
INTRA- AND INTER- AUTHOR VARIATION IN NEGATION IN THE 17th CENTURY DUTCH LETTERS AS LOOT*

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ABSTRACT This article provides a qualitative study of variation in negation in 17th century letters from people of different regions and social classes of the Dutch speaking area. This intermediate language stage between negative concord in Middle Dutch and single negation in Modern Dutch is affected by both bottom-up change (the negative clitic started to erode due to functional redundancy) and top-down change (some elite writers, like P. C. Hooft and Joost van den Vondel, started to omit the negative clitic completely). The letters display different surface varieties: optional deletion of the negative clitic, conservative negative concord and progressive single negation. However, in the underlying syntactic structure, the syntactic features of the negative clitic – polarity features projecting PolP – discriminate four different derivational systems: (i) a high PolP as part of an extended CP; (ii) a low PolP that attracts the finite verb to T; (iii) both high PolP and low PolP; and (iv) no PolP. We will argue that the letters with (incidental) negative concord represent a stage in which one or two PolPs are present. In particular, the letters with optional deletion of the negative clitic show that the clitic extends its function from true negation to emphasis on negation of a presupposition (as found in West Flemish) to general contrast on the polarity of the clause. This less specific function is indicative of semantic bleaching and a motive for eventual loss of the clitic. The letters without negative concord show completion of this process and hence loss of the PolP. However, we also show that at least it is feasible that a subset of letters with single negation still has a PolP underlyingly, which means that although the negative clitic is absent from the surface, its polarity features are present at the underlying syntactic structure. The negative features are present during the syntactic derivation in a PolP, however, we infer, they are not spelled-out at the surface, possi-

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bly as an effect of upper-class prescriptions. Sociolinguistically, we find that whereas the clitic is present across writers in Zeeland (a southern province of the Netherlands), the single negation systems with the clitic's features in deep structure are present in Noord-Holland ('North-Holland', a northern province of the Netherlands), displaying a more conservative spread of single negation. Writers showing the most progressive variant containing single negation (and no PolP) only appear in Noord-Holland, where this grammar is top-down initiated.

1 INTRODUCTION

The 17th century was a turbulent time for the Dutch. The first half of this century was marked by the war with Spain. After gaining independence and the recognition of the Dutch Republic, there were wars with France, England, Münster and Cologne. At the same time the republic had a thriving trade with both the East Indies and the West Indies. The 80-year war with Spain (from 1568–1648) and the concomitant independence of the Dutch Republic had far-reaching effects on many aspects of society, but, importantly for this paper, also on the Dutch language. Dutch was promoted from a vernacular language, mainly used at home, to a language that was used in new and formal domains including education, the government, the church and science (van der Sijs 2004, van der Wal 1995, van der Wal & van Bree 1992, van der Sijs & Willemyns 2009). These external influences on Dutch had an important effect on its grammar and vocabulary. At the same time, Dutch was already in the process of undergoing several linguistic changes, like the loss of the case system and changes in the way negation was expressed (van der Horst 2008). Within this period we find abundant linguistic variation (Breitbarth 2009, van der Horst 2008).

This paper focuses in particular on the linguistic variation that is found between and within writers in the way negation is expressed. Our aim is to discern which systems of negation were present in letters written in the 17th century and how these patterns can be analyzed within formal syntax. We will combine these insights with a close study of how the negative systems we find in Early Modern Dutch (EMD) are distributed over social groups and regions in order to uncover how exactly the changes in negation took place throughout the Dutch society. We will bring together these social and grammatical insights to analyze how variation in negation was distributed through society to gain more understanding in the process of language change.

Our research reveals four syntactic systems underlying the use of negation. We show that the underlying structure of these systems does not consistently align to their surface structure, which we argue might be an effect of

a collision between both top-down social pressure and bottom-up development. We will tentatively conclude that, although conservative use of negation occurs across regions and social classes, the most progressive system is situated in the high class of the northern part, where progressive change was also top-down initiated. These results are in line with earlier research on this topic (van der Horst & van der Wal 1979, Postma & Bennis 2006, Hoeksema 2014, Nobels & Rutten 2014, Vosters & Vandenbussche 2012).

For our research, we make use of a corpus of 17th century Dutch letters, the so called Letters as Loot (LAL) corpus (van der Wal, Rutten, Nobels & Simons 2015). LAL covers a collection of private letters that were sent home by Dutch sailors and others from abroad and vice versa. Those letters were confiscated between the second half of the 17th century and the early 19th centuries by ships belonging to the English fleet or privateers during the recurrent warfare between England and the Netherlands (van Gelder 2006). The letters stem from both men and women of different social classes and regions. Since most of them are private, they are likely to offer the best extant window on contemporary spoken language, allowing for the most transparent analysis of linguistic variation possible (van der Wal et al. 2015).

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 will first shortly discuss the patterns of negation in the history of Dutch from approximately 1150 till present, providing background and positioning the patterns of negation in the 17th century within this larger change pattern. Section 3 then goes into negation in the 17th century by describing the negation patterns we find in the LAL corpus. Section 4 discusses the syntactic analysis of the Jespersen cycle we will use in this paper. We will base ourselves on previous work by Zeijlstra (2004), Breitbarth (2009) and Breitbarth & Haegeman (2014). In section 5 we show that one of the systems we distinguish adds a particular meaning to the sentences with negative concord in contrast to those with single negation. In section 6, we discuss different perspectives in the literature on where this meaning is base-generated. Then, we will analyze these patterns of meaning and syntax in our corpus in section 7. Section 8 combines the grammatical patterns of negation with the social patterns, providing insight into the pattern of change that emerges from these private letters. Section 9 summarizes the paper.

2 NEGATION IN THE HISTORY OF DUTCH

This section describes the development of Dutch negation throughout the history of the Dutch language. In section 2.1, we illustrate the change from Middle Dutch to Modern Dutch in terms of the Jespersen cycle. In section 2.2, we focus on EMD.

Stage	Negation pattern
I	negative clitic
II	negative clitic + negative adverb
III	negative adverb

Table 1 Jespersen's negative cycle (Jespersen 1917).

2.1 The Dutch Jespersen cycle

Jespersen (1917) observed a pattern of diachronic variation in negation in a set of languages. He argued that in those languages "the original negative adverb is first weakened, then found insufficient and therefore strengthened, generally through some additional word, and this in its turn may be felt as the negative proper and may then in course of time be subject to the same development as the original word" (Jespersen 1917: 4). This pattern can be schematized as in table 1.

Stage I is attested in Old Dutch, in which negation is generally expressed by the single preverbal negative marker *ne*, as in (1). See e.g. Zeijlstra (2004) and van der Horst (2008).¹

- (1) *Inde in uuege sundigero ne stûnt.*
 and in way sinners.GEN NEG stood.3'SG
 'and didn't stand in the way of sinners.' (Zeijlstra 2004: 83)

Middle Dutch, in use between approximately 1150 and 1500, mainly exhibited the obligatory use of two negative elements (negative concord) to express negation, i.e. Jespersen's stage II (see table 1). Example (2) shows a Middle Dutch sentence expressing negative concord, with *en* as a preverbal negative clitic and *niet* as a negative adverb. The required presence of both elements marks Middle Dutch as a negative concord language, example from Zeijlstra (2004: 88).

- (2) *En laettine mi spreke niet.*
 NEG let.he me speak NEG

¹ This subsection briefly sketches the history of negation in Dutch to give the reader some general background. We leave out some of the details concerning patterns that deviate from the main patterns described here, e.g. the use of single negation in Middle Dutch for instance with modal verbs or verbs like *weten* 'know'. We refer the reader to the extensive literature on negation in Dutch for a thorough description of negation throughout the history of Dutch, e.g. van der Horst (2008), Burridge (1993), van der Horst & van der Wal (1979) and Breitbarth (2009).

‘If he doesn’t let me speak.’

At the end of the 17th century, this grammar containing (obligatory) negative concord changed into a grammar in which the negative clitic has almost completely disappeared and negation is only expressed by means of a negative adverb or another n-word, Jespersen’s stage III (see table 1). This is shown in the Modern Dutch sentence in (3), with *niet* as the only negative element.

- (3) *Jan loopt niet.*
Jan walks NEG
‘Jan isn’t walking.’

2.2 Negation in Early Modern Dutch (EMD)

This shift from one grammar to another did not occur suddenly. EMD, in use between 1500 and 1800, seems to show an intermediate stage of this change. In this intermediate stage, negation is allowed to be expressed by both single negation and negative concord (Breitbarth 2009, van der Horst 2008, Zeijlstra 2004). Example (4-a) shows an instance of single negation, (4-b) shows an example of negative concord. Both examples are from Vondel’s play *Gijsbrecht van Aemstel*, taken from Sterck, Moller, de Klerk, Molkenboer, Prinsen J.Lzn. & Simons (1927).

