

On the Synchronic and Diachronic Status of the Negative Adverbials *ikke* and *not*

1	The paradox.....	1
2	<i>Wh</i> -movement.....	4
3	The Lexical Topic Constraint.....	5
4	The Development in Danish.....	9
5	The Development in English.....	14
6	Summary.....	19
7	References.....	20

1 The paradox

In Danish and English, the negative operator *ikke/not* cannot be topicalized, whereas most other adverbials (but not all, cf. section 3 below) can.

- (1) a. Da: *Ikke har jeg læst den dumme bog.
b. En: *Not have I read that stupid book.
- (2) a. Da: Aldrig har jeg læst noget så dumt.
b. En: Never have I read anything so stupid.

As the target of topicalization is spec-CP, elements that can be topicalized must be XPs. Therefore, the fact that *ikke* and *not* can't be topicalized might be taken to show that they are X⁰s.

Analyzing negation as Neg⁰ would hold for English and Danish alone but not for the very closely related Faroese, Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish, where the topicalizable negation markers must be XPs (the same goes for Finland Swedish, cf. Bergroth 1917: 168, §251):¹

¹ At least in Norwegian (cf. Faarlund et al. 1997: 814) and Swedish (Platzack, p.c.), fronting of negation is usually accompanied with focal stress, which seems to imply focalization rather than topicalization. According to the Split-CP Hypothesis (Rizzi 1997), the former is movement to FocusP, the latter is movement to TopicP. However, focalization in the Scandinavian languages as well as English is normally done with emphatic stress, while topicalization is always movement. Thus, Danish *ikke* and English *not* can be focalized (phonological process) but not topicalized (syntactic process) while the other languages in question have no such restriction. Furthermore, the focal stress is often on a constituent other than the fronted negation, e.g. Sw: *Inte vet JAG* 'I don't know'. In Icelandic, there has to be focal stress on one of the constituents following the topicalized negation, e.g. *ég* 'I' in (4).

- (3) Fa: Ikki ljóðar tað væl.
Not sounds that well (Lockwood 1977: 155)
- (4) Ic: Ekki hef ég áhyggjur af börnunum.
Not have I worries of children.the
- (5) No: Ikkje var det sett opp noko varsel om denne faren.
Not were it put up any warning about this danger.the (AV/Loka/01²)
- (6) Sw: Inte tänker han sälja bilen i vår.
Not thinks he sell car.the in spring (Holmes & Hinchliffe 1994: 516)

In English as well as in Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish, it is clear that there are two versions of the negation marker, namely, English *not/-n't*, Icelandic *ekki* [ɛhɔɪ]/-*ekki* [ɪɔɪ], Norwegian *ikke/-kke*, and Swedish *inte/-nte*.^{3,4}

- (7) En: a. Has John not read the book?
b. Has-n't John read the book?
- (8) Ic: a. Hefur Jón ekki lesið bókina?
b. Hefur-ekki Jón lesið bókina?
- (9) No: a. Har Johan ikkje lest boka?
b. Ha-kkje Johan lest boka?
- (10) Sw: a. Har Johan inte läst boken?
b. Ha-nte Johan läst boken?

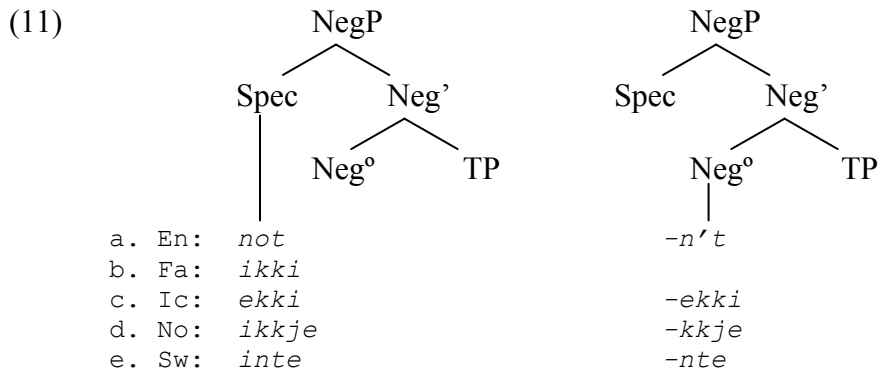
The two versions occupy different structural positions. The full version is an XP in spec-NegP, whereas the clitic version, which moves with the verb to C^o, is base-generated (or licensed) in Neg^o (as is the case with French *pas* and *ne-*, respectively):

² From the Nynorsk corpus at the *Tekstlaboratoriet* at Universitetet i Oslo, <http://www.hf.uio.no/tekstlab/>. The webpage gives no more specific data on the origins or dates of the text other than *lokalaviser*, 'local newspapers'.

³ The Swedish *-nte* may, however, not be a syntactic clitic but may instead be the result of phonological cliticization. In Swedish main clauses, both the finite verb and the non-clitic sentential negation (as well as the topic) may precede the subject, e.g. *idag kommer (inte) Peter (inte)* 'Peter isn't coming today' (Holmes & Hinchliffe 1994: 522). In embedded clauses, negation may precede the subject, e.g. *att (inte) Johan (inte) gillar prinsesstårta* 'that Johan doesn't like princess cake' (Sells 2000: 2). This seems to suggest that the subject may occupy a position lower than spec-NegP (say, spec-TP) and therefore it is possible that the *-nte* version of *inte* may be the result of phonological cliticization.

⁴ In Icelandic, if the subject is a pronoun, negation has to follow the enclitic subject:

- (i) Ic: *Hefur-ekki hann lesið bókina?
Has-not he read book.the
- (ii) Ic: Hefur-ann-ekki lesið bókina?
Has-he-not read book.the



In the case of *ikke* and *not*, however, cliticization is not possible; they don't move with the verb to C^o. This suggests that they are XPs, not X^os:

- (12) En: a. Has John not read the book?
 b. *Has-not John read the book?

- (13) Da: a. Har Johan ikke læst bogen?
 b. *Har-ikke Johan læst bogen?

Danish *ikke* appears to have the same categorial status as English *not*, which must be an XP as opposed to *-n't*. The set of elements that can be topicalized is parallel in Danish and English: all negative adverbials except *not*.⁵

- (14) En: a. Under no circumstances will I read that nonsense.
 b. Never will I read that nonsense.
 c. *Not will I read that nonsense.

- (15) Da: a. Under ingen omstændigheder vil jeg læse det sludder.
 b. Aldrig vil jeg læse det sludder.
 c. *Ikke vil jeg læse det sludder.

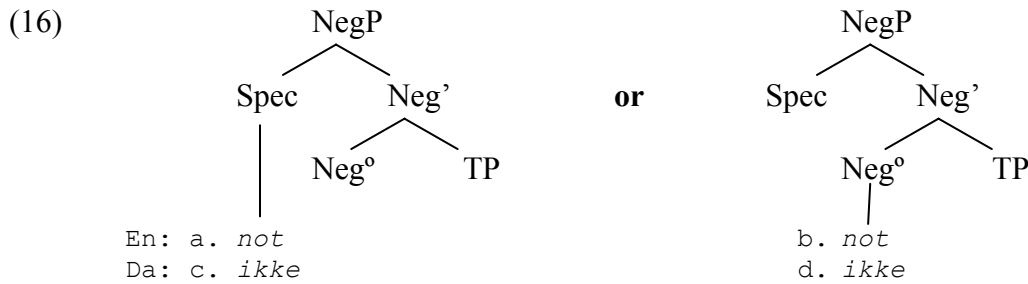
The paradox, then, is that *ikke* and *not* appear to be both Spec-NegP and Neg^o or neither:

⁵ Actually, there is another exception, namely, *hardly/næppe*:

- (i) En: *Hardly will I read that nonsense.
 (ii) Da: *Næppe vil jeg læse det sludder.

