filled, and the partial fulfillment is sufficient for this head to be seen as morphologically realized in the subjunctive context, thereby satisfying the VPE Licensing Condition in (25), and also its final version:

(38) VPE Licensing Condition (final version): An elided VP must be c-commanded by an overt, non-affixal, inflectional head within the same s-projection.*

*Potsdam (1998: 74-75): “The s(emantic)-projection of a head, … is an extended path along which the head’s descriptive content is passed on. That is, in the typical case it will be a c(ategory)-projection plus any functional c-projections that dominate it. The maximal c[sic]-projection of V⁰ is CP, that of I⁰, CP as well.”

(39) The case for *never*:

*Ted hoped to vacation in Liberia but his agent recommended that he *never* φ.

(Never has to be either one of the two; neither can become part of I.)

4. The historical development of *Not*

4.1. The negative cycle: Jespersen (1917)

(40) i. Negation is expressed by one negative marker.
   
   ii. The negative marker is combined with a negative adverb or noun phrase.

   iii. The second element in Stage (ii) takes on the function of expressing negation by itself; the original negative marker becomes optional.

   iv. The original negative marker becomes extinct.

(41) i. *He ne andwyrdre ðam wife æt fruman* (ÆCHom II, 8.68.45)
   
   he not answered the woman at first

   ii. *Ne sæde na ure Drihten ðæt he mid cynehelme oððe …* (ÆLS (Martin) 762)
   
   not said not our Lord that he with diadem or

   iii. *Yet ne wolde he nat answare sodeynly* (Chaucer Melibee 1032/2222)
   
   yet not wanted he not answer suddenly

   iv. *Thou attend’st not.* (Shakespeare The Tempest I.ii.87)
4.2 Explanation in the format of NegP: van Kemenade (1998); Fischer et al. (2000)

\[(42)\]
\[
\text{NegP} \rightarrow \text{Spec} \rightarrow \text{Neg'}
\]
\[
\text{na} \rightarrow \text{Neg} \rightarrow \text{ne}
\]

\[i.\] *ne* becomes a proclitic on *V* when *V* has moved up to *Neg*, to form the complex *ne*+*V*

\[ii.\] *na* appears in the specifier of NegP

\[iii.\] *na* is spelled like *noht*, *nauht*, etc. in ME, and *ne* gradually becomes optional

\[iv.\] *ne* completely disappears and *not* (origin. *na*) shifts from spec to head of NegP

4.3 Explanation without NegP: Murakami (2002)

\[(43)\]
\[
\text{I'} \rightarrow \text{I} \rightarrow \text{Adv} \rightarrow \text{V} \rightarrow \text{VP}
\]

\[i.\] *ne* is a proclitic on *V* from the beginning, and the complex raises together

\[ii.\] *na* arises as a post-adverb of *I*

\[iii.\] *na* is spelled like *noht*, *nauht*, etc. in ME, and *ne* gradually becomes optional

\[iv.\] *ne* becomes extinct

\[(44)\]
\[
\text{CP} \rightarrow \text{C} \rightarrow \text{IP} \rightarrow \text{I'} \rightarrow \text{I} \rightarrow \text{Adv} \rightarrow \text{V} \rightarrow \text{VP} \rightarrow \text{DP}
\]

\[41 ii.\] *Ne sæde* *na* ure Drehten

\[31 iii.\] Yet *ne* wolde *he* *t* *nat* *t*

4.4. The “I not say” word order

Nakao & Koma (1990): (45) a. *Ic ne sece* OE Stage (i)

b. *I ne seye not* EME – 15c Stages (ii) (iii)

c. *I say not* end of 14c – EModE Stage (iv)

d. *I not say* 15c – EModE

e. *I do not say* 16c – end of 17c established, after *V* no longer raises

*Cf. Iyeiri (2005: §6): “[T]he ‘not + finite verb’ form of negation goes back to the Old and Middle English periods, although it is often regarded as typical of early Modern English. … It arises from ‘not ne + finite verb’ with the obliteration of the adverb *ne*. The process is the same as the occurrence of ‘finite verb + not’ from ‘ne + finite verb + not’.”*
OE:  (46)  … and he wurde gesælig gif he *na ne syngode* (ÆSuppleHom 11/94)
ME:  (47) a.  Vp she stirte and *nouth ne sat* (Havelok 567)
     b.  that ye *not mysdoo* (Reynand the Fox 108/19)
     c.  I may noght wel ne *noght ne schal*
         Of veine gloire excuse me (Confessio Amantis 110/2722-3)
     d.  And if that he *noght may*, par aventure (The Shipman’s Tale 15)
     e.  Whan Troyens dede this trespass, Menelaus at home *not was*
         (ca. 1400, Laud Troy Book 3092)
EModE: (48)  … she *not denies it* (Shakespeare Much Ado about Nothing 1836)

Murakami (2009): In the “I not say” construction, *not* may premodify *I*, just as in the infinitival word order *not to*.

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(49)     CP
       /   \
      C     IP
       /   \
      DP     I'
       /     \
      I      \\
          \\
       Adv   I           VP
        /     \
       V

(46)  gif  he  na  ne syngode
(47) a.          …  nouth  ne sat
     b.  that ye  not  mysdoo
     c.  I …  noght  ne schal
     d.  if that he  noght  may
     e.  Menelaus at home  not  was
(48)  she  not  denies  it
```

5.  Conclusion

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(50) a.     XP      b.  X'      c.  X'
          Adv   XP    Adv   X'    Adv  X
                   Spec  X'          X  Adv  X  Adv
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In this argumentation, English sentential negation illustrates (50c).
References


English Literature, English Number 43: 94-104.


Nakao, Toshio and Osamu Koma (1992) Rekishi-tekki ni Saguru Gendai no Ei-bunpo [Contemporary English Grammar through a Historical Perspective], Taishukan Shoten, Tokyo.