- (4) a. *De krijgslie zijn niet veer van deeze kloosterpoort.*
the warriors are NEG far from this monastery.gate
‘The warriors are not far from the monastery’s gate.’
(Sterck et al. 1927: *Gijsbrecht van Aemstel*, verse 1038)
- b. *Zoo veele moeite en is het leven my niet waerdigh.*
so much effort NEG is the life me NEG worthy
‘Life is not worth that much trouble for me.’
(Sterck et al. 1927: *Gijsbrecht van Aemstel*, verse 955)

This change from a grammar exhibiting negative concord to a grammar exhibiting variation between negative concord and single negation is described as a more or less unconscious change starting in the lower classes and gradually reaching the higher classes (van der Horst 2008). Both sentences in (4), for example, are from the play *Gysbrecht van Aemstel* by Joost van den Vondel from 1638 (Sterck et al. 1927). This means that the two ways of expressing negation did not only co-occur within the same author, but also within one and the same text. During the middle of the 17th century, the choice for either negative concord or single negation became more conscious: in certain circles in the upper classes the negative clitic was no longer used (van der Wal

& van Bree 1992). Famous authors like Joost van den Vondel and Pieter Cornelisz Hooft, for instance, decided to stop using the negative clitic in all their texts from 1638 onward (van der Wouden 2007, Paardekooper 2006). Usually, bottom-up linguistic change originating in the vernacular is met with resistance from the upper class (Labov 2006, Kroch 1986). However, here we see a gradual bottom-up change (erosion of the clitic) co-occurring in the middle of the 17th century with a top-down change. At the same time, other elite authorities communicated contrasting conventions regarding the use of negation. In particular, the publication of the State Translation of the Bible in 1637 exhibited strict negative concord (van der Sijs, Willemyns, de Vries & Burger 2009). Since the State Translation entered the household of many Dutch citizens, it can be assumed that its conservative grammar with regard to negation also left a mark on the language use of those citizens, being part of a specific religious and literary register. Also, literary writers, such as Cats and De Brune, maintained the use of variation between negative concord and single negation (Rutten & van der Wal 2014). Yet, during the second half of the century, negative concord kept losing ground to single negation. Other elite authorities, like Leupenius and Joannes Vollenhove, expressed their disapproval of the negative clitic in meta-linguistic or prescriptive texts (Leupenius 1958, Dibbets 2007). During the 18th and 19th century, texts containing negative concord are a minority. Although instances of negative concord are still found, even in formal texts, see e.g. Vosters & Vandebussche (2012). van der Horst (2008: 1573) assumes that the negative clitic *en/ne* was still used frequently in colloquial speech, especially in certain (southern Dutch, Flemish) regions, where it is still used today (see e.g. Barbiers 2006, Breitbarth & Haegeman 2014). However, the negative connotations surrounding the negative clitic had become clearly formulated and, by the 19th century, negative concord had almost completely disappeared in writing.

The present paper aims to add to our knowledge about negation in the 17th century by describing which patterns of negation are found in which social circles, thereby contributing to our knowledge of how changes pertaining to negation took place in this dynamic period of Dutch and the Dutch speaking area. As such, we follow the line of research provided by Walkden & Breitbarth (2019: 202) who argue that “it is crucial not to conceptualize the change as a monolithic transformation of one grammar into another but rather as a process unfolding within populations along geographical and diachronic dimensions, and to look at texts that come closest to representing the local vernacular.”

3 NEGATION IN THE LETTERS AS LOOT: GRAMMATICAL SYSTEMS

This section focuses on the grammatical systems attested in our dataset. Section 3.1 provides detailed information about the corpus and the data itself. Section 3.2 gives an overview of the different Jespersen stages detected in the data.

3.1 *Dataset and previous findings*

As stated in the introduction, LAL covers a collection of private letters that were sent from Dutch sailors and Dutch people overseas to their relatives and vice versa. This collection is the Dutch subset of the *Prize Papers*, an archival collection in Kew, London (Nobels 2013, Simons 2013, Rutten & van der Wal 2014). The letters stem from both men and women of different social classes and regions. Their private nature indicates that they are “as close to speech as non-fictional historical texts can possibly be” (Rutten & van der Wal 2014: 4). Rutten & van der Wal (2014) transcribed a subset of 1000 letters from the collection, making them available in a digital interface.² The transcriptions are enriched with lemmatization, tags, part-of-speech and sociolinguistic annotations, like, for instance, age, social class of the writer, place and year of writing, and information about the addressee.

With respect to negation, it was usually assumed that the change from negative concord to single negation was a rapid one, with data collections displaying consistent negative concord around 1600 to consistent single negation around 1650 (Burridge 1993). Yet, Rutten & van der Wal (2014)’s study on LAL, which examines 2307 tokens of negation in 549 letters written between 1660 and 1670, shows a more gradual change to single negation, with 806 (35%) tokens still expressing negative concord. They also reveal different patterns underlying the use of the negation. The first pattern is region. Single negation was used more frequently in the letters stemming from the northern parts of the country (385 tokens, 88%) than in letters stemming from the southern parts (134 tokens, 49%). The second pattern is constructional. They identify six different syntactic environments, based on research by van der Horst & van der Wal (1979) and Burridge (1993), affecting the use of the clitic:

- (5) V1 > local > constituent > main clause > inversion / subordinate clause

In (5), the environments are ordered from most progressive (most frequent

² <https://brievenalsbuit.ivdnt.org/corpus-frontend/BaB/search/>

use of single negation) to most conservative (most frequent use of negative concord). This finding suggests a gradual spread of the single negation across syntactic environments, starting from V1 (118 tokens, 89%) and finishing in inversions (157 tokens, 56%) and subordinated clauses (458 tokens, 56%). The third pattern, social class, interacts with region and syntactic construction. For example, in Amsterdam, where single negation shows a dominance with 253 tokens (67%), they found strong social differences in subordinate clauses, whereas in Zeeland, where both variants of negation show equal frequency, social differences are observed in main clauses and subordinate clauses. Overall, [Rutten & van der Wal \(2014\)](#) show that the development of negation in EMD is more gradual and constrained than earlier literature proposed. Their data show that the negative clitic is still frequently used in the second half of the 17th century, subject to sociolinguistic and syntactic variation.

[Rutten \(2016\)](#)'s findings complicate the situation even further. Acknowledging the overall tendencies in the use of negation that were found in the aforementioned study, from LAL, Rutten takes a sample of 895 tokens from letters by 84 writers, based on more variable conditions than set out in this paper (e.g. more regions and a more fine-grained granularity of social classes), and investigates intra-author variation. He reveals that individual differences in negation usage within writers makes it hard to see how the general patterns apply. For example, Adam Erckelens, whose letter is also part of our data selection, is a high class writer from Amsterdam that displays 9 tokens (80%) of single negation, yet the few tokens of negative concord appear in V1 and constituents, which are regarded as the most progressive syntactic environments. A contrasting example is the letter of Jan Willems, a middle-class resident of Zeeland, that displays 2 tokens (22%) of single negation, but one of these is located in a subordinate clause, which is regarded as one of the most conservative environments. Thus, on a quantitative token level, patterns of negation usage can be observed, but these cannot be mapped to the individual writers. [Rutten \(2016\)](#) uses this data to argue that, rather than a historical development from diglossia to diaglossia, the EMD sociolinguistic situation was already diaglossic. A fine-grained analysis of the factors underlying this individual variation was not the purpose of the article.

In the current qualitative study, we will take a more restricted sample of LAL to elaborate on the aforementioned complexity of EMD with the use of generative syntactic instruments. We aim to investigate the syntactic and semantic/pragmatic factors affecting the observed individual variation as well as how these factors interact with the earlier mentioned sociolinguistic variables.

For this paper, we have selected a sample of letters from the collection of [Rutten & van der Wal \(2014\)](#) that is restricted by the following variables, applicable by using LAL's metadata. Each letter:

- contains at least three expressions of negation;
- stems from a time period between 1661–1673, 30 to 40 years after elite writers switched to a single negation grammar in their writings;
- is autographed as concluded by the Leiden Identification Procedure ([Nobels & van der Wal 2012](#)), a process combining script and content analysis in distinguishing autographed from non-autographed documents, to filter out negations appearing in standardized parts of letters that are possibly taken from writings of professional authors;
- is written by someone who originated in Noord-Holland (specifically: Amsterdam) or Zeeland, so as to investigate the opposition between Northern and Southern grammars respectively;
- is written by someone of (middle-)high or (middle-)low social class, so that we can distinguish between social classes. We merged the conditions middle-high and high, and middle-low and low, in the metadata to abstract to this level of granularity.

Some writers wrote more than one letter (containing negation). All these letters are included in our corpus to generate a larger volume of texts and negative expressions per author, even if the letters contained less than three negative sentences. Carefully filtering the corpus through these variables and balancing the number of letters between conditions restricts the sample to 33 letters from 23 different writers. Table 2 shows the set of letters sorted by writer and divided over regions and social classes.³

³ We are aware of the fact that we are working with a restricted and complicated set of data, where we have only a small set of data per writer. This is a more general problem of a lot of historical linguistics research and it is a problem that is inherently related to working with this corpus. However, we still believe that these letters can provide insight into the different grammars in use during that time period.

		Social class	
		Low	High
Noord- Holland	Hillegonda Vrienk	(1,27)	Adam Erckelens (1,10)
	Jaapje Koerten	(1,3)	Doedes Ennes Star (1,3)
	Maritje Barents	(1,6)	Elisabeth Amelingh (3,36)
	Meijndert van Kein	(1,15)	Henricus Cordes (1,5)
	Trijntje Jacobs	(1,6)	Lieven Kersteman (1,10)
	Saartje Jans	(1,4)	Willem Hontum de Jonge (2,8)
	Trijntje Hendriks-Barents	(1,38)	
Zeeland	Adriaan Adriaansen	(1,17)	Bastiaan Elinck (2,11)
	Arnoud Adriaansen	(1,7)	Boudewijn de Witte (2,24)
	Guillaume Beddelo	(1,8)	Jan Lefeber (2,19)
	Jacob Been	(1,3)	Lambrecht Verbrugge (4,5)
	Jacob Dimmenssen	(2,4)	
	Tanneke Cats	(1,19)	

Table 2 Selected letters from the collection of [van der Wal et al. \(2015\)](#) containing expressions of negation (N = 33), sorted by writers (number of letters, number of negative structures) and divided over regions and social classes.

3.2 Grammatical systems

Our corpus of 33 letters contains a total of 285 negative sentences,⁴ which we classified with respect to the Jespersen Cycle (see table 1). Our data set confirms that, in the second half of the 17th century, several stages of the Jes-

⁴ We excluded 26 negative sentences from our corpus in which the finite verb is absent. See example (i) from the writings of Arnoud Adriaansen, in which the finite verb, most probably 'be', underwent ellipsis.

- (i) *maer daerom nijet getreurt*
 but therefore NEG worried.PPRT
 'but therefore be not worried.'

As we will elaborate in section 5.1, this writer consistently inserts the clitic when using *maer*, signaling negative contrast. Sentence (i) forms the only exception. Since the negative clitic requires the finite verb as its host, the writer most probably had to drop the clitic here as part of the ellipsis. The clitic might be there in the underlying structure, but we have no valid means of discernment. Most of these elliptic sentences are more challenging to classify. Hence, we do not take them into account.

