Emphatic Multiple Negative Expressions in Dutch – A by-product of loss of Negative Concord

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▣ Abstract

Double Negation languages such as Dutch and German still exhibit constructions, such as Dutch *niemand niet* (nobody not) or *nooit geen* (nothing no), that seem to have a Negative Concord (NC) reading. Since these constructions normally have an emphatic reading, these are called Emphatic Multiple Negative Expressions (EMNE's). In this paper I discuss the difference between so-called EMNE's and plain NC constructions. I demonstrate that EMNE's are fundamentally different from NC constructions, and that for that reason EMNE's should not be taken to indicate traces of NC in DN languages. Instead I argue that EMNE's are best analysed as lexical items that consist of two semantic objects, of which one is semantically negative. By applying partial reconstruction at LF both semantic objects can take scope from a different position in the tree. EMNE's are the result of the disappearance of NC in Dutch. After the loss of the preverbal negative marker *en/ne*, strings containing two n-words or an n-word and a negative marker *niet* could no longer act as a cue for NC and therefore had to be stored in the lexicon. The death of Dutch NC, so to speak, led to the birth of EMNE's. Finally the discussion of EMNE's and the fact that they could not be taken to be instances of NC sheds more light on the nature of NC. The fact that NC is subject to parametric variation firmly supports the view that NC should be analysed as a syntactic and not as semantic phenomenon.

1 ▣ Emphatic Multiple Negative Expressions in Dutch

In languages such as Dutch and German every morpohosyntactically negative element corresponds to a semantic negation. Consequently, whenever two such elements occur in the same clause, the semantics of this clause also contain two negations. Such languages are called Double Negation (DN) after the law of Double Negation according to which two negations cancel each other out. Examples of multiple negative expressions in Dutch can be found in (1) below.

(1)a. *Niemand* zei *niets*. Dutch
Nobody said nothing
DN: 'Nobody said nothing.' = 'everybody said something'

b. *Geen* mens was daar *niet* bij.
No man was there NEG *at*
DN: 'No man wasn't there.' = 'everybody was there'

The fact that there is a 1:1 correspondence between morphosyntactically negative elements and semantic negations is not surprising from a compositional perspective. The semantics of the sentences in (1) follows immediately from the lexical semantics of the negative items. However, DN languages are typologically quite rare. Most languages that exhibit multiple negative items in one clause do not exhibit DN readings (Haspelmath 1997; Zeijlstra 2004). Opposite to DN languages, many languages exhibit Negative Concord (NC). In NC constructions multiple morphosyntactically negative elements correspond to only one semantic negation. This is illustrated in (2) for Italian and in (3) for West Flemish. Although each negative element can express negation in isolation, a joint occurrence of two negative elements in those languages yields only one semantic negation.

(2)a. *Non* ha telefonato. Italian
NEG has.3SG called
'He didn't call.'
b. *Nessuno* ha telefonato.
nobody has called.3SG
'Nobody called.'
c. *Non* ha telefonato a *nessuno*.
NEG has called.3SG
NC: 'He didn't call anybody'

(3)a. … da Valère *nie* nor us goast[1]. West Flemish
… that Valère NEG to house goes
'… that Valère doesn't go home.'
b. … da Valère *niemand* kent[2].
… that Valère nobody KNOWS
'… that Valère doesn't know anybody.'
c. … da Valère *niemand nie* kent[3].
… that Valère nobody NEG KNOWS
NC: '… that Valère doesn't know anybody.'

The difference between DN and NC languages seems to be an instance of parametric variation. Within the Indo-European language family most Germanic languages (with the exception of West Flemish, Bavarian, Yiddish and a number of Dutch and German dialects) exhibit DN, whereas most Slavic and Romance languages exhibit NC. However, in DN languages such as Dutch and German one may find examples of constructions in which two negative elements also yield just one semantic negation, as is shown in (4) and (5). These constructions are prescriptively ruled out, but found in many (substandard) varieties of Dutch and a substantial amount of German (substandard) varieties. For reasons to be clarified in the rest of this paper these constructions are called: Emphatic Multiple Negative Expressions (EMNE's).

(4)a. Zij heeft *nergens geen* zin in. Dutch
she has nowhere no lust in
'She doesn't feel like anything at all.'
b. Hij gaat *nooit niet* naar school.
he goes never NEG to school
'He never ever goes to school.'
c. Zij hebben *nooit geen* geld.
they have never no money
'They never have any money.'

(5) Sie hat nie keine Lust. German
she has never no lust
'She never feels like anything at all.'

In fact, as reported by Barbiers (2002), in parallel constructions such as in (6), the presence of an additional negative marker on the final conjunct is even the preferred option.

[1] After (Haegeman 1995: 118)
[2] After (Haegeman 1995: 128)
[3] After (Haegeman 1995: 131)

(6) Niemand was op het feest, Piet *niet*, Jan *niet*, *niemand*[?] (*niet*). Dutch
nobody was at the party, Piet NEG, Jan NEG, nobody NEG
'Nobody was at the part. Piet wasn't, Jan wasn't, nobody was.'

The question now rises what the status of these EMNE's (in DN languages) is. Either these EMNE's are instances of NC that surface in DN languages, or EMNE's constitute a phenomenon of their own and are only superficially reminiscent of NC expressions. The first position has been defended by Van der Wouden (1994), Giannakidou (2000) and Weiss (2002) amongst others. In this paper I defend the opposite view by demonstrating that EMNE exhibit fundamentally different behaviour from NC and that they should thus be analysed in a different fashion. I argue that EMNE should be explained in terms of lexical items.

