

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. Negative Form, Negative Meaning and the Impact of the Sociocultural Context

Malin Roitman

1. Research field and aim of the book

This is the second volume the editor will have assembled on negation studies. The present book, as well as the first (Roitman, 2017a), deals with the pragmatic dimension of negations. It originated from a 2017 conference at Stockholm University, *The Pragmatics of Negation: Aspects of Communication*, organised by the present book's editor. While the first book (Roitman ed., 2017a) covered negation studies on pragmatic matters from a wider range of linguistic fields, the present publication is more oriented towards empirical studies of negatives' meanings and functions in media and public discourses. The performed analyses are methodologically and theoretically oriented towards models in French pragma-semantics, enunciation, and cognitive theories.

Negation is one of our most central phenomena in human language and we use it daily for a vast range of different purposes: for rejection, denial and for expressing non-existence. Since ancient times it has captivated scholars, logicians and philosophers (Plato, Aristotle, Frege, Kant, Russell and Wittgenstein¹), and the very last century linguists – syntacticians, semanticists, pragmatists, sociolinguists and psycholinguists (Carston 1996; Clark and Chase, 1972; Dahl, 1979; Ducrot, 1984; Givón, 1979; Horn, 1989; Katz, 1972; Klima, 1964; Labov 1972; Larrivée, 2004; Miestamo, 2005; Moeschler, 2006; Muller, 1991; Tottie, 1991) – have been intrigued by its evasive and versatile character. Being one of the so-called *semantic universals*, i.e. meaning components shared by all languages studied so far, reveals its deep importance in human expression (Wierzbicka, 1996). Negation is certainly one of the most multidimensional and complex units in

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language, semantically, cognitively and syntactically, as well as from a functional, pragmatic, perspective.

Negations (negative morphemes) and negatives (here: sentences with negative meaning) have been analysed from an evolutionary perspective and synchronically, from a language internal or a language universal perspective. Depending of the theoretical framework, sentence negation in particular has been identified as a modal operator, a truth-value operator, a rhetoric device, a figure of thought, a polarity item and a marker of linguistic polyphony and as a linguistic unit with a variety of discursive and contextual meanings.

There remain, nevertheless, a large number of unsolved questions regarding negative forms of expressions and negative functions within specific languages, within different social settings and throughout the languages of the world. By bringing together scholars from different countries, with studies on different languages this volume aims to shed light and contribute to new knowledge about the forms and functionality of this universal phenomenon. Linguists and pragmaticiens generally agree that the *use* of negatives escapes logic and pure semantic description and is therefore best analysed with tools from cognitive and pragmatic theories. The variety of languages and different approaches in the book is by no means a disadvantage. Since the common denominator is analysing the functions and meaning of negatives, the different language specific parameters are pretty much an advantage when looking at the volume as a whole. Similar themes connected to negatives approached from different perspectives and examined in different languages offer a contrastive reading that actually enlarges the spectra of new knowledge presented in the books's chapters.

Based on hypotheses within pragmatics and discourse analysis, the main assumption is here that forms of expressing negatives (along with other forms of expressions) emerge and adjust constantly and in accordance with the cultural domain and the social setting of their appearance. This brings us to the second important and common denominator of the book's chapters, which is to study the functions of negative expressions in specific domains and types of discourses. The term *negatives* will here be used to cover *negative meaning* in general, from sentences containing negative morphemes – markers – to any sentence interpreted as bearer of negative meaning. I will come back to this dichotomy later on in this introductory chapter. Before continuing to discuss *negatives*, thus a *negative-meaning category*, we will try to clarify some formal issues necessary for understanding this complex phenomenon.

2. The relation between negative and declarative sentences

One of the first issues when it comes to analysing negatives – our general category for negative valuated meaning and function – is to problematise and clarify their status towards negative clauses² and negative sentences. Let's however leave the semantic category (negatives) for the moment and first straighten out some aspects regarding the relation between negative clauses and negatives sentences on the one hand – and then the relation – distinction – between negative sentences and declarative sentences on the other. The *negative clause* is first of all the simple morpho-syntactical structure of a subject and negated lexical predicate, and the *negative sentence* is basically a negative clause that may also contain a more complex structure including one or more negative morphemes and other syntactic operators (quantifiers, modalities, etc.) with different scope etc.; the negative sentence is to put in other words a well formed group of words including at least one negative marker, starting with a capital letter and ending with a full stop, an exclamation or an interrogative mark. Henceforward we will use *negative sentence* or *sentential negation* to cover all types of negative clauses³.

