

NEG—RAISING PREDICATES IN ENGLISH AND POLISH

EWA MODRZEJEWSKA

University of Gdańsk

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Fillmore (1963 : 220) proposes a rule which he calls "negative transportation" to account for the relationship between sentences like (1a) and (1b):

- 1a. Cliff thinks Harry won't win a prize.
- 1b. Cliff doesn't think Harry will win a prize.

The rule is supposed to raise the negative from the lower clause to the matrix sentence. Both (1a) and (1b) express the same proposition and, as it is pointed out by Sheintuch and Wise (1976), the choice between them is determined by several pragmatic factors, particularly by the speaker's uncertainty about the truth of the proposition expressed in the subordinate clause.

Strictly speaking, sentence (1b) has two readings. One of them is synonymous with the only reading of (1a), and the other can be paraphrased as *It is not the case that Cliff thinks Harry will win a prize.*

As a meaning-preserving rule¹, NEG-Raising (or the Fillmorian "negative transportation") does not relate sentences that convey different propositions:

- 2a. Cliff claims that Harry won't win a prize.
- 2b. Cliff doesn't claim that Harry will win a prize.

Thus, not all matrix predicates allow the rule of NEG-Raising to operate. The verb *claim* is an example of a non-neg-raising predicate.

1.2. The aim of this paper is to specify the conditions which have to be satisfied by the matrix predicate in order to let the adjacent negative refer to the lower clause. We will also indicate the differences and similarities between the sets of Polish and English NEG-raising predicates.

¹ By meaning we understand here propositional meaning. NEG-raising changes the pragmatic meaning of a sentence, which is, in general, the purpose of many other transformations.

2. ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF NEG-RAISING IN ENGLISH 2.3

2.0. The fact that certain English sentences are synonymous can be verified by interviewing native speakers of English. However, to state that the sentences are related by means of a transformation requires finding traces of its actual application. The aim of the arguments presented below is to indicate such traces.

2.1. Klima (1964: 288-9) claims that there are special restrictions on the occurrence of the phrase *until then* as negative sentences with an *until*-phrase do not always have their positive counterparts:

3a. That man didn't get there this time until five o'clock.

3b. *That man got there this time until five o'clock.

4a. The guest didn't arrive until five o'clock.

4b. *The guest arrived until five o'clock.

As (3)-(4) show, the *until*-phrase can appear only with a negative. However, if the predicate covers a broad time span, the *until*-phrase can appear without a negative as in (5):

5a. The guests arrived until five o'clock.

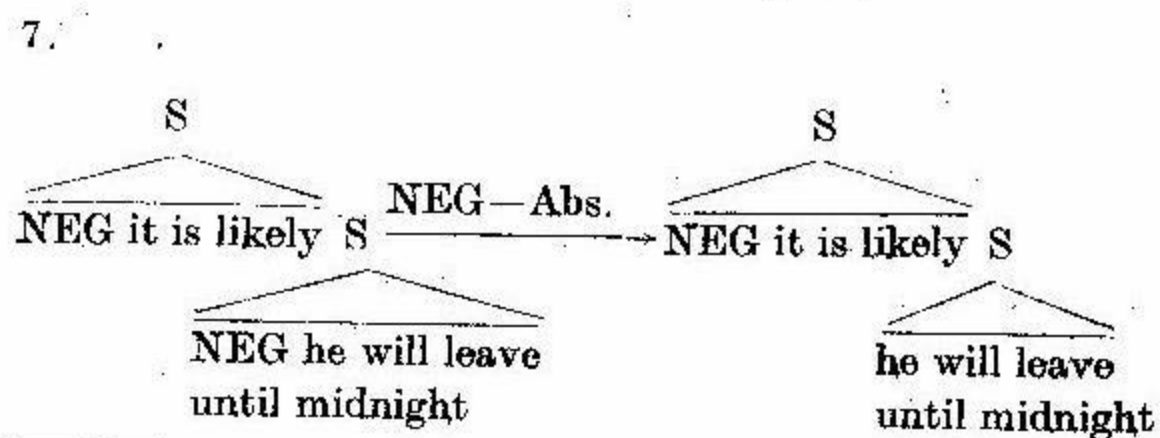
5b. The man slept until five o'clock.

Consider the following sentences:

6a. It is likely that he will not leave until midnight.

6b. It is not likely that he will leave until midnight.

