

Negative shifting in a modern Scandinavian language

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Pre-290

Outline of Handout

- Overview of Negative Indefinite Shift in §1
- Discussion of Scandinavian Pronoun structure in §2
- Discussion of Valentine Bordal 2017 in §3
- Discussion of Zeijlstra 2011 in §4
- Next steps in §5

1 Negative indefinite shifting

- (1) Negative Shifting (NegShift) is a process in the Scandinavian languages where a negative indefinite (NI) obligatorily shifts to a position outside of the VP.
 - a. Manden havde måske *ingenting* [_{VP} sagt t_o].
man-the had probably nothing said
'The man hadn't said anything.'
 - b. Jeg har *ingen bøger* [_{VP} lånt børnene t_o].
I have no books lent children-the
'I haven't lent the children any books.'
- (2) This process occurs to all NIs and is permissible from a large number of different contexts, depending on the variety and register, see Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of NegShift across Scandinavian languages. WJ = West Jutlandic, Ic = Icelandic, Fa = Faroese, DaL = Danish Linguists, SwL = Swedish Linguists, Scan1 = literary/formal Mainland Scandinavian, Scan2 = colloquial Mainland Scandinavian and Norwegian

NegS across		WJ1	WJ2	Ic	Fa	DaL1	DaL2	SwL	Scan1	Scan2
String-vacuous		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Verb		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*
IO	verb in situ	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*
	verb moved	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Preposition	verb in situ	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	?	*	*	*
	verb moved	✓	✓	?	*	*	*	*	*	*
Infinitive	verb in situ	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*	?	*	*
	verb moved	✓	*	*	✓	*	*	*	*	*

- (3) However, not all NegShift is treated equal. Christensen (2005: 65f), speaking on Danish, claims that the "weight" of the NI plays a factor in whether or not NegShift occurs.
- Jeg har *intet*_o hørt *t*_o.
I have nothing heard
'I haven't heard anything.'
 - Jeg har [*intet nyt*]_o hørt *t*_o.
I have nothing new heard
'I haven't heard anything new'
 - *Jeg har [*intet nyt i sagen*]_o hørt *t*_o.
I have nothing new in case-DET heard
'I haven't heard anything new about the case.'
 - *Jeg har [*intet nyt i sagen om de stjålne malerier*]_o hørt *t*_o.
I have nothing new in case-DET about the stolen paintings heard
'I haven't heard anything new in the case about the stolen paintings.'
- (4) In those instances where the NI is too large one potential repair is to strand the PP while moving just the pronoun or using the negative particle *ikke* and a NPI.
- Jeg har *intet*_i hørt *t*_i [_{PP} i sagen om de stjålne malerier].
 - Jeg har ikke hørt [*noget* i sagen om de stjålne malerier].
- (5) This same behavior has also been remarked upon by Penka (2011) for Swedish.
- Men mänskligheten har *ingenting*_o lärt sig *t*_o.
but mankind-the have nothing taught themselves
'But mankind haven't taught themselves anything.'
 - ? Vi hade *inga grottor*_o undersökt *t*_o.
we have no caves explored
'We haven't explored any caves.'
- (6) My QP explores whether or not there is indeed this preference for NegShift of pronouns by conducting a study on the Swedish Culturomics Gigaword Corpus (Eide, Tahmasebi & Borin 2016) and how this phenomenon might relate to prosodic analyses of pronominal object shift.
- (7) One of the issues for this analysis is that one of the NI pronouns (*ingen/inget/inga*) is identical to the NI determiner (*ingen/inget/inga*).

2 Scandinavian pronouns

- (8) There two different approaches that we can take when accounting for the syntactic structure of the negative indefinite pronouns in Swedish. The two positions are: (a) the pronoun is the head of a DP on its own; or (b) the pronoun resides in D and takes a null NP complete.¹

¹This second option could also assume that the pronoun originated in NP and moved to D prior to spell-out of the DP phase.

- a. DP with no complement

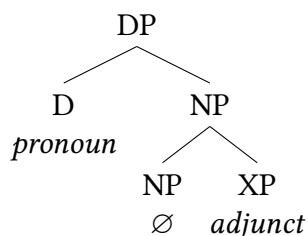
DP
pronoun

- b. DP with null NP complement

DP
 / \
 D NP
pronoun \emptyset

- (9) The reason this question is interesting is the presence of two homophonous NIs.
- a. the first is the negative indefinite determiner which always appears with a nominal pivot. This is equivalent to our NI determiner *no*.
 - i. Jag bakade honom [_{DP} *inget* kaka].
 I baked him no cake
 ‘I didn’t bake him any cake.’
 - ii. Hon såg *inga* barn.
 she saw no children
 ‘She didn’t see any children.’
 - b. The second is the negative indefinite pronoun which does not take a nominal pivot and stands independent or with an adjunct, similar to English’s *no-one* or *none*.
 - i. Jag bakade honom *inget*.
 I baked him none
 ‘I didn’t bake him anything.’
 - ii. Jag har *ingen* lånt barnen.
 I have none lent children-the
 ‘I haven’t lent the children anything.’
- (10) Evidence for one structure over the other comes from whether or not modification of the pronoun is allowed.
- a. Modification is taken to be additional material that changes what the set of things the NI refers too.
 - b. This is predominately done with PPs, relative clauses, or infinitival clauses (when the NI is an object of an existential clause).
- (11) Because of this difference in behavior between determiners and nouns, we can gather evidence that would suggest one of the two syntactic structures is the more likely one for the Swedish negative indefinite pronouns if modification of these pronouns is present.
- (12) Data will be drawn from across all of the Scandinavian languages because of the close similarity between the mainland Scandinavian languages syntactically.
- (13) We observe in Danish that their negative indefinite pronouns are able to be modified with PPs and CPs as shown in Allan, Holmes & Lundskær-Nielsen (1995: 218ff).
- a. PPs
 - i. Det er *intet* [_{PP} i vej-an].
 It is nothing in way-DET
 ‘There is nothing wrong’

