1. Introduction

C(ategorial)-selection is often assumed to be unique: if a given category selects for the categorial properties of its complement it does so by selecting one and only one category. In this paper I undertake two case-studies of categories which appear to c-select for more than one category: negation in German and diminutive marking in Halkomelem. I argue that these apparent cases of non-unique c-selection can – and in fact should – be analyzed in terms of unique c-selection. In both cases – I argue - the appearance of non-unique c-selection derives from the nature of roots, which by definition are category-neutral. On the one hand, the negative marker in German is itself a root and as such is not associated with any c-selectional properties. As a consequence, negation in German can combine with all categories apparently violating unique c-selection. On the other hand, the diminutive marker in Halkomelem selects for category-neutral roots. As a consequence, diminutive marking in Halkomelem appears to combine with nouns, verbs, or adjectives, apparently violating unique c-selection.

I conclude that the principle of unique c-selection can be maintained, even in light of superficial evidence for non-unique c-selection (such as negation in German or diminutive marking in Halkomelem). This paper then contributes to an ongoing research question concerning the nature of roots viewed as syntactic entities. According to the case-studies reported in this paper, roots do not c-select but can be c-selected for.

2. Cross-linguistic Differences in Selectional Properties of NEG

In German, sentential negation and constituent negation are both expressed by the same form: the uninflected particle nicht.

(1) SENTENTIAL NEGATION: [Neg VP]
weil ich das Buch nicht gelesen habe
COMP 1SG DET book NEG read.PART AUX
‘because I haven’t read the book.’

(2) CONSTITUENT NEGATION: [Neg DP]
Ich habe nicht das Buch gelesen sondern die Zeitung
1SG AUX NEG DET book read.PART but DET newspaper
‘I have read not the book but the newspaper.’

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1 Research on this paper was sponsored by a SSHRC Standard Research Grant awarded to the author (SSHRC 410-2002-1078).

2 I use the following glosses and abbreviations throughout the paper: 1=1st person; 2=2nd person; 3=3rd person; ADJ=adjectivizer; AUX=auxiliary; COMP=complementizer; CONT=continuative; D/C=determiner/complementizer; DEM=demonstrative; DET=determiner; DBM=diminutive; INDEP=independent pronoun; INF=infinitive; NEG=negation; NOM=nominalizer; O=object; PART=participle; PAST=past tense; POSS=possessive; PREF=prefix; S=subject; SG=singular; SS=subjunctive subject; SUBJ=subjunctive; TRANS=transitive

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In contrast, in Halkomelem the form used for sentential negation (éwe), which merges with CP (Wiltschko 2002) cannot be used in the context of constituent negation. Rather, constituent negation is expressed through sentential negation in Halkomelem.³

(3) **SENTENTIAL NEGATION:**  [Neg CP]

éwe i-l teló:mét

NEG AUX-1SG.SS understand

‘I don’t understand.’

(4) **CONSTITUENT NEGATION:** *[Neg DP]*

a. éwe tl’o-s te-é’elthe i:mex. Tl’o te Strang.

NEG 3-3S DET-1SG.INDEP walk.CONT. 3INDEP DET Strang

‘It wasn’t me who walked. It was Strang.’

b. *i:mex éwe te-é’elthe.

walk.CONT NEG DET-1SG.INDEP

‘It wasn’t me who walked.’

The data in (1)-(4) shows that there is a cross-linguistic difference in the selectional properties of negation. While German nicht can function both as sentential negation as well as constituent negation, Halkomelem éwe is restricted to sentential negation. To capture this difference one could posit a difference in the lexical entries of German and Halkomelem negation, respectively: while German nicht c-selects for DP or VP, Halkomelem éwe c-selects for CP only.⁴

(5) a. nicht [NEG; {DP; VP}]

b. éwe [NEG; CP]

Throughout this paper I use the same conventions for representing the categorial information associated with lexical entries. The first category within the square brackets represents the category of the respective linguistic element. The information following the semi-colon represents the c-selected category. If there is more than one c-selected category, all categories are given in curly brackets.

3. **Problems Associated with German Neg**

Lexical entries such as (5)a are problematic as they violate the principle of unique c-selection, i.e. a principle according to which every category can select for only one category. This principle has recently been derived by assuming that c-selection reflects the presence of an uninterpretable categorial feature [uF] (Adger 2003). [uF] must be checked under sisterhood. For Halkomelem negation, this works without problems: éwe is associated with an uninterpretable C feature [uC] which is checked when éwe merges with CP:

(6)

```
  NEG
    /\   /
   NEG CP
     \  /
      \ /
       \ éwe
        [uC]
         tsel lil tl’ilsthome
```
The unique c-selectional properties of Halkomelem negation are consistent with their status as a functional head (Wiltschko 2002). It is generally assumed that functional categories c-select for one and only one category (cf. Ouhalla 1991, Grimshaw 1991, Williams 2003 among many others).