Both are fine with a temporal reading such as:

- (iii) En: Hardly had I arrived before I had to leave again.
 (iv) Da: Næppe var jeg ankommet før jeg måtte tage af sted igen.



In this paper I shall argue that both *ikke* and *not* are in fact XPs, not X⁰s, and that the lack of topicalizability is due to their semantic ‘lightness’.

2 Wh-movement

Sentential negation may trigger an island effect. *Wh*-extraction across NegP is not possible in (17)a, while the positive version in (17)b doesn’t block extraction. The fact that negation may block \bar{A} -movement suggests that spec-NegP is filled.

- (17) Da: a. *Det er frygteligt hvor klog₁ du ikke er t₁
It is terrible how clever you not are
- b. Det er frygteligt hvor dum₁ du er t₁
It is terrible how stupid you are

(Vikner 2001b: 203 (81a), (82a))

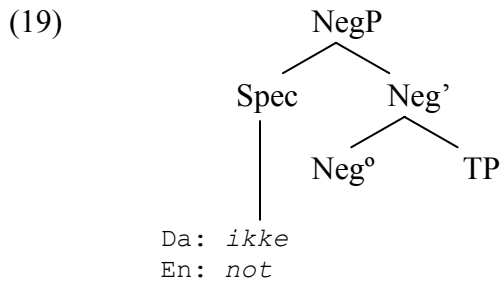
The same can be observed in English. However, the fact that the enclitic *-n’t* has the same blocking effect shows that it doesn’t matter whether negation is realized as an X⁰ or as an XP.

- (18) En: a. *It is terrible how clever₁ you are not t₁
 b. *It is terrible how clever₁ you aren’t t₁
 c. It is terrible how stupid₁ you are t₁

(Vikner 2001b: 203 (83); see also Haegeman 1995: 190)

In other words, negative islands do not give any conclusive evidence to choose between the X⁰ and the XP analysis. More importantly, it doesn’t give conclusive evidence against analyzing the negative markers as XPs.

It seems reasonable to analyse Danish *ikke* and English *not* as overt operators in spec-NegP rather than as the head of NegP, though there is no direct empirical evidence to support it. Hence, the structures in (16)b and d above are out and (16)a and c, repeated here as (19), are preferable:



In the next section, I present evidence that *ikke* and *not* are not the only XPs that can't be topicalized and therefore the lack of topicalizability may not be used as conclusive evidence for X° status.

3 The Lexical Topic Constraint

Following Rizzi (1997: 287), I assume that the movement of the topic to spec-CP is motivated by the *Topic Criterion* (on a par with the *Wh-Criterion* and the *NEG-Criterion*):

- (20) **The Topic Criterion (TOPCRIT)**
 The [TOP] feature must be overtly checked on C°_[TOP].
 “The topic must be in spec-CP at Spell-Out.”

One of the characteristics of a topic is lexical content. For example, English *never* literally (as well as etymologically⁶) means *not ever* or \neg *ever*, whereas the operator *not* itself has no lexical meaning, it only means “ \neg ”. I propose that the constraint that regulates whether a language allows topicalization of non-lexical material or not is LEXTOP:

- (21) **The Lexical Topic Constraint (LEXTOP)**
 “Spec-CP must have lexical content.”
Not is [+NEG, -LEX], *never* is [+NEG, +LEX].⁷

There are thus two different types of features, i.e. functional and lexical features. The following table is a simple example of the difference between the two (the list of features is not intended to be exhaustive, merely illustrative):

⁶ Etymologically, *never* is OE: *nāfre* < *ne-āfre* (not-ever); *aldrig* is ON: *aldri-gi* (age-no = never) < *ne aldri-gi* (not age-any = not at any age/time).

⁷ Strictly speaking, [LEX] is not a feature just as there is no [FUNC] feature. It's just shorthand for the presence of lexical features.

(22) **Lexical and Functional Features:**

Da:	<i>ikke</i>	<i>aldrig</i>	<i>hvilken</i>	<i>hvem</i>	<i>en</i>	<i>hende</i>
En:	<i>not</i>	<i>never</i>	<i>which</i>	<i>who</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>her</i>
Lexical	–	TIME	ENTITY	HUMAN	–	FEMALE ⁸
Functional	NEG	NEG	WH, -DEF	WH, -DEF	-DEF, 3 RD , -PLUR, D	ACC, +DEF, 3 RD , -PLUR, +FEM, -MASC, D

In Danish and English as well as in German, non-lexical negative operators can't be topicalized, whereas in Faroese, Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish (and Middle Danish, cf. section 4 below) both lexical and non-lexical operators can be topic (again, the list is not exhaustive; there are of course other possible negative topics, such as Danish *på ingen måde* 'in no way'):

(23) **Possible negative topics:**

Da	En	Fa	Ge	Ic	MD	No	Sw
<i>*ikke</i>	<i>*not</i>	<i>ikke</i>	<i>*nicht</i>	<i>ekki</i>	<i>icke</i>	<i>ikke</i>	<i>inte</i>
<i>aldrig</i>	<i>never</i>	<i>ongantið</i> ⁹	<i>nie</i>	<i>aldrei</i>	<i>aldrig</i>	<i>aldri</i>	<i>aldrig</i>

In a theory with violable constraints such as Optimality Theory (OT; e.g. Grimshaw 1995, Kager 1999, Prince & Smolensky 1993, Vikner 2001a, b) this difference may be accounted for by differential ranking of constraints (» means "is ranked higher than"):

- (24) a. Da, En, and Ge: LEXTOP » TOPCRIT
 "It's more important that spec-CP is lexical than it is to move the topic to spec-CP."
- b. Fa, Ic, No, and Sw: TOPCRIT » LEXTOP
 "It's more important to move the topic to spec-CP than it is that spec-CP is lexical."

In Danish and English, even though the negative adverbs *ikke* and *not* may be marked [+TOP], they cannot be topicalized. Instead, in English nothing is topicalized (both spec-CP and C° are empty), whereas in Danish, the subject moves to spec-CP to satisfy the V2 requirement. The subject becomes the 'default topic' because it is the closest c-commanded element and therefore optimally satisfies the Minimal Link Condition.

⁸ Note that the functional feature [+FEM(ININE)] and the lexical feature [+FEMALE] are not the same. In German, the word for 'girl', *Mädchen*, is [+FEMALE] but [-FEM, -MASC], i.e. neuter. The Danish word for 'girl', *pige*, is [+FEMALE] and [+FEM, +MASC], i.e. common gender.

⁹ En. *never* translates into both Fa. *ongantið* and *aldri(n)*.

