

CHAPTER 51

Negation

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51.1 Introduction

Descriptive and theoretical research distinguishes between various types of negative marker. The first distinction is that between lexical and syntactic negation. Lexical negation, although semantically present, is not expressed as an independent word, but is internal to a lexical item whose meaning entails a negation such as the Romanian verb *a se îndoii* ‘to doubt’ in (1) which entails a negative meaning, although there is no negative morpheme that signals only negation as such. Lexical negation can also be realized through prefixes on adjectives such as Italian *in-* ‘in-’ in (2).

- (1) Ion se îndoiește că Maria va veni (Ro.)
 Ion self= doubts that Maria will come.INF
 ‘Ion doubts that Maria will come’
- (2) Quel libro è incomprendibile (It.)
 That book is incomprehensible
 ‘That book is incomprehensible’

Syntactic negation is realized through a free morpheme which has a fixed position in the clause. Although in the languages of the world the case of negative inflection, i.e. negation realized through a negative morpheme on the verb, is widely attested (cf. rare cases in Latin such as *NOLO* ‘I do not want’, *nescio* ‘I do not know’), sentential negation in Romance is always represented by an independent adverb-like element (see §51.2.2.2, however, for *n-*words which acts as arguments of the verb and convey sentential negation). The negative marker selected by the various Romance languages presents interesting morphosyntactic as well as etymological variation (§51.2). In general, a syntactic negation can negate the whole event (3a) thus giving rise to sentential negation, or a single constituent (3b) yielding constituent negation. Given that in several Romance languages the element expressing sentential negation and constituent negation can be the same lexical item, there can arise ambiguous cases such as (3c) which can only be disambiguated through context (e.g. through the correction in brackets in example 3c):

- (3) a. Oggi Gianni non lavora (It.)
 Today Gianni not works
 ‘Today Gianni does not work’
- b. Gianni ha parlato non con Maria,
 Gianni has spoken not with Maria
 ma con Carla (It.)
 but with Carla
 ‘Gianni has spoken not with Maria but with Carla’
- c. Gianni non ha parlato con Maria
 Gianni not has spoken with Maria
 (ma con Carla) (It.)
 but with Carla
 ‘Gianni did not speak to Maria but to Carla’

Constituent negation has a partially different distribution from sentential negation, since it can occur in front of the negated constituent, and in some languages can take a different form with respect to the sentential negative marker in those cases where only the constituent is uttered as a reply to a question. For instance, French, which has a discontinuous sentential negation formed by the two elements *ne* and *pas*, only uses the latter for constituent negation:

- (4) Qui a fait ça? — Pas moi! (Fr.)
 Who has done this? Not me!
 ‘Who did this? Not me!’

Italian generally uses the pro-sentence negation form in this type of environment:

- (5) Chi è venuto al cinema?— Gianni no. (It.)
 Who is come to.the cinema? Gianni no
 ‘Who came to the cinema? Not Gianni.’

Another case of constituent negation found in negative answers to *wh*-questions or in short statements is exemplified in (6a,b). This type of constituent negation can be the usual sentential negation as in (6b), but can also be different from other cases of constituent negation, as shown by the use of the Italian *niente* lit. ‘nothing’ in (6a):

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- (6) a. Niente scemenze! (It.)
nothing silly.things
b. Pas de bêtises! (Fr.)
not of silly.things
'No messing about!'

Another type of negation is so-called pro-sentence negation, used as a negative reply to substitute an entire sentence (see §51.2.2.2):

- (7) a. Vai al cinema? (It.) / Tu vas
you.go to.the cinema? You go
au cinéma? (Fr.)
to.the cinema?
'Are you going to the cinema?'
b. No / Non
no no
'No, I am not'

In what follows I will mainly concentrate on sentential negation, since it has attracted much more attention than constituent negation and we know much more about it across Romance.

51.2 Form(s) and position(s) of the negative marker

All standard Romance languages have maintained a descendant of the Latin negative marker *NON* 'not', which is generally located in front of inflected and infinitival verbs and after a nominal subject in the domain of clitic elements.