In the context of German negation however, the principle of unique c-selection is faced with problems. The lexical entry for *nicht* would include two uninterpretable features ([uV] and [uD]) reflecting the fact that it can function as sentential as well as constituent negation. Consequently, one of these features remains unchecked after merge. When it functions as sentential negation, NEG merges with VP (Grewendorf 1990, Webelhuth 1992) in which case [uD] remains unchecked as in (7)a. When it functions as constituent negation, NEG merges with DP and consequently [uV] remains unchecked (7)b. In either case, the derivation should crash, contrary to fact.

To address this problem, one could posit two separate lexical entries for German NEG: *nicht* 1 which functions as sentential negation and selects for VP; and *nicht* 2 which functions as constituent negation and selects for DP. Under this view, no [uF] remains unchecked after merge since each of the homophonous negative elements is only associated with one [uF] as in (8).

The problem persists however. The negative particle *nicht* not only merges with VP and DP; it can also negate constituents of any category:

The problem that emerges in light of the data in (9) is that unless we allow for non-unique c-selection, we would need (at least) seven lexical entries for nicht - each with its own unique [uF]. This pattern stands in sharp contrast with Halkomelem, where constituent negation always proceeds via sentential negation, no matter what the negated category. There is no need for multiple lexical entries to maintain the principle of unique c-selection.
4. German NEG is a Root with no C-selectional Properties

Instead of positing seven lexical entries for German nicht, I argue that its properties can be derived with a single lexical entry which has no c-selectional properties: German NEG is not associated with any [uF] that would need to be checked. This allows us to capture the fact that nicht can merge with any category.

We have now, however, created an apparent problem. While we can derive the fact that nicht merges with any category, we have no principled way of determining whether nicht functions as constituent negation or as sentential negation. This is an interesting problem since nicht functions as sentential negation only when it merges with VP but not when it merges with any other category of the clausal domain (i.e., IP or CP). The problem is especially pressing in light of the fact that Halkomelem éwe functions as sentential negation when it merges with CP. How do we know that NEG does not function as sentential negation when it is merged with CP in German? The evidence stems from the patterns of negative concord.

Colloquial German displays negative concord effects with sentential negation. Only if nicht merges with VP as in (13), a negative concord interpretation is available; if nicht merges with IP as in (14) or with CP as in (15), the only interpretation available is one with double negation:

(13) (Ich weiss) dass der Peter kein Buch nicht liest [Neg VP]

✓ (I know that) … it is not the case that Peter read a book ✓ negative concord
* (I know that) … it is not the case that Peter read no book * double negation

(14) Wenn nicht der Peter kein Buch lies-t [Neg IP]

* If it were not the case that Peter read a book * negative concord
✓ If it were not the case that Peter read no book. ✓ double negation

(15) Nicht dass der Peter kein Buch lies-t [Neg CP]

* It is not the case that Peter read a book * negative concord
✓ It is not the case that Peter reads no book. ✓ double negation

The data in (13)-(15) establishes that sentential negation is only available when nicht merges with VP. If however there is only one lexical entry for nicht, we cannot stipulate this information in the
lexical entry of one form of *nicht*. According to our proposal, the interpretation associated with sentential negation should be a byproduct of *nicht* merging with VP and cannot be an inherent property of the lexical entry itself. So what determines whether [NEG + X] is interpreted as sentential negation?

I propose (without going into details) that *nicht* functions as sentential negation when it merges with VP via focus projection. It is well known in the relevant literature that other focus-sensitive particles display similar properties (cf. Zimmermann and Stromswold ms.; Penka and Stechow 2001).

At this point we have established that the c-selectional properties of German *nicht* can be accounted for under the assumption that it has no c-selectional properties and as a consequence it can merge with all categories. It remains to be determined however, whether there is a principled reason that determines the absence of c-selectional properties associated with *nicht*.

I argue that German *nicht* has no c-selectional properties because it has no categorial properties at all. But why? Are there other elements without any categorial properties? It has been independently argued that this is the defining property of roots (Borer 2004). Consequently, I argue that German *nicht* is a root with the lexical entry in (16).

