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Donna Gardiner
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"Scope of negation"

Donna Gardiner

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to discover the ways which negation is expressed in the Lakota dialect of Sioux, and to determine the scope of the various negative forms. The scope, or extent of influence, of a negative in a sentence, might be defined as that portion of the underlying tree structure of a sentence which is commanded by the negative.¹ Most of the expressions used as examples were elicited from three native speakers of the Lakota dialect. Those expressions which were culled from readings on Sioux grammar have been checked with several of the Sioux speakers before being inserted as examples.

In Lakota Sioux, negation is most commonly expressed in the form of the morpheme -šni, and šni occurs most commonly in sentence-final position. Below are some examples of common negative sentences, including lower predicates² of many types: transitive verb, intransitive verb, identifier, and qualifier.

1.a. 'šuka ki i'ktomi ki na'pcešni
dog the spider the gobble-not

1.b. ma'hixpaye šni
I - fall - not

1.c. mi'sukala 'wožu wi'čaša 'hečašni
my-brother-younger farming man that-one-not

1.d. wi'čaša ki t'a't'ake šni
man the clumsy-not

In example 1.a. the negative morpheme -šni dominates the entire expression "The dog gobbled the spider", thus saying that this proposition is not true. Perhaps it will be easier to see how the negative commands the rest of the expression in its entirety by positing underlying structures for each of the examples given above.

1.c'.

1.d'.

In the case of a compound or complex sentence, -šni may command either or both of the clauses. However, the morpheme must appear separately, commanding its own part of the complex sentence.

2. 'ukte ki slo'wayešni
he comes det. I know not

Sentence 2 is ambiguous in the sense that it is appropriate to describe these two situations:

1) "I didn't know he was coming."

2) "I don't know if he is coming."

2a. ukte ki nayiš uktešni ki slowayešni
he comes det. or he comes not det. I know not

"I don't know if he is (or isn't) coming."

The underlying structure for 2a. would be:

2a'. [see the following page]

The above structure would also account for meaning(2) of sentence 2. Sentence 2 can also be represented in this way:

2' .

To derive sentence 2 from 2' or to derive sentence 2a. from 2a' would not seem to involve unusual transformations. However, in the case where the second meaning of sentence 2 is required, the mapping from underlying structure 2a to the surface (2) is more complicated. Some kind of transformation would be required to delete the negative part of the subordinate structure (~~circled~~).

It is interesting to note that the determiner ki appears in the surface structure following a subordinate predicate; this suggests that the embedded clause is a noun phrase in surface structure.

2b. 'uktešni ki slo'waye
 he comes-not det. I know

"I know he is not coming."

Underlying this we have:

In this case the scope of the negative is restricted to the dependent clause, and commands only the lower proposition.

2c. 'uktešni ki slo'wayešni
 he comes-not det. I know-not

'I didn't know he wasn't coming.'

Here we see a negative dominating both propositions of a complex sentence. A possible underlying structure is:

The derivation of surface structure from 2b'. and 2c'. would involve transformational rules to raise the predicates³, and the insertion of the determiner ki to show the dependent rel-

ationship of the embedded proposition for the higher proposition.

When the negative is used with compound predicates, we encounter certain connectives which seem to limit the scope of a negative in surface structure. Consider the following examples:

- 3a. mni ki 'k^xate na'yiš snišni
water the hot either/or cold-not

'The water is neither cold nor hot.'

- 3b. mni 'snišni (k?)ayeš 'k^xate
water cold-not but hot

'The water isn't cold, but hot.'

- 3c. mni ki 'k^xatešni na 'snišni
water the hot-not and cold-not

'The water is not cold and not hot.'

Although 3a. and 3c. have different surface realizations both in Sioux and in translation, it could very well be that their underlying structures are basically the same.⁴ The connective nayiš seems to mean "either/or", while na is coordinate, meaning "and".

Proposed underlying structure for 3a. and for 3c. :

To arrive at the two differing surface structures the following procedures would apply:

1) First, a T-rule would raise the two lowest predicates.

2) A co-referential role deletion rule⁵ would then delete the second object.

3) Predicate raising would now apply again, and the connector must be moved.

4) An affix [+ def.] must be joined as sister to MNI.

Up to this point, the transformational process has been the same for sentences containing either of the two connectives. If the connective is NA, we are now ready to insert the proper

formatives.⁶ The final string is 3c.

3h. mni ki 'k^xatešni na 'snišni

However, if the sentence being transformed contains NA'YIŠ, one more rule must apply to remove the first negative.

Formative insertion will now yield sentence 3a.

3a. mni ki 'k^xate na'yiš 'snišni

The underlying structure of sentence 3b is different from that of the other two in that (K[?])AYEŠ will dominate only one negated proposition.

