A hybrid approach to Jespersen's cycle in West Germanic[*]

The goal of this paper is to propose an alternative interpretation of the diachronic development of the expression of negation known as Jespersen's cycle as it is found in the West Germanic languages. Research to date has focussed mainly on the conditions behind the rise of the secondary negator. Much less attention has been paid to the fate of the original marker. The present paper focuses on the development of the original negation particle in the West Germanic languages English, Dutch, High and Low German and argues that at least in these languages, its weakening and reinforcement are related in a more complex way than is usually assumed and that functional redundancy due to the presence of two negation elements is not likely to be the reason for its loss. Rather, a shift in the licensing conditions of n-indefinites created a potential ambiguity of the original marker which fed into its reanalysis as a polarity marker at exactly the point when a new marker became available, by reanalysis of a previously and independently grammaticalised reinforcer. It is argued that the two reanalyses have to occur simultaneously, resulting in a hybrid approach to Jespersen's cycle in West Germanic, as opposed to previous approaches under which one of the changes conditions the other.

1

Introduction

The goal of this paper is to propose an alternative interpretation of the diachronic development known as Jespersen's cycle (Dahl 1979, after Jespersen 1917)[1], as it is found in the West Germanic languages. This directional diachronic development of the expression of sentential negation found in a number of not necessarily related languages is characterised by an old marker (stage I) being joined by a newly grammaticalised new one (stage II) which eventually supplants it (stage III). From there, a language can return to stage I by weakening the new marker once more, as has been argued for English *n't*.[2] Frequently, more fine-grained distinctions are made[3], providing stages at which one of the elements is optional. Willis (forthc.), for example, assumes that stage II is further split into stages IIa and IIb. At IIa, the postverbal marker is optional; at IIb, it is obligatory.

stage I	stage II	stage III	stage I'
ic ne secge	I ne seye not	I say not	I do not say > I don't say
Old English	Middle English	Early Modern English	Present Day English

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The West Germanic languages English, German and Dutch and Frisian have all undergone Jespersen's cycle. They all passed through very similar stages in their development with respect to the expression of sentential negation. The rough picture is that the Common Germanic preverbal marker *ni* survives as *ni* and *ne* into Old High German 0 and Old Saxon (Old Low German) 0, and as *ne* into Old Dutch (Old Low Franconian) 0 and Old English 0. It has the syntactic distribution and behaviour of an immediately preverbal clitic in all these languages, moving with the verb irrespective of its position.[4]

ni   wâniu ih   iu   lîb habbe

OHG

NEG think I he life have

'I do not think he is still alive'   (Hildebrandslied 29)

Ne   habe thu   uuecan   hugi

OSx/OLG

NEG   have you   weak   mind

'Don't be weak-spirited'   (Heliand IV/262)

Inde in uuege sundigero   ne   stûnt

ODu/OLF

and inway   sinners.GEN NEG   stood.3SG

'and he didn't stand in the way of sinners'   (Wachtendonck Psalms I.1)

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[4]   The abbreviations used in the examples throughout this paper are: OE = Old English, ME = Middle English, OHG = Old High German, MHG = Middle High German, ENHG = Early New High German, ModG = Modern German, OSx/OLG = Old Saxon/Old Low German, MLG = Middle Low German, ODu/OLF = Old Dutch/Old Low Franconian, MDu = Middle Dutch and ModDu = Modern Dutch.

ic geseon   ne   mæg

<div align="center">OE</div>

I see   NEG can

'I cannot see'   (coaelive,+ALS_[Swithun]:204.4357; from Wallage 2005:77)

Between the 'Old' and 'Middle' periods of these languages[5], a secondary element is grammaticalised from an emphasising adverb which derives from a morphologically negated indefinite pronoun meaning 'nothing (at all)', cf. e.g. the Old High German *niowiht* (*ni-io-wiht* 'NEG.ever.thing' ~ 'nothing at all'). This element can be called a negative polarity adverb in the sense that it is restricted to the scope of negation (thus a strong NPI), and comes to mean something like 'at all', losing its original argument use, distribution and meaning. As can be seen in 0-0, the old preverbal marker, in the weakened form *ne* or *en*, could still co-occur with the new postverbal element.[6]

die Hinam   nescolt du nieht   ezzen ...

<div align="center">MHG</div>

the hyena   NE.shall you NEG eat

'You shall not eat the hyena'   (WPPhys 6,1:136v; ca. 1120)

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[5]   This is not uniform for the languages in question. The Middle Low German period for example overlaps with the second half of the Middle High German and the first half of the Early New High German periods. The literature sets the periods as follows:

Old English (600-1150) – Middle English (1150-1500)

Old High German (750-1050) – Middle High German (1050-1350) – Early New High German (1350-1650)

Old Low German (Old Saxon) (<1250) – Middle Low German (1250-1600)

Old Dutch (Old Low Franconian) (<1200) – Middle Dutch (1200-1600)

[6]   The preverbal marker is labelled NE, not NEG, in 0 to 0 because, anticipating the discussion below, it is no longer the expression of sentential negation at this time.

4

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   dat  en   schall  dar        nicht  an  schelen.
                              MLG
   that  NE  shall  there   not    PRT differ
   'that shall make no difference in this case'              (Lübeck 1132; March 5, 1381)


   Dat  wij  slapende nyet    ensteruen
                         MDu
   that  we  sleeping  NEG   NE  die
   'that we are not dying in our sleep'                 (Veldeke, St.Serv., 1, 138 (3v); <1170)


   Swo ne   answarede  noht   Moyses   ure  Drihten ...
          ME
   thus  NE  answered    NEG  Moses     our  Lord ...
   'Moses did not answer our Lord thus ...'        (CMTRINIT,215.3009; from Wallage 2005:101)
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The initial preverbal marker disappears after a period in which the two elements (can) coexist, bequeathing the function of expressing sentential negation to the secondary element, *no(h)t, niet, ni(c)ht*, respectively. This transitional period, which we have called stage II of Jespersen's cycle in 0 above, is of varying length in the West Germanic languages: while High German and English made the transition rather fast, Middle Low German and in particular Middle Dutch went through an extended period in which stage II was the prevalent way of expressing negation. German is the first to complete Jespersen's cycle. According to Jäger (2006: 211), Middle High German had essentially reached stage III by 1300. Already by this time, sentential negation is mainly expressed either by *niht* or by an n-indefinite. English did so between 1350-1420 (Wallage 2005:195, 2008:645). Dutch on the other hand only completed the transition around 1600 (Burridge 1993:190f). Middle Low German takes an intermediate position between Middle Dutch on the one hand and Middle High German and Early New High German on the other: most dialects reach stage III between 1450 and 1500 (Breitbarth 2008a,b). The present paper will, among other things, propose an explanation for these differences in diachronic stability.

There has been much scholarly work on the details of this development, focussing especially on the conditions behind the rise of the secondary negator. Such elements are typically reanalysed from independently grammaticalised negative (polarity) adverbs, for which languages seem to draw on essentially three types of sources: (a) (negative) indefinite (pro)nouns (e.g. '(no)one'), (b) minimisers/generalisers (e.g. 'a crumb', 'a living soul') and (c) (negative) adverbs (e.g. 'never'). The West Germanic languages instantiate pattern (a), deriving the postverbal adverbial reinforcer and later negation marker from a former negative indefinite pronoun as mentioned above.

Much less attention has been paid to the fate of the primary / original marker. Its weakening is often attributed to the reduction of phonetic substance, making reinforcement by a secondary marker necessary in order to ensure the perceivable expression of the negation operator. The general view, with variations, is here that it at some point simply falls victim to a universal ban on functional redundancy. The current paper will look especially at the development of the original negation particle in the West Germanic languages English, Dutch and High/Low German and argue that, at least in these languages, its weakening and reinforcement are related in a more complex way, and it is not functional redundancy that caused its loss. The proposed analysis essentially agrees with Wallage (2005, 2008), who builds on Rowlett's (1998) work on French, in that the inherited preverbal marker at stage II is fundamentally different in nature from its formal equivalent at stage I. In contrast to these authors, however, I will argue that, at least in the West Germanic languages, it falls outside the negation system altogether when the new element is established as the expression of negation.

Outline of the paper

The current paper will present a new interpretation of the diachronic development of negation in West Germanic based partly on data discussed in the literature and partly on the results of original corpus study, and propose an alternative account of the transitional stage II of Jespersen's Cycle in West Germanic, which has not yet been attempted in this comparative way. After outlining different approaches to the directionality of Jespersen's Cycle found in the literature in section 0, a formal analysis of our alternative approach to stage II of Jespersen's cycle in West Germanic will be proposed

in section 0. In section 0, empirical arguments for this alternative interpretation will be presented, and a 'hybrid' account of the transitions from stage I to stage III via stage II will be given in section 0. Section 0 sums up the findings of the paper.

A typology of approaches to Jespersen's cycle

The literature on Jespersen's cycle can essentially be divided into two camps:[7] one that views it as a pull chain, and another that conceives of it as a push chain. Both approaches can be combined when the development of the original and the new negation marker are viewed as two separate changes. Significantly, though, all types of approaches presuppose that the original marker remains a negative marker of some sort until it ultimately disappears. I will argue that both encounter conceptual and empirical problems in accounting for the development in the West Germanic languages, which can be solved under what I will call a hybrid approach.

