An Optimality-Theoretic Syntactic Typology of Negation in Three Sign Languages

Kadir Gökgöz and Ronnie B. Wilbur
kgokgoz@purdue.edu, wilbur@purdue.edu

Morphosyntactic Grouping for Negation

- Morphological V-to-Neg movement
  - DGS
- Hybrid V-to-Neg movement and c-command spread
  - TID
- Syntactic C-command spread
  - ASL and HZJ

Proposed Modular Model

- Syntax Driven Input
- Pragmatics, discourse context
- CMIS
  - Discourse dependent ranking of information structure

TID Data and Tableaux

(1) Data for TID

Tableau 1: Syntactic Constraints for TID

Tableau 2: Constraints for Mapping to Information Structure “Neutral” for TID

(2) Data for ASL and HZJ

Tableau 3: Syntactic Constraints for ASL and HZJ

Tableau 4: Constraints for Mapping to Information Structure “Neutral” for ASL and HZJ

Tableau 5: Constraints for Mapping to Information Structure “Signer Evaluation of Proposition” for ASL and HZJ

Additional support for analysis of TID in C above: neg in yes/no Qs has a positive epistemic implicature due to [V+N]-to-C movement

Context: You expect that the student is doing his homework. So, you have a “bias” towards the positive answer. You want your addressee to say that “Yes, (of course) the student is doing his homework.”

Summary

A: Language grouping based on availability of syntactic movement. DGS has movement due to affixal nature of [+neg]. ASL and HZJ have c-command spreading due to syntactic nature of [+neg]. TID displays a hybrid system with both movement and c-command spreading available.

B: Syntactic evaluation of candidates occurs independently. Input to information structure constraints (CMIS) can result from syntax as well as pragmatics and discourse context.

C: Since there is V-to-Neg movement in TID, OB-HD dominates STAY. Only one CMIS Tableau is found so far. There might be other CMIS tableaux for this language.

D: Since there is no V-to-Neg movement in ASL and HZJ, STAY dominates OB-HD. There are two CMIS tableaux. Cases of neg-doubling and SVON order require further research.

E: Since movement is available for TID, a positive epistemic implicature arises with the higher position of negation. ASL and HZJ do not have this since movement is not available.

Selected references