Expletive negation and related problems

PAOLO RAMAT

ACCADEMIA NAZIONALE DEI LINCEI - ROMA

There are more things in Heaven and Earth, Horatio, / than are dreamt of in your Philosophy
W. Shakespeare, *Hamlet* 1.5.167-8.
'Ci sono più cose in cielo e in terra, Orazio, / che **non** ne sogni la tua scienza'

Não sou nada. /Nunca serei nada.
'Non sono niente. / I will never be anything.'
Fernando Pessoa, *Tabacaria*

Abstract

This paper makes two main claims: the presence of two or more negative elements in Negative Concord, Negative Comparison, and Expletive Negation basically rests upon the pragmatic need of intensifying the negative import of the sentence. Secondly, the paper aims at identifying a possible path of functional expansion that may account for the use of the Expletive Negation in the constructions under scrutiny. Expletive Negation is originally tied to the core concept of inequality comparison (x is more/has more y than z, where y refers to a state, a quality or property), as well as to temporal comparison (x before y) – where the second member is implicitly negated; it may then expand to other constructions such as Negative Concord and the construction of fear verbs.

Keywords: Double Negation, Equative and Negative comparison, Expletive negation, Negative concord, Fear verbs, Pragmatic strategy.

1. Introduction and Summary

More than 20 years ago, taking advantage of a stimulating article by Carlotta Viti on the equatives in RgVeda (Viti 2002), I wrote a note on the negative comparison (Ramat 2002). Since then, the literature on negative comparison (henceforth

NegComp) has experienced a real boom, including a thread of LINGTYP[1] (January 2022) on 'Negation marks adverbial clauses' with interesting examples from many different languages. Moreover, Johan van der Auwera and Chiara Gianollo, at the 55th Annual Meeting of the Societas Linguistica Europaea (Bucharest 2022), organized a workshop on "A hundred years of negative concord". Therefore, I felt myself pushed to reconsider the issue based on the many publications that offer different viewpoints, and consequently different answers.

NegComp (for instance, *Paris is **not** as big as Tokyo*) cannot be considered in isolation since it reveals deep connections with other phenomena concerning negative constructs, such as negative concord (NegConc: for instance, *I did **not never** hear such a song*) and expletive negation (EN: for instance, It. *questo discorso è più pericoloso di quel che tu **non** creda* 'this speech is more dangerous than you (***not***) believe'). Starting with the statement that "[n]egation is one of the few truly universal grammatical categories: every language seems to have some grammaticalized means to deny the truth of an ordinary declarative sentence" (Willis et al. 2013: 1), I agree with Garzonio and Poletto's conclusions (2015: 147) that "negation is not a simple element […] but a complex one, formed as the result of the interaction of several abstract processes" that have to do not only with grammatical categories but also with the cognitive and pragmatic behaviour of the speakers.

The received opinion is that negative concord (NegConc) is a separate phenomenon from expletive negation (EN), while NegComp and negation with fear verbs are traditionally assumed to be subtypes of EN. In the following sections, I shall consider the four negative constructs separately to uncover the 'red thread' uniting not only EN, NegComp, and negation with 'fear verbs', but also NegConc.

The question of the so-called 'Negative Concord', though apparently different from NegComp, has several contact points with the latter, at least from the theoretical point of view.

The main points of the negative expressions that do not concern the standard negation marked by ¬ (i.e., the so-called polarity NEG), namely, the negation of the truth of an affirmation (*p*: *Paul likes ice cream* → ¬*p*: *Paul does not like ice cream*), are Negative Concord, Negative Comparison, Expletive Negation, and Expletive Negation with Fear Verbs. The aim of the following sections is to discuss each of these points and to provide a key to understanding their interconnections. I will start from Expletive Negation as a useful point of departure.

---

[1] lingtyp@listserv.linguistlist.org

Expletive negation is dealt with in Section 2, followed by the discussion of Negative Concord in Section 3 and of Negative Comparison in Section 4. Negation with fear verbs is treated in Section 5. Finally, Section 6 discusses whether the expletive negation is always, or has always been, expletive and suggests an explanatory hypothesis for its diffusion.

2. Expletive Negation

A useful starting point to treat the problems alluded to is the so-called 'expletive negation', which, as we will see in many of the following examples, occurs quite often, particularly in non-standard language varieties. EN and its equivalents like 'vacuous', 'pleonastic', 'abusive NEG', commonly refer to the presence of a negative marker that does not give a negative sense to the utterance. For a more detailed and restrictive definition of EN, see below Jin & Koenig (2021: 41). Not much attention was traditionally paid to EN: in descriptive/prescriptive grammars, it was even disapproved of as useless and disturbing to the logic of the sentence.[2] Even recent comprehensive descriptions of Negation and its diachronic evolutions do not pay much attention to this largely and crosslinguistically diffused phenomenon; for instance, in Larrivée & Ingham's collective volume on the evolution of NEG (2011) there is no 'expletive (or pleonastic, vacuous, abusive) negation' entry in the subject index. The same holds for Mosegaard Hansen & Visconti (2014), and Miestamo (2017). On the contrary, in the ten languages considered as case studies by Willis et al. (2013), the term EN appears with reference to the Italo-Romance, (High) German,

---

[2] Delfitto et al. (2019: 58) are right in stating that EN has received less attention in the literature concerning negation. However, already in 2002, Nocentini (not quoted in Delfitto et al.) had studied the following cases in connection with the 'so-called expletive negation' in Italian: dubitative interrogatives (*mi domando se **non** ci siamo*-IND/SBJ.PRS *comportati male* 'I ask myself whether we behaved badly'); exclamatives (*che cosa **non** darei*-COND.PRS *per vederla contenta!* 'what I would (not) give in order to see her be happy!'); comparatives (*la strada è più pericolosa di quel che tu **non** creda*-SBJ.PRS 'the road is more dangerous than you believe'); 'verba timendi' constructions (*temo che **non** sia*-SBJ.PRS *vero* when meaning 'I'm afraid it is true'); and some particular constructions such as the temporal one using *finché* (*rimasero a giocare finché **non** si stufarono*-IND.PST 'they kept playing until they got tired' or '*finché **non** telefoni*-SBJ.PRS *qualcuno* 'until someone will call') and the avertives (*c'è mancato poco che **non** cadessi*-SBJ.IMPF 'I almost fell (but I didn't)'. Some of these constructions will be discussed in the following pages. To my knowledge, the most exhaustive description of the EN properties is Delfitto's chapter in the *Oxford Handbook of Negation* (Delfitto 2020).

Low German and Dutch, Brythonic Celtic, Ancient and Modern Greek, and Slavonic languages. Jin (2021: 49) states that EN

> occurs rather widely. In Jin's 1,142 language sample it occurred in 128 languages, on all continents, and in 63 genera. […] Out of the 45 languages for which both research papers and reference grammars were consulted, expletive negation was mentioned in research papers but not grammars in 27 languages, suggesting that expletive negation most likely occurs in many more languages in Jin's sample: expletive negation is a relatively widespread phenomenon and certainly not an oddity of Romance languages.

Furthermore, Jin & Koenig's survey of 722 languages reports (2021: 40) that 74 languages show examples of EN. Their list of EN triggers goes beyond the traditional list considered in the present paper and considers not only temporal operators (see (10)-(12) below) or verbs such as 'regret', 'fear' etc. (see (49)-(53) below), but also logical operator triggers such as 'impossible', 'unless', 'without'. As can be seen in the references below, some valuable monographs have been recently dedicated to this topic (see fn. 2).

However, even languages that have EN can do without it (see (4) and the Italian translation of (8)). Significantly, van der Auwera (2009) is right in considering EN a universal potentiality. He collects examples where present-day French *ne*, *ne pas* and *pas* can all be considered as expletive; as *pas* has inherent negative meaning in all contexts and registers, independently of the presence of *ne* (cf. Mosegaard Hansen & Visconti 2012: 454f.), it can be expletive, i.e., pleonastic, in non-standard sentences such as ex. (1a), instead of the standard (1b):

(1) French (Indo-European)

a. *J'imagine que je désire   plus que j'peux   **pas** obtenir*
    I imagine that I desire   more than I can   NEG   obtain
    'I imagine that I want more than I can obtain.'
b. *J'imagine que je désire plus que je **ne** peux obtenir.*

Here are some examples where EN appears in utterances having different values: comparative, as in (1), (2) and (4), fear verbs in (3) and (5), and temporal in (6) and (7). By no means is this list exhaustive.[3]

From the following examples (2)-(7), we see that EN is a NEG that does not have the function of expressing negative polarity (see, among others, Dobrushina 2021: 121):

(2) French (Indo-European)

Il   est   plus grand   que   vous **ne**   *pensez.*
He   is   bigger   than you NEG think
'He's bigger than you think.'

(3) French (Indo-European)

J'ai   peur qu'   il **ne**   *pleuve   demain*
I have fear that it NEG rains   tomorrow
'I am afraid that it will rain tomorrow.'[4]

(4) Italian (Indo-European)

Maria   ha   mangiato più   biscotti   che **(non)** *Piero.*
Maria   has   eaten   more cookies   than (NEG)   Piero
'Mary has eaten more cookies than Peter.'

(5) Russian (Indo-European)

Boj-u-š,   čto   syn **ne**   *zabole-l*
Fear-1SG-RFL   COMPL son NEG fall.ill-PST
'I am afraid that my son might get ill.'

---

[3] For a general survey on EN across the languages of the world, see Jin & Koenig (2021) with reference to the previous literature.

