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NEGATIVITY IN TAMIL:
UNTYING THE UNDEFINABLE *NOT*

BY
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ABSTRACT

This thesis chooses as its foci, the two most intriguing topics in the area of negation - NPI-licensing and the scope interaction of quantifiers with negation. Many linguists have tried to explain the existence of NPIs in non-negative contexts by providing syntactic, semantic or syntactico-pragmatic evidence but none of these approaches have been able to satisfactorily answer a host of questions that might lead to a standard and uniform analysis of negative polarity items across languages.

We attempt to explain NPI-licensing by means of assuming a semantico-pragmatic outlook. In other words, we also consider non-truthfunctional aspects of meaning which implies that certain pragmatic conditions are necessary for a sentence to be fully understood in the context of discourse. By taking this stance it becomes easier to argue that negation, be it overt or covert, is the only licenser for NPIs; and chances of major cross-linguistic variation are nullified in offering this generalization and subsuming all categories of licensers under the nomenclature of Negative Implicature Terms.

In dealing with negation and quantifiers, we, at the outset, consider the rule of Neg-raising and its interaction with quantifiers and subsequently arrive at the conclusion that the rule of Neg-raising in Tamil does not result in synonymy even when Propositional Attitude Verbs (PAVs) are involved. Next we try to explain the universal quantifier in Tamil in terms of its unitariness and distributiveness to show how this disparity is brought out not by the quantifier itself, but by the NP it quantifies. This approach is shown to be useful in explaining why different types of universal quantifiers receive a unique lexical representation, namely, *ella(m)* in Tamil.

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I could have never imagined myself studying at a place so far away from home and hearth but for Professor Hans Henrich Hock of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. As visiting professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University, India, he inculcated interest in the scientific study of language and also goaded me into studying at a North American university to keep abreast with the current trends in linguistics. My deepest thanks go to him for all the time and help that he so generously gave to me.

I am also very grateful to my thesis director, Professor Marc Authier who recognised my shortcomings, yet constantly encouraged me with kind applauses. His keen eye for the slightest detail in theory kept my mind peaked for new ideas and the constructive criticisms have helped improve my output.

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I am especially grateful to Professor P.G. Patel who has made my acclimatization here a lot easier, considering the kind of moral support he gave me. I value his advice - kind, judicious and always useful.

What gives the Department of Linguistics a family atmosphere is the warmth and bonhomie that pervades the student circle and I take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues for making me feel at home.

I can never adequately express my gratefulness to my husband, Sashi, for sacrificing the security of a job back home in order for me to fulfil my academic goals.

Little though she may be, my daughter Shyamalika takes credit for keeping

me relaxed by being an absolutely even-tempered and a fun-to-be-with baby.

Last, but by no means the least, I owe to my father immeasurable thanks for making my dreams about academic pursuit a reality. It was difficult for him to let go of me but his stoic emotions and the best of intentions stood him in good stead. I am equally grateful to my mother who is the epitome of patience and inner strength and who is my constant source of inspiration. To my parents I thus, humbly, dedicate this thesis.

TO APPA AND AMMA

for helping me learn this adage:

"Betwixt the optimist and the pessimist
the difference is droll;
The optimist sees the doughnut,
The pessimist sees the hole."

Anonymous.

NOTATION

1. capital letters symbolize retroflex consonants
2. a high-back rounded vowel /u/, in the transcription, morpheme initially or word finally, is pronounced as a back-unrounded /ʊ/ vowel.
3. ↓/↑ downward/upward entailing
4. ≅ equivalent to
5. * grammatically unacceptable
6. ? of doubtful grammaticality
7. ~ negation
8. ‡ grammatical, without debate
9. A universal quantifier
10. ACC. accusative case
11. COND. conditional
12. DAT. dative case
13. E existential quantifier
14. FEM. feminine gender
15. GEN. genitive case
16. HON. honorific
17. LOC. locative case
18. MAS. masculine gender
19. NEU. neuter gender
20. NOM.AFF. nominalising affix
21. PL. plural number
22. SING. singular number
23. 1p. etc. first person, etc.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 TAMIL : A BRIEF BACKGROUND OF THE LANGUAGE

The Dravidian languages are dominant in the south of India and since the recarving of the country's provincial boundaries along linguistic lines in 1956, each of the four major languages is spoken in a single state. The Dravidian languages are known to have been spoken in India before the arrival of the Indo-Europeans around the year 1000 B.C.

Tamil is one of the major languages of South India. It is spoken principally in the state of Tamil Nadu, located on the eastern coast, extending down to the southern-most tip of the Indian sub-continent. Tamil is the oldest and the most richly developed of the Dravidian languages. The origin of the alphabet is uncertain, though it is believed to be about 1500 years old. Asher (1982) notes that Tamil is the only language within its family with the "longest continuous written history, the earliest extant literature belonging to the dawn of the Christian era or earlier."

The most frequent problem encountered while writing a description of Tamil is the question of what variety should form the basis. This is because Tamil provides a diglossic situation. Any literate speaker of Tamil will have a good command of two distinct varieties of the language. The "high" variety is used for

writing or for formal speaking (e.g., lectures, news broadcasts, political speeches) and the "low" variety for informal, everyday conversation. The "low" variety is what comprises a large number of dialects, in which there is variation on a geographical and also on the social dimension. Dialect differences, to a considerable extent, is a reflection of caste differences.

In this thesis, my choice of a dialect of Tamil will be restricted to the geographical area of Madras and pick the Brahmin variety of the vernacular to provide instances of negation and negative polarity items. Though the choice of a particular dialect will not significantly affect the description of negation in Tamil, variation in pronunciation and usage of certain lexical items is to be expected.

1.2. THE THEORETICAL ESSENCE:

1.2.1 NPI-LICENSING

Though some length and a lot of 'breath' has been expended on the theory of NPI-licensing in this thesis, it is only a small step taken towards establishing the claim that licensing of negative polarity items must be accounted for by pragmatic principles too. All previous accounts of NPI-licensing were heavily dependent on autonomous theories of syntax or semantics and it was with Linebarger (1987) that a possible solution to the correct explanation of NPI-licensing, by tying together syntax and pragmatics, was attempted.

In Linebarger's account, pragmatics was employed to derive a Negative Implicatum (NI) from a non-negative proposition containing an NPI and this 'NI account' appears under her Part B derivative licensing. In this thesis, we will argue that negation, either overt or covert, is the only licenser for NPIs. The covert or "hidden" negativity of any sentence that bears an NPI is the theory that roughly states that polarity items are permitted in a given sentence S_1 , when S_1 entails or presupposes another sentence S_2 which is of a negative quality.

In fact, when an NPI is indeed licensed in a non-negative context, it was attributed to the presence of a 'suitable licensing environment' that made it possible for the NPI to surface. At this point in the thesis, we make a generalization that subsumes all unrelated words or categories that were just "environments", under a category that we call Negative Implicature Terms (NIT). The category is so called because the items in it are inherently negative in nature and this is why the NPI can appear in the sentence; and when it does, the negativity of the same is enhanced. Hence the presence of a mysterious "negative polarity" item, in a sentence that has no overt negation word in it, can be explained by looking for the latent or covert negative proposition that, very often, is a negative pragmatic presupposition.

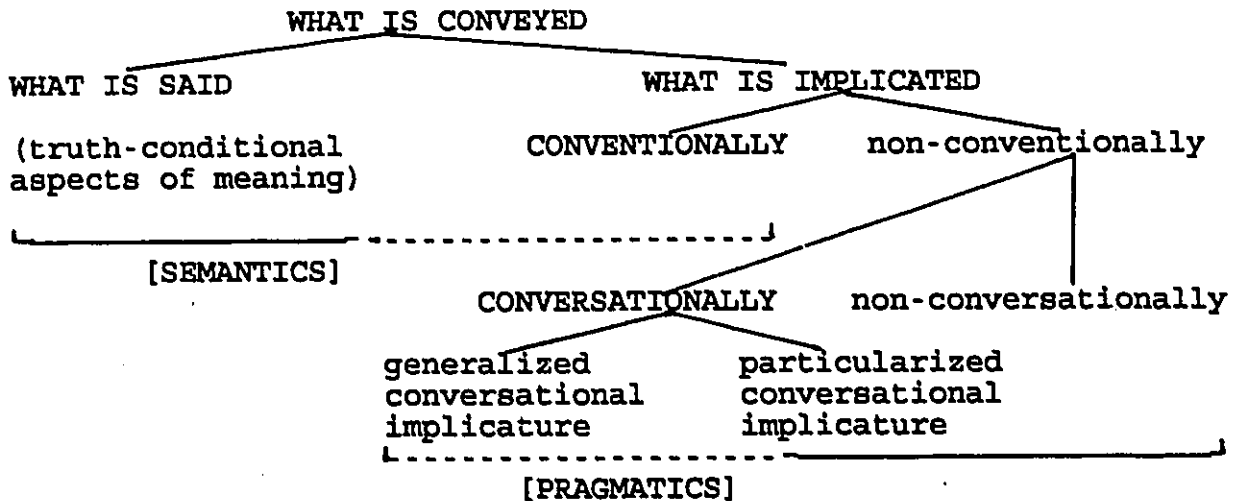
This hypothesis concerning a pragmatic presupposition is further strengthened by the fact that in a majority of instances in Tamil, an NPI can occur only in a sentence that has an overt negative marker. However, in the few instances where an NPI appears

without a negation word, the sentence pragmatically (or contextually) presupposes a sentence (S_2) that is negative. It is this [+ negative] sentence that licenses the NPI. Negative pragmatic presupposition is of all the more relevance because data from Tamil indicates that NPIs cannot appear even in sentences that have an NIT to act as the ideal licensing environment. Negativity, in the form of a pragmatic presupposition, is the only key to licensing.

In this thesis we will argue that the problem requires a pragmatic account: a negative polarity item is possible in an affirmative sentence if the sentence is pragmatically associated with a negative proposition, especially if a negative proposition is intended, presupposed, invited or explicitly affirmed by an utterance of this sentence. If the account of the occurrence of NPIs is pragmatic, rather than syntactic, these cases do not require special treatment, by way of conjuring up hypothetical categories and nodes.

The syntax-semantics-pragmatics trichotomy has been familiar to us for over half a century now though the domain of syntax and semantics have remained fairly more well-defined than the domain of pragmatics. In fact, to delimit the domain of semantics and keep it distinct from pragmatics remains a problem. However, the discursive context in which the utterance is made and the BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE behind it, belong to the realm of pragmatics and this notion is uncontroversial. Horn (1989, 146) nicely conveys the quintessence of the Gricean framework in the following schema where what is

conveyed falls within the nebulous patch of the semantics-pragmatics overlap.



[from Horn 1989; 146]

The overlap of semantics and pragmatics is apparent and both conventional and conversational implicata are a part of what the speaker conveys without necessarily having to be a part of what was actually spoken. Therefore, as Horn puts it, "as part of the meaning of an expression and yet not part of its literal meaning, ... conventional implicata are located simultaneously within semantics and pragmatics." (Horn 1989; 146). Therefore, in this thesis, we do not consider it infelicitous to assume that something spoken in the context of utterance as belonging to the domain of pragmatics. This pragmatic identification is a springboard for a wide range of other logical and linguistic explanation to NPI-licensing.

1.2.2 NEGATION AND QUANTIFIERS

The second intriguing topic that is considered in this thesis is the interaction of negation with quantifiers. Quantifiers are usually classified into two categories which are called Universal Quantifiers and Existential Quantifiers. Broadly speaking, the universals can be said to include words like 'all', 'every' 'each' etc., and the existentials cover words such as 'some'/'a', 'something', 'somebody' etc. In our discussion of quantifiers, we will look at some problems concerning overt, universal quantifiers like 'all' and 'every' in terms of two modes of conceptualisation known as UNITY and DISTRIBUTION.

The main aim of such a study is to differentiate between these quantifiers, which in Tamil, share a common word ('ella'). Until now, it was believed that Tamil had none but one universal quantifier to distinguish between 'all' and 'every', which are words that reflect two dissimilar notions.

'Unity' reflects the notion of oneness or an undifferentiated whole. By 'distribution' is meant the application of a term to the members of a class. In short, unitariness emphasizes the existence of a set as a set, while distributiveness stresses the membership of the set. Two examples of this distinction are:

- (1) The whole class grew restive while the teacher lectured.
- (2) Every student in the class grew restive ...

In the thesis, we have attempted to analyse the quantifiers concerned according to many different criteria. At this stage, the analysis is not entirely clear-cut and this has forced us to the conclusion that quantifiers, like any other item in natural language, cannot be made to fit into a neat and simple system. The centrality of this quantificational study has resulted largely from questions of a basically semantic nature, especially those which arise from the combinations of quantifiers and negatives. We have attempted to approach these questions in a manner fairly closely modelled upon the procedures of the predicate calculus and also those of set theory.

1.3 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

Having set forth the sum and substance of the thesis in the first part of Chapter 1, giving the reader an overview of the aims of this present study, we take up the issue of NPI-licensing in the following two chapters.

Chapter 2 is mainly concerned with recent views on NPI-licensing, namely those of Ladusaw's (1980), Linebarger's (1987) and Progovac's (1988). With a general background about the problem, we move on to proposing an alternate solution in Section 2.5.

Chapter 3, following the proposal given in the previous chapter, focusses on the phenomenon as manifested in Tamil. It concentrates on providing a semantico-pragmatic approach to the issue, after introducing to the reader the negation words and the

NPIs in the language.

Chapter 4 is a brief foray into the world of quantifiers and their interaction with negation. The aim of this chapter is twofold: firstly, it is to disprove certain claims about Dravidian and to show that, though Tamil is a verb-final language, quantifiers do not pattern the same way as they do in other SOV languages. The other purpose of this chapter is to introduce the semantic distinction between two universal quantifiers (viz., 'every' and 'all') and to show that though Tamil has just one word to represent both, ambiguity about which word represents which quantifier is easily clarified.

Chapter 5 provides a concluding note as a culmination of the study put forth in this thesis.

CHAPTER 2

RECENT THEORIES ON NPI-LICENSING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Polarity sensitivity has been the hot-bed of controversy and much argument for a while in linguistic theory and in the history of negation but it was only with Baker (1970), Fauconnier (1975a;1975b), Horn (1978a) and Linebarger (1981;1987) that detailed discussion on positive and negative polarity items provided the much needed insight into the topic.