Stage II			
<i>Negative concord</i>	Jacob Been	(1664)	[3, 0]
Stage III	Doedes Ennes Star	(1664)	[0, 3]
<i>Single negation</i>	Willem Hontum de Jonge	(1664)	[0, 8]
	Maritje Barents	(1664)	[0, 6]
	Meijndert van Kein	(1664)	[0, 15]
	Saartje Jans	(1664)	[0, 4]
	Trijntje Jacobs	(1664)	[0, 6]
	Jacob Dimmenssen	(1665)	[0, 4]
	Lieven Kersteman	(1665)	[0, 10]
	Henricus Cordes	(1667)	[0, 5]
Stage II/Stage III	Adriaan Adriaansen	(1664)	[13, 4]
	Arnoud Adriaansen	(1664)	[5, 2]
	Elisabeth Amelingh	(1661)	[14, 22]
	Hillegonda Vrienk	(1673)	[10, 15]
	Jaapje Koerten	(1664)	[1, 2]
	Trijntje Hendriks-Batens	(1664)	[16, 20]
	Adam Erckelens	(1664)	[1, 9]
	Guillaume Beddeloo	(1672)	[3, 5]
	Tanneke Cats	(1672)	[12, 7]
	Bastiaan Elinck	(1664)	[2, 10]
	Boudewijn de Witte	(1671)	[2, 22]
	Jan Lefeber	(1664/65)	[7, 13]
	Lambrecht Verbrugge	(1663/64)	[2, 3]

Table 3 Writers (year of writing)[number of negative concord tokens, number of single negation tokens] divided over stages of Jespersen's cycle.

persen Cycle are used simultaneously. Table 3 shows the division of writers across Jespersen's stages.

Table 3 shows three stages co-occurring in the period we are investigating: stage II with consistent use of negative concord, stage III with consistent use of single negation and an intermediate stage in which negative concord is optional. The earliest letter we selected (by Elisabeth Philipse Amelingh) was written approximately 25 years after the top-down change towards single negation started to appear in the writings of upper-class authors like Vondel and Hooft. Clearly, this top-down induced change has not been adopted by

all writers of EMD. Nine writers out of our sample of 23 writers seem to use a grammar similar to the grammar that was advocated by several authors around the middle of the 17th century: their letters contain only examples of single negation, which means that we can tentatively characterize their varieties as part of stage III. Jacob Been, on the other hand, seems to have a conservative grammar: he uses consistent negative concord in his letters. Yet, this writer displays three tokens, so it is hard to draw conclusions. We tentatively label his negative system as stage II. 13 writers show a grammar displaying variation between negative concord and single negation. Elisabeth Philips Amelingh, for instance, uses 36 sentences with negation in three different letters. 22 of these sentences (61%) contain single negation and 14 (39%) negative concord. Certain writers only use very few instances of negative concord in contrast to sentences with single negation. Boudewijn de Witte is a good example: he writes two letters (one to a business partner and one to his brother) each containing 12 sentences with negation. In both letters there is only one sentence with negative concord.

We have also investigated how in our subcorpus the syntactic context influences the distribution of single negation and negative concord on the basis of the classification in e.g. [van der Horst & van der Wal \(1979\)](#) and [Rutten & van der Wal \(2014\)](#). See example (5) above, repeated here as (6).

- (6) V1 > local > constituent > main clause > inversion / subordinate clause

Table 4 shows the distribution of the different negation tokens with respect to the three main clause types. Our corpus with 285 negative constructions is basically a subset of the much larger LAL corpus with 2307 negations compiled by [Rutten & van der Wal \(2014\)](#). We hence expect that, if our corpus is a representative subset of the larger corpus, the distribution is more or less equal. This is indeed what we observe when we compare the distribution of negative constructions in the extended LAL corpus in the fifth column (see [Rutten & van der Wal 2014: 365](#)).

This patterning of negation types shows the contexts in which it is more or less likely to find single negation or negative concord. It does not yet, however, explain why authors use both types of negation within the same text. As a result, there is a growing consensus among historical (socio)linguists to investigate the diversity of language usage among individual speakers, commonly referred to as intra-writer variation (a counterpart to the concept of intra-speaker variation often explored by sociolinguists, for instance, [Schilling 2013](#)). Earlier, [Nobels & Rutten \(2014: 43-44\)](#) advocated for this approach, specifically focusing on the study of negation in seventeenth-century Dutch.

		N	%	% in LAL
Subordinate clause	total	97	100	
	negative concord	41	43	44
	single negation	56	57	56
Main clause	total	170	100	
	negative concord	48	28	33
	single negation	122	72	67
V1	total	18	100	
	negative concord	1	6	11
	single negation	17	94	89

Table 4 Distribution of negation types over clause types: subordinate clauses, main clauses, and V1 (e.g. imperatives, yes/no questions).

The qualitative analysis we provide in this paper, see in particular sections 5 and 7, attempts to contribute to this line of research.

4 PREREQUISITE OF THE ANALYSIS I: A SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS OF JESPERSEN'S CYCLE

In order to analyze the syntactic systems that underlie the observed negation patterns discussed in Table 3, we first have to go deeper into the syntactic analysis of Jespersen's cycle. We will first discuss the analysis of negation provided by Zeijlstra (2004), which enables us to make syntactic representations of stages II and III. We will then go deeper into stage II/III, in which negative concord and single negation co-occur, on the basis of work by Breitbarth (2009) and Breitbarth & Haegeman (2014). In particular, we show that in this stage the examples with negative concord come with a specialized meaning. Finally, we discuss the syntactic implementation of negative concord in this stage II/III.

4.1 Syntactic analysis of negation in stages II and III of the Jespersen Cycle: Middle Dutch and Modern Dutch

In Middle Dutch, negation is expressed by two elements: the preverbal clitic *en* and the negative adverb *niet* (or another negative element). In order to account for the syntactic distribution of these elements, one has to know where

both elements are base-generated, what heads they project and what their feature inventory consists of. According to Zeijlstra (2004), *en* is base-generated in the verbal domain, adjoined to the verb. This negative marker is the realization of the uninterpretable formal feature [uNEG] that needs to be checked against an element that carries [iNEG]. Zeijlstra assumes that this checking has to take place in a NegP. The Spec of this NegP is filled with an abstract negative operator *Op-*, carrying an [iNEG] feature. In order for the [uNEG] feature on the verb to be eliminated, it has to move out of the verbal domain and into Neg, where it is deleted under spec-head agreement. The verb and adjoined clitic then move to T to check the verb's phi-features.

$$(7) \quad [{}_{NegP} Op_{-[iNEG]} [{}_{Neg} V_{-[uNEG]} [{}_{VP} \bar{V}_{[uNEG]}]]]$$

Given that Middle Dutch is a negative concord language, we also need to account for the distribution of the negative adverb *niet* 'not', which is required to support the negative clitic. According to Zeijlstra, *niet* is a maximal projection merging with the VP. *Niet* also contains a [uNEG] feature that needs to be checked against an [iNEG] feature in order to be deleted. Through Multiple Agree, both *en* and *niet* check their [uNEG] feature against the [iNEG] feature of the negative operator *Op-* in Spec,NegP.⁵ Negative adverbs and *n*-words are derived in similar fashion, carrying a [uNEG] feature. Hence, negative concord is the realization of agreement between the negative operator *Op-* in Spec,NegP and any negative marker. (8) shows how negative concord in Middle Dutch is derived.

$$(8) \quad [{}_{NegP} Op_{-[iNEG]} [{}_{Neg} V_{-[uNEG]} [{}_{VP} niet_{[uNEG]} [{}_{VP} \bar{V}_{[uNEG]}]]]]$$

In Modern Dutch, negation is expressed by the single negative adverb *niet*. According to Zeijlstra (2004), the loss of negative concord gives the receiver no cue to postulate either [uNeg] features or the abstract operator bearing [iNeg]. Hence, the adverb enters the derivation carrying an [iNEG] feature. Just as in Middle Dutch, *niet* is a maximal projection merging with the VP. Since it already contains an [iNEG] feature, no checking and deletion of [uNEG] features are necessary. Hence, no NegP needs to be projected. See the example in (9)

$$(9) \quad [{}_{CP} dat [{}_{TP} Jan_i [{}_{VP} niet_{-[iNEG]} [{}_{VP} t_i loopt]]]]$$

Following this analysis, we predict that multiple negative markers in this stage of the language each have their own negative force and thus cancel each

⁵ Zeijlstra (2004) adopts Hiraiwa (2001)'s notion of Multiple Agree as a single syntactic operation, allowing the single negative operator to license all elements carrying [uNEG] within its local domain.

other out. This is exactly what we find in Modern Dutch. See the example in (10), which is equivalent to the sentence ‘everybody walks’.⁶

- (10) *Niemand loopt niet*
nobody walks NEG
‘Nobody doesn’t walk.’ = everybody walks

4.2 Jespersen’s cycle revisited

The grammar of Middle Dutch, exhibiting negative concord as a result of feature checking between elements in the verbal domain and NegP, changed to the grammar of Modern Dutch in which the negative adverb carries interpretable negation itself. The Early Modern period functions as a transition stage, with optional deletion of the negative clitic.

Breitbarth (2009) argues that the variation between single negation and negative concord in these transition stages is not random, but related to meaning. More precisely, she argues that the negative adverb takes over the role as the principal negator, while the preverbal clitic grammaticalizes further and is reanalyzed as the head of a PolP (see Laka 1990), spelling out a polarity feature.⁷ Breitbarth (2009) suggests that polarity is a morphosyntactic feature that projects PolP in the presence of clause-internal or clause-external non-veridical operators. She labels Pol’s feature as [Affect]. PolP realizes this feature on the preverbal marker *en*, which is cliticized to the finite verb in VP. Put differently, the negative feature on *en* is changed and gets reanalyzed as the spell-out of the [Affect] feature at which point the negative adverb takes over the role of negator.⁸ Translated to Zeijlstra (2004)’s proposal for the syn-

⁶ Although Modern Dutch qualifies as a single negation language, examples of sentences have been identified that contain multiple negative elements showing a single negation reading (de Swart, Fonville, Gilbers & Hoeksema 2014, Zeijlstra 2006, 2010). In accordance with the respective literature, (10) could convey a single negation reading in contexts in which the speaker emphasizes this negation. The authors mainly investigate patterns of structures like *niemand niet* (‘nobody not’) and *nooit geen* (‘nothing no’), labeling them *Emphatic Multiple Negative Expressions* (EMNEs). Zeijlstra (2010, 2006) shows that EMNEs are fundamentally different from negative concord structures. As the result of a lexical operation, they are lexical items containing only one negation object. This way, the disappearance of the negative clitic and with it the cue for postulating negative concord was overcome. Although an elaborate discussion falls outside the scope of this article, it must be stressed that generally, EMNEs are not regarded as reflecting a new phase in the Jespersen cycle.