The pull chain approach

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[7] That is, not considering typological approaches such as Bartsch and Vennemann (1972), Vennemann (1974), Lehmann (1978) or Bernini and Ramat (1990), who correlate the position of the negation particle with the 'type' of the language: Apart from Lehmann, who argues for the opposite correlation, they claim that the SVO or TVX (V2) correlates with postverbal negators, and that therefore a shift from SOV to SVO can trigger the rise of such a postverbal negator. The problem with these approaches is that neither correlation seems to be valid, leaving aside the issue of what criteria the classification of a language as SOV or SVO is based on ('most frequent' / 'dominant' / 'unmarked' order, or derivational base order?). According to Dahl (1979) and Dryer (1988), preverbal placement of the negation particle is universally preferred, even in OV languages. On the other hand, as Posner (1985:173) remarks, most Romance languages, despite being SVO, retain the preverbal marker even if they have introduced postverbal reinforcing adverbs. Therefore, other explanations for Jespersen's cycle have to be found.

The pull chain scenario is the older conception, going back to Jespersen (1917) himself. According to this scenario, it is the weakening of the original, clitic marker of sentential negation that drives the grammaticalisation of the new marker, as is evident from Jespersen's original quote:

"The history of negative expressions in various languages makes us witness the following curious fluctuation; the original negative adverb is first weakened, then found insufficient and therefore strengthened, generally through some additional word, and in its turn may be felt as the negative proper and may then in course of time be subject to the same development as the original word."

(Jespersen 1917:4)

The formulation of this passage makes the development appear to be an entirely deterministic process. However, phonological weakening alone, as implied by Jespersen, cannot plausibly drive the cycle. As Posner (1985:177) remarks, languages can happily survive with an extremely phonologically weakened preverbal marker: "The insubstantiality of *ne* in French cannot in itself account for its elision, for in many South Central Italian dialects the preverbal marker is equally as slight, without showing any signs of disappearing or of requiring supplementation". Posner therefore argues that *ne* needs reinforcement in those Romance varieties that underwent Jespersen's Cycle because by its weakening, it became homophonous with the adverbial pronoun *ene* < Lat. *inde* (French *en*) in the relevant varieties and because it furthermore interacts with argument clitics in preverbal position:[8] "[t]he negative particle in these conditions must have been so swallowed up in the array of clitics that the semantic burden of negation passed to the 'forclusif'" (Posner 1985:188), i.e., the postverbal element. However, this still takes the weakening of the preverbal element as a given, it only outlines the conditions under which the weakening will lead to the creation of a postverbal negator.

Abraham (1999, 2003) proposes a pull chain approach to the development of the expression of negation in the Germanic languages. According to him, postverbal negators are grammaticalised as adverbs in the specifier of a NegP (and n-marked indefinites as negative quantifiers) "because Neg1 (i.e., the preverbal marker – AB) changes its status" (Abraham 1999:67). However, he only vaguely adumbrates the presence of "some trigger unidentified so far" (Abraham 1999:68) behind this change.

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8   Cf. also eg. Parry (1997).

Something more concrete about the reasons behind the weakening of the preverbal marker will have to be said.

All proponents of pull chain approaches implicitly assume that the preverbal marker remains a marker of negation all through to its demise, and that there are in fact two exponents of negation present in one clause at stage II of Jespersen's Cycle, working together in a form of negative concord. Abraham (1999:66) for example speaks about 'multiple sentential negation' when he discusses Old English[9] and Middle Dutch examples of what we have called stage II of Jespersen's Cycle in 0. This state of affairs is seen as uneconomic, and is expected to lead to the eventual loss of the preverbal marker: "Under criteria of economy, the attrition and total erosion of the weak verbal NEG-prefix is entirely expectable" (Abraham 2003:360).

The push chain approach

Some authors have questioned the directionality attributed to Jesersen's Cycle by the pull chain approach, with the weakening of the preverbal marker being the trigger for the reanalysis of the postverbal marker. Burridge (1993:201) remarks:

> "With something as crucial as a negator, it is just as feasible to see the reduction in terms of the **effect** rather than the **cause**; that is, the negative particle is weakened **because** the function of negation is taken over by these reinforcing elements."
>
> (Burridge 1993: 201)

Under a push chain scenario then, it is the grammaticalisation of the secondary negator from a previously and independently grammaticalised negative polarity adverb, used as a reinforcer, that pushes the original marker out of use.

Detges and Waltereit (2002) try to formalise this idea by proposing a pragmatically driven interplay of grammaticalisations and reanalyses. According to them, in French, "[g]eneralized ellipsis

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[9]   These examples show postverbal *na* (<*ni+aiw* 'NEG.ever'), which has been argued by Van Kemenade (2000) and Wallage (2005) to be an adverbial/phrasal negator in Old English as is *not* later in Middle English.

of *ne ...* could not occur before *pas* had turned into a non-emphatic obligatory element" (Detges and Waltereit 2002: 187). That is, the preverbal marker is only lost when the secondary marker takes over the function of expressing sentential negation.

The same idea underlies Frisch's (1997) (early) minimalist account of the development of negation in English. He claims that Middle English *ne* and *not* are competing functional doublets that are only not mutually exclusive because they occupy separate syntactic positions (Neg^o and SpecNegP, respectively): "[T]he old sentential negator *ne* is lost only after the new negator *not* is well established as sentential negator and component of NEGP. The simultaneous availability of both *ne* and *not* as negators creates an unstable functional doublet, and *ne* is lost as a result" (Frisch 1997:23). Stage II, the stage at which the expression of negation is bipartite, is then the result of an overlap between the old stage I grammar and the new stage III grammar, while they are in competition. Sundquist (2005) follows Frisch's analysis for Middle Low German.

According to Detges and Waltereit (2002), in French, first a free lexical minimiser is established as a grammaticalised emphasiser. Later, this emphatic function is lost due to a reanalysis of the emphasiser as an expression of sentential negation, at first in conjunction with the original marker.

   neg V emph > neg V neg

(Detges and Waltereit 2002:186)

Under this conception of Jespersen's cycle as well, there is a stage in which there are two markers bearing negation features of some sort present simultaneously, working together in expressing the single negation of the clause: "[W]hat so far has been a complex construction, consisting of two constituents, now turns into a single (albeit formally discontinuous) functional unit" (Detges and Waltereit 2002:186). As the expression of one function by formally two elements violates a functional principle of 'constructional iconicity', they argue, the original marker is then removed in order to regain a more iconic expression of negation. One might wonder why the form and not the function should be important here, but the assumption of such an iconicity principle 'cleaning up' after the reanalysis of the emphasiser as negator would predict a short transition period. Especially for French, the language Detges and Waltereit (2002) are looking at, this is not the case: French enters stage II before the Middle French period, i.e., before the 14th century (Catalani 2001), but *ne*-deletion only

becomes prevalent in the 19th century, as Martinet and Mougeon (2003) conclude on the basis of an analysis of a corpus of colloquial French covering the 17th through 20th centuries. Furthermore, this principle cannot account for the fact that it is the original marker that is lost, and not the new one.

Intermediate conclusion and outlook

We have seen how both types of approaches to Jespersen's cycle implicitly or explicitly assume both elements present in stage II of Jespersen's cycle to be associated with expressing negation, be it in terms of agreeing negation features or as part of a discontinuous construction where only functional considerations of iconicity or 'economy' lead to a non-redundant expression of negation, i.e., one of the markers is lost.

A possible alternative has been proposed by Wallage (2005, 2008), elaborating Rowlett's (1998) proposal for French. Under his account of the development of the expression of negation in early English, the rise of the postverbal and the demise of the preverbal negator are two separate developments. His analysis of the rise of the postverbal negator appears to be a pull chain approach: the rise of a variant of *ne* without the value neg in its morphosyntactic feature specification [pol:] next to the original variant [pol:neg] requires an element carrying [pol:neg] that can provide the required value to *ne* [pol:]. This element cannot have had this feature before the rise of *ne* [pol:], as it would have clashed with *ne* [pol:neg].

stage I: *ne* [pol:neg] >

stage II: *ne* [pol:] + *not* [pol:neg] >

stage III: *not* [pol:neg]   (cf. Wallage 2005:section 5.5)

The loss of the preverbal marker on the other hand appears to follow a push chain approach: "the loss of *ne* is contingent upon, and follows the introduction of *not*" (Wallage 2005:216). However, observe that under Wallage's approach, the 'new' *ne*, because it needs an element to provide it with the neg value of its pol-feature, to some degree seems to remain a negative marker. We will return to this in

11

section 0. Furthermore, even the 'new *ne*' seems to play a crucial role in expressing sentential negation: "the morpheme *ne* can only be eliminated once negation is identifiable elsewhere in the clause" (ibid.).

In contrast to all proposals discussed, but similar in spirit to Haegeman's (2000, 2001, 2002) proposal on contemporary West Flemish, I will argue here that in the West Germanic languages at least, the two markers present at stage II of Jespersen's cycle are functionally different. At what Willis (forthc.) calls stage IIa, with an obligatory preverbal negator and an optional emphasiser, the preverbal negator is still the expression of sentential negation, while the emphasiser is not yet. This stage could be considered as a subphase of stage I still, with just a preverbal marker of sentential negation. At Willis' stage IIb, where the postverbal element has become compulsory, I will argue that this element has become the expression of sentential negation, and the preverbal marker has ceased to be. In section 0, I will show that this functional differentiation is empirically borne out in the older West Germanic languages, and that Detges and Waltereit's (2002) assumption of a "single (albeit formally discontinuous) functional unit" at stage II is therefore not confirmed for these languages.

