

REMARK

Every Kid Doesn't Speak English*

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Abstract: This paper provides arguments based on Czech, Polish, Russian, and Serbo-Croatian that distributive universal subjects of negated sentences allow the surface scope interpretation on the order SUBJECT > NEGATION, contrary to Zeijlstra 2004. This observation agrees with theories of negative concord that take negative concord items as universal quantifiers taking scope above sentential negation. The arguments are based on available scope interpretations and correlations between word order and scope.

1. Introduction

A central problem in the theory of negative concord (NC) is the mechanism of licensing of NC items and their quantificational meaning. In his influential dissertation, Zeijlstra (2004) develops a syntax/semantics interface theory of negation and NC, which also aims to capture a number of typological generalizations on negation-related phenomena. One of these generalizations concerns the available readings of negated sentences with universal subjects on the surface order SUBJECT > NEGATION. According to Zeijlstra, the inverse reading can reasonably be expected in all NC languages:

The set of NC languages is a strict subset of the set of languages in which constructions in which an \forall -subject precedes

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Abbreviations are as follows: NC—negative concord; ZG—Zeijlstra's generalization; ZP—Zeijlstra's principle.

the negative marker can be assigned a reverse interpretation (with respect to the subject and the negation). (Zeijlstra 2004: 148)¹

Zeijlstra uses this generalization (henceforth, ZG), along with other considerations, to support the theory of NC, where the sentential negation operator must take scope over NC items that are non-quantificational indefinites.

Consider one of Zeijlstra's examples, the Standard English in (1). Example (1) has been reported to be marginal and ambiguous between the high (surface) and low (inverse) scope reading of the universally quantified subject:

- (1) ?Everybody doesn't show up.
- a. $\forall > \text{NEG}$: 'Nobody shows up.' surface scope reading
 - b. $\text{NEG} > \forall$: 'Not everybody shows up.' inverse scope reading

According to ZG, all NC languages allow the reading in (1b). Zeijlstra's explanation is that a universal subject cannot take scope above negation in NC languages:

[T]he central argument will be that negation blocks movement of the universal quantifier to a higher position than the negative operator. Only if the universal quantifier is base-generated in a higher position than the negative operator the $\forall > \neg$ interpretation is possible, otherwise not. (Zeijlstra 2004: 77)

[I]n NC languages, given the presence of a functional category NegP, which hosts the negative operator Op_{NEG} in its spec position, the \forall -subject **can never scope over negation** (*emphasis added*). In non-NC languages, a derivation where a universal

¹ Elsewhere in Zeijlstra 2004 stronger versions of this generalization are found:

Every NC language (i.e., every language that has NegP) has an inverse reading of clauses in which an \forall -subject precedes the negative marker. Only in some non-NC languages this reading is also available. (p. 184)

...NC languages allow for inverse readings only in clauses in which an \forall -subject precedes negation. (p. 188)

subject quantifier is base-generated in a higher position than Op_{NEG} is allowed... (Zeijlstra 2004: 188–89)

For brevity, I will refer to the gist of the quotations above as Zeijlstra's Principle, or ZP.

ZP: In NC languages, the universal subject of a negated sentence can never take scope above negation on the surface word order
SUBJECT > NEGATION.

The ZP has direct consequences for theories of NC and for this reason it deserves our careful attention.² If universal quantifiers cannot take

² Zeijlstra's account of his principle is based on two premises. First, according to Beghelli and Stowell 1997, universal quantifiers may not always be able to achieve high scope over negation by movement (for Zeijlstra, this is a stronger conclusion—universal subjects are not allowed to achieve a higher scope across negation by movement). Thus, if at some point in the derivation the structure [Op_{NEG} ... [\forall_{SUBJ} ...]] obtains, the universal subject may be unable to take wide scope because it would have to move across negation. Second, according to Zeijlstra, in languages that have NegP (and all NC languages do), NegP dominates vP . Thus, at some point in the derivation the (partial) structure [$NegP$ Op_{NEG} ... [vP \forall_{SUBJ} ...]] is built, which traps the universal subject in the scope of the negative operator.