Note that sentence (6b) is grammatical despite the fact that *leave* which is a non-durative verb here occurs without negation. Klima (1964: 292-3) proposes the rule of NEG-Absorption in order to account for the occurrence of *until* in such sentences. The underlying structure of (6b) would be mapped onto the surface structure in the following way:



² For interesting counterexamples to the arguments presented in section 2 see Jackendoff (1971).

³ We will not present the dialect argument for the existence of NEG-raising proposed by Guy Carden (1971) in his squib "A dialect argument for Not-transportation" published in *Linguistic inquiry* 2.

There are two NEGs in the underlying structure and thanks to the application of NEG-Absorption the NEG in the main clause "absorbs" the lower NEG. Being a meaning-changing rule, however, NEG-Absorption cannot be accepted in the framework of generative semantics as the underlying structure of (6b) would be apparently opposite in meaning to its surface realization.

It has been argued by Masaru Kajita⁴ that the NEG in (8) was present only in the underlying structure of the embedded sentence:

8. I didn't think that John would leave until tomorrow.

It was the application of NEG-Raising that caused the transportation of the negative. If not, we would have to claim that the negative has been generated in the matrix sentence and that a structure like **John would leave until tomorrow* could stand alone and be still a grammatical sentence. In other words, we would have to claim that *not* is not necessary for the occurrence of *until*. Sentences like (9) support Kajita's argument:

9. *I didn't say that John would leave until tomorrow.

Here, *not* has been generated in the matrix sentence. This means that *not* negates the verb *say*, and not the phrase *leave until tomorrow*. *Say* is not "transparent" the way *think* is and the lack of negative environment for the *until*-phrase causes the ungrammaticality.

R. Lakoff (1969: 141-2) points out that (8) is ungrammatical for many speakers. However, this may be due to the fact that their dialect does not permit NEG-Raising when the matrix predicate is in the past tense. A sentence like (10).

10. I don't think John will leave until tomorrow.

where the matrix predicate is in the present tense, is grammatical for all speakers. Those who accept (8) admit that its synonymy with the lower-neg version is less striking than it is in the case of (10).

2.2. Another argument is given by Lindholm (1969: 148) who considers sentences similar to the following:

11a. I don't expect Susan will ever become a singer.

11b. *Susan will ever become a singer.

11c. It is not likely that he will lift a finger to help you.

11d. *He will lift a finger to help you.

12a. *I don't claim that Susan will ever become a singer.

12b. *I don't know that he will lift a finger to help you.

⁴ Kajita's argument is presented in R. Lakoff (1969).

- 21b. Nie wydaje się, że wilk szarpnął swą ofiarę aż do nadejścia stada.
(It does not seem that the wolf worried its victim until the pack came over)
- 22a. Jest pewne, że wilk nie szarpnął swej ofiary aż do nadejścia stada.
(It is certain that the wolf did not worry its victim until the pack came over)
- 22b. *Nie jest pewne, że wilk szarpnął swą ofiarę aż do nadejścia stada.
(It is not certain that the wolf worried its victim until the pack came over)

Sentence (21b) is grammatical though it might seem that an ungrammatical clause has been embedded into it. The clause **wilk szarpnął swoją ofiarę aż do nadejścia stada* is ungrammatical because the *aż do*-phrase co-occurs with a positive punctual verb. However, this ungrammatical clause together with its matrix sentence forms a grammatical string. It happens so because the negative element actually refers to the embedded clause; thanks to the application of NEG-Raising the negative has been moved up to the matrix sentence. If that were not the case, it would mean that the *aż do*-phrase might occur with a positive perfective verb, which is not true.

Let us now explain why sentence (22b) is ungrammatical. In the case of the matrix predicate *jest pewne* lower-neg and higher-neg versions are not synonymous:

- 23a. Jest pewne, że wilk nie szarpnął swojej ofiary.
(It is certain that the wolf did not worry its victim)
- 23b. Nie jest pewne, że wilk szarpnął swoją ofiarę.
(It is not certain that the wolf worried its victim)

The negatives in the above sentences refer to their clause-mate predicates. Thus, in (22b) the negative refers to its clause-mate predicate as well. In such a case there is no negative environment to support the occurrence of the *aż do*-phrase.