I will argue in section 0 that the status of the preverbal and the postverbal markers changes simultaneously, after a preparatory step. In this step, the status of the preverbal marker is weakened by a change in the system of indefinites in the scope of negation, as they become able to identify sentential negation on their own. As a consequence, where the preverbal marker co-occurs with these new n-indefinites, it becomes ambiguous between a polarity marker (innovation) and a negative marker (conservative analysis), triggering the reanalysis of a new postverbal negator from an independently grammaticalised emphasiser in order to resolve the ambiguity. As a result, the preverbal element is fully reanalysed as a polarity marker. This chain of developments leads us to postulate what could be called a hybrid approach between the push chain and the pull chain approaches discussed above.

Proposal

In this section, I propose that at stage II of Jespersen's cycle in the West Germanic languages, the postverbal element takes over the identification of sentential negation, while the preverbal marker is reanalysed as the spell-out of the features of a CP-related polarity head on the finite verb. This analysis is motivated by the cross-linguistic availability of polarity phenomena ascribed to PolPs (at least)

12

above TP (Laka 1990, 1994, Holmberg 2003, 2007, Martins 2006, 2007).[10] In emphatic *affirmation*, European Portuguese for example duplicates the finite verb in a PolP[11] between TP and CP (Martins 2006, 2007) and in C while in emphatic *negation*, an emphasis feature on C triggers the fronting of the entire Pol/ΣP into SpecCP, stranding a doubled sentential negator adjoined to PolP/ΣP (Martins 2007:fn.25). Martins (2007:fn.24) proposes that "Σ merges with C post-syntactically [...] because […] the polarity features of Σ and the emphatic features of C need to be paired under C". CP also plays a crucial role in emphatic polarity constructions in Finnish. Holmberg (2007) argues that the finite verb in answers to yes/no questions and emphatic contradictions to negative statements/questions moves through a Pol head (on the border between the CP and TP fields as well) to C, which in these cases has a polarity focus feature (equivalent to Martins' emphasis feature).

As proposed by Rizzi (1997), the CP-domain functions as an interface between the interior of the clause (IP) on the one hand and the higher (discourse) context on the other. Subject to cross-linguistic variation, morphosyntactic features relating to clause-typing, discourse functions and finiteness can be overtly expressed within this layer of functional heads. In languages with complementiser agreement, for example, features of the IP-layer are reflected, often in an impoverished fashion, on a head in the C-layer, arguably Fin. In West Flemish for example, the declarative complementiser *da* agrees with T in φ-features:

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[10]   Haegeman (2000,2001,2002) has independently reached an analysis of contemporary West Flemish similar to the one proposed below, according to which *en* is taken to express Pol, rather than Neg. However, she does not associate the relevant PolP with the CP level, but places PolP between TP and a projection called FP situated between TP and AgrOP. Regarding Jespersen's cycle, Haegeman (2002) speculates that after *niet* had been reanalysed as the marker of sentential negation, *en*, because it had become 'redundant' and was therefore lost in other varieties of Dutch, is reanalysed from being the lexicalisation of Neg° to that of Pol°, but she does not discuss any historical evidence. As will be shown below, this directionality of the change is not probable. See Breitbarth and Haegeman (2008) for an alternative analysis of contemporary (West) Flemish *en*.

[11]   Martins uses Laka's (1990, 1994) label ΣP for PolP.

13

West Flemish

a. da-n-k   ik kom-(e)n

   that-1SG-scl I come-1SG

b. da-Ø-j   gie kom-t

   that-2SG-scl you come-2SG

c. da-t-j   ij   werk-t

   that-3SG-scl he   work-3SG   (Haegeman 1990)

I propose that polarity should be seen as another such morphosyntactic property that can be reflected at the interface between clauses in some languages. It reflects syntactically either the clause-internal presence of a non-veridical operator (Giannakidou 1998) or the selection by a clause-external operator. As an appoximation, let us call Pol's feature [affect], as it characterises affective contexts (Klima 1964). Depending on the kind of operator, different morphosyntactic reflexes might correlate with Pol in different languages, or be covert.

Evidence from other languages suggests that the means to achieve such a marking can be quite varied, where it is overt. Biberauer (2007, 2008) argues that the sentence-final element nie_2 in (colloquial) Afrikaans, often argued to be a scope marker for the clause-internal negation in a second NegP, is in fact the head of a very high CP-related PolP with an EPP-feature attracting its complement (CP) to its specifier. Evidence for the fact that nie_2 is a polarity marker, and not restricted to the expression of sentential negation, is provided by examples such as the following, where it occurs in the context of non-veridical operators such as the approximative adverb *nouliks/skaars* 'barely' and the complement of adversative predicates such as *weier* 'refuse'.

Ek kan my nouliks/skaars inhou nie_2

        Afr I   can me barely   in.hold   'NEG'

  'I can barely contain myself', i.e. 'I am very excited'

Ek weier om   saam   te kom nie_2

  I   refuse C.INF together to come 'NEG'

  'I refuse to come along'   (Biberauer 2007:17)

In case of selection by an adversative predicate as in 0 for example, or a clause in the scope of negation, we can identify Pol as Laka's (1990/1994) 'negative complementiser' C_{Neg}. She shows this C_{Neg} to have different morphological reflexes in different languages. It can be realised as a complementiser, either homophonous with its positive counterparts as in English (*that/that*NEG), or specially morphologically marked as negative as in Basque (*ela/enik*NEG), as seen in 0, but for instance also as subjunctive morphology on the verb, as in Spanish, (16).

    a. [Galapagoakmuskerrez beterik daudela] diote

          Galapagos   lizards-of full   are-that say-they

          'They say that the Galapagos are full of lizards'

   b. Amaiak [inork   gorrotoa dionik]   ukatu   du

       Amaia   anyone hatred   has-that_NEG denied   has]

        'Amaia denied that anybody hated her'   (Laka

1994:130f)

  El testigo negó que la   acusada   le   hubiera   dicho nada.

  the witness denied that the defendant him had.SUBJN   told   n.thing

  'The witness denied that the defendant had told him anything.'   (Laka 1994:138)

I will therefore assume that there is a CP-related PolP in all clauses that form a non-veridical environment, which can be identified overtly by various means in different languages. Basque would thus be an example of a language with a special complementiser in a selected environment, while in Spanish, subjunctive mood on the verb indicates its presence in the same context. Afrikaans has a free morpheme *nie* under Pol in various non-veridical contexts. Note that the presence of Pol does not imply the presence of sentential negation within the same clause. It is therefore not equivalent to a high NegP such as Zanuttini's NegP$_1$ above TP, which according to her hosts the interpretable negation features of the clause. The presence of negation in the clause on the other hand would naturally imply the presence of Pol [affect].

I propose to analyse the preverbal marker *ne/en* at stage II of Jespersen's cycle in the West Germanic languages as the head of PolP. While in Afrikaans the content of Pol is a free morpheme, it is a bound morpheme in Middle English, Middle Dutch, Middle High German and Middle Low German. Its host, I will argue, is the finite verb. The mechanism by which *ne/en* is spelt out on the finite verb I assume to be *Alternative Realisation* (Emonds 1987, 2000):

Alternative Realisation

A syntactic feature F canonically associated in UG with category B can be alternatively realised in a closed class grammatical morpheme under X^o, provided X^o is the lexical head of a sister of B.

(Emonds 2000: (4.20))

In the case at hand, instead of realising its features on its own head, the features of Pol are realised on the lexical head of a sister of Pol. Intervening functional heads not lexicalised in a structure are ignored because of the definition of *Extended Sisterhood*, e.g. heads in the TP and CP-domains in our case, if the verb stays low as in embedded clauses in (continental) West Germanic.

Extended Sisterhood

If Z^o and XP are sisters and if Z^1 is the smallest phrase (besides structural projections of Y) whose lexical head is Y^o, then Y^o and XP are extended sisters.

(Emonds 2000: (4.28))

In our case, Pol^o is the (extended) sister of TP or VP (or whichever more fine-grained positions in between), depending on which one the finite verb lexicalises in a given construction. The former negative clitic on the finite verb can be reanalysed as the exponent of Pol exactly because of the Extended Sisterhood relation between T and Pol. This reanalysis can only happen once sentential negation has found a new identifier, ultimately when an erstwhile adverbial emphasiser is reanalysed as the expression of sentential negation. Observe that the mechanism by which *ne/en* is reanalysed as the exponent of Pol is similar to Roberts' and Roussou's (2003) 'upward reanalysis' by which the expression of a lower functional head becomes associated with the features of a higher functional head

16

due to a derivational link between the two heads. Roberts and Roussou assume that the result of such a reanalysis is the loss of movement, which previously connected the two heads, but it does not seem unreasonable that agreement alone would already be a sufficient connection. Alternative Realisation (under Extended Sisterhood) allows us to capture the connection between the heads of the CP and TP domains and V. Therefore, when the West Germanic languages enter stage II of Jespersen's cycle, it is not the case that the expression of negation is achieved jointly by two elements. Rather, the two elements come to be associated with different functional heads. Once *ne/en* had been reanalysed as the Alternative Realisation of the features of Pol in negative clauses, it could be generalised to non-veridical contexts beyond negation. Such uses are attested in the West Germanic languages, and will be discussed in section 0.