The outcome of the discussion is of importance for the explanation of NC. The conclusion that NC is restricted to a strict subset of languages, and does not show up in typical DN languages, forms a strong indication that languages are subject to parametric differences between NC and DN, thus calling for a syntactic rather than a semantic account of NC.

This paper is constructed as follows. In section 2 I discuss a number of differences between EMNE's and NC expression. In section 3 I propose my analysis that takes EMNE's to be lexical items and show how the differences between EMNE's and NC expressions follow immediately under this approach. In section 4 I discuss the diachronic development of EMNE expressions, and in section 5 I discuss some remaining problems. Section 6 concludes.

2 ▣ Emphatic Multiple Negative Expressions vs. Negative Concord

Despite their superficial similarities, EMNE's differ from standard NC constructions in at least five different aspects, which have been listed below:

(7) Differences between EMNE's and NC expressions:
a. EMNE's always have an emphatic reading; NC constructions usually do not;
b. EMNE's are subject to strict adjacency conditions, contrary to NC constructions;
c. The first part of the EMNE must carry stress, otherwise it is ruled out;
d. The meaning of an EMNE is not always straightforward, contrary to most NC expressions;
e. The formation of EMNE's is not productive; speakers generally differ with respect to which EMNE they accept and which they do not accept;

One of the most striking differences between plain NC constructions and EMNE's is, as the name has already indicated, the fact that EMNE's always give rise to emphatic readings. NC expressions, on the other hand, give rise to plain readings. Even stronger, in pure NC languages, such as Italian the usage of the NC construction is even dispreferred if an emphatic reading is intended; in those cases a Negative Polarity Item (NPI) usually replaces the n-word. This is shown in (8) and (9) for Italian and Dutch. The reading of the Dutch example in (8a) is identical to the reading of Italian (9a), and the same holds for the readings in the b examples.

(8)a. Hij heeft *niemand niet* gezien. Dutch
he has nobody NEG seen
'He didn't see ANYbody.'
b. Hij heeft *niemand* gezien.
he has nobody seen
'He didn't see anybody.'

(9)a. *Non* ha visto alcunché. Italian
NEG has seen anybody
'He didn't see ANYbody.'
b. *Non* ha visto *nessuno.*
NEG has seen nobody
'He didn't see anybody.'

The second difference between EMNE's and NC constructions is that the two negative elements of an EMNE have to be strictly adjacent, whereas two elements that have established an NC relation still allow other material to intervene. In Italian, as shown in (10), the two NC elements are separated by the verbs *ha* and *telefonato*. In (11) however, it is shown for Dutch that whenever other lexical material intervenes between the two negative elements, only a DN reading can be obtained.

(10) Ieri *non* ha telefonato *niente* Italian
yesterday NEG has called nothing
'Nobody called yesterday'

(11) a. Gisteren heeft *niemand niet* gebeld Dutch
yesterday has n-body NEG called
'Nobody at all called yesterday'
b. N*iemand* heeft gisteren *niet* gebeld.
nobody has yesterday NEG called
*'Nobody at all called yesterday.'
√'Nobody didn't call yesterday.'

The third difference between EMNE's and plain NC constructions is that for EMNE's the stress must fall on the first element. If the second element carries stress, again only the DN reading is yielded (see (12)). Stress patterns do, however, not change the negative semantics in NC languages in this respect.

(12) a. Hij heeft *NIKS niet* gezegd. Dutch
he has nothin NEG said
'He didn't say anything (at all).'
b. Hij heeft *niks NIET* gezegd.
he has nothing NEG said
*'He didn't say anything (at all).'
√ 'There is nothing he didn't say'

(13) a. Gianni *NON* ha detto *niente* . Italian
Gianni NEG has said nothing
'Gianni did NOT say anything.'
b. Gianni *non* ha detto *NIENTE*
Gianni NEG has said nothing
'Gianni didn't say ANYthing'

A fourth difference between EMNE's and NC is that the meaning of an EMNE construction, apart from the 'lost negation', is not always compositionally derived. In most cases the reading of sentence containing an EMNE corresponds to the reading of the sentence in which the second negative element is replaced by its non-negative counterpart, modulo the emphatic effect. This is illustrated in (14) below.

(14) a. Zij leest *nooit geen* boek. Dutch
she reads never no book
'She never reads any money.'

b. Zij leest *nooit* een boek.
She reads never a book
'She never reads a book.'

Apparently, it is the fact that the second indefinite also carries negative morphology that leads to the emphatic reading of *nooit* 'never'. This holds for all EMNE's that I have discussed so far. This is however not the case in (15a) below. In (15a) the negative indefinite existential quantifier *geen* 'no' cannot be replaced by its positive counter part *een*, nor by a zero-determiner, as shown in (15b). In fact, in order to express the non-emphatic reading of (15a) *niks* 'nothing' has to be removed instead of *geen* and the reading of (15d) in which *geen* is modified by the adverb *helemaal* 'absolutely' is equivalent to the reading of (15a). This indicates that, apart from the loss of the negation, not all EMNE's are built up compositionally. In fact, it indicates that the behaviour of some EMNE's is rather idiosyncratic; while the behaviour of plain NC expressions is not.

