

On Negation splitting and doubling

1. Introduction

The aim of this talk is to provide a general framework to treat phenomena found in the Northern Italian dialects (and French). The following problems will be taken into account:

The empirical field

- Syntactic distribution of negative markers along the lines of Zanuttini (1997)'s work

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

Why can elements that are located in different position always express the same value for “sentential negation”? Shouldn't NegP have only one position (or appear in any position) in the sentence?

- Correspondence between the syntactic distribution and the etymological type

Ex: all cases of NegP2 are originally words indicating “small quantity”: crumble, step, morsel etc.

- Doubling and tripling in some dialects (and no doubling/tripling in others).

Ex: (2) No la go miga magnada NO!
 Not it have not eaten not ‘ I did not eat it’

Nonetheless, we do not have a double negation reading, but a negative concord one. Notice that negative doubling is different from negative concord with quantifiers, as it occurs in different sets of dialects (for instance Milanese tolerates negative doubling but not negative concord)

- “Noise in the data”: each generalization has undesired “exceptions”, which we should capture too

a) “Ghosts”: a negative marker of one type which behaves like a negative marker of another type

Ex: Preverbal negation acting as the postverbal one: usually preverbal negation does not allow for subject inversion in main interrogatives clauses:

(3) *No vienlo? Padova
 Not comes-he?
 ‘Isn't he coming?’

If a postverbal marker is present, inversion is possible:

- (4) No vienlo miga? Padova
 Not comes-he not?
 ‘Isn’t he coming?’

In some Friulian dialects no postverbal marker is present and yet inversion is possible:

- (5) No la comprestu? Cividale
 Not it buy-you?
 ‘Dont you buy it?’

b) “Wrong position”:

- (6) Nol lo ga fato NO
 Not-he it has done NO
 (7) NO che nol lo ga fato
 NO that not-he it has done

The hypothesis

- I try to apply the cartographic approach to NegP and assume that NegP is originally located very low in the sentence structure (probably on the VP border) and has an internal layering made up by several FPs with different features. How many FPs there are in the NegP and what they encode is an empirical question.
- There is a parallel between the internal structure of NegP and clausal structure in the sense that NegP and IP contain goals and probes for the same features
- If each FP internal to NegP has a structural counterpart in the clause, checking of the FPs located in the structure of the clause is ensured by movement of negative markers.

2. The distribution of negative markers

Zanuttini (1997) provides evidence for at least four positions for negative markers (see (1)) in the clause structure:

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

She establishes the position of the negative markers with respect to the position of the verb and to (low) adverbs located in TPs and AspPs following Cinque’s hierarchy of adverbs.

Features of the negative markers

NEGPI

- They are always heads and often also display clitic properties (interspersed with object/subject clitics).

- They are always in front of the inflected verb.
- In all dialects, they are obligatory with postverbal negative quantifiers (sometimes also with preverbal negative quantifiers).¹
- They cannot occur with true imperative forms
- They block verb movement

- (9)
- | | |
|---|---|
| a | No sai <i>Cencenighe Agordino (BL)</i>
(I) Not know
'I do not know' |
| b | No 'l è lugà nogugn
No the is come nobody
'No one came' |
| c | Nisun no vien più casa mia <i>Venice</i>
Nobody not comes more my home
'No one ever comes to my place' |
| d | *no va
not go+imperative
'Don't go' |
| e | *No vienlo? <i>Padova</i>
Not comes-he?
'Isn't he coming?' |

NEGP2

- They are also often phonologically reduced, but they are probably weak pronouns, not clitics.
- Items occurring in this position originally indicated a small quantity, (the derive from the word meaning "step" *pa*, "crumble" *brisa*, *mina/miga/minga*, "morsel" *bucca* .
- They are located after the inflected verb but in front of the past participle.
- Negative concord is not obligatory but possible with postverbal negative quantifiers.
- They do not block verb movement
- They can be used with true imperative forms:

- (10)
- | | |
|---|---|
| a | Al sei bic <i>Livigno (SO)</i>
I-it know not |
|---|---|

¹ Note incidentally that the case in which the preverbal negative marker cooccurs with a preverbal negative quantifier is also a counterexample to the empirical generalization that the head is always higher than the XP, in this case the negative quantifier precedes the negative marker.