3.2. Consider the following examples:

- 24a. Sądzę, że twój szef nie ruszy palcem by ci pomóc.
(I think that your boss will not lift a finger to help you)
- 24b. Nie sądzę, że twój szef ruszy palcem by ci pomóc.
(I don't think that your boss will lift a finger to help you)
- 25a. Twierdzę, że twój szef nie ruszy palcem by ci pomóc.
(I claim that your boss will not lift a finger to help you)
- 25b. *Nie twierdzę, że twój szef ruszy palcem by ci pomóc.
(I don't claim that your boss will lift a finger to help you)
- 26a. Wydaje się, że Piotr nie ma złamanego grosza.
(It seems that Peter doesn't have a red cent)

- 26b. Nie wydaje się, że Piotr ma złamany grosz.
(It doesn't seem that Peter has a red cent)
- 27a. Twierdzę, że Piotr nie ma złamanego grosza.
(I claim that Peter doesn't have a red cent)
- 27b. *Nie twierdzę, że Piotr ma złamany grosz.
(I don't claim that Peter has a red cent)

Mieć złamany grosz and *ruszyć palcem* are colloquial Polish negative polarity items, that is, they cannot appear without negation.⁵ Sentences (24b) and (26b) are grammatical despite the fact that there are no negatives in the lower clauses. The negatives in the matrix sentences, however, refer to the complement sentences and account for the occurrence of the negative polarity items. If that were not the case, the subordinate sentences should be able to stand alone. As (28) and (29) indicate, such complements are ungrammatical as simple sentences:

28. *Piotr ma złamany grosz.
29. *Twój szef ruszy palcem by ci pomóc.

Sentences (25b) and (27b), as well as (28) and (29), would be acceptable if we understood them literally, and not idiomatically. But even then (25b) and (27b) would not be derived from the respective underlying structures of (25a) and (27a).

4. NEG-RAISING PREDICATES IN ENGLISH

4.1. In the early works on NEG-Raising the set of verbs governing the rule is not clearly defined and contains apparently distinct verbs. Horn (1971: 120) claims that "while the individual predicates that permit NEG-Raising may vary from language to language — and indeed from idiolect to idiolect — the semantic classes into which such items fall are coherent and the patterns universal". The classes Horn proposes are:

- a. predicates of opinion and expectation: *think, expect, believe, be likely, suppose, guess*
- b. predicates of intention: *want, choose, intend, feel like*
- c. predicates of perceptual approximation: *appear, seem*

Later, Horn (1975: 292) unites the three classes under the common label of opinion. They occupy the central position on the scale he proposes. The scale divides predicates into three groups according to their perceptible strength:

⁵ Negative polarity items can occur in questions and conditionals as well. However, what is important for our analysis is the non-occurrence of negative polarity items in affirmative sentences.

- a. weak predicates
- b. mid predicates
- c. strong predicates

A sample of Horn's scale is presented below:

30.	able, possible believe, suppose think, likely seem, appear	know, realize evident, sure
	←WEAK→	←STRONG→
	----- ----- ----- -----	
	may, might can, could	should, want choose, suggest advise, better
		must, have to force, make, cause

Horn (1975 : 289) observes that:

- a. the negation of a weak predicate will produce a strong predicate
- b. the negation of a mid predicate will produce a mid predicate
- c. the negation of a strong predicate will produce a weak predicate

R. Lakoff (1969 : 140-1) credits Dwight Bolinger with the observation that higher-neg sentences are used when the speaker is uncertain about the truth of the proposition expressed in the complement. Thus, as G. Lakoff (1970 : 158) points out, factive verbs never raise NEGs since it is presupposed that their subject knows that the complement of a factive verb is true and he cannot be uncertain about it. Implicatives are excluded from the set of NEG-raising predicates for the same reason.

The predicates in the middle of Horn's scale are neither factive nor implicative, whereas in the case of weak and strong predicates either their positive or negative forms are factive or implicative. Mid-scalars remain non-factive and non-implicative even if they are negated and that is why they can raise NEGs.

The mid-scalar condition must be satisfied by all NEG-raisers, but it is not a sufficient condition. For example, the verbs *try* and *attempt* are mid-scalars but they are excluded from the set of NEG-raising predicates since they cannot express opinion and for that reason they do not have anything to do with the speaker's attitude of certainty or uncertainty.

4.2. Prince (1976 : 425-6) suggests that NEG-raisers behave in a way similar to performatives — both prefer the first person present non-progressive. Hence, if the predicate is in the progressive aspect, it will not allow NEG-Raising to operate even if it satisfies the mid-scalar condition:

31. *I'm not guessing you like roast goose, do you?

In Prince's terms the verb *guess* in (31) is understood "literally", and not "metaphorically".

