

# MICROVARIATION IN NEGATION IN VARIETIES OF DUTCH

Sjef Barbiers

*Meertens Institute of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences*

## 1 ■ INTRODUCTION\*

The first goal of this paper is to provide a descriptive overview of the microvariation in negation attested in varieties of Dutch.<sup>1</sup> The second goal is to consider some of the theoretical questions arising from this variation.

Description is provided in the first subsection of every main section, while the other subsections contain a theoretical discussion of one or more aspects of the variation described in the first part. Readers mainly interested in description can skip these subsections.

Section 2.1 describes the different patterns of sentential negation found in varieties of Dutch. Section 2.2-2.6 address the question as to whether sentential negation NOT is generated in SpecNegP or in the head Neg. Whereas Haegeman (1995) argues that West Flemish NOT is in SpecNegP and Hoeksema (1997) claims that Middle Dutch NOT is a head, it is argued here that in modern Standard Dutch NOT is sometimes generated in the head of NegP and sometimes in SpecNegP, the choice being fully determined by the interaction of the lexical specification of NOT with general syntactic licensing requirements. Evidence for the proposed specification of NOT comes from the syntactic distribution of the complementizer / preposition *van* 'of'. If this approach is correct, it suggests that the cross-linguistically varying X-bar status of NOT may be reducible to a cross-linguistically varying lexical specification of NOT.

---

\* I thank Hans den Besten, Liliane Haegeman and Helmut Weiß for valuable comments on previous versions of this paper. The usual disclaimers apply.

<sup>1</sup> This paper was written in May 2000 in preparation of the Dutch – Flemish research project Syntactic Atlas of the Dutch Dialects (SAND). The goal of this project is to take stock of and analyze current syntactic microvariation in the varieties of Dutch spoken in Flanders and the Netherlands, in four empirical domains: (i) The left periphery of the clause; (ii) The right periphery of the clause; (iii) Negation and Quantification, and (iv) Pronominal reference. The project will both yield a traditional atlas that represents the geographic distribution of microsyntactic variables and it will yield an electronic database that makes it possible to investigate the correlations between microsyntactic variables. The latter investigation will contribute to the theory of language system internal sources and limits of syntactic variation.

Section 3.1 describes variation in negative concord and the syntactic distribution of negative constituents. Section 3.2 discusses how the attested variation can be captured by the classical analysis according to which negative constituents move to SpecNegP.

Section 4.1 describes a special case of sentential negation, clause final negation as it is found in Afrikaans and certain Brabantish dialects. Section 4.2 argues that clause final negation can either arise by V-movement or by VP-movement, where language varieties may differ with respect to the option that is chosen. VP-movement is suggested to be an effect of the general requirement that negative constituents move to SpecNegP.

Section 5 summarizes the loci of microvariation in sentential negation in varieties of Dutch. The Appendix contains a description of further instances of microvariation in negation.

## 2 ■ SENTENTIAL NEGATION

### 2.1 ■ *Description*

We start by distinguishing three ways of expressing sentential negation, illustrated in (1) for three stages of Dutch (from Hoeksema 1997: 140):

- (1) a.    **Preverbal clitic**                      b.    **Preverbal clitic and NOT**  
      Ic en was siec (Old Dutch)            Ic en was niet siec (Middle Dutch)  
      I NEG-CL was sick                      I NEG-CL was NOT sick.  
      ‘I was not sick.’                        ‘I was not sick.’
- c.    **NOT**  
      Ic was niet siec (Modern Dutch)  
      I was NOT sick  
      ‘I was not sick.’

These types of negation occur in modern varieties of Dutch as well:<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> The preverbal negative clitic only occurs in varieties of Dutch spoken in Flanders. It is usually optional and it seems to be gradually disappearing. Pauwels (1958:454) reports for the southern Brabantish dialect of Aarschot that there are hardly any instances of a negative particles in main clauses anymore. There is some reason to doubt



(3) [CP C [AgrP Agr [NegP NOT [Neg' NEG CLITIC [TP T [VP V]]]]]]

Given the NegP hypothesis, we would like to know for every morpheme expressing sentential negation in the patterns described above whether it is a maximal projection XP in SpecNegP or a head in Neg.

It should be noted that the head or XP status of a negative morpheme cannot be inferred from its form. What seems to be a single morpheme and hence a head at first sight may turn out to be an XP upon closer scrutiny. As a consequence, the identity of the form of NOT in two varieties, e.g. West Flemish and Standard Dutch, does not necessarily entail that NOT is an XP generated in SpecNegP in both language varieties.

### 2.3 ▪ Middle Dutch NOT

For Middle Dutch, Hoeksema (1997:149ff) argues that NOT behaves as a head rather than a maximal projection, even though Middle Dutch is very similar to West Flemish and French in having *en* (clitic negation) cooccurring with *niet* 'NOT'. Hoeksema's arguments are summarized in (4). An example of each phenomenon is given in (5).

- (4) (i) *niet en en* may merge (5a).
- (ii) In addition to the ordering *niet...Verb-en-Vf*, we also find the order *Verb-niet -en-Vf* (5b). The latter can only be derived if *niet* is in a head position, not if it is in a Spec position. Verb and Vf arguably form a head cluster in (Middle) Dutch, hence if *niet* is within this cluster, it must be a head.
- (iii) *niet* can sometimes move along with the finite verb in V2 constructions (5c); this is not possible for XPs.
- (iv) *niet* cannot be preposed, whereas XPs normally can (5d).

- (5) a. So lijde hi dat hi nin ware Christus     Middle Dutch  
so confessed he that he not-NEG were Christ
- b. dat si keren niet en mochten     Middle Dutch  
that they turn not NEG could

- c. Des niet en fael ic Middle Dutch  
 that NOT NEG fail I  
 ‘I won’t fail in that’
- d. \*Niet heb ik gewerkt Standard Dutch  
 not have I worked

However, the arguments in (4) are not conclusive arguments against an XP status of Middle Dutch NOT. The merger of *niet* and *en* exemplified in (5a) may be a PF-phenomenon triggered by linear adjacency. There are clear cases of phonological merger of a constituent in Spec position with a head, e.g. Middle Dutch *ic en* ‘I NEG-CL’ realized as *in*, and Standard Dutch *dat is* ‘that is’ realized as *das*. The order in (5b) may be the result of leftward movement of the VP *keren* ‘turn’ across *niet*, an option that is available in Standard Dutch as well: *omdat zij* [<sub>VP</sub> *rondjes draaien*] *nog niet zo goed konden* lit. ‘because they rounds turn yet not so well could’. The order in (5c) is exceptional (cf. Hoeksema 1997).

