

NEGATION:  
AN INSIGHT INTO THE STRUCTURE OF MAIN CLAUSES IN WOODS CREE

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ABSTRACT

Two distinct types of verbs occur in Woods Cree: the Independent and the Conjunct. Independent verbs occur in main clauses; Conjunct verbs occur in both main and subordinate clauses. Woods Cree has a number of distinct negative particles. Descriptions of Cree dialects indicate that the distinction between two of these negative particles is dependent on the inflection of the verb. mwāc negates clauses with Independent verbs, īkā clauses with Conjunct verbs. This paper demonstrates that in fact, the negative morphemes are independent of verb inflection. Presupposed clauses are negated with the negative particle īkā, asserted clauses with the negative particle mwāc.

1. Introduction

Descriptions of the various Cree dialects only briefly mention the topic of negation. A few statements in the published works indicate there are two negative morphemes: an Independent verb negator and a Conjunct verb negator (Ellis 1983:29,426, Wolfart 1973:41). All Cree dialects distinguish two main types of verbs: an Independent verb used in main clauses and a Conjunct verb used in subordinate clauses. It would be then logical to assume that the Independent verb negator negates main clauses and the Conjunct verb negator negates subordinate clauses. However, scholars such as Ellis 1983 do not make that overt deduction for I believe, the logical reason: the situation is far more complex.

There are three basic problems. First, main clauses can occur with both Independent and Conjunct inflections. In narrative texts, Independent verb inflections are often a minority. There are however more Independent verbs than Conjunct verbs in the main clauses of conversational texts. The use of the Conjunct in main clauses creates the following two problems. I) The Independent verb negator can occur in a main clause with a Conjunct verb, and II) A Conjunct verb negator can occur in a main clause.

Cree scholars have failed to mention these irregularities. As a result, scholars working on North Shore (Quebec) Montagnais have assumed that Montagnais main clause negation is radically different from Cree negation, since the verb in a negated main clause in North Shore Montagnais must be marked with a Conjunct inflection (MacKenzie and Clarke 1981:143).

In this paper I will outline the various types of negative clauses in Woods Cree, a dialect spoken in north-western Manitoba,<sup>1</sup> focussing on the problems discussed above. I will demonstrate how these irregularities can be neatly incorporated into the grammar as a whole. As a result, not only will the analysis of negation be more detailed and precise, but also it will add insights into the problem of why main clauses can occur with a Conjunct verb, a topic too broad to cover in any detail in this paper (see Rogers 1979 for one analysis of Ojibwa). The analysis will also de-mystify the origin of Montagnais negative clauses, clauses where the verb always occurs with a Conjunct.

Before I discuss negation, I will provide a very brief synopsis of the structure of Woods Cree. Then, the various negative morphemes in Woods Cree will be outlined. Syntactic and semantic distinctions between the various morphemes will be discussed. Finally, an attempt will be made to explain the function of conjunct verbs in negative main clauses.

## 2. Verbal Structure of Woods Cree

There are four types of verb stems, divided on the basis of the transitivity of the verb and on the animacy of the noun.<sup>2</sup> There are two sets of intransitive verb stems, one for intransitive animate subjects (AI), and one for intransitive inanimate subjects (II). There are also two transitive verb stems, both with animate subjects. The transitive verb stems differ in respect to the animacy of the object. A Transitive Animate verb (TA) is a verb with an animate subject and an animate object, while a Transitive Inanimate verb (TI) is a verb with a animate subject and an inanimate object. The four verb stems are inflected with four distinct sets of inflectional endings. The following illustrate the four types of verb stems in Woods Cree.<sup>3</sup> Independent verb forms will be used here for illustration.

1)	'hard/strong'	AI	he is strong	maskawisiw
		II	it is hard	maskawāw
		TA	he hardens him	maskawisihīw
		TI	he hardens it	maskawisihtāw

There are three types of verb paradigms for each of the four verb stems discussed above. They are the Independent, the Conjunct and the Imperative.<sup>4</sup> The following illustrate these, using the 3sg. form of each verb stem.

## 2) 'hard/strong'

	AI	II	TA	TI
Independent	maskawisiw	maskawāw	maskawisihāw	maskawisihtāw
Conjunct	ī-maskawisit	ī-maskawāyāk	ī-maskawihāt	ī-maskawihtat
Imperative	maskawisi	[   ]	maskawihi	maskawihtā

The function of an Imperative verb is clear. Imperative verbs only occur in Imperative and Hortative structures.