- ii. Jeg kender *ingen* [_{PP} her i byen].
 I know no-one here in town
 ‘I know no one in this town.’
- b. CPs
- i. Der er *ingen*, [_{CP} der har set ham].
 there is no-one, who has seen him
 ‘Nobody has seen him’
- ii. Der er *intet* [_{CP} at være bange for].
 There is nothing to be afraid of
 ‘There is nothing to be afraid of’
- (14) This same behavior is also observed in Swedish (Holmes & Hinchliffe 2013: 197ff).
- a. PPs
- i. Han äger *inget* [_{PP} av värde].
 He owns nothing of value
 ‘He owns nothing of value.’
- b. CPs
- i. Jag såg *ingen* [_{CP} jag kände igen].
 I saw no-one I recognize
 ‘I saw no one that I recognize.’
- ii. Jag har *ingenting* [_{CP} att säga].
 I have nothing to say
 ‘I have nothing to say.’
- (15) Example (14a-i) shows the use of *inget* instead of *ingenting* which according to Holmes & Hinchliffe (2013) are in free variation.
- (16) Based on this data, we see adjunct extraposition, which is assumed to be the result of the adjunction site of these PPs and CPs being within NP.
- a. This is a working hypothesis and I am currently looking for further independent evidence that this is the correct analysis for pronominals in Swedish.
- (17) Another reason that we can assume that (8b), repeated below with a adjunct, is the correct structure, is that if we assume that (8a) is the structure for pronouns then we are left wondering how exactly these pronominal modifiers attach to our structure.
- a.



3 Valentine Bordal 2017

- (18) Valentine Bordal (2017) is a corpus study of *Språkbanken*² looking at how existential predicates are negated in Swedish.
- (19) According to Valentine Bordal declarative sentences are negated using the negative particle *inte* only.
- a. Anna är *inte* doktor.
Anna is not doctor
'Anna is not a doctor.'
- (20) If the verbal predicate has a non-lexical verb (i.e., modals and auxiliaries) then the sentence is negated with either the negative particle *inte* or with a negative indefinite.³
- a. Jag har *inte* några barn.
I have not any children
'I don't have any children'
 - b. Jag har *inga* barn.
I have no children
'I don't have children.'
- (21) According to her results, NIs were the most frequent method for negating existential predicates.

Table 2: Frequency of negation strategy

Negated existential	Raw count	Proportion
Existential predicates negated with an indefinite pronoun	212 918	89%
Existential predicates negated with <i>inte</i>	27 437	11%
Total	240 355	100%

- (22) Under her analysis of NIs, they are all treated as a pronomial which can or cannot appear with a nominal pivot.
- a. This means that her "modifier" is best treated as a NI determiner which appears with a nominal pivot and her "head" is best treated as a pronoun which doesn't appear with a nominal pivot.

Table 3: Frequency of NI property

Syntactic property of the NI	Frequency	Proportion
Modifier	687	78%
Head	198	22%
Total	885	100%

²<https://spraakbanken.gu.se/en>

³I disagree with her claim that NIs are only used with non-lexical verbs, because there are plenty of examples in the literature that show NIs negating sentences that contain lexical verbs (see Engels 2012 and Christensen 2005 for examples).

- (23) She also claims that out of all the negative indefinites, *inga* only appears as a modifier, *ingen* and *inget* both appear equally as modifiers and pronominal heads, and *ingenting* only ever appear as a head.

4 Zeijlstra 2011

- (24) Zeijlstra 2011 is interested in showing providing an analysis of the split-scope interpretation that exists for negative indefinites in Germanic languages.
- (25) Split-scope is evident when modals and other auxiliaries are present and the negation scopes higher than the modal/auxiliary's scope where the indefinite resides.
- (26) Zeijlstra assumes that this behavior is the result of the compositional status of negative indefinites similar to the claims made by Iatridou & Sichel (2011). Unlike Iatridou & Sichel, who simply claim that negation takes scope higher than the modal's scope and the indefinite scopes low, he claims that NIs are composed of a negative operator and an indefinite component.
- (27) He further claims that the split-scope interpretation is the result of a copy-theory of movement where the indefinite interpretation is interpreted in the lower copy while the negative operator is interpreted in the higher copy after quantifier rising.

5 Next steps

- Looking into the interaction of object shift and NegShift with a comparison of the size of shifted elements.
 - Additionally, looking into Christensen (2005), Vikner (2017, 2001), and Thráinsson (2010) for further descriptions of NegShift.
 - Thráinsson also describes the fact that *all* quantifiers undergo a similar process to NIs. This behavior has led him to claim that NegShift is just **Quantifier Scrambling**.
- Looking into the Anti-Holmberg effect (Fox & Pesetsky 2005, Engels 2012).

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