- ‘He does not know’
- b A n è (**mina**) riva nisun Loreo (RO)
 It not is not come nobody
 ‘No one came’
- c Magnelo mina? S. Anna (VE)
 Eat-it not
 ‘Isn’t he eating?’
- Movat mia! S. Antonino (CH)
 Move not!
 ‘Don’t move!’

NEGP3

- Elements located in NegP3 originates from the element meaning “nothing”
- They are located lower than adverbs like “already” but higher than “always”.
- They can occur with postverbal negative quantifiers (although with some restrictions)
- They occur in imperative clauses
- They are always specifiers and can move to SpecCP and be followed by a complementizer

- (11) a A l’avia già nen volu ‘ntlura *Piemontese* (Zanuttini (1997) 3:(29))
 He it had already not wanted then
 Already at that time he had not wanted to
- b A l’ha nen dine sempre tut (Zanuttini (1997) 3: (32))
 He he has not said-us always everything
 “He did not always tell us all”
- c A parla nen cun gnun (Zanuttini (1997) 3: (55))
 He speaks not with nobody
 ‘he does not speak with anybody’
- d Parla nen! (Zanuttini (1997) 4: (20b))
 Talk not!
 ‘Do not talk’
- e par nen ch’a s stofeissa
 so not that he himself get-tired
 ‘in order for him not to get tired’

NEGP4

- Elements located in Neg4 correspond to the same morpheme that is used for pro-sentence negation
- They are located at the end of the clause

- They are always specifiers, and they generally bear focus stress.
- They cannot occur with postverbal negative quantifiers (when used alone).
- They can be used in imperative forms:

- (12)
- | | |
|---|---|
| a | Su no <i>Milan</i>
(I) know not
‘I do not know’ |
| b | L'è rivà nisun
It is come nobody
‘No one came’ |
| c | Piof pu
Rains more
‘It stopped raining’ |
| d | L'a mangià no
he has eaten not
‘He is not eating’ |
| e | Vusa no!
Shout+imp not
‘Don’t shout’ |

Looking through 150 dialects in the ASIS data base, one notices the following descriptive generalization:

(13) each negative marker singled out by Zanuttini corresponds to an “etymological type” in the sense that all elements found in a given position have developed from homogeneous classes

a) NegP1: preverbal *no(n)* (which can be either a clitic or an independent head) which all derives from Latin *non* (which was originally a complex item)

b) NegP2: the postverbal negative class instantiated of (Northern) standard Italian *mica*. In this class all elements derive from polarity items indicating a minimal quantity like French *pas* (Lat. *passum* ‘step’) Emilian *brisa* ‘crumble’, Lombard *minga* ‘small round type of bread’, Northern Lombard *bucca* ‘morsel’

c) NegP3: the class of postverbal negative markers including Piedmontese *nen* and Rhaetoromance *nia* derives from (and in some dialects still are homophonous with) the negative quantifier corresponding to ‘nothing’

d) NegP4: the postverbal negative marker *NO*, which corresponds to pro-CP negation in all dialects that have this form.

- a) why do we have four types and not three or five, or just one?
 - b) why just these etymological types and not others?
 - c) why are those types distributed in the way they are in the structure of the clause? One could postulate out that either there is only one position for sentential negation or that each FP of the clausal structure hosts a NegP at the top. In the latter case, NegP is then interpreted in a given position (perhaps in CP?) in all languages
- The basic idea that should account for at least part of the numerous data seen above is a development of the Pollock's (1989) idea that NegP is complex. Pollock places *ne* in the head and *pas* in the Spec position of a NegP, thus assuming that NegP has an internal layering. I would like to push this idea even further and assume that NegP has an internal functional structure and I would like to use etymological data to identify what the structure of NegP is. The second ingredient of the analysis is the assumption that the structure of the clause contains NegP positions which corresponds to those located in the internal structure of the NegP. They need checking by the negative marker(s).
 - We have seen that there can be four types of negative markers:
 - a) a negative QP corresponding to 'nothing'
 - b) a scalar element corresponding to a polarity item indicating 'a small quantity'
 - c) a "real negative" head
 - d) a negative CP marker corresponding to pro CP negation which is related to Focus
 - I assume that the internal layering of NegP is the following:

(14) [NEGP [Focus/Operator NO [PolP non [ScalarQ mica [QP niente [ExistentialP]]]

NegP is not a simple syntactic projection, but needs various layers: an existential one, a scalar one, a polarity projection and an operator of some sort.

Each of these four types encodes a syntactic projection within NegP

Why is NO the highest projection if we find it at the end of the clause?

Zanuttini (1997) already reports that NO is related to Focus in Pavese. Notice that NO can occur either at the end of the clause (in some dialects even after an embedded clause) or at the beginning

- (15) No ghe so ndà NO
Not there are gone NOT 'I did not go there'
- (16) NO che no ghe so ndà
NOT that not there are gone 'I did not go there'

Notice that when NO occurs at the beginning, a complementizer is present, while this is not the case if it occurs at the end.

I will follow, here, Kayne's recent intuition that a non-overt element to a phase-edge (in our case the complementizer) corresponds to syntactic movement of the whole CP and analyze the distinction between (15) and (16) in terms of clausal movement to a SpecTopic position located in the CP layer and higher than the Focus field.

- (17) [CPTopic [FinP no ghe so ndà] [Focus/OperatorP NO] [FinP [IP ~~no ghe so ndà~~]]]
- (18) [Focus/OperatorP NO [FinP che [IP no ghe so ndà]]]

In (17) the edge of the phase is not realized, in (18) it is.

Therefore, NO is found either at the beginning or at the end of the clause but it is always negation in CP.

3. Doubling and tripling

- I propose that negative doubling and tripling originates as the realization of different FPs internal to NegP.²
- Virtually any combination of the various elements should be attested in the area

3.1 Standard Negation

The geographical distribution of standard negation (i.e. non presuppositional negation) is the following:

In the Eastern Area standard negation is provided by a preverbal negative marker of the *no(n)* type. This area includes Veneto, Friuli, Trentino and partly Romagnolo, and the Rhaetoromance dialects of the Fassa Valley and Cortina.

In the Western area standard negation is provided by a postverbal negative marker of different types (in Lombard NegP4, in Piedmont NegP3) except for the Ligurian area which pattern with the East.

Emilian dialects display doubling negation with a combination of NegP1 and NegP2 of the standard French type, (which is also a stage attested in all dialects which nowadays have postverbal negation (this confirms Jespersen's cycle). Some Rhaetoromance dialects (Badia and Gardena) also display discontinuous negation but of the type NegP1-NegP3 type. The NegP1 NegP4 combination is known to be attested through the history of Milanese (in the XVI century, see Vai (1996))

Hence, there is no real homogeneous trend from East to West, although this is the rough situation at first sight

3.2 Non standard negation

If we consider presuppositional negation the picture changes. Even dialects that are considered to have only preverbal negation display all the types of negation, in special pragmatic contexts (which I will not analyze here).³

I will illustrate the point with Veneto dialects:

NegP1 with any other

- | | | | |
|------|---|--|---------------|
| (19) | a | Nol me piaze
Not-it me likes 'I do not like it' | |
| | b | Nol me piaze miga
Not-it me likes not | NegP1 + NegP2 |
| | c | Nol me piaze gninte
Not-it me likes nothing | NegP1 + NegP3 |

• ² I will make use of the distinction between standard negation and presuppositional negation, meaning by that negative markers that can only occur under certain pragmatic conditions related to the speakers or addressee expectations.

³ Incidentally, non standard negation is a key into Jespersen's cycle

d Nol me piaze NO
Not-it me likes no

NegP1 + NegP4

The sentences in (19) show that doubling is always possible with preverbal negation with all other negation types.