- 3) atoskī  
2sg.Imp.-work  
'Work.'

- 4) atoskītān  
12.Imp.-work  
'Let's work.'

The function of the Independent and the Conjunct is however less clear. Both Independent and Conjunct verbs can occur in most types of main clauses, as the following examples illustrate:

- 5) kī-nipāw  
past.3sg.Ind.-sleep  
'He slept.'

- 6) ī-kī-nipāt  
past.3sg.Conj-sleep  
'He slept.'

The distinction between the two inflections is then not based on clause type. The distinction is also not based on the 'speech act' since the verbs in both yes-no questions and in declaratives can be inflected with both Independent and Conjunct inflections.

- 7) nipāw pīpī  
3sg.Ind-sleep.baby
- ī-nipāt pīpī  
3sg.Conj-sleep baby
- 'The baby is asleep.'
- 8) nipāw na pīpī  
3sg.Ind-sleep Q baby
- ī-nīpāt na pīpī  
3sg.Conj-sleep Q baby
- 'Is the baby asleep?'

Finally, the use of the Independent and the Conjunct is not directly related to negation. The negative can occur with either type of verb.

- 9) mōḍa nipāw  
neg 3sg.Ind-sleep
- mōḍa ī-nipāt  
neg 3sg.Conj-sleep
- 'He is not sleeping.'

The choice of inflection in a declarative main clause is therefore not that simple. Both Independent and Conjunct verbs can occur in most main clauses. The function of the Conjunct in a main clause appears to be based on a combination of factors, too complex to cover in any detail here. Only the inter-relationship between Conjunct and Independent verbs in negative clauses will be discussed in any detail.<sup>5</sup>

There are however a few instances where the verb is predictable. They are as follows.

- I. Most verbs in Wh-questions occur with Conjunct verbs.

- 10) awina ā-nipāt?  
who 3sg.Conj-sleep  
'Who is sleeping?'
- 11) tāntī ī-nipāt?  
where 3sg.Conj-sleep  
'Where is she/he sleeping?'

II. When however, the verb in the main clause is an evidential type construction, the verb must occur with an Independent inflection, even if the verb occurs in a wh-question. Contrast the following two wh-questions:

12) tānsi tōtam?  
 how 3sg.Ind-do it  
 'What is he doing?' (check out the baby)

13) tānsi tōtah?  
 How 3sg.Conj-do it  
 'What is he doing (right now)?'

III. The verb in a Jussive is always inflected with an Independent.

14) ta-nipāw  
 fut-3sg.Ind-sleep  
 'Let him sleep.'

IV. A few particles dictate the inflection of the verb. These particles must always precede the verb they modify. Two such particles are wīsa and ohci, both meaning 'because.' wīsa must precede either a NP or an Independent verb. ohci can only be followed by a Conjunct verb.

15) wīsa atim  
 because dog  
 'Because of the dog.'

wīsa sipwīhtīw  
 because 3sg.Ind-leave  
 'Because he left.'

16) ohci ī-sipwīhtīt  
 because 3sg.Conj-leave  
 'Because he left.' (Answer to question).

V. Finally, the only verb that can occur in any type of subordinate clause is a Conjunct verb.

17) oma nipāt, kwāni ī-ayamihkwāmit  
 When 3sg.Conj-sleep, then 3sg.Conj-talk in sleep  
 'When he sleeps, he talks.'

- 18) īkā oponapīnihk kī-itohtīyahki, kwān po Thompson ta-ayāyahk  
 neg SIL-loc able-12 Subj-go, then only Thompson fut-12  
 Conj-be.  
 'If we don't reach South Indian Lake, we will have to stay in Thompson.'

The verb in a declarative negated main clause is not directly affected by any of the above factors. As a result, a declarative negated main clause can occur with either an Independent or a Conjunct inflection. The forms and functions of the various negative particles in Woods Cree will be discussed in the following section.

### 3. Negative Forms

There are five distinct negative morphemes in Woods Cree. Three of these negative morphemes have been labelled as stylistic variants in descriptions of other Cree dialects (cf. Ellis 1983:183). These three negative morphemes are mwāc, mwā and mōḏa.<sup>6</sup> The three forms are all main clause negative morphemes. They cannot occur in a subordinate clause.