⁷ One could also consider this a case of pragmaticalization, i.e. a form of grammaticalization that leads to a discourse-functional domain (see Diewald 2011a,b).

⁸ It might very well be that this also means that the negative clitic is no longer merged together with the finite verb in VP but directly merges in the lower (or later possibly also the higher) PolP. This path would be reminiscent of the syntactic analysis of reanalysis as put forth in Roberts & Roussou (1999). We do not have evidence for this at this point, so we will remain

Jespersen stage	Op-	1 st neg	2 nd neg
Stage I	yes	<i>ne/en</i> [uNEG]	–
Stage IIa	yes	<i>ne/en</i> [uNEG]	<i>niet</i> [uNEG]
Stage IIb	no	<i>ne/en</i> [uAffect]	<i>niet</i> [iNEG]
Stage III	no	–	<i>niet</i> [iNEG]

Table 5 Revised stages of Jespersen’s cycle.

tactic distribution of negation, the reanalysis of the negative clitic as a head spelling out polarity features coincides with the disappearance of the [uNEG] feature from both the negative clitic and the negative adverb. Without this feature, there is no longer a need to project NegP, i.e. the loss of obligatory doubling will give the receiver no cue to postulate either [uNeg] features or the abstract operator bearing [iNeg]. The feature of the negative adverb is changed from [uNEG] to [iNEG].

This insight into the change of the feature specifications of the negative clitic and negative adverbs leads to a syntactic interpretation of the Jespersen cycle as schematized in Table 5.

Breitbarth (2009) shows several non-negative contexts that confirm the reanalysis of the negative clitic as a polarity head. For the purpose of this paper, we will discuss *expletive negation*. Expletive negation is the use of a negative element as an expletive in clauses embedded in adversative predicates and negated, comparative or interrogative matrix clauses. Expletive negation is found in Middle English, where the clitic *ne* appears on its own in the above mentioned contexts, while negative concord has almost disappeared from the language (Wallage 2005). See the example in (11).

- (11) *Ne doute the nat that alle things ne ben don aright.*
 NEG doubt you NEG that all things NEG are done rightfully
 ‘Do not doubt that all things are done rightfully.’
 (Wallage 2005: 178 from Chaucer Boethius IV P5,49)

Although the matrix clause in (11) contains conservative negative concord, the expletive negator *ne* in the embedded clause appears in a non-negative context. Breitbarth (2009) argues that the clitic is a realization of the Pol head’s [Affect]-feature rather than a realization of a negative head, since it does not actually express negation, but seems to underline the affect of the

agnostic about this here.

embedded clause.⁹

This revision of Jespersen's cycle in terms of feature changes raises the question of how we should analyze the descriptive systems of negation we find in the LAL discussed above in section 3. When we combine the revised Jespersen's cycle in Table 5 with the inventory of writers in Table 3, the question arises which revised Jespersen grammars the writers display. The simplest hypothesis is that stage III in Table 3 corresponds with stage III in table 5 and that stage II/III in table 3 corresponds to stage IIb in table 5. Although we will show that this hypothesis is largely right, we would like to show that there are some additional nuances that refine the picture of the distribution of negative systems in the Dutch 17th century even further. But first we will discuss the different semantic functions conveyed by the negative clitic.

5 THE MEANING OF NEGATIVE CONCORD IN STAGE II/III OF JESPERSEN'S CYCLE: EARLY MODERN DUTCH

A substantial portion of the letters in our corpus exhibits variation between single negation and negative concord. This stage is reminiscent of Breitbarth's stage IIb, i.e. the stage in which the negative clitic only appears in sentences with emphasis on the polarity or emphatic meaning (Breitbarth 2009). This new meaning of the negative clitic goes together with the use of the negative clitic as an expletive, see (11).¹⁰ A first indication that at least for some of the writers in our corpus the clitic has undergone this change from a negative marker to a marker of emphasis follows from the use of the clitic as a negative expletive. Consider the examples in (12).¹¹

9 This seemingly counter-intuitive relationship between expletiveness, typically viewed as semantically empty and merely place holding, and emphasis as a function of linguistic reinforcement, has been found in Modern Dutch as well. A tradition of research has shown that the expletive *er* ('there') is not meaningless, but carries an identifiable processing function (see Grondelaers & Speelman 2007 and Grondelaers 2009).

10 An anonymous reviewer makes the interesting suggestion that this negative clitic might have been present in Middle Dutch already in certain specific contexts, like for instance in the type of sentences below:

- (i) *Onverre ginc ic ic en vant*
not.far went I I NEG found
'I did not go far and I already found it.' (Stoett 1977: 223)

In these sentences, the negation of the second clause is dependent on the first clause, but the second clause does not have a negative meaning itself. More research is necessary to determine whether the meaning of the negative clitic that we describe in this paper is related to the uses of a single negative clitic in Middle Dutch; see also footnote 1.

11 An anonymous reviewer notes that both examples in (12) are imperatives and wonders if this is a coincidence. At present we do not have enough examples of this type to resolve this issue.

- (12) a. *wijl ghij naer hijer toe come, soo en verhuijert u selven*
 when you to here to come, so NEG lease.IMP your self
want van dusent mesters niet een die soo is egelijck mijne
 because of thousand masters not one that so is like mine
 ‘When you come here, lease yourself (to my master), because of
 a thousand masters there is none like mine.’
- b. *uader en suster en kinderen sijn noch gesont. Godt en danck*
 father and sister and children are yet healthy. God NEG thank
voer sijn genaden.
 for his grace
 ‘father, sister and the children are still in good health. Thank
 God for His grace.’

In example (12-a), Adriaan Adriaansen writes to his friend Antony Jansen that when he comes to Guadeloupe he should lease himself to his boss, because he takes good care of his employees. The negative clitic appears in a non-negative construction. It reinforces the emphatic context that is indicated by the verb’s imperative mood and a hyperbole about a thousand masters in the subsequent clause. In example (12-b), Elisabeth Philipse Amelingh praises God for the fact that her family is still in good health. A negative clitic is inserted in a non-negative clause, emphasizing thankfulness.¹²

The expletive clitics in examples (12-a) and (12-b) provide us with evidence that the clitic in at least some of the writers in our data has undergone this semantic change to affect and must occupy a PolP instead of a NegP. Moreover, note that these examples do not follow Breitbarth’s structural characterization of expletive negation contexts. They appear in main clauses of which one is an imperative. Also, whereas the imperative clause in (12-a) is conjugated with a negative main clause, the main clause in (12-b) does not follow or precede negative sentences. In comparison to Breitbarth’s data, we can conclude that in our data, the expletive clitic’s function of emphasis seems to have further developed into a pragmatic marker. Its position has expanded to main clauses, letting go of the requirement to fall within downward entailing scope.

However, the emphatic nature of the sentence is of course underlined by the imperative.

¹² In order to ensure ourselves that the expletive clitic in (12-b) is not an alternative to the subjunctive verb *zij* (‘be’), which is often used in this construction, i.e. *Godt zij dank* (‘thanks be to God’), we queried the LAL database for similar constructions stemming from writers of the same area and time period as Elisabeth Philipse Amelingh, i.e. Noord-Holland. None were found. Instead, all similar subjunctive constructions are realized with the verb *zij*. From this we conclude that, if the writer wanted to express subjunctive mode in (12-b), she would have inserted *zij*. Moreover, the fact that this phrase also occurs frequently as *Godt dank* underlines the optional nature of Elizabeth’s clitic insertion.

For present-day West-Flemish, the pragmatic contribution of negative concord has been made more precise: it puts emphasis on the unexpectedness of the negation, which negates a presupposition that one of the speakers assumes to be common ground (Breitbarth & Haegeman 2014), see (13).¹³

- (13) *Ge zou lyk peinzen dat da Valère is. Mo t-en is Valère niet.*
You would like think that that Valère is. But it-NEG is Valère neg.
'One would think it was Valère, but it wasn't Valère.'
(Breitbarth & Haegeman 2014: 72)

If the negative adverb in the clause negates a positive state of affairs that is entailed by the discourse, as in (13), the speaker can add the negative clitic *en* to the sentence. This clitic then expresses that the negation of this proposition is unexpected given its entailment in the discourse. This presupposition can be the result of general knowledge of the world or situational common ground between interlocutors.

Dietz, van Koppen & van Zanten (to appear) show that this meaning described by Breitbarth & Haegeman (2014) is also present in the 17th-century Dutch ship journals of Michiel de Ruyter (1607-1676). De Ruyter was the son of a sailor and steadily advanced from being a lowly cabin boy to a helmsman, eventually achieving the prestigious position of lieutenant admiral general, the highest rank in the Dutch fleet (Prud'homme van Reine 2015). An example is provided below (from Dietz et al. (to appear: example 18)).

- (14) *dyen dach geseylt n ten o behoude coers 7 mijlen maer en*
that day sailed north to east holding course 7 miles but NEG
sagen noch geen lant (13/02/1653)
saw still no land
'On that day, sailing north-east, we maintained a course of 7 miles
but still did not see any land.'

From the textual context of this sentence (the journal elements preceding it), it becomes apparent that De Ruyter is anticipating land, but at the current moment, it is not yet visible.

Dietz et al. (to appear) also find some cases in which De Ruyter seems to use negative concord in emphatic contexts. In this example the emphasis is on the fact that this is the worst sailor De Ruyter has ever seen and who has ruined the journey. An example is provided below (Dietz et al. to appear: example 24).

13 We refer the reader to Larrivé (2014) who discusses in depth these specific pragmatic uses of negations, West-Flanders but also several other languages, which he calls activated and emphatic negations.