[4] As can be seen in the examples reported in footnote 2, the question of mood associated with EN in the complement clause is very intricate, especially in the Romance languages; however, it does not impact the very nature of EN. On the usage of indicative vs. subjunctive in the Italian historical tradition, see Nocentini 2003. As Jin & Koenig (2021: 71) have noted, only a subset of EN triggers selects the subjunctive mood, and the subjunctive can be optional. Moreover, the nature of the verb (accomplishment / resultative / event, state, etc.) plays a role in the choice of the verbal mood. In the following, I shall not deal with the moods that appear in the examples, except for a short discussion in Section 5.

(6) Neo-Aramaic (Afro-Asiatic; Khan 2016: 499)

ʾé-⁺dān   léla   ⁺vàra, |ǰə̀xcəla.|
that-time NEG.COP.3FSG enter.PROG   laugh.PROG.3FSG
'Just as she enters, she laughs.'

(7) Danish (Indo-European)

Ikke *så snart   Amsterdam- traktaten   trådte i   kraft,*
not as soon   Amsterdam   treaty-the   came   into force,
begyndte   Europa-Kommissionen …
began   EU-Commission
'No sooner had the Treaty of Amsterdam entered into force than the European
Commission began…'

Helmut Haberland (LINGTYP, 12 Jan. 2022) comments (7) as follows:

> One could translate this [scil. *Ikke så snart*] into English with 'no sooner' and one
> might ask if a difference between "no sooner" (with negation) and 'as soon as'
> (without negation) always is observed by all speakers, as subtle it may be.

When speaking of translation, it is relevant to note that EN can be used in a target
language, whereas it is not present in the source language, as in the famous
Shakespearean verse quoted in the exergon and repeated here as (8):

(8)
a. English (Indo-European)
   *There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your
   Philosophy.*
b. Italian (Indo-European)
   *Ci sono più cose in cielo e in terra, Orazio, che **non** ne sogni la tua scienza.*

In English it would be impossible to say *than aren't dreamt.*

To note that the EN is not obligatory in the Italian translation: …*che ne sogni la tua
filosofia* would be quite correct as well. Interestingly, Old Church Slavonic knew the
same optionality of the negative particle *ne,* whereas later, in the 15th-17th centuries,
the presence of *ne* with preverbal N-words became the preferred variant. Finally, the

ne accompanying N-words became almost obligatory from the 17th century on: Russian is nowadays a strict NegConc language (see Garzonio 2019, Section 5, with the corresponding diachronic examples).

This hint regarding the historical development and the uncertainty of the speaker about the presence / absence of NEG is very relevant. Generally speaking, we agree with Delfitto et al. (2019: 86) conclusion that EN has to be considered in the context of the speaker's presuppositions and implicatures (we will come back to this also in the following sections). A more detailed and restrictive definition of EN, intended to eliminate phenomena that, strictly speaking, do not belong to the EN domain, such as rhetorical questions, concessives, polite requests, etc., is offered by Jin & Koenig (2021: 41):

> The occurrence of a negator is an instance of expletive negation if (i) it is included in a syntactic dependent of a lexical item (verb, adposition, adverb, or collocation), (ii) it is triggered by the meaning of that lexical item, but (iii) it does not contribute a (logical) negation to the proposition that the syntactic dependent denotes.

The French, Italian, and Russian examples above do fit the three conditions: *J'ai peur qu' il **ne** pleuve demain* is fine, but **Je souhaite qu'il **ne** pleuve demain*, intended as 'I wish that it will rain tomorrow', does not work because of condition (ii). The real negative sentence for 'I wish that tomorrow it will **not** rain' would be *Je souhaite qu'il **ne** pleuve **pas** demain*: with fear verbs as *avoir peur* EN entails the omission of *pas* (or, more precisely, the omission of *pas* marks *ne* as EN).

As we have just seen in (3) and (5), complement clauses of verbs of fear often contain an EN. I shall come back to this topic later. There are different contexts that invite EN. Though Jin & Koenig (2021) do not include exclamatives in ENs, it is worth paying attention to sentences like (9). Greco (2019, § 2.1) notes that EN rejects 'strong' Negative Polarity Items (NPIs) such as *affatto* 'not at all':

(9)   Italian (Indo-European)

    *Che cosa   **non**   ha   (*affatto)   capito   Gianni!*

    what   **not**   has   (*not at all)   understood   John!

    'What has John understood!' (= John understood everything!).

The ***non*** in (9) has an emphasizing effect, and the sentence without ***non*** (i.e. *che cosa ha capito Gianni!*) could even mean that Gianni has totally misunderstood what has been previously talked about (on the exclamative *non,* cf. Parry 2013: 99. Delfitto et al. 2019: 66ff. speak of (9) as capturing "the universal flavor of wh-exclamatives featuring EN"). The distinction between 'strong' and 'weak' NPIs (see below, fn. 13) does not impact the very nature of EN, which is a unitary phenomenon. Moreover, the intrinsic semantics of the verb can or cannot favour an EN construction, as in the case of *souhaiter,* or Russian *starat'sja* 'to try'. Consequently, the decision to consider the presence / absence of NEG in a sentence is not a black or white question to be solved simply on the basis of syntactic criteria: the context implicatures play a decisive role in interpreting EN sentences.

Another aspect of the multifarious EN has been alluded to by Ludwig Paul (LINGTYP 12 Jan.2022) with the German sentence:

(10) German (Indo-European)

Bevor	*ich*	*das*	*Geld*	***nicht***	*gespart*	*habe,*	*kann*	*ich*	*mir*	***kein***
before	I	the	money	NEG	saved	have	can	I	to.me	**no**

Auto kaufen.
car   buy

'Before I have saved money, I can't buy a car for myself.'

This *nicht* is superfluous from a logical point of view, since the negative indefinite pronoun *kein* in the main clause already assures the global negative sense of the sentence, but in this context *nicht* has a hybrid temporal / conditional nature: 'Before / If I do not save money, I can't buy a car'. Hence, its possibility in the spoken language to extend the value of EN to different domains.

Among the EN constructions, Wälchli (2018: 149) introduces what he calls the 'opportunity.before' type, used for taking advantage of an opportunity which will not be possible anymore at some later point in time. He quotes the following Russian sentence from Iordanskaja & Mel'čuk (2009):

(11) Russian (Indo-European)

Poka	*(ja)*	***ne***	*zabyl,*	*sxodi*	*za*
as.long.as/until/**before**	(I)	**not**	forget:PST.MSG	go.after:IPFV	behind

xlebom!

bread:INS.SG

'Before I forget: go buy some bread.'[5]

Japanese has the same construction (see Kuno 1973: 155 also cited in Wälchli 2018: 150):

(12) Japanese (Japonic)

*Wasure-**nai***	***uti***	***ni***	*henzi*	*o*	*kakimasyoo*
forget-NEG	inside	to	answer	ACC	let's.write

'I will write an answer before I forget it.'[6]

In conclusion, we have seen thus far in examples (1)-(7) different usages of EN in different contexts (by no means all the possible contexts we can find in languages).

The following sections will briefly discuss some negative constructs that are dealt with in the literature and examine the relations of EN with these constructs to find a unifying ratio, the 'red thread' I allude to in the introduction.

3. Negative Concord and Embracing Construction

As is well-known, the term NegConc refers to the phenomenon according to which a negative element (a so-called 'N-word', or 'Negative Concord Item', NCI) occurs in a sentence with a negative marker 'no(t)'. The negative component is expressed twice or more, if more than one N-word is present, but the sentence is interpreted as being negated only once.[7]

Romance languages have NegConc as almost obligatory. For instance, in Rumanian a sentence such as:

---

[5] *before I don't forget* would be impossible, but *avant que je n'oublie (**pas**)* would be fine.

[6] In French we might have *avant que je n'oublie **pas***.

[7] There exists a vast literature on NegConc. For recent reports on the state of the art, see van der Auwera & Van Alsenoy (2016), Giannakidou & Zeijlstra (2017), and Breitbarth et al. (2020). For a wider, philosophical approach, see Kuhn (2022). Moser (2019) gives an exhaustive overview of NegConc in the German dialects, with a focus on Upper German. As for the cognitive and processing operations tied to NegConc, with particular attention to its acquisition by children, see Tagliani et al. (2022), with a useful summary of the previous literature.

(13) Rumanian (Indo-European)

    Niciun   student   a   citit cartea

    No   student   has   read book.the

    'No student has read the book.'

is not accepted. You have to insert the negator *nu* and say, instead

(14) Rumanian (Indo-European; see Moscati, forthcom.)

    Niciun *student* **nu** *a citit cartea*

    'No student has read the book.'

In a sense, Rum. *nu* in (14) is logically superfluous since *niciun* already gives the sentence a negative meaning, as Germ. *kein* in (10). This fact shows the (diachronic) ties between NegConc and EN, the difference being that Rum. *nu* belongs now to NegConc as a grammaticalized element, while EN is 'per se' optional (on the discussion of the logic of NegConc, see below in this section).

    The tendency to accompany negative quantifiers (often an indefinite PRO) by a predicate negator is widespread (see examples below). For instance, Russian shows NegConc in

(15) Russian (Indo-European)

    Nikto   **ničego**   **ne**   *skazal.*

    nobody   **nothing**   **not** said

    'Nobody said anything.'

which corresponds to Italian (with triple NEG as in Russian)

(16) Italian (Indo-European)

    Nessuno   **non**   *disse* **niente**

    nobody   **not**   said   **nothing**

    'Nobody said anything.'

However, (17) sounds rather emphatic, with the more standard form being

(17) Italian (Indo-European)

Nessuno disse **niente**

'**Nobody** said **nothing**.'