The two other negative particles are īkā and kāḏa. I have labelled the negative particle īkā as the 'subordinate negator,' even though it can occur in a main clause. īkā is the only negative morpheme that can occur in a subordinate clause. Finally, kāḏa is the Imperative negator. It negates Imperatives, Hortatives and Jussives.

I have classified the negative morphemes on the basis of syntax since the morphological criteria presented in other descriptions is inadequate. Eg., kāḏa negates an Independent verb in a Jussive construction and an Imperative verb in an Imperative construction.

Furthermore, all five negative morphemes can occur in clauses without verbs. So although the position of the verb is syntactically important, the inflection on the verb does not determine which negative particle will occur. When however a verb does occur in a negative clause, the negative particle must precede it. However, the verb may be separated from the negative by an NP or a particle.

- 19) mōḏa cīskwa nipāw  
 neg yet 3sg.Ind-sleep  
 'He's not asleep yet.'
- 20) mistahi itowītāniwan īkā atim kita-tahcīt  
 a lot indf.Ind-care neg dog fut-3sg.Conj-let loose  
 'Care was taken not to have the dog loose.'

Cross-linguistic data suggest that languages with two negative morphemes often divide the negative into main and subordinate negators, with semantic nuances in the direction to be outlined below (Horne 1985:127-128). Since semantic differences are less clear than syntactic differences I will attempt to classify the five negative morphemes on the basis of syntax, before I present any semantic evidence. Only when there is more than one negative morpheme per syntactic category will I resort solely to a semantic analysis. Such an analysis is necessary to differentiate the three main clause negators.

#### 4. Semantics of Main Clause Negators

The three main clause negators mwāc, mwā and mōōa appear to differ only at a semantic level.

mwāc is the general negator. It occurs three times as often in texts as either of the other two negatives, mōōa or mwā. mwāc is used as the general word for 'no.' In constructions with a verb, mwāc marks the negative as a factive.

- 21) kwāni māka mwāc wīsta ohci-miskawīw  
 then but neg he too past-3sg.TA.Ind-find him  
 'But he too didn't find her.'

mwāc is sometimes used to express the speaker's belief that the statement is a fact.

- 22) mwāc ahpo nakī-kiskīyih tah īkosi  
 neg or fut-able-1sg.Pret-know it thus  
ta-kī-wīcihisowān  
 fut-able-1sg.Conj.refl-help  
 'I would not have learned how to help myself.'

mwāc is used in conjunction with the indefinite pronouns awina 'someone' and kīkwān 'something.'

- 23) mwāc awina ī-ohci-itohtī  
 neg s.one 3sg.Conj-go  
 'Nobody went there.'

- 24) mwāc kīkwān ī-ikiskah  
 neg s.thing 3sg.Conj-wear it  
 'She had nothing on.'

Finally mwāc occurs in conjunction with kīkwān to indicate the non-existence of an NP. The following example illustrates this.

- 25) mwāc kīkwān ōmatowa wāskahikan  
 neg s.thing like-this house  
 'There were no houses like this.'

The phrase mwāc kīkwān is used to negate the existence of an animate noun phrase.

- 26) mwāc kīkwān wīmistikosiw kayās  
 neg s.thing whiteman long ago  
 'There were no whitemen long ago.'

In contrast, mwā is used when the speaker wishes to express an opinion. The distinction between mwāc and mwā is best exemplified by the following sentences:

- 27) mwāc itokī nitohtān  
 neg prob. 1sg.Ind-go  
 'I'll think I'll not go.'
- 28) mwā pāham nitohtān  
 neg poss. 1sg.Ind-go.  
 'I don't think I'll go.'

The first sentence with mwāc is probable, whereas the second sentence with mwā is only possible.

mwā is used to indicate a non-factive. It most often occurs with 1st person verbs used to express an opinion.

- 29) anohc pō mwā tāpwī nimiōwīōihtīnān  
 now only neg really 13.Ind-like it  
 'Now we really don't like it.'

mwā is also used to express a temporary lack of ability. mwā is often translated as 'can't.'

- 30) mwā nikī-otihtinīn nicīmāninān  
 neg able-1sg.Ind-hold it 13 poss.boat  
 'I couldn't get hold of our boat.'

Finally, mōōa is a contrastive negator. It is used when an individual wants to modify or correct a previous utterance.