(15) a. Ik heb er *niks geen* aardigheid in. Dutch
I have there nothing no pleasure in
'I don't like it all.'
b.* Ik heb er *niks* (een) aardigheid in.
I have there no pleasure in
c. Ik heb er *geen* aardigheid in.
I have there no pleasure in
'I don't like it.'
d. Ik heb er *helemaal geen* aardigheid in.
I have there absolutely no pleasure in
'I don't like it all.'

This idiosyncratic nature of EMNE's is also reflected by the fact that the class of EMNE expressions is not productive. Several EMNE's are accepted by most speakers of Dutch, such as *nooit niet* or *niks geen*, but many other EMNE's are only accepted by some speakers of Dutch. Only a minority of my informants accepts the examples below.

(16) a. % Ik heb *niemand niets* gegeven. Dutch
I have nobody nothing given
'I didn't give anything to anybody at all.'
b. % Ik heb *nergens niet* gezocht.
I have nowhere NEG looked.for
'I didn't look (for it) anywhere'

On the basis of the differences between EMNE's and NC expressions, I conclude that these two phenomena do not represent two sides of the same coin, but are different in nature and require a different explanation. In the following sections I provide an explanation of EMNE's that treats EMNE's as complex lexical items. However, the theoretical consequences of the distinction between EMNE's and NC expressions does not only have consequences for the way EMNE's have to be analysed; it also sheds light on the nature of NC.

Over the past 15 years NC has been a subject of intensive study. Several analyses have been proposed to account for the fact that in many languages not every negative morphosyntactically negative element contributes to the negative semantics of a sentence. Several scholars have treated NC as a semantic phenomenon. Some of them have argued that n-words are able to undergo a process of polyadic quantification (Zanuttini 1991; Haegeman 1995; Haegeman and Zanuttini 1996; de Swart and Sag 2002), others that n-words are some kinds of NPI's. Others again have argued that NC is an instance of syntactic agreement and that semantic mechanisms such as feature checking or Agree

(Chomsky 1995, 2001), are responsible for the NC readings (cf. Brown 1999; Zeijlstra 2004, following Ladusaw 1992).

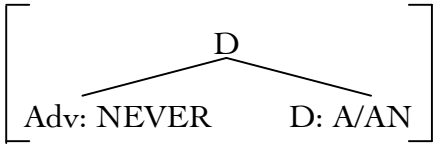
Generally speaking, the semantic component differs from the syntactic component of grammar in the sense that the mode of interpretation is not subject to variation across languages. This means, that if for instance resumption between multiple negative quantifiers is allowed in one language it should in principle be available in all languages, and the occurrence of NC should therefore not be subject to cross-linguistic variation. This has been acknowledged by de Swart and Sag (2002) who take the distinction between DN and NC languages to result from the relation between language system and language use. They argue that 'in principle, both interpretations [DN and NC] are available for both languages [English and French].' For De Swart & Sag each way of interpreting multiple negative expressions allows for two ways, and diachronically determined usage motivations determine which interpretation is preferred. The fact that in (Standard) French and (Substandard) English multiple negative expressions are often ambiguous between an NC and a DN interpretation seems to support this view, just as others (Van der Wouden 1994; Giannakidou 2000; Weiss 2002) took the EMNE examples to show that NC was also available in Dutch.

However, given the strong evidence against the presence of NC in languages, it seems unlikely that languages differ with respect to the interpretation of identical structures at LF. On the contrary, it seems much more likely that the absence of NC constructions in Dutch and German follows from the fact that there is no negative agreement in those languages, just as there is no subject-verb agreement in many other languages. I have developed this analysis in (2006) arguing that the difference between NC and DN can be reduced to the status of negative features: if in a particular language negative features are formalized (in the sense of Chomsky (1995)), NC applies; if negative elements only contain a purely semantic feature DN applies. Such an explanation predicts that NC is subject to cross-linguistic variation. Without being conclusive, the differences between NC constructions and EMNE's support this latter view on NC.[4]

3 ▣ Multiple Negative Expressions as Lexical Items

3.1 ▣ Proposal

Since, as I have demonstrated above, the nature of EMNE's is idiosyncratic in nature, I suggest that EMNE's are Lexical Items (LI's) notwithstanding their complex appearance. In short, I take an EMNE such as *nooit geen* or *niemand niet* to be a single LI's that consists of two different semantic objects: one negative indefinite and an additional non-negative indefinite or negative marker. Hence, the entire EMNE contains only one negation.[5] This means that the lexical representation of an EMNE like *nooit geen* is as in (17).

(17) Nooit geen: 

⇔ /nooit geen/

The structure in (17) consists of two parts that do not match semantically: adverbs do not

[4] The ambiguity between DN and NC readings in English and French does not seem to be compatible with this view at first sight. However, in Zeijlstra (2004) I argue that this ambiguity is a by-product of two instances of language change: namely the increasing use of the negative marker *n't* in stead of not in English, and the loss of the negative marker *ne* in French.

[5] At this point in the reasoning, the fact that the EMNE consists of only one negation seems a bit stipulative, but this is motivated in the next section in terms of the diachronic development of EMNE's.

modify D's or NP's. In a sentence like (18) the adverb *nooit* 'never' applies to the entire VP (*geen boek leest* 'no book reads'), whereas *geen* 'no' applies to the NP *boek* 'book'.