I am aware that much of the semantics literature is against an analysis of affectiveness as a syntactic feature. Much of the current literature on NPI licensing prefers semantic or pragmatic approaches.[12] However, the present approach does not aim at a syntactic characterisation of all downward entailing or non-veridical contexts, and is in particular not concerned with the complicated details of the licensing of polarity sensitive elements in general.[13] Rather, it proposes that there is a

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[12]   Semantic approaches assuming that the downward entailing or non-veridcal character of NPI licensing contexts arises because they contain elements whose meanings are (a subset of the) monotone decreasing functions are e.g. Ladusaw (1979), Van der Wouden (1997), Zwarts (1995), Giannakidou (1998) and Zeijlstra (2004). Pragmatic approaches to NPI-licensing in terms of domain-widening and scalar implicatures have been proposed by Kadmon and Landman (1993), Krifka (1995) and Van Rooij (2003). Syntactic approaches are much less common. According to Progovac (1994), NPIs are similar to anaphors in that they have to be bound by an operator at a suitable syntactic distance. Chierchia (2006), though essentially following a pragmatic approach, proposes that scalar expressions are endowed with a feature [+σ] in syntax, which has to be licensed by an abstract operator σ adjoined to the containing projection. Herburger and Mauck (2007) propose that NPIs have a formal [+NPI] feature that has to be checked in syntax for them to be licensed. They use Ludlow's (2002) logic L* where elements creating downward entailing contexts project operators into syntax which correspond to logical connectives. That is, if the L* representation of an expression contains a connective ¬, a PolP is projected in syntax, and NPIs check their [+NPI] feature locally against this negation.

[13]   With respect to indefinites in the scope of negation, I follow among others Jäger (2006) and Penka (2006, 2007b) in assuming that they are semantically non-negative, but syntactically restricted in their distribution. Whether they require the presence of a negation marker or can identify sentential negation on their own can

morphosyntactic correlate of non-veridical operators in form of a functional head where the containing context involves the CP-layer, and that this is a form of clause-typing, i.e. the presence of certain operators can activate it to reflect their presence at the clause's interface.[14] As it is not itself involved in the actual licensing of polarity sensitive expressions, such a functional polarity head is not equivalent to an abstract operator such as Chierchia's (2006) 'implicature freezing' σ, and does not semantically express negation itself. It therefore differs also from Herburger's and Mauck's (2007) proposal (cf. fn. 12). The present approach is motivated by the cross-linguistic availability of syntactic phenomena indicating the presence of such a head, cf. the discussion at the beginning of this section.

The proposed reanalysis may at first sight look similar to the morphosyntactic change Wallage (2005) proposes ([pol:neg] → [pol:]). However, Wallage does not assume that the two markers should have distinct functions; rather, they are both negation markers, one primary (interpretable) and one agreeing. Under Wallage's approach, *ne* needs its polarity feature [pol:] to be valued as [neg] by an element with the feature [pol:neg]. Under the present approach, *ne* does not require a valuation as negative. This allows for a more elegant analysis of expletive negation in Middle English (see section 0).

Furthermore, the present approach may look similar to Van Kemenade's (2000) account of Jespersen's Cycle in the history of English, as she also assumes a link between the preverbal marker *ne* and C through verb movement. However, her proposed reanalysis of *ne* as an exponent of C relates to the time when *ne* still expresses sentential negation, not when it is replaced by a new negator, as in the current paper. In distinction to Van Kemenade, under the present account, *ne* is a head cliticised or affixed to the finite verb in all West Germanic languages from their earliest attestations. It identifies negation until it is reanalysed as the realisation of affective Pol.

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change diachronically, as will be argued for the West Germanic n-marked indefinites in section 0. Cf. Jäger (2007) for a broader typological overview of possible changes within indefinite systems cross-linguistically.

[14] As one reviewer points out, this seems to predict that polarity marking should be possible where there is a CP in the restriction of a universal quantifier, e.g. *every car [that he ever (EN/NE)owned]*. However, *en/ne* in older West Germanic is not an NPI, as will become clear below. Even in languages which spell out Pol [+affect] in several non-negative contexts, not all possible contexts are marked in this way.

There is a possible alternative analysis of stage II *ne/en* which also assumes that it ceases to be able to identify sentential negation. We could assume that *ne/en* becomes a weak negative polarity item (NPI) when the postverbal element is reanalysed as the identification of sentential negation.[15] While it is rare, but not impossible for strong NPIs to become weak NPIs (cf. Jäger 2007), this analysis cannot account for the particular constructional role *ne/en* comes to play at stage II in the continental West Germanic languages, as we will see in section 0.

Summing up, I claim that the original marker can no longer identify sentential negation itself at the point in Jespersen's cycle when the reinforcer ceases to have the function of an emphasising adverb and comes to identify sentential negation in the West Germanic languages English, Dutch, High and Low German, as two elements identifying a single negation should lead to a double negation reading. It also does not simply 'agree' with the new primary negator, as it develops independent non-negative uses in the West Germanic languages as we will see presently, in section 0.

The non-negative nature of the preverbal marker at stage II

Under the account of *ne/en* as the Alternative Realisation of Pol's feature [affect] on V at stage II in the West Germanic languages, it is predicted that it should be able to occur in non-negative non-veridical contexts, as it is no longer a negation marker or part of a discontinuous negation marker. Such contexts are indeed found, as will be seen in section 0. Furthermore, the distribution of the pre- and postverbal markers with respect to n-indefinites will be shown in section 0 to be an argument for *ne/en* no longer being the identifier of sentential negation itself.

Non-negative uses of the old preverbal negation marker

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[15]   Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

19

Already Jespersen remarks about the non-negative use of negation markers: "It is well known how it (i.e., the non-negative use) develops in some languages to a fixed rule, especially if the negative employed has no longer its full force" (Jespersen 1917:75), although it has to be kept in mind that it never became "a fixed rule" in the West Germanic languages to the extent that it did in (written/prescriptive) French, for example, where it has long been recognised that preverbal *ne* is not actually inherently negative (e.g. Clarke 1904). In Middle High German, Middle Low German, Middle Dutch and Middle English, we find two syntactic contexts in which single *ne/en* does not express sentential negation and in which it remains used even when the new adverbial negator is already the most frequent negative particle.

Exceptive clauses

The first context in which we find a non-negative use of the original West Germanic preverbal negation marker is what I will call *exceptive clauses*. This type of construction is found in Middle High German, Middle Low German and Middle Dutch, and is characterised by the use of the single preverbal marker in subjunctive verb second clauses with an exceptive interpretation ('unless, except'). Burridge calls this construction 'paratactic negation' as it is used in what is logically a dependent clause, but formally appears to be an independent one (as it is an asyndetically conjoined verb-second clause).[16] Because this term is used by others (e.g. Jespersen 1917) to denote 'expletive negation' (see section 0), I will not follow her in this use.

> Nieman nimach   ze gotes   riche chomen, **er   newerde   zwire**
>
> **geborn**   MHG
>
> n.body   NE.may to God.GEN kingdom come he   NE.be.SUBJN twice born
>
> No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again'
>
> (WPPhys. 19, 2: 151r; ca. 1120)

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[16] In fact it is quite clear that exceptive clauses are also formally not independent despite their word order, because of the subjunctive mood on the verb, a marker of clausal dependency in older West Germanic (cf. e.g. Lühr 1985), as well as commonly cross-linguistically (Cristofaro 2003).

vnde   dar   moste numment yn,   **he ne gheue   V mark   vp   dat**

minste,   MLG

and   there   must   n.body   in(to)   he   NE   give.SUBJN five marks   at the   least

'and no one must be admitted, unless he give at least five marks'

(Stralsund 1375)

Maer   dat en   mach niet   siin **het en   waer   een sempel**

wonde   MDu

but   that NE   can   NEG   be   it   NE.were.SUBJN   a   simple   wound

'But that cannot be unless it were a simple wound'   (Br 1350; Burridge 1993:181)

This type of construction is very common in Middle High German, Middle Low German and Middle

Dutch. It is important not to confuse it with sentential negation marked by the preverbal marker alone

as found in Old High German, Old Saxon or Old Dutch. In a corpus of Middle Low German chancery

texts from ten places all over northern Germany between 1325 and 1575[17], I did not find a single case

in which sentential negation is expressed with the preverbal marker alone; all sentences in which the

preverbal marker appears alone are cases of exceptive clauses. Sundquist (2005) reports finding a total

of 90 cases of single preverbal 'negation' in his own corpus of Middle Low German chancery texts

from Lübeck between 1320 and 1500. He quotes four examples (his (10), (12), (13) and (25)), two of

which (10, 25) are however inconclusive without the preceeding context, and could well be exceptive

clauses. Furthermore, Sundquist's binomial regression analysis of factor groups reveals a strong

favoring effect of the clause type 'main clause', which probably means 'verb second', for the use of the

preverbal marker alone (Sundquist 2005:159). Therefore, it cannot be excluded that many of the 90

cases are actually not instances of sentential negation, but of exceptive clauses.