- 31) mōōa nipatācimon īkota  
 No. 1sg.Ind-miss-tell there.  
 'No. I missed part of my story.'

mōōa is also used to contradict someone else's statement.



- 32) Īkā mā ana Donna?      mōḏa mā ana Donna  
 neg Top. 3sg. Donna    neg Top. 3sg. Donna.  
 'Doesn't that look like Donna?'    'No, that's not Donna.'

When mōḏa negates a verb, it functions as a restrictive negator.

- 33) mōḏa n-ōh-misikitin  
 neg past-lsg.Ind-big  
 'I wasn't that big.'
- 34) mōḏa kinwīsk āsay kā-kīsisoci  
 neg long already 3pl.II.Ind-cook  
 'It doesn't take that long before they are done.'

The following excerpt is used to illustrate how this restrictive negation is used in discourse.

- 35) kinwīsk nōcihtāniwan nōsisim kā-osihtāniwik pahkīkin  
 long indf.Ind-work at lsg.poss.grandchild indf.Conj-do hide  
mōḏa wīḏa aciḏaw piko  
 neg he little-time only  
 'It takes a long time my grandchild to tan a hide. It  
 doesn't take a short time.'

Finally mōḏa is used for contrast or emphasis.

- 36) mōḏa nīḏa piko, kwāni kahkiḏaw nāpīwak  
 neg I only, then all man-pl  
 'Not only myself, but all the other guys.'
- 37) mōḏa āta mistahiwāw kā-patiskaman ōma nicīmāninān  
 neg although many-times lsg.Conj-miss it this 13.poss.boat  
 'It is not often I missed our boat.'

In summary, mwāc negates a factive, mwā negates an opinion or a temporary inability and finally, mōḏa is used for restrictive negation and for contrast.<sup>7</sup>

Since the distinction between the three main clause negators is purely semantic, these morphemes will be discussed together as a single form for the remainder of this paper. Examples however will be taken from contexts, and not regularized.

## 5. Verbal Inflection

These three negative particles mwāc, mwā and mōḏa occur only in main clauses. However, main clause verbs can occur with either

Independent or Conjunct inflections. So when a main clause verb with a Conjunct inflection is negated, it can be negated with either a main clause negator or the subordinate clause negator īkā. The following examples illustrate this.

- 38) kwāni mwāc wīkāc ī-ohci-wanāhtākīðimowahk nōhtawīpan  
 then neg ever 3sg.Conj-resolve 1sg.poss.father-late  
 'And my late father never felt comfortable.'
- 39) akwa nipāpā īkā ī-apit  
 and 1sg.father neg 3sg.Conj-be at home  
 'And my father wasn't at home.'

The relationship between these negative morphemes and verbal inflection will be outlined following a discussion of the syntactic constraints on main and subordinator clause negators.

#### 6. Syntactic Constraints on Main Clause Negators

There are only a few constraints that apply to main clause negators. For example, all three main clause negative particles must precede the verb.

- 40) mwāc miðomacihow  
 neg 3sg.Ind.mdle.rflx-feel good  
 'He didn't feel well.'
- 41) mwā nōkosiw  
 neg 3sg.AI.appear  
 'He is not seen.'
- 42) mōða asamīw  
 neg 3sg.TA.feed  
 'He wasn't fed.'

There are however three important syntactic constraints. First, the main clause negative morphemes can negate only main clauses. Second, if the main clause is a polar or yes-no question, then the main clause negator must precede the question clitic, cī or na. The following examples illustrate this:

- 43) mwā na cīskwa takosin?  
 neg Q yet 3sg.Ind-arrive  
 'Hasn't he come yet?'
- 44) mwāc cī nipāw?  
 neg Q 3sg.Ind.-sleep  
 'He doesn't sleep?'

The fact that mwāc, mwā and mōđa can only precede a polar clitic is important, since only one constituent in a polar question can precede a polar question particle. That constituent is always the focus of the polar question. The following polar questions provide illustrations.

- 45) ōko na nisto nāpīsisak kī-itohtīwak?  
3pl. Q 3 boy-pl. past-3pl.Ind-go  
'Did these three boys go?'
- 46) nisto na ōko nāpīsisak kī-itohtīwak?  
3 Q 3pl. boy-pl. past-3pl.Ind-go  
'Did three of these boys go?'
- 47) nāpīsisak na nisto ōko kī-itohtīwak?  
boy-pl. Q 3 3pl. past-3pl.Ind-go  
'These boys, did three of them go?'
- 48) nāpīsisak na ōko nisto kī-itohtīwak?  
boy-pl Q 3pl. 3 past-3pl.Ind-go  
'These three boys, did they go?'