Finally, although the equivalent of (5d) is not found in Middle Dutch, this is not conclusive evidence for a head status either. To be sure, preposing is a standard test for V2-languages to establish constituenthood, i.e. XP status. However, in Standard Dutch preposing of NOT gives mixed results. The well-formedness of NOT-preposing in Standard Dutch appears to depend on the presence of a complement clause. This, to the best of my knowledge, novel observation is illustrated by the minimal pair in (6a,b).<sup>3</sup> Verbs that do not take an embedded clause do not allow NOT-preposing (6c,d).

- (6) a. Ik had wel gezien dat Jan aankwam, maar NIET had ik gezien dat Ed  
vertrok.  
 I had AFFIRM seen that John arrived, but NOT had I seen that Ed left  
 ‘I had seen that John arrived but I had not seen that Ed left.’
- b. \*Ik had Jan wel gezien, maar NIET had ik Marie gezien.  
 I had John AFFIRM seen but NOT had I Mary seen

<sup>3</sup> Although the observed contrast is rather strong for many native speakers, there are also speakers who do not have a contrast here, in two directions: some accept both (6a) and (6b), others reject both of them. I have no explanation for this variation.

- c. \*Jan heeft wel gelopen maar NIET heeft hij gezwommen  
John has AFFIRM run but NOT has he swum
- d. \*Jan kent Marie wel maar NIET kent hij Anna.  
John knows Mary AFFIRM but NOT knows he Anna

The conclusion of this section is that there is no evidence to exclude an XP status of Middle Dutch NOT. In view of the similarity of French, West Flemish and Middle Dutch, the null hypothesis seems to be that Middle Dutch NOT is an XP.

#### 2.4 ▪ *Standard Dutch NOT: sometimes a head, sometimes an XP*

The hypothesis that Middle Dutch NOT is an XP does not entail that Standard Dutch NOT is an XP as well. It could be that Standard Dutch NOT was reanalyzed as a head after the loss of the negative clitic. The fact that Standard Dutch NOT can sometimes be preposed but not always suggests that it is sometimes an XP and sometimes a head. This is exactly what we argue in this section. The head or XP status and hence the distribution of Standard Dutch NOT will be shown to be fully determined by the interaction between the lexical specification of NOT and general syntactic licensing conditions. The advantage of this analysis is that it makes it unnecessary to stipulate the X-bar level status of NOT, thus supporting bare phrase structure theory (Chomsky 1995).

As was observed in (6), Standard Dutch NOT can only be preposed if the verb in the same clause selects a complement clause. We take this to show that Standard Dutch NOT is an XP only in the presence of a complement clause. In all other cases Standard Dutch NOT is a head that cannot be preposed. The next question to ask is how a complement clause can make an XP position available that is not available otherwise.

The analysis of complement clauses proposed in Barbiers (2000a) provides an answer to this question. According to that analysis the structural base position of complement clauses differs from the structural base position of DP complements. Thus, verbs that can either take a CP or a DP complement have two potential internal argument positions, a preverbal position and a postverbal

position.<sup>4</sup> This is illustrated in (7). The structural positions are given in (8): CP is the sister of V, while DP is in SpecVP.

- (7) a. Ik weet dat Jan dat denkt (\*dat Piet komt)  
 I know that John that thinks that Piet comes  
 b. Ik weet dat Jan (\*dat) denkt dat Piet komt  
 I know that John that thinks that Piet comes

- (8) [<sub>CP</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> [<sub>VP</sub> DP [<sub>v'</sub> [<sub>v</sub> thinks [<sub>CP</sub> ]]]]]]

As (7b) shows, the two argument positions cannot be filled both at the same time.<sup>5</sup> Let us assume that this follows from the  $\theta$ -criterion: THINK has only one  $\theta$ -role to assign, so one of the arguments would remain without a  $\theta$ -role.<sup>6</sup> This entails that in constructions such as (7b) the preverbal position should in principle be available, but only for constituents that do not require a  $\theta$ -role from the verb. I would like to suggest that Standard Dutch NOT is such a constituent and in this sense is similar to expletive pronouns.

## 2.5 ▪ A bare phrase structure analysis of Modern Dutch NOT

It is necessary to be a bit more precise about the distribution of Standard Dutch NOT as an XP in argument positions. In the classical GB analysis of the distribution of DP and CP complements (e.g. Stowell 1981), both require a  $\theta$ -role but only DPs require case. Let us assume, following Pesetsky and Torrego (2001), that case is an uninterpretable Tense feature  $uT$ . DPs have  $uT$  which must be checked by the verb or Tense, while CPs have an interpretable tense feature  $iT$  which need not be checked. Suppose that to have argument status means to have an (un)interpretable T feature, a  $\theta$ -role, or both. This predicts the existence of four types of arguments:

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Corver (1997) for similar ideas w.r.t. analysis of adjectival complementation.

<sup>5</sup> This only holds for sentences which constitute one intonational phrase. With comma intonation preceding that embedded clause, cooccurrence of pronoun and CP is possible. The latter presumably involves right dislocation, which arguably has different syntactic properties.

<sup>6</sup> Obviously the verb has an additional, external  $\theta$ -role, but this is irrelevant for the present discussion. I assume following Hale & Keyser (1993), Chomsky (1995) that this role is assigned by the abstract little  $v$ .