Despite the relative newness of the subject as far as other areas of negation are concerned, two approaches in this issue were considered enlightening: the theory of Ladusaw (1982;1983) on the one hand and that of Linebarger(1987) on the other. Both provide axes along which semantic conditions on grammaticality of sentences containing negative polarity items could be measured -- while Ladusaw treats the matter assuming a totally semantic approach, Linebarger considers the interplay between syntax and pragmatics. Another major view of polarity sensitivity that has to be reckoned with is that of Progovac (1988), who suggests a government and binding approach to NPI licensing which was a totally syntactic account.

The above tripartite analyses of NPI licensing were elegant in their own way and I shall discuss in detail in the following sections each of these views to weigh the pros and cons of such a

stance. In doing so, I will set up the props in support of my argument that NPI licensing can be well explained by inter-twining pragmatics to semantics, though the interface between these two branches of grammar is very nebulous. In other words, I will consider also the the non-truthfunctional aspects of meaning which implies that certain "pragmatic" conditions are necessary for a sentence to be fully understood in the context of a discourse. Though none of the above analyses takes into account the pragmatic notion of presupposition, they do give several explanations for the phenomenon of NPI licensing, which are variously interesting but which do not convincingly provide a conclusive theory of this phenomenon.

2.2 LADUSAW

Ladusaw (1980c) argues that not all licensers to negative polarity items can be reduced to "negation". Instead he proposes that a proper treatment of NPIs rests on the semantic property of downward entailment. The claim is that an NPI can appear in the scope of a downward entailing expression. The downward entailing expression is said to be a trigger for the presence of an NPI. An expression is downward entailing iff it licenses inferences in its scope from supersets to subsets. He gives the example of (1) below:

- (pp.120) 1a) John never eats a green vegetable for dinner.
b) John never eats brussels sprouts for dinner.

In his view, a negative polarity item is acceptable only when there is an expression in the sentence that is of a negative sort to license them. Ladusaw's analysis sought to find a semantic criterion which unified the class of NPI licensors and this class includes expressions from various syntactic categories (verbs, sentence adverbs, adjectives, determiners), and also encompassed terms with a negative morphology (no, not, never, unlikely) as well as 'covert negations' (rarely, few, doubtful). It was Klima (1964) who originally assumed that there existed some semantic property which unified the diverse class of licensors and postulated the feature Affective; and the so-called "affective" contexts restricted the distribution of negative polarity items by laying a condition that a negative polarity item is acceptable only when it occurs in this context.

Ladusaw's condition on the acceptability of a negative polarity item states that an NPI is licit only if it is in the scope of a polarity reversing expression. He explains 'polarity reversers' originally stated by Barwise and Cooper (1981) as, "a cross-categorial generalization of the definition of a monotonic decreasing quantifier. (cf. Barwise and Cooper 1981)" [Ladusaw 1983;383]. It turns out that the mathematical term 'monotonic decreasing' is the term used by Ladusaw in the definition of an "implication reverser" as in (2) below:

(2) An "implication reverser" is a constituent whose interpretation is a function F which has the property that: For any two arguments for F , A and B , if A is a subset of B , then $F(B)$ is a subset of $F(A)$.

(Ladusaw 1980a ;174)

However, Ladusaw prefers to use the term "downward entailing" to "affectives" for its perspicuity. He claims that triggers need not all be negations for "negations are simply one very obvious subclass of downward entailing expressions." Since the direction of entailment is from supersets to subsets, the reverse directionality is an instance of upward entailment. Take the following pairs of sentences:

(3a) You are not allowed to tease the animals in the zoo.

(3b) You are not allowed to tease the baboons in the zoo.

Since the entailment proceeds from the superset (animals) to the subset (baboons), it proves conclusively that (3a) entails (3b) and is therefore downward entailing.

Consider, on the contrary, the unnegated forms:

(4a) Mary has a dog called Pedro.

(4b) Mary has a pet called Pedro.

In this case the sentence containing the subset (dog) entails the sentence which has the superset (pet) and this is an instance of upward entailment. With these definitions and their explanations, Ladusaw draws the conclusion that:

- (5) A NPI must appear in the scope of a trigger¹. If its trigger is in the same clause as the NPI, the trigger must precede the NPI.

(Ladusaw 1980;85)

Ladusaw (1983;382) however, modifies the above assumption slightly to indicate that an NPI is acceptable "only if there is elsewhere in the sentence an expression of an appropriately negative sort to license them". He observes that since 'not' is a downward entailing expression, it licenses an NPI as seen below in (6).

(6) He did not save a single penny².

(7) * He saved a single penny.

Ladusaw extends his theory of downward entailment to correlate the ability of a lexical item to be a trigger and certain predicates that are not contradictories but contraries which differ in inherent perspectives on a scale. He claims that it is this 'inherent perspective' that determines whether or not an item will be a trigger.

The discussion that is offered by Ladusaw is one that investigates the interaction of negation with scalar predicates and shows how it is related to the definition of downward entailment. He cites Fauconnier's (1975a) examples to illustrate the point:

- (8) a. Alexei could lift the heaviest weight, entails
b. Every weight is such that Alexei could lift it.
- (9) a. Alexei couldn't lift the heaviest weight, does not entail
b. Every weight is such that Alexei couldn't lift it.
- (10) a. Alexei could lift the lightest weight, does not entail
b. Every weight is such that Alexei could lift it.
- (11) a. Alexei couldn't lift the lightest weight, entails
b. Every weight is such that Alexei couldn't lift it.

(Ladusaw 1980; 107)

Such analysis encompasses many other NPI environments, for instance, the quantifier NPs which show very interesting correlations between triggerhood and entailment. He derives the direction of entailment in (12) below:

(12) For any Quantifier NP P, if 'P walks' entails 'P walks slowly', P is downward entailing.

This establishes 'no men' as a downward entailing Quantifier NP and 'everyman' and 'some man' as upward entailing QNPs:

- (13)a. no men walk entails ↓ no men walk slowly.
b. every man walks slowly entails ↑ every man walks.
c. some man walks slowly entails ↑ some man walks.

The notion that only downward entailing contexts are predicted to license NPIs is no doubt true of English and is perhaps valid in the other 'western world' languages because most literature is written from the Occidental point of view. In section 2.5, as a culmination of the review of the various points of view on the theory of NPI licensing, I will argue how each theory narrows down the perspective to account for only a limited set of data, where cross-linguistic criteria are minimal (except for Progovac) and in doing so I will lay forth the considerations for licensing on which I choose to differ.

2.3 LINEBARGER

Linebarger (1987) argues that the distribution of negative polarity items in English is a reflection of the 'interplay between syntax and pragmatics' and as opposed to Ladusaw, she also rejects the role played by the level of "pure" semantic representation, claiming that NP triggerhood can be reduced to negation. Linebarger's account of negative polarity maintains the basic views of Baker's (1970) two-stage theory of polarity licensing which claims that: a) either the NPI licenser is an overt negation which c-commands the NPI at S-Structure or b) the NPI must be licensed by

logical entailment (this kind of licensing is derivative). However, Linebarger argues for the specifics of the above theory, in which she underlines the fact that NPIS must occur in the immediate scope of negation at LF and not at S-Structure; and also that the acceptability of these expressions in other environments is determined by extragrammatical conditions. Hence, this theory makes apparent the fact that only the first stage -- which states that the licenser is an overt negation which c-commands the NPI at S-Structure -- of Baker's two-stage theory of polarity licensing is a sentence grammar process as it represents the paradigm case. This account stands in contrast to Ladusaw's proposal, which seeks to encompass all cases of NPI licensing under the domain of sentence grammar.

Though Linebarger's account of negative polarity is analogous to Baker's theory, she suggests that part (a), i.e., licensing by overt negation, "would need to be restricted further, to license NPIS c-commanded by a negation in the same clause." This reformulation is termed as the Immediate Scope Constraint (ISC):

- (14) A negative polarity item is acceptable in a sentence if in the LF of S the subformula representing the NPI is in the immediate scope of the negative operator. An element is in the immediate scope of NOT only if (1) it occurs in a proposition that is the entire scope of NOT, and (2) within this proposition there are no logical elements intervening between it and NOT. (Linebarger 1987; 338)

The reformulation of part (b), i.e., the derivative licensing mechanism, calls for the logical implicature rather than logical entailment as the relation that holds between the host sentence and its negative implicatum. Linebarger proposes what is called the 'NI (Negative Implicatum) account' concerning part (b) and NPI licensing. The following is her proposal:

- (15) i. Expectation of negative implicatum is itself a conventional implicature A negative polarity item contributes to a sentence S expressing a proposition P the conventional implicature that the following two conditions are satisfied.
- ii. Availability of negative implicatum. There is some proposition NI (which may be identical to P) which is implicated or entailed by S and which is part of what the speaker is attempting to convey in uttering S. In the LF of some sentence S' expressing NI, the lexical representation of the NPI occurs in the immediate scope negation. In the event that S is distinct from S', we may say that in uttering S the speaker is making an allusion to S'.
- iii. NI strenghtens P The truth of NI, in the context of the utterance, virtually guarantees the truth of P.

(Linebarger 1987; 346)

The discussion of the above two reformulations is restricted to sentences with negated 'because'- clauses but the same proposals are also considered against other data. We will now see the essence of these proposals in examples given below:

(16) George didn't starve his cat because he has any love for her.

The presence of an NPI in a 'because'- clause is licit only when negation has wide scope reading over the logical operator CAUSE, though the narrow scope reading, where George does not starve his cat is more likely. However, when an NPI is introduced into a matrix clause, the effect is that of the narrow scope reading emerging:

(17)a. He didn't budge an inch because he was pushed.

This can logically be represented as,

b. CAUSE (he was pushed, NOT (he budged an inch)). NARROW SCOPE

c. *NOT CAUSE (he was pushed, he budged an inch). WIDE SCOPE

The reason given by Linebarger for the unacceptability of (17c) is that 'the predicate operator CAUSE intervenes in the notation' given above. It is therefore assumed that NPIs must be in the immediate scope of negation, for it to license that NPI and also that NPI licensing must be stated at the level of LF 'where relative scope of logical elements is explicitly represented'.
(Linebarger 1987; 341)

The reformulation of part (b) is used in order to explain the data that violate the ISC and also to account for NPIs that occur where no overt negation is present. Some of her examples are given below:

(18)a. Everyone who knows a damn thing about English knows it's an SVO language.

The above entails,

b. Everyone who doesn't know that English is an SVO language doesn't know a damn thing about it. {NEGATIVE IMPLICATUM}.

(19)a. I was surprised that she contributed a red cent.

b. I had expected her not to contribute a red cent. {NEG. IMPL.}

Thus, in this manner, NPIs are licensed derivatively using the mechanism of teasing out the negative implicature from an otherwise affirmative sentence where no overt negation is present.

2.4 PROGOVAC

The most recent exhaustive study of NPI licensing was provided by Progovac (1988) who argues that polarity sensitivity across a good number of languages can be best captured by adopting the generalized binding approach of Aoun (1985) where all "NPIs are treated as anaphors which have to be A'-bound in their governing category" (Progovac 1988). In other words, they must be bound by

overt negation within their governing category or by a negative operator present in the Spec of COMP. Progovac, at the very outset, makes it clear that the notion of binding is strictly syntactic and that there is no reason to draw a semantic relationship between the binder and the bindee.

Progovac demonstrates two types of NPis in relation to Serbo-Croatian which she calls NI-NPis and I-NPis according to the prefix (-ni or -i) with which they begin. While NI-NPis (see eg. 23) occur with only clausemate negation, the I-NPis (see eg. 24) occur with superordinate negation. Since both types of negation depend on the presence of negation, they are taken to be anaphoric. The difference between the two is that the NI-NPis are pure anaphors subject to Principle A of the Generalized Binding Framework but the I-NPis are classed as anaphoric pronominals which are subject to two generalized binding principles: Principle B as well as Principle A.

Following is the Generalized Binding Principles (c.f. Aoun, 1985):

(20) A: An anaphor must be X-bound in its governing category.

B: A pronominal must be X-free in its governing category.

C: A name must be A-free. (X ranges over A and A')

(21) Y is a governing category for X iff Y is the minimal category containing X, a governor of X and a SUBJECT accessible to X.

(22) X is accessible to Y iff Y is in the c-command domain of X and coindexing of (X,Y) would not violate any grammatical principle.

(Progovac 1988; 41)

NI-NPIs

- (23) Niko ne poznaje Milan-a (CLAUSEMATE NEGATION)
no one not knows Milan-Acc
'No one knows Milan'

I-NPIs

- (24) Ne tvrdi-m da iko poznaje Marij-u (SUPERORDINATE NEGATION)
not claim-1sg that anyone knows Mary-Acc
'I don't claim that anyone knows Mary'

Through similar such examples Progovac shows that the distribution of Serbo-Croatian NPIs follow the Generalised Binding framework. Progovac treats the range of variation in NPI licensing by an interplay of three factors: "Subjecthood to different binding principles, Raising possibilities and Negation placement".

(Progovac 1988; 209)

The approach she uses is one that is totally syntactic and there is no room for any semantics or pragmatics in the analysis of NPIs. Though her reasoning seems to explain a wide variety of cross-linguistic variation, it is hard to overlook the fact that it is also contrived. By 'contrived' I mean that there is little scope for pure logic to apply in order to explain the basic facts of NPI licensing across languages.

Progovac (1988) in her thesis argues for independent evidence for movement because restrictions on movement such as island constraints and the ECP "are far less obvious at LF". It is

certainly desirable to derive differences between LF and S-Structure by applying independent principles but it is possible only with further research on this topic as Progovac herself agrees. She however concludes that there is no reason to abandon the raising analysis (pp.88; Progovac 1988) of polarity sensitivity even if long-distance binding of NPIs in English and Serbo-Croatian does not obey all the movement constraints, because even if some of the principles are observed, the raising analysis can be "safely" adopted.

An account of any phenomenon in language has to start off at the most fundamental and therefore, presumably, the most natural method of evaluating a problem, covering as much ground as possible but Progovac, in assuming syntax to be the only recourse, overlooks facts that are explicable in simpler detail perhaps by just making a common-sense observation in the right pragmatic context. Complexities need not necessarily be swept aside until "further research" because they are still in the grammar (a full 'grammar' should include pragmatic contexts as well) and this is where our analysis of polarity sensitivity using the notion of pragmatic presupposition comes to fore. Syntactic implements should be reserved for use only when the explanatory device using pragmatic tools fails.