If a main clause negative particle can only occur in initial position in a polar question, a main clause negator must be able to be focussed.

Third, the main clause negative particles can negate any main clause with two exceptions: the wh-question and the Jussive. In most wh-questions, the wh-particle is the only element focussed. All other information in a wh-question is normally presupposed (Huddleston 1971:9), including a negative. If a main clause negative morpheme must be focussed, it is not normally presupposed. It is logical therefore that a main clause negative morpheme would not occur in a wh-question.

Not all wh-questions presuppose the entire clause (Huddleston 1971:9, Givon 1984:259-260). One type of wh-question that allows a main clause negative morpheme is a structure resembling an Evidential. An Evidential is not presupposed, it is asserted (Givon 1984:307-308).

- 49) tānsi mwāc tōtam?  
How neg 3sg.Ind-do it  
'What isn't he doing?'

All focussed clauses are assertions. Most declarative main clauses and polar questions, and all Evidentials are assertions.

All three main clause negators seem only to occur in asserted declarative clauses.

The Jussive is also an assertion that marks the verb with an Independent. The Jussive however can only be negated with the Imperative negative morpheme kā̄a.

- 50) kā̄a kimiwan.  
Neg-Imp 3sg.II.Ind-rain  
'Don't let it rain.'

The Imperative negative morpheme negates all Imperative Speech Acts. The main clause negators then can only occur in non-Imperative assertive clauses. Since subordinate clauses are not normally assertions, it is logical that main clause negators do not occur in subordinate clauses.

#### 7. īkā as a Subordinate Clause Negator

īkā is the subordinate clause negator. No other negative morpheme can occur in a proto-typical subordinate clause. The following examples illustrate the use of īkā in a subordinate clause.

- 51) īyako pō ī-kiskīhtamān īkā ta-mīcināniwahk atihk  
that-one only 1sg.Conj-know it neg fut-indf.Conj-eat  
caribou  
'That's all I can remember that isn't eaten on a caribou.'
- 52) wīhtikōw īkā kwayask ī-kī-ohci-mīcisocik ið iniwak  
wihtikow neg really past-neg.past-3pl.Conj-eat person-pl.  
'A wihtikow is (one of a group of) people who doesn't eat right.'

īkā can also occur in unintroduced subordinate clauses. The primary clauses of this type are 'so' clauses, 'because' clauses, 'if only' clauses, 'what if' clauses, and 'as if' clauses, as in the following examples:

- 53) īsa īkā kā-kāpisocik  
because/so neg 3pl.AI.Conj-stick  
'So they wouldn't stick together.'
- 54) īkā ī-wī-tōtah  
neg want-3sg.Conj-do it  
'Because he doesn't want to.'

55) tānika īkā itohtīyān  
 If only neg lsg.Conj-go  
 'If only I wasn't going.'

56) sipwīhtīyāni mā  
 lsg.Subj-leave Topic  
 'What if I leave?'

57) īkā mā ī-sipwīhtīyān  
 neg Topic lsg.Conj-leave  
 'As if I'm leaving.'<sup>8</sup>

īkā also negates subordinate clause sentence fragments, such as the following relative clause fragment.

58) īkā kā-mīcisot  
 neg 3sg.Conj-eat  
 'Those that don't eat.'

The verb in all of the above constructions is presupposed. The only type of subordinate clause that is not presupposed is the non-restrictive relative clause. A non-restrictive relative clause is also negated with the subordinate clause negator īkā. The following example illustrates this:

59) nīmāmā īkā wīkāc ohci-āhkosit, āhkosīkamikohk  
 lsg.-mother neg ever past-3sg.Conj-sick, hospital-loc  
a-kī-itohtī  
 past-3sg.Conj-go  
 'My mother who was never sick, had to go to the hospital.'

The negative particle īkā is the only negative particle that can occur in a subordinate clause. The use of īkā in a subordinate clause is purely grammatical.

It was noted above that īkā can also negate a wh-question and a main clause declarative.

60) kīkwāōiw īkā kā-kī-ohci-pītohtī?  
 What-obv. neg past-negpast-come  
 'Why didn't he come?'