This difference in topicalization is also (partly) supported by differences in topicalization of other semantically ‘light’ adverbs. The sentence-medial adverbs in (26) can all occupy the underlined slot in (25) in the respective languages.¹⁰ (a ‘-’ in the table indicates that the language has no corresponding single term.)

- (25) a. Da: Hun har _____ læst bogen
 b. En: She has _____ read the book
 c. Fa: Hon hevur _____ lisið bókina
 d. Ic: Hún hefur _____ lesið bókina
 e. No: Ho har _____ lest boka
 f. Sw: Hon har _____ läst boken

(26) Sentence medial ‘light’ adverbs:

Danish	English	Faroese	Icelandic	Norwegian	Swedish
<i>ikke</i>	<i>not</i>	<i>ikki</i>	<i>ekki</i>	<i>ikke</i>	<i>inte</i>
<i>jo</i>	-	<i>jú</i>	<i>nú</i>	<i>jo</i>	<i>ju</i>
<i>også</i>	<i>also</i>	<i>eisini</i>	<i>líka</i>	<i>også</i>	<i>också</i>
<i>da</i>	-	<i>tá</i>	<i>sko</i>	<i>da</i>	<i>då</i>
<i>sikkert</i>	<i>probably</i>	<i>ivaleynt</i>	<i>örugglega</i>	<i>sikkert</i>	<i>säkert</i>
<i>nok</i>	-	<i>nokk</i>	<i>ábyggilega</i>	<i>nok</i>	<i>nog</i>
<i>kun</i>	<i>just</i>	<i>bara</i>	<i>bara</i>	<i>kun</i>	<i>bara</i>
<i>endda</i>	<i>even</i>	<i>enntá</i>	-	<i>%enda</i>	<i>ändå</i>
<i>vistnok</i>	-	<i>helst</i>	<i>eflaust</i>	<i>visstnok</i>	<i>visst</i>
9	5	9	8	8(9)	9

Consider next topicalization of these adverbs:^{11, 12}

¹⁰ Thanks to Peter Svenonius, Kristine Bentzen, Marit Julien, and Janne Bondi Johannessen for information on Norwegian, Kersti Börjars for Swedish, and Gunnar Hrafn Hrafnbjargarson for Icelandic.

¹¹ In Icelandic, sentences with topicalized *örugglega*, *ábyggilega* and *eflaust* are better in the subjunctive (ii) than in the indicative (i). Both are grammatical but the indicative version is slightly marked:

- (i) Ic: ?Örugglega/ábyggilega/eflaust hef ég lesið bókina
Probably/possibly/maybe have I read book.the
 (ii) Ic: Örugglega/ábyggilega/eflaust hefði ég lesið bókina
Probably/possibly/maybe had I read book.the

¹² My informants and Faarlund et al. (1997: 814) agree that Norwegian *sikkert* cannot be topicalized. Interestingly, I have found one example in the Bokmål corpus at Tekstlaboratoriet, www.tekstlab.uio.no:

- (i) No: Sikkert kunne student-aktørerne ha turnert med den på Vestlandsbygdene
Probably could student-actors.the have toured with it on Vestland-towns.the
 med stort hell om de kunne gi seg tid til sligt.
with great luck if they could give SELF time to such.

- (27) a. Da: _____ har hun læst bogen
 b. En: _____ (has) she read the book
 c. Fa: _____ hevur hon lisið bókina
 d. Ic: _____ hefur hún lesið bókina
 e. No: _____ har ho lest boka
 f. Sw: _____ har hon läst boken

(28) **Fronted 'light' adverbs:**

Danish	English	Faroese	Icelandic	Norwegian	Swedish
<i>*Ikke</i>	<i>*not</i>	<i>ikki</i>	<i>ekki</i>	<i>ikke</i>	<i>inte</i>
<i>*jo</i>	-	<i>*jú</i>	<i>nú</i>	<i>*jo</i>	<i>*ju</i>
<i>*også</i>	<i>*also</i>	<i>eisini</i>	<i>*lika</i>	<i>*også</i>	<i>%också</i>
<i>*da</i>	-	<i>*tá</i>	<i>*sko</i>	<i>*da</i>	<i>då</i>
<i>*sikkert</i>	<i>*probably</i>	<i>ivaleyst</i>	<i>örugglega</i>	<i>sikkert</i>	<i>säkert</i>
<i>*nok</i>	-	<i>*nökk</i>	<i>ábyggilega</i>	<i>*nok</i>	<i>nog</i>
<i>*kun</i>	<i>*just</i>	<i>*bara</i>	<i>*bara</i>	<i>*kun</i>	<i>*bara</i>
<i>*endda</i>	<i>*even</i>	<i>enntá</i>	-	<i>enda</i>	<i>ändå</i>
<i>*vistnok</i>	-	<i>helst</i>	<i>eflaust</i>	<i>visstnok</i>	<i>visst</i>
0	0	5	5	4	6(7)

(There are, of course, other light adverbs that can be fronted in all the languages, such as *maybe* and *naturally*.)

The point is that topicalization of adverbs is significantly more restricted in Danish and English than in the other languages in question. None of the semantically light adverbs in (28) can be fronted in Danish and English, whereas it is possible to varying degrees in the other languages.

The fact that not all of these adverbials behave the same within each language suggests that some other constraint or constraints are involved besides LEXTOP and/or that [\pm LEX] is not binary: A certain amount of meaning or number of lexical features (such as e.g. [+TEMPORAL] and [+SPATIAL]) is necessary to license topicalization.

The question is not whether a language allows fronting of adverbials in general or not, because that is licensed in all the languages. The same goes for operators, because all the languages allow topicalization of (some version of) the operator *never*. The important distinction is whether semantically light adverbs may be topicalized or not

Below I show how this can be derived from the relative ranking of LEXTOP and TOPCRIT and their interaction with one additional constraint.

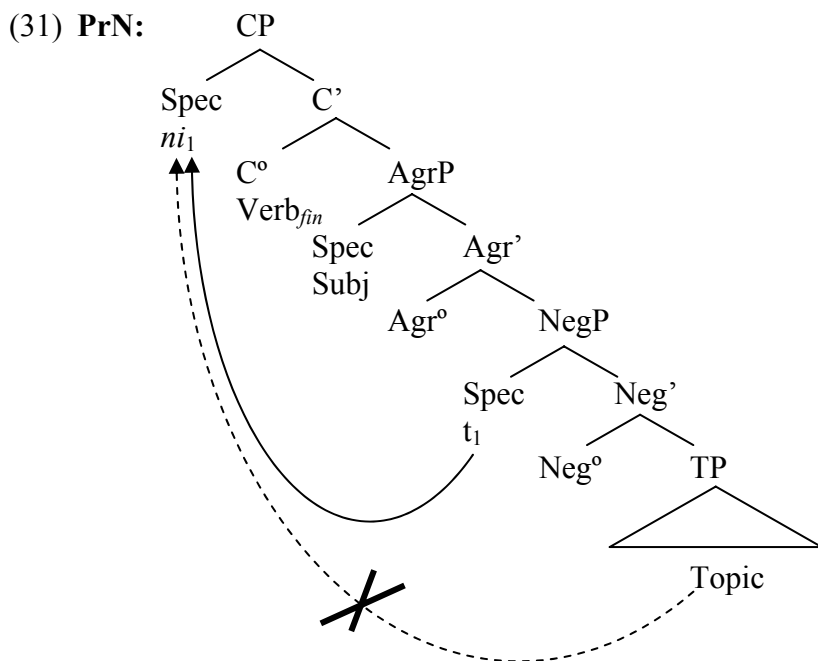
4 The Development in Danish

Jespersen's cycle (1917) (that is, oscillation between free word and affix) offers support for the XP status of Danish *ikke* as well as for negation in the other Scandinavian languages and English. The original negative marker *ni* was reduced to a clitic *ne-* and subsequently another marker was introduced, namely *ekki*, which started out as a negative polarity item (NPI). At some point *ne-* disappears and the adverbial *ekki* is used alone to mark negation.¹³