Similarly, if the predicate is in the future tense, it will be understood literally:

32. *I will not think that John will leave until tomorrow.

As we mentioned in section 2.1., some speakers do not accept predicates in the past as NEG-raisers, i.e., they do not interpret them metaphorically:

33. ? I didn't think that John would leave until tomorrow.

4.3. In this section, we will try to unite the observations made by Horn and Prince.

A mid-scalar predicate may have several meanings, but it must also have the meaning "hold the opinion". This meaning is noticeable only if the predicate satisfies a number of various conditions. Only some of them may be ignored by certain speakers. Less "tolerant" speakers, for example, will not interpret predicates as "hold the opinion" even if one of the conditions is not satisfied. Some of the conditions are then obligatory for all speakers, and two of them, marked "optional", are obligatory only for some speakers:

- A. oblig — the mid-scalar condition satisfied (factives and implicatives are excluded)
- B. oblig — the verb can be interpreted as "hold the opinion" (thus *try* and *attempt* are excluded)
- C. oblig — non-progressive
- D. oblig — non-future
- E. opt — the first person
- F. opt — non-past

Thanks to such a description of a NEG-raising predicate we can avoid formulating strict syntactic constraints that are hardly capable of grasping its elusive boundaries. The following words taken from Prince (1976 : 426) appear to advocate such a solution: "An indirect-discourse context alters the restriction [our E and F] in ways that are totally predictable if they are seen as stemming from the speech situation, but which are inexplicable as formal syntactic restrictions."

5. NEG RAISING PREDICATES IN POLISH

Chcieć ('want') and *sądzić* ('think', 'be of the opinion') are the only Polish NEG-raisers mentioned in the linguistic literature (see, for example, Wierzbicka (1969) and Fisiak et al (1978).) They are not the only Polish NEG-raisers.

In the following sentences the shift of the negative does not change the propositional meaning, which indicates that the matrix predicates belong to NEG-raisers:

- 34a. Wierzę, że nadzieja was nie opuszcza.
(I believe that you don't give up hope)
- 34b. Nie wierzę, że nadzieja was opuszcza.
(I don't believe that you give up hope)
- 35a. Radzę wam, żebyście nie odchodzili za daleko.
(I advise you not to go too far)
- 35b. Nie radzę wam, żebyście odchodzili za daleko.
(I don't advise you to go too far)
- 36a. Mam zamiar nie jechać do Anglii.
(I intend not to go to England)
- 36b. Nie mam zamiaru jechać do Anglii.
(I don't intend to go to England)
- 37a. Jest wskazane nie zwracać na siebie uwagi.
(It is advisable not to attract attention)
- 37b. Nie jest wskazane zwracać na siebie uwagę.
(It is not advisable to attract attention)
- 38a. Wyobrażam sobie, że ich poglądy nie różnią się tak bardzo od moich.
(I imagine that their views don't differ from mine so much)
- 38b. Nie wyobrażam sobie, że ich poglądy różnią się tak bardzo od moich.
(I don't imagine that their views differ from mine so much)

Uważać ('be of the opinion'), *życzyć sobie* ('wish'), *powinien* ('should'), *spodziewać się* ('expect'), *wątpić* ('doubt'), *przypuszczać* ('suppose'), and *wydawać się* ('seem') are other examples of Polish NEG-raisers. Several Polish predicates, however, do not raise NEG despite the fact that their English equivalents are NEG-raisers: *zakładać* ('assume'), *wnioskować* ('conclude'), *lepiej* ('better'), *być dobrym pomysłem* ('be a good idea'), *sugerować* ('suggest'), *woleć* ('choose'), *oczekiwać* ('expect', 'await') and *zgadywać* ('guess'). This is caused by the fact that the above Polish predicates are not able to express opinion though in other senses they are equivalent to their English counterparts.

Let us now consider following examples:

- 39a. Będę myślała, że nie ma ich w domu
(I will think that they are not at home)
- 39b. Nie będę myślała, że są w domu.
(I won't think that they are at home)

Sentences (39a) and (39b) are not synonymous. The verb *myśleć* in the future tense denotes a mental activity rather than "holding the opinion". In other words, it is used in its literal sense and cannot raise NEG.

A possible scale constructed for Polish verbs shows that Polish NEG-raisers occupy its middle part:

40. jest możliwe być zdolnym	wydawać się, jest prawdopodobne, przypuszczać, sądzić, myśleć	wiedzieć, jest pewne, jest oczywiste
← WEAK ————— — STRONG →		
----- -----		
móc, potrafić pozwalać	chcieć, powinien radzić, mieć zamiar	musieć, zmusić

Similarly as in English, Polish mid-scalars are neither factive nor implicative.