Beghelli and Stowell (1997) note two situations where the distributive universal survives the move across negation: (a) where focus interpretation is involved, and (b) where there is an existential that the universal has scope over, as in their examples in (i).

- (i) ??Every boy didn't leave. vs. Every boy didn't read one book.

I touch upon the influence of intonation on the scope interpretation of quantifiers in this remark only briefly. The contrast in (i) does not hold for those Russian speakers who find the sentences with the universal quantifiers preceding negation interpretable (my own judgment included). Example (ii) is not significantly better than (iii).

- (ii) ??Každyj mal'čik ne pročital odnu knigu. Russian
 every boy NEG read one book
 'Every boy didn't read one book.'
- (iii) ??Každyj mal'čik ne govorit po-anglijski. Russian
 every boy NEG speaks on-English
 'Every boy does not speak English.'

Surprisingly, (ii) improved for some speakers on the reading compatible with the wide scope of the existential—the same book for all the boys, say, *War and Peace*; an unexpected outcome from Beghelli and Stowell's (1997) perspective.

scope above negation in NC languages, then NC items cannot be analyzed as universals having scope above negation. As a consequence, proposals to treat NC items as universals scoping above negation, such as Giannakidou's (2000a, 2000b) and Abels's (2002) treatment of Russian NC items, may come to be seen as untenable.

This paper presents evidence that conflicts with ZP using the same languages Zeijlstra discusses—Czech, Polish, Russian, and Serbo-Croatian. All four languages are strict NC languages in the sense of Giannakidou 1998. NC items in these languages require the presence of the sentential negation morpheme, regardless of whether they are arguments or adjuncts, pre-verbal or post-verbal. First, contrary to ZP, the surface reading is available for the distributive universal quantifiers in Czech, Russian, Polish, and Serbo-Croatian. Second, Czech and Serbo-Croatian exhibit word order and scope correlations that are difficult to explain if the universal subject is banned from moving across negation.

The argument presented in this paper agrees with treatment of NC items as universals having scope above negation by showing that distributive universal quantifiers can be interpreted with wide scope over negation in four NC languages. First, the paper discusses evidence concerning the scope interpretation of sentences with universally quantified subjects that precede the negative morpheme on the surface. The discussion is limited to subjects with distributive universal quantifiers (henceforth, universal subjects) and shows that the inverse scope reading is available and preferred in Czech and for some speakers of Serbo-Croatian, but not for the Russian and Polish speakers in this study. The surface reading, in contrast, is available to some speakers of all four languages. Thus, all four languages violate ZP. Next, I present evidence of scope ambiguity and correlations between word order and scope in Czech and for some speakers of Serbo-Croatian that are better captured if derivations where universal subjects move to their scope positions across sentential negation are allowed.

2. Universal Subjects of Negated Sentences in Four Slavic Languages: Experimental Data

This section presents data on the interpretation of universal subjects of negated sentences in Czech, Polish, Russian, and Serbo-Croatian. Sentence (2), with a universal subject and sentential negation on the surface order UNIVERSAL SUBJECT > NEGATION, was presented to three to

six native speakers of each of the four languages, followed by brief descriptions of the two situations in (3).³ The speakers were asked which of the two situations provided the right context for this sentence.

(2) Every kid does not speak English.

(3) **Situation 1** (forcing $\forall > \text{NEG}$ interpretation): you are saying that each kid is such that he does not speak English (as in, *Each/every kid does not speak English so we had to hire an interpreter*).

Situation 2 (forcing $\text{NEG} > \forall$ interpretation): you are saying that only some, not all kids speak English (as in, *Each/every kid does not speak English because some of them have only German in school*).