- (8) a. Gianni non ha telefonato (It.)
Gianni not has phoned
b. Juan no ha llamado (Sp.)
Juan not has phoned
c. El Joan no a trucat (Cat.)
the Joan not has phoned
d. João não ligou (Pt.)
João not phoned
e. Ion nu a telefonat (Ro.)
Ion not has phoned
f. Jean n' a pas téléphoné (Fr.)
Jean not has not phoned
'John did not phone'

Its position in this area of the clause seems to be a rather stable feature across the whole Romance domain: there do

not seem to be languages where the negative marker deriving from Latin *NON* has a different position in the sentence (e.g. a postverbal one, or one at the beginning of the clause before the nominal subject), although the same item can often be used as constituent negation, showing that it is not an adverbial clitic. As for the actual form of the sentential negative marker, some languages like Galician and Italian have maintained the Latin form, while others have modified it, often losing the nasal coda (e.g. Sp./Cat. *no*, Ro. *nu*, Fr. *ne*). Non-standard varieties also display a variety of forms, which range between a simple *n* (Wal., ESic.), *un* (Flo.), *no* (Ven.), and *ne* (Eml.).

The exact position of the negative marker with respect to clitics depends on the language: the standard languages generally place it before all types of object clitic but after subject clitics (e.g. French):

- (9) a. Je ne le vois pas (Fr.)
I not it= see not
'I cannot see it'
b. María no se lo dio (Sp.)
María not him= it= gave
'María did not give it to him'
c. Ele não o comeu (Pt.)
He not it= ate
'He did not eat it'

Non-standard varieties present a more complex picture, as the negative marker can occur in front of subject clitics, as in Veneto dialects (cf. §47.2.2):

- (10) No i vien (Vnz.)
not SCL.3PL= come
'They are not coming'

In other dialects, such as Florentine, the negation variably occurs after some subject clitics but not others, generally before the second person (11a) but after the third person (11b):

- (11) a. Un tu mangi (Flo.)
not SCL.2SG= eat
'You do not eat'
b. La un mangia (Flo.)
SCL.3FSG= not eats
'She does not eat'

Friulian dialects which have two subject clitics in the third person often display the negative marker in between the two (12a), whereas in other varieties the negative marker alternates with the lower subject clitic (12b,c):

(12) A no-l ven (San Michele al Tagliamento, Ven.)
 SCL.3SG not=SCL.SG comes
 ‘He is not coming’

(13) a. O vin mangiat
 SCL.1PL= we.have eaten
 (San Michele al Tagliamento, Frl.)
 ‘We have eaten’

b. No vin mangiat
 not we.have eaten
 (San Michele al Tagliamento, Frl.)
 ‘We have not eaten’

Some Ligurian dialects (Parry 1997b:17) display a negative marker after first and second person, but before third person, object clitics.

(14) a. Un la sent nent (Cairo Montenotte, Lig.)
 SCL.3FSG.not her= hears not
 ‘He does not hear her’

b. U min sent nent (Cairo Montenotte, Lig.)
 SCL.3MG= me.not hear not
 ‘He does not hear me’

As noted by Parry (1997b) and Zanuttini (1997), the fact that some Ligurian dialects (15) display two preverbal negative morphemes shows that there are actually two types of preverbal negative marker, which Zanuttini analyses as a clitic and a non-clitic, respectively. The same is true of some Raeto-Romance varieties like Gardenese and Marebbano, witness the examples in (16) from S. Vigilio de Marebbe.

(15) In ten dan nent u libr
 SCL.3MPL.not= to.you.not= give not the book
 (Cossèria, Lig.)
 ‘They do not give you the book’

(16) I mituns ne no vègn nia encò
 the boys not not come not today
 (S. Vigilio di Marebbe)
 ‘The boys are not coming today’

In addition to the preverbal negative marker, several varieties have developed a postverbal negative marker. The presence versus absence of an obligatory postverbal negative marker appears to split the Romance domain into two: French and the majority of northern Italian dialects (except the eastern area) display an obligatory postverbal negative marker, while the rest of the Romance domain does not. Furthermore, some varieties such as Occitan, Quebecois, Valdôtain, Surselvan, Piedmontese, and Lombard

have lost the preverbal negative marker, retaining only the postverbal marker which developed later. The same trend is also clearly visible in colloquial spoken French, where the preverbal negator is generally absent.