(18) … dat Jan *nooit geen* boek leest.
… that Jan never no book reads
'… that John never reads a book (at all).'

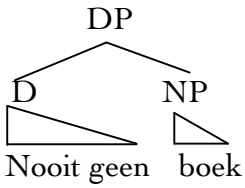
In order to have both semantic objects take scope from their appropriate position I argue that partial reconstruction applies in these constructions. Partial reconstruction has been adopted for many different syntactic phenomena, for instance anaphora binding or the syntax of *wat-for* 'what for' constructions. Following standard syntactic assumptions, the ambiguity in (19) follows from the fact that *himself* can be interpreted in either the lower or the higher copy. In the latter case *which picture of himself* is partially reconstructed to its base position (Grohmann, Hornstein et al. 2005).

(19) John_{i} wondered which picture of $\text{himself}_{i/j}$ Fred_{j} liked.

(20) [John wondered [[which ~~picture of himself~~] [Fred liked [~~which~~ picture of himself]]]]

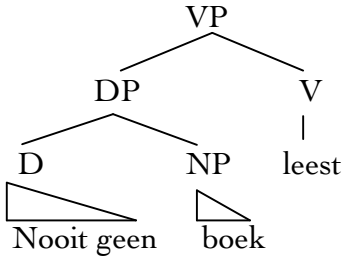
The same mechanism applies to EMNE constructions. Let us simply follow each step in the derivation of (18). For explanatory purposes I neglect all extra derivational steps that are required for Quantifier Raising effects, since this does not conflict with the proposal. First the LI *nooit geen* 'never no', having a D label, must select for an NP, *boek* 'book' in this case. This leads to (21).

(21)



At the same time, the verb *leest* 'reads' selects for a DP and merges with (21), thus creating (22).

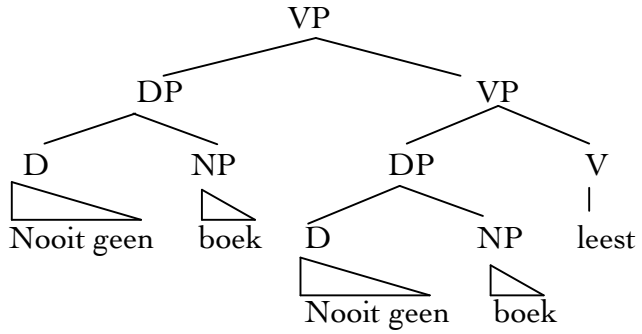
(22)



Finally, the DP moves out of its VP complement position to a position adjoining VP, from where the adverbial part of it can already take scope, as is shown in (23).[6] Following the copy theory of movemen (Chomsky 1995), this means that the entire DP is copied and that the copy merges with VP. At this point there are two copies, and all redundant material should be deleted before reaching LF and PF.

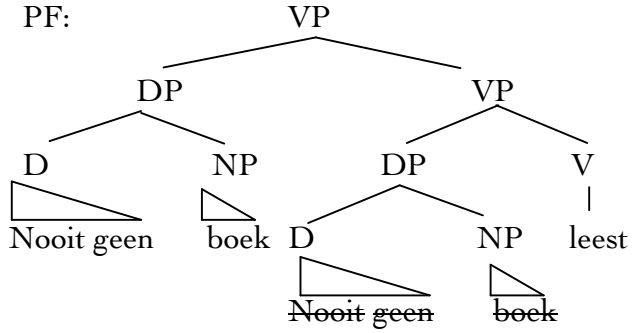
[6] Depending on one's theoretical preferences, this movement can be postponed until after Spell-Out

(23)



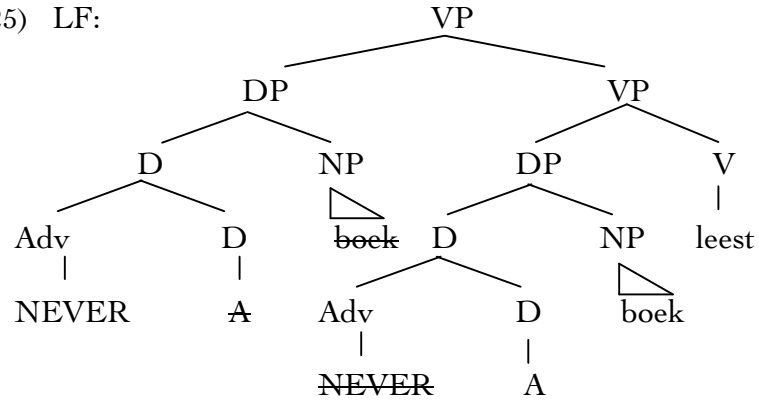
At this point in the derivation, Spell-Out takes place. Therefore, all deletion operations have to apply twice: once on the PF side, and once on the LF side. Now suggest that the lowest copy is deleted phonologically, i.e. only the highest copy gets phonologically realised. Then the derivation meets all requirements that the phonological component (the Sensori-Motor system in Chomsky's terms) imposes. The PF of (18) consists thus of (24).

(24) PF:



On the LF side things are slightly more complicated. We have seen that the entire DP has moved to a VP adjunct position. However, this position is only available for adverbials and not for argument DP's.[7] On the other hand, the adverbials cannot take cope from the lower copy, but the DP argument can. Hence the only way that deletion can take place is partially reconstruct the DP to the lower copy. This means that at LF all D material will be interpreted in the lower copy, whereas all adverbial material will be interpreted in the higher copy. Hence the derivation looks like (25).