- (9) Types of arguments<sup>7,8</sup>
- (i) Arguments with an uT-feature and a  $\bar{a}$ -role DP arguments
  - (ii) Arguments with an uT-feature and no  $\bar{a}$ -role expletives/negation
  - (iii) Arguments with an iT-feature and a  $\bar{a}$ -role CP arguments
  - (iv) Arguments with an iT-feature and no  $\bar{a}$ -role Root CPs

As in most analyses, expletives such as *it* in *I regret it that John is sick* are arguments with uT (i.e. without case) and without a  $\bar{a}$ -role. The fact that both NOT in argument position and internal argument expletives require the presence of a CP complement suggests that the analysis presented here is on the right track.

The distribution of Standard Dutch NOT now follows from the assumption that NOT should not receive a  $\bar{a}$ -role and has a uT feature that must be checked by the verb or T, either in a Spec Head configuration or in a head-head configuration. This means that NOT is excluded from all positions to which a  $\bar{a}$ -role is assigned. It also follows that it is excluded from adjunct positions, where it cannot get its uT feature checked. Only with verbs that have two argument positions but use only one can NOT occur in an argument position. If there is no such position, NOT must be generated as a functional head in the extended domain of the verb, being licensed in a head-head relation with V or Tense.

In this view, then, the head or XP status of NOT is not a stipulated primitive but follows from the interaction between the lexical specification of NOT as an element with uT that cannot receive a  $\bar{a}$ -role, and general syntactic licensing requirements.

The proposed analysis captures the facts in (10):

---

<sup>7</sup> For ease of exposition I use the notion of  $\bar{a}$ -role. This notion should ultimately be reducible to a syntactically defined semantic relation, as in Barriers (1995) and Heim & Kratzer (1998). The property of requiring/not allowing a  $\bar{a}$ -role should not be considered a primitive property of lexical elements or constituents, but should follow from the semantic and morphosyntactic properties of such constituents and elements.

<sup>8</sup> I do not consider PP-complements here. In Barriers (1995, 2000a,b), I argue that non-resultative PP-complements are not arguments of the verb but predicates of some (extended) projection of the verb.



- (10) a. \*Je weet dat ik *niet* denk.  
 you no that I not think  
 Intended interpretation: ‘You know that I don’t think so.’
- b. \*Je weet dat ik denk *niet*.  
 You know that I think not  
 Intended interpretation: ‘You know that I don’t think so.’
- c. Ik denk het *niet*  
 I think it not  
 ‘I don’t think so.’
- d. \**Niet* denk ik het.  
 not think I it
- e. Ik denk van *niet* (\*dat Jan komt).  
 I think of not (that John comes)  
 ‘I don’t think so.’

It is impossible for NOT to occur in the preverbal or postverbal argument position (10a,b), as expected as it would receive the  $\theta$ -role there that a complement DP and CP receive respectively.<sup>9</sup> In (10c), *het* ‘it’ is the internal argument of V. This means that the argument position taken by *het* ‘it’ is not available for NOT, which therefore must be a functional head here. As expected, fronting of NOT is impossible in this construction (10d).

In (10e) the PP [*van niet*] ‘of NOT’ is an internal argument of the verb given that it is in complementary distribution with a CP-complement and interpretively functions as an argument. This raises the question why it is possible for NOT to be in an argument position when *van* ‘of’ is present. Recall that Standard Dutch NOT has a feature  $uT$  that must be deleted and that it should not receive a  $\theta$ -role. This entails that *van* ‘of’ must have an  $iT$  feature and does not assign a  $\theta$ -role. The entire constituent [*van niet*] ‘of not’ receives a  $\theta$ -role from the verb, but *niet* ‘NOT’ itself does not. The constituent [*van niet*] satisfies the the selectional restrictions of THINK if selectional restrictions are defined in

---

<sup>9</sup> The sentence in (10a) is only ungrammatical under the intended interpretation. It is grammatical with the interpretation ‘You know that I don’t think.’ In the latter case THINK has an implicit internal argument and negation is a functional head.

terms of features: Standard Dutch THINK selects a complement with an iT feature, which can either be a CP or [*van niet*].

## 2.6 ▪ The specification of *van*

On the basis of its ability to license NOT as an argument I have proposed that the lexical specification of *van* 'of' is as in (11):

(11) *van*: 'of' Feature = iT

Argument structure: assigns no internal  $\theta$ -role

There is ample evidence that this lexical specification of *van* 'of' is correct. A first case is *van* 'of' introducing a finite clause. In Standard Dutch *van* 'of' turns root clauses into embedded clauses, i.e. whereas V1 and V2 clauses normally do not occur as embedded clauses, *van* 'of' makes this possible (12a-c). Conversely, *van* 'of' is impossible with canonical embedded clauses with V in clause final position (12e).

- (12) a. Dan denk ik [<sub>CP</sub> van waarom doe je dat].      Dependent V1 question  
       then think I of why do you that  
       'Then I think: Why are you doing that?'
- b. Dan denk ik [<sub>CP</sub> van ga weg].      Dependent V1 imperative  
       then think I of go away  
       'Then I think: Go away!'
- c. Dan denk ik [<sub>CP</sub> van ik stop vandaag]      Dependent V2 declarative  
       then think I of I stop today  
       'Then I think: I'll stop today,'
- d. \*Ik denk van dat je morgen moet stoppen.      Embedded V final clause  
       I think of that you tomorrow must stop

The fact that main clauses normally do not occur as embedded clauses follows from assumption (9-iv) that root clauses should not receive a  $\theta$ -role. It also follows that *van* 'of' can turn root clauses into embedded clauses: Whereas the

*van*-CP as a whole receives a  $\theta$ -role from the matrix verb, the CP complement of *van* ‘of’ itself does not receive a  $\theta$ -role, as *van* ‘of’ has no  $\theta$ -roles to assign. Since both *van* ‘of’ and root clauses have an *iT* feature, there neither are checking requirements nor potential feature clashes. The incompatibility of *van* ‘of’ with true embedded clauses also follows, since true embedded clauses need a  $\theta$ -role, which they do not get when they are the complement of *van* ‘of’.<sup>10</sup>

A second piece of evidence for the proposed specification of *van* ‘of’ comes from temporal adjuncts. When *van* ‘of’ introduces a temporal adjunct it does so obligatorily and it gives the temporal adjunct a specific temporal reference which is absent with a preposition like *in* ‘in’, as the examples in (13) show. When *van* ‘of’ is present, as in (13a), *avond* ‘evening’ must refer to the evening of the day of the utterance. Therefore, an adverb that requires there to be more evenings, such as *altijd* ‘always’ in (13b) is incompatible with *van* ‘of’. In (13c), we have *in* ‘in’ instead of *van* ‘of’, and now *avond* ‘evening’ can refer to any evening, and *in* ‘in’ is compatible with *altijd* ‘always’. The examples in (14) illustrate the same point.<sup>11</sup>

- (13) a. We gaan \*(van) avond.  
           we go of evening  
           ‘We’ll go this evening.’  
       b. \*We gaan altijd van avond.  
           we go always of evening  
       c. We gaan in de avond.  
           ‘We’ll go in the evening.’  
       d. We gaan altijd in de morgen.  
           we go always in the evening  
           ‘We always go in the evening.’