61) nīyo kīsikāw īkā ī-ohci-nipāyān  
 Four day neg past-lsg-Conj-sleep  
 'For four days I couldn't sleep.'

Since both īkā and mwāc can occur in a main clause with a Conjunct verb, it is necessary to distinguish the two constructions.

In the following sections, the syntactic and semantic constraints on the use of ikā in main clauses will be examined.

#### 8. Syntactic Constraints on the Subordinate Clause Negator

It was noted above that the verb in a wh-question and in a subordinate clause is usually presupposed. The evidence suggests that presupposition directly affects the use of subordinate negator in main clauses.

Syntactically, three restrictions apply to ikā in a main clause. First, ikā must precede the verb in any clause it negates.

- 62) ikā ta-kī-ihkihk  
 neg fut-able-3sg.II.Conj-function  
 '(It doesn't look like) it will work.'

Second, ikā cannot occur in a clause with an Independent verb: a verb used exclusively in main clauses.

- 63) \*ikā nipāw  
 \*neg 3sg.Ind.-sleep  
 '\*It is not he is asleep.'

Third, ikā usually does not precede the polar question clitics na and cī. ikā can occur in a polar question, but usually only after the question clitic.

- 64) ikwāni na ikā iskōliwīn?  
 then Q neg 2sg.Conj-go to school  
 'So, you're not going to school?'

ika can however occur in initial position in a polar question. The following example illustrates this:

- 65) ikā na ī-nipāt?  
 neg Q 3sg.Conj-sleep  
 'You mean he's not sleeping?'

In the above example, ikā is in focussed position. However, it is not ikā that is asserted, but rather the presupposition 'you mean.' ikā does not negate a main clause assertion.

There is further evidence to support this hypothesis. In Woods Cree, topic questions are formed by adding the clitic mā to the initial word in the topic question.

- 66) wīḏa mā?  
 he Topic  
 'What about him?'

Topicalized constituents preceded by mā are usually either nouns or particles. Among the constituents that mā can be cliticized to is the negative particle īkā.

- 67) īkā mā ī-nipāt  
 neg Topic 3sg.Conj-sleep  
 'As if he's sleeping.'

Topic markers represent backgrounded presupposed information (Haiman 1978, Reinhart 1982), not asserted or focussed information.

The only verbs that can precede the topic particle mā are Conjunct verbs. The following examples illustrate this.

- 68) kā-āhkosipaḏit mā?  
 3sg.Conj-fall sick Topic  
 'Did you hear of her sudden sickness?'

- 69) apici mā?  
 3sg.Subj.-be-at-home Topic  
 'What if he's home?'

Independent verbs cannot be followed by mā. Neither can the main clause negative morphemes.

It appears that main clauses are negated with the two distinct negative particles. mwāc negates main clause assertions, īkā negates presuppositions. The distinction however has been grammaticalized in all subordinate clauses.

## 9. Semantic Distinctions

So although īkā occurs in both main and subordinate clauses, it appears īkā is an unmarked negator in a subordinate clause, but a marked negator in a main clause. The unmarked negative particle in a main clause is mwāc. The syntactic distinction between main clauses negated with mwāc and main clauses negated by īkā is supported by semantic data.

In most main clauses, īkā has a specialized meaning, distinct from mwāc. Consider the following textual examples with īkā.

- 70) pahkaci ikā kā-nipāyān  
 Sometimes neg 1st.conj-sleep  
 'Sometimes I can't sleep [because I'm upset].'
- 71) nīyow kīsikāw ikā ī-ohci-nipāyān [worried]  
 four day neg 1sg.Conj-past-sleep  
 'For four days I couldn't sleep.'
- 72) ōta ī-kī-minihkwiyan kapi-kisik ikā ohci-nipāyān mīna  
 here 1sg.Conj-drink all-day neg past-1st.Conj-sleep also  
kapi-tipisk patimā kihtwām ī-ati-tipiskāk  
 all-night after again 3sg.Conj.II-be night  
 'I drank once and I didn't sleep all day and all night  
 until the next night.'

All of the above examples have the same verb nipāw 'sleep.' The above main clauses are negated with the particle ikā. They differ only in the type of Conjunct verb used. The first example occurs with a kā-Conjunct verb, the second with an ī-Conjunct verb and the third example with an unchanged Conjunct form.