(25) LF:

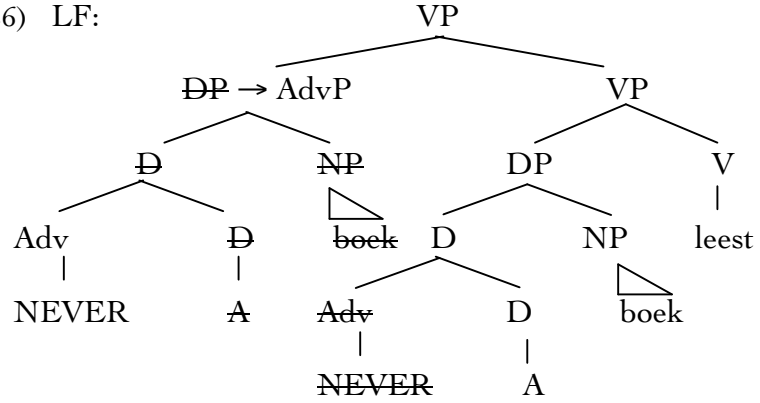


However, (25) still faces problems: the VP still seems to be modified by a DP in adjunct position. Ideally, one would want an AdvP in the VP adjunct position, and have all D labels removed from the highest copy. But this is what one already has achieved. Let us have a closer look at (25). Every element containing a D feature has been deleted. Given the idea that projection is nothing but the projection of one feature of the heading element,

[7] In proposals such as Cinque (1999) adverbial classes have functional projections of their own. This does not change the argumentation, since those positions are not available for DP's either.

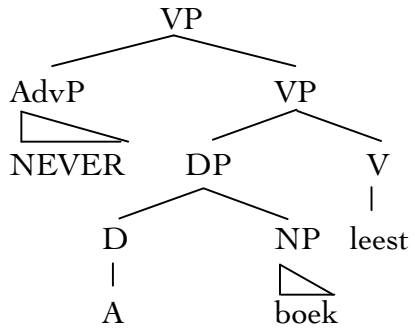
in this case the D label can only result from the presence of D-features in the highest copy. But in (25) all these features have been deleted. Hence there is no D feature to project in the first place, and (25) is actually (26) in disguise, where the label DP has changed into AdvP, since the Adv feature is the only feature available that can project.

(26) LF:



Trivially, (26) can be rewritten as (27), which is the same LF as that of a sentence in which a negative adverb would be combined with an indefinite DP, such as (28).

(27) LF:



(28) … dat Jan *nooit* een boek leest.
… that Jan never a book reads
'… that Jan never reads a book.'

The fact that at LF (18) and (28) are structurally identical demonstrates the following: the fact that EMNE's consist of two different semantic objects, i.e. objects with different semantic functions, does not imply that these semantic objects cannot be part of one and the same LI.

3.2 ▣ Explaining the differences between EMNE's and NC

Thus far I have shown that it is possible to take EMNE's to be LI's and have their different components operate from different structural positions as a result of partial reconstruction. Hence, the lexical analysis is as at least as fruitful as a theory that takes EMNE's to be NC constructions, assumably even more fruitful, since it paves the way for a parametric account for NC. In this subsection I argue that the differences between EMNE's and NC constructions immediately follow as a result of their lexical status. For reasons of convenience, below I repeat the list of differences mentioned in (7).

(29) Differences between EMNE's and NC expressions:
- a. EMNE's always have an emphatic reading; NC constructions usually do not;
- b. EMNE's are subject to strict adjacency conditions, contrary to NC constructions;
- c. The first part of the EMNE must carry stress, otherwise it is ruled out;
- d. The meaning of an EMNE is not always straightforward, contrary to most NC expressions;

e. The formation of EMNE's is not productive; speakers generally differ with respect to which EMNE they accept and which they do not accept;

The fact that EMNE's, being emphatic, have a slightly different meaning, than their counterparts consisting of a single negative element, is no longer unexpected, since they are all different LI's. Even stronger, there seems to be a tendency that if two LI's have an almost identical meaning, they will semantically diverge. The only question now is why all these EMNE's are emphatic and do not exhibit other semantic differences in comparison to there non-EMNE counterparts. In other words, why is it that *nooit geen boek* 'never no book' obtains an emphatic reading and *nooit een boek* 'never a book' does not? The answer to this question lies in the diachronic development of EMNE's, and will be dealt with in the next section.

The fact that EMNE's are subject to strict adjacency conditions also falls out immediately. Given the fact they form one LI, EMNE's must be spelled out in one and the same position.

Since under this approach EMNE's are single LI's, they are expected to be subject to phonological reduction. Other frozen expressions, such as English *thank you*, for instance are pronounced as if it were more or less one word. Phonological reduction effects are indeed found with respect to EMNE's, but are not that strong. People still recognize an EMNE as consisting of two different parts. Still, it can be shown that the phonological behaviour of EMNE is different from that of two independent words, as is shown below for the way that EMNE's give rise to special stress patterns. Take for instance the following minimal pair:

(30) a. … dat Jan *NOOIT geen* boek leest.
… *that Jan never a book reads*
'… that Jan never reads a book.'
b. … dat Jan *nooit GEEN* boek leest.
… *that Jan never a book reads*
'… that Jan never reads a book.'