---

<sup>10</sup> Consequently, DP-arguments of N should get their  $\theta$ -role directly from N and not through *van*. See below for an analysis along the lines of Hoekstra (1999).

<sup>11</sup> The examples in (13) and (14) also show that the Dutch orthographic convention to write *vanmorgen* ‘this morning’, *vanmiddag* ‘this afternoon’ and *vanavond* ‘this evening’ as one word is wrong. These “words” consist of a preposition *van* ‘of’ and an adverbial and behave the same as constituents consisting of *van* and a time denoting DP.

- (14) a. We gaan \*(van) de winter schaatsen.  
 we go of the winter skate  
 ‘We are going to skate this winter.’
- b. \*We gaan van de winter altijd schaatsen.  
 we go of the winter always skate
- c. We gaan in de winter schaatsen.  
 we go in the winter skate  
 ‘In the winter we go skating.’
- d. We gaan in de winter altijd schaatsen.  
 we go in the winter always skate  
 ‘In the winter we always go skating.’

Thirdly, as observed in Barbiers (1995) *van* ‘of’ in (15a) introduces a temporally opaque, independent domain, again strongly suggesting that it has an iT feature. The adverb *gisteren* ‘yesterday’ in the constituent [*die jongen gisteren*] forces a past tense on the finite verb (15b,c), but when *van* ‘of’ is there, as in (15a), the present tense is allowed as well.

- (15) a. Die jongen van gisteren vertelde / vertelt een goed verhaal.  
 that boy of yesterday told-PAST / tells-PRESENT a good story
- b. Die jongen gisteren vertelde een goed verhaal.  
 that boy yesterday told-PAST a good story
- c. \*Die jongen gisteren vertelt nu een goed verhaal.  
 that boy yesterday tells-PRESENT now a good story

The properties of *van* ‘of’ described so far suggest that it is a complementizer rather than a preposition. On the basis of Kayne (1994), Hoekstra (1999) proposes to analyse case assigning *van* ‘of’ in DPs as a complementizer to capture backward binding (16a) and parasitic gap licensing (16b) in DPs, facts that do not follow from analyses that take *van*-PPs to be complements or adjuncts to (a projection of) N. Hoekstra’s analysis of (16a) is given in (17). The reciprocal is bound by *de flessen* ‘the bottles’ in the base structure. When the moved XP

contains a parasitic gap, as in (16b), this gap is licensed by movement of the object to SpecIP prior to remnant movement of XP.

- (16) a. het *naast elkaar zetten van de flessen*  
 the next each other putting of the bottles  
 ‘putting the bottles next to each other’  
 b. het [zonder e te bestuderen] terugbrengen van je boeken  
 the without to examine returning of your books  
 ‘returning your books without examining them’

- (17) [<sub>DP</sub> het [<sub>CP</sub> [<sub>XP</sub> [<sub>DP</sub> ~~de flessen~~] naast elkaar zetten] [<sub>C</sub> van [<sub>IP</sub> [<sub>DP</sub> de flessen] H  
 the the bottles next each other put of the bottles  
 [<sub>XP</sub> ~~de flessen naast elkaar zetten~~]]]]  
 the bottles next each other put

This analysis of “case assigning” *van* ‘of’ is compatible with the specification of *van* ‘of’ proposed in this paper: *van* ‘of’ does not assign a  $\theta$ -role to the DP *de flessen* ‘the bottles’ in (16a), as required since this DP gets its  $\theta$ -role directly from the (nominalized) verb. In this respect  $\theta$ -role assignment within DPs and within CPs is entirely parallel.

To summarize, it was argued in this section that sentential negation NOT in Standard Dutch is usually generated in a head position and sometimes in a Spec position. This distribution is fully determined by the lexical specification of NOT as an element that has an uninterpretable tense feature  $uT$  and cannot receive a  $\theta$ -role. It is not necessary to stipulate the X-bar level of NOT in the lexicon. More precisely, NOT behaves exactly as bare phrase structure theory (Chomsky 1995) would lead us to expect. According to this theory, an element generated in a head position remains a head during the rest of the derivation and hence cannot show up in non-head positions. The same element generated in a Spec position is a head and an XP at the same time. It therefore can also move to Spec or adjunct positions.

Obviously, the analysis proposed here does not automatically carry over to other languages without further investigation. In English, for example, *\*I think of not* is strongly ungrammatical, while *I think not* is well-formed. There are also differences between the distribution of *of* in English and *van* in Standard Dutch. For example, English *of* does not introduce temporal adjuncts; instead, English is using *to*, as in *today, tonight*. I leave the precise analysis of English and other languages for future research.

### 3 ■ NEGATIVE CONCORD AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF NEGATIVE CONSTITUENTS

#### 3.1 ■ Description

As is well known, language varieties differ with respect to the interpretation of multiple negation, i.e. the interpretation of clauses with sentential negation and one or more negative constituents. In negative concord languages such as West Flemish, the negative elements in a clause together may constitute one sentential negation (18a).<sup>12</sup> In double negation languages such as Standard Dutch the negative elements normally cancel each other out, e.g., when there is sentential negation and one negative constituent the result is a positive interpretation, while sentential negation and two negative constituents yields a negative sentence (18b).