Earlier comparisons between negative sentences and declarative sentences have exposed many complex linguistic, cognitive and functional features of negative clauses in natural languages that distinguish them from declaratives. This appears in particular in the last decades' pragmatic studies where the relation between form and literal meaning on the one hand and language function and pragmatic meaning on the other has been highlighted. Syntactically, negative morphemes generally bring forth a more elaborate distributional syntactic pattern; cognitively, negative sentences are proven to require more time for the understanding process, and pragmatically negative morpho-syntactic structures can be used for a varieties of meaning in different contexts (See for instance Clark and Chase, 1972; Dahl, 1979; Horn, 1989, Kaup et al., 2006; Lee, 2017; Roitman, 2017a; Tian et al., 2016).

These features characterising negative sentences are interrelated in various ways and seem to explain some aspects of its usage. In order to obtain a communicative and cognitive flow in discourse, and in the light of general information structure, negative sentences seem actually to require an 'alert' to be fully interpreted; language users in general and independently of context generally communicate how things *are*, and since negative sentences communicate how things *are not*, the latter may need reinforcement in discourse (Haspelmath, 2006; Miestamo, 2005). This communicative 'break' and the apparent need to highlight

negative content in discourse may therefore be a plausible explanation to why negative sentences across languages to a high extent engender distributional patterns different from corresponding affirmatives and why negative morphemes have a tendency to appear early in the sentence such that it has been shown by Horn (1989) and Jespersen (1917). This distributional pattern seems to enhance a good communicative flow for the reason just mentioned. It was early suggested by Meillet (1912) and recently by Larrivé (2011) and others that negative morphemes' distribution over time may be motivated by pragmatic needs, rather than being solely a result of the phonetic evolution, as it was suggested by Jespersen. Mosegaard-Hansen (2009, 2021) has also shown in diachronic studies on the French bipartite negation *ne...pas* that the evolution of standard negation is ruled by discursive related principles of communicative flow in the information structure. It seems as if unexpected information, such as the rejection and denial of the state of affairs needs to be signalled.

The distinctions versus similarities between negative sentences and declaratives across languages have been widely studied within the language typology framework in terms of the *asymmetry* versus *symmetry* of standard negation, in relation to a declarative clause (van der Auwera and Krasnoukhova, 2020; Deprez, 2000). Our interest here lies however in the *functional* asymmetry of negative sentences (Givón, 1979; Miestamo, 2000, 2005). The functional asymmetric relation between standard negation and declaratives is in essence a rather uncontroversial postulate in modern linguistics. It is an almost indisputable fact that simple propositional logic cannot fully explain the function of negation in natural languages; thus the logic of the negative operator in $\neg P$ is true if and only if P is false (and vice versa $\neg P$ is false if and only if P is true) is not enough to explain the semantic complexity of a negative sentence. A negative sentence is normally a much more complex semantic phenomenon than a simple reversed affirmative (above), due to the way the negative morpheme interacts and creates meaning with other language items such as modality markers and quantifiers, but also in the way the sentence is used and interpreted in authentic contexts.

The longer process time for negative sentences, than for affirmatives, is actually related to the fact that a negative sentence involves more intricate semantic features – which allows it being used for different purposes – and therefore demands more time for the interpretation of it (Carston, 1996; Kaup and Zwaan, 2003; Kaup and Dudschig, 2020). The sentence negation (English *not* or French *ne...pas*) that is generally

used for denials (of some issue) actually triggers a more or less manifest *activation* of the positive counterpart that underpins the negative sentence (See below and 3.2 on *Enunciation theories* etc.). The degree and impact of this activation is due to the quality of triggering elements in the surrounding context. This indicates that this *stratifying* of a negative sentence in two layers, a positive and a negative, that takes place being both a semantic language inherent phenomenon and a pragmatic ditto. Catching negative meaning thus demands – as it has been mentioned earlier – to higher extent an interpretation, which goes along with the longer process time for sentences containing a negative morpheme. Experimental research on the process time of negative sentences has however shown that this processing difficulty is mitigated with contextual support (Nordmeyer and Frank, 2014). It can also be added that negative sentences constitute a late acquired feature in first and second language learning. Studies of children's language show evidence of larger efforts involved in their interpretation of negative sentences (Bardell, 2000; Leech, 1983).