In Russian a sentence without NegConc (18a) is ungrammatical; the correct form is instead (18b):

(18) Russian (Indo-European)

a. *__*Nikto*__ *zdes' menja* *znaiet:*

nobody here me knows.

b. **Nikto** *zdes' menja* **ne** *znaiet*

nobody here me **not** knows

'Nobody knows me here.'

NegConc appears also in dependent clauses:

(19) Portuguese (Indo-European; Pessoa, Tabacaria).

Como **não** *fiz* *propósito* **nenhum**, *talvez* *tudo* *fosse*

since **not** I.did purpose **not.any** perhaps everything would be

nada.

nothing

'Since I acted out no purpose, perhaps then everything was nothing.'

German is a language that does not have NegConc, and a possible translation of (19) would be, with two coordinated sentences:

(20) German (Indo-European)

Allerdings *hatte ich* *mir* *nichts* *vorgenommen,* *und* *so* *war*

however had I to.me nothing proposed, and thus was

dies *alles* *vielleicht* *nichts*

this all perhaps nothing

Logicians have maintained that the meaning of (15) should be 'Everyone said something' and that there is a form-meaning mismatch. Hence, the consideration of

NEG in (15) and (16) as 'vacuous', 'pleonastic', i.e. 'expletive'. However, it is a fact that (16) and (17) are both usually meant as negative, and all NEG elements contribute to the negative (emphatic) sense of the sentence with a NegConc strategy.[8]

One hundred years ago, Jespersen noted that in Old English it was the regular idiom to say: *nan man nyste nan þing,* 'no man not-knew nothing' (Jespersen 1922: 352). This construction still survives in non-standard English; Jespersen quotes from George Eliot: *there was niver nobody else,* […] *gen* ('given') *me nothin'* (see 'Negative Concord' in Glottopedia). The construct where negative indefinite pronouns such as *nobody,* Rus. *nikto,* Span. *nadie* etc. co-occur with another indefinite negative (e.g., *nothing,* Rus. *ničego,* Span. *nada.,* etc., and also *never,* Rus. *nikogda,* Span. *nunca,* etc.)

---

[8] Exceptions such as the colloquial French type *C'est pas rien* 'It is not nothing' (= 'It is quite something'), where two NEG words give a positive meaning, are rare. See de Swart (2010: 252). In the present case, the indefinite negative *rien* is in the scope of *pas,* and consequently the two negatives produce a positive outcome according to the mentioned principle of logic that such a statement is equivalent to the denial of the second negative *rien,* as in

i. *it is not the case that John is not here* which means 'John is here'.

See the classical example of Lat. *nemo non* (Gianollo 2018: 145; Moscati, forthcom. § 4.1):

ii. *aperte   enim adulantem   nemo   non   videt* (Cic., *Lael.,*99)
    blatantly in.fact flattering:ACC   no.one:NOM   not   see:3SG
    'no one does not recognize someone who is blatantly flattering.' (i.e., everyone recognizes someone who…)
iii. **Nemo**   *ergo* **non** *miser   Prorsus nemo* (Cic., *Tusc.* 1.9)
    nobody   then **not** unhappy.
    'No one then is not unhappy. Absolutely nobody.', i.e. 'Everyone is unhappy'

Remember that Classical Latin is basically not a NegConc language but a 'double NEG language', where two negations lead to a positive statement: each additional negative element / operator contributes to the meaning of the sentence. As stated by Gianollo (2019: 245), in 'double negation languages' (like German, English, Latin, and also Homeric Greek, Gianollo 2021) two negative indefinites do not produce a NegConc but represent two effective negations whose sum results in a positive sense:

iv. German (Indo-European)
    Hans gab **keinem** *Teilnehmer* **nichts**
    Hans gave to.none participant nothing
    'Hans gave something to every participant.'

is largely diffused in languages around the world, particularly in non-standard or non-standardized varieties (see de Swart 2010; Moser 2019). Old Italian knew NegConc: […] *e comandò a' baroni che nessuno non li insegnasse spendere questo oro* (*Novellino*, 7, 33.10-11) '…and he ordered the barons that nobody should instruct them how to spend this gold'. Van der Auwera and Neuckermans (2004: 462) quote the following examples from the Flemish dialects:

(21) Flemish (Indo-European)

'*k ben* **niemand ni** *tegengekomen*

I am **nobody** NEG met

'I have not met anyone.'

with *ni* as NEG, along with the standard Dutch strategy, that is, without NegConc:

(22) Dutch (Indo-European)

'*k ben* **niemand** *tegengekomen*

I am **nobody** met

'I have not met anyone.'[9]

Indefinite pronouns are usually ¬, when used as elements of the so-called 'non-canonical NEG', i.e., in negation strategies that are pragmatically marked (see Schwenter 2006; cf. Ballarè 2019: 211).[10]

Therefore, in English we have both

(23) *Nobody has said anything*

as well as

(24) *Nobody has said nothing*

---

[9] See also the ten case studies presented in Willis et al. (2013), with the interaction between NEG and indefinites that raise NegConc.

[10] On the Romance indefinite 'N-forms' in NegConc, as in It. **Non** *ho visto* **nessun** *bambino* 'I haven't see any child', Span. **No** *tengo* **ningún** *comentario oficial sobre eso* 'I don't have any official comment on it', Port. **Não** *vou assistir a* **nenhum** *espetáculo hoje à noite.* 'This night I'm not going to see any show', etc., see, among others, Gianollo (2018).

and both have the same first-order logic representation (see de Swart 2010: 248):

(25) $\neg\exists x \neg\exists y$ Say (x,y)

As an anonymous reviewer has noted, (25) contains two negative operators, that is, it describes the double negation reading found in the standard language. However, (24) is actually used in spoken language as being equivalent to (23). Accordingly, it has to be taken as a non-standard NegConc structure. Such a meaning equivalence shows the optionality and the speaker's possible uncertainty between NegConc and double NEG: *any* is not a NEG-expression per se, cf. (26).

(26) *Is there anything I can do to help?*

The optionality and uncertainty between NegConc and double NEG reading in certain environments – as is the case in Russian for holophrastic answers to negative questions (Garzonio 2019: 177) – is very important from the diachronic point of view since, as we will see below, it can give a hint in explaining the presence of EN.

However, first we must have a look at the so-called 'embracing (or discontinuous) negation', such as in Catalan *Joan **no** menja **pas** peix*, or French *Jean **ne** mange **pas** de poisson*, 'John does not eat fish' (see Bernini & Ramat 1996: 44;49). As the following examples (29)-(35) show, embracing negation, with its two negative items, may lead to understanding why one negative element may become superfluous and hence an EN.

Embracing constructions as well as NegConc have double negative lexemes, and both are interpreted as having just one negative meaning. Note that the second negative element of the embracing NEG and NegConc is usually located in the focus position, which in short sentences such as (27) and (28) coincides with the end of the sentence. Zanuttini (1997), and subsequently Poletto (2008), have collected a large sample of this kind in Italian dialects, with the indefinite PRO closing the sentence in focus position like the NPIs:

(27) Emilian dialect (Indo-European)

> *E'*   ***n***   *m'*   *a*   *vest*   *entsun*
> SCL   **NEG**   me   has   seen   nobody
> '**Nobody** saw me.'

(28) Piedmontese (Indo-European)

> *A*   *parla*   **nen** *cun* **gnun**
>
> he   speaks   **not**   with   **nobody**
>
> 'He does not speak with anybody.'

Such a trend in underlining the negativity of the sentence at its very end is psychologically and cognitively on a par with the historical development of the embracing NEG-type, as in Fr. *ne…pas* or in Malt. *ma….-x*:[11]

(29) Maltese (Afro-Asiatic)

> *Marika ma   rat-x*   *lit-tifel*
>
> Marika   NEG   saw-NEG   the-boy
>
> 'M. did not see the boy.'

---

[11] The Malt suffixes *–x,* Arab. *–š* derive from *šayʔ* 'thing' (cf. Fr. *rien* < Lat. *rem*-ACC 'thing'). Thus, originally they were NPIs; see Bernini & Ramat 1996: 235, fn.54. Later, they became obligatory parts of the NEG construction, i.e., they grammaticalized, according to the so-called Jespersen's cycle. I do not think it necessary to explain once more the well-known 'Jespersen's Cycle' with its evolution illustrated by the classical French example: 1. *Ne* + VB → 2. *Ne* + VB + *pas* → VB + *pas*. It is enough to note that Ahern's Dissertation (2015), by using mathematical and statistical methods, has reconstructed the same evolution from Middle English to Modern English: from pre-verbal *ne* to an initially emphatic embracing *ne...not*; from embracing *ne...not* to post-verbal *not.* As for the French cycle, it must be remembered that French-based creoles use NEG + VB (= back to stage 1 of the cycle and hence ready to start a new cycle!): *mo **pa** kup* lit. 'I NEG cut', i.e. 'I don't cut' (Louisiana); *nu **pa** vle* lit. 'we NEG want', i.e. 'We don't want' (Guadeloupe), along with the more French type that has postverbal NEG: *mo kup **pa**; nu vle **pa*** (see Posner 1985: 180-83; Ramat 2006; for a critical assessment of Jespersen's cycle, see Larrivée 2011). Preverbal ***nu*** is found also in the Spanish-based creole of Palenque (see further below):

i. Palenquero (Indo-European creole; Schwegler 1991a: 173, from Friedemann & Patiño Rosselli 1983)

> *Pero   kumu **nu** ta*   *yobé ¡uu!, sé*   *mori   toito*
>
> pero   como   **no** TENSE/ASP   llover uu   TENSE/ASP   morir todito
>
> but   if   **not**   rain   uu   die   everything
>
> 'But since it doesn't rain, uuh! everything dies.'