2.5 PRAGMATIC PRESUPPOSITION AND NPI-LICENSING

In this section I will argue that, (1) negation, be it overt or covert, is the only licenser for NPIs and consequently, (2) those "exceptional" NPIs that appear in affirmative sentences are likely to be better explained in terms of the pragmatic presupposition (carrying negative force) that a sentence may bear.

My hypothesis takes Robert Stalnaker's (1974) pragmatic notion of presupposition as its point of departure, definable as in (25):

- (25) P pragmatically presupposes Q iff whenever the utterance of P is conversationally acceptable, the speaker of P assumes Q and believes his audience to assume Q as well.

Schwarz (1977) has argued that the phenomenon characteristic of pragmatic presupposition is distinct from the phenomenon characteristic of semantic presupposition and that there are instances of sentences exhibiting the former phenomenon alone. Traditionally, the semantic notion of presupposition was defined as in (26) below:

- (26) P semantically presupposes Q if P's being either true or false necessitates that Q is true.

For instance, take P = John regrets that Mary came.
and Q = Mary came.

Q remains invariably true regardless of P being either true or false. In (25) and (26) P and Q are metavariables ranging over sentences.

In this section we will first of all consider NPIs that appear without any overt negative element anywhere in the sentence and argue that the licenser for such NPIs is the negative pragmatic presupposition which one can derive from the given sentence. The mechanism of pragmatic presupposition becomes necessary when the means of finding negativity tied to certain NPIs (like 'surprised', 'refused', 'doubt', etc.) is not available for some other NPIs.

Linebarger (1987; 3-7) claims that such NPIs emphasize 'the negativity of an entailment of the sentence'. At this point, it would be appropriate to say that the NPI simply does not 'highlight' or 'emphasize' negativity, but on the contrary it suits our theory better to say that one of the licensers for an NPI is an appropriate negative presupposition that is not always an entailment of the sentence bearing the NPI.

A sentence containing an NPI which cannot be explained to show a negative presupposition turns out to be illicit. Since the licitness of the NPI depends on pragmatic factors, it is the pragmatic presupposition that matters in the legitimacy of an NPI-bearing sentence.

2.5.1 LICENSING BY NEGATIVE PRESUPPOSITION

It will be of some use to mention that pragmatic presupposition is akin to conventional implicatures - (non-controversial propositions that a speaker posits as part of common ground (cf., Horn 1989; 145) - and since conventional implicatures are conventionally presupposed, the use of either of these terms in the course of this thesis might seem justified. To make clear the notion of implicature we will briefly outline the components of the Gricean program as presented in Grice (1975) though it is by no means a full exegesis of the same.

An implicature is a proposition that is implied by the utterance of a sentence in a context even though that proposition was not part of what was actually uttered. Grice claimed that there were two types of implicature: CONVENTIONAL and CONVERSATIONAL. The former variety exists solely because of conventional meaning attached to the words employed in a sentence, e.g. 'but' etc.

- (27) a. Mary got pregnant and John was pleased.
b. Mary got pregnant but John was pleased.

Sentences (27a) and (27b) have both the same truth conditions but (27b) implicates conventionally a proposition involving some sort of contrast, unexpectedness or the like. The word 'but' has some pragmatic component because of the non-truthconditional properties of the word.

Grice's conversational implicatures were further divided into PARTICULARIZED and GENERALIZED implicatures. The former are those that arise because of some special factor inherent in the context and are not normally carried by the sentence used. The relevance of this variety to linguistic interests appears to be marginal, so I shall not explain them. Generalized conversational implicatures arise when "one can say that the use of a certain form of words in an utterance would normally (in the ABSENCE of special circumstances) carry such-and-such an implicature or type of implicature". [Grice 1975 : 56]

In the following examples we will see how a number of expressions classified loosely by Linebarger as 'licensing expressions for NPIS³' are in fact, what I would like to call, NEGATIVE IMPLICATURE TERMS (NITs); negative presuppositions, in the absence of negation, are tied to these. That is why pragmatic presuppositions are considered analogous to conventional implicatures. The NITs are 'few', 'only', 'too', 'after', 'exactly'; and the broad categories of the others are given as 'Adversative predicates', 'Antecedent of conditional', 'Comparatives', 'Questions' and 'Relative clauses headed by a universal quantifier'.

We will presently see what negative presuppositions these terms are capable of holding. Let us now take a look at the various classes of licensers:

28(A) Few people have **any** interest in this.

Not many people have any interest in this.

(B) John is too tired to **give a damn**.

John does not care enough to give a damn (etc.)

(C) Only John has a **hope in hell** of passing.

No one but John has a hope in hell of passing.

(D) She persisted long after she had **any hope at all** of passing.

She persisted even when there was no hope at all of passing.

(E) Exactly four people in the whole world have **ever** read that dissertation : Bill, Mary, Tom and Ed.

No one in the whole world but...

(F) ADVERSATIVE PREDICATES

(i) He refused to **budge an inch**.

He did not agree to budge an inch.

(ii) She was surprised that there was **any** food left.

She did not expect that there would be any food left.

(iii) I'm sorry that I **ever** met him.

I'm not at all pleased that I met him.

(iv) I doubt that he **much** likes Louise.

I'm not too sure that he much likes Louise.

(G) ANTECEDENT OF CONDITIONAL

If you steal **any** food they'll arrest you.

The above sentence is issued as a warning whose NI is

Do not steal any food.

(H) COMPARATIVES

He was taller than we **ever** thought he would be.

We thought that he wouldn't be that tall.

In Comparative sentences where fact surpasses expectation, an NPI seems suitable.

(I) RELATIVE CLAUSES

(i) Anyone who **budged an inch** was shot.

No one was expected to budge an inch.

(ii) Everyone who knows a **damn thing** about English knows it's an SVO language.

No one who knows English is unaware of the fact that...

(J) QUESTIONS

(i) Have you **ever** met George?⁴

I'm not sure if you've met George.

(ii) Who gives a **damn** about Bill?

Nobody does. (NI)

The above rhetorical question also pragmatically presupposes the NI that is indicated.

(iii) Who **ever** told you that cock and bull story?

(iv) X: Who told you that cock and bull story?

Y: It was Tom/Dick/Harry.

The NPI in (iii) makes sure that it is not a direct Yes/No question like (iv) but on the contrary, is a question with the NI that 'The story that you heard is not true' (Compare

(iii) with (iv)).

In all the above sentences the negative presupposition can be teased out from any proposition P containing an NPI and an NIT as an equivalent proposition Q (to show that $P = Q$), where Q is shown to contain an overt negative element which is really the reason why the NPI in P is licit. However ad hoc this move may seem, it has one desirable result: a strong reason for the presence of an NPI in a sentence where there is no overt negative element to 'polarize' a lexical item. The crucial stipulation that would be necessary to make the NPI in P licit is for it to have an appropriate negative presupposition which is brought out only by an NIT; the term is defined in (29) below:

(29) Negative Implicature Term (NIT): Any lexical item or grammatical category X (including abstract entities like a Q morpheme⁵) is a potential NIT. When a sentence contains an NPI that is still licit without overt negation, there is a negative presupposition that makes it acceptable. The specific words/categories to which these negative presuppositions are tied, are called negative implicature terms.

The reason for using 'potential' in our definition of NITs is because these words/categories seem to have nothing in common prior to this generalization. The test for an NIT involves deleting it from the sentence containing an NPI and checking to see if it is

still acceptable.

In other words, to classify something as an NIT is to test, and hence determine, if the NPI in any sentence is licit and if it is, by what. Though there is no significantly apparent similarity between the items belonging to the category of NITs, we could certainly claim that in all cases it provides the negative reading of the sentence; for even when an NIT alone occurs (as in 30b), we can certainly derive an overtly negative sentence (He did not move), but when there is no NIT we cannot account for such a presupposition and thus the NPI is not acceptable (see 30c).

A negative polarity item is so called because it is believed to attract a negative element into the sentence where it is present. To "attract" in this case would mean that this lexical item/s that is called a Negative Polarity Item is not licit in a sentence that does not carry some sort of negativity. When there is no tangible evidence of an overt negation, we must take a closer look to be able to retrieve the latent negative presupposition of that sentence. To put it more precisely, the grammatically acceptable sentence with an NPI can be accounted for by an appropriate negative presupposition that is closely attached to the presence of an NIT.

The definition given in (29) indicates that an NIT is also present in a sentence which bears no NPI but only when it co-occurs with an NPI does it tend to highlight the negative quality of the sentence. For the sake of clarity, the following representation indicates what is and is not possible:

(30)a. NIT + NPI (emphasis on the negative quality)
He refused (NIT) to budge an inch (NPI).

b. NIT + \emptyset
He refused (NIT) to move.

c. * \emptyset + NPI
* He said that he could budge an inch (NPI).

In short, an NIT legitimizes an NPI which occurs without an overt negative element. The concept of NIT is evoked in order to unify a bunch of stragglers that were called "licensors" only because they seemed to provide the right environment where the NPIs could exist in the absence of overt negation. Linebarger's derivative licensing which proposes the NI account for polarity sensitivity is mainly seen as an answer to account for the rich and varied data base of sentences that fall under her Part A licensing mechanism. The NI account is the pragmatic part of her theory and the Part A notion of ISC is the syntactic part.

My claim is that all sentences that contain an NPI are licensed by negation - overt or covert. It is simple in cases that contain overt negation because it is one of the most obvious licensors but in cases that do not show overt negation, we can certainly find an answer for the existence of the negative polarity item. This is the part that needs an explanation and this can be done by evoking pragmatic contexts. The assertion I make is

that negation, in one form or the other, is the only key to explaining the occurrence of NPis.

My claim differs from Linebarger's discussion of derivative licensing by the NI account in that I consider the importance of an NIT associated with the NPI in conjuring a situation where it is possible to obtain a negative presupposition to render the NPI acceptable. Hence, NPI acceptability correlates with the availability of negative presupposition, which in turn needs the lexical item that serves as a potential NIT. The question is not simply that of a negative implicature of unknown origin that licenses an NPI but of the NI provided by the NIT. If the NIT is treated just as an 'environment' for licensing, then we cannot adequately explain (30c): Why can an NPI not exist 'freely'?

Linebarger has not given a full illustration explaining the NI available for NPis present in Interrogatives (28J). It is difficult to distinguish between sentences in the interrogative containing an NPI and sentences without an NPI because questions by nature presuppose a need for clarification, a doubt, a lack of knowledge etc. However, questions containing an NPI provide a touch of rhetoric to the negative presupposition already present and thus emphasize it. The reason for using the term 'pragmatic presupposition' is relevant here for our theory where pragmatics is crucial to the correct analysis of NPI licensing. Consider the following example:

(31) P = Mary played for her team better than ever before.

The implicature Q normally available for the above sentence is as follows:

(32) Q = Mary had not been such a good player before.

Now it is quite clear that when speaker X utters (31), both speaker X and hearer Y assume, or better still, pragmatically presuppose (32). L.Karttunen (1974) has said that what is pragmatically presupposed has to be part of the SHARED KNOWLEDGE, COMMON GROUND, COMMON SET OF ASSUMPTIONS, or CONTEXT. This claim, expressed in different terminology, is that the speaker believes that the hearer believes the information that is pragmatically presupposed.

Under normal circumstances, one can reasonably gather from a speaker's assertion of P that he believes all the participants in the conversation believe Q to be the case. Using the term borrowed from Grice, Q is taken to possess assumed 'common ground status'. In effect, we are saying that the licensing of an NPI depends, in one way or the other, on the negativity of the sentence that bears the NPI and that there are instances when negativity can be drawn up from assumed common ground of the apparently non-negative sentence [as in the case of (32)].

Then as a way of motivating the worry about certain counterexamples that may seem to oppose our view, we will consider the following sentences.

(33) Did you see anyone?

The most likely question regarding (33) is, "what is the negative presupposition that licenses the NPI 'anyone'?"; and this apparently does look like a troublesome question because on the face of it there seemingly is no presupposed or 'latent' negative flavour to it. But take the same sentence with a contrastive stress on 'you':

(34) Did ^úyou see anyone?

The negative presupposed notion in this case is 'I didn't see anyone, did you?' Hence, we could say this presupposition licenses the NPI 'anyone'. However, returning to (33) where there is no stressed lexical item to resolve our stance, we could, for instance, take this sentence as part of a discourse, where A and B are members of the set of the department of Linguistics and therefore share a common set of assumptions about it. This is done in an attempt to tease out a negative presupposition if possible.

(35) A: I went to the department of Linguistics yesterday.

B: Did you see anyone? (e.g. 33)

Here, B is familiar with the set of people at the department and is therefore using 'anyone' to replace a set of names relevant to the context. He might as well ask 'Did you see Phil / Helen / Louise / Janet' and so forth. Here, 'anyone' is treated as an item that replaces the need to use a determinate proper noun, and not as a

true NPI because we certainly cannot derive a negative presupposition tantamount to "there shouldn't have been anyone at the department that day".

But when we come across some sentences where 'any' is followed by an NP (Noun Phrase), we can find an appropriate and well-founded negative presupposition to license it. Hence we have,

(36) Were there any cookie crumbs on the bed?

((I just made the bed); there shouldn't have been anything on it).

(37) Did you see any men in the ladies' locker room?

(No men are allowed into the ladies' locker room).

(38) a. Were there any houses left in Bangladesh? versus

(The cyclone didn't spare too many homes.)

b. Were there houses in the Indus Valley civilization?

[plain Yes/No type of question without rhetoric]

Coming back to the question of anyone, we can recall that there was a problem of analysing (35) and justifying that it was indeed a true NPI because we could not come up with any suitable negative presupposition to fit our theory.

Indeed anyone in Questions appears to be a pseudo negative polarity item, in that, in certain contexts it is in complementary distribution with someone which is not a polarity item and in

others it cannot be supplanted by someone. When either option is available; that is, in the event that the sentence reading allows anyone or someone to alternate freely, then we can consider the polarity item to be more 'permissive' than in those cases where it absolutely cannot allow someone to stand instead of itself (anyone).

This is the reason why anyone is termed a pseudo-NPI. When the NPI is able to allow someone to appear in its position, one can no longer account for an appropriate negative presupposition, which is one of the licensers of an NPI. Though negative presupposition is not totally impossible to derive in the 'permissive' cases of the NPI, the possibility of substitution by the non-NPI someone makes judgements about it fairly irresolute and often suspicious.

