

The Possible Positioning of Negation

Cecilia Poletto

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Edited by Viviane Déprez and M. Teresa Espinal

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter deals with movements of sentential negative markers from one negative position to another and puts forth the idea that there is a relation between the position of the negative marker and its etymology. It argues that negative markers target positions that are located in three areas of the clause where operator-like elements move (either quantifiers or focused or *wh*-items) or argumental clitics. It also shows that there is no link between the position of the negative marker and its standard or non-standard usage.

Keywords: quantificational positions, etymology, negative positions, Focus, functional structure

9.1. Introduction

SENTENTIAL negation is exceptional with respect to other functional elements universally found in all languages across the world, since it does not always occupy the same position in the clause. While generally elements (either auxiliaries, adverbs, or even bound morphemes) expressing semantic values related to the utterance like (different types of) modality, tense, (different types of) aspect etc. can be shown to occupy the same position in the structural tree in all languages of the world (see Cinque 1999 and subsequent work in cartography on this), sentential negation can be expressed in different languages at all levels of clausal structure, ranging from the CP to an IP-internal position dominating TP, to lower positions in the aspectual field, or even in sentence final position. Before asking the question as to why this is so, we have to determine whether sentential negation can indeed appear interspersed with any functional projection in a cartographic clausal spine, or whether there is only a subset of positions where it can surface. In this work I will discuss the possible positions where a negative marker can be found in different languages mainly basing my evidence on non-standard Romance varieties; in particular I will use data from Italian dialects,¹ which display a wide spectrum of negative markers that is similar to the (p. 136) one found in typological work and for which we can trace back the etymological origin. I will also make occasional reference to other language groups that manifest a similar distribution. I will consider both standard sentential negative markers

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using the definition of Miestamo (2005: 3), that is “the basic way(s) a language has for negating declarative verbal main clauses” as well as non-standard ones, that is those that in addition to negating the clause also add either a presupposition or a sentence implicature to the negative value. Non-standard negations are also those negative markers that are used to express focus on the negative marker itself; see van der Auwera, Vossen, and Devos (2013) for a discussion in typological terms.² The chapter is organized as follows: in section 9.2, I describe the positions that have already been identified in the literature and provide empirical tests to distinguish them. I also discuss the relation between the position of the sentential negative marker and its etymological origin, a fact that is pretty evident in a micro-comparative perspective, although once we have identified the possible basic etymological types, the same tendencies are also evident in macro-comparative work. Section 9.3 deals with a rather fundamental question, that is whether the positions where we see the negative marker are first-merge positions or whether all negative markers are first-merged in a rather low position (e.g. one located at the border of the vP) and then some of them are moved to satisfy other features the element representing negation intrinsically possesses. Section 9.4 deals with the problem of the position of non-standard negative markers and shows that there is no connection between the status (as clitic or independent XP) or the (CP, TP, Asp, or vP) position and the standard versus non-standard interpretation of the negative marker.

9.2. Positions and etymological sources

Since the seminal work done on Northern Italian dialects by Zanuttini (1997), we know that negative markers can occupy different positions. Zanuttini identifies a position higher than TP in the clitic field (and some negative markers interact with clitics, in the sense that the clitic disappears when the negative marker occurs, as is the case in Friulian) or as an independent head and argues against the clitic status of standard Italian *non* on the basis of two arguments: (a) *non* never occurs in enclisis as a pronominal clitic; (b) *non* can bear word stress, while clitics cannot. She proposes that so-called “preverbal” negative markers, or better TP negations, can thus be split into two types, those that have a clitic status (like French *ne*, as analyzed by Pollock 1989) and those that do not (like standard Italian *non*).³ Notice however that under the assumptions that all clitics head their own projection in the clitic field, we can simply consider the two types of preverbal negative markers as heading (p. 137) two distinct projections both located within the field of clitic positions, one higher and one lower than object clitics. This in turn means that the distinction between the two types of preverbal negative markers is not a clitic/tonic distinction but a distinction in terms of height of the projection.⁴

Zanuttini (1997) also identifies three further positions: The second position to be considered is the one above aspectual adverbs like ‘already/not.yet’. Although Zanuttini does not make any reference to etymology, this position is the one typically occupied by a minimizer category, of the French/Italian *pas/mica* type. The third position Zanuttini identifies is also located in the lower IP area (as defined by Cinque 1999) lower than ‘already/not.yet’ but higher than perfective aspect and adverbs like ‘always’. Again, a link to the

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etymological origin of the negative marker can be established, since the majority of the dialects that use this position have a negative marker that typically surfaces with the form of the n-word corresponding to ‘nothing’ which is the etymological origin of the German *nicht*, English *not*, and Occitan *ren*, Raetoromance *nia*. One further position for negative markers is in the VP area as a modifier of the object (like German *kein*). The last type of negative marker Zanuttini identifies is the sentence final Focus one (like Afrikaans *nie*, Brazilian Portuguese *nao*, and Milanese *no*) and proposes the following sentence structure:

(1)

[_{NegP₁} non [_{TP₁} V+Agr [_{NegP₂} mica [_{TP₂} [_{AdvP} already] [_{NegP₃} niente [_{Asp} perf. Vpast part [_{Asp} gen/progr [_{AdvP} always] [_{NegP₄} NO]]]]]]]]]]]

In Zanuttini’s survey there are two further types of negation missing. One is found in the CP area, often expressed by negative complementizers (such as Latin *ne* or the fully-fledged system of Irish negative C elements *ni*, *cen*, etc.). Some Sicilian varieties also have a C negation (see the forms *can* and *nommu*, *pemmu* discussed in Garzonio and Polletto 2015b). The other fundamental type missing are the negative determiners like German *kein-*, which is clearly integrated in the argumental structure of the verb, that is inside the vP.

The respective position of verb and negation is not a good indicator of different negations, since we know that the verb can move to different positions even in varieties that are very closely related to the ones we are dealing with. Since Cinque (1999) we know that adverbs are a much more reliable test, as they generally do not move (apart from focus, which can easily be detected, or lexical ambiguity, which can easily be eliminated by performing the test in more than one language). Apart from the position with respect to adverbs, there are other tests that can be used in Italian dialects to show the necessity of postulating more than one position for negation. I summarize in Table 9.1 the tests and the results provided by the negative markers considered by Zanuttini (1997) and systematize them for all negative marker types.

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Table 9.1. Properties of different types of negative markers

	CP Neg	NegP1	NegP2	NegP3	NegP4	VP negation
Position	Low CP	preT	preAnteriorT	pregeneric- Asp	PrevP	Sentence fi- nal
V to C inter- ference	+	+	-	-	-	-
Negative concord	+	+	+/-	-/(+)	-	+/-
Compatible with true imperatives	-	-	+/-	+	+	0
Reorders with clitics	-	+	-/(+)	-	-	-

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Table 9.1 shows that the four NegPs identified by Zanuttini behave differently not only with respect to their position in relation to adverbs (as the first row illustrates), but also (p. 138) with respect to other properties like the possibility to block V to C movement in interrogative clauses, the obligatoriness or optionality (marked here as -/+) of negative concord with n-words, the possibility of occurring in imperative clauses in which the verb has a unique imperative morphology (i.e. it is not ambiguous with any other form), and whether it must, can, or cannot reorder with clitics. Each of the four types of negative elements has a unique combination of + and - with respect to these properties, which attests that they are indeed all different. I have also added the CP and vP negations that Zanuttini does not discuss with their properties. Although Zanuttini does not discuss the etymological origin of the various negative markers, there seems to be a relation between the syntactic position they occupy and their etymological origin. In what follows I will explore the connection between position and the etymological type of negative markers.

9.3. Etymological sources

Work done by the typologists on negation has shown that sentential negation can be expressed through a number of etymologically very different elements. A survey provided in various works by Devos and van der Auwera (2013) on Bantu, van der Auwera and Vossen (2016), by Miestamo (2005), and in particular by Porcellato (2017) provides us with a general overview of the elements which can develop into sentential negation, which can be:

- (a) a negative auxiliary (see e.g. non-standard English *ain't*);
- (b) a negative copula probably originating from a cleft construction (such as the Finnish negative marker and Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, see Bar-Asher Siegal 2015a);
- (c) focus markers (e.g. the negative marker identified in Bantu by Devos and van der Auwera 2013);
- (d) a verbal or adverbial element originally related to verbs which contain a lexical negation like *lack*, *refuse*, *leave*, or *stop*;
- (e) an adverb originally related to the non-animate negative quantifier corresponding to 'nothing' (like Germanic *nicht*, *naught*, Latin *ne-oenum*, Welsh *ddim*, Occitan *res*);
- (f) elements derived from sentential tags (like Afrikaans *nie*);
- (g) minimizers (like French and Catalan *pas* or Rhaetoromance *buca* or Bantu *pa*);
- (p. 139) (h) locatives like Bantu 'there' (*ko* in the language Kongo);
- (i) possessives (e.g. Kanincin *Kwend* is a possessive pronoun typically used as a focus marker);
- (j) modality markers (as in Jamul Tiipay, a Yuman language reported in Porcellato 2017 and Sicilian *nommu*).

