



indefinite scopes over negation (by LF-raising [ $\exists$  NP] over the negation). Also (1a) can be uttered with focus on *eine*. Crucially, these readings can never be yielded by (3).

- (5) a. Fritz kann nicht eine Fremdsprache die man in Frankreich spricht  
b. Fritz kann nicht EINE Fremdsprache.

Second, since the effect that by uttering (1a) the speaker does not want to convey the meaning of (3) is a conversational implicature (cf. Horn 1984, 1989), this implicature should be cancellable. This is indeed correct as well, as shown in the following question-answer pair:

- (6) Q. Kann Fritz nicht eine Fremdsprache?  
A. Nein, Fritz kann nicht eine Fremdsprache. Er kann keine Fremdsprache

Third, implicatures of this type disappear in downward entailing contexts (cf. Levinson 2000 amongst many others for discussion). Therefore, it is predicted that light negation constructions are fine when they are embedded under a downward entailing operator, deriving their NPI-like distributional behaviour. Again, this is indeed correct, as shown in (1c) and in (7), taken from Schwarz & Bhatt 2008.

- (7) Wir haben keinen angenommen, der nicht eine Fremdsprache kennt  
*We have no one hired, who not a foreign language knows*

Fourth, the implicature can only arise when *nicht eine* and *keine* stand in competition. Consequently, once lexical material intervenes *nicht* and *eine*, *nicht + X + eine* can no longer be replaced by *keine* and the construction is fine again, as shown in (8). Note that this also prevents the analysis from overgeneralizing to languages like English that lack light negation.

- (8) Fritz denkt nicht an eine Fremdsprache  
*Fritz thinks not of a foreign language*

Fifth, the analysis naturally extends to other cases of light negation. For instance, (1b), contains a definite expression under the scope of negation. Given that definite expressions presuppose the existence of their referent and that such presuppositions survive under negation, the sentence is truth-conditionally equivalent to a sentence where the definite expression outscopes negation, as in (9). Once it is assumed that (8) and (9) stand in a markedness relation as well, albeit a markedness relation of a syntactic/semantic kind ((9) is an instance of plain sentential negation; (8) is a special type of constituent negation), the ill-formedness of (8) immediately follows.

- (9) Fritz hat Frage 3 nicht beantwortet.

To conclude: there is nothing special about light negation. Light negation involves regular negation and its limited distribution follows from independently established pragmatic mechanisms.

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