

On focus of negation

Keywords: focus, ellipsis, negation, wh-movement

Overview: This study examines properties of “fragment negation” (e.g., (1)). In fragment negation, a negation marker *not* directly attaches to a constituent, although such negation is impossible in non-fragment environments ((2): See Horn 1989). In this work, I will show that fragment negation is derived by movement and ellipsis, in a similar way as Merchant’s (2001, 2004) treatment of sluicing and fragment answers. Assuming that negation is base-generated in the CP-domain (Klima 1964), I argue that the structure of the fragment answer is as shown in (3); the negated phrase undergoes focus movement, followed by IP-ellipsis.

Previous studies: Merchant (2004) argues that fragment answers such as (4a) are derived from focus movement followed by IP-deletion (See also his analysis of sluicing (4b): Merchant 2001). Based on data including connectivity effects, he argues that there is a hidden ‘full-fledged’ structure underlying these fragments. Similarly, Yoshida (in preparation) argues that ‘why XP’ fragments such as (5a) is derived from focus movement and ellipsis ((5b)). In this paper, I propose that fragment negation should be treated in a parallel way as fragment answers and the ‘why XP’ constructions.

Fragment negation and other fragments: [A] One similarity between fragment negation and these constructions is that the relevant forms are observed *only in fragments*. When the whole sentence is overt, such word orders are impossible ((6), (7)). Under Merchant and Yoshida’s analyses, it means that overt focus movement is possible only when there is IP-deletion. I point out that the surface form ‘not XP’ in (1), too, is only observed in fragment negation (i.e., (8) is unacceptable). [B] Another similarity between fragment negation ((1)) and ‘why XP’ fragments ((5)) is that both *not* and *why* are focus-sensitive elements. *Not* can negate any part of the sentence even when it appears in a sentential negation position; there arises ambiguity as to which part of the sentence is negated, depending on where the focus is put ((9)). *Why*-questions, too, are focus-sensitive in that the expected answer changes depending on focus ((10): Bromberger 1991). Such focus sensitivity is not observed in other wh-questions. For example, (11) unambiguously asks the location where the event “Mary read the book” happened. Such non-focus-sensitive wh-expressions do not have a counterpart of fragment constructions ((12): Yoshida). [C] Fragment answers show (i) connectivity effects ((13)) and (ii) island effects ((14)) (Merchant 2004). Yoshida shows similar data for ‘why XP’ fragments. Similarly, I demonstrate that fragment negation shows Case connectivity effects (as shown in German (15)) and island effects ((16)). Based on the above similarities, I propose the analysis of fragment negation in (3), that is parallel with (4a) and (5b).

Ellipsis and focus: We have seen above that focus movement is possible *only in elliptical constructions*. Merchant accounts for the fact by simply assuming that F has an ellipsis feature. However, it is unclear why F always comes with an ellipsis feature, while C may or may not have an ellipsis feature (i.e. sluicing) as in (17). Instead, I claim that movement to FP occurs in non-elliptical focus, too, but it surfaces as overt movement only when ellipsis follows. I assume covert focus movement for in-situ focus ((18)). The movement cannot be overt, presumably because F doesn’t have a strong feature in English. I propose to treat this focus movement in a parallel way as covert wh-movement (e.g. *what* in (19)). In both types of movement, the lower copy of the movement is pronounced, resulting in covert movement ((20)). (See Ortega-Santos (2006) for a similar proposal for Spanish focused subjects.) However, the lower copy cannot be pronounced when a focused phrase/an in-situ wh-phrase is included in an ellipsis site. I assume that, in such a situation, the top copy is *forced* to be pronounced. To support this line of analysis, I point out that both focused elements and in-situ wh-phrases can be pronounced outside of the IP *only when ellipsis follows*. The second wh-phrase *what* is outside of the deleted IP in the multiple sluicing in (21), although it is usually pronounced in-situ. The focused elements in (3)-(5) are also pronounced outside of the ellipsis site, although they should be pronounced in-situ in non-elliptical environments ((6)-(8)). This similarity between in-situ wh-phrases and focus supports the covert movement analysis of focus.

Summary: This work proposed a focus-movement analysis of fragment negation ((3)), based on its similarities to fragment answers and ‘why XP’ fragments: [A] impossibility in non-elliptical sentences, [B] focus sensitivity, and [C] demonstration of connectivity effects and island effects. To account for [A], I proposed that the higher copy of English focus movement (as well as covert wh-movement) is pronounced only when the lower copy is unpronounceable, being inside an ellipsis site.

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- (1) a. John wrote the book, not Bill. b. John ate an apple, not an orange.
 c. John studied in this room, not in that room.
- (2) a. *Not Bill wrote the book. (cf. Bill didn't write the book.)
 b. *John ate not an orange. (cf. John didn't eat an orange.)
 c. *John studied not in this room. (cf. John didn't study in this room.)
- (3) [CP not [FP **an orange**₁ [IP John ate **t₁**]]] (cf. 0b))
- (4) a. A: Who did John meet? B: [**Mary**₁ [IP John met **t₁**]].
 b. John met someone, but I don't know [CP **who**₁ [IP John met **t₁**]].
- (5) a. A: John likes Mary. B: Why Mary?
 b. [CP Why₁ [FP **Mary**₁ [IP John likes **t₁**]]]? ↑
- (6) A: Who did John meet? B: ***Mary** John met. (cf. (4a))
- (7) A: John likes Mary. B: ***Why Mary** John likes? (cf. (5))
- (8) *Not an orange John ate. (cf. 0b))
- (9) John **didn't** read the book in this room.
 a. It is not John that read the book in this room; it was Mary.
 b. It is not the book that John read in this room; it was the newspaper.
 c. It is not in this room that John read the book; it was in that room., etc.
- (10) **Why** did Adam eat the apple?
 a. Because God intended that to happen.
 b. Because it (the apple) was the only food around. (the reason why it was the apple)
 c. Because he couldn't think of anything else to do with it. (the reason why it was eating)
 d. Because he (Adam) was the one that Eve worked on. (the reason why it was Adam)
- (11) **Where** did Mary read the book? (unambiguous)
- (12) *Who Mary?/*Where Mary?/*When Mary? etc.
- (13) A: Wem folgt Hans? B: Dem/Den Lehrer.
 Who(**Dat**) follows Hans **Dat**/***Acc** teacher
 "Who is Hans following?" "The teacher."
- (14) A: Did Peter meet [a kid who ate the apple]? B: *No, the orange.
- (15) Peter will **der** Sekretaerin gefallen, aber nicht **dem**/***den** Chef. (German)
 Peter wants **Dat** secretary please, but not **Dat**/***Acc** boss
 "Peter wants to please the secretary, but not the boss."
- (16) Eng. *Peter met [a kid who ate the apple], but not the orange. (*long-distance reading)
 Ger. *Peter traf [den Jungen, der den Apfel aß], aber nicht die Orange. (*long-distance reading)
- (17) A: Someone arrived. B: Who? (**elliptical**)/Who arrived? (**non-elliptical**)
- (18) a. JOHN ate an apple. b. John ate AN APPLE.
- (19) Who brought **what** to the potluck?
- (20) a. [FP [**An apple**] [IP John ate [AN APPLE]]]. (covert focus movement)
 b. [CP who₁ **what**₂ [IP who₁ brought **what**₂ to the potluck]]? (covert wh-movement)
- (21) (?)Everyone brought something (different) to the potluck, but I couldn't tell you who what.
 (Merchant 2001)

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