(16)  \[ \sqrt{\text{nicht}} \]

Evidence that this lexical entry for *nicht* is indeed on the right track stems from the fact that, with an appropriate affix, *nicht* can be nominalized, verbalized, and adjectivized as in (17):

(17)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a.</th>
<th>b.</th>
<th>c.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>nicht</strong>-s</td>
<td>[v \sqrt{\text{nicht}}],</td>
<td>ver-\text{nicht}-en</td>
<td>\text{nicht}-ig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEG-NOM</td>
<td>PREF-NEG-INF</td>
<td>NEG-ADJ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘nothingness’</td>
<td>‘destroy’</td>
<td>‘nothingy’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In sum, I propose that *nicht* is a root and as such is not associated with any categorial information. This suggests that German *nicht* does not function as a functional category Neg but rather functions as a modificalional particle (cf. Grewendorf 1990, Lederer 1969, Webelhuth 1992, Zimmermann and Stromswold ms.; contra Hauptmann 1993). In addition, we derive the absence of any c-selectional properties associated with *nicht*. As a result, *nicht* can merge with all categories including heads and phrases. This approach allows us to assume a single lexical entry for *nicht* while still maintaining the principle of unique c-selection.

In the next section, we turn to another case which appears to violate the principle of unique c-selection: diminutive marking in Halkomelem.

5. Cross-linguistic Differences in Selectional Properties of DIM

In Halkomelem, diminutive marking is a form of reduplication, namely Ci- or Ce-reduplication. It is possible to diminutivize nouns, verbs, and adjectives as shown in (18)-(20):

(18)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a.</th>
<th>b.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOUN</strong> (unmarked)</td>
<td><strong>DIMINUTIVE</strong> NOUN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>q’á:mi</td>
<td>q’í-q’emi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>girl</td>
<td>small girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>xo:tsa</td>
<td>xo-xtsa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lake</td>
<td>small lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii.</td>
<td>theqát</td>
<td>thi-thqet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tree</td>
<td>little tree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(19)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a.</th>
<th>b.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>VERB</strong> (unmarked)</td>
<td><strong>DIMINUTIVE</strong> VERB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>lhi:m</td>
<td>lhi-lhi:m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>picking</td>
<td>picking a little bit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>xa:m</td>
<td>xe-xám</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>crying</td>
<td>sobbing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
iii. tl’ewéls    tl’í-tl’ewéls
  barking    barking a little

(20) a. ADJECTIVE (unmarked)  b. DIMINUTIVE ADJECTIVE
  i. p’eq’  p’í-p’eq
      white      a little white, whitish  Galloway 1993: 330f.
  ii. qel  qi-qel
     be bad      be naughty  Galloway 1993: 330f.
  iii. lós  li-lós
       fat      little bit fat

In contrast, in German diminutive marking (-chen) can only combine with nouns.

(21) a. NOUN (unmarked)  b. DIMINUTIVE NOUN
      Hund  Hünd-chen
     dog    dog-DIM
(22) a. VERB (unmarked)  b. DIMINUTIVE VERB
      lesen  *les-chen
     read   read-DIM
(23) a. ADJECTIVE (unmarked)  b. DIMINUTIVE ADJECTIVE
      schön  *schön-chen5
     beautiful  beautiful-DIM

The data in (18)-(23) shows that there is a cross-linguistic difference in the selectional properties of diminutive markers. While Halkomelem diminutive marking can merge with all lexical categories, German diminutive marking can only merge with nouns. To capture this difference one could posit the following lexical entries associated with Halkomelem and German diminutive marking, respectively: while in Halkomelem, DIM c-selects for N, V, or A, in German DIM c-selects for N.

(24) a. Ci/Ce-redup [DIM; {uN, uV, uA}]
    b. –chen [DIM; uN]

6. Problems Associated with Halkomelem DIM

Recall from section 3 that lexical entries such as (24)a are problematic as they violate the principle of unique c-selection. Whatever category DIM merges with, there will always be some [uF]’s which remain unchecked.

(25) a. DIM N
     Ci/Ce
     [{uN; uV; uA}]
 b. DIM V
     Ci/Ce
     [{uN; uV; uA}]
 c. DIM A
     Ci/Ce
     [{uN; uV; uA}]

Again, one might hypothesize that we are dealing with multiple lexical entries; and that each of them is associated with its own uF, in accordance with the principle of unique c-selection:

(26) a. Ci/Ce Red [DIM uN]
    b. Ci/Ce Red [DIM uV]
    c. Ci/Ce Red [DIM uA]

5 This form is well-formed if interpreted as coerced into a noun meaning ‘someone who is beautiful’
The problem with this approach is that it doesn’t capture the fact that the form of all diminutive markers is associated with the exact identical allomorphy (see (26)). In addition, if we were dealing with multiple lexical entries, then it would be a mere coincidence that all of the diminutive meanings are systematically related, no matter what categories they merge with. Diminutive marking always means little (bit of) X (see (18)-(20)).