The text for all three examples indicates that the speaker is expressing a difficulty in sleeping. However the speaker always allows the option of dozing off. In effect, the above examples illustrate that ikā does not negate the clause but rather is used to negate a presupposition associated with the clause. ikā negates presuppositions.

Furthermore, when ikā occurs in conjunction with the topic particle mā, it also is not used to negate the proposition per se. ikā is used to question the hearer as to whether his/her impression is the same as the speaker's.

- 73) ikā mā tīhtapiwin  
 neg Top. table  
 'Doesn't that look like a table?'
- 74) ikā mā apici  
 neg Top. 3sg.Subj-be at home  
 'What if he's not home?'

So although ikā can negate both main and subordinate clauses, in a main clause ikā is marked. ikā in a main clause somehow seems to negate a proposition higher than that expressed by the verb in the main clause. It functions as if the main clause is semantically subordinate.



- 75) īkā ī-mīcisot  
 neg 3sg.Conj-eat  
 'He doesn't feel like eating.'

In contrast, mwāc, mwā and mōōa are used to negate the truth-value of the clause. Consider the following examples with mwāc.

- 76) kwāni mwāc pīyakwāw ī-nipāyāh  
 then neg one-time 13.Conj-sleep  
 'Not once did we go to sleep.'
- 77) mwāc kā-nipāyāhk ī-papāmohtīt nōhtawīpan  
 neg 13.Conj-sleep 3sg.Conj-walk-about 1sg.poss.father-late  
 'We didn't sleep because my late father was walking about.'
- 78) mwāc n-ohci-nipān  
 neg past 1sg.Ind-sleep  
 'I didn't sleep.'

The first two examples occur with mwāc and a form of the Conjunct verb nipāw 'sleep.' In the third example, the verb nipāw 'sleep' is inflected with an Independent verb. The textual reference for each of the above clauses indicates the individual in question did not attempt to go to sleep for a specific reason (i.e., someone was lost, died etc.). When mwāc is used in a main clause, the clause is always negated. The clauses are all negative assertions, independent of the type of verb in the clause.

#### 10. Conjunct vs. Independent Verbs

There is only one question left unanswered: Why does mwāc occur in a main clause with a Conjunct verb, and how is this type of main clause distinct from when mwāc occurs in a clause with an Independent verb? I think the distinction between the two negative structures is the same as the distinction between any two main clauses distinguished solely on the basis of an Independent or Conjunct inflection.

It is clear that the use of a Conjunct is not dependent on whether the clause is asserted or presupposed. Conjunct verbs can precede the polar question markers, as in:

79) ī-āhkosit na?  
3sg.Conj-sick Q

ī-āhkosit cī?  
3sg.Conj-sick Q

'Is he/she sick?'

Conjunct verbs also precede the topic marker mā, as in:

80) kā-sipwīpaðit mā?  
3sg.Conj-leave suddenly Topic  
'Did you hear about his leaving?'

A Conjunct verb can be both presupposed and foregrounded.

The function of the Conjunct verb in a main clause negated with mwāc is partly related to aspect, partly modality. There are at least four factors involved. First, a Conjunct inflection is used to aspectually mark a main clause when the time reference for this clause is dependent on another event in the discourse. The following examples illustrate this:

81) mwāc ī-ayamit iðō ī-wīsakīhtahk oskīsik.  
neg 3sg.Conj-talk as-long-as 3sg.TI.Conj-hurt  
3sg.poss-eye  
'He couldn't talk as long as his eye hurt so.'

82) nisto kīsikāw īkota ā-kā-nipāt. mwā īnco ahpo nipīs  
3 day there past-3sg.Conj-sleep. neg [ ] or little-water  
ī-kī-minihkwīt wawīs māyiða apisīs ta-mīcisot  
past.3sg.Conj-drink at-all but a little fut-3sg.Conj-eat  
'He slept there for three days. He didn't drink any water  
at all or even eat a bit.'

Second, textual examples indicate that a Conjunct verb negated with a main clause negator is also used in discourse to restrict the clause such that it refers only to a specific group of people or specific time frame. The following examples illustrate this:

83) mwāc awina ta-nawatākosit  
neg someone fut.3sg.Conj-catch  
'Nobody was around. (referring to group of women who could deliver a baby).'

84) mōðā awina nitawīðimihkwāw  
neg someone 3.TA.Conj-want you  
'Nobody wants you (response to man entering delivery room).'