(29) *ni* V > *ne-*V *ekki*_{NPI} > V *ekki*_{NEG} > V *icke*_{NEG} > V *ikke*_{NEG}

Topicalized negation is found in Proto-Norse (PrN) (Da. *Urnordisk*; c. 200-800) runic inscriptions (I take *ni*'s to be phonological cliticization of *-s* in C° to *ni* in spec-CP):

(30) PrN: *ni*'s solu sot uk ni sakse stAin skorin
not-is sun sought and not knife stone cut
 "It is not hit by the sun and the stone is not cut with a knife."
 (ca. 700, *The Eggjum Stone in Norway*, Krause 1971: 143)



I propose that this obligatory movement to spec-CP of the negative operator is motivated by the highly ranked constraint *Operator in Scope*:

¹³ The former status of the negative marker as an NPI receives some support from the etymology of Danish *ikke* and English *not* (both reminiscent of the French *ne pas*, literally 'not a step'):

- (i) Da: *ikke* < OD *ekki* < ON *ekki*, neuter of *engi* < *ne einn-gi* / *ne eitt-gi* ('not one-at.all')
- (ii) En: *not* < ME weak variant of *naught* < ME, OE *nauht*, *nāwith* (*nā* 'no' + *with* 'thing')

(32) **Operators in Scope (OPSC)**

Operators must be in scope positions, i.e. c-command the clause.
 “OPs must be in spec-CP”

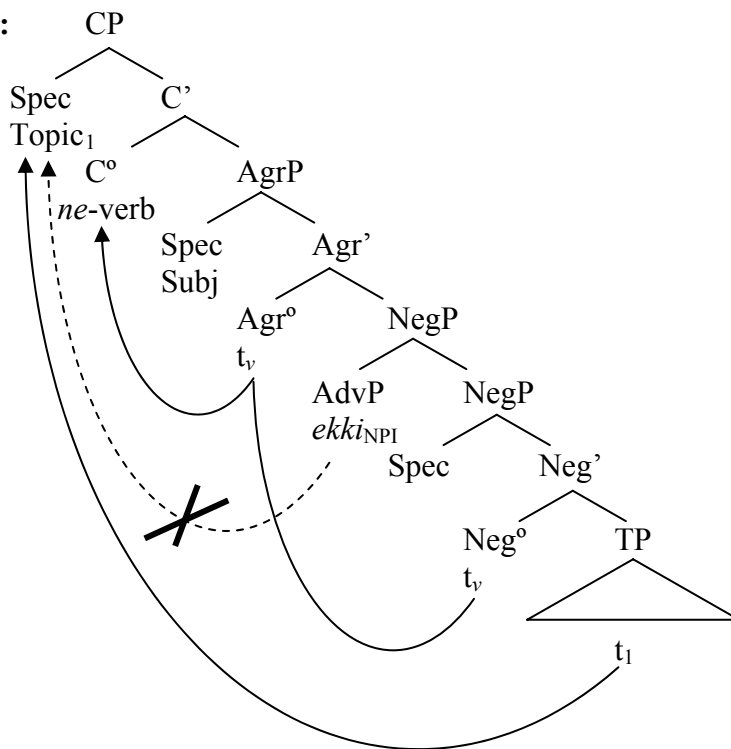
With OPSC ranked higher than LEXTOP and TOPCRIT, it is more important to have the operator in spec-CP than to move a potential topic and to make sure that spec-CP is lexical.

(33) Proto-Norse: OPSC » LEXTOP, TOPCRIT

According to Eythórsson (2002: 193), the negative marker *ne* (*ni*) is rare and not productive in Old Norse and when it is there, it displays the characteristics of an archaism (base-generated on the verb). Moreover, in Old Norse, the verb with the proclitic *ne* never occurs sentence-initially.

This suggests a hypothetical intermediate stage between Proto-Norse and Old Norse, Proto-Norse 2, where *ne/ni* has been reduced to a proclitic head. Being an X⁰, it can't move to spec-CP and block topicalization:

(34) **PrN2:**



Note that in Proto-Norse 2, *ekki* is adjoined to NegP like other sentential adverbials, whereas it occurs in spec-NegP in later stages where it has the status of true negation. (It is, of course, also possible to analyse *ekki* as a VP-adverbial; the difference is string-vacuous as the negative *ne* is cliticized onto the verb in C⁰.)

The semantically light NPI *ekki* cannot be topicalized, which can be accounted for by ranking LEXTOP above OPSC and TOPCRIT: It is more important to keep spec-CP lexical than to move a non-lexical topic (OPSC doesn't apply to Neg^o or NPIs).

(35) Proto-Norse 2: LEXTOP » OPSC, TOPCRIT

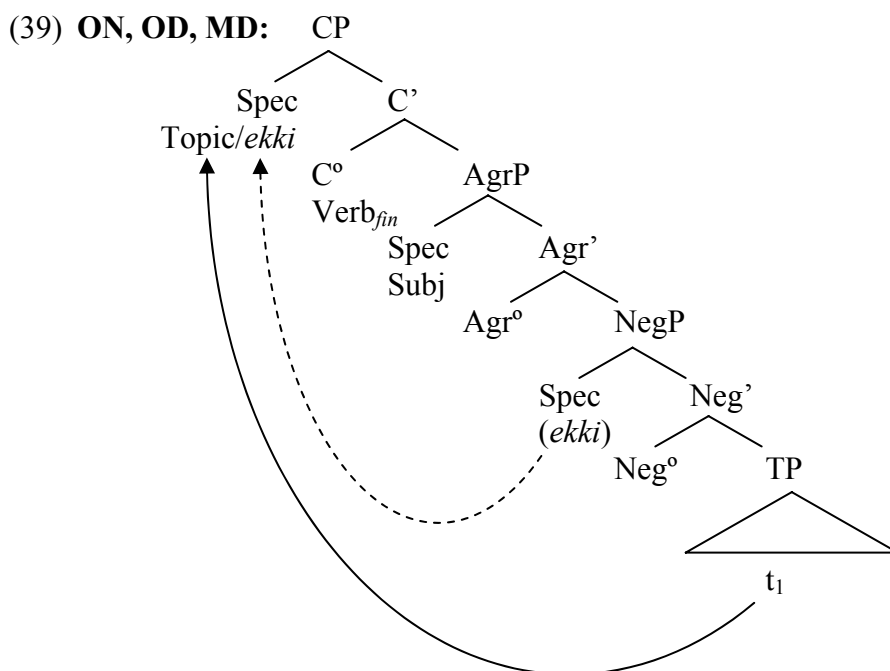
In short, two things separate Proto-Norse 2 from Proto-Norse 1. **First**, negation *ne* changes from being realized as spec-NegP to being realized as Neg^o. It is therefore not subject to OPSC as this constraint only applies to operators (XPs). **Second**, constraint reranking; LEXTOP now outranks TOPCRIT and OPSC.