We will soon see that though anyone-someone seems to alternate freely, there is certainly a more 'positive' feel concerning someone. Though perception levels may vary among individuals, given below are a few instances that display subtle differences :

(39)a. Did you see anyone at the department ?

(I'm not sure if you saw anyone, (because it was summer vacation..))

Did you see someone at the department ?

(It's likely you saw someone, (because school just reopened..))

b. If anyone hits you, let me know.

(No one ought to hit you, but if it so happens..)

If someone hits you, let me know.

(There's a brat in this class who is likely to hit you, if he does..)

c. I didn't see anyone at the party. †

I didn't see someone at the party.

In (39a) and (39b) we saw that though there seems to be a choice between anyone and someone, the meaning that emerges from the context is different in each case.

Further, in Chapter 3 we will look at instances in Tamil where a freely alternating ('permissive') anyone is represented by 'yaaraavdu', which like the English case can mean either anyone or someone but anyone which is NOT substitutable by someone (like 39c) automatically selects the form 'yaaraium'. This shows that the 'polarity' anyone is, in fact, a negative-positive polarity item.

More discussion on 'anyone'/'someone' will be relevant only with some more background on Tamil and therefore we will postpone this issue until we get to section 3.6.1 of Chapter 3. After this little digression to clarify the status of the anyone in (33), we will propose considering the NPI as something that is, more precisely termed, a pseudo-NPI. 'Anyone' in this sentence can be replaced by 'someone', without a significant change in meaning,

though on a closer scrutiny (like in [39a-39b]), we do notice the 'negative' hues of anyone.

The mere fact of replaceability of a polarity item by a non-polarity item suggests that 'anyone', especially in Interrogatives, has a propensity for behaving less like a negative polarity item which, in the true sense of the term, is something that exists only in negative contexts. Hence 'anyone' in cases like (33) is not ruled out as being an NPI because one can still derive a negative context to license its existence though these negative contexts are not remarkably conspicuous. This discussion and argument till now should suffice as enough justification for referring to the term for anyone as a 'pseudo-NPI'.

These examples, especially (39a) and (39b), only go on to reinforce the claim that pragmatic knowledge is very essential in making conclusions about the negative presupposition of a sentence containing an NPI, because without utilising the discourse context there is no valid justification for deriving the pragmatic (negative) presupposition which is truly the licenser for these NPIs. Getting down to the problem of certain Conditional sentences, it is of relevance to know that Linebarger makes a note of R.Lakoff's (1969) observation that 'NPIs sound considerably more appropriate in conditionals used as threats rather than in conditionals used as promises'. For instance,

(40) ? If ever you water my plants, I'll bake you a special cake.

(41) If at all you visit Scotland, watch out for the Loch Ness monster.

In Linebarger's NI account, NPIS that occur in conditionals that do not express threats, more often than not, highlight the contrapositive entailment. For instance,

(42) If he gives a damn about his cat, he'll take it to the vet. entails 'if he doesn't take his cat to the vet, then he doesn't give a damn about it'.

Hence, the NPI 'anyone' in Conditionals always conjures an appropriate negative presupposition to license it. This presupposition is contextually derivable, for anyone who utters (43) also underlines the fact that 'he/she ought not to be disturbed.' This overtly negative sentence licenses the NPI.

(43) If anyone gives you a hard time, let me know. presupposes No one ought to give you a hard time, but if that happens, let me know.

But Linebarger (1987; 381) stipulates a condition to the effect that when no NI is available, the NPIS are not acceptable in that environment. This seems to be the case because whenever there is a legitimate occurrence of an NPI we can always come up with a licensing negative presupposition; where NOT P is possible. But

again, I would like to emphasize the point that since reasoning with examples like (43) depend entirely on SHARED KNOWLEDGE, pragmatic presupposition plays an important role in the licensing of NPIS.

Progovac (1988; 278) claims that the discussion of NPI licensing should distinguish two different components: "the definition of the class of potential licensers, and the definition of the required relation between licensers and NPIS." Here, she agrees, contrary to her initial unyielding syntactic stance, that the first component is explicable in terms of semantic principles though the second component requires only a syntactic approach.

In this chapter we just saw how the former component - the definition of the class of potential licensers - was classed as anything that indicated negativity, overtly or covertly and overt negativity was something that was present in the negative presupposition of the NPI-bearing sentence. Once again, negativity in a sentence that is not overtly marked for negation is captured by the NIT which was defined earlier in (29), and as a consequence, of these relations, the NPI was licensed. This approach may have to appeal to some semantic notion and the latter component which requires the relation between NPIS and licensers is also explained by the above criteria.

The only sub-clause in our proposal is to include the relevance of the discourse context and the role played by pragmatics in drawing out the the pertinent negative presupposition that acts as a licenser for the NPIS that seemingly appear to exist

even when there is no negation word to polarize it.

These two components that make use of both semantic and pragmatic principles is what is needed to explain a theory of NPI-licensing. The definition of a licenser rests upon the acceptability of an NPI in a non-negative sentence as stated in (29) and acceptability is a semantic notion, but the relation between a licenser and an NPI is concerned with deriving a negative pragmatic presupposition.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1. A term whose meaning licenses an entailment.
2. Items such as lift a finger, a single N, budge an inch is treated by Ladusaw as a semi-open class of "minimal value".
3. Linebarger (1987; 328) lists about five words and five categories that serve as licensers for NPIs where no overt negation is present.

4. Though native speakers' intuitions about this sentence is rather shaky - the response not coming forth at the first instance - there seemed to be an interpretation wherein the sentence containing 'ever' meant presupposing "a first-time experience." From this I infer that there hadn't been an occasion before when X met George.

With the sentence minus 'ever', however, my informants said that it need not obligatorily have the above mentioned reading but on the contrary, was making a reference to a "particular occasion" when X met George.

I have a strong intuition that the confusion arises out of the semantics of the word 'meet'. Take, for instance, 'see' as an alternate:

Have you seen George ? vs

Have you ever seen George ?

Here, I do find a negative presupposition in the latter sentence. This opinion is shared by my informants too.

5. Baker (198) argues that English direct and indirect questions contain an initial question morpheme. Positing such a morpheme

(Q) makes it possible to relate interrogatives like if and whether, on one hand and the wh-words on the other, and to claim that they are found in a clause-initial position.

CHAPTER 3

NEGATION AND NEGATIVE POLARITY ITEMS IN TAMIL

3.1 NEGATION WORDS IN TAMIL

In the last chapter we worked towards an assumption that a negative polarity item in a sentence is licensed by the negative pragmatic presupposition that it bears; and this hypothesis is true when the NPI concerned is not directly made licit by an overt negative element. We draw out the licensing factor by taking into account our knowledge of the world that is relevant to present day living and to do this, we depend greatly upon pragmatic information that every contextually based utterance carries.

The reason for not making a mention here of NITs or about the words and categories that help license a negative polarity item by providing a negative context is because the NPIs in Tamil show great resistance towards appearing in sentences that show no overt signs of negation. However, that is not to say that the NPIs never surface at all when there is a lack of overt negativity. On the contrary, though the frequency of NPIs not licensed by negation is low, these resilient NPIs do appear otherwise. But when they do, they are licensed by a relevant pragmatic presupposition (of a negative sort) of that sentence. This type of covert or 'hidden' negativity that is inherent in any sentence containing an NPI is what licenses it. Yet the remarkable absence of NITs in Tamil cannot be explained satisfactorily at this point but it is

important to note that it is not possible to equate the set of NITs in English with their corresponding counterparts in Tamil.

In Tamil, however, NPIS are very predictable, that is to say, whenever we come across an NPI, an overt negative element is sure to follow to act as the required "licenser". It is not very often that we find a negative polarity item in an affirmative sentence and as explained earlier, such instances are licensed by 'covert' negation. In other words, the NPI is sure to be licensed by negative pragmatic presupposition that is drawn from the NPI-bearing affirmative sentence. This type of licensing was also required for the English instances where NPIS in affirmative sentences were explained to possess a "hidden"/background presupposition of a negative quality that warranted the appearance of an NPI. However, the negative pragmatic presupposition for English is obtained only when the NIT is present. Thus the one difference between the NPIS of Tamil and English is that in the former case there is nothing that can be called an NIT which would probably help derive a negative presupposition but in the latter, all negative presupposition is derived with the aid of an NIT.

In order to provide a background about the placement of negation in Tamil we will cite a few examples. Tamil is an SOV language and the negative verb ille (which becomes -le in fast speech) is also the "being" verb in existential sentences; and it occurs in sentence-final position.

(1) Ram uur-ile ille
town-LOC not there
'Ram is not in town.'

(2) anda naai peru Timmy ille
that dog name not
'That dog is not called Timmy.'

(3) inda pustakam svaarasyamaa ille
this book interesting not
'This book is not interesting.'

Sentences are negated by the use of a negative form of the verb; the most common being - infinitive + negative marker (il)le the latter being unmarked for tense.

(4) Kumar nettiki paLLikooDam poga-le
yesterday school go-NEG
'Kumar didn't got to school yesterday.'

(5) avan nambaL-kooDa ippo vara-le
he us-with now come-NEG
'He is not coming with us now.'

Modal auxiliaries are unmarked for person/number/gender and they form two-term sets, each with a positive and a negative member, e.g., muDi 'be able', 'be possible':

(6a) enn-ale adu paNNa muDi-(y)um`
my-INST that do can-CP
'I can do that.'

(6b) enn-ale adu paNNa muDi-(y)aadu
my-INST that do can-NEG
'I cannot do that.'

Sentence negation is thus usually expressed by a negative element in a sentence-final position. In the case of negating particular constituents in a sentence, there is a choice between using emphatic stress on the root of the constituent in question and the other is the device of clefting.

(7) Viji nettiki sinimaa-kku poga-le
yesterday movie-DAT go-NEG
'Viji didn't go to the movies yesterday.'

(7b) **STRESS**

Viji nettiki sinimaa-kku poga-le
'Viji didn't go to the movies yesterday.'

(7b) CLEFTING

Viji sinimaa-kku po-nadu nettiki ille
go-NOM.AFF NEG

'It wasn't yesterday that Viji went to the movies.'

The use of stress is similar to Horn's (1989; 363) description of the phenomenon of metalinguistic negation which is a device for objecting to a particular constituent in a sentence; and therefore the negation focuses on the assertability of an utterance and not on the truth or falsity of a proposition. Since the negative word in Tamil is unable to incorporate with any word other than the verb, metalinguistic negation is always expressed by stress.

In coordinated structures too negated elements are clause-final and they cannot be moved to the coordinator position. The verb root cannot be deleted even when only one of two coordinated clauses or sentences is negated and the verbs are identical:

(8) naan kaDai-kku po-nen aanaa avaL poga-le
I store-DAT go-PAST,1p.sg. but she go-NEG
'I went to the store but she didn't.'

The three tenses of the positive indicative forms are not paralleled in the set of finite negative forms, among which there is a four-fold distinction. The possibilities are:

(i) infinitive + -le (not marked for tense)

(avan) poga-le = 'he didn't go', 'he isn't going'

(ii) present tense stem + nominalising suffix -atu + ille (used to indicate habitual/customary action)

avan paDikar-atu ille = 'he doesn't study.'

(iii) past tense stem + nominalising suffix -atu + ille (used to refer to some conceivable action that has not taken place)

naan France-kku po(n)-atu ille = 'I haven't been to France.'

(iv) infinitive + maTT- (only this category allows the addition of person/number/gender suffixes and is used to refer to a future action where an element of volition is involved)

For all non-rational subjects (subjects that don't possess the power of reason - animals, birds etc.), the verbs have a separate negative form composed of the verb-root + -(kk)aadu:

(9a) kaakaa paaD-aada

crows sing-NEG

'Crows don't sing.'

(9b) kuruvi naDa-(kk)aadu

birds walk-NEG

'Birds don't walk.'

We have briefly gone through the preliminary list of negative forms that correspond to 'not' when it occurs with different verbs in different moods and sentence forms; and since the negative particle in Tamil is an inflectional affix, the numerous variations of the expression of negation itself is redundant to our present study.

3.2 THE SEMANTIC-PRAGMATIC DICHOTOMY

In chapter 2 we proposed an account of NPI-licensing that resorts to our pragmatic knowledge of the world of presuppositions and working on these presuppositions that are gathered from this "pragmatic wastebasket" (cf., Schwarz (1979)), so called because of its neglect in current linguistic theory - we came up with a hypothesis that any sentence containing an NPI is licit even in non-negative contexts provided we derived a suitable pragmatic presupposition equivalent to that sentence.

Any further discussion of NPIs would involve providing an account of polarity sensitivity in Tamil since we will take a look at the way pragmatics is responsible for NPI-licensing in non-negative contexts. Taking this claim to be the basis of all future argument, we could put aside the notion that an NPI which could occur in an affirmative sentence was problematic to most accounts of NPI-licensing. This strategy of drawing out a negative pragmatic presupposition in sentences containing an NPI indicates that negation, be it overt or covert, is the only licenser for NPIs and negation alone would satisfy as a sufficient legitimate licenser. This opinion may seem rather radical in its outlook but instances from Tamil would substantiate this point.

However, the direction of this chapter would be to suggest a semantico-pragmatic level of analysis for polarity sensitivity. This way, there is little cross-linguistic variation in the treatment of NPIs and this fact only strengthens the claims made

which, in other words, is that since pragmatic knowledge is universal, the common ground behind this knowledge could unify the class of licensers in a majority of languages. Here, it is of relevance to make note of the kind of pragmatic knowledge we are referring to. Pragmatic knowledge that is affiliated to conversational implicatures are not universal because they are more culture-bound. Pragmatic knowledge that consists of non-controversial propositions that a speaker posits as part of common ground is more like conventional implicatures and this is what would probably resolve the issue of inter- or cross-linguistic variation in NPI-licensing.

Clearly, a distinction has to be made between pragmatics and semantics - semantics is the empirical theory of how humans understand and interpret sentences the way they do. But pragmatics is seen as something dependent upon psycholinguistic structures and processes at work during the utterance and comprehension of linguistic units.

The view of the domain of pragmatics, as adopted by Gazdar (1979) which is also similar to Karttunen and Stalnaker, considers as its topic those aspects of utterance-meaning that cannot be accounted for by plain reference to the truth conditions of the sentences alone. Gazdar's "crude" equation for this is as follows:
PRAGMATICS = MEANING - TRUTH CONDITIONS

This means that pragmatics is a very important independent constraining force on any well-founded semantic theory. But it is not to say that the merits of the model-theoretic approach, which

has contributed enormously to present-day semantics is belittled, yet it must be realized that model-theory has to contend with cognitive and pragmatic problems as well.