- (15) *ja ick en heb in al myn leven sulken slechten seylder nijet meer*
 yes I NEG have in all my live such.a bad sailor not more
gesyen en het is een verderf van onse reyse (06/09/1675)
 seen and it is a ruination of our journey
 ‘Yes, I have never seen such a poor sailor in all my life, and it is a ruin
 of our journey.’

In the set of letters displaying variation between single negation and negative concord (stage II/III), we observe that the negative clitic is either used to emphasize negation of a presupposition, or to emphasize stress on salient topics or emotional topics. In the following subsections, we will discuss both functions separately.

5.1 *Emphasis on negating a presupposition*

All writers from Jespersen stage II/III insert the negative clitic to emphasize negation of a presupposition. In order for us to identify this function, we reconstructed the presupposition from text or based on (historic) world-knowledge (following the requirements of Breitbarth & Haegeman 2014). Furthermore, we paid attention to pragmatic discourse markers that signal contrast (e.g. coordinators like *maer* ‘but’), or intensify the object of negation. Below, we will provide examples from different writers. First, see (16), taken from the writings of Elisabeth Philipse Amelingh.

- (16) a. *daer uijt uerstaen dat ul noch nijet en weet waer*
 there from understand that you yet NEG NEG know where
naer toe u reijs sal gaen.
 to to your journey will go
 ‘from which I understand that you do not yet know where your
 journey will lead.’
- b. *ijck hadde gedocht dat ul weeder naar hijs soude coomen,*
 I had thought that you back to house would come
maer schijnt of het nijet weese en wijl
 but seems if it NEG be NEG want
 ‘I thought that you would come back home, but that seems not
 to be the case.’
- c. *niet meer op dit pas*
 NEG more on this fit
 ‘No more text fits on this.’

Examples (16-a) and (16-b) are both taken from the same letter. Elisabeth writes this letter to her husband Lukas Pruijs on June 6th 1664. Apparently,

she had just received a letter from her husband in which it became clear that he does not know where he will travel to next. It is clear that he is not coming home, which Elisabeth did not expect and which she deeply regrets. She was under the assumption that her husband would come home. In these two particular sentences, which negate this presupposition, she inserts the negative clitic. Moreover, in (16-b), this presupposition is expressed in the sentence preceding the negative concord. This example resembles the context of the West Flemish example with negative concord in (13) quite closely: something is expected, but it does not happen or it appears not to be true. Also, notice the use of the coordinator *maer* ('but') in this sentence which also signals a contrast. Adriaan Adriaansen and Arnoud Adriaansen even consistently insert the clitic when using *maer*, underlining this negation of a situation that is opposite to the expectations. However, (16-c) shows a sentence with single negation, in which Elisabeth motivates the end of her letter: there is no more space for text. This sentence does not negate any presupposition, and following our proposal, inserting the clitic seems unnecessary. The next sentences come from the writings of Adriaan Adriaansen. See (17).

- (17) a. *maer de wijtte krabben [...] die hebbe sulcke groede tenghels dat*
 but the white crabs [...] they have such large fingers that
onse claes Josen sijn hrmen daerin stack. sij en soude hem
 our Claas Josen his arm therein put. they NEG would him
niet eens seere doen
 NEG even hurt do.
 'but the white crabs, they have such large claws. Our Claas Josen reached out his arm, but they would not even hurt him.'
- b. *als dat ick noch seer wel te passe ben, noch van geen sijeste*
 if that I yet very well to fit am yet from NEG disease
gewete hebbe.
 known have.
 'that I am still very fit, having caught no disease yet.'

(17-a) is taken from a letter in which Adriaan writes about white crabs he encountered on his journey. He describes them as dangerous and having large claws. However, reaching the climax of this topic, where he describes that his fellow traveler Claas put his arm in one of the claws of a crab, he says that the crab would not hurt him. The presupposition that the crabs are harmful is negated. A negative clitic is inserted. Also note the intensifier *eens* ('even'), which further enforces negation of the expected state of affairs. Yet, the negative sentence in (17-b) exhibits single negation. Here, the writer's statement about his health seems like a general update and no insertion of the negative

clitic is necessary. Finally, see the example sentences in (18), taken from the writings of Bastiaan Elinck.

- (18) a. *maer denck schoon ick uijt u gesijcht ben ghij daerom uijt*
 but think clean I from your sight am you therefore from
mijn herte niet en zijt
 my heart NEG NEG am.
 ‘but though I am out of your sight, do not think that you are out
 of my heart.’
- b. *wanneer daer geen oorloog komt*
 when there NEG war come
 ‘if there is no war coming’

(18-a) is one of the opening sentences from one of Bastiaan Elinck’s letters. He negates the presupposition that he has forgotten his father, the addressee. It has been a long time since they have seen each other, and Bastiaan seems to use this opening sentence and the metaphor of the heart to reinforce their relation. The sentence in (18-b) exhibits single negation. The sentence does not form a factual statement that can negate any pre-established state of affairs, but it forms a conditional if-statement conveying a hypothesis. Hence, there is no presupposition to be negated and the writer does not need to utilize the negative clitic.

In the next section we will discuss a different function of the negative clitic we have observed in these letters, namely general emphasis.

5.2 General emphasis

In addition to emphasis on negation of a presupposition, we found that certain writers of Jespersen stage II/III use the negative clitic to emphasize stress on salient or emotional topics. In order for us to identify this function, we investigated the context to see whether the object of negation references such a topic. We also focused on emphatic syntactic constructions, such as *zo ... dat ...* (‘so ... that ...’). Furthermore, we paid attention to figures of speech, like hyperboles or paralepsis, that intensify the negation. (19) provides examples.

- (19) a. *Dat mackt mij soo bedroeft dat ijck niet veel lust en hebben*
 that makes me so sad that I NEG much desire NEG have
 ‘That makes me so sad that I don’t have much desire to do any-
 thing.’
- b. *dat ick het hem niet en kon weergeven*
 that I it him NEG NEG could return
 ‘that I was unable to return it to him.’
- c. *het gaet hijer nu soo slecht dat het niet en is om uijt te spreken*
 it goes here now so bad that it NEG NEG is to out to
 speak.
 ‘The situation here is now so bad that it is not something to talk
 about.’

Sentence (19-a) is taken from the writings that Hillegonda Vrienk sent to her husband in Indonesia. It regards the most salient topic of the letter, which is a desperate need for money creating an emotional state of depression. Here, the negative clitic seems to emphasize general stress on the main topic of the letter, the depressive state, rather than negation of a presupposition as discussed in section 5.1. Also notice the emphatic syntactic construction *soo ... dat ...*, further reinforcing her emotional state.

Sentence (19-b) is taken from a letter of Trijntje Hendriks-Barents, written to her husband at sea. The main purpose of the letter is to inform him about the difficult circumstances at home. Throughout the letter, she embeds those circumstances in a religious perspective and reminds her husband repeatedly of her guilt and sinfulness: *denckt dat alles om de sonden willen ons is overgekomen* (‘know that everything happens to us because of our sins’). In every sentence describing such an incident, the constituent referencing Trijntje is assigned an agentive semantic role, emphasizing her responsibility. When she uses negation in those sentences, the negative clitic is inserted. Sentence (19-b) describes one of those incidents: people come to her door to collect debts that she cannot pay.

Finally, sentence (19-c) is taken from a letter of Tanneke Cats, also written to her husband at sea. Tanneke seems to insert the negative clitic to lay emphasis on the fact that she suffers from terrible personal circumstances. This is further reinforced by the emphatic syntactic construction *soo ... dat ...*. Moreover, she uses *paralepsis*, stating that the level of circumstances makes her too ashamed to talk about it. Yet, she explains it in detail in the remainder of the letter.

In section 2.2, we pointed out that, besides the bottom-up erosion and top-down rejection of the clitic, the strict use of negative concord in the State

Translation of the Bible must also have left its mark on the use of *en* in EMD. We find possible traces of this influence in our corpus. Some letters seem to show occurrences of negative concord lacking negation of a presupposition or an emphatic meaning. See for example (20), written by Elisabeth Philipse Amelingh.

- (20) *Ende een yegelijck die in hem gelooft, en sal niet beschaemt*
 and one any who in him believes NEG shall NEG ashamed
worden.
 be
 ‘and whoever believes in Him shall not be ashamed.’

In these instances of negation, *en* is part of a religious register. In fact, the examples are direct quotes from the State Bible.¹⁴ Thus, they are not part of colloquial writing and not exhibited by the writers’ grammars, but imported as an external conservative register stemming from Jespersen stage II, still used in daily religious practise.

To summarize, for the writers in stage II/III of Jespersen’s Cycle we find that they use negative concord to either (i) negate a presupposition or (ii) negate a presupposition and emphasize stress on the negation. We did not find writers in our corpus that use negative concord solely for the purpose of general emphatic stress. We have summarized the data in table 6.

The fact that some writers can use the negative clitic to convey emphatic stress with regard to a salient topic in addition to negation of a presupposition means that for these writers the use of the negative clitic is broader than for the other writers in our corpus as well as for the speakers of the West-Flemish varieties discussed by Breitbarth & Haegeman (2014).

6 PREREQUISITE OF THE ANALYSIS II: THE POSITION OF POLP

Whereas the syntactic analysis of stage I, IIa and III are elaborately discussed in the literature, see e.g. section 4 and references cited there, the question from a syntactic point of view is now where the negative clitic expressing affect/negation of a presupposition (i.e. stage IIb) as discussed in section 5 should be located in the syntactic structure. As discussed above, Breitbarth & Haegeman (2014) argue that this meaning is assigned in a PolP (Laka 1990). PolP is generally assumed to be in the extended left periphery of the clause, in the extended VP-domain or in both (van Craenenbroeck 2010, Haegeman 2002, van Kemenade 2012, 2000, Zanuttini 1997). In particular, van Craenenbroeck (2010) and van Craenenbroeck & van Koppen (2016, 2018) argue that

¹⁴ Example (20) quotes Romans 9:33. State Bible (van der Sijs 2008).