- (18) a. da Valère van niemand (nie) ketent en was                      West Flemish  
           that V. of no one (not) contented en was  
           ‘that Valère was not pleased with anyone’<sup>13</sup>
- b. dat Jan op niemand niet boos is geworden                      Standard Dutch  
           that John at no one not angry has become  
           ‘there’s no one such that John did not become angry at him’  
           # ‘that John did not become angry at anyone

<sup>12</sup> In West-Flemish *nie* NOT is optionally absent in the presence of a negative constituent.

<sup>13</sup> A double negation reading for this sentence is marginally possible with focal stress on *niemand* and a pause to precede *nie* (Haegeman 1995).

It should be noted, however, that the difference between the two types of languages is not as absolute as the examples in (18) may seem to suggest. With deaccented *niet* NOT in (18b) a negative concord reading is marginally possible for many speakers of Standard Dutch. Moreover, there are contexts in which all speakers of Standard Dutch seem to be able to get a negative concord reading, e.g. (19a); the presence of “superfluous” *niet* NOT in this construction is almost obligatory.

- (19) a. Ik ga niet opzij, voor jou niet en voor niemand ??(niet).  
 I go not out of the way, for you not and for no one not  
 ‘I don’t get out of the way, not for you and not for anyone’
- b. \* Ik ga niet opzij, niet voor jou en niet voor niemand.  
 I go not out of the way, not for you and not for no one
- c. Ik ga niet opzij, niet voor jou en ook niet voor de koningin.  
 I go not out of the way, not for you and also not for the queen  
 ‘I don’t get out of the way, neither for you nor for the queen’

Observations such as (18) and (19) suggest that Weiß (2001; this volume, ftn. 4) is correct in claiming that the absence of negative concord in the standard varieties of English, Dutch and German is an artificial phenomenon, resulting from language external factors such as modelling languages after Latin grammar or logical considerations in the course of standardization. Many non-standard varieties of these languages do have negative concord, and the standard varieties themselves reveal their hidden negative concord character on certain syntactic tests.

The distribution of negative constituents in the negative concord language West Flemish is similar to that in the “non negative concord” language Standard Dutch (Haegeman 1995). As the contrast between (19a) and (19b) shows, the negative concord construction in Standard Dutch is only possible if the negative PP precedes *niet* ‘NOT’, while (19c) shows that there is no general requirement for PPs to precede *niet* ‘NOT’. This scrambling of negative constituents is obligatory in both West Flemish and Standard Dutch (20a, 21a). When scrambling does not take place, as in (20b,21b), a positive interpretation is the result.

- (20) a. da Valère [<sub>PP</sub> me niets] [<sub>A</sub> ketent] (en-)was  
 that Valère with nothing contented (en) was  
 ‘that Valère was not pleased with anything’  
 b. da Valère [<sub>A</sub> ketent] [<sub>PP</sub> me niets] (\*en) was  
 that Valère contented with nothing (en) was  
 ‘that Valère was pleased with nothing’
- (21) a. dat Valère [<sub>PP</sub> met niets] [<sub>A</sub> tevreden] was  
 that Valère with nothing contented was  
 ‘that Valère was not pleased with anything’  
 b. dat Valère [<sub>A</sub> tevreden] [<sub>PP</sub> met niets] was<sup>14</sup>  
 that Valère contented with nothing was  
 I. #‘that Valère was not pleased with anything’  
 II. ‘that Valère was pleased with nothing’

### 3.2 ▪ Analysis: Negative scrambling and the doubly filled NegP filter

Let us assume that Haegeman (1995) is right that all negative constituents must move (scramble) to SpecNegP to satisfy the NEG-criterion; if a negative constituent does not move to SpecNegP it does not get a negative interpretation. The difference between Standard Dutch and West Flemish can then be captured if we assume that both West Flemish *nie* ‘NOT’ and Standard Dutch *niet* ‘NOT’ are normally generated as the head of NegP and attract negative constituents to SpecNegP.<sup>15</sup> The difference between Standard Dutch and West Flemish would then be that it is impossible in Standard Dutch to spell out both the head and the spec of NegP, a kind of doubly filled NegP filter (cf. Robbers 1992). This type of microvariation would be of the same type as we find in CPs, where varieties differ with respect to the possibility to fill both SpecCP and C: the doubly filled COMP filter (cf. Chomsky & Lasnik 1977) active in English but not e.g. in Standard Dutch.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> For me the negative reading is available in (21b) with a slightly different intonation. This may be the result of focus movement of *tevreden* ‘contented’ across the scrambled PP *met niets* ‘with nothing’.

<sup>15</sup> This assumption is in accordance with the fact that West Flemish *nie* NOT cannot be fronted.

<sup>16</sup> This analysis of West Flemish *nie* differs from Haegeman (1995:125), according to which *nie* is generated in SpecNegP rather than Neg.



The doubly filled NegP filter can be further generalized to doubly filled SpecNegPs to capture another difference between West Flemish and Standard Dutch. In West Flemish several constituents may occur in SpecNegP (22a), while in Standard Dutch only one constituent is allowed (22b). Again, we know that there is similar cross linguistic variation in the CP domain, with single Wh-fronting in English, Standard Dutch and French and multiple Wh-fronting in Polish, Czech and Rumanian (Haegeman 1995).

- (22) a. da Valère an niemand niets nie gezeid (en)-oat                      West-Flemish  
           that Valère to nobody nothing not said (NEG)-has  
           ‘that Valère had not said anything to anyone’
- b. dat Jan (\*nooit) op niemand boos is                                      Standard Dutch  
           that John (never) at no one angry is  
           ‘that John is not angry at anyone’

If this approach is correct, the fact that Standard Dutch does not have overt negative concord and the fact that it does not allow multiple scrambling of negative constituents are both consequences of one parameter: In Standard Dutch the generalized doubly filled NegP filter is active, in West Flemish it is not.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> On theoretical grounds, another potential source of variation may be that movement to SpecNegP to fulfill the NEG criterion may apply at different levels of derivation, i.e. overtly or covertly. For the domain of Wh-movement it has been proposed that some languages have covert Wh-movement (Chinese) while others have overt movement (English). Similarly, there may be languages that have covert negative constituent movement. Italian is a candidate:

- (i) Gianni non telefona a nessuno  
       Gianni not telephones to no one  
       ‘Gianni does not call anyone.’