Note that the term 'negative polarity item' used by Booij & Bettelou & Rem (2006) has nothing to do with the NPIs alluded to in this footnote. *Ghe-* is a prefix that in Middle Nederland transforms the following verb (mostly *kunnen*) into a negative polarity item.

Both *pas* and the suffix *–x* are (or were) negative polarity items whose function was originally to enhance, as postverbal minimizer objects, the negative sense of the sentence. And both can be subsumed under the label of 'multiple negation', which intensifies the negation, such as the double NEG and the NegConc.

On the other hand, Siller-Runggaldier (1985) has studied the Central Ladin (near the Austrian-Italian border) negation in sentences like

(30) Central Ladin (Indo-European)

a. Livinallongo and Fassano
    *La **no** ˈvɛŋ (ˈnɔ)*
b. Gardenese
    *La **ne** ˈveŋ (ˈnò)*
c. Badiotto
    *Ara **ne** vegn **(no)***
    'She's not coming (at all).'

She has observed (1985: 74) that the second *no* is always sentence-final (= …. NEG#) and does not refer to any particular element of the sentence, but resumes the negative value of the entire sentence. Further examples from Northern Italian dialects can be found in Poletto (2008; see, e.g., her ex. 32: ***No** ghe so ndà **no***, lit. **Not** there I.am gone **not**, i.e. 'I didn't go there' with the second *no* in focus position).

Similarly, in Afrikaans, a V2 language like Dutch and German, every negative sentence must end with the NEG *nie* (or another negative morpheme):[12]

(31) Afrikaans (Indo-European)
    *Jan   het   **nie**   geëet   **nie***
    J.   has   **not**   eaten   **not**
    'John has not eaten.'

versus Dutch *Jan heft **niet** gegeten.*

---

[12] According to Bernini (1994, § 4.2) the Afrikaans negative construction is a calque from the colonial Portuguese, once again a non-cultivated language variety. Bernini reports Valkhoff's (1972: 94) distinction between 'High' and 'Low Portuguese': "a pidginized, creolized or simplified Portuguese" used in South Africa. (On Brazilian Portuguese, see immediately below.)

If a negative sentence has a subordinated clause, the NEG *nie* is repeated at the end of the subordinated clause and refers to the main sentence, according to the general rule of *nie* in final position.

(32) Afrikaans (Indo-European; Bernini 1994, ex. 13)

Jan	*het*	***nie***	*gedink*	*[dat*	*iets*		*met*	*hom*	*sou*	*gebeur]*	***nie***
J.	has	NEG	thought	[that	something		with	him	would	happen]	NEG

'John didn't think that something could happen to him.'

In (Brazilian) Portuguese, the NEG *não* is frequently repeated at the end of the sentence and the same holds for the creoles of Palenque (Colombia) and Chocó-Spanish (Northwestern Colombia; see Schwegler 1990: 170):

(33) Brazilian Portuguese (Indo-European)

Ele	***não***	*fala*	*português*	***não***
he	NEG1	speaks	Portuguese	NEG1

'He does not speak P.'

(34) Palenquero (Indo-European creole)

I	***nu***	*ta*	*kandá*	***nu***
I	NEG1	TENSE/ASPECT	sing	NEG1

'I'm not singing (at all).'

(35) Chocó-Spanish (Indo-European)

Yo	***no***	*sé*	***no***
I	NEG1	know	NEG1

'I do not know.'

The Afrikaans ex. (32) follows exactly the same scheme (hence, the calque hypothesis referred to in fn. 12): 'NEG1…NEG1#' is valid also when a subordinate clause is inserted:

(36) Brazilian Portuguese (Indo-European)

Ele	***não***	*sabe*	*que*	*o*	*pai*	*chegou*	***não***
he	NEG1	knows	that	the	father	arrived	NEG1#

'He does not know that his father arrived.'

where the final NEG1# refers to the main sentence 'He doesn't know' and not to the subordinate clause (see Schwegler 1991a: 199). Schwegler (ibid.) has shown that there may be constructions with double NEG as in (33) or final NEG only as in

(37) Palenquero (Indo-European creole; Schwegler 1991b: 172)

E   kelé   fruta **nu**

he   want   fruit   **not**

'He doesn't want any fruit.'

There are other examples of sentence-final NEG with the Scheme NEG1 + VB + NEG1#, which is rather widespread among the languages of the world (cf. Bernini 1994 for the African languages; Ramat 2006).[13]

In examples (33)-(36), the second NEG is the repetition of the first one (NEG1…NEG1(#)), and therefore its history is different from that of NPIs such as *pas* or *goutte, mica,* etc., which originally represented the (emphatically minimizing) object of the sentence (NEG1…NEG2(#)): *non bibo guttam* 'I don't drink a drop', used in ancient French as NEG2 (see *Jeu d'Adam,*12th cent.: *Par Dieu , je n'ai goute d'argent* 'By God, I don't have a penny'); *non vado passum* 'I don't move a step'. As is well-known, (parts of these) NPIs were finally grammaticalized as a NEG marker: *Je* **ne** *vais* **pas***, je* **ne** *vois* **pas** (see fn. 11)[14].

According to the Optimality Theory, there is a contrast between the overall tendency to place the verb in the scope position of NEG (i.e., to have preverbal NEG)

---

[13] A good history of the French negation, endowed with fine examples, can be read in Grieve-Smith's Dissertation (2009). From the acquisition point of view, we may refer to Tagliani (2019; reported by Tagliani et al. 2022: 116): "double negation, which is extremely marked from both a pragmatic, prosodic and syntactic perspective, is learned by children only at a much later age, at around 7, when they start to correctly interpret and produce these marked constructions". As for the creoles, among whom the already-mentioned Palenquero, see the accurate description in Bernini (1994, Section 3.2). Note that the second NEG does not necessarily coincide with the first one. In the Portuguese-based creole of São Tomé, for instance, we find *na* (= NEG$_1$)…*fa* (= NEG$_2$) and in angular (São Tomé and Príncipe) *na* (= NEG$_1$)….. *wa* (= NEG$_2$). It has been suggested that *fa* and *wa* derive from the aboriginal languages of West Africa. But the problem is too complex and too far from the topic of the present paper. The main point remains that creoles do have embracing NEG.

[14] Greco's (2019) twofold distinction between 'strong' and 'weak' NPIs, based almost exclusively on syntactic properties, does not help very much in defining what NPIs properly are: It. *alzare un dito* 'to lift a finger' or *avere la più pallida idea* 'to have the faintest idea' are considered as 'weak-NPI'. But this makes the concept of 'NPI' very vague and potentially unlimited. For a more exhaustive definition, see Bernini & Ramat (1996: 30-34).

and to place the postverbal NEG in the focus position[15]. This contrast has caused the emergence of discontinuous NEG (= NEG…. NEG; cf. de Swart 2010: 247), both via the repetition of NEG1 or the grammaticalization of NPIs.

However, what we finally get in both cases is an embracing NEG, which is really not necessary for the negative sense of the sentence, so that one negative element can disappear: *Je vois pas* 'I don't see'. If both NEGs are maintained, this may open one of the ways leading to EN.

The repetition of NEG1 in the sentence-final position represents an afterthought strategy, the aim of which is (or was, before its grammaticalization) to enhance the negative force of the entire utterance, as in:

(38) French (Indo-European)
   Je (ne) sais pas moi, non.
   'I don't know, **nah.**'[16]

These *no, non, nah,* etc. may be considered as a kind of comment on the previous utterance; we have already seen that NEG reinforcement, both via negative PROs (i.e., NegConc) or quantifiers and via NPIs, appears frequently in non-standard varieties.[17]

This fact can easily be considered as the speaker's intention to underline the negative content of her/his utterance when s/he speaks in an informal, spontaneous but pragmatically efficient way ('emphatic negation'). And this strategy is not limited to the spontaneous face-to-face conversation. Even modern literary texts make current use of this strategy: Bernini (1994) quotes an example from Jorge Amado:

(39) Brazilian Portuguese (Indo-European)
   *"Quem vem   lá?" – disse Ferreira.   "É   homem. **Não** é bicho   **não"***
   who   comes   there? - said Ferreira.   is   man.   **Not** is animal **not**
   'Who's coming?' –said F. 'It is a man, not an animal.'

---

[15] On the focus properties of comparison (a topic we shall come back to in a moment) see Gawron 1995.

[16] Jespersen (1917: 72) had already spoken for the Port. construction *não* VB *não* of "incorporation of a post-sentential, afterthought like 'resumptive negation'"; see further, Schwegler (1990: 170) and (1991a); Ramat (2006).

[17] See further examples in Google s.v. Negative Concord, with reference to the *Yale Grammatical Diversity Project*, which offers many instances from non-standard varieties of American English, as *I don't never* have *no problems* 'I don't ever have any problems' (African American English).

To sum up what we have said thus far: whatever the origin of the doubling negative element – i.e., via the repetition of NEG1 as in Port. *não*, or via NPIs as in Fr. *pas* – the final step in the construction is more or less the obligatory grammaticalization of postverbal or sentence final NEG (i.e., '…NEG#'), as we have seen in the Afrikaans ex. (31); see also *Ek het dit **nie** gesien **nie*** lit. I have this **not** seen **not**, 'I don't have seen this'. This entails, particularly for the NPIs, the well-known progressive bleaching of their original meaning. However, this holds also for the repetition of 'NEG1#' as in Braz. Port. *não… não*. Moreover, the final NEG, which can have a holophrastic value, particularly in answers[18], has finally become a simple marker of NEG. In other words, '…NEG#' is the final grammaticalized and no longer emphatic step in the 'NEG….NEG#' emphatic construction: cf. Dutch

(40) Dutch (Indo-European)

Die	*man*	*verstáán*		*die*	*werk*	*eenvoudig*	***nie!***
that	man	understand:PRS.3SG		the	work	simply	**not**!