The speakers were initially asked to judge and interpret the sentence on neutral intonation. Next, they were asked to consider the sentence with stress on the negated verb or on the quantifier and see if their judgment changed. For all the speakers of all four languages, the sentence was marginal, but for most of them it was still interpretable.

The sentence appears to be less marginal for the Czech speakers. As for available readings, for two out of three of my Czech informants, the sentence was ambiguous between the surface and the inverse scope interpretation. This is in agreement with the conclusion in Rechzieglová's (1995) detailed treatment of Czech negation and references cited there, which is that despite a clear tendency for inverse scope interpretation, the surface scope interpretation is also available, especially in spoken Czech. The two readings can be brought out by intonation, as was the case for German and English in Büring 1997 and references cited there. In Czech, stress on *každé* 'every' makes the wide scope reading of the subject the only one available, whereas stress on the negated verb brings out the narrow scope interpretation of the subject. Thus, Czech allows the inverse reading, which is in agreement with ZG, but it also allows the surface reading, which runs contrary to ZP.

The other languages discussed here very clearly differ from Czech with respect to ZG. Half of the speakers of Polish and Russian and two speakers of Serbo-Croatian completely rejected the possibility of low

³ The eighteen speakers came from a variety of backgrounds. Most were academics of language-related disciplines; others were students and professional acquaintances.

scope interpretation of the universal subject on any intonation. The other speakers only marginally accepted the possibility of a low-scope-like metalinguistic interpretation. For them, this interpretation becomes possible with stress on the negated verb or on 'every' or on both the negated verb and 'every' combined with a pause after 'every kid'. Crucially, all of these speakers agree that even when the sentence is pronounced with the required intonation, the low-scope-like interpretation is not available unless the positive statement 'Every kid speaks English' occurs in the preceding discourse.

In contrast, the surface scope reading, which ZP rules out, was available for the majority of speakers. The judgments for speakers who found the sentence degraded but still interpretable are presented in (4–7). They are consistent among the speakers of Czech, Russian, and Polish; there was variation among the Serbo-Croatian speakers. One Serbo-Croatian speaker allows the inverse scope interpretation only, which is consistent with ZP. For two more speakers, only the surface interpretation was possible, which goes against ZP. Finally, both the surface and the inverse scope interpretations are possible for one speaker, which violates ZP. All four languages are strict NC languages, and it is not difficult to find native speakers who allow for the surface scope interpretation of universal subjects of negated sentences. Thus, NC and the possibility of assigning the surface interpretation to a negated sentence with a universal subject on the order UNIVERSAL SUBJECT > NEGATION can very well coexist within the same mental grammar. The notation ZP: * appears next to judgments that are inconsistent with ZP; where the judgment is consistent with ZP, the notation ZP: √ appears.

- (4) Každé dítě nemluví anglicky. Czech (interpretable
 every kid not-speaks English for all 3 speakers)
 'Every kid doesn't speak English.'
- 2 speakers:
 ∀ > NEG: available but degraded ZP: *
 NEG > ∀: available and preferred
- 1 speaker:
 ∀ > NEG: not available ZP: √
 NEG > ∀: available

- (5) ??Svaki dečak ne govori engleski. Serbo-Croatian
 every kid not speaks English (interpretable for 5 out
 'Every kid does not speak English.' of 6 speakers⁴)
- 2 speakers:
 $\forall > \text{NEG}$: available ZP: *
 $\text{NEG} > \forall$: not available
- 1 speaker:
 $\forall > \text{NEG}$: available ZP: *
 $\text{NEG} > \forall$: available
- 1 speaker:
 $\forall > \text{NEG}$: not available ZP: \checkmark
 $\text{NEG} > \forall$: available
- (6) ??Každe dziecko nie mówi po angielsku. Polish
 each kid not speaks on English (interpretable for 2
 'Each kid does not speak English' out of 4 speakers)
- $\forall > \text{NEG}$: available ZP: *
 $\text{NEG} > \forall$: not available
- (7) ??Každyj rebënok ne govorit po-anglijski. Russian
 every kid not speaks on-English (interpretable for 5
 'Every kid does not speak English.' out of 6 speakers)
- $\forall > \text{NEG}$: available ZP: *
 $\text{NEG} > \forall$: not available