In (30a) the first part of the EMNE obtained stress, in (30b) the second part. These stress effects do not stand on their own. Elements carrying heavy stress, as in (30), require a preceding phonological break Φ, as shown in (31).

(31) a. … dat Jan Φ *NOOIT geen* boek leest
b. … dat Jan *nooit* Φ *GEEN* boek leest

However, as is well known from the work by Selkirk (1984) (adopted in a somewhat different version by Van der Koot and Neeleman (2006)), prosodic structure reflects syntactic structure. Phonological boundaries cannot be introduced at each point in the structure, but can only follow after at the right edge of a maximal phrase. The prosodic structures in (31) must be derived from different structures in (32).

(32) a. … [[dat Jan] [[NOOIT geen boek] leest]]
b. … [[dat Jan] [[nooit] [GEEN boek] leest]]

It follows from (32) that for the b sentence *nooit* 'never' must constitute a maximal projection on its own, whereas this is not required for the a sentence with stress on *nooit* 'never'. Since EMNE's are LI's no part of it can be a maximal projection, thus ruling out EMNE's carrying stress on their second part.

The fourth and fifth differences between EMNE's and plain NC constructions also follow from the fact that EMNE's are LI's. The idiosyncratic nature of several EMNE's can easily be accounted for since the entire EMNE corresponds to a single meaning. Thus it is no

longer a problem that an EMNE such as *nikɘ geen* 'nothing no' in (33) behaves differently from most other EMNE's in the sense that not the first element but the second seems to be emphasized.

(33) Ik heb er *nikɘ geen* aardigheid in. Dutch
I have there nothing no pleasure in
'I don't like it all.'

Of course the question remains open why this EMNE obtained this particular meaning (the lexical analysis only explains why this meaning may differ from other EMNE's). I argue that the meaning has developed analogous to other expressions expressing a speaker's mood.

(34) a. Ik heb er zin in.
I have there lust in
'I feel like it.'
b. Ik heb er last van.
I have there load of
'I suffer from it'
c. Ik heb er aardigheid in.
I have there pleasure in
'I have there pleasure in.'

In previous stages of the languages such mood DP's could be combined with an indefinite article, as is reflected by the archaic sounding example in (35).

(35) Ik heb er een aardigheid in.
I have there a pleasure in
'I have there pleasure in.'

Now, note that the DP's in the examples in (34) can all be combined with *nikɘ* 'nothing', also with a slightly archaic flavour:

(36) a. Ik heb er niks zin in.
I have there NEG lust in
'I feel like it.'
b. Ik heb er niks last van.
I have there NEG load of
'I suffer from it.'
c. Ik heb er niks aardigheid in.
I have there NEG pleasure in
'I have there pleasure in.'

I argue that by analogy to the examples in (36) the DP *een aardigheid* 'a pleasure' in some phase of the language can be modified with *nikɘ* 'nothing' as well. It then becomes clear for this example why the negative morphology of *geen* 'no' in this phase of the language could emphasize *nikɘ* 'nothing', as is the case with other EMNE's. In later versions a later phase of the language this *nikɘ geen* 'nothing no' has been reanalysed with the meaning of 'absolutely no'. From this reanalysis it follows why *nikɘ geen* 'nothing no' has become highly productive.

The fifth property concerns the large amount of speaker variation with respect to EMNE's. Since the acquisition of EMNE's is a purely lexical and not a syntactic process, each EMNE has to be acquired independently. Therefore relatively infrequent EMNE's such as the ones in (37) are accepted by only a minority of speakers.

(37) a. % Ik heb *niemand niets* gegeven. Dutch
I have nobody nothing given
'I didn't give anything to anybody at all.'
b. % Ik heb *nergens niet* gezocht.
I have nowhere NEG looked.for
'I didn't look (for it) anywhere.'

To conclude, all differences between EMNE's and plain NC constructions immediately follow from the proposal presented in section 3.1. I take this to be firm support for the analysis that EMNE's are not instances of NC, but are LI's consisting of two independent semantic objects, of which one is semantically negative.

4 ▣ The development of Emphatic Multiple Negative Expressions

Thus far I have addressed the question how EMNE's should be analysed. Yet one of the main questions, why are there are EMNE's in the first place, is still open. The answer of this question is of acute interest since it still needs to be explained why meanings assigned to EMNE's contain only one negation. In order to answer this question, one first needs to have a look at the way sentential negation was expressed in Middle Dutch.

Middle Dutch was special with respect to the expression of negation in two ways: first, it was an NC language, contrary to Modern Dutch; second, it had two negative markers instead of one, *en/ne* and *niet* 'not' , that embraced the finite verb much like French *ne…pas*. The first property is shown in (38), the second in (39).

(38) a. Ic *en* sag *niemen.*[8] Middle Dutch
I NEG saw n-body
'I didn't see anybody.'
b. Die *niemen en* spaers.[9]
that nobody NEG saves
'Who saves nobody.'
c. Den onderseten *niet en* was // gheoorlooft *niet niet* Middle Dutch
the shephards NEG NEG was // allowed nothing NEG
met allen // aen enen andren paus te vallen.[10]
with all // PRT an other pope to attack
'The shephards were not at all allowed to attack another pope together'

(39) a. *En* laettine mi spreke *niet.*[11] 13th Century Dutch
NEG let.he me speak NEG
'If he does't let me speak'
b. Si*ne* ware *niet* genedert heden.[12] 13th Century Dutch
she.NEG were NEG humiliated currently
'She wasn't humiliated currently
c. Dat si *niet en* sach dat si sochte.[13] 13th Century Dutch
that sheNEG NEG saw that she looked-for
'That she didn't see what she looked for.'