Negation is even often borrowed from neighboring languages, which is in itself a rather strange fact, since functional elements are generally rather resistant to borrowing. Fur-

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thermore, it is impossible that a language did not have a negative marker on its own before the borrowing happened, so one wonders what the reason for such a type of borrowing might be.⁵ Interestingly, a similar type of variation found by typological work is found inside a homogeneous dialectal area like Italy, where we find a subset of the types corresponding to those listed above:

1. Type b. i.e. a negative copula: This is the case of Sicilian *neca*, which is literally *n-è-ca*, i.e. not.is.that and which is still used as a real cleft *un è ca* in Palermitan, while in other Sicilian dialects it has already turned into a single negative marker (see Cruschina 2015),
2. Type c. The Milanese and Trentino sentence final *no* which has nowadays become the standard sentential negative marker in Milanese corresponds in origin to the sentence negative marker. In Trentino it is still used only in contexts in which negation is focused. Although at present we have no prosodic analysis of these dialects, the fact that Milanese *no* still carries phonological Focus is clearly perceivable when native speakers produce it. Zanuttini (1997) already relates this type of negative marker to Focus and Poletto and Zanuttini (2013) analyze emphatic positive and negative constructions of the type *no che non viene* (no that he comes, meaning 'he won't come indeed') in standard Italian as cases in which FocusP is occupied by the negative marker *no*.
3. Type d. This type of negative marker, related to a verb expressing a negative meaning of the type *lack, stop*, etc. found in typological work (see Porcellato 2017 for a review of the literature on a sample of over 100 languages), is represented in the Italian dialects by the negative marker *manco*, etymologically related to the verb *mancare* 'lack' and to the adjective *mancino* 'left-handed'. The form *manco* is widespread in southern Italian dialects with the value of 'not even' but has developed into the standard negative marker in Basilicata dialects like Rionero in Vulture, as shown in Garzonio and Poletto (2014).
4. Type e. Rhaetoromance *nia* and Piedmontese *nen*, Occitan *ren*, are etymologically related to the element meaning 'nothing', which is *nent* in Piedmontese and *nia* in Rhaetoromance. Occitan *ren* is clearly the counterpart of French *rien*, but is also the standard negative marker in the Occitan dialects spoken in the Western part of Piedmont.
5. Type f. The minimizer type of negation is very widespread in the Romance domain. The etymology of French *pas* and Catalan *pas* as deriving from Latin *passum* 'step' (p. 140) is well known. Further minimizer elements are spoken in northern Italian *mica, miga, mina, mia*, etc. derived from Latin *micam* 'crumble', northern Lombard *bucca, ca* corresponding to Latin *buccam*, 'morsel', and Florentine *punto* (meaning 'dot', see Garzonio and Poletto 2014).⁶
6. Some negative modality marker is found in Sicilian dialects which have a special set of modal particles similar to the ones found in the Balkan Sprachbund (see Damonte 2010 for a description of these modal elements which can be either modal IP particles or complementizers). The form of these elements is a combination of the negative marker and the modal marker which gives rise to forms like *nummu*

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(negation *nun* + modal marker *mu* with assimilation of the coda of the negative marker /n/ to the onset /m/ of the modal marker, see Damonte 2008). There is also one further case of conflation of negation and modal markers, the case of *pemmu*, where the order is modal + negation and is analyzed as a case of modality in the CP.

One might ask why some negative etymological types found across the languages of the world are not attested in the Romance domain. This might not be chance, but the effect of independent properties of these languages. For instance, since in Romance the IP is strong and always attracts the inflected verb even in languages with a relatively reduced verbal morphology like French, one would not expect to find negative auxiliaries, or modals or negative tags, since the lexical verb competes for that position. Hence, some negative types require independent properties of the languages where they occur, for instance a weak inflection.⁷

Table 9.2 shows the comparison of this structure with the different etymological origins of the negative markers.

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Table 9.2. Negative markers and their etymological origin

Position	CP negation	TP negationNegP1	Tanterior negation-NegP2	NegP3Aspectual negation	NegP4	VP Neg
Etymology	Modal forms	Clitic forms	Minimizer	n-word 'nothing'	Focus negation	Negative determiners

Note: Here I use Zanuttini's terminology in addition to mine to make the parallel to structure (1) clear.

(p. 141) **9.4. Relation between position and etymology**

Hence, it is pretty clear that postulating different positions for sentential negation in the clause is supported by rather strong empirical reasons. On the other hand, there might be a way to unify different types into a single one by postulating movement of other elements around the negative marker. In Garzonio and Poletto (2015a) we proposed that at least some sentence final elements (in particular those related to pro-sentence negation like Milanese *no* and maybe Brazilian Portuguese *nao*) are actually located in a left peripheral Focus position, which attracts the whole IP, thus reversing the order of the clause and appearing sentence finally. In this way structures where the negative marker *no* is sentence final and structures where it is sentence initial are identical modulo the spell-out of one or the other copy of the clause:

(2)

[_{H_{TP}} [non è arrivato] [_{Force_P} [_{Foc_P}no_i [_{Pol_{IP}}no_i [_{TP} . . . [_{Force_P}OP_i] [_{Force^o} che [_{Pol_{IP}}e_i non è arrivato]]]]]]]]]]

In a structure like (2), if the higher copy is spelled out, we obtain sentence final *no*; if the lower copy of the clause is spelled out, we obtain sentence initial *no*; Notice that in pragmatically marked cases, both copies of the clause can be spelled out, yielding a negation which is sandwiched between the two copies of the clause:⁸

(3)

No che non è arrivato.
no that not is arrived
'He did not!' / 'Not at all!'