Observe that the pattern of available meanings is predominantly inconsistent with ZP (ZP*). The surface scope reading is available for some speakers of each language and is, moreover the only one available for Polish and Russian speakers. Out of fifteen speakers of the four languages in this study who found the sentence interpretable, only two speakers of two languages (one speaker of Serbo-Croatian and one speaker of Czech) had judgments that are consistent with ZP: only the inverse scope reading for examples (4) and (5).

⁴ One Serbo-Croatian speaker allowed only the metalinguistic reading. Since this reading is not covered by either the principle or the generalization, this judgment is not included in (5).

3. Scope Ambiguity and Correlation of Word Order and Scope Interpretation

In Zeijlstra's framework for strict NC languages, a (partial) structure of a Czech sentence with a universally quantified subject preceding the negative morpheme on the surface would be as in (8), assuming that in this case the verb does not move and uNEG undergoes feature movement:

$$(8) [\text{NegP Op}_{\text{NEG}} \text{Neg}^0 \text{ }_{\text{iNEG}} \text{ }_{\text{uNEG}} [\text{vP } \forall_{\text{SUBJ}} [\text{v0 } \text{ne}_{\text{uNEG}} \text{V } \dots]]]$$

Zeijlstra's starting point is the observation that the sentential negation morpheme *ne* in Czech is a prefix on the V head.⁵ According to his theory of negation, in Czech (and in the other strict NC languages where the negative marker is a prefix on the verb) the negative operator is separate from the sentential negation morpheme *ne*, which carries a uNEG feature. This feature undergoes movement to a position outside of vP (as feature movement or together with the verb if the verb moves) and triggers NegP with Op_{NEG} in its specifier at the landing site. Op_{NEG} thus takes scope above the base-generated position of the subject. Zeijlstra does not directly discuss the question of whether the quantified subject in Czech ever leaves the base-generated position. Two scenarios are possible. Either the quantified subject never leaves the base-generated position or, if it does move (for example, for case or agreement), the scope configuration in (8) is preserved at LF (via some form of reconstruction or lower copy interpretation). Example (4) and the discussion in Rechzieglová 1995 shows that neither case is very likely. The surface scope interpretation is available, which means that the LF order does not have to be NEGATION > UNIVERSAL SUBJECT. The conclusion, then, that in Czech the universal subject cannot cross ne-

⁵ As an anonymous *JSL* reviewer points out, given what is known about Slavic prefixes, even if negation is a prefix, it may be located higher in the tree. Slavic has both lexical (within the vP) and superlexical (above the aspect head, outside of the vP) prefixes (see Svenonius 2004 for discussion). Negation occurs outside of all verbal prefixes. So even if sentential negation is a prefix, it can still originate much higher in the structure than Zeijlstra assumes. To keep this paper short, I focus on the availability of surface-scope interpretation, leaving the question of the exact morphosyntactic nature of the negative morpheme aside.

gation is not necessary. If it is not necessary for Czech, which is most consistent with ZG, it is even less probable for Polish, Russian, and Serbo-Croatian.

On the other hand, the ambiguity in question can be captured very naturally if we postulate a copy of the universal subject below sentential negation as well as above it, along the lines of the partial structure in (9):

$$(9) \left[\forall_{SUBJ} \dots \left[\text{NegP Op}_{NEG} \text{Neg}^0 \text{ne}_{\#NEG} \left[\text{vP } \forall_{SUBJ} \left[\text{v0 ne}_{\#NEG} \text{V } \dots \right] \right] \right] \right] \text{iNEG}$$

Which copy is chosen for interpretation would then be decided by the discourse conditions reflected in the stress pattern. Russian and Polish would differ from Czech in not allowing the choice of the lower copy for scope interpretation in examples (6) and (7). The Serbo-Croatian speakers in this study differ with respect to whether the lower copy of the universal subject is accessible on the surface order UNIVERSAL SUBJECT > NEGATION.