In the view adopted in this thesis, semantics for natural language, covers, besides truth-conditional aspects, also speech-act properties of sentences and everything to do with the processes of discourse incrementation including the various forms of presupposition. This approach will produce the systematic contribution made by language towards the understanding of sentences which involve the important role of background knowledge.

3.3 NPIS IN NON-POLARITY CONTEXTS

In this chapter, when we look at the occurrence of NPIS in Tamil, it will become obvious that it is a language where NPIS are, to a large extent, restricted only to contexts containing an overt negative element. But in those rare instances where NPIS do occur despite a missing overt negative element, the phenomenon can be explained by resorting to the COMMON GROUND or COMMON SET OF ASSUMPTIONS behind the utterance made. As Karttunen (1974) puts it, what is pragmatically presupposed has to be part of the shared knowledge because pragmatics is equated with those aspects of meaning that are arrived at by general principles of preferred interpretation. From this we deduce that pragmatic presupposition should be a major criterion in solving the puzzle of the existence of an NPI in a sentence without overt negation.

To make our claims stronger, we will also see that in Tamil there is nothing like a "licensing environment" (what I call an NIT) which makes the NPI acceptable by producing a suitable negative implicature. This might seem like a potential problem for those of us who have been adhering to the claim that all NPIs are made licit only by "other expressions" that license them. What, then, is the licenser in Tamil? Before we go on to answering this question it is essential to discuss the few NPIs there are in Tamil and also verify their status as NPIs because a lot of times there is a possibility of confusing them with emphasis markers, though one of the functions of the NPIs is to emphasize negativity.

3.4 NEGATIVE POLARITY ITEMS IN TAMIL

Though the NPIs in Tamil exist in three forms - affixes, words and idiomatic expressions - there is no need to classify them as separate groups because they do not show any variation as far as their existence in negative contexts is concerned. All the same, it is of importance to know that in non-negative polarity contexts only words and the affixal forms¹ of the NPIs are licensed; all idiomatic NPIs are licensed strictly only by an overt negative element. In the following sub-sections, each NPI category is explained thereby making it simpler to comprehend any further finer classification of the NPI-forms.

3.4.1 AFFIXAL NPIS

The class of affixal NPIS consists of only two members: -ve and -e. While the former (-ve) is conjoined to verbs, the latter (-e) is the NPI that attaches itself to nouns.

Verbs + -ve NPIS

- (10) Raman-kku saikal ota-ve teriy-aadu
-DAT cycle ride-NPI know-NEG
'Raman does not know how to ride a bicycle.'
- (11) en-oDa akkaa-kku samaika-ve teriy-aadu
my-POSS sister-DAT cook-NPI know-NEG
'My sister cannot cook.'
- (12) nii amma-kiTe kocika-ve kooD-aadu
you mother-LOC angry-NPI must-NEG
'You must not get angry with mother.'

In the above examples, we saw the occurrence of the NPI with verbs, in sentences bearing different modals. In fact, the NPI -ve can be paraphrased as 'at all'/'ever' and just like its English counterpart, -ve does the job of emphasizing negativity though it strictly occurs only in negative contexts. It does not exist in "licensing environments" such as Questions or in the Antecedent of Conditionals or any other context but one that bears an overt

negation. To show that NPIs in Tamil are "parasitic" on negation alone, we have the following examples below:

(13) -ve in Questions

* ni unn-oDA 'homework' paNN-ve senjayaa?
you your-POSS do-NPI did(2p.sing.)
'Did you do your homework at all?'

(14) -ve in Conditionals

* avan 'phone' paNNa-ve senjaan-naa, saapaDa kuupiDu
he do-NPI did(3p.mas.)-COND, dinner call
'If at all/ever he phones you, ask him over for dinner.'

(15) -ve in Adversative Predicates

* Tara parikshe-kku paDika-ve paDicaaL-naa aacaryamaa irukkum
exam -DAT study-NPI study(3p.fem.)-COND surprise will be
'If Tara ever studies for her exams I'll be surprised.'

(16) -ve in Comparatives

? Ram-ai viDa Shyam vegam-aa-ve oDinaan
Ram-ACC than Shyam fast-ADV-NPI ran(3p.mas.)
'Shyam ran faster than Ram ever did.'

Nouns + -e NPIs

Similarly the -e NPIs too are dependent on negation though they occur only with nouns.

(17) kuDiyaanavan-oDa viT-ile arisi-e ille
farmer-POSS house-LOC rice-NPI not there
'There is no rice in the farmer's house.'

(18) varaTSi-naale kaNat-ile taNNi-e ille
drought-CAUSE well-LOC water-NPI not there
'There is no water in the well because of drought.'

These -e NPIs are also paraphrasable as 'at all' and it so happens that Tamil carries two distinct forms for the NPI 'at all' - one for verbs and the other for nouns. Similar to the -ve NPIs, this class too can simply not occur in any licensing environment whatsoever:

(19) -e in Questions

* viT-ile arisi-e irukk-a ?
house-LOC rise-NPI is there-Q
'Is there any rice at all in the house?'

(20) -e in Conditionals

- * veLLam-e vandadu-naa , maaDI-kku poiiviDu
flood-NPI come-COND, upstairs-DAT go
'If at all there is a flood, go upstairs.'

(21) -e in Adversative Predicates

- * maRai-e penjada-naa aacaryamaa irukkum
rain-NPI pour-COND surprise will be
'I'll be surprised if at all it rains,

The semantic contribution of these NPIs (-ve and -e) is one that provides an emphasis on the negativity of a sentence. The difference between a sentence in Tamil bearing an NPI and one without is much like the difference between these sentences in English: a) 'The clown in the circus was not funny.' versus

b) 'The clown in the circus was not at all funny.'

Though these NPIs are claimed to occur strictly only in overtly negative contexts, there are occasions when they are used quite freely in non-negative contexts as well. We will now see how and why they are licensed despite demonstrating that no class of licenser is a possible reason for its existence. This claim appears paradoxical, because every NPI has to have a licenser: a negative element or a suitable licensing environment in which it appears, but Tamil will vouch for the fact that covert negation, which is associated with negative pragmatic presupposition, is indeed a serious notion to reckon with.

Perplexing instances of NPIS appearing in non-negative contexts are easily clarified and an account of NPI-licensing in these contexts is provided. In fact, the occasions when these NPIS are used without overt negation is when "the speaker of P assumes Q and believes his audience to assume Q as well" [chapter 2, e.g. (25)].

3.4.2 IDIOMATIC NPIS

On the other hand, the class of idiomatic NPIS consists of only one significant member, namely, oru N kuDa/ oru N-um both of which mean 'a single N'.

(22) inda palamara(tt)-ile oru paRam kuDa ille
 this jackfruit tree-LOC a single fruit not there
 'There is not a single fruit on this jackfruit tree.'

(23) avan oru pacca kaai-um saapaDa-maaTaan
 he a single green vegetable eat-will not(3p.mas.)
 'He does not eat a single green vegetable.'

Strangely enough, though this idiomatic expression is provided with the English translation 'a single N', it encompasses the other idiomatic expressions like, 'bat an eyelid', 'a red cent', 'lift a finger' and 'budge an inch' as well.

(24) Ram oru emai kuDa cimiT-aamal poi connaan

one eyelash even bat-NEG lie told

'Ram lied without batting an eyelid.'

(25) avan-ai pola oru karumi piccaikaaran-kku oru paisa kuDa

him-ACC like a stingy beggar-DAT a coin even

kuDuka-maTaan

give-will not(3p.mas.)

'A stingy like him won't give the beggar a red cent.'

Both forms of the NPI from the idiomatic category cannot be licensed without an overt negation and examples (26) and (27) prove beyond doubt that all idiomatic NPIs must obligatorily have a licenser that is an overt negative element.

(26) * avaL amma-kku uttasai paNna oru veral kuDa asaipaal

she mother-DAT help do one finger even will move(3p.fem.)

* 'She will lift a finger to help her mother.'

(27) * avan enn-ai adikaaram paNNinaan-naa oru inch kuDa asaiuven

he me-ACC boss(V) do(3p.mas.)-COND one inch even will move

* 'I will budge an inch if he bosses over me.'

In fact, this suffix -um can productively attach itself to any noun which is preceded by 'oru' (one) to render the whole expression an NPI that strictly requires a negation word.

use the wh-word as the NPI.

(29) ni xiang chi sheme ma? MA-QUESTIONS
you like eat what Q

(30) ni xiang-bu-xiang chi sheme? A-NOT-A QUESTIONS
you like-not-like eat what
'Would you like to eat anything?' (Progovac 1988)

Tamil, however, uses the wh-word but with the -aavdu (not the -um) suffix on the wh-word to render the Chinese examples cited above into Tamil. As seen in Chapter 2, 'anyone'/'anything' that is substitutable by 'someone'/'something' will use the suffix -aavdu. For instance,

(31) una-kku ed(u)-aavdu saapaDa veNam-aa? (= MA-questions)
you-DAT what- to eat want-Q

(32) una-kku ed(u)-aavdu saapaDa veNam-aa-venDaam-aa? (= A-not-A)
you-DAT what- to eat want-Q-don't want-Q
'Would you like anything/something to eat?'

The latter question (32), however, is employed with the purpose of demanding an answer. The parallel between the wh-words of Tamil and Chinese was brought out to demonstrate and also to exemplify the third category of NPIs in Tamil, which consisted of a single

lexical item (unlike affixes or whole expressions).

Coming back to the negative polarity items formed by -um, we must make a note that -um by itself is not a member of the affixal NPIs because no single and specific meaning can be assigned to it, except to say that in lexical expressions like (23) it adds the meaning of even and in the cases like (28), it is considered a derivational affix that forms an NPI out of a wh-word.

At this point, it is of relevance to mention that Sedivy (1990) upholds the existence of two subclasses of NPIs that she calls "regular NPIs" and "lexical NPIs". Regular NPIs are of the type 'ever', 'any', 'at all' etc., and lexical NPIs are the quasi-idiomatic expressions like 'have a hope in hell', 'budge an inch', 'lift a finger', etc. Linebarger's theory of assuming that NPI licensing was best accounted for by both syntax and pragmatics was not a problem for Sedivy but the fact that all NPIs were taken into consideration as one unrelated set was the thorny issue. She provides evidence from contexts in English and Czech in support of her claim in maintaining the distinction between the two types of NPIs and concludes that regular NPIs are licensed by syntactic principles and lexical NPIs by pragmatic factors. Examples:

Both lexical and regular NPIs are licensed in Questions but the "pragmatic force of the question differs with the type of NPI it contains" (Sedivy 1990; 96).

(33) Does John give a damn about academic integrity? versus
Does Sam want any cake?

Sedivy lists four environments in which lexical NPIs contrast with regular NPIs: Questions, Modals, Emphasis and Superordinate negation with Adversatives.

(34) John should have lifted a finger to help Mary clean up. vs.
 * John should have eaten any healthful tofu.

(35) I do give a damn. versus
 * Bert did ever kiss Marilyn Monroe.

The bottom line of her account of two levels of licensing is that lexical NPIs require the availability "of some reading in which the proposition containing the NPI is negated", whereas regular NPIs occur in "contexts in which the syntactic requirement for a negative element is met".

Sedivy's 'regular NPIs' covers the classes that I call affixal NPIs and so also the 'word' NPIs; and her class of 'lexical NPIs' subsumes the idiomatic expressions.

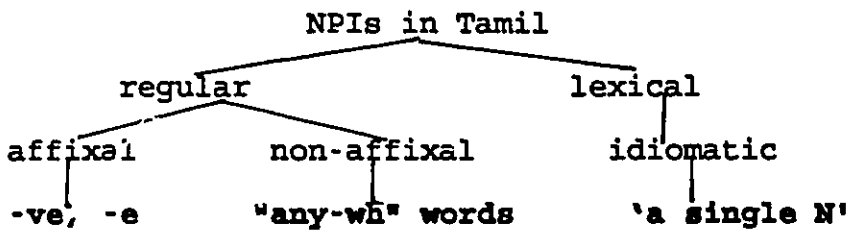


Figure A

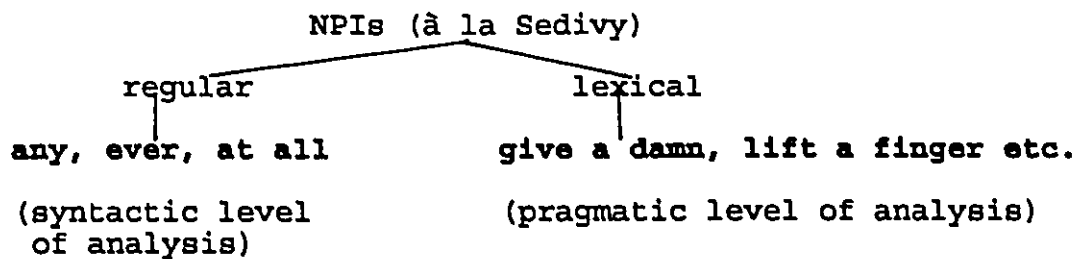


Figure B

The need for this distinct classification of the NPIs in Tamil arises in order to distinguish the NPIs that can be licensed without overt negation from the others that simply cannot. Regular NPIs can appear in non-negative contexts but lexical NPIs are in no way permitted to surface without an overt negative element. Instances of disparity between regular and lexical NPIs is provided in the following section.

We have no quarrel with the idea that syntax plays a significant role in the licensing of certain NPIs but we would prefer to look at it from another angle: the existence of all NPIs that are acceptable to a native speaker of the language in which they appear, are licensed by negation that is either overt or covert. The latency, nevertheless, can be made transparent by contextually inferring a negative presupposition of that sentence and thereby rendering the NPI perfectly licit.

3.5 NPIS IN NON-NEGATIVE POLARITY CONTEXTS

3.5.1 AFFIXAL NPIS

It is generally believed that licensing by negation is the core case of NPI licensing (e.g. Linebarger (1981)), but there are many contexts that apparently do not seem to be negative, which allow NPIs. In Chapter 2, we saw that the various environments that license NPIs did have some imperceptible negativity about them at the semantic level of words and very often, when we fail to make conclusions about its negativity at that level, we can use a pragmatic context to draw out a negative presupposition of that sentence; and this in turn licenses the NPI.