(4)

Non è arrivato no.
not is arrived no
'He did not!' / 'Not at all!'

(5)

[Non è arrivato], no che [non è arrivato]
not is arrived no that not is arrived
'Of course he hasn't arrived!'

Notice that the same type of analysis can be used to explain sentence final negations of the question tag types analyzed by Biberauer (2009) for Afrikaans, who brings convincing (p. 142) evidence in favor of the idea that the sentence final *níe* is a CP element as well as sentence final Focus-related negations like Brazilian Portuguese *nao*. These negative markers are sentence final, but are actually CP elements which attract the whole clause

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to their left. An alternative analysis, which has to be evaluated on the basis of the distribution of sentence final negation in embedded clauses is to assume that there is no remnant IP but simply vP movement in front of the negative marker located in the low vP peripheral Focus position postulated by Belletti (2004) and subsequent work. The two alternatives make different predictions: the structure in (2) can only be found in main contexts; the low alternative has no relation to sentence embedding. Which of the two alternatives is valid for the various languages that present this type of negative marker remains to be evaluated on the basis of tests like embedding, since a priori both possibilities are allowed.

Although some cases of sentence final negation can be analyzed as a CP negation, it is clearly not possible to reduce all negative markers to a single position with movement of portions of the sentence (either the vP or the I or the CP) as proposed above, because the various types have other properties which differentiate them, as shown in Table 9.1. This means that we are indeed forced to postulate that negation can occur (a) in the CP domain (probably in the lower CP area dedicated to Focus, *wh*, quantifiers, and more generally operators), (b) immediately above TP (either as a clitic or as an independent morpheme), (c) in the Aspectual area either higher or lower than Tense Anterior (whose specifier is occupied by adverbs like ‘already’ in Cinque’s hierarchy) and (d) in the vP area connected to arguments (see Manzini and Savoia 2011). The lowest type of negation, that is the one internal to the vP, is not only attested by so-called negative determiners like German *kein* and Dutch *geen*⁹ but has been also postulated (see Rowlett 1998 for a discussion) to explain the historical development of French *pas*, and more generally the fact that minimizers that were originally complex nominal expressions in the object position are reanalyzed as the standard negative marker (see Garzonio 2008).¹⁰ Garzonio (2008) shows that the Old Italian minimizer *mica* was already a quantificational element of the direct object, but could also occur in positive environments. He proposes that the grammaticalization path of minimizers goes through a stage in which the minimizer is not (yet) negative, but is already a quantifier of the object. Different types of elements can be related to the CP domain, like types b, c, and f (originating from a copula stemming from a cleft structure, tags which scope over the whole CP, and focus markers of various types). The TP type can be instantiated by negative auxiliaries (like English *ain’t* and adverbials related to lexically negative verbs). The aspectual type includes elements like minimizers that are located in a low IP area where in general other quantificational elements land (see the position of universal quantifiers in Cinque’s work and Kayne’s 1975 analysis of bare quantifier positions in front of the past participle in French) and quantifier negation of the ‘nothing’ type. The fact that minimizers and quantificational negation occupy two different positions in the aspectual area should not be surprising, since each quantifier most probably has its own position in this area (see again Cinque 1999 for a distinction between universal and negative (p. 143) quantifiers).¹¹ As for the lowest area, that is the thematic one related to so-called negative determiners, it can be shown that elements preceded by *kein-* in German non-standard varieties like Bavarian, which tolerate negative concord, have to move out of their canonical object position to an area that is defined in its upper limit by the adverb meaning ‘never’ and in its lower limit by the negative

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marker itself. The following examples show that elements preceded by *kein-* need to move to the left of the negative marker *nit* in Bavarian and this is true for both direct objects, as in (6) and PPs, as in (7), while in general in German varieties non-negative PPs need not climb higher than the negative marker (as shown in (8)).

(6)

a. daß da Hons koa Buach nit glesn hot
that the H. no book(acc) not read has
'H. did not read any book'

b. *daß da Hons nit koa Buach glesn hot
that the H. not no book(acc) read has

(7)

a. daß da Hons auf koan Freind nit gwoat hot
that the H. for no friend not waited has
'H. did not wait for any friend'

b. *daß da Hons nit auf koan Freind gwoat hot

c. daß da Hons auf koan Berg nit gstiegn is
that the H. on no mountain not climbed is
'H. did not climb on any mountain'

d. *daß da Hons nit auf koan Berg gstiegn is

(8)

a. daß Hans nicht auf den Berg gestiegen ist
that H. not on the mountain climbed is
'H did not climb on the mountain'

b. daß Hans auf den Berg nicht gestiegen ist
that H. on the mountain not climbed is