Several varieties have developed a non-obligatory postverbal negative marker which is generally associated with the specific pragmatic effect of negating a conversational implicature and not only the sentence itself (see Cinque 1976 for Italian, and Espinal 1991 for Catalan). This is generally defined, following Cinque (1976), as ‘presuppositional negation’. In colloquial Italian of the north and Florence (as well as in Florentine dialect), the difference between (17a) and (17c) is that the latter can only be used as a reaction to a specific presuppositional statement such as that in (17b):

(17) a. Non piove (NIt.)
 not rains
 ‘It is not raining’

b. Se vieni, porta l’ ombrello (NIt.)
 if you.come, take the umbrella
 ‘If you are coming, take your umbrella’

c. Non piove mica (NIt.)
 not rains not
 ‘It’s not raining’

The same type of so-called ‘presuppositional negation’ is found in preverbal position in central and southern Italian varieties, with the interesting difference that the element *mica* is realized preverbally and the preverbal negative marker *non* disappears, as is usually the case when an *n*-word appears in preverbal position.

(18) a. Mica ti ho detto di uscire (C/SIt.)
 not to.you= I.have told of exit.INF

b. Non ti ho mica detto di uscire (NIt.)
 not to.you= I.have not told of exit.INF
 ‘I did not tell you to get out’

Some southern dialects use other preverbal adverbs to convey this meaning: as noted by Ledgeway and Lombardi (2005), for instance, Calabrian varieties use preverbal *mancu*, e.g. *mancu chiova* ‘in any case, it’s not raining’, while postverbal *mancu* is interpreted as ‘not even’ (e.g. *un chiova mancu* ‘it is not even raining’). Evidently, this type of presuppositional negative marker is only possible in sentences where the conversational implicature can be negated, hence, not in *wh*-questions or in embedded clauses such as infinitival or relative clauses (Cinque 1976). The problem with this type of negative marker is that there

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are several northeastern Italian dialects where it is used in contexts not found in colloquial standard Italian (for instance *wh*-interrogatives and relative and infinitival clauses), but where it is still not obligatory as it is in languages like French. This appears to represent a further development of postverbal negative markers in the direction of French, although the postverbal negative marker has not become obligatory. At present there is no systematic study on the spread of postverbal negation from the presuppositional value of the colloquial Italian type to the obligatory French type; but this topic is clearly important in further defining and refining the stages of Jespersen cycle (cf. §51.2.1).

If we also include this type of presuppositional negation and, more generally, non-obligatory postverbal negative markers like colloquial northern Italian *niente* lit. ‘nothing’ and Portuguese sentence-final *não* ‘no(t)’, then the number of varieties that can be said to display discontinuous negation is much larger than that noted above. Cases like the following are generally also only used in specific contexts, though they have generalized as the standard sentential negative marker in northern Italian dialects such as Lombard varieties:

- (19) Non mi piace niente, questa storia (coll. NIt.)
 Not to.me= pleases nothing this story
 ‘I do not like this story at all’
- (20) Eu não quero o bolo não (Pt.)
 I not want the cake not
 ‘I do not want the cake’

Cases like (20) are particularly frequent in Brazilian Portuguese, where however the preverbal negative marker is also used as the standard preverbal sentential negation.

51.2.1 Jespersen’s Cycle

Analysing the development of the negative marker in French, Jespersen (1917) observes that the sentential negative marker undergoes a sort of cycle, whose first stage is a single negative marker which is used in all contexts, including contexts of emphasis involving the negation itself (cf. also §18.4.3.2). The standard case exemplified in diachronic grammars is the following:

- (21) a. Je ne dis (OFr.)
 I not say
 b. Je ne dis pas (ModFr.)
 I not say not

- c. Je dis pas (coll. Fr.)
 I say not
 ‘I do not say’

Notice however, that old French was already at a stage where postverbal negative markers like *mie* (lit. ‘crumb’), *pas* (lit. ‘step’), *point* (‘stitch’) could optionally (probably with some additional meaning such as the presuppositional value noted above for Italian *mica*) be added already at this stage.

- (22) Mais a bataille n’ oset il pas
 but to battle not dares he= not
 venir (OFr., *Canç Guillelme* 81; ToLo 6, 411,29)
 come.INF
 ‘He does not venture to come to the battle’
- (23) N’ est la raïne Ysolt ta amie? –
 not is the queen Ysolt your friend Yes
 Oïl, par foi, je nel ni mie.
 by faith I not.it= deny not
 (OFr., *FolieTristOx*, 386-7)
 ‘Isn’t the queen Ysolt your friend? Yes, truly, she is and I don’t hide it.’