In this section we will see that in Tamil the 'regular' NPIS are used in non-negative contexts and are found to be appropriate only in a situation where Q is presupposed by the speaker, Q being a negative statement. Also it is necessary to assume that the hearer presupposes that Q in order to understand or correctly interpret the statement.

(36) netikki Tara ellorkum edirke paaDa-ve senja
yesterday everyone in front of sing-NPI did
'Tara indeed sang in front of everybody yesterday.'

In the utterance of this sentence, the speaker X of (36) clearly assumes that the hearer Y knows that Q; Q being :
Tara is a shy girl and one did not expect her to SING.

In the event that Y is not familiar with Tara's nature, then the utterance of X would seem absurd. Similarly the -e NPIs are also licensed in non-negative contexts as seen in (37):

- (37) Arun-ai appa(v)-e aDicuTaar
Arun-ACC father-NPI beat(PAST,HON.)
'Father (himself) beat Arun.'

The above sentence delivers its full meaning only if the hearer Y is in line with the assumptions (say Q) made by X.

Q: Arun is his father's pet and his father has never punished him, therefore it was unlikely that father would beat him.

In the above two examples we see how a negative pragmatic presupposition is the only licenser available for the existence of the NPIs in non-polarity contexts. Without using pragmatic knowledge that is common to X and Y, to correctly interpret the statement containing an NPI in a non-negative situation would result in a sentence of doubtful grammaticality. Strangely enough, when these NPIs surface in non-polarity contexts, the meaning of the NPIs, that is, 'at all'/'ever', cannot be derived at the level of interpretation. More precisely, neither can (36) be translated as (*) 'Tara sang in front of everybody at all yesterday' nor (37) as, (*) 'Father beat Arun at all.' The 'at all'/'ever' surfaces only in the negative presupposition of the respective sentences -
For (36) : 'Tara doesn't ever sing in front of everybody.'
For (37) : 'Father never ever beats Arun.'

This feature indicates that though the -ve/-e NPIs are licensed in non-negative contexts [(36) and (37)], it is only because they are also licensed in their respective negative presuppositions (given above) that they are able to exist without overt negation. This is further proof to the claim that covert negation also helps license NPIs in cases where there is no manifest negation.

Though we saw the occurrence of -ve/-e in case without overt negation, a few more examples are given below to show that they can occur anywhere in declarative sentences as long as they PRAGMATICALLY PRESUPPOSE negativity and this is possible

- 1) only when both the speaker and the hearer share a background knowledge of the context and/or
- 2) when the speaker wants the hearer to assume Q as well.

(38) ippo Leela-oDa aRag-e poiDutu
now Leela-GEN beauty-NPI is gone
'Now Leela's beauty is gone.' : LITERAL
(38') 'Leela is not at all beautiful anymore.'

According to native speakers' intuitions (38), a back-handed compliment, is uttered when (38') is considered outrageously impolite to say, even though that is what (38), not taken literally is supposed to mean. The same applies to (39) and (39'):

- (39) avaL-oDa naDai-e oru madiri irukkum
her-POSS gait-NPI one sort is
'Her gait is strange (funny).' : LITERAL
(39') 'Her gait is not at all graceful.'

As discussed in 3.4.1, these affixal NPIs cannot be licensed even in so-called 'licensing environments' [see examples (13)-(16)] and this is unexpected under theories that rely on other suitable environments to license the NPI in the event when it is not licensed by negation. But affixal NPIs are perfectly licit in the above such cases, provided there exists a presupposition of a negative sort. Very often, people, usually non-linguists, have believed in terming -ve and -e as emphasis markers but this is not the case. Firstly, these affixes can occur only when there is a negative element/negativity in that sentence and secondly, 'emphasis' here is taken in sense of giving weight to the negative pragmatic presupposition of that sentence.

3.5.2 'WORD' NPIs

Thus far, we considered only the cases of affixal NPIs that could be licensed without overt negation but the non-affixal, regular NPIs are also capable of appearing in non-negative sentences except that these NPIs can appear in a 'suitable environment' that acts as the licenser. Example (28a-28d) in section 3.4.3 indicates that these regular NPIs usually can occur only in sentences that carry a negative element but we will see

that these NPIs are also capable of appearing in non-negative contexts. To recapitulate, here is the list of non-affixal NPIs in Tamil:

- a) yaarum 'anyone' b) edu(v)um 'anything'
- c) enge(y)um 'anywhere' d) edukkum 'for any reason'
- e) eppaDi(y)um 'no matter how'

Though it may seem unnecessary to talk about each of these NPIs because they behave in the same manner and appear in the same licensing environment, we will, nevertheless, mention a couple of them to demonstrate that all wh-word NPIs pattern the same way.

When these NPIs appear in a non-polarity context, the lexical form of the NPI undergoes a change: the -um after the wh-word is deleted and in its place the affix -aavdu is added. For example,

(40) SET A		SET B	
yaar-um	--->	yaar-aavdu	'anyone'
edu(v)-um	--->	ed(u)-aavdu	'anything'
enge(y)-u	--->	enge(y)-aavdu	'anywhere'
edukk-um	--->	edukk-aavdu	'for any reason'
eppaDy)-um	--->	eppaDi(y)-aavdu	'no matter how'

Though the meaning of these new words (in Set B) remains the same as what it was before (in Set A), they are not necessarily used in a context where there is an overt negative element; contrary to the NPIs that ended in -um [see egs. (28a-28d)]. We will now see how the 'wh-um' differs from the 'wh-aavdu'.

(41) Wh-um/Wh-aavdu in:

a) Questions

* yaarum vandaan-aa?
anyone came (3p.mas) -Q
'Did anyone come?'

% yaaraavdu vandaan-aa?

b) Conditionals

* yaarum vandaa-naake ukkara collu
anyone come-COND to sit tell
'If anyone comes ask them to sit.'

% yaaraavdu vandaa-naake..

c) Adversative Predicates

* yaarum inikki aRutaa-naake aacaryamaa irukkum
anyone today cry-COND surprise will be
'I'll be surprised if anyone cries today.'

% yaaraavdu inikki ...

(42a) Questions

* ni edu(v)um ippo saapaDarayaa
you anything now eat (2p.sing)
'Do you want anything to eat now?'

% ni edaavdu ippo ...

b) Conditionals

* avan edu(v)um connaan-naake enakku kovam varum
he anything tell (3p.mas) -COND me (DAT) anger will come
'If he says anything, I'll get angry.'

% avan edaavdu connaan-naake ...

c) Adversative Predicates

- * Mira edu(v)um vaanguvaaL enkiratu sandeham
Mira anything buy(3p.sing.fem,FUT) COMP. doubt
'I doubt if Mira will buy anything.'
‡ Mira ed-aavdu vanguvaaL ...

In dealing with such pairs of NPIs we notice that 'anything'/ 'anyone' etc. have two variants in Tamil - one used strictly with overt negation only and the other which can appear in certain environments that act as licensers. Using an analysis based on the patterning of these NPIs, we claim that whenever the word with the -aavdu affix is possible, the NPI in the corresponding English sentence can be replaced by a non-NPI 'someone' or 'something' as the case may be.

Since we had already mentioned in Chapter 2 that there seemed to be a problem in analysing and thus justifying that 'anyone' was indeed an NPI, we will, in the following section, discuss the case of this particular NPI.

3.6 IS 'ANYONE' AN NPI ?

Linebarger's account of derivative licensing makes use of the NI account to explain certain NPIs appearing in acceptable non-negative sentences, but unfortunately does not provide any explanation for the NPIs that are capable of appearing in Questions. Her claim that "negative polarity licensing in English

cannot begin to be predicted on the basis of truth-conditional meaning alone" (pp.362) is both straightforward and acceptable. The role of negative implicature and other pragmatic factors in the licensing of NPIS is considered critical. However, we faced a tough problem when we tackled NPIS in Questions, particularly, 'anyone', because a negative pragmatic presupposition was not readily available.

In fact, one is tempted to reject the fact that it belongs to the class of NPIS due to this difficulty. We will presently see that 'anyone' is indeed an NPI though, in English, it freely alternates with 'someone' in some cases while in some others it does not. This phenomenon was introduced earlier, in Chapter 2 [e.g (39a)-(39b)], but it was not discussed entirely pending facts about NPIS in Tamil where this distinction in alternation is very clear.

'Anyone' in English/Tamil

(43) QUESTIONS

Did you meet anyone at the party last night ?

Did you meet someone at the party last night ?

ni neti raatri paarTi-ile yaar-ai-aavdu paatiyaa ?
you last night party-LOC anyone/someone saw

(44) CONDITIONALS

If anyone tries to cross the border, he will be shot.

If someone tries to cross the border, he will be shot.

yaaraavdu ellai-ai taandinaal-naake, suDapaDuvaa
anyone/someone border-ACC cross-COND will be shot

(45) ADVERSATIVE PREDICATES

I'll be surprised if anyone helps you do the dishes.

I'll be surprised if someone helps you do the dishes.

unakku yaaraavdu patram teka udavi paNNaa-naake aacaryamaa
you (DAT) anyone/someone dishes to wash help do-COND surprise
irukkum
will be

(46) COMPARATIVES

Ram ran faster than anyone did.

Ram ran faster than someone did.

Raam yaar-ai-um viDa vegamaa oDinaan
anyone (ACC) than fast (ADV) ran (3p.mas.)

(47) NEGATION

Timmy didn't bark at anyone at the dog-show.

Timmy didn't bark at someone at the dog-show.

Timmy naai-KaNkaaTsi-ile yaar-ai-um paatu kolaika-le
dog-show-LOC anyone (ACC) see bark-NEG

We notice that the licensing environments (31) through (33) allow either 'anyone' or 'someone' to surface; where 'someone' in these cases is not stressed. They mean the same, yet the subtle difference between these very sentences - that is normally overlooked - concerns the sentence that has 'anyone' which delivers more of a negative quality to the reading as against a sentence containing 'someone' that is intuitively felt to reflect a positive notion. This argument is instantiated below:

[e.g.(45a)] I'll be surprised if anyone helps you do the dishes.
(Everybody at this party is so drunk that no one seems to care about cleaning up..)

[e.g.(45b)] I'll be surprised if someone helps you do the dishes.
(These so-called friends of yours ought to help you with the dishes, but they really are those party parasites..)

These examples, with a brief background of the discursive context suggests the negative quality of the sentence containing 'anyone' and the positive tone of the one that bears 'someone'. As mentioned a while ago, though in general one tends to ignore these minor details of negativity/positivity of 'anyone'/'someone', the fact remains. For more instances of perception of these slight differences, see Chapter 2, (38a) and (38b).

The important thing about all this is that Tamil represents the freely alternating 'anyone' by yaaraavdu and cases like (46) and (47), where it is impossible to substitute 'anyone' with 'someone', it is represented by yaarum. This demonstrates that the NPI 'anyone' in English and Tamil is, in fact, a negative-positive polarity item because when it can alternate with 'someone' it leans towards the positive side of the interpretation but when it does not, the reading that we get can certainly account for a negative presupposition.

Since the derivation of the positive or the negative flavour of sentences depends so much on the discursive context or the

pragmatic knowledge of the utterance, it is once again stressed that negative presupposition is an important factor to contend with when dealing with sentences that contain an NPI that is not licensed by overt negation. From this we also conclude that the question of 'anyone' as an NPI in sentences can be better dealt with when we take a corresponding sentence with 'someone' in it. By applying pragmatic and contextual force, we are able to derive the inherent negativity of 'anyone'.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

- 1 Prescriptive grammars call -um the Conjunctive Participle and it can represent several things: it can mean 'too', 'even', 'also', 'and' and 'neither...nor'. However, when the affix occurs in a sequence of oru(one)-N-um it means 'a single N', which is definitely an NPI; and incorporating the meaning of -um, we translate it more precisely as 'even a single N'.

CHAPTER 4

NEGATION AND QUANTIFIERS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

No matter what particular account of grammar of negation one adopts, the analyst must, at some point, account for the least-understood phenomena within the semantics of negation: the scope interaction of the negative operator with quantifiers.

This chapter will bring to note that a lot of generalized claims about verb-final languages, where there is no incorporation of negation into quantifiers, are not true. Davison (1978) and Horn (1989) predict that "it is more a rule than the exception for a negative to the right of an existential or particular quantifier to be assigned (at least optionally) wide scope with respect to that quantifier" (Horn 1989; 500, cf. Davison 1978). This, they claim, is the case of Dravidian too, like it is in Indo-Aryan and Turkish.

The facts about Dravidian, in particular, Tamil, indicate that it can indeed have a variant morpheme in the indefinite words themselves to indicate whether or not they are in the scope of the negative present in that sentence and this way, scope ambiguities are easily disambiguated. One way is the use of particular lexical items, and the other, is to place the quantifier before or after the noun and the third case is when stress is placed on the quantifier itself.

4.2 TYPES OF NEGATION

The modern distinction between internal and external negation can be traced back to Aristotle's two negations: contrary vs contradictory negation. Horn (1989) presents Aristotle's judgement in the following way:

An affirmation is opposed to a denial in the sense which I denote as 'contradictory' when, while the subject remains the same, the affirmation is of universal character and the denial is not. The affirmation 'every man is white' is the CONTRADICTORY of the denial 'not every man is white'... But propositions are opposed as CONTRARIES when both affirmation and the denial are universal, as in the sentences 'every man is white', 'no man is white'.

The solution to these numerous types of negation involves the "exploitation of one of the oldest weapons in the philosopher's arsenal", which is the interaction of negation with quantifiers, or in other words, scope distinctions. Consider in this respect the sentence in (1) and its interpretations in (1a) and (1b):

(1) The king of France is not bald.

a) INTERNAL: [= 'The king of France is not-bald']

$\text{Ex } (K(x) \ \& \ \text{Ay } (K(y) \ \rightarrow \ y=x) \ \& \ \sim B(x))$

b) EXTERNAL: [= 'not (The king of France is bald)']

$\sim \text{Ex } (K(x) \ \& \ \text{Ay } (K(y) \ \rightarrow \ y=x) \ \& \ B(x))$

where K = property of being king

and B = property of being bald

In (1a) the description is said to have wide scope (primary occurrence) with respect to negation, where it is asserted that the king of France is not bald. (1b), on the contrary, is a case where the description has narrow scope with respect to negation (secondary occurrence) and denies the assertion that the king of France is bald.