Exceptive clauses have a special status for three reasons. First, they remain the only context in

which the preverbal marker survives on its own for an extended period of time. If they had been

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[17]   The corpus is based on the collections of chancery documents from the cities of Braunschweig, Oldenburg,

Steinfurt and Stralsund, the convents of Barsinghausen, Börstel, Mariengarten, Rinteln and Scharnebeck, and the

diocese of Lübeck.

equivalent to a negative conditional of the type seen in 0, which was available all along and is in fact one of the contexts where the preverbal marker is lost first in Middle Dutch and Middle Low German[18], it would be unclear why the exceptive construction should have survived for as long as it did, see section 0.

Deden se   des   night, sosculde men   dat   [...] vorclaghen

                    MLG

did   they this.GENNEG so should one that   charge

'if they do not comply with it, one should take this to court'   (Oldenburg 36/1/1345)

Second, although they are usually classified as a subtype of negative conditionals, there are arguments for the absence of true sentential (i.e. propositional) negation in them. In my corpus of Middle Low German chancery documents, in none of the 176 exceptive clauses with the preverbal marker do we find a postverbal marker or an n-word, even though either would be compatible with *ne/en* (see also section 0). From a cross-linguistic perspective, it becomes clear that this is this is not surprising. French for example has an exceptive construction with 'expletive' *ne* 0, which can also be rendered as a 'normal' conditional with sentential negation. As however already noted by Clarke (1904:7f), *pas* is often omitted in 0b, the negative conditional rendition of 0a, presumably exactly because of the absence of sentential negation in the equivalent clause with *à moins que*, on which 0b seems to be modelled. Clarke writes: "It seems as if *ne* so used has a function which *ne…pas* would not fulfil. The expression as we have it undoubtedly means more than *si je ne me trompe pas*; its force is rather *à moins que je ne me trompe…*" (Clarke 1904:8).

Il   n'en   fera   rien,   **à moins que** vous **ne**   luiparliez.

  he   NE.PART do.FUT n.thing   to least   that you NE him speak.SUBJN

  'He will do nothing about it unless you talk to him'

---

a. à moins que je (**ne**) me   trompe

     to least that   I   NE   REFL   be.mistaken

      'unless I am mistaken'

b. si je **ne**   me   trompe   (**pas**)

     if I   NE   REFL   be.mistaken   NEG

      'if I am not mistaken'

Another argument against exceptive clauses being equivalent to negative conditionals and for the absence of negation is that exceptive clauses with *unless* in English do not license weak NPI indefinites (unless there is a clause-internal licenser such as negation):[19]

   a. It's no problem if you haven't done **anything**.

    b. It's no problem, unless you have done **something** / ***anything**.

The reason for this state of affairs is probably that exceptive clauses do not actually express a negative condition for a consequent to be true, but an underlyingly positive one. They presuppose that the unmarked or expected state of affairs is the opposite, positive statement. 0a is therefore not equivalent to the negative conditional in the form *if..not* as in 0a, but rather implies 0b:

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[19]   Note that free-choice *any* is fine in *unless*-clauses. We can determine whether we are dealing with a free-coice item by employing the tests devised by Carlson (1981). According to Carlson, free-choice *any*, but not polarity-sensitive *any*, is (a) modifiable by *almost* or *nearly* (although this test does not seem to work so well in *unless*-clauses), (b) may precede numerals and (c) licenses 'amount relatives' like *there is*.

(i) a.   Unless *anyone* disagrees, we will adjourn the meeting.

   b.   Unless *any three members* disagree, we will adjourn the meeting.

   c.   Unless *anyone there is in this room* disagrees, we will adjourn the meeting.

Compare this to 0b:

(ii) a.   *It's no problem unless you have done *nearly anything*.

   b.   *It's no problem unless you have done *any three things*.

   c.   *It's no problem unless you have done *anything there is*.

23

a. It's no problem if you haven't done anything.

b. It is a problem if you have done something.

Third, they clearly differ *formally* from other positive or negative conditionals in the continental West Germanic languages at the time they are used. Normally, conditionals are either asyndetic with sentence-initial verb placement, or syndetic with an *if*-type complementiser and sentence-final verb placement. Verb-initial asyndetic conditionals always precede their main clause consequent, as seen in 0, repeated here as 0. Syndetic conditionals may occasionally follow it 0, but preceding seems almost exclusive in the sources consulted for this study.

Deden se   des   night, so   sculde men dat [...] vorclaghen

                    MLG

did   they this.GENNEG so   should one that   charge

'if they do not comply with it, one should take this to court'   (Oldenburg 36/1/1345)

a. **Szo euch nu der son frey macht**, so   seyt yhr recht frei

     ENHG

  if   you   now the son free makes   then   are you right free

  'If the Son therefore shall make you free, (so) you shall be free indeed'

                              (John 8:36, Luther's 1545 translation, from Lühr 1985:35)

b. up dat vorige 18 m   jharliker rennte   villichte under geistlicke   MLG

    up that previous 18 mark annual   revenue easily   under clerical

    beschermingenicht   genamen [_], **so   kein bewis vorhanden   [_]**,[20]

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[20]   This example contains two cases of finite auxiliary and copula ellipsis, indicated by [_]. This was a very common phenomenon in Early New High German between 1500 and 1650 (Breitbarth 2005), and is occasionally also found in Middle Low German after 1500. As Middle Low German ceased to be used as a written language after about 1550, and High German auxiliary ellipsis only becomes very frequent around 1600, it is unclear here whether Low German follows High German in expanding the use of the ellipsis later or not.

protection	NEG	taken	[be]	if	no	proof	present	[was]

'so that the previous 18 mark annual revenue are not taken under clerical protection, in case no proof was present …' (Lübeck 05/18/1519)

The four main formal properties of exceptive clauses setting them apart from ordinary conditionals are that (a) they require the subject to front in addition to the verb, that is, unlike other conditionals, they are verb-second instead of verb-first or verb-last (with a complementiser), (b) they always follow the clause which they express an exception to, (c) there is a strong tendency for the embedding clause to contain a negation itself and (d) the verb of the exceptive clause is always in subjunctive mood.[21] It seems as though the entire construction encodes the function of an exceptive complementiser ('unless, except'). Under the analysis proposed here, *ne/en* is the Alternative Realisation of the features of a CP-related PolP, and arguably, the placement of verb and subject and the subjunctive morphology on the verb are a consequence of this.

This construction develops further as follows: In High and Low German, the preverbal marker is first joined by the adverb *dan > denn* ('then'), first still with any type of verb, and is eventually replaced by the frozen expression *es sei denn* 'unless', lit. 'it be.SUBJN then'.

a. original exceptive construction:

dat	en	sy	mit	willen	der	zessen	MLG
that	NE	be.SUBJN	with	declared.intention	of.the	six	

'unless it be with the permission of the six' (Steinfurt 04/28/1370)

b. augmented with *dan*:

id	ensy	dan	myt	willen [...]	des	edelen	unsers	leven
it	NE.be.SUBJN	then	with	declared.intention [...]	of.the	noble	our	dear

juncheren

squire

'unless it be with the permission of our dear noble squire' (Steinfurt 05/07/1486)

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[21]   In some cases, this may be homophonous to the present or especially past indicative.

25

c. frozen expression with denn:

es   sei   denn ...   ModG

it   be.SUBJN then ...

'unless...'

On average, exceptive clauses disappear from Low German around 1475. In Dutch, the exceptive construction survives until it is ultimately grammaticalised as a concessive complementiser *tenzij* 'unless' < *het.en.zij* 'it.NE.be.SUBJN', complete with subordinate clause word order (sentence-final verb placement).

Ik ga   surfen, tenzij het windstil is.

                        ModDu

I go surf   unless it   windless is

'I will go surfing, unless there is no wind.'

While the continental West Germanic languages maintained the preverbal marker *en/ne* in a purely formal, non-negative use in exceptive clauses, Middle English developed a different non-negative use of its preverbal element, to which we will now turn.

Expletive negation

The other context in which the old preverbal marker continues to be used on its own even when the new adverbial negator is already the most frequent negative particle is 'expletive negation', i.e. the use of formal negation in the complements of adversative predicates (i.e., predicates of prohibition, denial and doubt), negated and sometimes comparative and interrogative clauses. A variety of names have been proposed for this phenomenon, ranging from *paratactic* (Jespersen 1917) via (*purely*) *formal* (Jack 1978a) and *expletive* (Burridge 1993) to *redundant* negation (Wallage 2005). I will use the term expletive negation as it is traditionally used in French grammar, referring to its lack of a negative interpretation.

26

Expletive negation in the history of English has recently been addressed by Van der Wurff (1999) and Wallage (2005, 2008). Both identify two types of expletive negation in Early English, but propose very different analyses for them. One type uses whichever is the regular sentential negator in the relevant period (thus, initially *ne* and later *not* and negative quantifiers) and is productive from Old English until Early Middle English (Wallage 2005:178).