[8] Cf. Hoeksema (1997)
[9] Vanden levene ons heren 2018.
[10] Brabantsche yeesten 7957-9.
[11] Lanceloet: 20316.
[12] Lanceloet: 20166.
[13] Lanceloet: 20042.

A particular property of Middle Dutch *en/ne* is that it cannot occur on itself (except for a number of contexts, cf. Postma (2002)). In negative sentences without indefinite arguments (without n-words, that is) the additional negative marker *niet* 'not' licenses the presence of *en/ne*. In contexts in which there is an n-word, the n-word may license *en/ne* as well and *niet* can be left out. Although *niet* 'not' may participate in NC relations as well (see (38c)), this does not seem to serve any specific purpose and therefore the co-occurrence of *en/ne* in combination with both an n-word and *niet* 'not' is rather rare. The same holds for combinations of *en/ne* in combination with more than one n-word. Note that many instances of multiple n-words are often redundant. Take for instance current Italian (40):

(40) Nessuno ha detto niente a nessuno.
nobody has said n-thing to nobody
'Nobody said anything to anybody.'

In this example the presence of the second *nessuno* 'nobody' is superfluous since it already follows from the fact that nobody said anything that nobody said anything to anybody. Hence, without special motivation combinations n-words tend to be avoided.

As a result the majority of negative sentences in Middle Dutch consisted either of *en/ne* in combination with *niet* or a single n-word. However, as has been known since Jespersen's seminal work (Jespersen 1917) *en/ne* lost force and gradually started to disappear. Its usage became optional as shown below in (41), which consists of two examples out of one text. In the middle of the 17th century for instance the usage of *en/ne* was almost entirely gone. The development of *en*-deletion in Holland Dutch is shown in (42).

(41) a. Maer *niemant* gaf gehoor.[14] 1638 Dutch
but nobody gave obeying
'But nobody obeyed.'

b. Dat *niemant* zich het woên der vyanden*en* kreunde.[15]
that nobody SE the raging of.the enemies NEG moaned
'That nobody cared about the raging of the enemies'

(42) *En*-deletion in Holland Dutch (in %) (Burridge 1993)

	V1	V2	V-final
1300	43	28	8
1400	75	25	36
1500	77	48	28
1600	100	30	8
1650	100	100	98

Following the line of reasoning pursued in this paper, NC has been taken to be subject to parametric variation. This means that the language learner on the basis of its input has to determine whether the target language is an NC or a DN language. This means that if the cue to set the parameter to NC is robust enough the language will be taken to be an NC language. For the NC/DN distinction such a cue is formed by sentences with more than one morphosyntactic instance of negation that is interpreted with only single semantic negation. As the majority of such cues consists of examples consisting of *en/ne* in combination with either *niet* or a single n-word, as a result of *en*-deletion the cue robust

[14] Gysbrecht V: 1368.
[15] Gysbrecht V: 1410.

enough to set the language as an NC language, has disappeared. This leads us to the following situation: the majority of NC expressions has disappeared from Dutch. Therefore the language can no longer be interpreted as an NC language. But there are still these much rarer former NC expressions consisting of multiple n-words or n-word(s) + *niet*. Since the language learner could not interpret these instances as instances of NC, they had to be analysed as LI's as some kind of last resort option. Since in the language input the adult NC speakers still assigned an NC to reading to these constructions, these LI's have been analysed as carrying only one semantic negation. The death of Dutch NC led to the birth of EMNE's.

Now it automatically becomes clear why EMNE's mostly bear an emphatic reading. As addressed above the usage of redundant negation always leads to en emphatic effect, just as the inclusion of non-necessary indefinites always shows an emphatic effect. The implied sentences in (43) are also emphatic for that reason.

(43) a. John never eats → John never eats anything
b. John didn't say anything → John didn't say anything to anybody

This observation is also confirmed for NC languages. In languages where (instances of) NC are optional the NC variant is always emphatic, as is illustrated for Afrikaans in (44).[16]

(44) a. Sy is *nooit nie* beskikbaar *nie.*
she is never NEG available NEG
'She's never available'
b. Sy is *nooit* beskikbaar *nie.*
she is neveravailable NEG
'She's just never available'

Hence, the emphatic readings of EMNE's were already there in their Middle Dutch counterparts. When EMNE's were first analysed as LI's this emphatic meaning has become part of its lexical semantic representation.

5 ▣ Loose ends

In this section two further issues will be discussed: the possibility of EMNE's to appear in Spec,CP position and the parallel constructions where the usage of an EMNE seems almost obligatory.

5.1 ▣ EMNE's in Spec,CP

A property of V-to-C languages, such as Dutch and German, is that only one constituent may appear to the left of the finite verb in main clauses. It is thus predicted that EMNE's, being LI's, should be able to appear in this projection. This is indeed the case for most EMNE's as shown in (45) and (46).

(45) *Nooit geen* boek heb ik gelezen. Dutch
never no book have I read
'I have never ever read a book.'