According to Iversen (1973: 158), in Old Norse (ON, c. 800-1100), topicalization of negation had developed into being quite common – i.e. optional, not obligatory. The same pattern is found in Old Danish (OD, c. 1100-1350), and Middle Danish (MD, c. 1350-1500):

(36) ON: Ekki er þat vart ættnafn
Not is that our family-name (Iversen 1973: 158)

(37) OD: Ekki kan umbotzman mere for siin ret fangæ
Not can ombudsman more for his right catch
 “The ombudsman has no right to catch more.”
 (1241, *Jyske Lov*, Udaler & Wellejus 1968: 90)

(38) MD: Icke tror ieg ath Gud kunde bliffue mand
Not think I that God could become man
 (1534, *Karl Magnus' Krønike*, Ruus 2001)

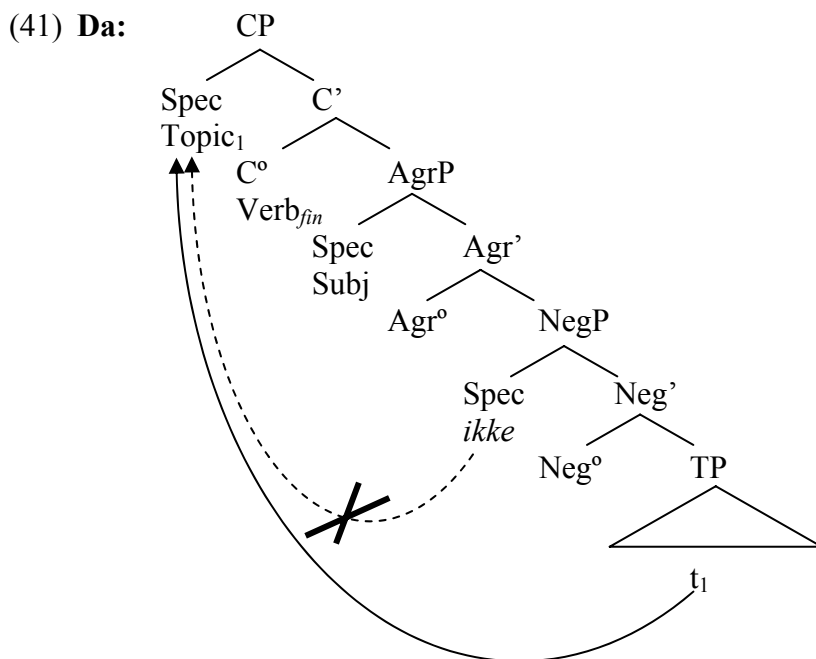


The change from Proto-Norse 2 to Old Norse is also two-sided. **First**, negation changes from Neg° back to spec-NegP. *Ne* has disappeared and *ekki* has changed status from NPI to negative operator (and thus from being adjoined to NegP to being inserted into spec-NegP). Old Danish and Middle Danish, as well as all the other Scandinavian languages except Modern Danish, behave in the same way as Old Norse in allowing topicalization of the negative operator.

The **second** change is constraint reranking: TOPCRIT is now ranked above LEXTOP and OPSC. It is more important to move any topic, lexical or non-lexical than it is to make sure that spec-CP is lexical or to move the operator into spec-CP.¹⁴

(40) Old Norse (and descendants): TOPCRIT » LEXTOP, OPSC

Consider next Modern Danish, which doesn't allow topicalization of the negative operator.



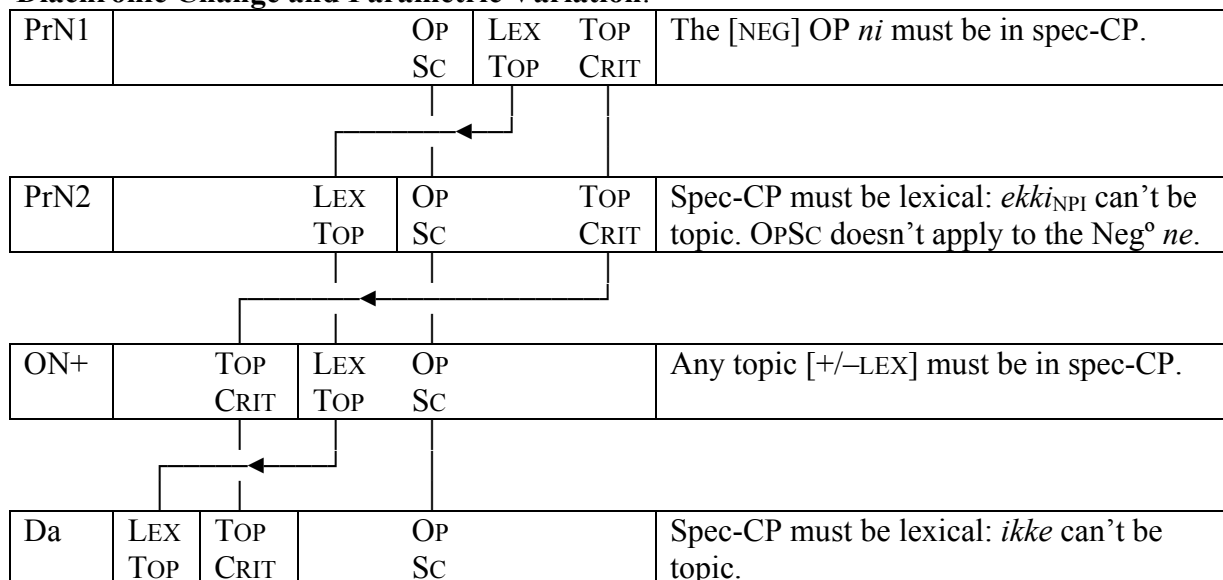
¹⁴ There is another important difference between Old Norse and the descendant Scandinavian languages on the one hand and Modern Danish and English on the other. The former (with Danish at least up until Middle Danish) allow (stylistically marked) V1 declarative main clauses in certain contexts, primarily in written narrative texts, a phenomenon known as Narrative Inversion. If Narrative Inversion is analyzed as topic-drop (perhaps of something like “and then”), such structures probably contain an empty operator OP in spec-CP. This OP, being an operator and topic, is subject to OPSC, LEXTOP and TOPCRIT; in fact it violates LEXTOP. Some other highly ranked constraint or constraints render such V1 declaratives grammatical. Alternatively, the finite verb (or some property of it) is itself the topic and thus checks [TOP] on C°. It is interesting to note that Danish and English which are restricted in the topicalization of ‘light’ adverbials are also the languages that disallow Narrative Inversion. German is a counter example as it disallows topicalization of *nicht* but allows Narrative Inversion. However, I disregard Narrative Inversion in my analysis.