However, the issue is more complicated. Haegeman (1995) proposes that the Neg-criterion must be fulfilled overtly even in Italian: an empty operator occupies Spec,NegP in Italian. Moreover, if Kayne (2000) is right that there is no covert movement, the clause final position of *nessuno* in (i) is the result of leftward movement of *nessuno* followed by remnant movement of (extended) VP across *nessuno*. Microvariation in movement of negative constituents to SpecNegP then really involves microvariation in remnant movement.

#### 4 ▪ CLAUSE FINAL NOT

##### 4.1 ▪ Description

A final instance of microvariation in sentential negation involves clause final negation as it is found in Aarschots and Afrikaans:<sup>18</sup>

- (23) a. Ik geluuf dat er niemand nie en komt (nie)  
Aarschots (Pauwels 1958:443)  
I believe that there no one NOT NEG-CLITIC comes (NOT)
- b. dat niemand glo dat hy dit gedoen het nie  
Afrikaans (Robbers 1992:224)  
that no one believes that he this done has NOT  
'that noone believes that he has done this'

Pauwels (1958: 464) claims that clause final negation in Aarschots and Afrikaans have different properties. In Aarschots, clause final *nie* 'NOT' is optionally present, whereas in Afrikaans it is obligatory. More importantly, in Aarschots clause final *nie* 'NOT' cannot be separated from its clause by an embedded clause or by extraposed material, whereas this is standardly the case in Afrikaans, e.g. in (23b). In Transvaals (spoken in the north of South Africa) clause final *nie* 'NOT' occurs both at the end of the matrix clause and at the end of the embedded clause.

##### 4.2 ▪ Analysis

So far, the proposed analysis of negation makes use of one functional projection NegP present in the sentences in the case of sentential negation.<sup>19</sup> The cooccurrence of preverbal *nie* 'NOT', the negative particle *en* and clause final *nie* 'NOT' in Aarschots clearly shows that the latter *nie* 'NOT' is not in the head or spec of the NegP discussed in the previous sections. This implies that there must be a second NegP in the clause. This has been suggested for English in Lasnik (1974), for Afrikaans in Robbers (1992), for Italian in Zanuttini (1991) and for West Flemish in Haegeman (2001a, 2001b). For Afrikaans, Robbers argues convincingly that the clause final negation position behaves the same as the high Neg-position

---

<sup>18</sup> Helmut Weiß (p.c) notes that clause final negation also occurs in a variant of Bavarian spoken in the Valle del Fersina (Trentino, Italy) (cf. Rowley, undated).

<sup>19</sup> Putting the exceptional status of negation as an argument aside.

in Italian. She therefore assumes that clause final negation is high in the clause but head final; consequently the complement of Neg linearly precedes it.

If the Universal Base Hypothesis, according to which all languages have the same number and hierarchy of projections, is correct, the fact that we find two positions for NegP in certain languages entails that all languages should have those two positions. Explaining variation in this respect would then amount to explaining why in certain languages only high NegP is visible, in other languages only low NegP, while in others both are visible.

I will briefly speculate on negation in Aarschots and Afrikaans to indicate in which direction such an explanation may go. Let us assume that Robbers (1992) is right that clause final negation is high NegP. Let us further assume that syntactic structures are antisymmetric, hence that a complement is generated as a right hand sister of a head. Robbers' analysis must then be modified: clause final negation is the result of base generating the sister XP of high Neg to the right of Neg and then moving it to SpecNegP (we refer to this constituent as XP rather than TP to remain agnostic about the precise categorial status of the constituent).

Since movement to high SpecNegP is independently motivated for negative constituents, as we have seen in section 3, it is straightforward to account for movement of XP to high SpecNegP in the same terms. Low NegP makes XP a negative constituent and the NEG criterion forces this negative XP to move to high SpecNegP. Thus, we use a generalized version of the NEG criterion to account for the possibility of clause final negation in Aarschots and Afrikaans.

Since movement of negative constituents to high SpecNegP is obligatory in Standard Dutch as well (cf. section 3), it is plausible that XP movement to the Spec of high NegP takes place in Standard Dutch too. The question why clause final negation is not visible in Standard Dutch now reduces to the more general question why Spec and head of NegP cannot be filled both at the same time in Standard Dutch. As we have seen, preverbal sentential negation NIET and scrambled negative constituents are in complementary distribution, suggesting that Robbers is right that there is a doubly filled NegP filter that may or may not be active in a language.

In the analysis suggested here, then, there is no parameter "high NegP present yes/no". All language varieties have the same projections in the same

hierarchy and obey the NEG-criterion. Varieties differ in whether the doubly filled NegP filter is active, just like varieties differ in whether the doubly filled CP filter is active. More generally, we conclude that doubly filled XP filters are an important locus of cross-linguistic variation. Obviously, it is necessary to investigate whether doubly filled XP filters can be further reduced to deeper properties of the elements involved.

So far we have treated clause final negation in Aarschots and Afrikaans as a uniform phenomenon. However, in section 4.1 it was noted that matrix clause associated *nie* 'NOT' can follow an embedded clause in Afrikaans but not in Aarschots. The fact that this is impossible in Aarschots is problematic for the analysis proposed above. If clause final *nie* 'NOT' involved movement of XP to SpecNegP, it should be possible for XP to carry along a CP or extraposed material that is part of XP:

$$(24) \quad \begin{array}{l} [_{CP} \quad [_{NegP} \quad [Neg \textit{nie} [_{XP} [VP [CP]]]]]] \implies \\ [_{CP} \quad [_{NegP} \quad [_{XP} [VP [CP]]] [Neg \textit{nie} [_{XP} [VP [CP]]]]] \end{array}$$

This problem is not sufficient to reject the proposed analysis, since Pauwels (1958:465, fn. 51) reports that for him clause final *nie* 'NOT' is natural in the Aarschots sentence in (25):

- (25) Hij is nie weggelopen <nie> voor het spook dat afkwam <nie> Aarschots  
 he is not away-run not for the ghost that approached not  
 'He did not run away for the ghost that was approaching.'