Another argument that universal subjects in Czech can cross sentential negation comes from the observation that in this language the surface order of the universal subject and negation influences the preferred scope interpretation. Rechzieglová (1995) observes that when the negated verb precedes the universal subject on the surface, the tendency to interpret the sentence with the surface scope is stronger. In her example, (10a) is equivalent to (10b). The scope interpretation NEGATION > UNIVERSAL SUBJECT “seems the most appropriate,” in Rechzieglová’s words.

- (10) a. Neuměl psát každý. (Rechzieglová 1995)
 not-could write everybody
 ‘Not everybody could write.’
 b. Někdo neuměl psát.
 somebody not-could write
 ‘Somebody could not write.’

In the ZP there is no reason for this word order difference to influence the extent to which a scope interpretation is more accessible: (4) and (10a) should both have only the reading NEGATION > UNIVERSAL

SUBJECT if the universal subject is banned from crossing sentential negation.

A stronger effect holds for the two speakers of Serbo-Croatian. For them, (11a) has the order UNIVERSAL SUBJECT > NEGATION and only one interpretation—the surface scope reading, where the universal subject takes scope above negation. In (11b) the surface order is NEGATION > UNIVERSAL SUBJECT, and the only available reading is the one where the negation takes scope over the universal subject. If the universal subject was banned from crossing the negative operator by movement, it would be more difficult to find the reason why the different surface orders correlate with the different scope interpretations in (11). Again, the conclusion that the scope order NEGATION > UNIVERSAL SUBJECT has to be preserved at LF is not confirmed.

(11) Serbo-Croatian

- a. [?]Svaki dečak ne govori engleski.
 every kid not speaks English

‘Every kid does not speak English.’

$\forall > \neg$: available

$\neg > \forall$: not available

- b. Ne govori engleski svaki dečak.

$\forall > \neg$: not available

$\neg > \forall$: available

It is documented in the literature that in languages with variable surface word order, order between two scope-bearing elements can influence scope interpretation, so the contrast in (11) is not surprising if the universal subject that precedes sentential negation on the surface is interpreted with surface scope.⁶

6. Conclusion and Further Questions

Evidence presented in this paper shows that Zeijlstra’s (2004) principle of unavailability of the surface reading for negated sentences with the surface order UNIVERSAL SUBJECT > NEGATION in strict NC languages

⁶ See Bobaljik and Wurmbrand 2012 for a detailed discussion that focuses on “partial correlations between word order variation and scope possibilities” between QNPs.

needs to be revised. Contrary to this principle, for the native speakers of Czech, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, and Russian in this study, the surface reading is available. Moreover, Czech exhibits a scope ambiguity and both Czech and Serbo-Croatian display correlations between word order and scope that are unexpected if the universal subject cannot cross negation. This result agrees with theories of NC that treat NC items as universal quantifiers taking scope above sentential negation, as in Giannakidou 2000a, 2000b and the treatment of Russian NC items in Abels 2002, removing an important argument against such theories.

This paper is not meant to be a comprehensive treatment of relative scope of universal subjects and sentential negation. It does not touch on collective universals, only briefly notes the effect of context and stress, and does not touch on the role of the meaning of the negated verb, the possibility that the location of NegP varies among the four languages under discussion, or of the topic/focus structure. It also does not claim that there are no strict NC languages for which Zeijlstra's principle holds; this is a matter for further research. Nevertheless, the conclusion is supported that Czech, Polish, Russian, and Serbo-Croatian are better captured by a theory of negative concord that does not contain this principle.

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