- 85) mwāc osōma kiskīhtamān  
 neg like-this lsg.Conj-know it  
 'I don't know anything (about that specific topic to talk about right now).'

Third, a main clause negative occurs with a Conjunct verb when the speaker views the event as 'amazing.'

- 86) mwāc īnto ī-nisiwaninākonōik ita atimwa  
 neg [ ] 3sg.II.Conj.looktorn where dog-pl.  
ā-kī-sāpotaskātihpīpitikot  
 past-TA.3.Conj-rip her head open  
 'You couldn't tell where the rip was, where the dogs ripped her head.'

Finally, when the speaker is expressing a possible opinion of another person, the verb always occurs in the Conjunct.

- 87) mōōa wīōa ī-kī-ohci-wāpahtahk  
 neg he past.negpast.3sg.TI.Conj-see it  
 'He didn't see it (Her grandfather putting curses on people).'

In contrast, Independent verbs negated with a main clause negator are used to report facts and personal opinions. The following examples illustrate.

- 88) mwāc awasimī nitawīōimāw sōkāw īkota  
 neg more lsg.TA.Ind-want him sugar there  
 'So I don't need as much sugar in there.'
- 89) mōōa pīhtākosiōiwa  
 neg 3obv.TA.Ind-hear him  
 'He couldn't hear them.'
- 90) mwā kanakī ohci-pisiskīōihtam  
 neg well past-3sg.TI.Ind-check it  
 'He didn't bother to check.'

Main clauses negated with īkā illustrate that Conjunct verbs also occur in syntactically main clauses, that function as if they were semantically subordinate, vis-a-vis presupposition. The problem is the various uses of the Conjunct verbs overlap. Other factors also influence the use of the choice of the main clause verb, but they are outside the scope of this paper. However, it is clear the functions of the Conjunct verb in a main clause outlined above supports the analysis presented above: negation is independent from verb inflection.

## 11. Conclusion

There are five negative morphemes in Woods Cree. mwāc, mwā and mōōa negate only main clauses, īkā is the only negator that can negate subordinate clauses, and kāōa is the only negator that can negate Imperative clauses. All five negative particles have however a number of marked uses. For example, the subordinate clause negator can occur in a main clause. The distinction is, then, not purely syntactic. The distinction between a main clause negator and a subordinate clause negator is also semantically based. The main clause negator negates assertions, the subordinate clause negator, presuppositions.

Morphologically, there is a partial overlap between clause type and verb inflection. Proto-typically, a main clause verb occurs with Independent inflections, a subordinate clause verb with Conjunct inflections and an Imperative clause with Imperative inflections. However, a verb in a main clause can occur with a Conjunct inflection and a verb in an Imperative clause can occur with an Independent inflection.

This analysis of negation clarifies the issue of Conjunct verbs in main clauses. In negative clauses, the Conjunct/Independent distinction is dependent on several semantic factors, including aspect, modality and presupposition.

This analysis also demystifies the source of Montagnais negative main clauses with Conjunct verbs. Givon notes languages tend to reduce contrasts in marked structures, especially the negative (Givon 1977). In Montagnais, a contrast has simply been lost. The use of the Conjunct in main clause negative is not therefore a major change from Cree, but a minor one.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>The material for this paper is based on data collected at South Indian Lake, Manitoba. Algonquianists will note three phonological processes evident from the orthography: the merger of \*e with \*i, the weakening and loss of /k/ word initially in the \*kā conjunct marker, and the weakening of word final /hk/. The latter weakening is both grammatically and socially determined.

<sup>2</sup>Animate NPs are not totally iconic. A number of Inanimate objects are grammatically animate, e.g., ōīwahikan 'dried pounded meat,' sōniyāw 'money.'

<sup>3</sup>There are two types of TI verbs. The example below is inflected with AI inflections. A distinct set of inflections also exist for TI stems.

<sup>4</sup>An Imperative II verb is not grammatically possible. It is simply logically improbable.

<sup>5</sup>This discussion will not distinguish the various types of Conjunct verbs.

<sup>6</sup>These forms also appear with a na-prefix when emphatic.

<sup>7</sup>The scope of the negation does not appear to affect the choice of the negative morpheme. Generally the constituent which is the focus of the negation is closer to the negative morpheme.

<sup>8</sup>'As if' structures are introduced by the negative particle ikā. This example literally translates as 'But I am not leaving;' mā reverses the polarity of the negative.

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