Negating presupposition		Negating presupposition + emphatic negation	
Elisabeth Amelingh	[13, 0, 14]	Trijntje Hendriks-Barents	[6, 8, 16]
Adriaan Adriaansen	[13, 0, 13]	Hillegonda Vrienk	[2, 8, 10]
Arnoud Adriaansen	[6, 0, 6]	Tanneke Cats	[4, 5, 12]
Bastiaan Elinck	[2, 0, 2]	Boudewijn de Witte	[1, 1, 2]
Lambrecht Verbrugge	[2, 0, 2]	Jan Lefeber	[1, 4, 7]
Jaapje Koerten	[1, 0, 1]		
Guillaume Beddeloo	[3, 0, 3]		
Adam Erckelens	[1, 0, 1]		

Table 6 Semantic effect of negative concord for writers in stage II/III ($N=13$), with per writer [N of structures negating presupposition, N of structures emphasizing general stress, sum of negative concord constructions].

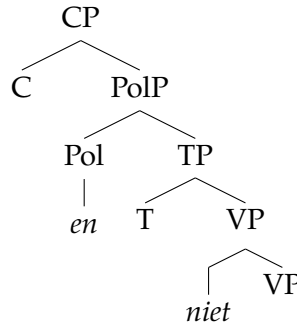
the negative clitic in the modern Dutch dialects occupies the head position of the higher PolP, whereas [Breitbarth & Haegeman \(2014\)](#) and [Haegeman \(2002\)](#) argue that this negative clitic occupies a lower PolP. We will discuss these analyses of the high and the low PolP below.¹⁵

6.1 High PolP

[van Craenenbroeck & van Koppen \(2016\)](#) argue that the negative clitic in (a subset of) the modern Dutch dialects heads a high PolP within the extended left periphery, as in (21).

¹⁵ [Batllori & Hernanz \(2013\)](#) propose a distinction between high and low emphatic polarity particles. High emphatic polarity particles project a polarity phrase in the extended CP layer, which makes their distribution restricted to root clauses. We do not assume that the left peripheral negative clitic that we discuss here is a high emphatic polarity particle in the sense of [Batllori & Hernanz \(2013\)](#). We assume that these high emphatic markers are located even higher in the CP-domain.

(21)



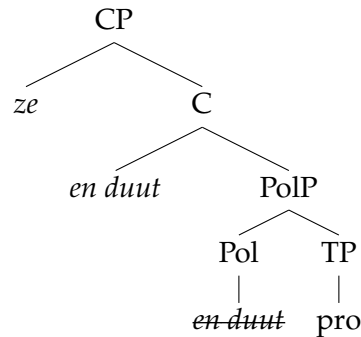
They follow [van Craenenbroeck \(2010\)](#) who argues that the negative clitic is situated high in the structure because it can appear in so-called short-do replies (see (22) from the Dutch dialect of Wambeek; [van Craenenbroeck 2010: 172](#)).

- (22) a. *Marie zie Pierre geirn*
 Mary sees Peter gladly
 'Mary loves Peter.'
- b. *Jou z'en duut*
 yes she.not does
 'No, she doesn't.'

The b-example shows a short do reply: a short contradictory answer containing the polarity marker yes/no, a subject clitic, depending on the meaning of the reply a negative clitic and an instance of the verb *doen* 'to do'. [van Craenenbroeck \(2010\)](#) argues extensively that in this form of ellipsis the complement of PolP, TP, is pronominalized by *pro*. There is hence no lexical verb in this construction and the verb *do* is used as a dummy to host the subject agreement and the negative clitic. The fact that the negative clitic can appear in these constructions suggests that it is base-generated above TP, i.e. in a high PolP. This analysis is provided in (23) below:¹⁶

¹⁶ We will not go into the arguments in favor of this analysis since that will steer us to far away from the main point of this paper. Instead, we refer the reader to [van Craenenbroeck \(2010\)](#) for an in-depth elaboration on this analysis.

(23)



van Craenenbroeck & van Koppen (2019) argue that, within the present-day (mainly southern) Dutch dialects with a negative clitic, the CP-domain is always split into more than one projection, one of which is PolP. This is based on their observation that, in dialectal systems with a negative clitic, it consistently correlates with other C-related phenomena that depend upon a split CP. One of the Split C-phenomena that is related to such an extended left periphery is the ability to realize two C-heads within one clause. This happens for instance when an embedded clause contains two complementizers or when a complementizer combines with a relative pronoun or wh-pronoun in the left periphery. An example of the latter phenomenon is provided below (from van Craenenbroeck & van Koppen 2019):

(24) ... *wien da-se* *zie* *hadde wiln roepn.*
 who that-they_{clitic} they_{strong} had want call
 ‘... who they planned to call.’

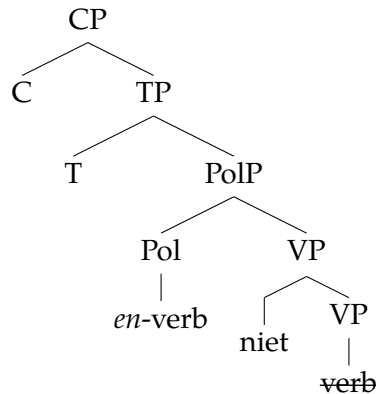
Since the *Doubly-Filled COMP* filter prohibits multiple elements from co-occurring in Spec,CP and C simultaneously (van Riemsdijk & Williams 1986), *wien* and *da* in (24) must each occupy a different projection in an extended CP-domain.

Given that the modern Dutch dialects are so closely related to the historical varieties we are discussing here, we assume that there is also a relation between the presence of a negative clitic and an extended CP with a PolP in this left periphery in 17th century Dutch.

6.2 Low PolP

Haegeman (2002), Breitbarth & Haegeman (2014) and Jayaseelan (2010) among others argue that the negative clitic in present-day West-Flemish occupies a position in the extended VP-domain, a low PolP, situated between TP and the VP:

(25)



An argument in favor of the idea that negative clitics in present-day West-Flemish are in a low PolP is that the finite verb must be in the initial position in verb clusters. The analysis in (25) accounts for this since the finite verb always moves to T where the negative clitic *en* attaches to it. See the examples from Haegeman (2002: 164) in (26).

- (26) a. *Da Valère dienen boek **niet en** eet willen lezen.*
 that Valère that book NEG NEG has want read
 ‘that Valère has not wanted to read that book.’
- b. *Da Valère dienen boek **niet** willen lezen (***en**) eet.*
 that Valère that book NEG want read (*NEG) has
 ‘that Valère has not wanted to read that book.’

6.3 Summary

In short, there are potentially two projections that can host the negative clitic: a low polarity phrase that is just above the VP, but below TP, and a high polarity phrase that is in the left periphery of the clause, above TP. Based on the literature, we expect that the presence of a negative clitic in the high PolP goes hand in hand with an extended left periphery and hence with other phenomena of an extended left periphery, like double complementizers. When the negative clitic is in the lower PolP, we expect that the placement of the finite verb in verbal clusters is affected by this position of the negative clitic.

7 ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL SYSTEMS

The previous section identified which syntactic phenomena are expected to co-occur with either a high PolP or a low PolP hosting the negative clitic. In this section, we reconsider the two dominant systems we found in our corpus, namely stage II/III, in which negative concord and single negation co-occur,

Writer	Double comp	Verb Third	V1 in verb clusters
Adriaan Adriaansen	+	+	?
Arnoud Adriaansen	+	+	-
Elisabeth Philipse Amelingh	+	-	-
Hillegonda Vrienk	+	+	?
Jaapje Koerten	-	-	?
Trijntje Hendriks-Batens	+	-	-
Adam Erckelens	+	+	?
Guillaume Beddeloo	-	+	?
Tanneke Cats	+	+	-
Bastiaan Elinck	+	-	?
Boudewijn de Witte	+	-	-
Jan Lefeber	+	-	+
Lambrecht Verbrugge	+	-	?

Table 7 Distribution of syntactic properties among the writers of stage II/III, with optional insertion of the negative clitic. Double complementizers and Verb Third indicate high PolP, verb clusters in sentences containing the negative clitic with the finite verb at V1 position indicates Low PolP. ‘?’ indicates that the presence of Low PolP could not be validated, due to, for instance, lack of verb clusters.

and stage III of Jespersen’s Cycle with only single negation. We identify how these systems interact with the linguistic phenomena we have identified in section 6 and, based on this, provide our analysis of the different grammatical systems as discussed in Section 3.2 and show how this analysis also accommodates the specific meaning of negative concord sentences within this system. We discuss the different underlying grammatical systems of the writers in Jespersen stage II/III (section 7.1) and of the writers in stage III (section 7.2).

7.1 Writers in stage II/III

Table 7 shows the distribution of syntactic properties related to the negative clitic over the writers in Jespersen stage II/III.

We observe that, except for Jaapje Koerten, all of the writers display at least one of the above mentioned phenomena, with the double complementizer as the most common phenomenon (N = 37). See (27), taken from the writings of Adam Erckelens.

- (27) *als₁ dat₂ ick een half jaar over myn tijt soude alhier blijven.*
 if that I a half year over my time would here remain
 ‘that I would remain here for another half year.’

Following van Craenenbroeck & van Koppen (2018) and van Riemsdijk & Williams (1986), we assume that both complementizers are base generated in their own head position of an extended CP and hence each has an extended CP-domain. When a variety has multiple CP-projections in embedded clauses (evidenced by the presence of multiple complementizers), we expect that these extended structural positions are also available in main clauses. More precisely, the CP in main clauses in the observed EMD varieties is expected to allow multiple constituents preceding the finite verb, which is also called the *Verb Third* construction (Walkden 2015, 2017). These Verb Third constructions occur frequently in our data (N = 31), as exemplified in (28), taken from the writings of Hillegonda Vrienk.

- (28) *Aen sijn lieff₁ hij₂ schreff₃ hadde hij kleren gehadt [...]*
 to his love he wrote had he clothes had [...]
 ‘To his love he wrote: if he had his clothes [...].’

Finally, in addition to C-related features, Jan Lefeber shows consistent V1 patterns in verb clusters when using negation, and no V1 patterns when negation is absent. See (29).