Perhaps, then, Aarschots is like Transvaals in allowing both matrix clause final and embedded clause final *nie* 'NOT', with a tendency to avoid a long distance between the matrix verb and *nie* 'NOT'.

This solves the problem of the near non-occurrence of embedded clause final *nie* 'NOT' in Aarschots, but it does not solve another problem for the analysis proposed above, namely the fact that matrix clause final *nie* 'NOT' preceding an embedded clause is possible at all. It is impossible to derive that from the base structure in (24), as movement of XP will always carry along CP.

A possible solution is that matrix clause final *nie* 'NOT' preceding an embedded clause is the result of head movement of the verb across *nie* 'NOT' to an abstract functional head, as in (26). Embedded V-movement has been proposed on independent grounds for West Flemish in Haegeman (1998, 2000).

(26) [<sub>FP</sub> V-F [<sub>NegP</sub> *nie* [<sub>VP</sub>  $\bar{V}$  [CP]]]]

The preliminary conclusion is that there are two ways for a language to have clause final *nie* 'NOT': (i) Movement of the sister XP of high Neg to the Spec of high NegP, as in Afrikaans and Aarschots, and (ii) movement of the verb (or verb cluster) across low Neg, as in Aarschots. In Transvaals, both options are available.

## 5 ■ SUMMARY: LOCI OF MICROVARIATION FOR SENTENTIAL NEGATION

The basic clause structure of the varieties discussed in this paper is as in (27) (irrelevant projections left out):

(27) [<sub>CP</sub> C [<sub>NegP</sub> Spec Neg [<sub>XP</sub> X [<sub>FP</sub> F [<sub>NegP</sub> Spec Neg [<sub>VP</sub> V]]]]]]

Aarschots	( <i>nie</i> )	<i>nie</i>	( <i>en</i> )
Afrikaans	<i>nie</i>	<i>nie</i>	∅
Standard Dutch	∅	∅	<i>niet</i>
Middle Dutch	∅	<i>niet</i>	( <i>en</i> )
Transvaals	<i>nie</i>	<i>nie</i>	∅
West Flemish	∅	<i>nie</i>	( <i>en</i> )

In all of these varieties, movement of negative constituents to SpecNegP is obligatory. This also holds for XP when it contains NegP. The reflex of this is clause final *nie* 'NOT' in Afrikaans, Aarschots and Transvaals, being a spell out of high Neg. This is a locus of microvariation, as the same head is not spelled out in Standard Dutch, Middle Dutch and West Flemish. A second locus of microvariation is found in the lower NegP, where the head, the Spec or both

may be filled or spelled out.<sup>20</sup> A third locus of microvariation yields movement of V to F. This movement accounts for matrix clause final negation preceding embedded and extraposed material, possible in Aarschots and Transvaals. Since the other varieties discussed do not have such clause final negation, this movement operation may either be absent or show no overt reflex.

▪ APPENDIX: MORE MICROVARIATION IN NEGATION

This appendix provides a brief description of some further instances of microvariation in negation.

▪ THE STATUS OF N-WORDS

N-words such as *niemand* ‘no one’, *nooit* ‘never’, *niets* ‘nothing’ may have the status of negative polarity items (NPIs) with existential force in one variety and of negative quantifiers in another (cf. Hoeksema 1997). For Standard Dutch, it is clear that the N-words do not behave like NPIs. NPIs in Standard Dutch cannot occur without an overt licenser (28a), N-words however can and in such cases they still express sentential negation (28b). A second test is whether the N-word can be used as an answer. If it can, it is not an NPI (28c,d). A third test is modification by *almost*: possible for Negative Quantifiers, impossible for NPIs (28e,f).

- (28) a. \*Ik heb ook maar iemand gezien.  
I have even only anyone seen
- b. Ik heb niemand gezien.  
I have no one seen  
'I haven't seen anybody'
- c. Who did you meet?  
No one / \*Anyone
- d. Heb je iemand ontmoet?  
Nee, niemand / \*Nee, ook maar iemand  
no, no one no, even only anyone
- e. Ik begrijp er bijna niets van.

---

<sup>20</sup> We did not find any evidence distinguishing between PF-absence and complete absence.

- I understand there almost nothing of  
 'I hardly understand anything of it.'
- f. \*Ik begrijp er bijna geen bal van.  
 I understand there almost no ball of  
 Intended interpretation: 'I hardly understand anything of it.'

Moreover, NPIs can be licensed by downward entailing environments, not just by negation (29a,b). The N-words in Standard Dutch do not behave like NPIs in such environments; they are simply negative constituents (29c,d).

- (29) a. zonder ook maar een keer te lachen  
 without even only once to laugh  
 'without ever laughing'
- b. alvorens ook maar iets te zeggen  
 before even only something to say  
 'before saying anything'
- c. \*zonder nooit te lachen  
 without never to laugh
- d. \*alvorens niets te zeggen  
 before nothing to say

On the other hand, Hoeksema (1997: 152-153) observes that Middle Dutch N-words do appear in downward entailing contexts that are not defined by sentential negation.

- (30) *Without*-clause
- a. sonder nemmermeer daer jeghen te comene  
 without never there against to come  
 'without ever coming against that'
- Before*-clause
- b. Ic sal mi doden met enen knive eer ic nemmer doe sconinx wille  
 I will me kill with one knive ere I never do the-king's wish  
 'I will kill myself before I do the king's wish.'

It is clear that the N-words in these constructions are NPIs, not negative quantifiers, since the negative particle *en* cannot show up here.

The latter correlation does not seem to be absolute cross-linguistically, as Hoeksema (1997:154) notes. Whereas Italian behaves like Middle Dutch in not having a negative head when the NPI is licensed by a downward entailing context different from an N-word (31b), in Spanish the negative head shows up even in such environments (32b).

(31) Italian

- a. Non ha telefonato nessuno.  
Neg has called n-body  
'Nobody called'
- b. Ha telefonato nessuno?  
has called n-body  
'Did anybody call?'