The combination of NegP2 with NegP4 is also attested:

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

And the one between NegP3 and NegP4 is also possible.

- (21) No-l me piaze gninte NO!
Not-it me likes not NOT 'I do not like it at all'

Notice however that in Veneto, the combination of NegP2 and NegP3 is not possible, probably due to different presuppositional values:

- (22) *Nol me piaze miga gninte
Not-it me likes not NOT

Therefore, Veneto dialects do not display quadrupling cases:

- (23) *Nol me piaze miga gninte NO
Not-it me likes not not NOT

But notice that in Piedmontese, where negP3 is standard Negation and not a presuppositional one, the combination of NegP3 and NegP2 is indeed possible, so there is no a priori ban against this combination.

- (24) Fa pa nen sulì (Zanuttini (1997:46))
Do not not that 'Don't do that'

Summing up

- All logic combinations of different NegP types are attested
- The combination between NegP2 (the polarity type) with NegP3 (the Negative QP type) is only attested in those dialects in which NegP3 has lost its presuppositional value
- doubling is possible only when the presuppositional values of the two negative markers do not clash.

3.3 *NegP checking and splitting*

How does the checking of the various features located in the IP happen?

- Where is Negation merged in the IP?

In the dialects in which NegP3 is not the standard negative marker but a presuppositional one, NegP3 'nothing' seems prima facie incompatible with a direct object of transitive verbs and with some inaccusative subjects:

- (25)
- a Nol lavora gnente
Not-he works nothing
 - b Nol dorme gnente
Not-he sleeps nothing
 - c *Nol leze gnente i libri
Not-he reads nothing the books
 - d *Nol magna gnente la me torta
Not-he eats nothing my cake
 - e *Nol riva gnente
Not-he arrives nothing
 - f No la crese gnente
Not she grows nothing
 - g %Nol salta gnente
Not-he jumps nothing
*Not-it explodes nothing
 - h %Nol impara gnente
He learns nothing (only object interpretation)

Notice however, that the Aktionsart of the verb required by *nothing* is one of atelicity, which is incompatible with accomplishments and achievements.

This phenomenon is also found in other languages, notably, English and German also display the following pattern: (examples from Bayer (2008)).

- (26)
- a I have slept *nothing* for I've been thinking of you.
 - b Christians have not stood up for evil. They have sat back and protested *nothing*.
 - c als gehorten sie nichts zur kirchen
as belonged they nothing to-the church
 - d Karl hat nichts gearbeitet
Karl has nothing worked
 - e Da wird nichts gelogen
there becomes nothing lied
„There will/must be no lying“
 - f Von Freitag auf Samstag hab ich aber fast nichts geschlafen
from Friday to Saturday have I however almost nothing slept
„However, between Friday and Saturday I hardly slept“
 - g *Der wird ihn nichts umbringen,
he will him nothing kill
 - h Ik heb bijna niets geslapen, ...
I have almost nothing slept
„I have almost not slept at all“

Bayer assumes that *nothing* is merged in the object position even when it is an adverb and is licensed by a null NegP. However, this does not account for

- a) the distinction between elements like *nothing* and minimizers like *mica*,
- b) the fact that among NQs only *nothing* works like this and no NQs like *nobody*, etc.

- c) the position of nothing once it has developed into a real negative marker: at this point it should occupy the position of the null/overt NegP, hence in Italian dialects NegP1, but this is not true, because it is still located very low in the sentence structure.
- d) the fact that nothing is incompatible with intransitive accomplishments

The connection between nothings as an object and nothing as an adverb is the following: nothing always occupies a position where Telic/Atelic Aktionsart is checked.

(27) [TelicP [NegP [QP no[ExistentialP thing]] [VP [V' V°]]]

- When it is an object, it raises there
- When it is an adverb it is merge there

The incompatibility with an object is only found when the object triggers telicity:

(28) *Nol leze gnente i libri
 Not-he reads nothing the books
 Nol leze gnente libri, solo giornali
 Not-he reads nothing books, only newspapers

Therefore, nothing cannot be merged in the object position when it is used as an adverb

Why is nothing so special? We do not find cases of “nobody” working like this.