If the matrix subject is in the third person, the synonymity is less obvious than it is in the case of the first person. Consider, for example, the following sentences:

- 41a. Piotr przypuszcza, że transformacje nie istnieją.
(Peter supposes that transformations don't exist)
- 41b. Piotr nie przypuszcza, że transformacje istnieją.
(Peter doesn't suppose that transformations exist)
- 42a. Przypuszczam, że transformacje nie istnieją.
(I suppose that transformations don't exist)
- 42b. Nie przypuszczam, że transformacje istnieją.
(I don't suppose that transformations exist)

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1. Roughly speaking, the sets of Polish and English NEG-raising overlap. However, the number of Polish predicates that can express opinion is smaller and for this reason many English NEG-raisers do not have separate Polish equivalents.

6.2. The conditions that must be satisfied by NEG-raising predicates are common for English and Polish. Since Polish does not have any formal distinction between progressive and the non-progressive aspect, condition C is irrelevant in this language.

APPENDIX

English and Polish NEG-Raising Predicates

A. English NEG-raising predicates:

advisable	assume	be true	conclude
advise	be a good idea	better	consider
anticipate	be likely	care	desirable
appear	be probable	choose	expect

fancy	ought to, should	seem	think
feel like	presume	suggest	turn out
figure	presuppose	supposed to	want
guess	reckon	take it for granted	wish
intend			

B. Polish NEG-raising predicates:

być zdania ('be of the opinion')	radzić ('advise')
chcieć ('want')	sądzić ('think', 'be of the opinion')
mieć (as in <i>mieć coś zrobić</i> = 'to be to do something')	spodziewać się ('expect')
mieć ochotę ('feel like')	uważać ('be of the opinion')
mieć zamiar ('intend')	wątpić ('doubt')
?mniemać ('be of the opinion')	wierzyć ('believe')
myśleć ('think')	wydawać się ('seem', 'appear')
powinien ('should')	wyobrażać sobie ('imagine')
pożądane ('desirable')	wskazane ('advisable')
prawdopodobne ('probable', 'likely')	zdawać się ('seem', 'appear')
przypuszczać ('suppose')	zyczyć sobie ('wish')

REFERENCES

- Carden, G. 1971. "A dialect argument for NOT-transportation". *Linguistic inquiry* 2. 423—426.
- Feldman, C. F. 1974. "Pragmatic features of natural language". *CLS* 10. 151—160.
- Fillmore, C. 1963. "The position of embedding transformations in a grammar". *Word* 19. 208—231.
- Fisiak, J., et al. 1978. *An introductory English-Polish contrastive grammar*. Warszawa; PWN.
- Fodor, J. A. and Katz, J. J. (eds). 1964. *The structure of language. Readings in the philosophy of language*. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall.
- Horn, L. 1971. "Negative transportation: unsafe at any speed?". *CLS* 7. 120—133.
- Horn, L. 1975. "NEG-raising predicates: towards an explanation". *CLS* 11. 279—294.
- Jackendoff, R. S. 1971. "On some questionable arguments about quantifiers and negation". *Language* 47. 282—297.
- Jacobs, R. A. and Rosenbaum, P. S. (eds). 1970. *Readings in English transformational grammar*. Waltham, Mass.: Ginn and Co.
- Klima, E. 1964. "Negation in English". In Fodor, J. A. and Katz, J. J. (eds). 1964. 246—323.
- Lakoff, R. 1969. "A syntactic argument for negative transportation". *CLS* 5. 148—158.
- Lakoff, G. 1970. "Pronominalization, negation and the analysis of adverbs". In Jacobs, R. A. and Rosenbaum, P. S. (eds). 1970. 145—165.
- Lindholm, J. M. 1969. "Negative-Raising and sentence pronominalization". *CLS* 5. 148—158.
- Prince, E. 1976. "The syntax and semantics of NEG-raising, with evidence from French". *Language* 52. 404—426.
- Sheintuch, G. and Wise, K. 1976. "On the pragmatic unity of the rules of NEG-Raising and NEG-Attraction". *CLS* 12. 548—557.
- Stockwell, R. P., et al. 1973. *The major syntactic structures of English*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Wierzbicka, A. 1969. *Dociekania semantyczne*. Wrocław: Ossolineum.