The difference between Modern Danish and Old Norse (and its descendants) is that in Modern Danish, LEX_{TOP} has highest priority. As in Proto-Norse 2, making sure that spec-CP is lexical has highest priority. After that, moving the topic has priority over moving the operator to spec-CP:
 (42) Modern Danish: LEX_{TOP} » TOP_{CRIT} » OP_{SC}

There is, however, an important difference between Proto-Norse 2 and Modern Danish: In the former, negation is the proclitic Neg^o, *ne-*, whereas in the latter, it's an XP in spec-NegP, namely, *ikke*.

That the differences between the stages are rather minimal becomes clearer once the hierarchies are set up in a box-diagram. (Vertical lines mean “is ranked higher than”, i.e., the same as “»”; ‘missing’ vertical lines indicate that rankings are non-crucial, i.e. the same as commas in the constraint hierarchies above.)

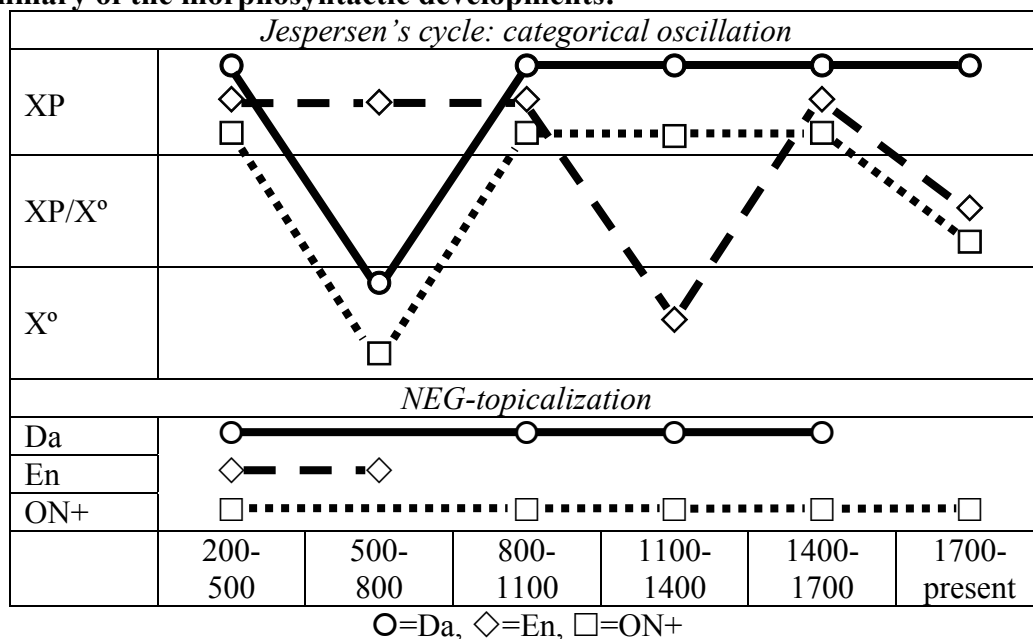
(43) **Diachronic Change and Parametric Variation:**



The syntactic change in grammaticality of NEG-topicalization, but not the cyclic change between spec-NegP and Neg^o, is accounted for by the movement of a single constraint (ON+ is short for Old Norse, Old Danish, Middle Danish, Faroese, Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish).

In fact, it seems that Jespersen's cycle and NEG-topicalization has little or nothing to do with each other, except that XP status is a necessary (but not sufficient) prerequisite for topicalization:

(44) Summary of the morphosyntactic developments:



5 The Development in English

The morphosyntactic development in English is in a number of ways parallel to the one in Danish. For expository reasons I begin with the summary:

(45) Diachronic Change and Parametric Variation:

PrE	OP SC	LEX TOP	TOP CRIT		The [NEG] OP <i>no</i> must be in spec-CP. [-V2]
OE	OP SC	LEX TOP	TOP CRIT		The [NEG] OP <i>ne</i> must be in spec-CP. [+V2]
ME	OP SC	LEX TOP	TOP CRIT		Spec-CP must be lexical: <i>na</i> _{NPI} can't be topic. OPSC doesn't apply to the Neg° <i>ne</i> . [+V2]
ENE		LEX TOP	TOP CRIT	OP SC	Spec-CP must be lexical: <i>not</i> can't be topic. [-V2] / residual [+V2]
En		LEX TOP	TOP CRIT	OP SC	Spec-CP must be lexical: <i>not</i> can't be topic. [-V2] / residual [+V2], +dummy <i>do</i>

Note that the rankings for Proto-, Old, and Middle English are the same as the one for Proto-Norse 1, and that Early Modern and Modern English are the same as Modern Danish.

Jespersen's cycle for English looks as follows:

(46) $no\ V > ne\ V > ne\text{-}V\ na_{NPI} > V\ not_{NEG}$

Van Kemenade (2000: 63) divides the language in *Beowulf* into two stages, namely 8th century Old English, for which I use the term Proto-English, and Early and Later Old English, which I merely call Old English. In Proto-English (PrE, c. 450-800), which is not a V2 language, negation is marked with the sentence initial *no/ne* (I ignore OV word order phenomena):

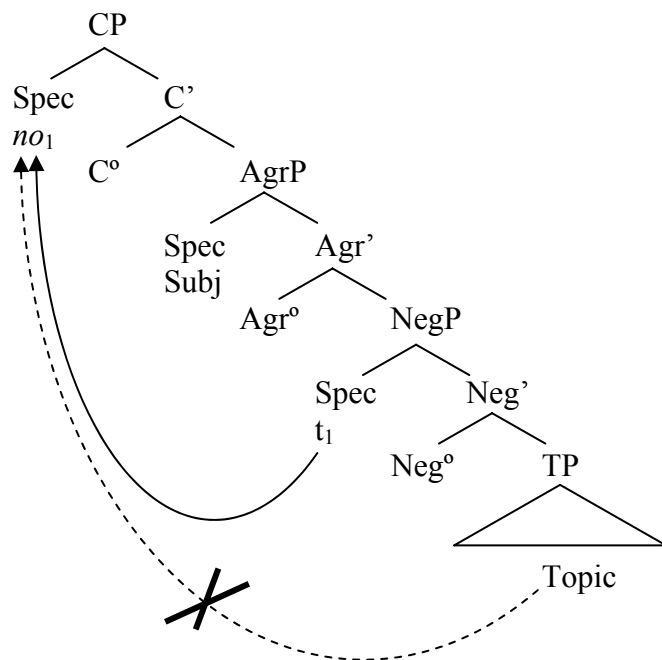
(47) PrE: *nō hē wiht fram mē flōdyþum feor fleotan*
Not he thing from me waves-DAT.PL far swim

meahte, hraþor on holme; nō ic fram him wolde.
could, quicker in water; not I from him wanted

“In no way could he swim far from me on the waves of the flood, more quickly on the sea; I would not consent to leave him.”