So could the solution to this problem be of the same nature as the solution we proposed for German negation? Can we account for the behavior of Halkomelem diminutive marking by assuming that it has no c-selectional properties?

Recall that the absence of c-selectional properties of German nicht derives from its status as a root. Consequently, this type of solution is not a viable option for Halkomelem diminutive marking, which – as a form of reduplication – has the status of a prefix as opposed to a root. This theory-driven conclusion is empirically supported by the fact that Halkomelem diminutive marking does appear to be associated with some c-selectional restrictions. In particular, Halkomelem DIM cannot target any phrasal categories: reduplication of DP, CP or IP is excluded:

```
(28) a. *tsel kw’ets-l-exw [DIM te-[DP te sqwemáy [DIM DP]
  I saw the dog.’

  b. *skw’áy [DIM kw’i-[CP kw’el-s kw’ets-l-exw [DIM CP
     impossible D/C.DIM-1SG.POSS-NOM see-TRANS-3O
     ‘I can’t see it.’ (lit. ‘It’s impossible that I see it.’)

  c. *[Dimli-[IP li chexw lá:yem [DIM IP
    AUX.DIM 2SG.S laugh
    ‘Are you laughing?’
```

Since Halkomelem DIM is clearly associated with some c-selectional properties, we are still faced with our original question: How can Halkomelem DIM merge with more than one category? Are we dealing with a genuine problem for the principle of unique c-selection?

### 7. Halkomelem DIM C-selects for Roots

In this section, I argue that we can derive the property of Halkomelem DIM by assuming that it c-selects for roots (cf. Hukari 1978, Wiltschko 2005). In particular, I propose the lexical entry in (29)a for Halkomelem DIM. This lexical entry is in accordance with the principle of unique c-selection as indicated in (29)b.

```
(29) a. Ci/Ce- redup [DIM; UROOT]

  b. Dim
    Ci/Ce- redup
    [uRoot]
```

The proposed lexical entry for Halkomelem DIM is independently supported by its interaction with categorizing morphology. As shown in (30), Halkomelem DIM merges with roots before the nominalizer.

```
(30) i. s-tó:lo river s-tó-telo creek (G 1993: 377)

  ii. sqewáth rabbit s-qí-qewáth small rabbit
```
iii. s-qwemáy        s-qwi-qwemáy  
    dog          little dog  
iv s-teqiw         s-ti-tiqiw  
    horse        small horse

This contrasts with German DIM which merges with nouns after the nominalizer is attached - consistent with the assumption that German DIM c-selects for nouns and not for roots.

(31) a. Schül-er-chen
    school-nom-dim
    'little pupil'
b. *Schül-chen-er
    school-dim-nom

(32)
```
  DIM
     \   /
    n   n√Root
   /   /\-chen
DIM [un]
```

Similarly, Halkomelem D IM attaches before the adjectivizer\(^6\)

(33) i. s-xwóxwth’        s-xwi-xwóxwth’
    stat-insane        stat-insane
    'be insane'        'be stupid, a little crazy'
ii. s-máth’el        s-má-mth’el
    stat-proud        stat-dim-proud
    'be proud'        'be a little bit proud'

Summing up, we have seen that the selectional properties of Halkomelem D IM can be accounted for with the assumption that it c-selects for roots in line with the principle of unique c-selection. As a consequence it appears to combine with nouns, verbs and adjectives.

8. Conclusion

I have discussed two different cases which appear to violate the principle of unique c-selection. First, German nicht functions as a root and is consequently not associated with any c-selectional properties. Second, Halkomelem diminutive marking c-selects for roots and therefore appears to be merged with nouns, verbs, and adjectives. This suggests that the principle of unique c-selection can be maintained even in light of superficial counter-evidence.

In the course of discussing the c-selectional properties of negation and diminutive marking we have also learned something about the nature of roots. It has been argued in the literature over the past decade that roots can function as syntactic categories in their own right (Borer 2004, Marantz 1997 among many others). A question that arises in this context concerns the c-selectional properties of roots.

From the study of Halkomelem diminutive marking we can conclude that roots can be c-selected – as is in fact expected if they function as syntactic categories. From the study of German negation we can conclude that roots do not c-select. It remains to be seen whether these conclusions can be maintained against a broader empirical base. But I have to leave this issue as a question of future research.

\(^6\) Unfortunately, it is not straightforward to establish that D IM attaches before a verbalizer because the verbalizer is a suffix whereas the diminutive marker is a prefix.
References


Zimmermann, Kai, and Stromswold, Karin. ms. Is NegP part of UG.