Jespersen argues that the reason for the start of the cycle lies in the fact that the original negative marker becomes increasingly weaker, both phonologically and semantically (e.g. it can no longer bear emphasis), which gives rise to the presence of a ‘reinforcer’ that is at first only used in cases of emphatic negation and which in Romance is generally located in an adverbial position after the inflected verb (or auxiliary). Arguably, this is the stage at which Catalan, Portuguese, and colloquial northern Italian are at present, where the original negative marker is ‘reinforced’ only in some emphatic contexts like that of presuppositional negation.

According to Jespersen’s original analysis, the second stage of the cycle is represented by modern standard French, where both the preverbal and the postverbal negative markers are obligatory. The last step of the cycle occurs where only the original preverbal negative marker is eliminated and only the postverbal reinforcer takes on the role of the real negative marker. This stage is represented by spoken French, Québécois French, several French-based creole languages (like Haitian creole), and northwestern Italian dialects where the preverbal negative marker is no longer used. According to Jespersen, at this point the cycle can start again, which means that, in principle, we should find Romance varieties where the postverbal negative marker needs an additional element in cases of emphasis. This is actually the case for Piedmontese, which has a single postverbal negative marker *nen* and presents cases in which presuppositional negation is expressed by *pa nen* (Zanuttini 1997).

The discovery of the negative cycle as a possible universal path of evolution has led many to investigate the stages of the cycle in greater detail and the reason why, among other adverbials, only negation seems to be so unstable. Van der Auwera (2009) and van Gelderen (2011) divide the cycle into at least five stages instead of the original three in order to account for the progressive spreading of the ‘additional’ negative marker from emphatic context to obligatory use and, finally, to substitution of the original negative marker. Although neither author talks about these data, northeastern Italian varieties which also display a postverbal negative marker in non-presuppositional contexts, provide a further intermediate stage. The problem of how many stages the cycle entails probably conceals a deeper one: the type and number of factors that can favour or hinder the spreading of the additional negative marker. Probably the doubling of a negative marker through an additional element starts out in contexts where special emphasis is required on the negation itself; but apart from the theoretical problem of defining exactly what emphasis is in the various components of the grammar, there are still too many unidentified factors that might play a role in the doubling mechanism. For instance, in addition to the information structure meaning originally discovered by Cinque (1976), Penello and Pescarini (2008) further identify focus and modality as two factors that might play a role in the progressive spread of the postverbal element *miga* in northern Italian dialects.

Regarding the triggering factors behind the cycle, Jespersen proposed that the process is due to phonetic erosion of the original negative marker. By contrast, van Gelderen (2011), van der Auwera (2009; 2011), and Breitbarth (2012) claim that the start of the doubling process lies either in the semantic/pragmatic component (van der Auwera) or in a general economy principle in the syntax, which requires the projection of the smallest category possible (van Gelderen). This economy principle is responsible for a general trend of reanalysis of complex items (including negation) into heads and, in turn, into clitics and, finally, into bound morphemes, which at the end of the process disappear entirely. However, even within this general framework there are still some facts which require explanation if Jespersen’s Cycle is to receive a principled explanation. For instance, the process has developed very rapidly in Germanic but considerably more slowly in French (Martineau and Vinet 2005), but has remained at the same stage as that found in old French in several varieties (e.g. Italian, Spanish) since the medieval period. The latter varieties highlight how there must be several factors which either favour (or even enforce) or otherwise block the process, since on the basis of economy considerations we should expect the pace of the change to be stable across languages. Another unexplained

fact concerns the observation that no known Romance variety shows obligatory doubling of a postverbal negative marker. Although it might be argued that no Romance language has yet advanced so far given that, for instance, standard French still retains the preverbal negative marker, demonstrating that the loss of *ne* in French must be relatively recent (Zeijlstra 2004), this reasoning cannot be applied to northern Italian varieties. For example, we know that the preverbal negative marker had already been lost at the beginning of the seventeenth century in Piedmontese (Parry 1997b), but no further development of the negative marker has been attested in the following periods and in contemporary Piedmontese. This might suggest that only certain types of negative marker undergo Jespersen’s Cycle, namely those located in the higher portion of the sentential core (cf. §31.2.2.). If none of the new negative markers created by the negative cycle is located in this higher clausal area, then Jespersen’s Cycle cannot apply. Since explaining Jespersen’s Cycle is not the purpose of this chapter, we simply conclude that (a) Jespersen’s Cycle seems to be a possible universal development of negative markers and (b) it must be triggered by a complex cluster of properties not always present in Romance, and which do not involve only a phonological, semantic, or morphosyntactic process of reduction, but must apply at all levels of the grammar. Furthermore, as the cycle has been completed in some varieties (e.g. colloquial French, Occitan, Québécois, Piedmontese), but has never started in others (notably southern Italian dialects, Romanian, and Spanish) or has remained stable at the first stage of development in others (e.g. Italian; cf. Zanuttini 2010), we are forced to conclude that some Romance languages but not others have independent properties that have accelerated, slowed down, or blocked Jespersen’s Cycle.