Bochas forbade husbandes without prefe **not** to leve to sone their wyves

  Bochas forbade husbands without proof NEG to leave too soon their wives

  'Bochas forbade husbands without proof to leave their wives too soon'

                              (c. 1430-40, Lydg. Bochas (1554) 22b; Wallage 2005:178)

The other use emerges in Middle English and involves only single *ne* at a time when *ne* is already extremely infrequent or lost in its unsupported use (Wallage 2005:179).[22]

ne   doute the nat that alle thinges **ne** ben don   aryght

  NEG doubt you not that all things ne are done rightfully

  'Do not doubt that all things are done rightfully'

                              (Chaucer's Boethius IV P5,49; Wallage 2005:178)

According to Wallage, the difference between the two types is that the context for the first type is clauses following adversative predicates in general while that for the second type is clauses following negated (adversative) predicates. He generalises that "[w]hilst non-negative adversative predicates select negative complements containing a sentential negator such as Middle English *not*, negative adversative predicates do not. They take complements with *ne* at a time when unsupported *ne* is not a productive negative marker" (Wallage 2005:181).

Van der Wurff (1999) proposes to treat only cases like 0 (i.e., which use *ne*) as 'expletive negation proper'. The other type, illustrated in 0, which uses the regular sentential negator, whatever it is at a given stage, he calls "polarity shift", and he analyses it as a non-grammaticalised form of

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[22]   The glosses in 0 (NEG, not, ne) are Wallage's.

27

contamination of the main clause performative and its content, e.g. prohibition, doubt, etc., comparable to shift from indirect to direct speech (e.g. "He said that, I will do X").

Because the second pattern ('expletive negation proper') is only productive in Middle English, and mainly restricted to the occurrence of a negated adversative predicate in the matrix clause, Wallage takes it to be evidence of the competition between the old and the new *ne*. In this type of expletive negation, we would be dealing with an instance of the new *ne* [pol:] which requires licensing by an element carrying [pol:neg], such as *not*. He assumes that expletive *ne* is actually licensed the same way as 'supported' *ne* in the bipartite construction, namely by feature valuation/agreement. He thus analyses these constructions as a form of interclausal Negative Concord ('non-local multiple negation', Wallage 2005:181).

> "In Middle English, redundant *ne* appears in non-local multiple negation across a clause boundary. The appearance of redundant *ne* in non-local multiple negation shows that *ne* is insufficient to mark negation on its own in the complement clause. It appears when licensed by another negative. The availability of this new context for ME *ne* is further evidence of the competition between two types of *ne* which I proposed for Middle English."
>
> (Wallage 2005:181)

This quote makes clear one problem essentially all available approaches to expletive negation face. Despite the lack of logical negation, the licensing mechanisms invoked treat the purely formally negative elements in expletive negation constructions as markers of negation: "the negator *ne* is almost always used to mark redundant negation in the complement clause of a negated predicate, even in Late Middle English when the typical sentential negator is *not*." (Wallage 2005:179). However, expletive negation is not in fact logical negation at all. If it was indeed necessary "to mark negation [...] in the complement clause", the speaker could choose to use *not* [pol:neg] right away. Van der Wurff (1999: 297f) furthermore remarks that sentential negation in the matrix clause alone does not seem to be sufficient to trigger expletive negation with *ne*, so it is rather the presence of the adversative that seems to trigger the appearance of expletive *ne*, pointing in the direction of lexical or semantic selection rather than syntactic licensing.

Under the approach proposed here, *ne* appears as Alternative Realisation of 'selected' Pol [affect] on the finite verb, i.e. as something like Laka's C_{Neg}. This is crucially not intra-clausal sentential negation, nor is it inter-clausal agreement. The function of *ne* is to realise the presence of affective Pol at the interface between clauses. Cases of *not* on the other hand can be analysed as "polarity shift", following Van der Wurff.

A possible objection

It may appear that the availability of so few non-negative constructions using the polarity marker *ne/en* which are furthermore both still more or less closely related to negation (in a higher clause) is not enough to argue that *ne/en* is the realisation of the feature [affect] of Pol. While the preverbal marker *ne* in French is found in a range of non-veridical contexts[23], it is only one per language in our cases, viz. exceptive clauses in Middle Dutch, Middle High German and Middle Low German and expletive negation in Middle English. Why did the West Germanic preverbal marker never spread to contexts like comparatives or questions?

I already mentioned in section 0 that depending on the non-veridical operator licensing it, Pol may have different morphosyntactic reflexes, not all of which need to have an overt realisation in a language. Given its history, *ne/en* starts out in 'more negative' contexts, and may or may not spread to 'less negative' ones. This is a rare development, but not unattested. There appears to be a cross-

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[23]   These contexts in French include the complements of adversative predicates, comparatives or the preposition *avant* 'before':

(i)   Je crains qu'il ne soit malade.

    I fear that.he NE be.SUBJN ill

    'I am afraid that he is (*not) ill'

(ii)   Elle a pleuré avant qu'elle ne se soit endormie.

    she has cried before that.she NE REFL be.SUBJN go.to.sleep

    'She cried before she went to sleep' (*didn't go)

(iii)   Le temps est pire qu'il ne l'était hier

    the weather is worse than.it NE it.was yesterday

    'The weather is better than it was (*n't) yesterday'

linguistically confirmed hierarchy of contexts with for example conditionals at the weaker end and negation at the strongest end. As has been discussed in the literature on (the acquisition of) NPI licensing[24], the restrictions on elements licensed in non-negative non-veridical contexts are harder to acquire the 'weaker' the context is, and need solid evidence in the primary linguistic data available to language learners. As discussed in Jäger (2007), this is the reason why it is much more common cross-linguistically for weak NPI indefinites to become strong NPIs and eventually negative quantifiers than it is for negative quantifiers to go the other way. According to her, this has to do with the role of underspecification in language acquisition (Eisenbeiß 2002), as all language learners do is acquire a more specific/restricted licensing context if cued for it. That is, they can acquire the 'plus' setting for a feature, while the 'minus' setting (i.e., the absence of the feature under the underspecification approach) is the default setting, and will only be acquired in the absence of any more specific cues. This makes the development from 'more negative' to 'less negative' so rare crosslinguistically. It is nevertheless possible for a lexical item to develop in the opposite direction. Jäger (2007: section 3) discusses a number of examples from different languages where indefinites have lost their restriction to negative contexts, such as Old Irish *nech* 'no one' > Middle Irish *nech* 'anyone'.

With respect to the fate of the West Germanic preverbal marker *ne/en*, the development began in 'more negative' contexts, as we have just seen, and the marker was lost in most languages before it could become more entrenched and spread to less 'negative' contexts. This is not an argument against the proposed analysis. Indeed, in several Flemish dialects, in which the old preverbal marker has survived as *en/n/e* to this day, it has in fact spread to a wider range of non-negative non-veridical contexts, such as *before*-clauses 0, the standard of comparison 0-0, conditional clauses 0 and the context of *maar* 'only' 0 (Breitbarth and Haegeman 2008):[25]

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[24] Cf. among others, Van der Wal (1996), Van der Wouden (1996), Jäger (2007).

[25] There are analyses of the comparative assuming that it underlyingly contains negation, e.g. Seuren (1973), or more recently, Penka (2007a). While Hoeksema (1983) has shown that clausal comparatives (i.e., comparatives with a clausal, not just an NP complement, like 0 and 0) at least are downward-entailing contexts, this does not yet imply that they are negative contexts as well. Many approaches to comparatives do not postulate the availability of negation in them and analyse them instead in terms of containment-relations or comparison between sets of degrees (cf. e.g. Hoeksema 1983, von Stechow 1984 and references cited therein).

30

Zie dadier wig zat veur dat a op u kappe **en**-komt

see that.you.here away are before that he on your hood EN.comes

'Clear out before he gets you.' (Ghent, Tavernier 1959:247)

Marjo heeft nu meer koeien dan ze vroeger **en** had.

Marjo has now more cows than she before EN had

'Marjo has more cows now than she used to have'

(Overijse , Van der Auwera & De Vogelaer 2008: (18c))

...gelijk dat 't nu tegenwoordig **en** is ewaar

...like that it now presently EN is PRT

'as it is nowadays, isn't it?' (Ghent, Leemans 1966: 191)

aster den nieuwen maar **en** is [...] dan ben ekik al gered.'

if.there the new.one but EN is [...] then am I already saved

'As long as the new one is still there, I'm saved' (Buggenhout-Opstal, De Pauw 1973:5)

K'(**en**) een mo drie marbels

I (EN) have but three marbles

'I only have three marbles' (Lapscheure, L.Haegeman, p.c.)

The reasons for why *ne/en* was lost in the other West Germanic languages before it could spread into more non-negative non-veridical contexts as it has in the Flemish dialects was already hinted at at the end of section 0: the exceptive construction in Middle Low German for example disappeared around 1475, expletive negation in Middle English also some time in the 15th century (Wallage 2005:179).

Indefinites in the scope of negation

The behaviour of indefinites in the scope of negation in the West Germanic languages at stage II provides further support for the proposed functional differentiation of the preverbal and postverbal markers, and supports the hybrid approach to the transition from stage I to stage II of Jespersen's Cycle. At the latter stage, n-marked indefinites can be used only with the preverbal marker, even after a postverbal marker is already well-established as the expression of sentential negation.