(32) Spanish

- a. No llamó ninguno.  
neg called n-body  
'Nobody called'
- b. ¿No llamó ninguno  
neg called n-body  
'Did anybody call?'

Another potential source of variation is the type of downward entailing environments that allow N-words to be used as NPIs. Middle Dutch allows N-words as NPIs in the environments in (33), but not in questions (Hoeksema 1997:153).



(33) Relative clause restricting a universal quantifier

- a. God die makere es alre dinc dat nie was of lijf ontfin  
God who maker is of everything that (n)ever was or received life  
'God who is the creator of all things that ever were or sprung to life.'

Relative clause restricting a superlative

- b. dat hi die beste ridder was die noit quam in sconinx hof  
that he the best knight was that (n)ever came in the king's court  
'that he was the best knight that ever came to the king's court.'

Comparative clauses

- c. Ick belove u [...] meer dan ghi noyt hadt van vrienden oft magen.  
I promise thee more than thou never hadst from friends or relatives  
'I promise you more than you ever had from friends or relatives.'

A peculiar property of some dialects is that the initial /n/ of negative words preceding NOT can optionally be dropped (Pauwels 1958:457). An example from the Brabantish dialect of Aarschot is given below:

- (34) Ik heb (n)iemand niet gezien (nie) Aarschots  
I have (no) one not seen  
'I haven't seen anybody'

According to Pauwels, in Aarschots this is possible with *nievers* 'nowhere', *nieverans* 'nowhere' and *niemand* 'no one', but not with *nooit* 'never'. The precise conditions under which this is possible require further investigation. It seems clear, however, that negative concord is not a sufficient condition. In the limited cases in which Standard Dutch has negative concord, /n/-drop is impossible.

- (35) Ik ga niet opzij, voor jou niet en voor \*(n)-iemand niet Standard Dutch  
I go not out of the way, for you not and for \*(no) one not

▪ NEGATIVE CONCORD IN DP'S

Vanacker (1975) and Haegeman (this volume) observe that some Flemish dialects spoken in northern France and West Flanders have DP-internal negative concord, as illustrated in (36):

- (36) a. K'(en)-een nie vele geen geld  
I (en) have not much no money  
'I don't have much money.'
- b. K'(en)-een nie genoeg geen geld  
I (en) have not enough no money

▪ MICROVARIATION IN SCOPE

Varieties seem to differ with respect to the availability of an inverse scope reading in sentences such as (37):

- (37) a. Iedereen is geen vakman.  
everyone is no craftsman  
I. 'Everyone is no craftsman.'  
II. 'Not everyone is a craftsman.'
- b. Hij heeft overal geen vrienden.  
I. 'Everywhere he does not have friends.'  
II. 'He does not have friends everywhere.'

▪ REFERENCES

- Barbiers, S. (1995). *The Syntax of Interpretation*. Dissertation Leiden University/HIL. The Hague: HAG.
- (2000a). The right-periphery in SOV-languages: English and Dutch. In P. Svenonius (ed.) *The derivation of VO and OV*. Linguistik Aktuell Series 31. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, p. 181-218.
- (2000b). On the Interpretation of Movement and Agreement: PPs and Binding. In H. Bennis et al. (eds.) *Interface Strategies*. Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen Verhandelingen. Afd. Letterkunde, Nieuwe Reeks, deel 180, 21-36.
- Chomsky, N. & H. Lasnik (1977). Filters and control. *Linguistic Inquiry* 8, 425-504.
- Chomsky, N. (1995). *The Minimalist Program*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Corver, N. (1997). The internal syntax of the Dutch Extended Adjectival Projection. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 15, 263-287,
- Haegeman, L. (1995). *The syntax of negation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- (1998). Verb Movement in embedded clauses in West Flemish. *Linguistic Inquiry* 29: 631-656.
- (2000). Remnant movement and OV order. In P. Svenonius (ed.) *The derivation of VO and OV*. Linguistics Today 31. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 69-96.
- Hale, K. & S.J. Keyser (1993). On argument structure and the lexical expression of syntactic relations. In K. Hale & S.J. Keyser (eds.) *The view from Building 20. Essays in Linguistics in Honor of Sylvain Bromberger*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Heim, I. & A. Kratzer (1998). *Semantics in Generative Grammar*. Malden: Blackwell.
- Hoeksema, J. (1997). Negation and negative concord in Middle Dutch. In D. Forget et al. (eds) *Negation and Polarity. Syntax and semantics*. Current Issues in Linguistic Theory 155. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Hoekstra, T. (1999). Parallels between Nominal and Verbal Projections. In D. Adger et al. (eds.) *Specifiers*. Oxford University Press.

- Kayne, R. (1994). *The Antisymmetry of Syntax*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- (2000). *Parameters and Universals*. Oxford Studies in Comparative Syntax. New York: Oxford University Press
- Lasnik, H. (1974). *Analyses of negation in English*. MIT diss. Indiana University Linguistics Club.
- Pauwels, J.L. (1958). *Het dialect van Aarschot en omstreken*. I. Tekst. Belgisch Interuniversitair Centrum voor Neerlandistiek.
- Pesetsky, D. & E. Torrego (2001). T-to-C-movement: Causes and Consequences. In *Ken Hale, A life in language*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Pollock, J-Y. (1989). Verb movement, universal grammar and the structure of IP. *Linguistic Inquiry* 20, 365-424.
- Robbers, K. (1992). Properties of negation in Afrikaans and Italian. In R. Bok-Bennema & R. van Hout (eds): *Linguistics in the Netherlands 1992*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, p. 223-234.
- Rowley, A. (undated). Deskriptive Grammatik des Deutsch-Fersentalerischen (Mòcheno), Ms.
- Stowell, T. (1981). *Origins of phrase structure*. MIT Dissertation.
- Tavernier, C. (1959). Over negatie en expletief *en* in het Gents dialect. *Taal en Tongval* 11, 245-252.
- Vanacker, V.F. (1975). Substantiefgroepen met dubbele ontkenning in zuidwestelijke dialecten. *Taal en Tongval* 17, 41-50
- Zanuttini, R. (1991). *Syntactic properties of sentential negation*. A comparative study of Romance languages. Diss. University of Pennsylvania.