If it is true that the lower type of negative markers, that is negative determiners, have to move outside the vP, this means that we can actually reduce the positions of negation to three fields: the CP field where the negative marker is located in the lower operator area, higher than TP in the clitic area, and in the aspectual field in the positions where various types of (bare) quantifiers land when they are raised from their basic position within the vP area. Interestingly, we can see a parallel between the CP and the AspP areas, since in both fields we find dedicated positions to operator-like elements: in the CP it is clear that there (p. 144) are dedicated positions to wh-items (in the Slavic languages where multiple wh-fronting is found there is most probably even more than one position) and in the AspP where quantified arguments land (see again Cinque 1999 on universal quantifiers and Kayne 1975 for French preposing of bare quantifiers to the past participle). The third area where negation occurs is that of argumental clitics, which have no quantificational import, but are still arguments. Therefore, it seems tempting to argue that negation can target positions in various areas of the clause, but all of which are related to specific

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movement. This is the case of the French loss of the higher negative marker *ne*, the case of the loss of *en/ne* in the Germanic languages, and also the cases found in the Bantu languages which have been analyzed in the typological literature by Devos and van der Auwera (2013), Devos et al. (2010), and van der Auwera and Vossen (2016) that share surprising similarities with Romance, and among others, also the fact that the new negator is a lower one, often instantiated either by a minimizer or by a focus-related item, just like in Romance. However, Garzonio and Poletto (2014) have shown that there are indeed cases of change of the negative marker without the doubling stage typical of the Jespersen Cycle, but in these cases there is no change in the position of the negative marker, just the substitution of the old negation with the new one while the two negators maintain the same properties described for TP-related negation in Table 9.2. This is expected if we think that across the clausal spine there are several positions which can host negative markers, although they are in origin per se not NegPs, but generally host different types of quantificational XPs, which have one property/feature in common with negation, as I will propose below.

The last point to be made is the following: if the negative circuit exists, we should be able to find cases of doubling of all the negative markers occurring in the various positions. It is indeed possible to find several combinations. We can pretty easily find T-negation and minimizer negation (French, Northern Italian dialects):¹⁴

(10)

A	<i>n</i>	<i>magn</i>	<i>meng</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>cherna</i>	Emilian Carpi MO
SCL	NEG1	at	NEG2	the	meat		
'I do not eat meat'							

The combination between T-negation and quantifier negation is also attested:

(11)

Dytaurela	<i>n</i>	<i>el</i>	<i>nia</i>	<i>gny</i>	Rhaetoromance S. Leonardo di Badia BZ
Yet	NEG1	is-he	NEG3	come	
'He has not come yet'					

(p. 146) The combination between T-negation and Focus negation is also attested:¹⁵

(12)

No	<i>se</i>	<i>dis</i>	<i>cosi</i>	<i>no</i>	Val di Non TN
NEG1	it	says	so	NEG4	
'We do not say so'					

The combination of minimizer and quantifier negation is also attested:

(13)

Fa pa en suli
Do not not that
'Don't do that'

(Zanuttini 1997: 46)

What is missing are combinations with the complementizer-like negation and the negative article type, which as far as I know are not reported in the literature, so the question whether all doubling possibilities are attested remains open. In section 9.6 I will concern myself with the other major question concerning negative positions, namely the possibility of movement.

9.6. Movements through the negative circuit

In this section I reconsider the various types of negative markers and try to determine (a) whether there are possible movements of negative markers from one position to the other across what can be defined as a “negative circuit” and (b) what the reason for these movements is. I will not consider the well-known phenomenon of negation raising found in sentences like ‘I do not think that John will leave’ where the negative marker is located on the main verb, but the interpretation is on the embedded verb (for this see Collins and Postal 2014 and Zeijlstra’s 2017a work) because it involves biclausal structures. I will rather try to ascertain whether it is possible for negative markers to move from one negative position to higher ones of the negative circuit inside the structure of a single clause. Structure (9) shows that the negative circuit is interspersed with other positions in the clausal spine. However, assuming the latest version of relativized minimality as discussed in Rizzi (2004), negative markers can in principle move from one position to another inside the circuit without yielding ungrammaticality provided there is no other element located in the movement path that shares features with the negative marker. There is actually empirical evidence that negative markers can move from one position to another. This is already taken for granted in Pollock’s (1989) first analysis of French negation, where the element *ne* is merged lower in the structure and then is moved to the clitic field where it (p. 147) adjoins to the left of the inflected verb. The same is true of the so-called postverbal negative marker *pas* in French, since it can occur either alone or with *ne* in front of the complementizer in purpose clauses, as illustrated in (15):

(14)

Pour pas que les pates collent
So NEG that the noodles stick

(15)

Pour ne pas que tu m’oublies
For NEG NEG that you me forget

Further evidence that minimizer negation can also occur preverbally most probably in the Focus position in the CP¹⁶ where CP-negative markers occur is provided by Italian *mica* (see Penello and Pescarini 2008 for a discussion of *mica* preposing):