I think ‘nothing’ is the negative counterpart of elements like French *que* in the wh realm: it is the semantically (and syntactically) barest operator, in the sense that it has the smallest set of features and its lexical restrictor is virtually non existent.

Nothing is formed by Negation, a QP and an existential elements inside, which provides atelicity. In those dialects where nothing does not interfere with telicity and it corresponds to standard negation, the existential feature has been bleached.

The position inside NegP are the counterpart of those where we find the various negative markers in the IP

(29) a [NEGP [Focus/Operator NO [PolP non [ScalarQ mica [QP niente [ExistentialP]]]

 b [ForceP/CP [Topic [Focus/Operator NO [FinP [IP [PolP non [TP V+infl [ScalarQ mica [TP2 already
 [QP niente [Asp perf] [VP]]]]]]]]]]]

Each negative marker checks by movement or by agree the corresponding feature in the IP/CP domain

Why do we need this correspondence between sentence structure and NegP? One could simply assume that the various elements are generated where they occur and there is no NegP.

- a) There is only one NegP in the clause, no double negation reading occurs
- b) why do only these elements express negation and not others? If they are not those corresponding to the internal positions of NegP we could find all sorts of elements grammaticalized as sentential negation, but this is not the case
- c) in order for NegP to be interpreted we need a very high NegP located maybe on top of the CP which however is NEVER realized

I think it is fundamentally wrong to think of the syntax of sentential negation along the lines of its semantics in formal logic: we do not negate sentences by means of the formula $\neg P$.

How is doubling to be explained? Doubling is analogous to DP doubling: a splitting procedure of the complex NegP with different pieces moving to different projections in the clause structure (corresponding to the feature of the projection they are merged in). Before moving outside we have internal movement of the lowest part of the DP to the Spec of the highest projection followed by remnant movement.

(30) [[KP [K° cl] [DP]] →

(31) [[XP DP [X° [KP [K° cl] [~~DP~~]]] →

(32) [IP [cIP [KP [K° cl] [~~DP~~]] [VP V [[XP DP [X° [~~KP~~ [~~K°~~ ~~cl~~] [~~DP~~]]]]]]]

Originating the two “pieces”, the clitic/tonic/quantifier and the DP, as one single item solves the problem of a single thematic role and case for DPs.

Originating the two negative markers as one single unit solves the interpretive problem, as there is only one negation. (Negative concord with negative quantifiers is probably something else, in fact we also find cases of doubling of negative markers even in those dialects where negative concord with negative quantifiers is not allowed)

→ Notice that a doubling analysis of negation predicts that there should be empty elements in the FPs which check the positions in the clause although there is nothing visible there.

4. Negative ghosts

We have seen that there can be more than one negative marker in the clause, each checking a different projection. What happens when we only see one negative marker?

The empirical observation we draw from the distribution of negative markers is the following

- Any element located in NegP is sufficient to enclose sentential negation
- When a lexical negative marker is present, it must check the corresponding feature in the sentence structure

What happens to the other projections inside NegP?

They can:

- remain empty/inactive/not projected
- contain null elements

The idea of extending doubling to negation provides us with the possibility of generating null negative markers inside the complex NegP structure and then raise them to the projection where we usually see their overt counterpart in other dialects.

This means that in some dialects there should be some “ghosts” of preverbal or postverbal negations although we do not see any overt one.

- Postverbal negation acting like preverbal negation

A. Imperative clauses

A distinction first noted by Benincà (1992) and then developed in Zanuttini (1997) is the one between preverbal and postverbal negation in imperative contexts: while postverbal negation can

negate a morphologically unambiguous imperative forms, preverbal negation cannot and the imperative form is changed into an infinitival one

In Benincà and Poletto (2004) we notice that there also exist some cases of postverbal negation that is not compatible with a true imperative form (Emilian *mia*, Rhaeto-Romance *buca*: cf. AIS VIII, 1647): (the following example is from Emilian)

- (33) Movrat mia! Albinea (Emilian)
 Move-infinit.yourself not! ‘Don’t move!’