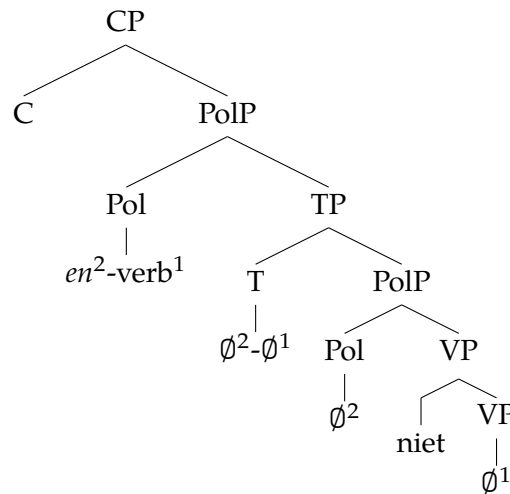
- (29) a. *Van gerret tanghe consement tues noch **niet en** hoef_{V1} te*
 from gerrit tange bill of lading home yet NEG NEG have to
betaellen_{V2}.
 pay
 ‘the bill of lading you received home from Gerrit Tange does not yet have to be paid.’
 b. *dat ick met [...]*ijn* twe in een hues gaewont_{V2} hebbe_{V1}.*
 that I with [...]*ijn* two in a house lived have.
 ‘That the two of us have lived in the same house.’

The presence of this feature indicates that, in addition to high PolP, this writer probably also has a low PolP, attracting the finite verb to T in verb clusters. Unfortunately, Jan Lefeber is the only author for whom we could definitely establish that the position of the finite verb in verb clusters is dependent on

the presence or absence of a negative clitic. The other authors either did not show this particular feature of the low PolP (Arnoud Adriaansen, Elisabeth Philipse Ameling, Trijntje Hendriks-Batens, Tanneke Cats, Boudwijn de Witte) or there was not enough evidence to draw a conclusion on this particular point (Adriaan Adriaansen, Hillgonda Vrienk, Jaapje Koerten, Guillaume Beddeloo, Bastiaan Elinck, Lambrecht Verbrugge).

When comparing the writers' two functions of the negative clitic in Table 6 to their projections in Table 7, we can draw the following tentative conclusions. Recall that, in present-day West-Flemish dialects, the clitic remains in low PolP, accounting for its restricted function of negating a presupposition. In our EMD dataset, the clitic's function seems to have expanded to emphatic stress. A subset of writers still uses *en* to emphasize negation of a presupposition, but not without general emphasis. Furthermore, almost all writers show evidence of an extended CP-domain and hence they might very well be exhibiting a high PolP. Yet, Jan Lefeber (and in the following sections we will discuss writers in stage III) also shows evidence for low PolP. Hence, a form of grammaticalization seems to be on display, where high PolP is projected to expand the clitic's meaning. For writers like Jan Lefeber, we assume then that the negative clitic moves from the low PolP to the high PolP. A tree structure of this system can be observed in (30).¹⁷

(30)



¹⁷ An anonymous reviewer asks how this structure can derive the examples in (29) where *niet* 'not' precedes the negative clitic. This is indeed problematic. We have to assume that either PolP is head final, or that the finite verb moves into PolP and then the remnant VP moves further. We will leave this as a topic for further research.

Notice that five writers in Table 7 show indication of high PolP but absence of low PolP, which means that, in these grammars, high PolP develops independently of low PolP. Movement to high PolP can thus be interpreted as a step in the process of bleaching the clitic's meaning, making it functionally less specific and hence easier for it to disappear completely.¹⁸ We will illustrate this in the next subsection.

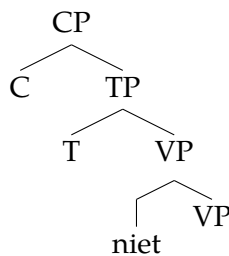
7.2 Writers in stage III

In this subsection, we will discuss different underlying grammatical systems for the writers that superficially are in Jespersen stage III. Table 8 shows the distribution of the polarity-related syntactic features found in their letters. We divide the writers into two types: true writers in stage III (section 7.2.1), and writers that show a progressive stage III grammar at surface structure but a conservative stage II grammar in the underlying syntactic structure (section 7.2.2).

7.2.1 True writers in stage III

In Table 8, Henricus Cordes and Lieven Kersteman show consistent single negation and none of the polarity-related phenomena. These varieties fit the revisited Jespersen stage III in Table 5, in which the features of the negative adverb *niet* became interpretable, as proposed by Zeijlstra (2004) for modern Dutch, and the PolP and all features related to this PolP, like a complex left periphery and V1 in embedded clauses, have disappeared. This system is demonstrated in (31).

(31)



¹⁸ Note that we expect that the presence of a high PolP always coincides with the ability to use the negative clitic as an emphasis marker. Unfortunately, we do not have a confirmation of this hypothesis because of the restricted dataset. However, we do find the opposite, namely Jaapje Koerten does not show evidence for a high PolP and also does not have an emphatic meaning of the negation.

Writer	Double comp	Verb Third	V1 in verb clusters
Henricus Cordes	-	-	?
Lieven Kersteman	-	-	?
Maritje Barents	+	+	?
Meijndert van Kein	-	+	+
Saartje Jans	+	-	?
Trijntje Jacobs	+	+	-
Doedes Ennes Star	+	+	+
Willem Hontum de Jonge	-	+	?
Jacob Dimmenssen	+	-	+

Table 8 Distribution of polarity-related syntactic features in writers that show consistent single negation. Double complementizers and Verb Third indicate high PolP, verb clusters with the finite verb at V1 position indicates Low PolP. ‘?’ indicates that the presence of Low PolP could not be validated, due to, for instance, lack of verb clusters.

7.2.2 Apparent writers in stage III that are actually in stage II

In section 4, we have proposed that the negative clitic heads a PolP, which in turn indicates a complex CP-domain and/or a particular word order in verbal clusters (V1 in negative sentences). If the presence of PolP and the extended left periphery/verb order in verb clusters are indeed related, we expect that they disappear when the negative clitic is lost. However, Table 8 shows that 7 out of 9 writers with consistent single negation still display the syntactic features of the negative clitic. The extended CP-domain is still present, which results in double complementizers (N = 15) and Verb Third constructions (N = 12). See (32-a) taken from the letter of Trijntje Jacobs (*min bemijnde man* is taken to be an interjection), and (32-b) taken from the letter of Maritje Barents.

- (32) a. *Daerom*₁ [*min bemijnde maen*] *so*₂ *wet*₃ *ick nijet beter te*
 therefore my beloved husband so know I NEG better to
doen daen [...]
 do than [...]
 ‘therefore, my beloved husband, I do not know better than [...]’

- b. *aels₁ dat₂ ghij mijn schrijvens ten besten huoden welt.*
 if that you my writings to.the best keep want
 ‘that you will keep my writings close.’
- c. *dat ul mij geen goet mochte_{V1} senden_{V2} benaemen met*
 that you me no things may send labeled with
toback.
 tobacco
 ‘that you don’t send me any more tobacco.’
- d. *alsoo van primo stantie al claer en uijtgetrocken_{V3}*
 so of primo stantia already clear and outstretched
geleegen_{V2} heeft_{V1}
 laid have
 ‘so of primo stantia has already been laid out and stretched out.’

This can mean two things: either these letters accidentally do not contain a negative clitic and it is a side-effect of the restricted amount of language material we have of these writers, or the syntactic system underlying the negative concord is still in place, but the negative clitic is deliberately left out of the letter (for instance, to conform to prescriptive ideas about the clitic).¹⁹ This latter scenario becomes even more persuasive when we look closely at the letters of Meijndert van Kein, Doedes Ennes Star and Jacob Dimmenssen. In these letters, the finite verb in verb clusters is consistently in the V1 position when the sentence is negated, while it is in non-V1 position in the absence of the negation. See (32-c) and (32-d), taken from the letter of Meijndert Van Kein.²⁰

Therefore, we assume that for these speakers the negative clitic in low PolP attracted the finite verb in verb clusters to V1 position during the derivation. However, *en* does not appear in the letter because it was deliberately left out by

19 See Barbiers (2005) for a similar idea concerning verb clusters in modern-day Dutch dialects. Barbiers argues that some verb cluster orderings are allowed by the grammar, but not realised because of sociolinguistic restrictions.

20 These letters show a few non-negative constructions with verb clusters in which the finite verb is in V1 position. Looking closely at these occurrences, we can safely assume that they still convey emphasis on polarity, requiring PolP. See example (i), taken from the writings of Meijndert van Kein.

(i) *Doch jck sal sien oft jcker jts van can_{V1} maecke_{V2}*
 Yet I will see if I.there something of can make
 ‘Yet, I will see if I can make something out of it.’

Sentence (i) is preceded by the statement that Meijndert does not know how to sell the oranges stored in the warehouse of his deceased business associate. This sentence then contrasts this state of affairs. Thus, this sentence expresses polarity, which is signaled by the complementizer *doch*.

the writer to conform to normative ideas about negative concord (see section 3).

Based on these findings, we can tentatively conclude that while these writers show consistent single negation at the surface structure, apparently belonging to Jespersen stage III, the CP phenomena and the position of the finite verb in verb clusters of negated clauses reveal the presence of a PolP and hence a negative clitic in their underlying syntactic system. Thus, underlyingly, these writers are actually still in Jespersen stage II/III.

7.3 Summary

In section 3, we described how the dataset displays different stages of Jespersen's cycle. However, that was merely a description in terms of their surface appearance. Now that we have described the varieties in terms of the underlying syntactic systems, we can summarise how these systems are related to the stages of Jespersen's cycle.

Stage IIa: In this stage, the negative clitic is consistently used. The negative clitic expresses the [uNeg] feature, projecting NegP.

Stage IIb: In this stage, the negative clitic is still used, but it is reanalyzed as the spell-out of [Affect] features, projecting low/high PolP. The projection of high PolP coincides with phenomena related to a complex CP, like double complementizer or V3-structures. This stage includes the majority of the writers in our corpus, consisting of those that show stage II/III of Jespersen's cycle (i.e. having both negative concord and single negation) and those that appear to be in stage III, but only superficially delete or deliberately do not include the negative clitic in their writings.

Stage III: In this stage, the negative clitic and its (polarity-related) C-features have disappeared completely from the language system. The negative adverb carries [iNEG] and expresses negation on its own. Two writers in our dataset (Cordes and Kersteman) are part of this stage.