The scope of negation and its complex interaction with extra-structural aspects of language that includes intonation, focus, stress, etc. and also with modals and quantifiers is bound to be voluminous and this study will, therefore, concentrate on the scopal relations pertaining to negation and quantifiers alone.

In English a quantifier can be negated independently of the main verb in its sentence and this option results in the NEG-Q or the NEG-V reading:

(2) a. Not all the children can swim.

b. All the children can't swim.

NEG-Q Reading: $\sim \forall x (\text{child}(x) \rightarrow \text{can swim}(x))$

NEG-V Reading: $\forall x (\text{child}(x) \rightarrow \sim \text{can swim}(x))$

According to Carden (1976), a sentence like (2a) has only the NEG-Q reading, where the negation is construed with the quantifier 'all'. But in some dialects (2b) is ambiguous between the NEG-Q and the NEG-V readings and the latter reading is one where the negative is construed with the predicate 'can swim'.

4.3 NEG-RAISING AND AMBIGUITY

It is generally accepted that the interaction of negation and quantifiers with the rule of Neg-raising is important evidence in favour of the claim that quantifiers derive from a higher sentence. If this claim is to hold, Neg-raising must be a meaning-preserving rule ("the NOT-transportation argument...depends on the hypothesis that syntax is meaning-preserving" [Carden 1976; 25]), but it is not clear if indeed it is.

The Neg-raising phenomenon, as it is called, is the "availability of a lower clause reading or understanding for a higher-clause negation" (Horn 1989; 308). Neg-raising is considered as a way of attenuating negation because the embedded-neg versions of pairs like (3) is intuitively felt to be stronger than the higher-neg counterpart. This transformation is variously termed "Transformation of NOT" (Fillmore 1963), "not-hopping", and "Negative Transportation" (R.Lakoff 1969) and (Horn 1969).

- (3) a. I don't think he'll sing.
b. I think he won't sing.

It is believed that sentences like (3b) are synonymous with (3a) and this has been accounted for by a rule of Neg-raising that, for certain verbs, moves a negative from the embedded sentence ("he will sing") to the verb of the higher sentence ("think"). Carden

(1976) claims that a sentence like 'All the boys will run' has the structure given below:

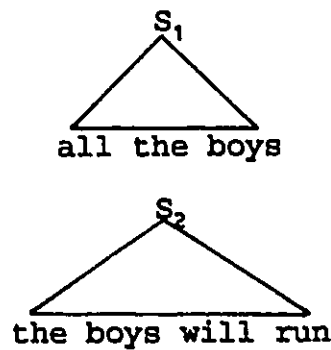


FIGURE A

When the sentence is negated, NEG is attached either to S₁ or to S₂ giving rise to NEG-Q or the NEG-V reading respectively. Similarly, if quantifiers come from a deep structure like Figure A, ambiguity of sentences like 'All the boys won't run' can be accounted for by a "NEG-Placement and Quantifier Lowering rules and a Quantifier-NEG-Moving rule." Despite this analysis of quantifiers Carden agrees that it is "complicated", for one must "discover the internal structure of the mysterious higher sentence" and also that one must "find independent motivation for the higher sentence" (Carden 1976; 25).

The rule of Neg-raising/Neg-Transportation which is able to move a negation from a sentence immediately dominated by verbs such as **think**, **believe** and **expect** and placing the negation on the verb instead, is the source of synonymy in pairs of sentences like

(3a-b) in English:

In most other cases, that is, cases other than the Propositional Attitude Verbs (PAVs), Neg-raising is a transformation that opposes the original theory [of Katz & Postal (1964)] that transformations do not change meaning of sentences. Of course, later work such as Jackendoff (1969), among others, has shown that a theory in which transformations change meaning can be motivated on other grounds. More recently, Horn (1989; 316) has concluded that a syntactic account of Neg-raising "can be salvaged only if we are willing to give up the thesis that transformations preserve meaning."

The Poutsma-Bolinger Uncertainty Principle¹, according to Horn, may not cast any more doubt on the synonymy between a sentence like (3b) and the transported reading of (3a) than the ambiguity of these sentences itself. In other words, he claims that if the synonymy between these sentences is an issue of controversy, then the ambiguity too is no less controversial.

The issue at hand now is that Tamil presents evidence wherein even (the transformation of) Neg-raising with PAVs results in ambiguity. These meaning-changing transformations are usually unexpected with PAVs in English, a language which preserves meaning under Neg-raising.

(4) a. avan paaDuvaan-nnu nenaika-le (AMBIGUITY)

he sing (3p.mas.)-COMP. think-NEG

PRIMARY: i) 'I DON'T think he'll sing.'

I ~(think)_{pres.} he will sing.

SECONDARY: ii) 'I DIDN'T think he would sing.'

I ~(think)_{past} he would sing.

b. avan paaDa-maaTaan-nnu nenaikaren (SYNONYMY)

he sing won't (3p.mas.)-COMP. think (1p.sing.)

PRIMARY: i) 'I think he WON'T sing.' =

I think he ~(will sing).

SECONDARY: ii) 'I DON'T think he'll sing.'

I ~(think) he will sing.

When we consider the primary readings of (4), i.e., (4ai) and (4bi) we do observe the synonymy similar to the English sentences of (3a) and (3b). The crux of the problem arises when dealing with the reading as in (4a_{ii}) where Neg-raising is in effect and where the verb is taken in the past tense. However, it is not at all times that that this reading emerges. Only when there is a COMMON SET OF ASSUMPTIONS about X or a relevant pragmatic context does this reading hold; in all other cases, only (4ai) is assumed to be the core/primary reading.

In such a situation, one is left to perceive the synonymy of (4a) and (4b) and the case in point is equivalent to the other Neg-

(6) Indira Gandhi kolla-paDa-maTaaL-nnu nenaikaren
kill-CAUS-won't (3p.fem.)-COMP. think(1p.sing.)

i) 'I don't think that Indira Gandhi will be killed.'

ii) 'I think that Indira Gandhi won't be killed.'

The clear ambiguity of the two readings of the Neg-raised (4a) and (5) is due to the fact that finite negative forms in Tamil are not parallel to the three tenses of the positive indicative forms. The negative form of a verb is not marked for person, number, gender or tense unlike the positive forms. Likewise, the infinitive + -le (nenaika-le 'didn't think') is not marked for tense [see e.g. (9i) of Chapter 3] and this in turn raises the assumption about the ambiguity of Neg-raised PAVs which in Tamil is certainly distinguishable from mere 'lack of specificity' (a.k.a. generality or vagueness). It is therefore plausible to conclude that external negation with Tamil PAVs is ambiguous between the past and the present tense but internal negation is not. In other words, the English examples above [(3a) and (3b)], which indicate synonymy, are inconsistent with data presented from Tamil.

This discussion about Neg-raising and ambiguity is in order because implicit in the argument is the fact that Neg-raising is not a meaning-preserving rule and therefore the claim that quantifiers derive from a higher sentence is open to question. In fact, Hogg (1977) points out that since the matter of synonymy and the relation between Neg-raising and quantifiers is not entirely

clear, it will be inconclusive and consequently, a discussion of such a relation "is best avoided." In Tamil, even the synonymy of sentences with Neg-raised PAVs (which is supposed to be synonymous in English) and one without, is a moot point.

4.4 NEGATION, QUANTIFIERS AND NEGATIVE SCOPE

Coming back to quantifiers, we will here limit the discussion to sorting out certain cursory generalizations made about Dravidian and we will demonstrate through examples that there are characteristics that have not been seriously considered while making these predictions.

Tamil is a verb-final language where the position of negation is fixed by the position of the verb, and negation of any kind is represented by a negative affix on the verb. The negated indefinite is not as specific as in the case of English, where nobody and anyone are distinct from someone. Similarly, there are no complex negated quantifiers corresponding to not every, and not all.

Davison (1978) claims that despite Hindi-Urdu not having any incorporated negative indefinites, surface strings are not ambiguous because there are "half-a-dozen devices" (which she lists) differentiating an unnegated indefinite from a negated indefinite in a negative context. "This pattern found in Hindi and Urdu... is representative of a widely occurring type of verb-final languages." At this point, it must be made clear that though Tamil

has no negated indefinite that shows a negative element incorporated in the structure, it does have a variant in the lexical item that indicates 'someone' and one that indicates 'no one'.

TAMIL

- (7) a. yaaro inniki varale
 someone today didn't come
 'Someone didn't come today.'
- b. yaarum inniki varale
 no one today didn't come
 'No one came today.'

Although in Chapter 3 we talked about anyone and someone in some detail, we didn't see too many examples where no one was made distinct from anyone and this is because it is not possible (cf. (29a) of chapter 3). 'yaarum' translated as 'anyone' is in fact also equivalent to 'no one'.

- (8) naan yaaraium paarkale
 I anyone (ACC) didn't see
 'I didn't see anyone'/'I saw no one'.
- (9) ange yaarum ille
 there anyone not-there
 'There isn't anyone out there'/'There is no one out there'.

In either case, (8) or (9), negation takes wide scope over the indefinite. (10) below will show the difference between yaaro and yaarum more clearly.

(10) a. naan kaDai-ile yaar-ai-o paarkale

I store-LOC someone (ACC) didn't see

'I didn't see someone at the store.'

(Ex, x a person, such that I didn't see x at the store)

b. naan kadai-ile yaar-ai-um paarkale

I store-LOC anyone (ACC) didn't see

'I didn't see anyone at the store'/'I saw no one at the store.'

(~Ex, x a person / I saw x at the store)

Hindi, on the other hand, may or may not consider an indefinite word in a negative sentence to be in the scope of the negative.

HINDI

(11) aaj koi nahi aayaa

today someone not came

'Today no one came' OR 'Today someone didn't come.'

(cf., Davison (1978))

Though this looks ambiguous in principle, it is "not always so in practice." Davison's Appendix B gives similar examples from Kannada², a Dravidian language, and concludes that all verb-final

languages function similarly and therefore, 'someone didn't come' is equivalent to 'no one came'. Example (7), the Tamil counterpart of (11), just demonstrated otherwise. The indefinite yaaro 'someone' in (7a) is thus assigned wide scope with respect to negation, yielding the NEG-V reading and in (7b), negation gets wide scope, whence the NEG-Q reading. This also contradicts Horn's (1989) claim for Dravidian that the literal translations of 'Somebody isn't happy', 'Some man didn't win' etc., into "Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, and Turkish can be, and generally are, interpreted as NEG-Q".

Some facts that were unfortunately overlooked have resulted in a blanket judgement about two unrelated languages only because they are SOV and it would be remiss to ignore this error. There is certainly a marking in the indefinite word itself to indicate whether or not it is in the scope of the negative - 'yaaro' in a negative sentence indicates that the verb alone is negated, but 'yaarum' would indicate that the negative assumes wide scope over the quantifier.

Note that yaarum is NOT the emphatic form of the indefinite like the Hindi koi-bhii as indicated by Davison (1978) because Dravidian has other indicators for emphasis³. As already mentioned in a footnote in Chapter 3, -um has other functions and is not an emphasis marker. With these remarks we will now go on to looking into other means of clearing up scope ambiguities in Tamil.

4.4.1 THE UNIVERSAL QUANTIFIER IN TAMIL

It seems that when a language has universal quantifiers that are distributive ('each') and others that are unitary ('the whole of'), there should be at least one which is used in either way. The best candidate for this purpose seems to be 'all' - ['The bishop spoke to all in turn.' (distributive) and 'All England was at war.' (unitary)] - though 'every', very often, seems to lose its distributive sense (e.g. everyone_i said that they_i had a good time).

This position works well for Tamil too - the word 'all' in its proper logical sense encompasses 'each and every' but it also stands for all taken together. Hence, the universal quantifier *ella + N/ellorum* 'all + N/all' is considered as one that covers 'each' and 'every'. If a negative is incorporated into the verb/predicate it cannot take scope over the universal.

- (12) *ella naai-kaL-um kolai(k)-aadu* (A~/NEG-V)
all dog-PLU.-CP bark- will not
'All dogs don't bark.' / $\forall x (\text{dog}(x) \rightarrow \sim \text{bark}(x))$

This is very similar to the English instance when the $\sim A$ reading of 'All handwritings are not legible' is lost when the negative is associated with the adjective ('All handwritings are illegible'). The only difference being that in Tamil the $\sim A$ wide scope reading is derived only when the quantifier is stressed; normal stress and a final fall are always associated with the A~/NEG-V reading.

However, **stress** is not the only means of deriving a NEG-Q reading. When the quantifier follows the NP that it quantifies, the interpretation is one that is $\sim A$ /NEG-Q and this is a very commonly used device to extract the NEG-Q reading when the normal-stress sentence always gives rise to the NEG-V reading. This is because the negation that is affixed to the verb cannot take wide -scope over the universal.

This device of **postposing** the quantifier is possible only when 'ella(m)'⁴ stands to mean 'all' (unitary) and NOT 'every'. The next logical question would be to ask how one could decipher whether in (12) 'ella' means 'all' or it means 'every'; and since both are possible with just one lexical item, this does seem confusing.

'ella' in (12) is quite obviously used in its unitary sense, in which the expression 'the whole of' can be used in the meaning. Hence, 'all dogs don't bark', in the above case, could be substituted by 'the whole set/species of dogs/canines don't bark.' In Tamil, this unitary sense of 'ella(m)' can be gathered only when the quantified noun is in the plural. When the singular noun is used, then the quantifier takes on the distributive sense.

- (13) ella naai-um kolaikaadu (A \sim /NEG-V)
 all dog-um (sing.) doesn't bark
 'All dogs don't bark.' \approx (Every single dog does not bark)
 $\forall x$ (dog (x) \rightarrow \sim bark(x))

In both (12) and (13), the NEG-V interpretation is the primary meaning and to get the NEG-Q reading for these, we use postposing⁵ (for plural Ns) and stress (for singular Ns) respectively. Also notice that the noun in (13) is in the **singular number**.

Postposing

(12a) : — naai-kaL ellam kolai(k)-aadu (~A/NEG-Q)
 dog-PLU. all don't bark
 'Not all dogs bark.'

Stress

(13a) : eLLa naai-um kolaik-aadu (~A/NEG-Q)
 all dog-CP don't bark
 'Not all dogs bark.'/'Not every dog barks.'

Unless more instances of the relation of quantifiers to the singular or the plural nouns, especially in negative sentences are observed, the phenomenon itself could be perplexing to anyone who is not familiar with the nature of this language. The sentences in (14) will allow us to clarify the facts a little more.