51.2.2 Postverbal negators

51.2.2.1 Position of postverbal negators

We have seen above that the order of the preverbal negative marker with respect to subject and object clitics has led some authors to propose that there are two distinct positions for the preverbal negative marker, an independent head position and a clitic position which may even be simultaneously lexicalized. By contrast, postverbal negative markers can occupy several different positions with respect to the non-finite verb form and other (e.g. aspectual and modal) adverbs located in the lower portion of the sentential core (cf. §31.2.2.1). On the basis of Cinque’s (1999) universal hierarchy of adverbs (cf. §30.2.2), Zanuttini shows that there are at least three different positions for postverbal negative markers in the low clausal area:

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- (i) A position before adverbs like ‘already’, ‘no longer’, and ‘always’, which is found with Fr. *pas*, Vaô./Pie. *pa*, Mil. *minga*, It. *mica*, and more generally with all negative markers deriving from items originally indicating a very small quantity (‘minimizers’).
- (ii) A position after adverbs like ‘already’ but higher than ‘no longer’ and ‘always’, as in the case of Pie. *nen*. The same type of position seems to be used by those central Raeto-Romance dialects like Badiot that use the item *nia* as postverbal negation (in addition to the preverbal *ne*).
- (iii) A position after all adverbs, including ‘no longer’ and ‘always’, which is the one found with Mil. *no*, Trn. *no*, and Pt. *não*.

Consequently, the concept ‘postverbal’ negative marker does not single out one position or even one etymological type in the clause, but several, ultimately only highlighting the fact that all these negators are located after the inflected verb in the lower portion of the clause.

51.2.2.2 Form of postverbal negators

All postverbal negators have developed (or are still developing) in accordance with Jespersen’s Cycle, and all represent therefore innovations. This explains why postverbal negators display such a variety of positions, and why they appear to have different etymological sources. However, upon closer examination the apparently wide spectrum of etymological sources actually reduces to three possible types of negators: (a) those coming from elements originally indicating a very small quantity, which most probably first developed into polarity items and then negative polarity items before becoming negative markers (for It. *mica*, see Garzonio 2010). Within this class we find items such as Fr. *pas* (< ‘step’), Eml. *brisa* (< ‘crumb’), NLmb. *buca* (< ‘morsel’), Flo. *punto* (‘stitch’), which are originally all ‘minimizers’ expressing some sort of scalar negation. Van der Auwera (2009; 2010) supposes that this class of negative markers must have evolved out of emphatic constructions such as ‘he did not move a step’, which were originally confined to only specific verbs (e.g. verbs of movement). However, old French does not provide any textual attestation for this stage, with the negative marker *pas* (lit. ‘step’) having already evolved into the first stage of postverbal negation in the medieval period.

The second possible source of new negative markers comes from elements corresponding to the n-word meaning ‘nothing’ such as Pie. *nen*, Prv. *ren*, RæR. *nia*. At least in Romance there is no other n-word which has been turned into the actual negative marker in the course of Jespersen’s Cycle. The grammaticalization of this class of elements has most

probably followed a different path with respect to that followed by the minimizer class which passed through a stage in which they were presuppositional negators (cf. discussion of It. *mica* in 17a,c). The possibility of using the element ‘nothing’ in order to emphatically negate a sentence is found in old Florentine, as well as today in several non-standard Italian varieties and colloquial northern regional Italian with a subclass of activity verbs (see 19 above for further examples):

- (24) Non ho dormito niente (coll. Ven.It.)
 not I.have slept nothing
 ‘I did not sleep at all’