(c. 750, *Beowulf*, 541-543, Klaeber 1922; translation: van Kemenade 2000: 61, (11a))

(48) PrE:

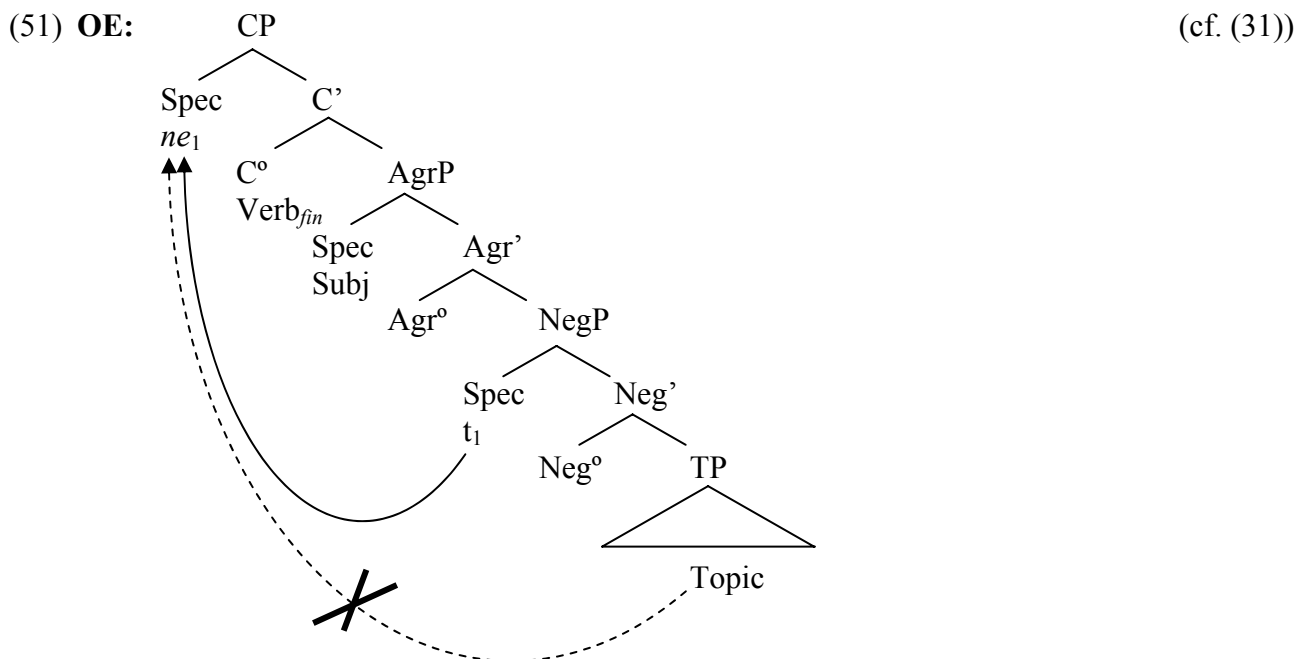


It's more important to have the operator in spec-CP than to make sure that spec-CP is lexical and to move a potential topic:

(49) Proto-English: OPSC » LEXTOP, TOPCRIT

Old English (OE, c. 800-1100) is a V2 language and sentential negation is realized as the sentence initial *ne* immediately followed by the finite verb:

- (50) OE: Ne seah ic elpeodige þus manige men modiglicran
Not see I all-people thus many men brave
 “Among all the peoples, I haven’t seen so many brave men.”
 (c. 750, *Beowulf*, 336-337, Klaeber 1922)



As was the case with Proto-English, in Old English it is more important to have the operator in spec-CP than to make sure that spec-CP is lexical and to move a potential topic (the difference between the two is the setting of the ‘V2 parameter’).

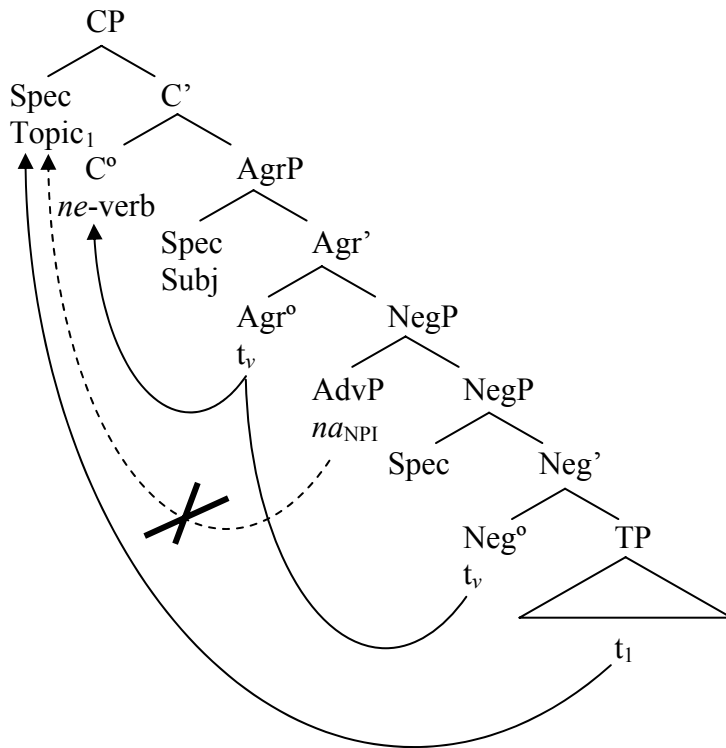
- (52) Old English: OPSC » LEXTOP, TOPCRIT

In Middle English (ME, c. 1100-1450), the sentence initial *ne* has been weakened and it is now supported by the sentence medial NPI *na* or by some other negative element (such as a negative quantifier phrase or *nouȝt*). *Ælfric* is normally classified as Old English but when it comes to negation, it behaves more like Middle English:

- (53) ME: Ne hate ic eow na þeowan
Not hate I you not slave
 “I don’t hate you, slave.”
 (c. 1000, *Ælfric’s Lives of Saints*, 84, Skeat 1966)

(54) ME:

(cf. (34))



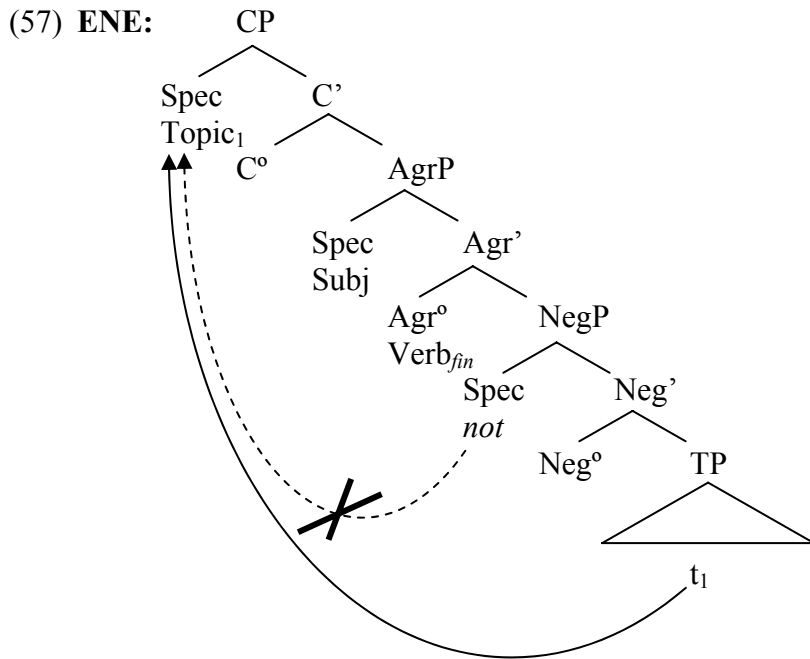
The semantically light NPI *na* (adjoined to NegP) cannot be topicalized. It is more important to keep spec-CP lexical than to move a non-lexical topic:

(55) Middle English: OPSC, LEXTOP » TOPCRIT

The difference between Old and Middle English is two-sided: **one**, negation changes category from spec-NegP to Neg°; **two**, spec-CP has to be lexical. Recall that OPSC doesn't apply the Neg°.