(14) a. avaL ella pustakam-um paDika-maaTaaL (NEG-V)
 she all book-CP (sing.) read-will not(3p.fem.)
 'She will not read all the books.' ≈

DISTRIBUTIVE : (She will not read (every single book))

b. avaL eLLa pustakam-um paDika-maaTaaL (STRESS = NEG-Q)
 ~Ax (book(x) → she will read(x))

- c. aVaL (Beckett-oDA) ella pustakan-kaL-um paDika-maaTaaL (NEG-V)
 she (Beckett-POSS.) all book-PLU.-CP read-does not(3p.fem.)
 'She will not read all the books (of Beckett's plays).'
- d. aVaL $\overbrace{\text{pustakan-kaL}}^{\downarrow}$ ellam paDika-maaTaaL (POSTPOSING = NEG-Q)
 $\neg Ax$ (book(x) \rightarrow she will read(x))

As is the case with most taxonomies, the attempt to distinguish between the unitary and the distributive all flounders upon several borderline cases and for many native speakers even the distinction between (14a) and (14c) is not altogether clear. To my mind, this vagueness is due to the fact that regardless of a plural morpheme (cf. (14c)), (14a) is translated as 'all the books', taking into consideration a number of books and this is so because ella(m) by itself is good enough reason for plurality. However, the unitary or the distributive interpretation does surface on some prodding. In the above cases, the mere fact of plurality marked on nouns is sufficient to demonstrate that all in those instances is UNITARY and in cases where there is no such marker, all is DISTRIBUTIVE.

Though the quantifier ella(m) is ambiguous between the unitary and the distributive senses, the relevant interpretation is apparent in many cases while there are others in which it is difficult, if not impossible, to detect the distinction clearly.

This discussion just revealed to us how a particular language with its unique set of characteristics distinguishes between sentences with scope ambiguities especially when there is no device such as using the negative word at the head of a sentence to mark

it as \bar{A} (NEG-Q). It is all the more interesting because one quantifier can represent two types of quantifiers, when most languages have explicit representative members for the universal quantifiers: 'all', 'each' and 'every'. Until now, we saw the usefulness of the plurality morpheme in solving the riddle about getting the right interpretation of NEG-Q sentences that had the form $Q + N_{(sing./plu.)}$. In what follows, for the sake of convenience, we will recapitulate the entire phenomenon in a few words -

The NEG-Q interpretation of sentences can be derived in two ways:

- a) by the placement of stress and
- b) by postposing the quantifier in a $Q + N$ sequence.

Stress can be assigned only to those quantifiers that quantify a singular noun. Whereas postposing occurs when the noun is in the plural. The quantifier 'ella' that occurs with a singular noun is translated to mean 'every' but when it occurs with a noun in the plural, it means 'all'.

Despite the usage of one word to describe 'all' and 'every', there appears to be an obvious difference between them. Like in English, 'every' collocates with singular nouns only and this reflects the underlying distributive meaning of 'every'. A second point of difference is that 'every' does not have the same freedom of movement as does 'all'. We have sentences below to explain this point. Consider (15a) and (15b) versus (16a) and (16b):

(15) a. ella kuruvi-um para(kk)-aadu
all bird-CP (sing.) fly-don't (neu.)
'Every bird does not fly.'

b. * kuruvi ellam para(kk)-aadu
bird all fly-don't

(16) a. ella kuruvi-kaL-um para(kk)-um
all bird-plu.-CP fly-CP
'All birds fly.'

b. kuruvi-kaL ellam para(kk)-um
bird-plu. all fly-CP
'All birds fly.'

This is similar to the cases listed below:

'Every living creature is mortal' versus

* 'Living creature every is mortal.'

'All living creatures are mortal.' versus

'Living creatures are all mortal.'

Looking at all these instances of ella occurring with $N_{(sing.)}$ or $N_{(plu.)}$ it is tempting to regard the 'every-ella' as a suppletive form of the 'all-ella'. However, this proposal ought to be rejected because the semantic difference between the two quantifiers is something more than just a suppletion process. 'Every' is basically a distributive, universal quantifier and it always takes a singular

head (except after cardinal numbers, for instance, 'Every six hours I swallow a pill for my headache'), whereas 'all', in most cases seems to possess a unitary force. Thus, the 'every-ella' demands a non-generic interpretation and the 'all-ella' is a true universal quantifier, which can occur to the right of the noun too (has variable structure position); but 'every' does not occur post-nominally. The position of these quantifiers and their semantic and syntactic characteristics in Tamil are very similar to the universal quantifiers on English as well.

The 'every-ella' is similar to the 'all-ella' except for the generic/non-generic contrast as we will notice in the sentences given below which is as a result of the singularity/plurality of the noun it quantifies :

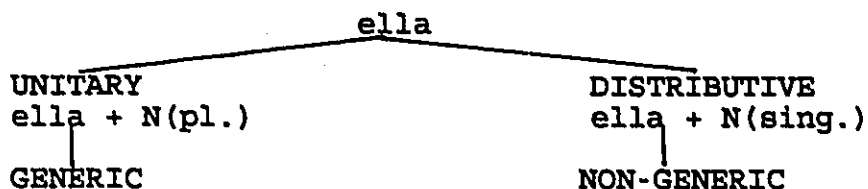
NON-GENERIC

- (17) inniki ella yaanai-kk-um tengaai kuDupaar-kaL
 today every elephant-DAT-CP coconut will give-PL
 'Today they will give a coconut to every elephant.'

GENERIC

- (18) ella yaanai-kaL-kk-um karumbu puDi-kkum
 all elephant-PL-DAT-CP sugarcane like-(generic)
 'All elephants like sugarcane.'

In this section, we have suggested ways of deriving the NEG-Q or the NEG-V reading from the quantifier 'ella(m)' which took on the unitary or the distributive reference depending on the noun it quantifies. The distributive 'ella' gave rise to the non-generic meaning and the unitary 'ella' to the generic interpretation.



This proposal of bifurcating the universal quantifier in Tamil is new; for, until now 'ella' was looked upon to mean EITHER all or every. In fact, this is the first step towards working on underlying structures of the two types of universal quantifiers in Tamil so that the difference in variable surface structure position between the two can be better explained.

The reason why we talk about quantifiers, providing examples simultaneously from English and from Tamil, is to let the readers get a better understanding of the problem while relating it to the language that is more familiar to them.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1. This principle, as it is termed by Horn (1989), is the collapsing of remarks and observations made on the interpretation of sentences that undergo Neg-raising. They are taken as challenges against the purported synonymy of the Neg-raised sentences. Poutsma remarks that "the shifting of not often has the effect of softening down the negating of a sentence" (cf., Horn (1989)) and Bolinger observes that the negative force in a Neg-raised sentence is weaker than that in its non Neg-raised partner. The Poutsma-Bolinger Uncertainty Principle is therefore seen as a special case of interaction involving negation and morpho-syntactic space.
2. Kannada is, in many ways, similar to Tamil. Davison's (1978) examples from the language claim that yaaro is 'someone' and yaaru is 'someone (emphatic)' which translates to 'no one' because the "form of the indefinite pronoun is emphatic." She then equates this form (yaaru) to the Hindi koi-bhii 'someone-emphatic' and thus generalizes that Indo-Aryan and Dravidian pattern similarly because they lack incorporated negative indefinites. yaaru (like T. yaarum) is different from yaaro because yaaru will always yeild a NEG-Q reading and can never occur in an affirmative sentence; and yaaro always yeilds a NEG-V reading.

KANNADA

- | | |
|---|---|
| a) yaaro ivattu bandida
someone today came | b) yaaro ivattu barlilla (NEG-V)
someone today didn't come |
| c) * yaaru ivattu bandida | d) yaaru ivattu barlilla (NEG-Q) |

3. The emphasis marker in Tamil is taan though the NPIs -ve/-e is also seen as something that emphasizes negativity.

TAMIL

inniki yaarum-e varale
today anyone-emp. didn't come.
'No one came today.'

HINDI

aaj koi-bhii nahi aaya
today someone-emp. didn't
come.
'No one came today.'

4. All post-nominal quantifiers take a word-final bilabial nasal closure.
5. The device of Q-postposing (the term used by Postal 1974) resembles the floating quantifiers phenomenon as outlined by Sportiche (1988). The floating Q appears both to the left and to the right of some NP. "What characterizes the set of NPs that Qs can float rightward from ?.." The answer to this is, in the case of Tamil - only plural NPs qualify as eligible to permit Q-float and only they appear to the right of the NP. Also note that this idea of postposing is not taken to be a movement rule here because to provide evidence for a movement rule is beyond the scope of this thesis. We only mention whether the quantifier appears to the right or to the left of the NP.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, we discussed two very interesting areas in the semantics of negation. The primary focus was on the licensing of Negative Polarity Items (NPIs) especially in non-negative contexts. Our claim that only negation can be heralded as a licenser for NPIs is well-substantiated by a number of examples. NPIs in non-polarity contexts are perfectly licit only because the proposition contains a Negative Implicature Term (NIT). In fact, our definition of an NIT emphasizes the notion that negative pragmatic presupposition, that is akin to conventional implicata, are tied to these NITs. It is the negativity that arises from the NIT that is responsible for the licensing of the NPI.

Pragmatic presuppositions here stand for the noncontroversial propositions a speaker posits as part of common ground. This general concept about pragmatic presupposition comes from Stalnaker (1974) and Karttunen (1974) who have strongly argued that this phenomenon is distinct from the phenomenon of semantic presupposition.

We proposed that pragmatic principles are to be given serious thought in explaining NPI-licensing because, even when there are no NITs in a language to which presuppositions are linked, common ground or background knowledge teases out the inherent negativity of an apparently non-negative proposition. This analysis attempts to explain why some languages (like Tamil, co name just one) seem

to permit an NPI to surface despite the conspicuous absence of an NIT, which, in fact, provides a suitable negative presupposition that acts as licenser.

It is interesting to note that Tamil is one such language that allows NPIs to appear in non-polarity contexts that derive negativity simply based on pragmatic presupposition drawn from the discursive background. In this case, however, it is very important to associate any utterance bearing an NPI (say P) with a negative proposition that was probably intended, presupposed, affirmed or invited by P.

We also saw the need to classify the NPIs under various labels because all of them do not uniformly behave in the same manner. Some NPIs simply require a negative pragmatic presupposition that can be contextually inferred, while others can exist only when the negative presuppositions are associated with the NITs (as in English).

The claim put forth in this thesis is that a licenser, for an NPI in any grammatical proposition, is negation. The word 'negation', however, is taken to mean either negativity as overtly represented by a negation word in that proposition or negativity that is covertly manifested by means of another proposition (S_2) that is contextually presupposed. This claim accords with Progovac's (1988) argument, in her dissertation, that "the only binder for polarity items is taken to be negation, either overt or covert" (pp. 415).

The major difference between the two outwardly similar claims,

however, rests in the theoretical approach that has been employed. While Progovac argued for the presence of a null and negative operator in the Spec of Comp "of those environments which license NPIs" (that excludes overt negation), our contention precludes any such hypothetical nodes or categories. On the contrary, it involves using contextual inference or pragmatic presupposition to draw out that 'covert' negativity, which was in fact responsible for the licensing of the polarity item.

This thesis is only an attempt to suggest an alternate and a simpler solution. In other words, we are only trying to draw back the curtain and reveal what is already there.

We believe our approach is also likely to account for cross-linguistic variation though no attempt was made with that specific purpose in mind. This assumption stems from the fact that pragmatic knowledge, that is associated with the non-controversial propositions that the speaker posits as common ground, is universal and universality makes parametrization possible.

This approach to polarity sensitivity has assimilated the notion of Negative Implicature à la Linebarger and the concept of overt versus covert negation à la Progovac to produce the theory as put forth in this thesis.

In addition to the treatment of this controversial topic, we also analysed, briefly, the subject of negation and quantifiers in Tamil. Since the scope of negation and its complex interaction with aspects of language that include intonation, stress, focus and modals is bound to be voluminous, we reserved our study to scopal

relations pertaining to negation and quantifiers alone.

Despite the brevity of this section in the thesis, we did bring to book several cursory generalizations that were passed as representing a typical SOV language. Horn (1989), following data provided by Davison (1978) claims that a negative to the right of an existential quantifier should be assigned wide scope with respect to that quantifier. This may be true in the case of Indo-Aryan and Turkish (cf. Davison 1978) but not so in Dravidian as we have shown, because Dravidian does have an independent lexical item to distinguish 'someone' from 'anyone'. Hence, we show that the "problem" of scope ambiguities does not, in reality, exist in Dravidian (instances from Tamil and Kannada are provided in the thesis).

Dwelling on the subject of the scopal interaction of negation and quantifiers, we discussed the rule of Neg-raising in relation to data from Tamil and concluded that Neg-raising in Tamil was ambiguous between a higher-neg and a lower-neg reading. Since Neg-raising does not result in the synonymy of sentences, the argument provided by Carden (1976) that quantifiers come from a "higher sentence" appears to be weakened. Enough evidence was provided to indicate that the ambiguity is not something that arises from individual perception alone, but that it is a question of grammar.

We concluded our discussion of quantifiers by taking up the issue of the universal quantifier in Tamil ['ella(m)'] which, in fact, represents 'every' and 'all', though the latter two words, by themselves, are clearly used with different types of noun phrases.

These two uses of the word 'ella(m)' are distinguished when it occurs in a sentence containing a negative. When 'ella(m)' is used in the sense of 'all' it can undergo Q-float but when it is used in the sense of 'every' it can occur only sentence-initially. This distinction is an important matter because from this we derived the unitary versus the distributive classification of 'ella(m)'.

The section on quantifiers focussed more on revealing overlooked facts and giving a new perspective to the treatment of universal quantifiers. This is of particular relevance to Tamil because no other study in the past mentioned about this interesting distinction.

Though this thesis does not exhaust the topic of quantifiers and negation, it is suggestive in many ways for further study on the topic. For one, it provides concrete proof that Neg-raising of PAVs does not result in synonymy and therefore the claim, that quantifiers come from a higher sentence, has to be abandoned. Further, underlying structures of the universal quantifier 'ella(m)' has to be thoroughly investigated in order to understand the behaviour of this quantifier with the various NPs it quantifies.

As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, the analysis of NPI-licensing as provided in this thesis will help account for the phenomenon in a wide range of languages although it still remains to be further tested. Only empirical evidence will prove beyond doubt that pragmatics does indeed play a pertinent role in answering most questions about NPI-licensing.

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