'That man simply does not understand the work!'

4. Negative comparison

Some of the constructions that express (negative) comparison belong to the same psychological strategy as illustrated in the previous section (see examples (26)-(29)), though the outcome is not a double NEG. Stassen (1985: 218), based on a sample of 110 languages, says there exists an "intimate relationship of the comparative construction with negation" in a large part of his language sample and that the comparison may include a negative pronoun.[19] Holthausen (1913), in a short note entitled 'Negation statt Vergleichungspartikel beim Komparativ', had already observed that comparisons such as

---

[18] On the holophrastic negative forms, see Floricic (2016). Already present in Old French: *Nel feras? – **Non***! (*Jeu d'Adam*, 171) 'Won't you do it? – No', and continued in today's spoken French: *T'as rien vu hier soir? - **Rien*** 'Did you see anything yesterday evening? - Nothing'.

[19] In her PhD thesis, Ballarè quotes (2019: 34) the following sentence twitted by the famous goalkeeper Gigi Buffon for the footballer Paulo Dybala upon his winning the 'Gazzetta dello Sport' Award: *Meriti questo premio più di **nessun** altro @gianluigibuffon !!!*. lit. You deserve such a prize more than **nobody** else, i.e., 'Nobody would deserve such a prize more than you!'

(41) Middle English (*Leg.Schott.* III1103, anno 1400)

*Sonare **na** onyman cuth thynke*

'eher als jemand denken konnte'

'sooner than anybody could [*not!] think.'

have an implicitly negative sense, which explains the presence of *na*. Holthausen refers to a previous article by Fraenkel (1911) that mentions the same construction in Sanskrit, Ancient Greek, the Slavonic languages, and Lithuanian. Holthausen quotes further English dialectal comparative forms using *nor* (< OEngl. *náwðer* < ná-*hwæðer* < I.-E. NE-KᵂO-TERO- with the negative element *ne* followed by the typical I.-E comparative suffix *–tero-*):

(42) *He's older **nor** I/me*

by Holthausen literally translated as 'er ist älter, und nicht ich' meaning 'he's older than me'.

In Modern English, *nor* is a conjunction used before the second or last in a set of negative possibilities: its etymologically negative comparative meaning has been preserved. Similarly, Klein (1980) considers EN as arising from an underlying negation. But NEG can even surface in negative comparisons, as we have seen in (42). Some languages have grammaticalized the negative strategy: "(*a* BIG) & (*b* not-BIG)" meaning '*a* is bigger than *b*'. See Classic Nahuatl (examples from Stolz & Stolz 2001: 39; cf. Andrews 1975: 350ff.):

(43) Classic Nahuatl (Aztecan)

a. *Oc achi ni-yec-tli in **amo** tehua-tl*

    still some 1SG-beautiful-ABS DET **NEG** 2SG-ABS

    'I am more beautiful than you.' (lit. I'm beautiful, you not)

b. *Tlapanahuia ic tliltic in cacalo-tl in **amo** huexolo-tl*

    surpass   with black DET raven-ABS DET **NEG** peacock-ABS

    'The raven is blacker than the peacock.' (lit. the raven surpass with blackness not the peacock).

Twenty languages in Stassen's sample (110 languages) adopt this strategy (called by Stassen 1985: 44ff. 'conjoined comparative [with] a positive-negative polarity'):

(44) Hixkaryána (Cariban)

*kaw-**ohra** naha Waraka,   kaw   naha Kaywerye*

tall-**not**   he:is W.   tall   he:is K.

'K. is taller than W.'

(45) Telugu (Dravidian)

*I- pandu   a-pandu-**kanna**   tipi-ga   undi*

this-fruit   that-fruit-**not.be**:PRS.PTCP   sweet-this is

'This fruit is sweeter than that one.' (Stassen 1985: 310)[20]

Consider now the French sentence

(46) French (Indo-European)

Je suis parti avant qu'il ne soit arrivé

 'I left before he arrived.'

As we have already seen in examples (10) and (11), *avant* ('before') establishes a temporal comparison between two states of affairs (A before B), and the sentence refers in its second part to a non-real state of affairs: at the moment of my departure he was **not yet** arrived: "il s'agit toujours d'une comparaison établie […] entre deux événements dont l'un n'existait pas encore quand l'autre s'est produit" ('we have to do with a comparison between two events, and the second one did not yet exist when the first happened', Vendryes 1950: 5; cf. Delfitto 2020, referring to Krifka 2010: "For every time t preceding A, $\neg$B(t)"). Forest (1993: 115) quotes Welsh and Berber parallels. [21]

---

[20] On the contrary, the non-comparative negative sentence has

(i) *I-pandu   tipi-di   ka-du*

   this-fruit   sweet-this   not-is   (Stassen 1985: 51)

[21] See also Lithuanian (Indo-European; Wälchli 2018:194)

(i) [*Šlovės Dievas apsireiškė mūsų tėvui Abraomui Mesopotamijoje,*]

   ***kai**   jis **dar**   **ne**buvo   persikėlęs   į   Charaną,*

   as   he **yet**   NEG.be:PST.3SG   move:RFL.PST.PA.NOM.SG.M   into   Haran

As Vendryes states, (47a) sharply contrasts with (47b):

(47) French (Indo-European)

a. *il a bien changé depuis qu'il a été malade*
    'he has really changed since he has been ill.'
b. **depuis qu'il n'ait eté malade*
    'after he was not ill.'

(47b) is impossible, since it is a fact that he's been ill.

As we will see below in Sections 5 and 6, what might appear as a series of uncorrelated observations can be reduced to a common denominator: namely, the presence of negative elements: via Negative Polarity Items in embracing negation (as in Fr. *il **ne** mange **pas***), in Negative Concord (as in (14): ***Niciun** student nu a citit cartea*), in the Expletive Negation (as in (46): *Je suis parti avant qu'il **ne** soit arrive*), and in Negative Comparison (as in (41): *sonare na ony man cuth thynke*).

An anonymous reviewer has noted that there is a difference between NegConc and embracing negation on one side and comparatives on the other since the latter do not seem to have a pragmatic need for enhancement nor to have a negative meaning. This

---

'[The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was in Mesopotamia,] before he settled in Haran.'

Old Church Slavonic uses 'before' also in negative hortatives that refer to two actions where one has to occur before the other, exactly as in the French *avant* example (43):

(ii) *Sъnidi   prěžde daže   **ne**   оumьretь   otročę   moe*
      descend:IMP.2SG   before HORT.SUB   **NEG**   die:(PFV)PRS.3SG.   son   my
      '…come down before my child dies!' (Wälchli, ibid.)

Cf. Old Italian (Bono Giamboni, *Libro*, Chap. 11, para 28):

(iii) *…e da te non si partiranno giammai (…) **infino che non** t'hanno data la vittoria*
      ' …and from you they will never separate **until/before** they will [***not**] give you the victory.'

On the Italian before-clauses with EN of the type

(iv) *Avvertila **prima** che **non** succeda qualche guaio!*
      'Warn her before some trouble does (*?**not**) happen!'

see the discussion in Delfitto et al. (2019: 61ff.). See also Wälchli's proposals in Section 6 below.

is correct as far as the pragmatic enhancement is concerned, but it does not change the fact that we have seen lot of examples, drawn from very different languages, where comparisons are or were expressed via a negative strategy (see, particularly, (42)). Therefore, we are entitled to consider negative comparative constructs along with other negative constructs, particularly when we find sentences containing temporal comparison or sentences with fear verbs, which will be discussed below (cf. examples (61) and (50), respectively).

As we have said, one of the causes that triggers the insertion of a negative form or the doubling of NEG is the pragmatic need to enhance the negative meaning of the sentence. Jin & Koenig's (2021; see Section 2) conclusion seems to be valid for all NEG types considered in this paper: the presence of affirmative sentences *p* (*John is heavier than Dik*) may lead speakers to produce ¬*p* (*John is heavier than **not** Dik*, scil. is): Sanskrit *mṛtam˙ śreyo **ná** jīvitam*" lit. 'death better **not** life', i.e., 'death is better than life', where the negative particle ***ná*** functions as a comparative particle (cf. Viti 2002: 71). In Italian we can have two possible translations: *la morte è meglio che **non** la vita*, vs. *la morte è meglio che la vita.* In the first sentence *non* is clearly EN.

Another interesting aspect of EN has to be considered. Kuteva (1998: 124ff.) cites the following Bulgarian example of 'action nearly averted':

(48) Bulgarian (Indo-European)

  Bez / Za   *malko*   ***ne***   *padnax*
  without / for   few   **NEG**   fall1:SG.AOR
  'I almost fell.'

which corresponds exactly to Ital. "per poco **non** cadevo", along with the equally possible "per poco cadevo" (that implies …*but I didn't*).

Queffélec (1988: 422ff.) has a specific section on the facultative presence of EN vs. Ø in Old French. See for instance, *Mais moct crienment qu'ele leur faille* 'but they much fear that she could fail them' vs. *Et por crienme que il **n'i** faillent / S'esvertuent de lor poeirs* 'and fearing that they [***not**] fail there, they strengthen their troops', Benoît de Sainte Maure *Chronique,* v. 34830 and 35814f., respectively.[22]

---

[22] However, utterances expressing the idea of 'failing to' do not necessarily belong to the domain of EN, pace Queffélec (1988), who quotes Marie de Fance, *Lais. Guigemar* 735f.: *Quant el l'oï, si suspira / Par un petit **ne** se pasma* 'As she heard him, she sighed so strong / that she failed to faint': actually, the dame did not faint, and consequently the NEG is not superfluous.