Bayer (2009) points out that the same type of emphatic cases can be found in the history of Germanic, noting that these constructions are only possible when there is no direct object realized, which leads him to claim that this type of adverbial negation starts out in the empty object position of intransitive verbs (cf. also Breitbarth 2012). In Romance, however, the class of verbs through which the n-word ‘nothing’ becomes a negative marker is rather related to aspectual features of the verb (see below on the relation between negation and aspect), inasmuch as the construction is very often found with psych-verbs of the *piacere* ‘to please’ type, which are not intransitive verbs. This is further demonstrated by the fact that in old Tuscan, the emphatic negation *niente* is indeed compatible with direct objects:

- (25) Molte cose dissero di che non mostrano
 Many things they.said of that not show.3PL
niente la veritade
 nothing the truth
 (OTsc., Anon., *Tesoro Volg.* 3.4)
 ‘They said several things, which do not show the truth at all’

The third type of new negators is found in Trentino, Lombard, and European and (especially) Brazilian varieties of Portuguese, where it occurs clause-finally and is generally related to focus. This etymological class of sentence negators is the same as that which can also occur as pro-sentence negation or at the very beginning of the sentence (cf. §51.2.1):

- (26) a. Andasti al cinema? / Foste ao
 you.went to.the cinema you.went to.the
 cinema? (It./Pt.)
 cinema
 ‘Did you go to the cinema?’
 b. No /Não. (It./Pt.)
 no no(t)
 ‘No’

- (27) a. Non lo mangio no! (coll. It.)
 not it= eat no
 ‘No way will I eat it!’
- b. Agora não entra mais não (BrPt)
 now not enter.3SG more NEG
 ‘Nobody else comes in any more’

Brazilian Portuguese and Lombard dialects are even more advanced than Trentino and European Portuguese in also admitting the postverbal negative marker alone:

- (28) a. El lupo el va no (Mil)
 the wolf he goes not
 ‘The wolf does not go’
- b. Tenho não. (BrPt.)
 I.have neg
 ‘I don’t have’

Here too, the pre-theoretical notion of emphasis also plays a crucial role in defining the first contexts in which this type of negation must have surfaced (or still surfaces in the case of European Portuguese) before becoming the usual negator. We therefore conclude that van der Auwera’s intuition of linking the start of Jespersen’s Cycle to emphasis is correct. All three classes of postverbal negator occur in different emphatic contexts, the first being related to a sort of quantitative evaluation (possibly to be formalized as scalar negation), while the second starts out within a special class of intransitive activity verbs (such as ‘sleep’, ‘work’) or psych-verbs such as ‘please’ and is probably related to some aspectual feature, while the last one is more connected to the syntactic notion of focus (possibly with its exhaustivity component). If different types of emphasis are one of the factors favouring the start of Jespersen’s Cycle, then it clearly must be made more precise in syntactic and semantic terms before it can be used to explain the variety of possible new negators that arise as a consequence of it (on the connection between negation and focus, see below).

One further issue concerns the link between the three etymological classes and the three possible positions for new postverbal negators. One might be tempted to propose that each etymological class corresponds to one possible position in Zanuttini’s (1997) syntactic hierarchy of postverbal negators examined in §51.2.2.1. Actually, it is true that the minimizer class of negators is generally found in position (1) among the three described above for postverbal negators, the quantifier class in position (2), and the presentence class in position (3). However, Manzini and Savoia (2012) report several exceptions to this generalization involving all three classes, although these might be

explained by assuming negator movement from a syntactically very low underlying position to a higher superficial one.

51.2.3 New preverbal negative markers

One aspect of the substitution of the original negator *non* with other elements that has gone almost unnoticed in the Romance literature is the fact that varieties that have not been through the postverbal ‘French-type’ stage of Jespersen’s Cycle have also developed in some cases new negative markers. One rather astonishing case is the southern Italian dialect of Rionero in Vulture, a Basilicatense variety, which has entirely lost the original preverbal negative marker *non* and substituted it with the preverbal negative marker *manco* (< ‘not even’), also possible in several Italian central and southern varieties (as well as in colloquial Italian):

- (29) a. Paol mag e mac s’ n’ vai
 Paolo eats and not self= not goes
 (Rionero in Vulture, Basilicata)
 ‘Paolo is going to eat and will not leave’
- b. Ii pens ca Gianni manc vene
 I think that Gianni not comes
 (Rionero in Vulture, Basilicata)
 ‘I think that Gianni does not come’
- c. Manc o piglià (Rionero in Vulture, Basilicata)
 Not it= take.INF
 ‘Don’t take it!’