This global idea of the activation of the positive counterpart in negative sentences to explain the meaning and functions of negative sentences is actually framed in several theories, using different terminology and models for explanation that will be further explained below and in the books' chapters (Fauconnier, 1994; Culioli, 1990; Martin, 1983; Givón, 1979, etc. to mention some). This idea is also what outlines the explanation of negation in the theory of linguistic polyphony (Ducrot, 1984; Nølke, 2017) repeatedly referred to in this book. Since our approach is a pragmatic one, the question of mapping affirmatives and negative sentences to the logic of true and false statement is for reasons mentioned earlier less important than the studying of their potential meanings, in a variety of contexts.

3. Fundamentals and theoretical orientations of this book

3.1. The pragmatics of negative meaning

This book focuses henceforth mainly on the emergence of *negative meaning* such as it is engendered in different social domains: political and media discourses and social interaction. The studies deal with questions regarding negative meaning and function in a broad sense, which implies interpreting negative utterances based on text type, genre, or sociocultural factors. The linguistic analysis will not be abandoned but the sociocultural aspect will be an important parameter for the interpretation of negative meaning.

The chapters cover thus analyses of *negatives* (negative meaning) from two perspectives: *form-to-meaning/function* and *meaning/function-to-form*. Thus, some of the studies are carried out on negative sentences carrying negative morphemes, (quantifiers and adverbs: *no*, *nobody*, *not*, *n't*, *never*, etc.) while others chapters deal with negative meanings conveyed through other units or linguistic phenomena: counterfactual elements, prosody, stress, gestures, etc. involved in expressions and contexts producing negative meaning. Negatives shall thus, to put it differently, here be approached and considered from semasiological as well as from onomasiological standpoints; the differentiation between negative form and negative meaning is omnipresent in the book since there is no automatic mapping between them: affirmatives can produce negative meaning (irony, as for example “I’m excellent at predicting the weather!” declared on a rainy day at the beach) and sentences with negative morphemes can produce positive meaning such as in: *That’s not too bad!* (litote) or *I didn’t lose him* (double negation). When it comes to studying negative meaning in discourse (as opposed to positive meaning) there is consequently more to it than to differentiate standard negation *Paul didn’t eat the apple* – negation of a main lexical verb – from an affirmative clause *Paul ate the apple* although this and other syntactic and semantic categories (mentioned earlier in the chapter) will be referred to whenever there is a need for it.

The focus lies here, once again, on determining what is negative meaning from a pragmatic point of view⁴. The noun *negative* is hereby defined as a category of sentences that express negative meaning, will it hold negative morphemes or not. More precisely *negative* is a statement indicating or expressing a contradiction, denial, non-existence or refusal. *Negativity* will be used to design the outcome of a negative (the noun in the sense above). The adjective *negative* will refer to designating a proposition that somehow denies agreement between a subject and its predicate or to design a linguistic element as in “negative polarity” or “the French negative adverb *pas*”.

Negative meanings (or negatives) emerge thus from interpretations grounded in the communicative situation where a particular sentence is used. Every chapter will present their methods and criteria for interpreting negative meaning in their corpuses. In accordance with the purpose, the studies in this book are thus framed in theories and methods within pragmatics, in a broad sense; these are French pragmatic theories on argumentation, enunciation, presuppositions, and polyphony (Benveniste, 1966; Anscombe and Ducrot, 1983; Ducrot, 1984;

Carel and Ducrot, 2005; Culioli, 1990; Nølke, 2017), speech acts theory (Searle, 1969), systemic functional theory (Halliday and Hasan, 2000; Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014), cognitive pragmatics and the model of mental spaces (Fauconnier, 1994), sociolinguistics, in particular variation aspects and discourse analysis. Earlier studies on the pragmatics of negation also play an essential role in the chapters' theoretical framework, such as Horn (1989), Larrivée (2004, 2018), Moeshler (2016), Muller (1991), and Miestamo (2005).

