Basic Sentence Transformation: Negative, Interrogative

Dr. Svetlana Nuernberg
Objectives

- Recognize the underlying pattern of sentences that have undergone
  - interrogative
  - negative
  - imperative transformation
Exercise 1

- Consider each pair of sentences below. First, what, if any, is the difference in meaning between the two members of each pair? Then, what grammatically signals that difference in meaning?

  a) Ally dressed up as Tinker Bell on Halloween.
  b) Ally did not dress up Tinker Bell on Halloween.

  a) Max had eaten all his candy by the next day.
  b) Had Max eaten all his candy by the next day?

  a) You show me your costume.
  b) Show me your costume!

  a) Amanda saved the best candy for her.
  b) Amanda saved the best candy for herself.
Negative Sentences with Auxiliary Verbs

• The negative word *not* appears after the auxiliary verb:
  – Peter will not (won't) arrive early.
  – Frances has not (hasn't) finished her homework.
  – Fred is not (isn't) painting his room white.

• In a combination of auxiliaries the negative marker *not* appears after the first one
  – Jan should not have been driving your car.
  – Edward has not been telephoning us regularly.
Negative Sentences with Be

• When the main verb is a form of Be, the negative word *not* appears after be
  – Betty is here.
  – Betty is not (isn't) here.
  – Harold's old stereo was powerful.
  – Harold's old stereo was not (wasn't) powerful.
Negative Sentences Without Auxiliary Verbs or Be

- To form a negative sentence we need to have an **auxiliary verb** or a **verb be** (as a main verb) and a **negative indicator** *not*
  - if the sentence does not have an auxiliary verb or a main verb *be*, the substitute auxiliary verb (*do*) must be used
  - *not* is inserted after *do*
  - *do* doesn't bring any meaning to the sentence – is called sometimes a *dummy auxiliary*
  - tense is signaled by the form that *do* takes (*do, does, did*)

- **Do you know what is the time?**
- **Did you see her today?**
- **Does she know about the exam?**
Analyzing the Substitute Auxiliary Do

- Jan should have been driving your car.
  - Jan + [present + should + HAVE + {-en} + BE + {-ing}] + drive + your car
- The bank remained open after 5:00 P.M.
  - The bank + [past + DO] + remain + open + after 5:00 P.M.
- Jan should not have been driving your car.
- The bank did not remain open after 5:00 P.M.
  - Jan + [present + should + not + HAVE + {-en} + BE + {-ing}] + drive + your car
  - The bank + [past + DO + not] + remain + open + after 5:00 P.M.
Diagramming Negative Sentences

Egbert had not been snoring.

Diagram:

S
   /\                     
  NP_1  VP
    /\                    
   NEG  TENSE  PERFECT   PROGRESSIVE
  Egbert not past [HAVE + {-en}] BE + {-ing} snore

MVP
  \       MV_{int}
   \      
    MV  
     \  
      MV_{int}
Diagramming Negative Sentences

Egbert had been snoring

after TENSE and other verb inflections have been incorporated into appropriate verbs and not has been moved to its position after the first auxiliary
**Double Negatives**

- We have other ways of negating the sentences
  - prefixes like *in-* or *un-*
  - changing the indefinite pronoun *some* and *any* to *no* and *none*
    - Her apologies were insincere.
    - He is treating them unkindly.
    - He blamed nobody for the accident.
    - The dog ate none of the cat food.
  - if *not* is added to the negative sentences, the result has two negative signals
    - Her apologies were not insincere. = positive
    - He is not treating them unkindly. = positive
    - He didn't blame nobody for the accident. - to emphasize
    - The dog didn't eat none of the cat food. - to emphasize
  - the last two are avoided by native speakers (dialectal)
Exercise 2

Rewrite each of the following sentences, showing the underlying structure of the main verb phrase, which will contain not and some combination of the following elements: [TENSE + DO] + main verb or [TENSE + (MODAL) + (HAVE + {-en}) + (BE + {-ing})] + main verb

Example: My cat isn't eating well.
My cat [present + BE + not + {-ing} + eat] well
My instructor doesn't consider me a bad student.
My instructor [present + DO + not + consider] me a bad student

1. Ellie has not finished her English homework yet.
2. She did not understand the discussion of the negative transformation.
3. She had not asked anyone to explain it to her.
4. Julie is not working on her English homework right now.
5. Julie's problem is not sentence transformations.
6. She doesn't know how to do the math assignment.
7. Marty cannot figure out the underlying structure of sentence #15.
8. He has not yet had time to work it out.
Interrogative Sentences

- Sentences of the five basic types are all declarative
  - they make statements
- Interrogative sentences – ask questions
  - yes/no questions (general questions)
    - Did someone eat last piece of cake?
  - seeks yes/no answer
  - wh-questions (special questions)
    - Who ate the last piece of cake?
  - assumes the truth of a statement
  - seeks the missing information about it
Yes, No Questions

- Are built by
- 1. Moving the first auxiliary verb to the front of the sentence
   - **Has Barbara_____ been reading the book?**
- 2. Moving the main verb Be to the front of the sentence
   - **Is Twain_____ Jim's favorite author?**
- 3. Inserting Do at the beginning of the sentence if auxiliaries are not present or the main verb is not Be
   - **Did Bill turn off his computer?**
Barbara has been reading the book
Diagramming Yes, No Questions

Has Barbara been reading the book

Has been reading book
We often find it useful to combine two or more transformations in a single sentence.

- He opened his presents.
  - statement
- Did he open his presents early?
  - question
- He didn't open his presents early.
  - negative
- Didn't he open his presents early?
  - negative question
Exercise 3

- Transform the following sentences first into **positive yes/no questions** and then into **negative ones**.
  - **Example:** The gardener should mow the grass every Thursday
    - Should the gardener mow the grass every Thursday?
    - Shouldn't the gardener mow the grass every Thursday?
  - The airport traffic was quite heavy this morning.
  - We wanted to use the curbside check-in.
  - Most of the passengers were carrying electronic tickets.
  - I should have printed out a boarding pass at home.
  - The plane from Houston landed three minutes ago.
  - We can carry on this piece of luggage.
  - The other luggage will be checked in through to New York.
  - Jill always wants to have a window seat.
Wh- Questions

• Wh-questions differ from yes/no questions in two ways
  – they ask for missing information rather than for confirmation or denial
  – they begin with interrogative word (wh-word)
• The most common wh-words: who, whom, what, when, where, why, how, which, whose
  – Who played the solo?
  – What will the judge decide?
  – Where has Dan go?
  – Why are the police on the corner?
  – When is the first exchange student arriving?
Step 1

• Insert Do if required; move first auxiliary, or the main verb if there is no auxiliary, to the front of the sentence

  a) Someone played the solo
     \[ \text{played} \text{ someone } \underline{\text{_______}} \text{ the solo} \]

  b) The judge will decide something
     \[ \text{will} \text{ the judge } \underline{\text{_______}} \text{ decide something} \]

  c) Dan has gone somewhere
     \[ \text{has} \text{ Dan } \underline{\text{_______}} \text{ gone somewhere} \]
Steps 2 and 3

• Substitute the appropriate wh-word
  a) played someone who the solo
  b) will the judge decide something what
  c) has Dan gone somewhere where

• Move the wh-word to the front of the sentence
  a) Who played _______ the solo?
      ________________
  b) What will the judge decide _______?
      ____________________________
  c) Where has Dan gone ________?
      ____________________________
Diagramming Wh-Questions

before transformation has been applied

The committee

past

invite someone
Diagramming Wh-Questions

NP₁

Whom

AUX

did

NP₁

the committee

VP

MVP

MVₜᵣ

invite

committee

did invite

Whom

the

after the wh-question transformation has been applied
Interrogative Determiners

- When you create wh-question corresponding to the following declarative sentence with the indefinite word (stand for unknown information), you sentence is likely to be this
  
  • Barbara wore someone's coat
  • *Whose did Barbara wear coat?
  • Whose coat did Barbara wear?

- Note that the entire constituent containing an unknown must move to the front of the sentence in wh-question transformation
  
  • *Whose did Barbara wear coat?
  • Whose coat did Barbara wear?
Ending a Sentence with Preposition

• What happens when the unknown is the object of a preposition?
  – Keith polished his car with something.
  – What did Keith polished his car with? (conversational)
  – With what did Keith polished his car? (appropriate only in formal situations)

• Who/whom questions
  – Carolyn invited someone to the dance.
  – Who/Whom did Caroline invite to the dance?
  – Who/Whom was Caroline going to the dance with?
Imperative Sentences

• Imperative sentences give commands and issue orders
  – Finish your soup!
  – Sit down!
• more polite would be to say
  – Would you like to be seated?
• To transform from declarative into imperative sentences
  – delete the subject you
  – You walk faster – Walk faster!
  – You are here - *Are here!; You are quiet - *Are quiet!
  – check if the verb is in its uninflected base form
  – Be here! Be quiet!
In the underlying structure of all verb phrases, TENSE, the first constituent of the verb phrase, converts the following verb (except for modals) from the base form to a form marked for present or past tense.
Diagramming Imperative Sentences

The imperative transformation tells us to delete TENSE from the underlying structure of the verb phrase in order to ensure that the verb remains in the base form.

```
Sv
 /   \
NP   VP
 |   /   \   |
|  MVP        ADVP |
        |  |       |
        |  MVint  faster |
        |  |         |
        |  walk     |
        |  |         |
        |  AUX      |
        |  |         |
        |  TENSE    |
        |  |         |
        |  You      |
```

x Walk faster
Negative Forms of the Imperative

- The negative form of imperatives contains a *Do not*, just like the negative of a sentence without an auxiliary constituent
  - since imperatives delete *you* and *will*, you insert an *expletive DO* in order to introduce *not*
  - * Not wear black to the dance
    - *You will wear black to the dance.*
    - *Not wear black to the dance.*
    - *Don't wear black to the dance.*