Table 9 shows a revision of the Jespersen stages as well as a redistribution of the writers, taking into account their underlying syntactic systems. In the next section, we will apply the sociolinguistic variables to the observed systems.

Stage IIb <i>Negative concord + pol features</i>	Jacob Been (1664)	[3]
Stage II/III	Adriaan Adriaansen (1664)	[17]
	Arnoud Adriaansen (1664)	[7]
	Elisabeth Amelingh (1661–1664)	[36]
	Hillegonda Vrienk (1673)	[27]
	Jaapje Koerten (1664)	[3]
	Trijntje Hendriks-Batens (1664)	[38]
	Adam Erckelens (1664)	[10]
	Guillaume Beddeloo (1672)	[8]
	Tanneke Cats (1672)	[19]
	Bastiaan Elinck (1664)	[11]
	Boudewijn de Witte (1671)	[24]
	Jan Lefeber (1664–1665)	[19]
	Lambrecht Verbrugge (1663–1664)	[5]
Stage II/III <i>Single negation at the surface but PolP features at deep structure</i>	Maritje Barents (1664)	
	Meijndert van Kein (1664)	[15]
	Saartje Jans (1664)	[4]
	Trijntje Jacobs (1664)	[6]
	Doedes Ennes Star (1664)	[3]
	Willem Hontum de Jonge (1664)	[8]
	Jacob Dimmenssen (1665)	[4]
Stage III <i>Single negation at surface and deep structure</i>	Henricus Cordes (1667)	[5]
	Lieven Kersteman (1665)	[10]

Table 9 Writers (year of writing)[number of negative structures] redistributed over revised stages of Jespersen’s cycle.

8 NEGATION IN THE LETTERS AS LOOT: SOCIAL PATTERNING

In the data analysis so far, we have shown not only how different stages of Jespersen’s cycle co-occur between and within writers, but also how four underlying systems can be derived from different observed PolP-related phenomena (high PolP; low PolP; low PolP and high PolP; no PolP). We suggested that the scattering of all the observed stages over data originating from such a short period might be an effect of the different prescriptive and natural developments coinciding at this dynamic period of Dutch. In this section, we

	Region	
	Noord-Holland	Zeeland
High social class	Doedes Ennes Star	(IIc) Bastiaan Elinck (IIb)
	Willem Hontum de Jonge	(IIc) Boudewijn de Witte (IIb)
	Henricus Cordes	(III) Jan Lefeber (IIb)
	Lieven Kersteman	(III) Lambrecht Verbrugge (IIb)
	Adam Erckelens	(IIb)
	Elisabeth Philipse Amelingh	(IIb)
Low social class	Maritje Barents	(IIc) Jacob Been (IIa)
	Meijndert van Kein	(IIc) Tanneke Cats (IIb)
	Saartje Jans	(IIc) Jacob Dimmenssen (IIc)
	Trijntje Jacobs	(IIc) Guillaume Beddelo (IIb)
	Trijntje Hendriks-Batens	(IIb) Adriaan Adriaansen (IIb)
	Hillegonda Vrienk	(IIb) Arnoud Adriaansen (IIb)
	Jaapje Koerten	(IIb)

Table 10 Writers (N = 23) and their grammars divided over social class and region. Index: (IIa) the language user systematically uses the negative clitic; (IIb) the language user uses the negative clitic in emphatic contexts/negation of a presupposition; (IIc) the language user does not use the negative clitic on the surface, but there are still indications of a PolP; (III) the language user does not use the negative clitic, nor any other indication of a PolP.

combine the sociolinguistic variables of the writers with their systems in order to gain insight into this social aspect of development. Table 10 shows the redistribution of the language users over social class and region, involving their grammars. In this redistribution, their revised Jespersen stages with respect to polarity-related properties are taken into account. Also notice that instead of distributing on token level as was done by Rutten & van der Wal (2014) to investigate general patterns of clitic occurrences, we distributed on writer level to investigate patterns of grammars.²¹

Table 10 confirms certain findings observed by Rutten & van der Wal (2014). With respect to region, negative concord occurs more frequently in Zeeland in comparison to Noord-Holland. Also, in Noord-Holland, slightly

²¹ Note that we have now classified the negative pattern of Jacob Been as stage IIa due to consistent use of the negative clitic. However, we only have three sentences with negation from this writer. Also, an anonymous reviewer suggests that it is probably more likely that this writer is also in stage IIb, given that his letters are historically situated centuries after the Middle Dutch period in which stage IIa was dominant.

more grammars exhibiting single negation occur in the high social class. Hence, loss of the clitic seems to spread from the north to the south, and from higher to lower social classes.

In addition to this confirmation, this table provides us with the insight that in Zeeland, with the exception of Jacob Been, the clitic is found across writers, which means that the dominant frequency of negative concord was not attributed to certain writers. Furthermore, intra-author variation between single negation and negative concord (stage IIIb) appears across all regions and social classes. This means that, a quarter of a decade after the top-down introduction of the modern grammar exhibiting consistent single negation, language users across regions and social classes still use negative concord, though not consistently any more. The most probable motivations for the language users to utilize this deviating grammar remain: they are unaware of the prescriptive ideas about the language, they deviate from these top-down ideas deliberately, or they simply follow the (probably slower) natural change.

Finally, the revised Jespersen stages form patterns that provide us with new insights on a syntactic level. Recall from section 2 that the most progressive grammar – consistent single negation – originated in Northern regions of the Dutch-speaking area (Postma & Bennis 2006, Hoeksema 2014, Vosters & Vandenbussche 2012, Nobels & Rutten 2014), and was also prescribed by the upper-class which predominantly lived in the North as well (see section 2 and references cited there). Hence, it comes as no surprise that almost all grammars exhibiting single negation occur in Noord-Holland. Yet, most of these writers display what we would like to classify as stage IIc, which is indexed as consistent single negation, but also exhibiting syntactic features indicating PolP. Thus, while the clitic is absent on the surface, it still seems operative at deep structure. This points to a conscious surface level deletion of the clitic, while complete erosion of the clitic's syntactic features has not yet completed. In other words, in deep structure, these grammars still exhibit stage IIIb.

Moreover, the two writers showing both deletion of *en* and complete disappearance of its syntactic features, i.e. stage III, both appear in the high class of Noord-Holland. They show the most progressive grammar with single negation being base-generated in VP. Since across regions the clitic already started to erode in bottom-up fashion, but the high class of Noord-Holland first introduced this progressive single negation grammar, it follows that, in this condition, we find the first writers in which the change in both top-down and bottom-up fashion has completed.

To conclude, despite the presence of different grammars and syntactic systems between the writers in our corpus, we can observe patterns of change. The most progressive grammar – consistent single negation at both surface and deep structure – only occurs in Noord-Holland, where this change was both developing in a bottom-up fashion and simultaneously initiated top-down by certain groups in the society that were mostly located in this area. Other authors in Noord-Holland displaying consistent single negation still show the clitic's syntactic features indicating the presence of PolP. Their loss of *en* seems merely a surface deletion. Underlyingly, they are still in stage IIb.

9 CONCLUSION

In this paper, we focused on the development of negation in EMD. In this intermediate stage between negative concord and single negation, the negative clitic became optional. It already started to erode towards the end of the Middle Dutch language stage as a result of bottom-up change. Consistent use of single negation originated consciously from 1638 in the upper class of Noord-Holland and spread out in the direction of surrounding speaking language areas and lower social classes. We investigated a sample of LAL, written approximately 30 years after this top-down introduction, with the incorporation of Jespersen's cycle and mechanisms of generative syntax, to get a clear picture of how negation kept on developing in varieties from people across regions and social classes.

We started our research by classifying the distribution of the letters in our corpus into Jespersen stages. The letters show many co-occurring varieties displaying different stages in synchronic fashion. While some varieties display a conservative grammar exhibiting negative concord (stage II), others display a progressive grammar containing single negation (stage III). In addition, the dominant portion of letters displays a grammar exhibiting variation between the two variants.

On a syntactic level, we investigated the distribution of features related to the negative clitic, which resulted in the following structures: (i) a high PolP as part of an extended CP, (ii) a low PolP that attracts the finite verb to T, (iii) a combination of high PolP and low PolP, and (iv) no PolP. Each structure has been observed in at least one of the varieties in our corpus. Interestingly, many letters with single negation show polarity-related features at the surface, indicating a PolP. We conclude that, since its features remain present, the clitic has most likely been elided from these letters and the respective varieties are still at stage IIb in the underlying structure. This dual grammar is possibly the result of external social pressure to drop the clitic on the one hand, and internal natural development on the other hand. A por-

tion of the grammars with single negation exhibited total loss of the clitic's features. This is considered the most progressive grammar.

With respect to meaning, we find that, in all letters showing variation, the clitic conveys emphasis on the unexpectedness of a presupposition being negated. In addition, half of this subset of letters showed the more general function of emphasizing negative stress on salient topics. Some of these letters even contain expletive clitics, confirming reanalysis of the clitic as a spell-out of the [uAffect] feature. Since this extended emphatic function is captured in high PolP, we assume that with this reanalysis of the clitic, high PolP became available for the language user to emphasize stress. This extended function is less specific and points to the eventual loss of the clitic due to functional redundancy. It follows that high PolP and with it the extended CP eventually loses ground.

In applying the analyzed data to the sociolinguistic variables of the writers' social classes and regions of origin to find that new patterns emerge. First, the dominant use of the negative clitic in Zeeland as observed in earlier research is present across writers, which means that its high frequency is not attributed to a subset. Second, intra-author variation occurs across all conditions, which means that there is no region or social class in which all varieties have completely adapted to the prescribed modern grammar yet. The question comes up whether the observed variation is an effect of consciously deviating from the prescribed norm or an effect of bottom-up change, resulting in erosion of the clitic due to functional redundancy. The latter is an effect of the clitic's reanalysis as the spell-out of polarity features. Third, almost all writers in Noord-Holland that show single negation at surface structure show the clitic's features at deep structure, pointing to a conscious level surface deletion of *en*, while bottom-up erosion of its features has not completed yet. Finally, the two writers showing complete disappearance of *en* and its features at both surface and deep structure appear in the high class of Noord-Holland. In this class and region where this progressive grammar was first introduced, it also collides first with the change in bottom-up fashion.

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