Besides pragmatic theories, the questions dealt with in the different chapters are related to methods, models and theoretical postures in other linguistic fields, notably semantics, rhetoric, cognitive linguistics, syntax, language acquisition and paralinguistics. Some studies are primarily theory-based while others are more empirically oriented, though all are methodically oriented towards demonstration and reasoning through authentic corpora.

3.2. Enunciation theories and the polyphony of negation

Various chapters deal with enunciation, in Ducrot's meaning. According to this view, the meaning of a sentence is a result of its own production – its enunciation, and language units thus hold *traces* of the speaking subject(s), the interlocutors, space and time in terms of personal pronouns, tense and modality markers (epistemic and axiological) and deictic expressions. This is the fundamental pillar of the Anscombe and Ducrot's (1983) framework *Argumentation dans la langue* which outlines *la pragmatique intégrée*, the idea of the enunciation process being an integrated part of the meaning of specific language phenomena, such as scalar words, presuppositions, connectors and negations. Ducrot (1984) further develops this idea in his theory of linguistic polyphony, where sentence negation (among other items) is described as the polyphonic 'multi-voiced' marker par excellence. According to this view, sentence negation discloses a 'crystallised discourse' exposing two different enunciators or 'voices', one positive and one negative. The linguistic polyphony has been developed and practised in a number of studies, of which Nølke (2017) and Nølke *et al.* (2004) is the most influential among others (Bres *et al.*, 2005a; Bres, 2005b; Kronning, 2009; Nowakowska, 2005; Perrin, 2009; Therkelsen, 2009). As for the polyphony of negation, it has been researched by Birkelund (2009), Fløttum and Gjerstad (2017) and Roitman (2015, 2017b) and others. This subdivision of negative sentences in two 'voices' challenges the established idea of the *unity of the speaking subject*. As mentioned

earlier in this introduction, the idea of stratifying negative sentences, the superposing of layers ‘enunciators’, is present in other theories besides the models inherited from the French enunciation theories (see below), although the latter are predominant in this book.

3.3. Negative sentences and the crossroads between the semantic and pragmatics

With regard to the dominant enunciative perspective on negation in this book, an important issue will be the studying of the crossroads between the semantic content and the pragmatic functions of sentence negation. The pragmatic distinction between the so-called descriptive, polemic, and metalinguistic negations is widely dealt with within pragmatic studies on negation (Ducrot, 1984; Horn, 1989; Larrivée, 2011; Moeschler, 2016 etc.) and implies queries on whether to conceive linguistic meaning and negative meaning in particular as truth conditional or non-truth conditional. Some pragmatic theories applied in the book argue in favour of an overlapping between these two conceptions of meaning (Austin, 1962; Fauconnier, 1994; Horn, 1989; Searle, 1969; Sperber and Wilson, 2004) and some other (Culioli, 1990; Ducrot, 1984; Nølke, 2017) stand for a radical non-truth conditional model for linguistic meaning. This fundamental question will among other questions be problematised and discussed in the books’ chapters.

4. Theoretical frames of the chapters

The theories applied in the books’ chapters will now briefly be framed in order to position this volume in the field of the pragmatics of negation. The chapters are organised according to whether their studies have a form-to-meaning or a meaning-to-form approach on negatives.

4.1. Negative forms and negative meaning

Fløttum and Gjerstad aim to explore the polyphony of negation and its impact on argumentation in environmental discourses, notably French blog posts on climate change, a highly confrontational forum where opposing views on this issue is exposed. Framed in the theory of linguistic polyphony (Nølke et al., 2004 and Nølke, 2017) their analysis searches for a matching of the divergent views on climate change and the polemic negation in order to decide whether the polyphony of negation is a characteristic tool for argumentation in this type of discourse.

The theory of linguistic polyphony also frames Roitman and Fonseca Greber's study on the dichotomy of polemic-descriptive negation in relation to the *ne*-loss and *ne*-retention in modern French political discourse. The interest lies in the relation between the *ne*-retention and a communicative, pragmatic need to emphasising the negative content within a specific type of discourse, the highly confrontational presidential debates. The evolution of French negation from a preverbal unit to a two-folded negation (*ne...pas*, *ne...plus*), the grammaticalisation of the post verbal nominal units, and the loss and retention of *ne* has been studied from a chronological and syntactical perspective (Dahl, 1979; Jespersen, 1917) but less from a pragmatic point of view. One hypothesis for this study is that the social setting does actually have an impact on the *ne*-loss and *ne*-retention observed in the French presidential debates and in general. Based on sociolinguistic criteria for language variation (register, relation between the interlocutors, social setting, genre) comparisons of the *ne*-loss and the *ne*-retention are therefore made with spoken corpora that differs with respect to most variation parameters.