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(16)

Mica ti ho detto di uscire
NEG you have told to go.out
'I did not tell you to go out'

(17)

Non ti ho mica detto di uscire
NEG you have NEG told to go.out

The same is true of other negative markers, which can occur even higher than the position where Zanuttini places them: Manzini and Savoia (2011: 108) notice that quantifier negation, usually located lower than adverbs of the *yet/already* pair, can be found higher than the adverb in some Piedmontese dialects (cf. Mobercelli, Pamparato, Montaldo).¹⁷ This clearly shows that negative elements can move inside the circuit to higher positions with respect to the one where they are usually located. Even more interesting from the theoretical point of view are those cases in which a negative marker that usually occurs in a certain position surfaces lower than that, because it shows the first merge position of the negator. This is the case for instance in Rhaetoromance of the Müstertal and Florentine (see Garzonio 2008 where minimizer negation occurs lower than the adverb *already/yes*, while in the vast majority of other dialects it occurs higher; they are represented here by the dialect of Turin).

(18)

A l'a pa già ciama Turin
He CL.has not already called

(19)

jau dormel aun bo Müstertal
I sleep yet NEG2
'I don't sleep yet'

(p. 148)

(20)

Un ha ancora dormito punto Florence
Not has yet slept not

The same is true of T negation, since it can occur lower than the inflected verb in the position where usually minimizer negation is found (i.e. higher than the adverbial pair *already/yes*):

(21)

El ciami mia non anno S. Angelo Lodigiano
Him I.call not not yet (Manzini and Savoia 2011: 27)

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These facts can only be interpreted in the following way: negative elements which usually occur in the aspectual or clitic fields are actually first merged in a lower position, and the (few) dialects where Manzini and Savoia notice that they are lower are exactly those that display the first merge position of the negative markers. We are thus forced to assume that even clitic and aspectual negators are merged lower, most probably in the vP area, and then raise higher. However, there is no evidence that the highest type of negation, the complementizer-like one located in the CP area, is actually merged lower down in any of the lower positions of the circuit. Although this is definitely the case for the element represented by a negative complementizer, there is evidence that the focus-related negative markers of the pro-sentence negation type (e.g. Brazilian Portuguese *nao*, Milanese *no*, Trentino *nɔ*, etc.) can indeed be found lower down in the structure: see Manzini and Savoia (2011: 25–6), reported below.

(22)

El dorme no semper
he sleeps not always
'He doesn't always sleep'

(Manzini and Savoia 2011: 27, 100)

This does not undermine the analysis presented in section 9.2, but simply means that even the highest type of negation that reaches the CP can be first merged lower in the structure and stop in one of the lower positions in the negative circuit. Manzini and Savoia (2011) propose that negation is actually always an argument and starts out in the object position of the verb. This means that the basic position of all negative markers is that of negative determiners in languages like German, which is located in the object DP but still has scope on the whole clause:

(23)

Ich habe kein Geld
I have no money
'I do not have money'

In theory we should find examples in different languages that all types of negative markers, including the complementizer-like one, could occur in the object position. Although the hypothesis that negation is merged in the internal argument position straightforwardly explains why negative elements target positions inside argumental fields (like whs, clitics, and quantifiers), this type of evidence that it is indeed always merged in the vP is still lacking at the moment. Furthermore, it remains to be explained (a) why some elements can (p. 149) raise higher than others, that is what triggers movement and (b) how complementizer-like negation is to be accounted for. In Poletto (2017) I explored the possibility that negation is made up of a complex set of elements and that the different types of negative markers actually express one feature inside this complex set. For instance, negative elements that are originated from Focus still tend to target Focus and elements derived from the object quantifier still move to the same quantificational position to which quantifiers move. According to this view, the “negative circuit” illustrated in (9)

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would be an epiphenomenon due to diachronic inertia: although an element can stand for the whole negative complex set of projections, it still moves to the position it used to move when it did not. This leaves the question open as to why elements like minimizers, focus, etc. can be used to mark negation, and the only possible solution I see is that they must share some quantificational features still to be exactly pinned down through semantics (see Poletto 2017 for a discussion of this).