This dialect shows that Jespersen’s Cycle might not in principle be related to the substitution of a syntactically high negation with a syntactically lower negation. It might be that *manco* is preverbal because the verb actually raises lower in this dialect (see Ledgeway and Lombardi 2005). The preverbal element *manco* is generally used in southern dialects as an emphatic adverb in contexts similar to those of minimizer negation described above.

In Sicilian, another new preverbal negator has evolved out of a cleft; at present it has not substituted the original *nun/un* ‘not’ (< *NON*), but is used only in emphatic contexts, and more precisely those involving presuppositional negation where standard Italian displays *mica*. Its form is *neca* and it is clearly derived from *nun-è-ca* (lit. ‘not-it.is-that’), i.e. the main clause of a cleft construction. The fact that the verb can no longer be inflected proves that the sequence *neca* is no longer analysed by speakers as a cleft, but has become an adverb similar to others (cf. Cruschina 2011) such as *parica* ‘allegedly’ (lit. ‘seems.that’), *capacica* ‘maybe’

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(lit. ‘capable.that’). This type of development is reported by typologists to be rather frequent in the languages of the world for negation as well as for other types of sentential markers (see e.g. French cleft constructions in questions, which in some cases have to be analysed as monoclausal constructions with the original cleft sitting in the left periphery of the apparently embedded clause; Munaro and Pollock 2005).

Once again, some sort of emphatic strategy seems to be at work here, given that in colloquial Italian negative cleft constructions are used to convey particular stress in a given context stating that the reason for a certain event is not the one that the interlocutor might have said or implied.

- (30) Non è che non voglio venire, è che
not is that not I.want come.INF is that
ho mal di testa (It.)
I.have ache of head
‘It’s not really that I don’t want to come, the problem
is that I have a headache’

Assuming *neca* to be an adverb, it might be the only case in Romance to conform to the so-called ‘neg-first principle’, which assumes that negation has to be expressed in front of the proposition (as in logic). Evidently, if the neg-first principle really applied to natural languages, all languages should have a sentence-initial negator, which is clearly not true; moreover the sheer existence of Jespersen’s Cycle as described above shows that the neg-first principle cannot be universal. However, what southern Italian dialects show is not only that Jespersen’s Cycle is to be interpreted as a structurally low negation substituting for a higher one, but that the substitution can also occur by means of a syntactically similar or even structurally higher type of negative marker.

51.3 Interaction between negation and verbal forms

51.3.1 Negation and modality

It is well known that negation interacts with other sentence operators like modality. There are languages that mark this interaction by changing the form of the negative marker such as modern Greek or Latin.

In Romance, the best-known case of interaction between sentential negation and a verb form is the case of so-called ‘true’ imperatives. Most Romance varieties

that have an exclusively preverbal negative marker (rather than discontinuous negation of the standard French type) do not allow true imperative forms (i.e. those that are morphologically marked exclusively as imperatives; cf. 31a,d,g) to combine with the preverbal negative marker (cf. 31b,e,h), whereas this is not true of suppletive imperative forms (cf. 31c,f,i).

- (31) a. ¡Habla! (Sp.)
talk.IMP.2SG
‘Talk!’
b. **¡No habla! (Sp.)
not talk.IMP.2SG
c. ¡No hables! (Sp.)
not talk.SBJV.2SG
‘Don’t talk!’
d. Parla! (Cat.)
talk.IMP.2SG
‘Talk!’
e. **No parla! (Cat.)
not talk.IMP.2SG
f. No parlis! (Cat.)
not talk.SBJV.2SG
‘Don’t talk!’
g. Kanta! (Srd.)
sing.IMP.2SG
‘Sing!’
h. **Non kanta! (Srd.)
not sing.IMP.2SG
i. Non kantes! (Srd.)
not sing.SBJV.2SG
‘Don’t sing!’


Italian and French varieties with either discontinuous negation or postverbal negation do not display this incompatibility:

- (32) a. Parla. (Pie.)
talk.IMP2SG
‘Talk!’
b. Parla nen! (Pie.)
talk.IMP2SG not
‘Do not talk!’
c. Ne parle pas! (Fr.)
not talk.IMP2SG not
‘Do not talk!’