The interpretation of the negatives' context is also crucial in García Negroni's study. The author explores evidentiality (the marking of the source of information in the utterance and the relating of it to a referent in the world) in relation to metalinguistic negations in Argentinian politicians' speeches. The originality of her study is to elaborate the concept of evidentiality within French enunciation theory, thus considering external sources as utterance-internal dialogic and polyphonic phenomena in the light of this non-truth-conditional approach to meaning. Metalinguistic negations are in Ducrot's definition the kind of negations that rectify external enunciations (the act of saying) such as in "He didn't 'die in a car accident'. He is still alive!". The metalinguistic negation disqualifies thus in this example the presupposition (that someone actually died), which would be the default instruction for this negative sentence outspoken, without the cue *He is still alive!* The metalinguistic negation disqualifies also the *decreasing principle* of a canonical negative sentence that would allow a cue such as for example "The truth is he *sat* in his car when he had a heart attack (and died)". In García Negroni's view, metalinguistic negation creates its own discursive and interactive frames where evidential points of views are staged and rectified. There are interesting parallels between this study and Besnard's who discuss countrafactual meaning in relation to evidentiality.

Two of the chapters studying negation as a marker of linguistic polyphony (Roitman and Fonseca-Greber, and Lopez) relate the two negation types — polemic and descriptive — to extra-linguistic speech features (intonation and stress) and paralinguistic markers (gestures) and then analyse them in the light of sociolinguistic matters of variation. Roitman and Fonseca-Greber study hence (also) how prosodic patterns interfere with the argumentative reinforcements of negative sentences in political debates by comparing the differences in terms of social setting. Their study is however focused on negative morphemes. Lopez, on the other hand, primarily relates negative gestures to different types of negations and we have therefore chosen to associate her study to the section 4.2 below where it will be further described.

Negatives' function and meaning related to the social setting and genre are also particularly significant in two large corpus studies. Albu and Capuano examine the distribution and functions of the negative items, negative quantifiers (*no-negations*) and sentence negation (*not/n't negations*) in English-language tweets from UK candidates running for the EU parliament. They problematise the classic spoken-written dichotomy in the light of the social setting in this specific hybrid type of discourse that is dialogic in nature. Different distributional and collocation patterns are found in the use of *not* and *n't* which can sometimes be related to the informal style of this genre where the limits between spoken and written is rather unsettled.

Within the functionalist 'choice-grammar' framework (Halliday and Hassan, 2000), Durán studies negative polarity in American presidential inaugural speeches from the president Washington to Trump. The functionalist top-down approach allows scanning the pattern of choices from the negative system and then a comparison of the frequency and nature of negative polarity items at a given time, between the different speeches over time, and with other types of discourses. This method of scrutinising elements with negative meaning and function – polarity – without primarily taking into account their syntactic structure and semantic denotation is efficient for uncovering the nature of negatives in specific domains, discourse type and genre (*field*, *tenor* and *mood* in the functionalist terminology). Durán shows that negative polarity is to a higher extent represented in the presidential inaugural speeches than in other English language domains, in general. The level of polarisation in these speeches reveals actually the global stand the presidents take in relation to their predecessors.

4.2. Negative function and negative meaning

Non-negative forms may engender negative meaning and ironic utterances are probably the example par excellence of this. Although the book's chapters don't deal directly (but only indirectly) with irony, it may serve as an illustrative example of implicit negative meaning. Irony reverses literal meaning and may therefore express negativity by means of an affirmative sentence, under certain circumstances. This delicate problem of irony and negativity has been studied within the linguistic polyphony framework (Birkelund and Nølke, 2013; Bres, 2010; Dendale, 2008; Ouaz 2010; Perrin 1996). Irony is there described as a polyphonic phenomenon, where what is explicitly enounced covers another opposite enunciation. Thus when the speaker holds the implicit (and opposite) enunciation as true, ironic utterances express negative meaning without necessarily containing negative linguistic forms.