In her Middle High German corpus, for example, Jäger (2006:185ff) found no example of co-occurring *nicht* and n-indefinites, while *en* can co-occur with them (7 occurrences in the Nibelungenlied and 6 in the Lancelot; Jäger 2006:189). Similarly, in my Middle Low German corpus of official documents (1350-1550) mentioned above, only two cases of *nit/niet/nycht/nicht* co-occurring with an n-indefinite were found (out of 1301 sentences with n-indefinites).[26]

Middle Low German

	en ..*n-indef*	*n-indef. alone*	*n-indef* .. nicht	*total*
Barsinghausen	40	27	-	67
Börstel	27	35	-	62
Braunschweig	128	176	-	304
Lübeck	24	125	-	149
Mariengarten	17	39	-	56
Oldenburg	75	86	-	161

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[26] They occur in 1523 and 1559, that is, rather late in the Middle Low German period and just before High German replaced it as the written language in the area. This type of negative doubling with n-indefinite and *nicht* is also found in Early New High German around the same time, so this could be a sign of a next step in the development of the licensing conditions on n-indefinites (see section 0 below), possibly already under High German influence, which replaces Low German as the written language in the north in the middle of the 16th century. This type of negative concord is also the one we still find in present-day German dialects such as Bavarian (Weiß 2002), and other West Germanic dialects, e.g. West Flemish (Haegeman 1995).

Rinteln	16	25	2	43
Scharnebeck	54	100	-	154
Steinfurt	34	30	-	64
Stralsund	2	67	-	69
Uelzen	70	102	-	172
total	487	812	2	1301

The same tendency of n-indefinites to exclude the postverbal negator, but to (optionally) co-occur with the preverbal marker is strongly confirmed for Middle Dutch. In an analysis of the legal documents from the Corpus Gysseling (Gysseling 1977) between 1200 and 1280, I did not find any co-occurrence of n-indefinites with the postverbal negator *niet*. Even Middle Dutch *g(h)een* 'no' is no exception; unlike Middle High German *dehein* 'no, any', which occasionally does co-occur with *niht*, because it starts out as a weak NPI ('any') and is reanalysed as an n-indefinite only later (Jäger 2006,2007), *g(h)een* never seems to co-occur with *niet* in the texts analysed. For its co-occurrence with *ne/en* or alone, it does not seem to make a difference in the corpus investigated here whether *g(h)een* is n-marked (*engheen/negheen*) or not.[27] Already in these early texts, about a quarter of the n-marked indefinites occur without the preverbal marker *en/ne/n* 0. This is remarkable seeing as Middle Dutch kept the preverbal marker to a greater extent and over a longer period than Middle High German and Middle English (see section 0).

13th century Middle Dutch n-indefinites (1200-1280)

	en.geen	*geen*	*niemand*	total

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[27] The column labels in the table are standardised to Modern Dutch. What I labelled *en.geen* here appears in the spellings *negen, negeen, negheen, engheen* and *negien*. *Geen* appears as *geen, gheen* and *gien*; *niemand* as *nieman, niemen, niement* and *niemmen*.

33

	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
+ *en/ne*	9	69.2	13	68.4	27	81.8	49	75.4
− *en/ne*	4	30.8	6	31.6	6	18.2	16	24.6

dat niemen vortane   hem sal onderwinden moghen der   bruederscap ...

that n.body henceforth him shall begin   may   of.the fraternity ...

'that noone henceforth may become part of the fraternity ...'   (CG14:63,8-10; Mechelen 1254)

The same tendency has been noted for English (Jack 1978a,b).[28] Ingham (2003) contests this and claims that at least in Southern English dialects, Late Middle English allowed *not* to co-occur with n-indefinites to a large extent. However, first, nowhere does he compare the constructions *ne*+n-word with *not*+n-word directly, and second, NC-constructions for him are (a) *not* +n-word, (b) n-word+n-word, and even (c) the 'bipartite negation' *ne*+*not*, but not *ne*+n-word. This definition precludes the direct comparision. The data collected by Wallage (2005:239f) in the PPCME2 corpus, especially negative NPs, on the other hand clearly confirm the tendency observed by Jack. As can be seen from 0, negative NPs and the adverb *never* co-occur on average in 93% of all possible cases with the preverbal marker *ne* between 1150 and 1350. After that, *ne* becomes very infrequent in the language in general. This does not, however, mean that *not* simply takes over where *ne* disappears.

	negative NP			never		
	# ne	total	% ne	# ne	total	% ne
1150-1250	493	520	95	264	289	92

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[28]   Iyeiri (2001) goes as far as to call this tendency 'Jack's Law', which for Middle English, however, does not seem to be justified, as the data of Jack (1978a,b) and Wallage (2005) show.

1250-1350	168	189	89	15	16	94
1350-1420	111	1022	11	25	274	9
1420-1500	12	1018	1	3	374	1

The data in 0 show that on the contrary, the co-occurrence of negative NPs and *not* remains extremely infrequent.

	negative NP		
	# not	total	% not
1350-1420	31	1022	3
1420-1500	21	1018	2
Total	52	2040	2.5

Summary

The West Germanic languages developed specific constructions using the preverbal marker *ne* without expressing negation. Furthermore, the preverbal marker is compatible with n-marked indefinites, while the postverbal marker is (tendentially) not. This forms a supporting argument for a functional differentiation of the pre- and postverbal markers at the point in Jespersen's cycle when the postverbal element takes over the power of expressing negation.

35

The diachronic development of negation in West Germanic

A hybrid approach to the change stage I > stage II in West Germanic

Donhauser (1996) claims, based on pre-formal works on the history of German negation, that n-indefinites could already be used independently of a sentential negator since the 8th century. Mourek (1904) for example gives 26 examples of n-indefinites used without the preverbal negator *ni* in Otfrid's Gospel Book. This seems to have also been possible in Old English, he quotes 41 examples from Beowulf (7th c.). Here are some examples from Old High German and Old English.

thazimo fisg nihein intflôh

OHG

that him fish no.one escaped

'that no fish escaped him'   (Otfrid V.14,23)

Nemo quippe in occulto quid facit ...

Nioman giuuisso in taugle uuaz tuot ...   OHG

n.body certainly in secrecy anything does

'Certainly, noone does anything furtively'   (Tatian Ev.Harm. 104,1)

Nænegum ārað

OE

None   spares

'he spares none'   (Beowulf 598)

nænigne ic under swegle sêlran hŷrde hordmâdmum hæleða

OE

none   I under sky   better heard from.hoard-treasures of.heroes

'I have heard of no(ne) better hoard-treasures of heroes under the sky'   (Beowulf 1197-1198)

In Jäger's (2006) Old High German corpus, n-indefinites occurring on their own are still infrequent. In the three Middle High German texts she looked at, however, the independent use of n-indefinites is much more advanced than the independent use of the postverbal negator, and more frequent than the use of n-indefinites with the preverbal marker. On average ca. 90% of the n-indefinites occur on their own, while *niht* occurs without *en/ne* only in 36% of the cases on average.[29]

Middle High German

	ne/en + n-indefinite	n-indefinite alone
Nibelungenlied	6 (14%)	37 (86%)
Lancelot	6 (19%)	26 (81%)
Berthold	0 (0%)	42 (100%)
total/average	12 (10%)	105 (90%)

(based on Jäger 2006)

As seen in section 0, table 0 and example 0, in Dutch, as well, n-indefinites become able to independently express sentential negation very early w.r.t. the overall progress of Jespersen's cycle in the language. Old English texts and text types do not seem to behave uniformly w.r.t negative doubling (concord of a negation particle with an n-word) of *ne* with 'negative phrases'. While prose texts on average hardly allow n-indefinites to occur without *ne* (Wallage 2005:238), poetry seems to be much more advanced in this respect: on average, *ne* only co-occurs with n-indefinites in 21% of the relevant cases in main clauses and in 38% of the subordinate clauses (Wallage 2005:244). In many of the poetry texts, the negative phrases in fact do not co-occur with *ne* at all, while others appear to be more

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[29] *Niht* occurs on its own in 35% of the cases in the *Nibelungenlied*, 28% in the prose *Lancelot* and 45% in sermons of *Berthold von Regensburg* (Jäger 2006:78). The figures used in 0 are based on Jäger's (2006) tables (482) and (489). The numbers of n-indefinites used on their own are based on her (482) and the numbers for *ne/en* + n-indefinite are taken from her (489), where she differentiates the different types of NC (I have discounted occurrences of *dehein/kein* due to its ongoing shift from a weak NPI ('any') to an n-indefinite ('no') as discussed by Jäger).

conservative.[30] There is also one exception among the prose texts. In the OE Bede, only 23% of the negative NPs occur in negative doubling in main clauses, 14% in second conjuncts and 17% in subordinate clauses (Wallage 2005:238).

This means that the development of negative indefinites independently expressing sentential negation predates the independent use of the new postverbal marker in all West Germanic languages, and, if Donhauser is right, possibly even its emergence itself. Jäger (2006:191f) argues for Middle High German that "*niht* stepped in to additionally identify negation mainly in those cases where negation was not already sufficiently identified by an n-indefinite. This resulted in a nearly complementary distribution of *niht* and n-indefinites". That is, the postverbal negator only followed the development in the system of indefinites.

Given the observed developments, I propose that it is a change in the licensing conditions of indefinites in the scope of negation which ultimately triggers Jespersen's cycle in the West Germanic languages. While at the original stage they require the presence of the sentential negator, the preverbal clitic *ni/ne*, to be licensed, they become (optionally) able to identify sentential negation on their own. The mechanism by which this occurs is comparable to expressions like 'care less' or 'give a damn' no longer occurring with sentential negation in some varieties of English and becoming 'negative by association'.[31] Once they are, at least optionally, able to identify sentential negation on their own, the status of the preverbal marker becomes open to reanalysis. In negative sentences with n-indefinites, it is now interpretable as a polarity marker. That means that the preverbal marker has become ambiguous at this point between being the expression of sentential negation (in clauses without n-indefinites) and being the realisation of the features of Pol (in sentences with). This ambiguity is then resolved by the reanalysis of an independently grammaticalised emphasiser as the lexical expression of negation.