9.7. Standard and non-standard negation

The last question we deal with is whether standard and non-standard negation occupy different positions, or whether there is a unique dedicated position for specific pragmatic types. In the introduction I adopted the definition of standard negation provided by Miestamo (2005) and used in subsequent typological work on negative markers. Non-standard negative markers are defined as those that are not the standard, that is all those that have an additional pragmatic import in addition to purely negating the clause in which they occur. Several authors have indeed noticed that some negative markers have a special pragmatic import in addition to the negative meaning. This is particularly relevant with respect to the Jespersen Cycle where the “new negator” is often added first in pragmatically marked contexts and only later on is reanalyzed as the standard negator (see van der Auwera 2010b for a discussion on this). At present, I do not think that there exists a detailed cross-linguistic survey of all the possible pragmatic imports non-standard negation can convey. Very often the pragmatics is rather complex and it is not easy to compare between languages. If we consider as non-standard negation all the negative markers that convey any sort of additional pragmatic value with respect to the standard one of negating the clause, we might conceive that pragmatics is directly inserted into some (maybe left peripheral) position. Consider for instance the Italian so-called presuppositional negation first identified by Cinque (1976) for colloquial Italian. The pragmatic import it expresses has to do with a sentence implicature, so the distinction between (24) and (25) is not in terms of truth value, the second simply implies that the speaker is not coming, contrary to the expectation of the addressee:

(24)

Non vengo
Not come
'I am not coming'

(p. 150)

(25)

Non vengo mica
Not come not
'Contrary to what you seem to think, I am not coming'

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Zanuttini (1997) notices that standard French also uses *pas* for the same presuppositional use, and since French *pas* and Italian *mica* occupy the same position, proposes that there is a position for presuppositional negation. However, recent work on resumptive sentence final Brazilian Portuguese *nao* shows that the same presuppositional value (and the same distributional restrictions) apply to an element which is clearly not in the same position; this *nao* is sentence final and belongs to the etymological type of Focus negation (see above Table 9.2).¹⁸

(26)

A: Voce gustou da palestra da Maria?
You like of.the talk of Maria?
'Did you like Maria's talk?

B: Eu nao fui nao
I not went not
'I didn't go.'

(Schwenter 2005: 1449)

Therefore, we assume that there exists no direct link between the position of the negative marker in the clause and its status as standard or non-standard negation. Non-standard negative markers are either the "new negative markers" which start out the JC or the old ones, but we also find cases in which the same element can have or not have a non-standard interpretation. However, as noted by one anonymous reviewer, clitic negation is generally not used in cases of non-standard negation. This might be an epiphenomenon due to the fact that clitic negation is the oldest negative marker in this area, and as such it is the standard, but definitely requires further investigation of those dialects which are losing the preverbal negative marker to see whether it is really the case that clitic negation does not lend itself to special interpretations. Furthermore, it is possible to pile up more than one in the clause, if they have a different pragmatic value. So the following sentence in Venetian has three negative markers, the standard one *no*, the presuppositional one *miga* (roughly corresponding to colloquial Italian *mica*), and the focus one *no* which expresses a Focus on the negative marker itself (which occupies the same position as Brazilian Portuguese *nao* and has the same etymology just discussed). Since the pragmatics of the two negative markers is compatible, they can be combined.

(27)

No la go miga magnada NO!
Not it have not eaten not
'I did not eat it'

Venice

The occurrence of several negative markers is also reported by the typological literature (see Porcellato 2017 on this) both with standard and non-standard negative markers.

(p. 151)

(28)

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ka-zeby-áandi khúumbu ya ngúdy-áni kó

NEG1.ISC-know-NEG3 9.name 9.CONN 1.mother-POSS.1SG NEG2

'he does not know the name of my mother' (Suundi H16b, Baka 1998: fieldnotes)

We conclude by noticing that pragmatics and syntax do not match each other in such a simple way, at least for where negation is concerned.

9.8. Concluding remarks

In the previous sections I have first shown that negation is special with respect to other functional elements, since it can occur at different heights in the sentence structure even in a syntactically rather homogeneous domain as the Italian dialects. I have shown that the position of different negative markers can occur in the CP, immediately higher than the TP and in the aspectual area. I have also shown that their position is related to their etymological types and reflects the process of grammaticalization they have undergone: for instance, the negative markers derived from a quantifier occur in the same position in the clause in which quantificational elements occur, negative markers derived from Focus elements occur in the same position in the clause in which Focus occurs, and so on. The reason why there is a correspondence between etymology and syntactic position is due to the fact that negative markers maintain the same original position they had when they were not the standard negative marker. I have also shown that there is a minority of cases in which we can have movement inside the negative circuit, that is lower negations can move to higher positions. Since we also find sporadic cases of higher negative elements that occur very low in the sentence structure, I have considered the hypothesis that negation starts out in the internal argument position, which however requires further empirical support. I have also shown that there is no link between the interpretation as standard/non-standard negation and a single position in the clause.

We conclude that the observation that negation can occur in various positions, while other functional elements do not, is due to the fact that negative markers maintain the position they had when they were not negative (yet).

The conclusion of this chapter could be used to dismiss the variable position of negation as an epiphenomenon due to historical facts. I think that there is more to it, and that negation can occur in so many positions and have so many etymological sources because it has a complex internal structure which at least in part reflects the features of the elements used to become negative markers. I leave the development of this idea to future research.