From the negative meaning-to-form perspective, Besnard examines in her chapter the idea of counterfactual meaning as a built-in potential of certain expressions containing a meaning of 'not to be the case' such that the expression *be supposed to*. The framework is Culioli's (1990) analysis of negation within his theory of enunciative operations. From this viewpoint a counterfactual linguistic item may be considered as an implicit negation expressing at least two different values for a given predicative relation: p and p' (*non-p/ other than-p*). Culioli's semantic theory has a cognitive dimension where negative meaning (and other meanings) are achieved through predicative operations in different notional domains of possible representations, supported by enunciative operations that locate the situation and the speaker's position. From this perspective the triggering of negative meaning of 'be supposed to' can be described as a result from the interaction between the counterfactual expression's p' value (*non-p/ other than-p*), other reinforcing facts in the context, and the act of enunciation, i.e. the contextual linking of the predicative operation to the speaking subject and place. This calculation of meaning is pragmatic since it reveals a constant dynamic relation between mental potential representations and the enunciative condition of an utterance.

Lopez explores the correlation between negative gestures and negative utterances performed in teachers' classroom discourse and if so whether there are correlations between different types of gestures and the three types of sentence negation described within French enunciation theories: descriptive, polemic and metalinguistic negations. Some of the gestures used for expressing negative meaning in this corpus appear to be language specific although some match

universal known gestures for negations. Earlier studies within the cognitive field (Kaup and Dudschig, 2020; Giora, 2006) have explained the complexity and the longer process time for interpreting negative sentences in speech (See also introduction). Inspired by these studies Lopez finds a correlation between different gestures and the pragmatic functions of the negative sentences performed by the teachers. The polemic negation is accompanied by typical negation gestures but as for the descriptive negation the accompanying gestures seem to be motivated by a volatile act of supporting the audience to process negation. It is of course interesting to consider the results in relation to the social setting – classroom – and the type and function of the discourse (pedagogical).

Sakai's chapter represent a somewhat different conception of the pragmatics of negation. This study deals with the act of reference and how it differs between affirmatives and negatives, according to the *ontology* referred to. This study has a conceptual-cognitive approach to negative meaning and deals with the choices of the adequate referent to capture a plausible meaning in a given context. The occurring ontology change in the reference act, pragmatic in nature, in certain negated identity statements is here explained within Fauconnier's theory on mental spaces. This model explains the stratifying and the duality of sentence negation from a cognitive point of view, where different "*univers de croyance*"⁵ mentally overlap and interact and help to explain the interpretability of apparently illogical relations of certain utterances. Sakai's analysis shows that sentence negation – when it comes to certain identity statements – operates not on the truth conditional content of the proposition but on the *modes of representation* of the items denoted in it. This is an example of an analysis where there is an overlapping of truth-conditional and non-truth conditional – pragmatic – perspectives on linguistic meaning.

Abstracts

A corpus-pragmatic account to negation in electoral tweets

Elena Albu and Francesca Capuano, University of Tübingen

This paper aims at discussing the constructional strategies and pragmatic uses of *no*-negation, *not*-negation and *n't*-negation in the political tweets sent by the UK candidates at the time of the 2014 European Parliamentary Elections. Using the tools and methods of corpus pragmatics, this is an exploratory study meant to cast light on the on-going

debates about the oral vs. written features present in tweets and about the colloquialisation of political discourse on social media. The analysis revealed that in terms of overall frequency, negation is not extensively used (17.18%), while the tripartite division showed that *not*-negation and *n't*-negation are prevalent (72.44%) in comparison with *no*-negation (19%). Although numerically similar, the analyses of the first ten token collocates and of the first four most used parts of speech indicated that *not*-negation and *n't*-negation are not used interchangeably, and instead form distinct patterns and have different combinatorial preferences. To illustrate, *not* is generally part of non-verbal clausal negation, being mainly found in the [(X') not (X)] construction. It is also used in elliptical structures and followed by full stops, features which point rather towards non-standard values of the negative particle. In contrast, the bound inflectional form *n't* showed a strong preference for the auxiliary *do*, while *no* was found in weak recurrent patterns as a result of the great variety of items it combines with. Overall, in line with Wikström (2017), the electoral tweets in our dataset appear to be neither a form of spoken language nor written language but rather a hybrid form that extends beyond a mix of linguistic features. Additionally, the tweets present features that indicate a shift from the formality imposed by traditional political discourse to a more flexible and colloquial type of political discourse.