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[30]   Nine of the thirteen texts from the York-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Poetry Wallage discusses have ≤ 25% of doubling with *ne* in main clauses, five of them no doubling at all. In subordinate clauses, five of the texts have ≤ 25% of doubling with *ne*, three of them none at all, cf. Wallage (2005:244).

[31]   This term is due to John Lawler, http://www-personal.umich.edu/%7Ejlawler/aue/giveadamn.html, who writes: "there apparently is such a thing as negation by association. Like what happened to French *pas* from *ne...pas*, which is now usable as a negative in its own right, from long association in the discontinuous morpheme with the overt negative *ne*, *give a damn* and *could care less* have, in American usage at least, come to have their own quasi-independent negative force". Cf. also Horn (2001).

The scenario outlined here is necessarily 'hybrid' with respect to the typology of approaches to Jespersen's cycle discussed in section 0: The postverbal marker could not have been reanalysed without the 'weakening' of *ne*'s position in the system, brought about by the ambiguity of the indefinites in the scope of negation. On the other hand, *ne* could not fully have been reanalysed without the reanalysis of the postverbal marker from an original emphasiser as the lexicalisation of sentential negation. That is to say, the 'weakening' of *ne* and the reanalysis of *not/niet/niht* go hand in hand in West Germanic.

This scenario is similar to Postma's (2002) analysis in the sense that it is the reanalysis of indefinites in the scope of negation from NPIs to indefinites able to identify negation on their own that drives the restructuring of the Dutch negation system. As such, they remain compatible with the preverbal marker until the latter falls victim to what Postma (2002) calls "deflexion".[32]

The duration of stage II and the transition to stage III

The present approach, based on a functional and morphosyntactic differentiation of the two markers at stage II of Jespersen's cycle, leads us to expect a potentially stable stage II due to the simultaneous reanalysis of the two elements, because no competition or functional redundancy is involved.

As discussed in section 0, if there were two elements in a stage II language jointly or separately expressing negation and if something like Detges' and Waltereit's (2002) principle of *constructional iconicity* was the only force removing excess negative markers, we would expect rather

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[32]   According to Postma, Middle Dutch negation is achieved by a preverbal negation marker and an "NPI", which can be an NPI pronoun, an indefinite nominal or adverbial element, but also certain verbs and syntactic constructions which only occur under negation or additional weak NPI contexts (questions, conditionals, comparative constructions). He identifies two classes of NPIs, ones which can co-occur with each other as well as with the postverbal negator *niet* ("NPI-2"), and elements which are incompatible with each other (and the postverbal negator *niet*) ("NPI-1"). It is the transition of n-indefinites from class NPI-2 to NPI-1 which triggers the shift. Unfortunately, Postma neither gives the dates nor a quantitative overview of the development, because according to him, the 'strengthening' of *ne* by NPIs of either type is a strict rule in Middle Dutch. The analysis presented here obviously disagrees with Postma's analysis as it assumes that *ne/en* is not the sentential negator at stage II of Jespersen's cycle but a polarity marker and *niet* not an NPI, but the sentential negator.

short periods of transition from stage I to stage II. Under the present approach, and based on the evidence from early West Germanic languages presented so far, it is more likely that only one of two elements in a construction expressing sentential negation can be the actual expression of sentential negation. If, however, there is no 'competition' between two elements for this function, we can potentially expect an extended transition period.

For Dutch, Burridge (1993:190f) reports a such a relatively stable transition period of ca. 300 years. Stage III only fully replaces stage II around 1650. There is a dialectal split in her data: Brabantish in the South is lagging behind in the loss of *ne*, while Hollandish in the North already has a higher percentage of single postverbal deletion from 1300 on, but it still maintains the preverbal marker to a high degree, around two thirds of the cases on average. In general, Dutch seems to have the type of stable transition period expected if there is an early functional differentiation of the old and the new negator.

On the other hand, it has been noted by Iyeiri (2001) for English and Jäger (2006) for German that contrary to what is commonly claimed in the traditional literature on these languages, the period of transition from stage I to stage III was actually rather short in these languages, and the evidence for an independently existing stage II is scarce. Jäger (2006) shows that the percentage of *en/ne..niht* in her Middle High German corpus is actually significantly lower on average than the percentage of *niht* alone 0, while in Old High German, a stage-I-construction with only a preverbal marker *ni/ne* prevails.

Ratio of neg-particles in Middle High German

	Nibelungenlied (A) (1190-1200)	Lancelot (before 1250)	Berthold (approx. 1275)
en/ne as only neg-marker	7%	2%	3%
en/ne ... niht	13%	27%	4%
niht as only neg-marker	35%	28%	45%

(adapted from Jäger 2006:93)

Jäger notes that "[t]here is no evidence for a stable stage II period in terms of Jespersen's cycle" in the history of German and that "Middle High German is in fact a stage-III language with respect to the average negated clause" (Jäger 2006:211). In the same vein, Iyeiri concludes her discussion of the development of negation in Middle English poetry saying,

> "Although Jespersen (1917: 9-11) regards *ne..not* as the most representative form of negation in Middle English, I find it difficult to claim that *ne..not* was fully established at any period of Middle English. Before *ne..not* establishes itself, *not* alone becomes abundant on the one hand, while on the other hand, *ne* alone is retained to a certain extent even in late Middle English, especially in some specific syntactic contexts, so that it is eventually *ne..not*, rather than *ne* alone, that declines first in Middle English."

> (Iyeiri 2001:176)

In Wallage's (2005) Middle English data, the bipartite construction is more frequent than single *ne* or single *not* only in the period from 1250-1350.

	ne	%	*ne..not*	%	*not*	%	Total
1150-1250	832	54.6%	686	45.0%	5	0.3%	1523
1250-1350	209	25.0%	541	64.7%	86	10.3%	836
1350-1420	125	5.0%	278	11.2%	2086	83.8%	2489
1420-1500	36	1.7%	24	1.2%	2000	97.1%	2060

(Wallage 2005:195)

Middle Low German takes an intermediate position between Middle High German/Early Modern German and Middle Dutch. The texts from all the places in my corpus develop from stage II to stage III between 1450 and 1500. As the preverbal marker only ever occurs on its own in exceptive clauses in

41

the texts examined (cf. section 0), and no longer expresses sentential negation, it will not be considered in 0.

	en .. nicht	%	Total (*en..*) *nicht*
1325-1374	52	65.0%	80
1375-1424	58	33.3%	174
1425-1474	252	61.0%	413
1475-1524	51	17.6%	290
1525-1574	14	14.1%	99

We thus find two scenarios w.r.t. the duration of the transition period in the West Germanic languages. The relatively stable stage II in Middle Dutch and Middle Low German points at a functional differentiation of the preverbal and the postverbal marker. This is further corroborated by the fact that the single preverbal marker is only found in exceptive clauses in my Middle Low German corpus, but no longer in sentential negation. There is therefore no competition between *ne/en* and *niet/nicht* as assumed by Frisch (1997) and Sundquist (2005).

The rapid transition from stage I to stage III in Middle English and in Middle High German on the other hand could be a potential argument for the presence of two incompatible or competing "negation" elements per clause. However, given that the other two arguments for functional differentiation of the pre- and postverbal markers, i.e., the existence of purely formal uses of the preverbal marker and the behaviour of indefinites in the scope of negation, apply to Middle High German and Middle English as well, I suggest that the differences in the length of the transition period are simply a result of the purely formal uses of the preverbal marker disappearing before it could spread to other non-negative affective contexts, thereby removing independent evidence available to language learners for postulating *ne/en* as the realisation of Pol [affect]. We have seen (section 0) that the preverbal marker is still available in several Flemish dialects, where further non-negative uses of *en*

42

have developed. Furthermore, the feature [affect] is implied by overtly identified negation, as every negative clause is also affective. Therefore, a short period of transition is possible under the present approach as well.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed an alternative view on Jespersen's cycle as it occurred in the West-Germanic languages English, Dutch and German. Any approach to Jespersen's cycle has to face two problems: first, concerning the nature of the two elements at stage II of Jespersen's cycle, and second, concerning the direction of the change. Problematically, all available approaches assume in one form or other that there are two elements linked to the category "negation" present at stage II.

Under the approach to Jespersen's cycle taken here, there is no stage at which two elements individually or jointly express negation. Rather, the old and the new marker are reanalysed simultaneously, the old one as exponent of affective polarity, the new one taking over the expression of negation. Due to the simultaneous reanalysis, I have called this approach 'hybrid'. It is similar to Wallage's (2005, 2008) approach in that it assumes two separate changes, one from stage I to stage II and one from stage II to stage III. It is different in assuming that the former change had properties of both a pull chain and a push chain change as it is the result of a simultaneous reanalysis of both preverbal and postverbal markers. This reanalysis happened in order to resolve the ambiguity of the preverbal marker created by the independent change in the licensing conditions of n-indefinites.

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47

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