5. Negation with fear verbs

The above observations suggest some reflections on a particular kind of EN we have already introduced in Section 2. In fact, EN concerns not only fear verbs but also verbs such as 'to think', 'to doubt', 'to be uncertain', 'to avoid', etc. In other words when used with these kinds of verbs, EN "is a means for the speakers not to commit to the truth of what they are saying" Dobrushina (2021: 126, and cf. Grieve-Smith 2009: 166). Verbs like 'think, fear, avoid' etc., refer to a state of affairs which is possible but not considered as real by the speaker. This is the reason EN mostly co-occurs with non-indicative moods.

Moreover, an intrinsically negative meaning of the verb can make NEG quite superfluous. Jin & Koenig (2021: 56ff.) notice that many English speakers can say 'I miss not seeing you' when they really mean 'I miss seeing you': "A speaker intends to say *p*, but because the meaning of a trigger [as Fr. *regretter* 'to regret' or Engl. *miss*: P.Rt.] strongly activates ¬*p*, ¬*p* is produced instead".[23]

As for the non-indicative moods used with fear verbs, notice that EN has been found in Greek since Homeric times, with imperatives, interrogatives, conditionals, optatives, called using the hypernym 'nonveridical' or 'antiveridical':

> A veridical operator entails the truth of *p* in all worlds in the model, while a nonveridical operator expresses uncertainty [...] the class of nonveridical operators is the class of antiveridical ones, among which is negation; antiveridical operators entail the falsity of *p*. In other words, veridical operators reflect the speaker's certainty and commitment to the truth of the proposition which is uttered, whereas nonveridical operators reflect uncertainty and lack of commitment, Chatzopoulou (2014, § 3.1), and see Dobrushina's statement reported above.[24]

---

[23] Delfitto et al. (2019: 72) rightly quote Yoon (2011: 24), who states that EN triggers a likelihood scale based on the speaker's presuppositions of uncertainty or unlikelihood (see also the concept of 'veridical' discussed immediately below). In the present context, the threefold division of fear verbs introduced by Dobrushina (2021) is not relevant. She also considers structures of fear verbs that do not show NEG. On the contrary, the main topic of my paper is precisely the presence of NEG in sentences which logically would not request the presence of NEG.

[24] As for the concept of 'nonveridical', Chatzopoulou refers, among others, to Giannakidou (1998). Exceptions such as Japanese, Korean, and Russian using the indicative mood in fear-complements are mentioned by Dobrushina (2021, § 3.1).

(49) Ancient Greek (Indo-European; Il.20, v.30)

    Δείδω **μὴ** *καὶ τεῖχος ὑπὲρ μόρον ἐξαλαπάξῃ*

    I.fear **NEG** and wall against destiny destroy:3SG.AOR.SBJ.

    'I am afraid that he will destroy the wall even against the destiny.' [25]

And in standard Modern Greek:

(50) Modern Greek (Indo-European; Chatzopoulou 2014).

    Ο Γιάννης φοβάται μην αρρωστήσει.

    O Jánis fováte min arostísi

    the Janis fear:IND.3SG NEG get.sick:3SG.PRS.SBJ

    'John is afraid that he may get sick.'

The same situation occurs in Latin:

(51) Latin (Indo-European)

    Timeo **ne** *id [….] astute fecerint*

    I.fear **NEG** it astutely do:3PL.PERF.SBJ.

    'I fear that they did (***not**) it astutely.' (Cic. *Caec.* 4)

This type of construction with the 'fear verbs' ('verba timendi') was maintained in the Romance languages up to the present times (see Grieve–Smith 2009: 20):

(52) Old French (Indo-European; J. Bodel, *Jeu de St. Nicolas,* ca. 1200)

    J'ai paour qu'ele ne t'escape

    'I'm afraid she will get away from you.'

(53)

a. French (Indo-European)

    Jean a peur qu'elle **ne** *soit malade*

b. Italian (Indo-European)

    Giovanni teme che lei **non** *sia malata*

c. Portuguese (Indo-European)

    Juan teme que ela **não** *esteja doente*

    'John is afraid that she be (***not**) ill.'

---

[25] Humbert (1986, §184) calls this construct 'subjonctif d'appréhension' and gives examples from Homer, Herodotus, and Plato.

6. Expletive (?) Negation

The question mark alludes to the fact that not all (apparent) ENs are truly expletive, i.e., pleonastic or vacuous. Note first that there are contexts which implicitly invite inserting NEG: if I say 'the bar is open from nine until as long as there are clients' (translation of the Lithuanian example (38) in Wälchli 2018: 186), I am implicitly saying that that bar remains open until there are **no longer** clients: in Italian it would be *Il bar resta aperto finché **non** ci sono **più** clienti*, and not *...*finché ci sono più clienti*; in Spanish *el bar está abierto hasta que **no** hayan **más** clientes* and not *...*hasta que hayan más clientes*.

   For their part, Kehayov & Boye (2016) find that in complements of verbs of fear, the Russian complementation marker system encodes the distinction between a remotely possible threat and a more real threat: *kak* refers to a feared state of affairs portrayed as only remotely possible, while *čto* conveys a real threat. Many other fine-grained observations have been made in different studies, mainly those dedicated to a single language or a restricted language family. Thus, for instance, Greco (2020: 2 and passim) has studied an unnoticed usage of EN in Italian, namely the 'Surprise Negation Sentences' such as:

(54) Italian (Indo-European)

E	***non***	*mi*	*è*	*scesa*	*dal*	*treno*	*Maria*	*?!*
And	NEG	to.me	is	got	off.the	train	Mary	?!

'Mary (to my surprise) got off the train!'

meaning 'Mary (to my surprise) got off the train!', with strong pragmatic effects. However, the crucial point is that, concerning negative comparison (Section 3), we have already seen that EN is very frequently used in comparative constructions (cf. Stassen's statement quoted above and the examples (43)-(45)). In Old French we find (see Grieve-Smith 2009: 20):

(55) Old French (Indo-European; *Ordo Representacionis Ade*, ca.1160)

   *Es plus fresche que **n'** est rose*

   'You are fresher than a rose.'

(56) Old French (Indo-European; *Graal* 107, 25)

     *Et en cele biauté sans faille m'enorguilli un poi plus que je **ne** deusse*

     'Je fus plus orgueilleuse de ma beauté que je **n**'aurais dû' (Queffélec 1988: 421)

     'I have been prouder of my beauty than I should (***not**) have been.'

This construction is still used in Modern French, though it is possible to cancel the *ne*:

(57) French (Indo-European)

     Ce   travail est plus   difficile   que je (n')   avais imaginé

     'This work is more difficult than I (***NEG**) had thought.'

In this kind of inequality comparison, the second member (e.g., *the rose*) refers to a state of affairs which is negated (i.e., it has a nonveridical status; cf. Delfitto 2020): 'the rose is **not** fresher than the dame'; or 'the dame is fresh, the rose is **not**'; and similarly 'I did **not** imagine this work be so difficult'. In this kind of comparison, NEG is not expletive/vacuous in the same sense that 'expletive' is used in the examples examined in the previous sections (e.g., Russ. ***Poka ja ne** zabyl*, in (11)): 'before I (***not**) forget'). These constructs of inequality comparison may provide the reason the NEG marker may become the comparison marker tout court as in Sanskrit: *mṛtaṃ ́śreyo **na** jīvitam* (see above, Section 4; Viti 2002). According to Wälchli (LINGTYP, 12 Jan. 2022), "typical comparative examples with 'expletive' negation are all comparison of inequality (which strengthens my point that 'expletive' negation can have something to do with non-identity)".

    In (56) from *Graal* 107, the speaker thinks for sure that 'I should **not** have been too much proud of my beauty'. Compare this example with the following (from Jin & Koenig 2021: 61):

(58) French (Indo-European)

     *Je regrette qu'il   **ne** faille   souvent   attendre des*

     I regret that.it NEG should:3SG.SBJ often   wait   ART.INDF

     *années   avant   que l'histoire   **ne** juge   les   tyrans.*

     years   before that the.history NEG judge:3SG.SBJ the   tyrants.

     'I regret that it often should take years before history judges tyrants.'

The difference lies in the 'nonveridical' status of *je regrette qu'il ne,* etc., while *Graal* 107 refers to a statement (*m'énourguilli* 'I became proud') that reports a situation which the speaker considers to have been true in the past.

The same holds for:

(59) French (Indo-European; Jin & Koenig 2021)

Niez-vous qu'il	**ne**	*soit*-3SG.SBJ	*un*	*grand*	*artiste?*
deny-you that.he	NEG	be	a	great	artist

'Do you deny that he is (***not**) a great artist?'

The speaker is sure that the person he's speaking about is a great artist, but he thinks that his/her conversation partner has a different opinion; therefore, he uses an interrogative construction which entails a subjunctive (*soit*), typical of a nonveridical status. The speaker intends to say *p*, but the verb 'deny' triggers a ¬*p*.

The conclusion is that the presence / absence of EN depends (particularly in subordinated clauses) on the semantics of the individual lexical items (cf. Jin & Koenig 2021: 59): see the different constructs of *avoir peur* ('to be afraid') and *souhaiter* 'to wish' mentioned in Section 2. Moreover, grammatical descriptions (particularly of French) do not provide a consistent definition, particularly regarding the correctness of the usages. Some grammarians consider EN as not belonging to standard French. In fact, its usages vary in spoken language and extend to various construction types. In standard, prototypical NegConc, two or more negative elements yield a single semantic negation (see Section 3), but often a NEG element can be inserted emphasizing the negativity value of the utterance. Consequently, NegConc acquires an EN as in the Russian example quoted above as (15), ***Nikto ničego ne*** *skazal* lit. **Nobody nothing not** said i.e. 'Nobody said anything'.