Counterfactuality as negative meaning. A case study of 'BE supposed to' *Anne-Laure Besnard, University of Rennes*

The aim of this paper is to investigate how markers that are not typically negative may generate negative interpretations in context. More specifically, it focuses on the counterfactual, which can be considered a type of implicit negation insofar as it involves the expression of a state of affairs that is understood not to be the case. The issue of counterfactuality as negative meaning is approached via a case study of the quasi-modal marker *BE supposed to* within the framework of the Theory of Predicative and Enunciative Operations (Culioli, 1990). Drawing from a 40-million-word newspaper corpus (*The Independent* 2009), the study shows that this structure is more likely to give rise to a counterfactual interpretation than other apparently similar periphrastic expressions such as *BE expected to* or *BE believed to*, which suggests that what might look at first sight like a purely pragmatic phenomenon is actually rooted in semantics.

A corpus study of grammatical negation in US presidents' inaugural speeches

José Manuel Durán, Universidad de Belgrano, Buenos Aires

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) describes the system of grammatical negation as realised through negative polarity items such as *not*, *never*, *no*. This paper analyses the frequency of grammatical negation per clause in a corpus of political speeches from an SFL perspective. The corpus is made up of the 45 inaugural speeches (122,848 words, 10,498 clauses) delivered by US presidents, from Washington 1789 to Trump 2017. The corpus was semi-automatically tagged with the aid of WodsmithTool and UAM CorpusTool. The study aims at discovering the patterns of the most frequent polarity items in the corpus and contrasting them with those in the overall pattern of English. Additionally, the chapter analyses the most frequent collocations and colligations of the most pervasive polarity items. Results show that polarity items in my corpus are much higher than those found in the literature (Halliday and James, 1993/2005, Matthiessen 2006). Besides, grammatical negation is found to be twice as frequent at clause level than at the level of the noun group.

Metadiscursive negation, evidential points of view and ethos in Argentine political discourse

María Marta García Negroni, Universidad de San Andrés—Universidad de Buenos Aires

Most often approached from referential or cognitive perspectives, evidentiality is usually understood as the semantic domain marking the existence of the source of information in the utterance and specifying what type of source—direct or indirect—it involves (Aikhenvald, 2004). The source is said to be direct when the knowledge the speaker refers to has been acquired by means of a perception arising from one of their senses, while it is called indirect when such knowledge derives from an inference or a quotation of somebody else's discourse (Anderson, 1986; Willet, 1988).

This chapter will focus on the analysis of the *evidential meaning of metadiscursive negation*. However, to account for such meaning, this study will drift apart from many of the assumptions on which most studies on evidentiality rest. On the research paths paved by the theories of polyphony (Ducrot, 1984, 2001), dialogism (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984), and argumentative semantics (Ducrot, 2004; Carel and Ducrot, 2005), the *dialogic approach to argumentation and polyphony*, within

which this chapter is framed, advocates a non-truth-value, non-referential characterisation of meaning (*i.e.*, there is no meaning component that can be considered purely objective).

Negation and climate change in French blog posts

Øyvind Gjerstad and Kjersti Fløttum, Universitetet i Bergen

Can the use of negation be seen as a metric for the contentiousness of an issue? That is the basic assumption that forms the point of departure for the present chapter. By expressing a diametric opposition to another point of view (Ducrot, 1984, Nölke et al., 2004), negation has the potential to crystallise and reproduce two fronts of a given issue, and few issues are as societally important as climate change (CC). During the last few decades, the public prominence of different aspects of CC—the prognoses offered by science, the necessity of mitigation and adaptation, the division of respective responsibilities of various nation-states—have ebbed and flowed as the result of political and natural events such as the Kyoto summit in 1997 and the California wildfires in 2018. The year 2007 stands out as particularly important in this regard as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Al Gore were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, a recognition of their efforts to inform the global population of the risks of CC. The award also had the added effect of amplifying this very message. However, the following years were characterised by both disappointment (e.g., the CC summit in Copenhagen in 2009) and controversy (e.g., the release of internal e-mails from the University of East Anglia, also referred to as ‘climategate’, in 2009). All the while, the IPCC’s prognosis of CC grew more dire, as laid out in its 5th Assessment Report published in 2013. While the panel’s mandate is only to give a summary of the available science, it did provide a subtle rebuttal to one specific argument advanced by CC sceptics, in the form of negation.