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ Traditional dialectologists (see e.g. Rohlfs 1969) refer to the variation found in Italian dialects as the "small Romania," since the span of variation found in Italian dialects is similar to the one found in the whole Romance linguistic domain. The use of Italian dialects also justifies itself in the sense discussed by Kayne (2013): a cohesive linguistic do-

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main allows us to see linguistic phenomena under a magnifying lens and make our observations as similar as possible to a controlled scientific experiment where other variables except the one we are investigating are controlled for. This is so because the grammar of genetically closely related dialects is more similar than that of languages that are very different both from the typological and from the genetic point of view.

(²) For a discussion on the definition of standard negation see Miestamo (2005) and van der Auwera, Vossen, and Devos (2013).

(³) Garzonio and Poletto (2014) argue for the idea that preverbal negative markers can become clitic and give rise to the Jespersen cycle only when several factors are met. One of them is the bi-morphemic status of the negative marker.

(⁴) I refer here to Zanuttini (1997) for the examples of negative markers that interact either with subject or with object clitics.

(⁵) Porcellato (2017) reports borrowing of negation in grammars of Austronesian languages like Roglai, Rengao, and Biak, and in Abun, Western Papua.

(⁶) Since in Romance the IP is strong and attracts the verb, it is possible that at least some of these types that are related to an independent realization of inflection, like negative auxiliaries, modals, or negative tags, cannot be found because they are incompatible with a strong Infl.

(⁷) One further problem concerns the reason why etymological negative markers can have so many etymological sources as shown above. In Poletto (2012) and (2018) I have argued in favor of the idea that there is a link between the amount of etymological variation we find in a certain genetically and grammatically homogeneous area and the amount of semantic and therefore morpho-syntactic features a given functional element is endowed with. In other words, the more an element is complex the more its etymology will vary. The case of negation is rather clear: since it can have so many different etymological origins even within a homogenous domain like the Italian dialects, it must have several features (see Poletto 2017 for a discussion of these features).

(⁸) I refer to Garzonio and Poletto (2015b) for the tests that show that the distribution of sentence initial and sentence final *no* is the same. We examined compatibility with other left peripheral elements like Focus, Left Dislocation, Scene setting adverbs, other adverbial modifiers and Hanging Topics, and the (im)possibility to be embedded.

(⁹) Although these are determiners, the meaning is clearly that of sentential negation, so these elements are to be considered as sentential negation.

(¹⁰) The fact that negation can be found in the low argumental portion of the sentence structure is not incompatible with the fact that negation can be realized as a clitic, since clitics generally represent arguments and as such XPs, although they are moved as heads. The same occurs with negation.

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(¹¹) As for locative and possessives, I do not have a real answer, but I surmise that some of these elements might also be related to Focus. Devos and van der Auwera 2013 mention that the class of possessives used for negation in Bantu is the same that can signal Focus. I will leave these cases, which do not occur in Italian dialects, to future research.

(¹²) Notice that in the aspectual field there is more than one NegP because the two types of negative markers correspond to different types of quantifiers, since minimizers, located above T anteriorP, are existential, while the lower NegP corresponds to a negative quantifier. See section 9.3 for more discussion.

(¹³) It is more surprising that negation targets the clitic field, where elements are intrinsically definite and have no quantificational properties. We leave this problem open since it definitely requires semantic considerations that are beyond the scope of the present chapter.

(¹⁴) For Bantu see Devos and van der Auwera (2013).

(¹⁵) This is rather frequent in the Trentino area, although this type of negation is going back to a system where only preverbal negation is found, or focus negation is only used in special contexts, and is known to have existed in Milanese in the sixteenth century (see Vai 1996), which has nowadays only Focus negation.

(¹⁶) Since the preverbal position of *mica* is incompatible with the presence of *non*, one might think that the movement of *mica* is to the TP position of *non*. Apart from the fact that *non* is in a clitic position, and *mica* does not have the typical properties of a clitic, there are other reasons why I think that this is the CP Focus-like position and not the TP one.

(¹⁷) Manzini and Savoia do not actually provide any complete examples of this, just a list of dialects which allow for the order: quantifier negation, *already*.

(¹⁸) See also the discussion found in Haegeman and Breitbarth (2015), who claim that Flemish *en* only partially overlaps with presuppositional negators but contrary to them (a) it is not restricted to main contexts and (b) it has no negative import whatsoever.

Cecilia Poletto

Cecilia Poletto is full Professor in the Department of Linguistic and Literary Studies at the University of Padua (part-time) and full Professor of Italian and French linguistics at the institute for Romance studies at the University of Frankfurt am Main (part-time). She is also an associate member at the Institute of Cognitive Sciences and Technologies—ISTC—(Padua). Her research interests include formal morpho-syntax of Romance varieties, in particular the Italian and French ones, and including non-standard varieties. She is currently a member of the steering committee for the graduate school in linguistic, phonological, and literary studies of the University of Padua,

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in charge of the Master in Linguistics, and a member of the DFG steering committee “Nominal Modification” at the Goethe University Frankfurt.