Here the infinitive substitutes for the true imperative even if the negative marker is postverbal. The idea is that there is a null preverbal negative marker which doubles the postverbal one, which originates inside the complex NegP and is then moved to the preverbal NegP within the clause

B. Negative Concord

Generally, preverbal negative markers require negative concord (no exception to this generalization), postverbal negative markers do not (see Benincà and Poletto (2005)):

- (34) a *No* vien *nisun* Paduan and Venetian
 not comes nobody ‘Nobody is coming’
 b **A l’*à vist no *nisun* Milanese
 cl cl has seen not nobody ‘He has seen nobody’
 c *A l’*à nen vist *gnun* Turinese (Zanuttini)
 cl cl has not seen nobody ‘He has seen nobody’

However in some dialects, postverbal negative markers tolerate negative concord. We could assume here an optional null preverbal negative marker which induces the concord effect: one might think of negative concord as something similar to what happens in the DP with the spreading of number and gender: there is a field of projections where the Neg feature spreads.

Arguments in favour of this hypothesis is the fact that the negative feature seems to spread to adverbs as well: elements like *gnancora* ‘not-yet’ or *piugn* ‘not more’ show that negative concord does not simply apply to negative QPs.

I would like to reformulate Haegeman’s idea that NQPs move to SpecNeg in an antisymmetric framework: NQs enter a “negative field” located lower than NegP1 but higher than NegP3. Bavarian negative concord shows the limits of the Negative field (from Brugger and Poletto (1995))

- (35) 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 koan Freind (nit) ghoifn hot
 that the H. no friend(dat) not helped has
 H. did not help any friend
 c. daß eam koa Mensch (nit) gseng hot
 that him no man(nom) not seen has
 nobody saw him

k-words only precede 'nit'

- (36) a. *daß da Hons nit koa Buach glesn hot
that the H. not no book(acc) read has
b. *daß da Hons nit koan Freind ghoifn hot
that the H. not no freind(dat) helped has
c. *daß eam nit koa Mensch gseng hot
that him not no man(nom) seen has

This is also true of PPs which do not move because of case

- (37) 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
- (38) 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
- (39) a. 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
b. *daß da Hons nit auf koan Berg gstiegn is

As (40) shows it is possible to have more than one k-word preceding the negative marker. Multiple k-words respect the unmarked word order, just as positive nominal arguments. In (41), the nominative k-word has to precede the accusative one; in (42), the dative k-word has to precede the accusative one. (43) shows that multiple k-words asymmetrically c-command each other.

- (40) a. daß woi neamt koa Buch nit glesn hot
that probably nobody no book not read has
nobody probably read any book
b. daß neamt koan Madl koa Bussl nit gem not
that nobody no girl(dat) no kiss(acc) given has
nobody gave any girl a kiss
- (41) a. #daß koa Buch neamt nit glesn hot
that no book(acc) nobody(nom) not read has
b. daß neamt koa Buach nit glesn hot
that nobody(nom) no book(acc) not read has
nobody read any book
- (42) a. daß da Hons neamt koa Bussl nit gem hot
that the H. nobody(dat) no kiss(acc) not given has
H. did not give a kiss to anybody
b. *daß da Hons koan Bussl neamt nit gem hot
- (43) a. daß koa Madl koan Freind von si nit busslt hot
that no girl no friend of herself not kissed has
no girl kissed any friend of herself
b. *daß koan Freind von si koa Madl nit busslt hot
that no friend of herself no girl not kissed has
no friend of herself kissed any girl

One could suppose that there is more than one specifier of NEGP. However, the following example shows that it is possible to interrupt the sequence of k-words and 'nit'.

- (44) a. daß neamt sei Frau nit mitgnumma hot
that nobody his wife not took along has
nobody took along his wife

- b. daß neamt sei Madl nit busslt hot
 that nobody his girlfriend not kissed has
nobody kissed his girlfriend

This clearly shows that k-words do not occupy the specifier of NEGP

- Preverbal negation acting like postverbal negation

I to C in main interrogative clauses

Benincà and Vanelli (1982) and Zanuttini (1997) note that preverbal negation blocks V to C movement in main interrogative clauses in Veneto. This is generally not the case for postverbal negative markers or discontinuous negation

- (45) a *No vien-lo? Paduan (from Benincà and Poletto (2004:37))
 not comes.he? 'Isn't he coming?'
 b No vien-lo miga? Paduan
 not comes.he not? 'Isn't he coming?'
 c Vien-lo miga? S. Anna di Chioggia
 comes.he not? 'Isn't he coming?'

There are dialects however, in which a simple preverbal negative marker does not block V to C.

- (46) a No mangeta al meil? Barcis (Friulian)
 b No magneste l pom (de èlber) Campitello di Fassa (Rhaetoromance, Fassa Valley)

In this case we can assume that it has a null postverbal counterpart generated in the complex NegP.

5. Dialectal variation

We are back to the basic problem. How come different dialects have different negative markers but the interpretation is always the same?

- Hyp: one overt element inside the NegP is sufficient to generate the whole NegP. So, all dialects have the whole NegP, though it can be filled by one or more lexical elements
- However, lexical negative markers can only move to the corresponding position in the clause, the other features are checked not via movement but via agree. In other words, the path a negative marker follows in the clause corresponds to the position it has inside the NegP
- This leaves the possibility open for negative markers to raise inside NegP (and therefore inside the clause). Are there any cases of this?

The differences among dialects can be traced back to different raising the negative markers inside the NegP internal structure

In the dialects where this negative marker has generalized as the standard NegP it is directly merged in QP and not in the existential position following a well known path of lexical elements raising to FPs which become functional elements merged in the same FPs and correspondingly losing part of their lexical meaning.

(47) [NEGP [Focus/Op [PolP [ScalarP [QP gninte [ExistentialP]]]

In some dialects, like the Veneto ones, this element starts in the existential position inside NegP which originated in the object position of the clause and can reach the presuppositional layer, and makes it thus incompatible with the presuppositional element of the *mica* type.

(48) [NEGP [Focus/Op [PolP [ScalarP gninte [QP ~~gninte~~ [Existential ~~gninte~~]]]

- NegP2

In the dialects where NegP2 and NegP3 are incompatible, the two elements compete for the same position

(49) [NEGP [Focus [PolP [ScalarP mica [QP ~~mica~~ [Existential]]]

In those dialects, like Piedmontese where NegP2 and NegP3 are compatible, this means that NegP2 is directly merged in the Scalar projection.

(50) [NEGP [Focus [PolP [ScalarP pa [QP nen [ExistentialP]]

If this line of reasoning is correct, it seems that the +/- presuppositional value of a negative element at least partially depends on its raising path inside the NegP. Notice however that the progressive extension of usages noted above still remains to be worked out.

5. Conclusion

In this talk I have exploited etymology to look into the internal structure of NegP and derive a complex distribution of several negative markers by adopting a complex internal layering of NegP and a doubling analysis which allows movement of the different portions of the NegP to different projections in the clausal structure

- Why do we find those four NegPs in the clause and not others? Because they correspond to the internal layering of NegP, which has to be mirrored by sentence structure.
- Why those four etymological types and not others? Because they best represent the features of the FPs contained in NegP
- Why doubling and tripling? Because splitting a complex XP which needs to check more than one functional feature, is generally possible in human languages
- How do we account for dialectal variation: by varying the number of FPs where a negative marker is merged or moved.

A corollary to the analysis is that those elements that do not move from one position to the other inside NegP should be heads, those which move from one position to another internal to NegP are specifiers. Those that are heads should be compatible with all other negations, those which are specifiers should at least have one other negative marker that is incompatible.

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