The meaning of teachers’ negations in Hong Kong classrooms interpreted from their co-occurring gestures

Renia Lopez-Ozieblo, Hong Kong Polytechnic University

In an Asian pedagogical context, teachers’ negations need to take into account Asian politeness attitudes (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Cheng and Tsui, 2009) as well as the pedagogical objective of the negation (Rees-Miller, 2000; Seedhouse 1997) and the difficulties inherent in its processing (Tian *et al.*, 2016). Despite these issues, teachers do use

negative particles in the classroom when answering students' questions or delivering content. This paper focuses on two Hong Kong tertiary teachers' explicit negations and the hand gestures that co-occur with them. I investigate how the gesture mitigates or accentuates the negation and the possible reasons for these actions. It would seem that negating gestures are more likely to co-occur with polemic negations while stressing and referential gestures are linked to descriptive negations.

Negative campaigning: communicating negative meanings in French presidential debates over time

Malin Roitman, Stockholm University and Bonnie Fonseca-Greber, University of Louisville

Given the well-documented, ongoing loss of *ne* in real-time during the last half-century (Armstrong and Smith, 2002; Ashby, 1976, 2001; Martineau and Mougeon, 2003; Hansen and Malderez, 2004), it is hypothesised that the remaining Spoken French negator, that is, *pas* [pa(:)] carries more negative meaning than it did 50 years ago and, therefore, it has become prosodically more prominent (e.g., through increased focal stress and/or vowel lengthening) in contexts where its negative meaning is paramount to the communicative/pragmatic intent of the utterance. The proposed chapter then explores, in real-time, the intersection of *ne* loss (and its concurrent reanalysis-in-progress for pragmatic emphasis (Fonseca-Greber, 2007, 2017; van Compernelle, 2009; Donaldson, 2017) and *pas* prominence in the Roitman corpus of televised French presidential debates (Roitman, 2009, 2015, 2017), that is, the 1974 and 2012 debates. Debates provide an ideal interactional counterpoint to friendly conversation, which seems to abide by the social agreement principle (Yaeger-Dror, 2002; Fonseca-Greber, 2017) because here, the candidates often argue and interact aggressively with each other, as if following a social disagreement principle, instead.

Ontological change caused by negation: the case of identity statements

Tomohiro Sakai, Waseda University

This paper shows that the negation of (1) entails a change of ontology, which is pragmatic in nature.

- (1) Clark Kent is Superman (1) is a covert existential, in that it is ontology-preserving just like an overt existential such as (2).

- (2) Pegasus exists (in reality). Thus, if you endorse the ontology expressed by (1)/(2), you can accept (3)/(4) as true, respectively.
- (3) Superman leaps more tall buildings than Clark Kent.
- (4) Pegasus leaps more tall buildings than Bucephalus.

A difference emerges when the negation comes into the picture. If you accept the negation of (2), you can no longer hold (4) to be true. This is not the case for (1)/(3). Whether you assent to (1) or not has no bearing on the truth-conditional content of (3), affecting only the modes of presentation of the objects referred by ‘Superman’ and ‘Clark Kent’.

Endnotes

1. Regarding Aristotle’s conception of negation, turn for example to Izgin (2020) and regarding Kant’s, see Newton (2021). Plato examines the nature of negation in *The Sophist*. As for Frege, reference is made to *La Pensée, La Négation, La Composition des pensées* in *Écrits logiques et philosophiques*. (1918) and in the case of Russell reference is made to *On Denoting* (1905). Wittgenstein deals with negation in his *Philosophical Investigations* (1953).
2. The term *standard negation* is commonly used in the same way as negative clause i.e. a negation of a simple lexical predicate, although some researchers separate them.
3. Our focus lies on negative meaning and therefore this clause-sentence distinction is not necessary. See Miestamo 2005, Muller 1991 or Horn 1989 for further reading on these issues.
4. Negative meaning without negative markers has for example been studied within language typology by Miestamo (2000) from a semantic-universal perspective.
5. The term “univers de croyance” is borrowed from Robert Martin (1981) who developed a similar semantic model.

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