As Wälchli (2018: 152) writes,

> a range of similar, but different, meanings are expressed by the same form and are treated as if they were the same thing although they are slightly different meanings, [and] cross-linguistically recurrent identity of form reflects similarity in meaning.

It seems that this applies to EN as well.

Conclusion: we can imagine that EN started in (inequality) comparisons where the second member of the comparison is implicitly negated as in the Sanskrit NEG *ná* (*mṛtaṁ śreyo ná jīvitam*) and in (55) *es plus fresche que n'est rose*; i.e., 'la rose *n'est pas* si fraîche comme tu l'es'. As already noted, Old French is particularly rich in this type (see Vendryes 1950: 5ff.):

(60) Old French (Indo-European; *Perceval* 5443)

    *Ele   vaut   miauz   que vos   **ne**   feites*

    'She is worthier than you (* NEG**)** think.'

EN extended further to the other constructs triggered by operators such as 'deny', 'unless', or 'before' that implicitly invited a (negative) comparison, as we have discussed in the previous sections, until it finally expanded to other domains such as NegConc and fear verb constructions, under the pragmatic need of the speaker to enhance the negative meaning of the sentence. Compare the Russian sentences:

(61) Russian (Indo-European; Wälchli 2018: 151)

    Poka   *stanet*   *temno,*   *ja*   *eščë*   *porabotaju*

    as.long.as/**until**   become:PFV.PRS.3SG dark:N.SG I   yet   DLM:work:PFV

    'Until it has become dark, I'll still (manage to) work a bit.'

(62) Russian (Indo-European; Wälchli 2018: 149)

    Ja porobotaju,   ***poka***   ***ne***   *stalo*   temno*

    I   DLM:work:PFV   as.long.as/until/**before**   **not**   become:PST.N.SG   dark:N.SG

    'I'll work a bit, before it (***not**) gets dark.'

In the second sentence, NEG is semantically unnecessary since the fact that it will get dark is a matter of fact, but NEG is inserted according the 'opportunity.before' scheme. Wälchli (2018) has based his study on a temporal comparison considering how a sample of languages (mainly the Baltic languages) comes to grips with the concepts 'AS LONG AS','UNTIL' and 'BEFORE'. He concludes there has been a gradual expansion of NEG and EN beyond the temporal domain. My article concludes that the origin of EN lies in inequality comparisons, but we have seen above that concepts such as 'UNTIL' and 'BEFORE' implicitly entail a comparison between two states of affairs:

consider, for example, the Latin *ante quam* ('before') where *quam* is the typical comparative form:

(63) Latin (Indo-European; Cic., *Cato Maior*, 50)
    Sex annis antequam ego natus sum
    'Six years before I was born.'

(64) Latin (Indo-European; Cic., *Cat.*, 4,20)
    nunc antequam […] ad sententiam redeo, de me pauca dicam
    'now before […] I return to the sentence, I'll say a few things about me.'

Whether we start from the temporal dimension or the predicative one (*plus fresche que*), both underline the progressive expansion of the EN from the core concept of comparison,[26] where the second member is (more or less) implicitly negated:

(65) French (Indo-european)
    *Je suis parti avant qu'il **ne** soit arrivé*
    'I left before he arrived.'

7. Final summary

This paper maintains that various negative constructions, already alluded to in the abstract, crucially obey the psychological, and hence pragmatic, need of the speaker to enhance and intensify the negative import of the sentence. Thus, we have Negative Concord where two or more negative elements yield a single semantic negation. Consequently, some negative elements in the sentence may be redundant, 'expletive'. Expletive Negation is mostly and originally found in inequality comparisons – including temporal comparisons – where the second member of the comparison is implicitly negated. Expletive Negation is also found with fear verbs that implicitly invite a negative comparison.

---

[26] In 1974, Seuren had already proposed that comparative clauses implicitly involve semantic negation, as clearly surfaces in languages such as Nahuatl (43), Hixkaryána (44), or Telugu (45). More precisely, we have to speak of comparative clauses expressing inequality: *Mary is taller than John = John is **not** as tall as Mary.*

Acknowledgments

Abbreviations

1 = 1st person	NCI(s) = Negative Concord Item(s)
3 = 3rd person	NEG = Negation
ABS = Absolute	NEG# = NEG's final position
ACC = Accusative	NEG1 = NEG's first member
AOR = Aorist	NEG2 = NEG's second member
ART = Article	NegComp = Negative Comparison
COMPL = Complementizer	NegConc = Negative Concord
COND = Conditional	NOM = Nominative
COP = Copula	NPI(s) = Negative Polarity Item(s)
DET = Determinative	PA = Active Participle
DLM = Delimitative	PERF = Perfect
EN = Expletive Negation	PFV = Perfective
F = Feminine	PRO = Pronoun
HORT = Hortative	PROG = Progressive
IMP = Imperative	PRS = Present
IMPF = Imperfect	PST = Past
IND = Indicative	PTCP = Particple
INDF = Indefinite	RFL = Reflexive
INS = Instrumental	SBJ = Subjunctive
IPFV = Imperfective	SCL = Clitic Subject
M = Masculine	SG = Singular
N = Neuter	SUB = Co-subordinating Particle

References

Ahern, Christopher A. 2015. *Cycles and Stability in Linguistic Signaling*. University of Pennsylvania (Dissertation).

---

[27] Unfortunately, I had the opportunity to look in the important book *Intorno alla negazione. Analisi di contesti negativi dalle lingue antiche al Romanzo*. Atti della giornata di studi, Roma 26 febbraio 2009, a cura di Mauro Lasagna, Anna Orlandini, Paolo Poccetti. Pisa – Roma: Serra Editore 2012, only when this article was finished and the proofs were ready.

Andrews, Richard. 1975. *Introduction to Classical Nahuatl*. Austin & London: Texas Univ. Press.

Ballarè, Silvia. 2019. *La negazione di frase: forme e funzioni. Studi di caso nel dominio italoromanzo*. Universities of Bergamo & Pavia (Doctoral Dissertation).

Bernini, Giuliano. 1994. La negazione finale di frase in afrikaans e il suo retroterra portoghese. *Quaderni del Dipart.ᵗᵒ di Linguistica e Letterature Comparate. Univ. di Bergamo* 10. 287-325.

Bernini, Giuliano & Paolo Ramat. 1996. *Negative Sentences in the Languages of Europe. A Typological Approach*. Berlin / New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Breitbarth, Anne & Christopher Lucas & David Willis (eds.). 2020. *The History of Negation in the Languages of Europe and the Mediterranean.* Volume II: *Patterns and Processes.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Booij, Geert & Los Bettelou & Margit Rem. 2006. De oorsprong van *ghe-* als negatief-polar element in het Middelnederlands. *Taal en Tongval* 58. 3-23.

Chatzopoulou, Katerina. 2014. The Greek Jespersen's Cycle: Renewal, stability and structural microelevation. In Chiara Gianollo & Agnes Jäger & Doris Penka (eds.), *Language Change at the Syntax-Semantics Interface*. 323-354. Berlin / New York: Mouton De Gruyter.

Delfitto, Denis. 2020. Expletive Negation. In Viviane Déprez & M. Teresa Espinal (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Negation*. 255-268. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Delfitto, Denis & Chiara Melloni & Maria Vender. 2019. The (en)rich(ed) meaning of expletive negation. *Evolutionary Linguistic Theory* 1(1). 57–89.

De Swart, Henriëtte. 2010. *Expression and interpretation of negation: An OT typology*. Berlin: Springer.

Dobrushina, Nina. 2021. Negation in complement clauses of fear-verbs. *Functions of language* 28(2). 121-152. https://doi.org/10.1075/fol.18056.dob.

Floricic, Franck. 2016. À propos de la négation holophrastique dans les langues romanes. In Emilia Hilgert & Silvia Palma & Pierre Frath & René Daval (eds.), *Négation et référence*. 377-399. Éditions et presses universitaires de Reims.

Forest, Robert. 1993. *Négations. Essai de syntaxe et de typologie linguistique*. Collection de la Soc. de Linguist. de Paris, vol. 77. Paris: Klincksieck

Fraenkel, Ernst. 1911. Grammatisches und Syntaktisches, IV: οὐδέ nach Komparativ im Sinne von ἤ. *Indogermanische Forschungen* 28. 236-239.

Friedemann, Nina S. de & Carlos Patiño Rosselli. 1983. *Lengua y sociedad en el Palenque de San Basilio*. Bogotà: Instituto Caro y Cuervo.

Garzonio, Jacopo. 2019. Negative Concord in Russian. An Overview. In Iliyana Krapova & Svetlana Nistratova & Luisa Ruvoletto (eds.), *Studi di linguistica slava. Nuove prospettive e metodologie di ricerca*. 175-190. Venezia: Ediz. Ca' Foscari.

Garzonio, Jacopo & Cecilia Poletto. 2015. On Preverbal Negation in Sicilian and Syntactic Parasitism. *Isogloss* 18 (Special Issue). 133-149.

Gawron, Jean Mark. 1995. Comparatives, Superlatives, and Resolution. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 18. 333-380.

Giannakidou, Anastasia. 1998. *Polarity Sensitivity as (Non)Veridical Dependency*. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: Benjamins.