Procedures for deriving sentence 3b would be similar to those used in deriving 3c. The meaning of (K[?])AYEŠ is "but". This connector implies some kind of contrast, so a negative may appear on either predicate, but not on both.

This use of the negative with the connectors (K?)AYEŠ, NA'YIŠ, and NA is one of the less common uses of -ŠNI.

There are instances in Sioux when the negative dominates

an indefinite pronoun, a numeral, or an adverb. The special form used in such cases is NI. Some examples of these are;

- 4a. 'tohini "never" from tohi "time" + ni "not"
 'tokiyani "nowhere" from place + no
 'takuni "nothing"
 tu'weni "no one" (Boas and Deloria 1941, 105)

Franz Boas in his "Dakota Grammar" stated pairs of expressions which would seem to indicate that the presence of a negated indefinite pronoun or numeral intensifies the negation (or rather, generalizes the negation) of the predicate.

- 4b. 1 {tu'we ki wə'blakešni? 'I did not see who it was.'
 {tu'weni wə'blakešni? 'I did not see anyone.'
 2 {y'ma wə'blakešni? 'I did not see the one, but the other.'
 {y'mani wə'blakešni? 'I saw neither the one nor the other.'
 3 {wə'ži šni 'It is not one, (but another one).'
 {wə'žini šni 'It is not one (of that group).'
 4 { 'toki 'mniktešni 'I am not going to some particular
 place.'
 { 'tokiyani 'mniktešni? 'I'm not going anywhere at all.'
 5 { 'taku wa'čišni? 'I have no wants.'
 { 'takuni wa'čišni? 'I don't want anything at all.'

(Boas and Deloria 1941, 105)

These pairs of sentences, and more, which I have not cited here, were checked for meaning with several Lakota speakers. Their reactions to these sentence pairs were quite interesting. It seems that the age of the speaker roughly correlates with his ability to recognize a difference in meaning between the members of a pair. The older speaker would more readily recognize a difference between the first and second members of each pair. The younger speakers had more of a tendency to attribute the same meaning to both members of a pair, or, sometimes to

reject the first as ungrammatical. Since the data available was very limited, and since there was very little time to fully check my observations, the ideas above are very tentative. I might add a hypothesis which I drew from my observation of the Sioux speakers' reaction to the sentence pairs above and to others like it. It appears that the first member of pairs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 may have been more common at one time, but may have become archaic, and may have dropped out of use since Boas made his analysis. It might be noted that all speakers made a distinction in meaning for pair number 2. Perhaps the difference lies not so much in the speaker's age, but in the extent of his exposure to and use of his own language.

Another unusual use of -šni, pointed out again by Boas, was the double negative. When these were checked out with several Sioux speakers, it was interesting to note that the youngest informant rejected all double negation as silly and impossible to say. The oldest speaker, however, said that these were grammatical, but not often used. There were just a few expressions cited by Boas which all speakers rejected. Here are some of Boas' examples:

- 4c. 1) ʔo'ma ʔanišnišni 'Why don't you not walk about?'
 2) kiš wa'la wašnišni 'Why don't you not read?'
 3) wa'yatešnišni 'Why do you not eat?'
 4) ʔečišnišniya 'wrong'
 5) ʔitušnišniya 'falsely'
 6) niyašnišni 'all out of breath'

do not usually neutralize each other as they do in standard English. Instead, they augment each other, and thus intensify the meaning. It seems that this type of double negation may be falling out of use.

Another very interesting concept which seems to influence the scope of negation is the idea of focus, or highlighting. In Essentials of English Grammar, Langendoen pointed out the fact that the negative element in English "occurs syntactically as an adverb which is placed in front of the main predicate in the clause which is its argument." Because of this, negative sentences in English are often simple on the surface, but complex in the underlying structure. As an example he used:

5. Brutus didn't kill a tyrant.

Expressed in logical notation sentence 5 looks like this:

5a. Not [Brutus (x). Tyrant (y). Killed (x,y)]

Because the not in surface structure always is placed in front of the predicate, we cannot tell which of the assertions in the sentence is being negated.

5b. Not [Brutus (x)] or Not [Tyrant (y)] or Not [Killed (x,y)]

To help clarify sentence 5, an English speaker would raise the pitch of his voice on the accented syllable of the predicate he wishes to highlight. (Langendoen 1970, 161-162)

In Sioux the negative element normally occurs with the main predicate in the form of a suffix. When the Sioux wish to highlight a certain part of a sentence other than the main

predicate, the positive morpheme 'eča "--emphasis", or the negative morpheme 'ešni "--neg. emphasis" may be placed after the word (or article following the word) that they wish to highlight. 'eča and 'ešni seem to dominate roles.