(46) *Niks geen* aardigheid heb ik er in. Dutch
nothing no pleasure have I there in
'I don't like it at all.'

However, not every EMNE is allowed to occur in first position. *Nooit niet* 'never not', for example, is not allowed in this position. If *nooit niet* 'never not' is indeed an LI, the question arises why (47) is ruled out.

[16] Thanks to Theresa Biberauer for providing me these examples.

(47) * *Nooit niet* heb ik het gedaan. Dutch
never NEG have I it ∂one
'I never ever did it.'

I suspect that this ban on sentence-initial *nooit niet* 'never not' follows from a more general ban on the negative marker *niet* 'not' immediately preceding a finite verb in verb second position, as shown in (48).

(48) * *Niet* heb ik gegeten. Dutch
NEG have I eaten
'I didn't eat.'

The ban on sole negative markers in sentence-initial position is a property that is attested across language (see Payne (1985), Horn (1989) for an overview of facts, analyses and discussions). However, as Barbiers (2002) has shown, there are contexts in Dutch where *niet* 'not' in sentence-initial position is accepted, as shown in (49).

(49) √ Ik had wel gezien dat Jan aankwam, Dutch
I had PRT ɘeen that Jan arrived,
maar *niet* had ik gezien dat Ed vertrok.[17]
but NEG had I ɘeen that Ed left
'I did see that Jan arrived, but I had not seen that Ed left.'

According to some informants, the replacement of *niet* 'not' by *nooit niet* 'never not' improves the sentence slightly. This may account for the ban on *nooit niet* 'never not' in sentence-initial position.

(50) ? Ik had altijd wel gezien dat Jan aankwam, Dutch
I had always PRT ɘeen that Jan arrived,
maar *nooit niet* had ik gezien dat Ed vertrok.
but never NEG had I ɘeen that Ed left
'I did see that Jan arrived, but I had not seen that Ed left.'

However, one should be careful since informants are unsure about their judgements, as sentences such as (50) are hard to evaluate. In any case, I argue that the ban on sentence-initial *nooit niet* follows from some particular properties of this EMNE, and that the analysis that EMNE's are LI's not contradicted by these data.

5.2 ▣ Parallelism

Finally the example in (51) needs to be discussed. The question is why *niet* 'not' in the final conjunct is almost obligatory. Why can't *niemand* 'nobody' appear on its own?

(51) a. *Niemand* was op het feest, Piet *niet*, Jan *niet*, *niemand niet.*
nobody was at the party, Piet NEG, Jan NEG, nobody NEG
'Nobody was at the part. Piet wasn't, Jan wasn't , nobody was.'
b. ? *Niemand* was op het feest, Piet *niet*, Jan *niet*, *niemand.*
Nobody was at the party, Piet NEG, Jan NEG, nobody
'Nobody was at the part. Piet wasn't, Jan wasn't , nobody was.'

Note that the reading of final *niemand* 'nobody' must be emphatic. This already calls for either an EMNE, or another emphatic modifier, such as *helemaal* 'absolutely', as shown in (52):

(52) *Niemand* was op het feest, Piet *niet*, Jan *niet*, helemaal *niemand.*
nobody was at the party, Piet NEG, Jan NEG, absolutely nobody
'Nobody was at the part. Piet wasn't, Jan wasn't, nobody was.'

[17] Barbiers (2002: 21)

A second reason why an EMNE is preferred in these parallel constructions is that the prosodic parallelism must be maintained as well. Take the example in (53). Here the particle *wel* is used in both the main clause and the first and second conjuncts. If *wel*, which is not required in the final conjunct for semantic reasons, is left out, the sentence sounds odd as well. This is the second reason why final *niet* 'not' in (51) may not be left out.

(53) Er waren wel wat mensen gekomen. Marie wel, Piet wel,
There were PRT some people come. Marie PRT, Piet PRT,
mijn vrienden ?(wel).
my friends PRT
'Some people came, Marie did, Piet did, my friends did.'

To conclude, although EMNE's are normally prescriptively ruled out, the empathic reading and particularly the prosodic parallelism requirement call for the inclusion of an EMNE. This joint force is stronger than the purely emphatic reason effects that have played a role in the other examples discussed in this paper, which explains why the inclusion of EMNE's is almost obligatory in these parallel constructions, despite the fact that they are prescriptively ruled out.

6 ▣ Conclusions

In this paper I have discussed the difference between so-called EMNE's and plain NC constructions. I have demonstrated that EMNE's are fundamentally different from NC constructions, and that for that reason EMNE's should not be taken to indicate traces of NC in DN languages.

I have argued that EMNE's are best analyzed as LI's that consist of two semantic objects, of which one is semantically negative. By applying partial reconstruction at LF both semantic objects can take scope from a different position in the tree.

EMNE's are the result of the disappearance of NC in Dutch. After the loss of the preverbal negative marker *en/ne*, strings containing two n-words or an n-word and a negative marker *niet* 'not' could no longer act as a cue for NC and therefore had to be stored in the lexicon. The death of Dutch NC, so to speak, led to the birth of EMNE's.

Finally the discussion of EMNE's and the fact that they could not be taken to be instances of NC shed more light on the nature of NC. The fact that NC is subject to parametric variation firmly supports the view that NC should be analyzed as a syntactic and not as semantic phenomenon.

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