Giannakidou, Anastasia & Hedde Zeijlstra. 2017. The Landscape of Negative Dependencies: Negative Concord and N-Words. In Martin Everaert & Henk van Riemsdijk (eds.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Syntax,* 2nd Edit. 1-38. Hoboken (NJ): Wiley & Sons. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-968X.00059.

Gianollo, Chiara. 2018. *Indefinites between Latin and Romance.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gianollo, Chiara. 2019. Quanta variazione è possibile nella concordanza negativa? I dati del greco classico. *CLUB. Working Papers in Linguistics* 3. 244-256.

Gianollo, Chiara. 2021. Indefinites and negation in Ancient Greek. *Journal of Historical Syntax* 5. 1-38.

Greco, Matteo. 2019. Is expletive negation a unitary phenomenon? *Lingue e linguaggio* 18(1). 25-58.

Greco, Matteo. 2020. The syntax of surprise: expletive negation and the left periphery, Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Grieve-Smith, Angus B. 2009. *The Spread of Change in French Negation.* Albuquerque, The University of New Mexico (PhD. Dissertation).

Holthausen, Ferdinand. 1913. Negation als Vergleichungspartikel beim Komparativ. *Indogermanische Forschungen* 32. 339f.

Humbert, Jean. 1986. *Syntaxe grecque.* 3me éd., Paris: Klincksieck.

Jespersen, Otto. 1917. *Negation in English and other languages.* Copenhagen: I.F. Høst & So.

Jespersen, Otto. 1922. *Language: Its Nature, Development, and Origin.* London: Allen & Unwin.

Jin, Yanwei. 2021. *Negation on your mind: A cross-linguistic and psycholinguistic study of expletive negation.* Buffalo, NY: University at Buffalo (Dissertation).

Jin, Yanwei & Jean-Pierre Koenig. 2021. A cross-linguistic study of expletive negation. *Linguistic Typology* 25(1). 39-78

Iordanskaja, Lidija & Igor Mel'čuk. 2009. Semantics of the Russian conjunction *poka* 'while, before, until'. In Tilman Berger & Markus Giger & Sybille Kurt & Imke Mendoza (eds.), *Von grammatischen Kategorien und sprachlichen Weltbildern — Die Slavia von der Sprachgeschichte bis zur Politsprache. Wiener Slawistischer Almanach.* Sonderband 73. 253-262. München / Wien: Kubon & Sagner.

Kehayov, Petar & Kasper Boye. 2016. Complementizer semantics in European languages: Overview and generalizations. In Kasper Boye & Petar Kehayov (eds.), *Complementizer Semantics in European Languages*, 793-878. Berlin / New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Khan, Geoffrey. 2016. *The Neo-Aramaic Dialect of the Assyrian Christians of Urmi.* Leiden/Boston: Brill.

Klein, Wolfgang. 1980. Some remarks on Sander's typology of elliptical coordinations. *Linguistics* 18, 871-876.

Krifka, Manfred. 2010. How to interpret "expletive" negation under *bevor* in German. In Thomas Hanneforth & Gisbert Fanselow (eds.), *Language and Logos. Studies in Theoretical and Computational Linguistics*, 214–236. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.

Kuhn, Jeremy. 2022. The dynamics of Negative Concord, *Linguistics and Philosophy* 45. 153-198.

Kuno, Susumu. 1973. *The Structure of the Japanese Language.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Kuteva, Tania. 1998. On identifying an evasive gram: Action Nearly Averted. *Studies in Language* 22. 113-160.

Larrivée, Pierre. 2011. Is there a Jespersen cycle?. In Pierre Larrivée & Richard P. Ingham (eds.), *The evolution of Negation. Beyond the Jespersen Cycle.* 165-178. Berlin / New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Lasagna, Mauro & Anna Orlandini & Paolo Poccetti (eds.). 2012. *Intorno alla negazione: analisi di contesti negativi, dalle lingue classiche al romanzo. Atti della giornata di studi, Roma, 26 febbraio 2009.* Pisa / Roma: Fabrizio Serra editore.

Miestamo, Matti. 2017. Negation. In Alexandra Aikhenvald & Robert M. W. Dixon (eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Linguistic Typology.* 405-439.

Moscati, Vincenzo (forthcom.). Negation and Polarity in the Romance languages. In *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Romance Linguistics.*

Mosegaard Hansen & Maj-Britt & Jacqueline Visconti. 2012. The evolution of negation in French and Italian: Similarities and differences. *Folia Linguistica* 46. 453-482.

Mosegaard Hansen & Maj-Britt & Jacqueline Visconti (eds.). 2014. *The Diachrony of Negation,* Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: Benjamins.

Moser, Ann-Marie. 2019. Form und Funktion der doppelten Negation in deutschen Dialekten, mit einem Schwerpunkt im Oberdeutschen. *Linguistik Online* 98(5). 179–195. https://doi.org/10.13092/lo.98.5935.

Nocentini, Alberto. 2003. La cosiddetta negazione espletiva in italiano. *Archivio Glottologico Italiano* 88. 72-90.

Parry, Mair. 2013. Negation in the history of Italo-Romance. In David Willis & Christopher Lucas & Anne Breitbarth (eds.), 2013. *The History of Negation in the Languages of Europe and the Mediterranean.* Volume I: *Case Studies.* 77-118.

Poletto, Cecilia. 2008. On negative doubling. *Quaderni di lavoro ASIT* 8. 57-84.

Posner, Rebecca. 1985. Post-verbal negation in Non-standard French: A historical and comparative view. *Romance Philology* 39. 170-197.

Queffélec, Ambroise. 1988. La négation 'explétive' en ancien français: une approche psycho-mécanique. In André Joly (ed.), *La linguistique génétique. Histoire et théories,* 419-443. Lille: Presses Univ. de Lille.

Ramat, Paolo. 2002. La comparazione negativa. *Archivio Glottologico Italiano* 87. 223-229.

Ramat, Paolo. 2006. Italian Negatives from a typological/areal point of view. In Nicola Grandi & Gabriele Iannàccaro (eds.), *Zhì. Scritti in onore di Emanuele Banfi in occasione del suo 60° compleanno,* 355-370. Cesena / Roma: Caissa Italia editore.

Schwegler, Armin. 1990. *Analyticity and Syntheticity. A Diachronic Perspective with Special Reference to Romance Languages.* Berlin / New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Schwegler, Armin. 1991a. Predicate negation in contemporary Brazilian Portuguese – A change in progress. *Orbis* 34 [1985-1987 but 1991]. 186-214.

Schwegler, Armin. 1991b. Negation in Palenquero: synchrony. *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 6. 165-214.

Schwenter, Scott A. 2006. Fine-tuning Jespersen's Cycle. In Betty J. Birner & Gregory Ward (eds.), *Drawing the boundaries of meaning: Neo-Gricean studies in pragmatics and semantics in honor of Laurence R. Horn.* 327-344. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: Benjamins.

Seuren, Pieter A. M. 1974. Negative's travels. In Pieter A. M. Seuren (ed.), *Semantic syntax*. 96–122. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Siller-Runggaldier, Heidi. 1985. La negazione nel ladino centrale. *Revue de Linguist. Romane* 48. 71-85.

Stassen, Leon. 1985. *Comparison and Universal Grammar*. London: Blackwell.

Stolz, Christel & Thomas Stolz. 2001. Hispanicized comparative constructions in indigenous languages of Austronesia and the Americas. In Klaus Zimmermann & Thomas Stolz (eds.), *Lo propio y lo ajeno en las lenguas austronésicas y amerindias*, 35-56. Frankfurt: Vervuert.

Tagliani, Marta. 2019. The Acquisition of Double Negation in Italian. In *Language Use and Linguistic Structure. Proceedings of the Olomouc Linguistics Colloquium 2018*. 109–126. Olomouc: Palacký University.

Tagliani, Marta & Maria Verder & Chiara Melloni. 2022. The Acquisition of Negation in Italian. *Languages* 7. 116-149.

Valkhoff, Marius F. 1972. *New light on Afrikaans and 'Malayo-Portuguese'*. Louvain, Peeters.

Van der Auwera, Johan. 2009. The Jespersen cycles. In Elly van Gelderen (ed.), *Cyclical change*. 35-71. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: Benjamins.

Van der Auwera, Johan & Annemie Neuckermans. 2004. Jespersen's cycle and the interaction of predicate and quantifier negation in Flemish. In Bernd Kortmann (ed.), *Dialectology meets Typology. Dialect Grammar from a Cross-Linguistic Perspective*. 453-478. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: Benjamins.

Van der Auwera, Johan & Lauren van Alsenoy. 2016. On the typology of negative concord. *Studies in Language* 40. 473–512

Vendryes, Joseph. 1950. Sur la négation abusive, *Bulletin de la Soc. de Linguist. de Paris* 46. 1-18.

Viti, Carlotta. 2002. Comparazione e individuazione: uno studio sugli equativi r̥gvedici *iva* e *ná. Archivio Glottologico Italiano* 87. 46-87.

Wälchli, Bernhard. 2018. 'As long as', 'until' and 'before' clauses: Zooming in on linguistic diversity*, Baltic Linguistics* 9. 141-236.

Willis, David & Christopher Lucas & Anne Breitbarth (eds.). 2013. *The History of Negation in the Languages of Europe and the Mediterranean*. Volume I: *Case Studies*. Oxford, Oxford University Press

Yoon, Suwon. 2011. *"Not" in the mood: The syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of evaluative negation*. University of Chicago (Doctoral dissertation).

Zanuttini, Raffaella. 1997. *Negation and Clausal Structure: A Comparative Study of Romance Languages.* New York: Oxford University Press.

CONTACT

paoram@unipv.it