Early Modern English (or Early New English, ENE, c. 1450-1700; 'Shakespeare English') is not a V2 language (or rather, it's 'residual V2'). The negative marker is *not* in spec-NegP and it can't be topicalized.

(56) ENE: So foul and fair a day I have not seen.
(1606, *Macbeth*, scene 3, William Shakespeare)



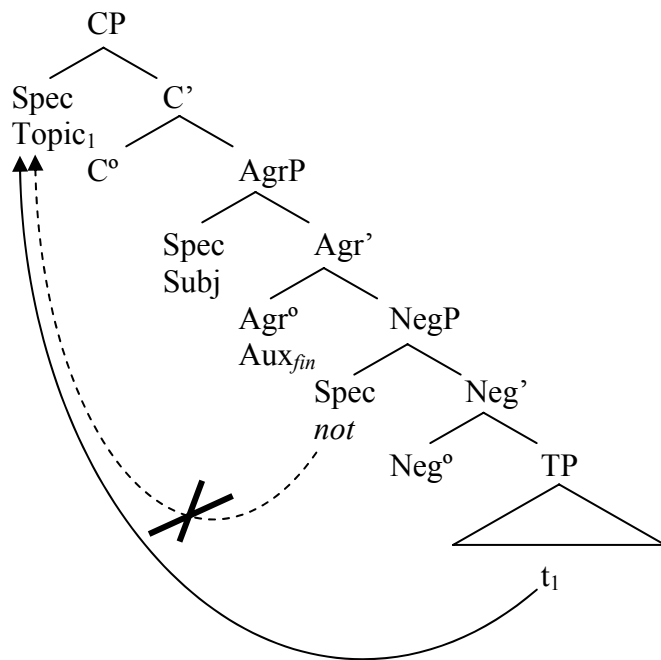
The change from Middle to Early Modern English involves, again, two things: **one**, negation changes back from Neg° to spec-NegP and **two**, constraint reranking. As before, semantically light elements can't be topic but the crucial difference is that the negative operator can't occupy spec-CP. Hence, OPSC is ranked lower than TOPCRIT and LEXTOP.

(58) Early Modern English: LEXTOP » TOPCRIT » OPSC

It's more important to move the topic to spec-CP and to make sure that it's lexical than it is to move the operator to a scope position.

Finally, the rise of *do* insertion during the 17th century (cf. Rohrbacher 1999: 166) leads to Modern English where lexical verbs no longer move (overtly) to Agr°. With regard to category and topicalizability of the negation marker, however, there is no difference between Early Modern and Modern English. The ranking of the relevant constraints are identical.

(59) En:



(60) Modern English: LEXTOP » TOPCRIT » OPSC

6 Summary

I have argued that the negation markers *ikke* and *not* in Danish and English, respectively, can be analyzed as XPs rather than X° and that the fact they can't be topicalized is due to their semantic 'lightness' – a property also found with other adverbials.

The synchronic variation among the Scandinavian languages and English is accounted by different rankings of the Lexical Topic Constraint (LEXTOP) and the Topic Criterion (TOPCRIT).

The diachronic development from obligatory clause-initial negation in Proto-Norse and Proto-English to the present non-topicalizability of the negation markers is accounted for by two mechanisms: 1) categorical oscillation known as Jespersen's cycle, and 2) the relative ranking of one more constraint, namely, Operators in Scope (OpSc).

These two mechanisms are independent. XP-status is a necessary, but not sufficient, prerequisite for topicalization.

7 References

- Bergroth, Hugo (1917) *Finlandssvenska.Handledning till Unvikande av Provinsialismer i Tal och Skrift*, Helsinki: Holger Schildts Förlag.
- Eythórsson, Thórhallur (2002) Negation in C: The Syntax of Negated Verbs in Old Norse. *Nordic Journal of Linguistics*, 25, 190-224.
- Faarlund, Jan Terje, Sven Lie & Kjell Ivar Vannebo (1997) *Norsk Referansegrammatikk*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Grimshaw, Jane (1995) *Projections, Heads, and Optimality*. PDF-document, Rutgers Optimality Archive. Published in *Linguistic Inquiry* 28.3, 373-422.
- Haegeman, Liliane (1995) *The Syntax of Negation*, Cambridge University Press.
- Holmes, Philip & Ian Hinchliffe (1994) *Swedish. A Comprehensive Grammar*, London: Routledge.
- Iversen, Ragnvald (1973) *Norrøn Grammatikk. 7. Udg.* Oslo: Aschehoug.
- Jespersen, Otto (1917) *Negation in English and Other Languages*, København: Det Kgl. Danske Videnskabernes Selskab.
- Kager, René (1999) *Optimality Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Klaeber, Fr. (ed.) (1922) *Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, Boston: D.C. Heath & Co.
- Krause, Wolfgang (1971) *Die Sprache der urnordischen Runeninschriften*, Heidelberg: Carl Winter, Universitätsvorlag.
- Lockwood, W. B. (1977) *An Introduction to Modern Faroese*, Tórshavn: Føroya Skúlabólagrunnur.
- Prince, Alan & Paul Smolensky (1993) *Optimality Theory: Constraint Interaction in Generative Grammar*. Rutgers University Center for Cognitive Science Technical Report 2.
- Rizzi, Luigi (1997) "The Fine Structure of the Left Periphery". In Haegeman, Liliane (ed.) *Elements of Grammar*, Dordrecht: Kluwer, pp. 281-337.
- Rohrbacher, Bernhard (1999) *Morphology-driven Syntax*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Ruus, Hanne, ed. 2001. *Dansk Sprog- og Stilhistorisk Database*. CD-ROM published by the Department of Nordic Philology, University of Copenhagen.
- Sells, Peter (2000) "Negation in Swedish: Where It's Not At". In Butt, Miriam & Tracy Holloway King (eds.) *Proceedings of the LFG00 Conference*, Berkley: University of California.
- Skeat, Walter W., ed. (1881-1900) (reprinted 1966) *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*. EETS o.s. 76, 82, 94, 114. London: Oxford University Press.
- Udaler, Nelly & Gerd Wellejus, eds. (1968) *Gammeldansk Læsebog*, København: Gyldendal.
- van Kemenade, Ans (2000) "Jespersen's Cycle Revisited: Formal Properties of Grammaticalization". In Pintzuk, Susan, George Tsoulas & Anthony Warner (eds.) *Diachronic Syntax. Models and Mechanisms*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Vikner, Sten (2001a) "The Interpretation of Object Shift and Optimality Theory". In Müller, G. & W. Sternefeld (eds.) *Competition in Syntax*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 321-340.
- Vikner, Sten (2001b) *Verb Movement Variation in Germanic and Optimality Theory*. Habilitationsschrift, Universität Tübingen.