- 6a. le a'petu a'te 'wotešni
 this day Dad eat-not
 'Dad didn't eat today.'
- 6b. *le a'petu šni a'te 'wote
 this day not Dad eat
 'It's not today Dad ate.'
- 6c. le a'petu a'te 'eča 'wotešni
 this day Dad ←-- eat-not
 'Dad didn't eat today.'
- 6d. *le a'petu a'te 'ešni 'wote (šni)
 this day Dad ←-neg. eat (not)
 'It's not Dad who did(n't) eat today.'

The underlying structure of 6a. and 6c. would be:

6a'.

6c'.

In both sentences the negative remains the highest predicate, and in 6c' the highlighter 'eča directly dominates the role

S

ID PROP

PROP P

ESS P ŠNI

Ia SYKA

AG A

O P

IKTOMI NA'PCE

YAT^x EŠNI

šni ['šuka (x)]

[illegible]

In 7b. we find the negative highlighter modifying the agent. It is not yet apparent why it is acceptable to use 'ešni' in the case of 7b., but a similar construction was rejected in the case of 6d. There is a difference in transitivity of verbs, but it doesn't seem that transitivity should affect the use of the negative. It would have been interesting to discover more about highlighting and the scope of negation in Sioux, but time does not permit this.

In order to suggest the position which the negative morpheme takes in relation to other verbs and verb affixes, the following examples are appropriate:

8.a. 'wiblukčāšni
I think-not

šni [wiblukca]
NEG [THINK (I)]

8.b. 'wiblukčaktešni
I think-will-not

NEG [FUT [THINK (I)]]

8.c. 'wiblukčaktexčišni
I think-will-try-not
'I will not try to think.'

NEG [TRY [FUT [THINK (I)]]]

8.d. wiblukča wačišni
I think I want-not
'I don't want to think.'

8.e. wiblukčakte wačišni
I think-will I want-not
'I don't want to think.'

It appears that the negative morpheme must be affixed to the main predicate of the clause which it commands. All of the following were rated as unacceptable:

- 8.f. *wiblukčāšnikte
I think-not-will
- 8.g. *wiblukčaktešnixči
I think-will-not-try
- 8.h. *wiblukčāšni waci
I think-not I want
- 8.i. *wiblukčaktešni waci
I think-will-not I want

It appears to be true also that the negative affix must take final position in a string of verbal affixes.

As a final statement, here are some conclusions about the forms of the negative in Sioux and their use:

9. <u>P</u>	PC	<u>F</u>	<u>FI</u>
ŠNI	PROP + P: —	šni	$\left[\begin{array}{c} +\text{verb} \\ +\text{adj} \end{array} \right] + \text{—}$
		'ešni	$[+\text{noun}(+\text{article})] \text{—}$
		ni	$\left[\begin{array}{c} +\text{indef. pronoun} \\ +\text{numeral} \\ +\text{adverb} \end{array} \right] + \text{—}$

The scope of the two less common forms of the negative is quite limited. The scope of 'ešni' covers one of the arguments of a proposition (see examples 7b. and 7c.). The scope of ni is limited to the indefinite pronoun, numeral, or adverb to which it is affixed.

- 9a. tu'weni wāblakešni
nobody I see-not
(Boas and Deloria 1941, 105)

[See following page
for tree

(with indef. pronoun)

- 9b. le i'činypani e'cy šni yo (Buechel 1939, 353)
 this 2nd time-not do not
 'Don't do this again.' (with numeral)

The scope of the most common negative form -šni is larger in that it always commands a proposition with predicate and (optional) arguments.

FOOTNOTES

1. Definition of "command" is found in Langacker 1969, 167
2. "Predicate" is used here in the logical sense, not in the traditional grammatical sense.
3. Predicate raising is one of the cyclic rules in a transformational grammar whereby a lower predicate in an underlying tree structure is raised and attached to the predicate node which commands it. Arguments of the predicate being moved are attached to the next highest

PROP. Example:

For a definition of predicate raising see McCawley 1968a, 75.

4. These could also be derived from logically equivalent underlying structures: $(S_1 \vee S_2) \equiv \sim S_1 \cdot \sim S_2$ (McCawley 1968 b, 168.)
5. The absence of nni with subsequent predicates may be the Sioux equivalent of pronominalization.
6. In the model being used, predicates are abstract until after transformations are complete, when they are replaced by formatives from the lexicon. (Frantz 1970, 210)
7. Yat^xešni has a complex structure which was not represented in the structural trees 7b' and 7c'. Perhaps the P node above yat^xešni should be a PROP node instead, and this word, which seems to be used as an adverb on the surface, could be broken down in this way: