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ARTICLE

On the Dual Nature of *Sem*-Phrases in Hungarian: Negative Quantifiers or Negative Indefinites?

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ABSTRACT

Sem-phrases in Hungarian are negative indefinites accompanied by the negative emphatic particle *sem* 'neither'. Preverbal *sem*-phrases differ from postverbal ones in that the former behave as negative quantifiers (NQs), while the latter resemble *s*-words, which are negative concord items (NCIs) like *senki* 'nobody'. By adopting Ladusaw's distinction between syntactic vs. semantic licensing, the paper offers an explanation for this variation in a purely cartographic syntactic framework. Earlier accounts turned around the universal vs. existential interpretations of negative indefinites. The present proposal derives the interpretive differences from their different licensing requirements. It extends the proposed analysis to negative connectives, where nominals precede *sem* 'neither', and negative conjunction constructions, where nominals follow *sem* 'neither'. Preverbal nominals show quantificational properties only when they precede *sem* 'neither'; postverbally, however, the same nominals are non-quantificational NCIs. Nominals following *sem* 'neither' are invariably NCIs. Therefore, a uniform quantificational analysis for all these items is untenable. Finally, the paper briefly discusses (még) ... sem 'not ... even' constructions with nominals modified by numerical quantifiers and classifiers, which mimic the behaviour of *sem*-phrases and nominals accompanied by *sem* 'neither' in preverbal and postverbal positions. All these differences follow from a special freezing effect called Criterial Freezing, which applies whenever the specifier of the SEMP functional projection is filled.

Keywords: Strict Negative Concord; Negative Licenser; Quantificational Force; Negative Indefinites; Negative Connectives; Negative Conjunction; Not ... Even

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ARTICLE INFO
Received: 14 March 2026 | Revised: 9 June 2026 | Accepted: 16 June 2026 | Published Online: 23 June 2026
DOI: https://doi.org/10.55121/le.v3i1.1214

CITATION
Dalmi, G., 2026. On the Dual Nature of *Sem*-Phrases in Hungarian: Negative Quantifiers or Negative Indefinites? Linguistic Exploration. 3(1): 132–146. DOI: https://doi.org/10.55121/le.v3i1.1214

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1. Introduction

Since Giannakidou's[1] study of negative concord in Greek, the division of languages into Negative Concord (NC) and Non-Negative Concord (Non-NC) types has been refined, due to the emergence of a new subgroup called Strict Negative Concord languages. The common features of such languages are given in (1) and examples from typologically diverse Strict NC languages, in which the overt clause negator co-occurs with multiple negative items, are listed in (2)–(5):

(1) a. The multiple occurrences of negative items do not cancel clause negation.
b. The preverbal or postverbal position of negative items has no bearing on their negative import or quantificational force.
c. The clause negator must be overtly expressed, irrespective of how many negative expressions the clause contains.

(2) a. *Kanenas dhen ipe tipota.*
no.person NEG said no.thing
'Nobody said anything.'

b. *Kanenas *ipe tipota.*
no.person said no.thing
'Nobody said anything.'
(Greek, modelled on Giannakidou[1])

(3) a. *Nikt nie widział nikogo.*
no.person NEG *saw* no.person.ACC
'Nobody saw anybody.'

b. **Nikt widział nikogo.*
no.person saw no.person.ACC
Intended: 'Nobody saw anybody.'
(Polish, Błaszczak[2, 3])

(4) a. *Senki nem hív-ott meg*
no.person. NEG invite-PST.3SG PFX
senki-t.
no.person-ACC
'Nobody invited anybody.'

b. **Senki hív-ott meg*
no.person.NOM invite-PST.3SG PFX
senki-t.
no.person-ACC
Intended: 'Nobody invited anybody.'
(Hungarian, Puskás[4])

(5) a. *Pèsan pa manje anyen.*
no.person NEG eats no.thing
'No person ests anything.'

b. **Pèsan manje anyen.*
no.person eats no.thing
Intended: 'Nobody eats anything.'
(Haitian Creole, Déprez[5, 6])

An important question arising here is how negative indefinites are licensed in these languages (for recent overviews of negative concord and negative licensing, see Déprez[6], Penka[7], Déprez and Espinal[8], Witkoś and Dalmi[9]).

The concept of negative licensing as feature agreement, originally proposed by Haegeman and Zanuttini[10] and adopted by Zeijlstra[11], turns out to be problematic in the case of multiple negative indefinites, as it necessitates either multiple specifiers or an iterative NEGP. The quantificational approach, on the other hand, leaves the obligatory presence of the clause negator unexplained in Strict Negative Concord languages. This is discussed in detail in the relevant literature (see Déprez[5], Déprez[6], Giannakidou[12], Penka[7]).

The introduction of OP_{NEG} (see Krifka[13] and Ladusaw[14]) seems promising insofar as it offers a straightforward solution to handling the varying quantificational force of preverbal and postverbal negative indefinites by dividing them into negative quantifiers (NQs) and negative polarity items (NPIs) in Non-Strict Negative Concord languages.

Ladusaw[14] proposes to divorce syntactic licensing from semantic licensing in Non-Strict (or Asymmetric) Negative Concord languages like Italian. While NQs need only semantic licensing, i.e., being in the scope of OP_{NEG}, NPIs require both semantic and syntactic licensing, the latter of which takes place via spec-head feature agreement. Ladusaw's concept of licensing negative indefinites in Non-Strict NC languages is extended here to the licensing mechanism of *sem*-phrases and *s*-words, as well as nominals preceded or followed by *sem* 'neither' in Strict Negative Concord Hungarian. In particular, NCIs are licensed syntactically by the OP_{NEG} ... NEG chain, while they are also licensed semantically by being in the scope of OP_{NEG}. NQs need only semantic licensing.

The aim of the paper is twofold. First, it demonstrates that nominals preceding *sem* 'neither' show quantificational properties only in preverbal position. Postverbally, they are plain negative concord items (NCIs). Nominals following *sem* are not quantificational at all; they invariably show the properties of NCIs. This makes a uniform quantificational analysis untenable. Second, it offers an explanation for this variation in a purely cartographic framework in terms of Criterial Freezing, without any reference to alternative semantics and exhaustification. The paper is based on empirical data adopted from published sources and also provided and checked by native informants.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 1 is a brief introduction explaining the basic types of negative concord and placing Hungarian among Strict NC languages within this typology. Section 2 deals with the various occurrences of the negative emphatic particle *sem 'neither'*. In particular, Section 2.1 discusses the distinction between *s*-words and *sem*-phrases, originally made by Surányi[15, 16]. Section 2.2 outlines the cartographic syntactic framework, which serves as the theoretical background of the paper. Section 2.3 reveals that nominals preceding *sem* 'neither' show asymmetric behaviour in preverbal vs. postverbal positions in negative connectives as far as their quantificational properties are concerned. Section 2.4 deals with negative conjunction constructions, in which nominals follow *sem* 'neither'. These nominals behave as NCIs in preverbal and postverbal positions alike. Finally, Section 2.5 deals with the (*még) ... sem* 'not ... even' construction with nominals premodified by numerical quantifiers and classifiers. It shows that preverbal and postverbal QPs accompanied by (*még*) ... *sem* 'not ... even' display the same asymmetric behaviour as nominals followed by *sem* 'neither' in negative conjunction constructions, discussed in Section 2.4. Section 3 summarizes the results reached in the paper.

2. The Dual Nature of *Sem* 'Neither' in Hungarian

2.1. Preverbal and Postverbal *Sem*-Phrases

Negative indefinite pronouns in Hungarian, such as *senki* 'nobody', *semmi* 'nothing', *sehol* 'nowhere' come in three types:

(i) *S*-words are semantically non-quantificational and non-negative items, which always require the clause negator as their licenser. Such items are referred to as Negative Concord Items (NCIs) by Giannakidou, and this term is adopted here.

(ii) Preverbal *sem*-phrases (i.e., negative indefinite pronouns accompanied by the negative emphatic particle *sem 'neither'*) function as negative quantifiers (NQs), which can license other negative indefinites in their own right, and which do not tolerate the clause negator.

(iii) Postverbal *sem*-phrases pattern with *s*-words (i.e., negative indefinites like *senki* 'nobody') in that they are non-quantificational and they always need to be licensed by a negative licenser. Such items are called NCIs. (For a syntactic analysis of negative concord in Hungarian, see Surányi[15, 16]; for an alternative semantics approach see Szabolcsi[17, 18].)

Preverbal *sem*-phrases are licensers

(6) *Senki sem látogatott meg senki-t*
no.person neither visit.PST.3SG PFX no.person-ACC
/ senki-t sem.
/ no.person-ACC neither
'Nobody visited anybody.'

(7) **Senki sem nem látogatott meg*
no.person.NOM neither NEG visit.PST.3SG PFX
senki-t / senki-t sem.
no.person-ACC / no.person-ACC neither
Intended: 'Nobody visited anybody.'

Postverbal *sem*-phrases are not licensers

(8) **Látogatott meg senki sem*
visit.PST.3SG PFX no.person.NOM neither
senki-t sem.
no.person.ACC neither
Intended: 'Nobody visited anybody.'

S-words are not licensers

(9) **Senki látogatott meg senki-t*
no.person.NOM visit.PST.3SG PFX no.person-ACC
/ senki-t sem.
/ no.person-ACC neither
Intended: 'Nobody visited anybody.'

Clause negator is a licenser

(10) *Nem látogatott meg senki*
NEG visit.PST.3SG PFX no.person.NOM
senki-t / senki-t sem.
no.person-ACC / no.person.ACC neither
'Nobody visited anybody.'

Incompatibility with the clause negator is usually taken to be an indicator of the quantificational force of preverbal negative indefinites (see Ladusaw[14], Déprez[5], Penka[7]). (A similar dichotomy in the behaviour of preverbal vs. postverbal negative items with respect to the clause negator is also found in some South Slavic and Baltic languages, see van der Auwera et al.[19].) Preverbally, these items function as NQs, which can license postverbal negative indefinites in their own right. This makes the clause negator superfluous in such sentences in Non-Strict Negative Concord languages like Italian:

(11) *Nessuno ha visto nessuno.*
nobody PERF see.PTCP nobody
'Nobody saw anybody.'

(12) **Nessuno non ha visto nessuno.*
nobody NEG PERF see.PTCP nobody
Intended: 'Nobody saw anybody.'
(Italian, Penka[7])

In the absence of a preverbal NQ, the clause negator is compulsory:

(13) *Gianni non ha visto nessuno.*
Gianni NEG PERF see.PTCP nobody
'Gianni did not see anybody.'

(14) **Gianni ha visto nessuno.*
Gianni PERF see.PTCP nobody
Intended: 'Gianni did not see anybody.'
(Italian, Penka[7])

Although the behaviour of *s*-words places Hungarian in the Strict Negative Concord subgroup of NC languages, preverbal *sem*-phrases follow the Non-Strict (or Asymmetric) Negative Concord pattern, found for example in Italian; postverbal *sem*-phrases, on the other hand, resemble plain *s*-words, which are NCIs, and which are found only in Strict NC languages (see Giannakidou[12]). As Surányi[16] convincingly shows, Hungarian represents a mixed type of Negative Concord languages. This is a striking state of affairs in itself, as many authors exclude the co-occurrence of the two strategies in one and the same language (cf. Zeijlstra[20]). But there is more to that. A comparison of *sem*-phrases with personal pronouns followed by *sem* 'neither' in preverbal position reveals that it is, in fact, *sem* 'neither' that turns preverbal nominals into negative licensers, that is, NQs, (15)–(16):

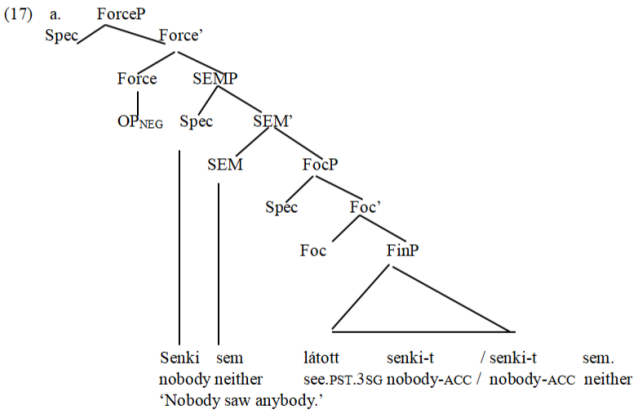
(15) *Senki sem (*nem) látott*
no.person.NOM neither NEG see.PST.3SG
senki-t / senki-t sem.
no.person-ACC / no.person-ACC neither
'Nobody saw anybody.'

(16) *Ő sem (*nem) látott*
s/he.NOM neither NEG see.PST.3SG
senki-t / senki-t sem.
no.person-ACC / no.person.ACC neither
'S/he did not see anyone, either.'

With the clause negator banned in this environment, the preverbal pronoun accompanied by *sem* 'neither' is the only potential licenser for postverbal negative indefinites. This follows automatically under the assumption that *sem* 'neither' following nominals in preverbal position turns them into NQs. As we shall see below, no similar change can be observed in the case of postverbal nominals followed by *sem* 'neither'.

Olsvay[21] introduces the SEMP functional projection, which preverbal *sem*-phrases target. In such cases, the clausal NEGP does not project at all. This is shown in (17a):

(17) a.

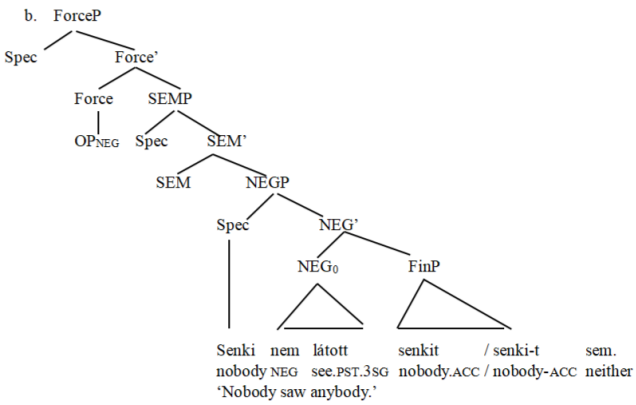


Preverbal *sem*-phrases are NQs, which need only se-

mantic licensing by OP_{NEG}, and do not cooccur with the clause negator *nem* 'not'. In this way, preverbal *sem*-phrases become potential licensers for postverbal NCIs. This is in line with Ladusaw's account of licensing negative quantifiers vs. negative polarity items. (On the interplay between the focus negator, the clause negator and *sem*-phrases as well as *s*-words, see Surányi[16], Puskás[22] and Szabolcsi[17].)

It seems reasonable to assume that preverbal nominals preceding *sem* 'neither' are also NQs, which target the same SEMP as *sem*-phrases do. Notice that NCIs are distinguished here from Negative Polarity Items (NPIs) in the following: (i) They can appear in fragment answers, where NPIs cannot (see Penka[7]); (ii) While NCIs are licensed only by negative licensers, NPIs can appear in the scope of other non-veridical operators as well. These facts justify the view that NCIs are not a proper subset of NPIs but constitute a distinct category.

Postverbal *sem*-phrases and other *sem*-nominals, on the other hand, pattern with *s*-words in that they need syntactic licensing by the OP_{NEG} ... NEG chain, as well as semantic licensing by being in the scope of OP_{NEG}. The members of the chain here constitute the segments of one functional category, acting as the syntactic licenser. Here, the clause negator *nem* 'NEG' syntactically merges with the verbal head under NEG_0:



Before discussing the syntactic and semantic properties of nominals preceding *sem* in negative connectives and following *sem* in negative conjunction constructions, let us survey some widely used syntactic tests concerning the quantificational properties of negative indefinites. These tests are relevant for the present paper inasmuch as they support the view that it is not the universal vs. existential quantifier interpretation of negative indefinites that determines their quantificational strength. What turns preverbal nominals into NQs is that they occupy the designated [Spec, SEMP] syntactic position. This position can be duly called a criterial position, as it produces the special freezing effect called Criterial Freezing (see Rizzi[23, 24]).

2.2. Testing the Quantificational Force of *Sem*-Phrases

Several tests have been offered in the literature in support of the existential vs. universal quantifier status of negative indefinites (see Giannakidou[1], Giannakidou[12], Zeijlstra[20], Giannakidou and Zeijlstra[25], Swart[26]). These tests include fragment answers, adverbial modification by *almost* and *not ... at all*, *donkey*-anaphora and inverse scope. If we apply these tests to Hungarian *sem*-phrases, we can see that none of them can unambiguously predict their existential or universal quantifier status in Hungarian: they are either not applicable or they do not give unambiguous results. These tests are briefly discussed below.

2.2.1. Fragment Answers

Fragment answers are said to diagnose the quantificational force of negative indefinites. This is based on the observation that a universally quantified pronoun like *mindenki* 'everyone' can appear as a response to a *wh*-question like (18a) on its own, (18b), however, an NPI like *bárki* 'anyone' cannot, (18c):

(18) a. *Ki jött el a koncert-re?*
who came PFX the concert-SBL
'Who came to the concert?'

b. *Mindenki.*
everyone
'Everyone.'

c. **Bárki.*
anyone
'Anyone.'

d. *Senki sem.*
no.person neither
'Nobody.'

The current view on preverbal *sem*-phrases in Hungarian is that they are negative quantifiers (NQs), see Olsvay[21]; Surányi[16]. A comparison of *sem*-phrases with personal pronouns (18e) or proper names, (18f), accompanied by *sem*

'neither' in fragment answers, however, reveals that the latter are just as much NQs as *sem*-phrases are. Still, they cannot appear in fragment answers given to *wh*-questions on their own:

e. **Ő sem.*
s/he neither
'S/he did not, either.'

f. **Péter sem.*
Peter neither
'Peter did not, either.'

This difference, however, has to do more with the semantics of *wh*-questions and not with the quantificational nature of nominals preceding *sem* 'neither' in negative fragment answers.

As was mentioned above, the clause negator *nem* 'NEG' in negative sentences forms a chain with OP_{NEG} and this chain functions as a syntactic licenser for *s*-words and postverbal nominals followed by *sem* 'neither':

(19) *Ki nem jött el a koncert-re?*
who NEG come.PST.3SG PFX the concert-SBL
'Who did not come to the concert?'

In negative fragment answers containing *s*-words or other nominals, syntactic licensing via feature checking must take place prior to VP-deletion:

(20) *Senki / Ő / Péter*
no.person / s/he / Peter
[$_{NEGP}$ ~~nem jött el a koncert-re~~].
[NEG come.PST.3SG PFX the concert-SBL]
'Nobody / S/he / Peter [did not come to the concert].'

But how are *sem*-phrases licensed in negative fragment answers? We cannot resort to the clause negator here, as preverbal *sem*-phrases do not tolerate it:

(21) *[$_{ForceP}$ OP_{NEG} [$_{SEMP}$ Senki sem [$_{NEGP}$ *(nem)*
no.person neither (NEG)
[$_{FinP}$ jött el a koncert-re]]]].
come.PST.3SG PFX the concert-SBL
'Nobody came to the concert.'

Remember that preverbal *sem*-phrases are hosted by SEMP, with *sem* 'neither' sitting under the head of SEMP. Postverbal *sem*-phrases, on the other hand, behave exactly like *s*-words. The absence of the clause negator *nem* 'NEG' in the full answer in (22) results in ungrammaticality because no chain formation can take place, and therefore the postverbal *sem*-phrase cannot be licensed. In the grammatical example in (23), the verb merges with the clause negator *nem* 'not' and forms a complex head in NEGP, which is right above FinP. Here, licensing takes place as expected:

(22) **Jött el a koncert-re senki sem.*
come.PST.3SG PFX the concert-SBL no.person neither
Intended: 'Nobody came to the concert.'

(23) *[$_{NEGP}$ Nem jött$_i$ el a koncert-re ...*
NEG come.PST.3SG PFX the concert-SBL
[$_{FinP}$ t_i ... [$_{VP}$ senki sem]]].
no.person neither
'Nobody came to the concert.'

What follows from these facts is that the *sem*-phrases found in negative fragment answers must be preverbal, and they must be licensed semantically by OP_{NEG}. Namely, if the *sem*-phrase were postverbal, it would require the OP_{NEG}... NEG chain for licensing, which is not available here.

Thus, Ladusaw's[14] division of syntactic vs. semantic licensing provides us with a natural explanation for the different licensing mechanisms of preverbal *sem*-phrases and *sem*-nominals vs. *s*-words, postverbal *sem*-phrases and postverbal *sem*-nominals. It also sheds light on the quantificational properties of preverbal and postverbal *sem*-phrases in negative fragment answers.

2.2.2. Majdnem 'Almost', Szinte 'Almost', Egyáltalán Nem 'Not ... At All'

While it is true that the adverbial modifier *majdnem* 'almost' fails with preverbal *sem*-phrases, which would constitute a strong argument against their universal quantifier status, a similar modifier, *szinte* 'almost' fares well in the same environment:

(24) **Majdnem senki sem vett*
almost no.person NEG.EMPH take.PST.3SG
rész-t az előadás-on.
part-ACC the lecture-SPR
Intended : 'Hardly anybody took part in the lecture.'

(25) *Szinte senki sem vett*
almost no.person NEG.EMPH take.PST.3SG
rész-t az előadás -on.
part-ACC the lecture-SPR'
'Hardly anybody took part in the lecture.'

This test, therefore, does not take us closer to the solution. Furthermore, *egyáltalán nem* 'not ... at all' can be used with preverbal and postverbal *sem*-phrases alike, as well as with preverbal and postverbal *s*-words; thus, it is not diagnostic in this respect:

(26) *Egyáltalán senki / senki sem*
altogether no.person / no.person NEG.EMPH
vett rész-t az előadás-on.
took part-ACC the lecture-SPR
'No person at all took part at the lecture.'

(27) *Nem vett rész-t az előadás-on*
NEG took part.ACC the lecture-SPR
egyáltalán senki / senki sem.
altogether no.person / no.person NEG.EMPH
'No person at all took part at the lecture.'

2.2.3. Donkey-Anaphora

Donkey-sentences contain an indefinite noun in the scope of the universal quantifier 'every' and yet, the indefinite noun gets interpreted as referential and definite. This is shown by the definite pronoun in (28), whose antecedent is the indefinite noun:

(28) *Everyone who owns **a donkey**, beats **it**.*
For every x [if Owns <x, y> then Beats <x, y>].

This property is characteristic of existentially bound indefinites (see Geach[27]). Preverbal *sem*-phrases with an indefinite noun in their scope give a similar result in Hungarian. This is reflected by the definite object suffix on the verb in the adjacent clause (On definite object agreement in Hungarian, see Bartos[28] and Bárány[29]):

(29) *Senki sem, aki talál-t*
no.person NEG.EMPH who find-PST.3SG[-DEF]
egy nyaklánc-ot a kincstár-ban,
a necklace-ACC the treasury-INE
*lop-hat-**t-a** el pro **az-t**.*
steal.POT.PST.3PL[DEF] PFX no.person it-ACC
'Nobody who found ***a necklace*** in the treasury, can have stole n ***it***.'

The indefinite noun phrase is in the scope of the preverbal *sem*-phrase; nonetheless, it gets interpreted as a definite NP. This is taken to be evidence in support of the universal quantifier status of preverbal *sem*-phrases in Hungarian.

2.2.4. Inverse Scope

Finally, inverse scope tells apart NPIs from NCIs. The fact that negative indefinites in Hungarian do not allow inverse scope convinces us that they cannot be NPIs:

(30) *[[Egy bármiféle háborús tapasztalat-tal*
an any.kind.of war experience-INST
rendelkező] [politikus] [nem így beszél]].
commanding politician NEG so talk.PRS.3SG
'A politician who has any war experience does not talk like this.'

In (30), the clause negator *nem* 'NEG' in the matrix clause syntactically licenses the NPI in the subject position of the participial clause from a non-c-commanding position. As Swart[26] notes, such inverse scope is found only with NPIs. As we can see in (31), it is not available in the case of the NCIs in Hungarian:

(31) **[[Egy semmiféle háborús tapasztalat-tal*
a no.kind.of war experience-INST
rendelkező] politikus [nem így beszél]].
commanding politician NEG so talk.PRS.3SG
Intended: 'A politician who has no kind of war experience does not talk like this.'

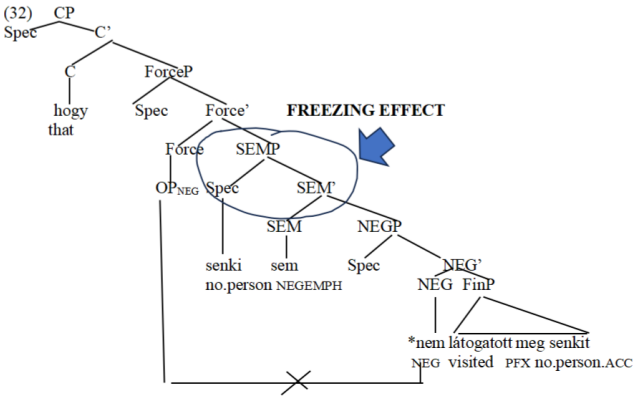
In sum, the widely used tests to support the universal or existential quantifier character of negative indefinites are not conclusive in Hungarian; therefore, they cannot be reliably employed.

In the remaining part of the paper, *sem*-nominals appearing preverbally or postverbally are investigated. As we shall see, they do not give a homogeneous picture as far as their quantificational properties are concerned. This undermines the common view that the syntactic differences between preverbal vs. postverbal *sem*-nominals are derivable from their different quantificational properties. Instead, a purely cartographic syntactic analysis is proposed, to resolve this conflict.

2.3. What Criterial Freezing Offers to Resolve This Conflict

The rich preverbal domain of Hungarian clausal architecture, i.e., the C-zone in Rizzi's cartographic model (see Rizzi[24, 30, 31]). hosts discourse-semantic operators in ForceP, or, in the so-called Operator Field, as called by Bródy[32] and Olsvay[21] introduces SEMP as a distinct syntactic position within the Operator Field. *Sem*-phrases target the [Spec, SEMP] position while *sem* occupies the SEM head.

In the proposed framework, [Spec, SEMP] is taken to be a criterial position. Whenever this position is filled, SEMP acts as a licenser and blocks any potential negative licenser in the clause. This is called Criterial Freezing by Rizzi[23, 24]. If this position is not filled, SEM remains inactive, hence the clause negator acts as a negative licenser:



(33) *Ő sem (*nem) látogatott meg*
s/he.NOM NEG.EMPH NEG visit.PST.3SG PFX
senki-t / senki-t sem]]].
no.person-ACC / no.person.ACC NEG.EMPH
'S/he did not visit anyone, either.'

Sem acquires the [+nq] feature from the SEM functional head. This alone, however, is not sufficient for SEMP to function as a negative licenser; the [Spec, SEMP] position must also be filled (33). Whenever the specifier position is filled, SEMP becomes a negative licenser, blocking any connection between OP_{NEG} and the clause negator *nem* 'NEG'in NEGP, as is shown in (34). Postverbally, no similar freezing effect is observed. The clause negator is required in order to license any postverbal negative item, see (36).

(34) *[$_{ForceP}$ OP_{NEG} [$_{SEMP}$ *Ő* [$_{SEM}$ *sem* … .[$_{NEGP}$ *nem* [$_{FinP}$ *látogatott* [$_{VP}$ *t meg senkit*]]]]
s/he NEGEMPH NEG visited PFX nobody.ACC

Preverbal position

(35) *Kati sem és Mari sem (*nem) vett részt*
Kate neither and Mary neither NEG took part.ACC
a konferencián.
the conference.on
'Neither Kate nor Mary took part at the conference.'

Postverbal position

(36) ***Nem** vett részt a konferencián Kati sem*
NEG took part.ACC the conference.on Kate neither
és Mari sem.
and Mary neither
'Neither Kate nor Mary took part at the conference.'

Notice that we find the same blocking effect with preverbal *sem*-phrases. As expected, the blocking effect is absent postverbally:

Preverbal and postverbal *sem*-phrases

(37) a. *Senki sem vett részt a*
nobody neither took part.ACC the
konferencián.
conference.on
'Nobody took part at the conference.'

b. ***Nem** vett részt a konferencián*
NEG took part.ACC the conference.on
senki sem.
nobody neither
'Nobody took part at the conference.'

Now let us turn to the differences in the syntactic properties of nominals preceding *sem* 'neither' in negative connectives vs. nominals following *sem* 'neither' in negative conjunction constructions.

2.4. Negative Connectives

In negative connectives, *sem* 'neither' is preceded by personal pronouns, proper names and other nominals. (It must be noted that although the paper does not discuss the derivational history of negative connectives, it assumes that they emerge as a result of gapping. Our main concern here is how the syntactic and semantic properties of *sem* 'neither' in negative connectives differ from those of *sem* 'neither' in negative conjunction constructions. Clausal connectives are

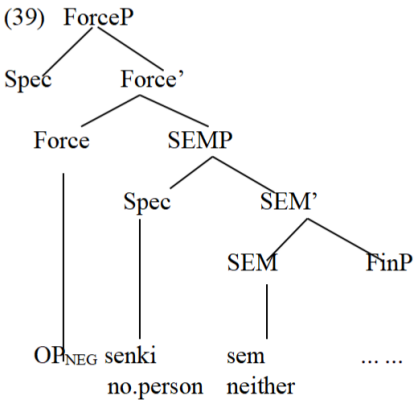
discussed by Szabolcsi[17].)

(38) a. *Kati sem és Zsuzsa sem*
Kate neither and Susan neither
jött el a koncert-re.
come.PST.3SG PFX the concert-SBL
'Neither Kate nor Susan came to the concert.'

b. *Péter sem és a barát-ja*
Peter neither and the friend-POSS3SG
sem jött el a koncert-re.
neither come.PST.3SG PFX the concert-SBL
'Neither Peter nor his friends came to the concert.'

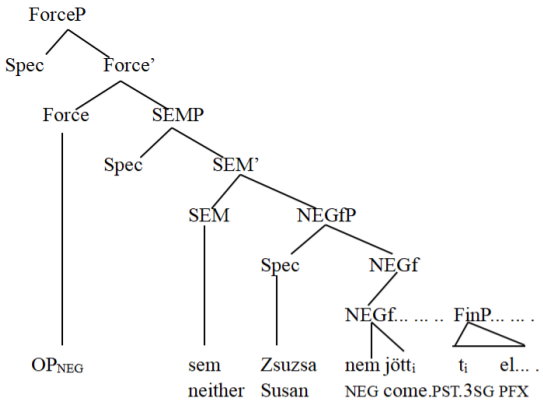
c. *Ők sem és a barát-aik*
they neither and the friends-POSS3PL
sem jöttek el a koncert-re.
neither come.PST.3SG PFX the concert-SBL
'Neither they nor their friends came to the concert.'

As was explained in Section 2.1, preverbal *sem*-phrases like *senki sem* 'no.person neither' are NQs. The negative indefinite pronoun targets the specifier of the SEMP functional projection, while *sem* 'neither' occupies the head of SEMP, as proposed by Olsvay[21]. The clausal NEGP does not project here; hence, no chain formation takes place. This is shown in (39):

(39)


Nominals preceding *sem* 'neither' in negative connective constructions occupy the same syntactic position. Feature checking takes place in SEMP in the usual way, and this turns nominals preceding *sem* 'neither' into NQs. Notice that this happens only if the specifier position of SEMP is filled. As we shall see in 2.4, nominals following *sem* 'neither' target a lower position, [Spec, NEGfP], leaving [Spec SEMP unfilled and making feature checking there impossible.

Recall that NCIs in general target the [Spec, NEGfP] position, while *sem* 'neither' appears as the head of SEMP. The clause negator *nem* 'NEG' merges syntactically with the verb in NEGP (40):

(40)


Szabolcsi proposes to analyze nominals preceding or following *sem* 'neither' uniformly as negative quantifiers. Her analysis builds on three theories: Surányi's theory of *s*-words vs. *sem*-phrases in Hungarian; Zeiljstra's feature agreement; and Chierchia's alternative semantics approach. As was explained above, a unified quantifier-based account of negative items cannot be maintained for reasons discussed by Dalmi[33]. For a recent semantic account of similar constructions in Turkish, see Jeretič[34].

The present analysis differs from Szabolcsi's account on the following points. (i) First, it highlights the differences in the quantificational properties of preverbal and postverbal nominals followed by *sem* 'neither', which mimic the distribution of preverbal and postverbal *sem*-phrases; preverbally they are NQs, postverbally they are NCIs. This makes a unified treatment untenable. (ii) Second, the cartographic framework does not exploit the interpretable/uninterpretable distinction of features. Categories project only if they are filled by an item capable of checking/licensing the relevant feature. (iii) Third, the present model extends Ladusaw's distinction of syntactic and semantic licensing to the negative emphatic particle *sem* 'neither' in negative connectives, negative conjunctions and the *még... sem* 'not ... even' construction in Hungarian.

One important advantage of the present proposal is that it is laid out in a homogeneous, purely cartographic framework. Furthermore, it extends Surányi's mixed model to

negative connectives, negative conjunction and the *még... sem* 'not ... even' construction, without the technical apparatus of alternative semantics and exhaustification, proposed in Szabolcsi's combined model.

A common way to test the quantificational properties of preverbal nominals following *sem* 'neither' is to place them in non-veridical environments. As the example in (38) reveals, *sem*-nominals cannot be licensed by non-veridical operators other than OP_{NEG}. The absence of the clause negator leads to ungrammaticality. This points in the direction that these nominals cannot be NQs:

(41) *[$_{ForceP}$ *INT* [$_{SemP}$ *Sem Kati,* [$_{SemP}$ *sem*
neither Kate neither
Zsuzsa jött el a koncert-re]?
Susan come.PST.3SG PFX the concert-SBL
Intended: 'Did neither Kate nor Susan come to the concert?'

Here, the negative conjunction construction is in the scope of the INT (errogative) operator, and the sentence is ungrammatical. In (42), the conditional operator IF has the two *sem*-nominals in its scope, yet, it does not license them. This leads to ungrammaticality:

(42) *[$_{ForceP}$ *Ha sem Kati, sem Zsuzsa*
if neither Kate neither Susan
jön el a koncert-re, akkor
come.PRS.3SG PFX the concert-SBL then
el-halaszt-juk pro].
PFX-postpone-1PL (it)
Intended: 'If neither Kate, nor Susan comes to the concert, we will postpone it.'

These facts exclude any analysis of preverbal nominals following *sem* 'neither' as NQs or NPIs. They are NCIs, just like their postverbal counterparts, which need the clause negator as their licenser (43):

(43) *Nem jött el a koncert-re sem*
NEG come.PST.3SG PFX the concert-SBL neither
Kati sem Zsuzsa.
Kate neither Susan
'Neither Kate nor Susan came to the concert.'

The OP_{NEG} ... NEG chain functions as a syntactic licenser, and OP_{NEG} acts as a semantic licenser.

2.5. Negative Conjunction Constructions

As Szabolcsi observes, in negative conjunction constructions with nominals following *sem* 'neither', the presence of the clause negator is obligatory. This is shown in (44). In negative connective constructions, however, where *sem* 'neither' is preceded by a nominal in each conjunct appearing in preverbal position, the clause negator is banned (45):

(44) Negative conjunction construction
*Sem Kati, sem Zsuzsa *(nem) ment*
neither Kate neither Susan NEG go.PST.3SG
el sehova.
PFX nowhere
'Neither Kate nor Susan went anywhere.'

(45) Negative connective construction
*Kati sem és Zsuzsa sem (*nem)*
Kati neither and Susan neither (*NEG)
ment el sehova.
go.PST.3SG PFX nowhere
'Kate didn't [~~go anywhere~~] and Susan didn't [go anywhere], either.'

What (45) demonstrates is that preverbal nominals preceding *sem* 'neither' in negative connective constructions behave exactly like preverbal *sem*-phrases: they reject the clause negator and function as negative licensers for postverbal NCIs. This suggests that we are dealing with NQs in such cases. In fact, nominals preceding *sem* 'neither' are turned into NQs preverbally only when they occupy the specifier position of SEMP. When nominals preceding *sem* 'neither' appear postverbally, on the other hand, they pattern with postverbal *sem*-phrases and *s*-words, i.e., they are plain NCIs. This is exactly the scenario described as Criterial Freezing for *wh*-items by Rizzi[23, 24].

Furthermore, the examples in (46a) and (46b) demonstrate that preverbal nominals preceding *sem* 'neither' in negative connective constructions happily survive in non-veridical environments without the clause negator. In other words, they show a pattern which is the reverse of the one displayed by *sem*-nominals, which always require the clause negator in the same environment:

(46) a. *Kati sem és Zsuzsa sem ment el*
Kate neither and Susan neither came PFX to
a koncert-re?
the concert-SBL
'Did neither Kate nor Susan go to the concert?'

b. *Ha Kati sem és Zsuzsa sem ment*
if Kate neither and Susan neither went
el a koncert-re. akkor bizonyára
PFX the concert-SBL then surely
mindketten meg-beteged-t-ek pro.
both PFX-got_ill-PST-3PL (they)
'If neither Kate nor Susan went to the concert, they both must have got ill.'

These robust differences boil down to the conclusion that nominals preceding *sem* 'neither' in negative connectives vs. nominals following *sem* 'neither' in negative conjunction constructions represent two different types of negative items. Therefore, they cannot be given a unified quantificational account. It should be noted here that the emphatic double *sem nem... sem nem* construction, mentioned by Szabolcsi [18], is an instance of exclusive OR, i.e., neither x, nor y nor anybody else did anything. Syntactically, *sem nem* phrases are NCIs, as they always require the clause negator *nem* NEG'.

Here is a chart that summarizes the properties of preverbal and postverbal *sem*-phrases and *s*-words, as well as preverbal and postverbal *sem*-nominals, and nominals followed by *sem* 'neither' in preverbal or postverbal positions:

(47c)

	Negative Items	Preverbal Position	Postverbal Position
a.	sem-phrases (senki sem; semmi sem)	NQ	NCI
b.	s-words (senki; semmi)	NCI	NCI
c.	sem-nominals (sem Kati... sem Zsuzsa)	NCI	NCI
d.	Nominals + sem (Kati sem; ő sem)	NQ	NCI

As the chart shows, *sem*-phrases show asymmetric behaviour in preverbal and postverbal positions (47a), while *s*-words follow the Strict Negative Concord pattern, irrespective of their syntactic position (47b). This dichotomy reappears in the case of nominals following *sem* (47c), vs. nominals preceding *sem* 'neither' (47d). This confirms the conclusion reached by Surányi [15, 16] that Hungarian employs mixed strategies of negative concord. While it shows basically the properties of Strict NC languages in the case of *s*-words and *sem*-nominals, it behaves as a Non-Strict (or Asymmetric) NC language as far as *sem*-phrases and other *sem*-nominals are concerned.

Finally, let us look at a special construction in which (még) ... sem 'not ... even' is combined with quantifiers and classifiers.

2.6. (Még) ... Sem 'Not ... Even' with Quantifiers and Classifiers

Még ... sem 'not ... even' can combine with nominals denoting atomic sets. *Sem* is glossed as 'not ... even' although the Hungarian construction does not contain any overt *még* 'even'. In addition to introducing existential presupposition, the covert EVEN maximizes the set of logically possible entities relevant for the discussion (see Collins [35]):

(48) *Peti nem olvas-ott el egy köny-vet*
Pete NEG read-PST.3SG PFX one book-ACC
sem a vizsgá-ra.
not.even the exam-SBL
'Pete did not read (even) a single book for the exam.'

(49) *Mari nem szól-t egy árva szó-t*
Mary NEG say-PST.3SG one orphaned word-ACC
sem.
not.even
'Mary did not say (even) a single word.'

(50) *Év a nem önt-ött ki egy csepp tej-et*
Eve NEG spill-PST.3SG PFX one drop milk.ACC
sem.
not.even
'Eve did not spill (even) a single drop of milk.'

The numerical quantifier *egy* 'one' refers to the smallest number of elements in the set, while the classifier defines the smallest available amount. (Még) ... sem 'not ... even' removes the single atomic member (or the smallest available amount of the given item) from the set, yielding the empty set. Omitting (még) ... sem 'not ... even' makes such constructions ungrammatical:

(51) a. **Peti nem olvas-ott el egy*
Pete.NOM NEG read.PST.3SG PFX one
könyv-et.
book-ACC
'Pete did not read (even) a single book.'

b. **Mari nem szól-t egy árva*
Mary.NOM NEG say.PST.3SG one orphaned
szó-t.
word-ACC
'Mary did not say (even) a single word.'

c. **Éva nem önt-ött ki egy csepp*
Eve.NOM NEG spill.PST.3SG PFX one drop
tej-et.
milk-ACC
'Eve did not spill (even) a single drop of milk.'

As Tsedryk[36] observes, numerical quantifiers higher than *one* are banned in such constructions in Russian:

(52) a. *Ona ne pročitala ni odnoy*
she NEG read.PST.F not.even one.GEN
knigi.
book.GEN
'She did not read a single book.'

b. *Ona ne pročitala ni *dvux*
she NEG read.PST.F not.even two.GEN
*/ *trëx knig*.
/ three.GEN book.PL.GEN
'She did not read two / three books.'
(Russian, Tsedryk[36])

The reason for this, he claims, is that the negative particle *ni* 'not ... even' cannot turn a multiplicity of referents into the empty set. (On the *ne/ni* contrast in Russian, see Garzonio[37]). As he notes, the numerical quantifier *odna* 'one.F' denotes a set with a single atomic unit in it, which has a given property. When *ni* 'not ... even' is added to this denotation, it erases the single atomic unit, yielding the empty set. Notice that Genitive of Negation is obligatory in such cases, signalling the presence of existential presupposition (see Kagan[38]).

In Hungarian, a similar a picture is found with numerical quantifiers in this environment:

(53) a. *Peti nem olvas-ott el egy könyv-et*
Pete NEG read-PST.3SG PFX one book-ACC
sem a vizsgá-ra.
not.even the exam.SBL
'Pete did not read (even) a single book for the exam.'

b. **Peti nem olvas-ott el két könyv-et*
Pete NEG read-PST.3SG PFX two book-ACC
sem a vizsgá-ra.
not.even the exam.SBL
Intended: 'Pete did not read (even) two books for the exam.'

When the numerical quantifier *egy* 'one' modifies a nominal accompanied by *sem* 'not ... even', the single element of the set is erased, yielding the empty set; hence the total exhaustivity requirement is fulfilled. With higher numerical quantifiers, however, only partial exhaustivity can be reached.

When QPs accompanied by *sem* 'not ... even' appear preverbally, they occupy the [Spec, SEMP] position. As is expected, the clause negator *nem* 'NEG' is banned here for the same reason as in the case of preverbal *sem*-phrases:

(54) a. *Peti EGY KÖNYV-ET sem *(nem)*
Pete one book-ACC not.even NEG
olvas-ott el a vizsgá-ra.
read.PST.3SG PFX the exam-SBL
'Pete did not read (even) A SINGLE BOOK for the exam.'

b. *Mari EGY ÁRVA SZÓ-T sem*
Mary one orphaned word-ACC not.even
**(nem) szól-t.*
NEG say.PST.3SG
'Mary did not say (even) A SINGLE WORD.'

c. *Év a EGY CSEPP TEJ-ET sem *(nem)*
Eve one drop milk.ACC not.even NEG
öntött ki.
spill.PST.3SG PFX
'Eve did not spill (even) A SINGLE DROP OF MILK.'

The chart in (55) shows the syntactic properties of QPs followed by (még) ... sem 'not... (even)' in preverbal and postverbal positions:

(55) (*még*) ... *sem* 'not ... even' *Preverbal position*
QP + *sem* NQ
Postverbal position
NCI

The preverbal quantified nominal is turned into a NQ

when (még) ... sem 'not ... even' is added. This is the reason why the clause negator *nem* 'NEG' is banned. In the absence of (*még*) ... *sem* 'not ... even' the overt clause negator becomes obligatory and the QP receives focus interpretation:

(56) a. *Peti [$_{FocP}$ EGY KÖNYV-ET] nem*
Pete one book-ACC NEG
olvas-ott el a vizsgá-ra.
read.PST.3SG PFX the exam-SBL
'Pete did not read A SINGLE BOOK for the exam.'

b. *Mari [$_{FocP}$ EGY ÁRVA SZÓ-T] nem*
Mary one orphaned word-ACC NEG
szól-t.
say.PST.3SG
'Mary did not say A SINGLE WORD.'

c. *Év a [$_{FocP}$EGY CSEPP TEJ-ET] nem*
Eve one drop milk.ACC NEG
önt-ött ki.
spill.PST.3SG PFX
'Eve did not spill A SINGLE DROP OF MILK.'

This state of affairs makes any generalized treatment of *sem*-phrases, *sem*-nominals and nominals followed by *sem* 'neither' impossible. Preverbally, they appear either in SEMP or in NEGfP. What is more, *sem*-phrases and nominals followed by *sem* are NQs only when they appear preverbally; however, they are NCIs in postverbal position. QPs used in the (még) ... sem 'not... (even)' construction also follow this pattern. *Sem*-nominals are NCIs, irrespective of their preverbal or postverbal position, just like *s*-words.

3. Conclusions

The paper claims that the negative emphatic particle *sem* 'neither' turns nominals into negative quantifiers (NQs) only when these nominals appear in the specifier position of SEMP in preverbal position. No similar quantificational properties are observed postverbally. This makes a unified quantificational treatment for them untenable.

Nominals following *sem* 'neither' in negative conjunction constructions are non-quantificational NCIs, which always require the clause negator, irrespective of their syntactic position. As regards nominals preceding *sem* 'neither' in negative connectives, only those that appear preverbally in the [Spec, SEMP] position are licensers; the ones in postverbal position are NCIs, requiring the clause negator for licensing. Finally, in (még) ... sem 'not ... even' constructions, nominals premodified by numerical quantifiers and classifiers in preverbal and postverbal positions also show the asymmetric pattern familiar from *sem*-phrases.

This dichotomy is due to a special freezing effect, called Criterial Freezing. Postverbally, no such freezing effect can be observed because the clause negator functions as a licenser for all nominals preceding *sem* 'neither'.

Funding

This work received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement

Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement

Not applicable.

Acknowledgments

I wish to express my gratitude to the following colleagues for reading and commenting on my earlier work on strict negative concord in Hungarian: Edith Moravcsik, Genoveva Puskas, Balázs Surányi, Vilma Eőry, Jacek Witkoś, Malgorzata Krzek, Marta Ruda, Veronika Hegedűs. The data used in the paper come from the sources given under the examples. The Hungarian

data were carefully checked by colleagues and former students. All remaining errors are mine.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

AI Use Statement

The author declares that no AI tools were used in the preparation of the manuscript.

Abbreviations

ACC	accusative case
DAT	dative case
ForceP	functional projection, storing illocutionary force features
IF	IF operator
INT	interrogative operator
NC	negative concord
NCI	negative concord item
NQ	negative quantifier
NPI	negative polarity item
NEG	clause negator
NEGP	functional projection hosting the clause negator
NOM	nominative case
OP_{NEG}	negative operator
PERF	perfect tense
PFX	prefix/postfix
PL	plural number
POSS	possessive suffix
PST	past tense
SBL	sublative case
SEMP	functional projection hosting SEM
SG	singular number

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