- d. Nu l' houke nin! (Wal.)
 not him= call.IMP2SG not
 'Do not call him!'

The relevant empirical generalization can be formulated as follows:

- (33) In Romance, preverbal negative markers do not co-occur with true imperatives, postverbal negative markers do. (Zanuttini 1997:111)

One fact that remains unexplained is why this generalization seems to apply robustly across Romance, while the type of verb form that is used as a substitute for true imperatives in the case of negation varies so greatly across Romance: while Spanish, Catalan, and Sardinian generally use a subjunctive form (cf. ,i), Italian dialects use an infinitival or an indicative form or, in the case of some southern Italian dialects (Pugliese, Calabrian, and Basilicata), a gerund:

- (34) Non facenno! (Pgl.)
 not doing
 'Do not do it!'

One further interesting twist is that some varieties not only substitute the form of the verb when the negative marker is present, but also add an auxiliary form, which has been analysed by Kayne (1992) as a modal auxiliary which is also syntactically present (though lexically null) in those varieties (e.g. Italian) that use either the infinitive or the gerund to create a negative imperative:

- (35) a. No sta parlare! (Vnz)
 not stay.INF talk.INF
 'Don't talk!'
 b. Non zi facennø! (Pgl.)
 not go.INF doing
 'Don't do it!'

Whatever the correct analysis, it is interesting to note that there are exceptions to the generalization in both directions. As noted by Vai (1996), the Raeto-Romance variety of Cortina d'Ampezzo allows a true imperative form to co-occur with a preverbal negative marker:

- (36) a. Laora! (Cortina d'Ampezzo)
 work.IMP2SG 'Work!'
 b. No laora! (Cortina d'Ampezzo)
 not work.IMP2SG 'Don't work!'

However, the reason why this looks like an exception to the generalization might be related to the type of negative marker *no* used here, which in this dialect could be of the pro-sentence type and not of the usual preverbal type. Indeed, there are other Raeto-Romance varieties (although considerably less in number) that, instead of changing the form of the imperative verb, change the form of the negative marker:

- (37) a. Maria ne vagn nia a ciasa
 Maria not comes not to home
 (S. Leonardo di Badia)
 'Maria is not coming home'
 b. **Ne (ma) l li nia (S. Leonardo di Badia)
 not ma it= read not
 c. No ma l li (S. Leonardo di Badia)
 not ma it= read
 'Do not read it!'

While the usual negative marker is a discontinuous form with preverbal *ne* and postverbal *nia* (37a), imperative forms display a negative marker *no* (37c), identical to the pro-sentence negation.

Colloquial Romanian also allows co-occurrence of preverbal negative markers with true imperatives when the latter are uniquely identifiable as imperatives; this is the case with the 2SG *du* 'lead!', *zi* 'say!', *fă* 'do!' which in colloquial registers can be directly negated, e.g. *Nu fă!* 'not do.IMP.2SG' (cf. prescribed *Nu face!* lit. 'not do.INF'). This is not the case with imperative forms which, while distinct from the second person singular indicative/subjunctive, are identical to the third person singular present indicative: ***Nu cântă!* 'not sing.IMP2SG' (cf. *Nu cânta!* 'not sing.INF'). A further complication is modern dialectal (e.g. Oltenian) forms which have special second person plural imperative forms uniquely associated with the negative: *Cântați!* 'sing.IMP2PL', but *Nu cântareți!* 'not sing.NEG.IMPL2PL'.

Another exception to the generalization discussed by Zanuttini (1997) is found in central Occitan, which has an exclusively postverbal negative marker but which still requires a change from the true imperative to a subjunctive form. The AIS maps also show that this is also true for some Emilian varieties (cf. Benincà and Poletto 2005):

- (38) a. Canta! (COcc.)
 sing
 'Sing!'
 b. Cantes pas! (COcc.)
 sing not
 'Do not sing!'

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- c. **Canta pas! (COcc.)
sing not
- (39) a. Movat! (Albinea, Eml.)
move
'Move!'
- b. **Movat mia (Albinea, Eml.)
move not
- c. Movrat mia (Albinea, Eml.)
move.INF not
'Do not move!'

Benincà and Poletto (2005) propose that in this case there is a silent negative preverbal element, which is incompatible with the true imperative form; but this requires a distinction among preverbal negative markers occurring in discontinuous negation, of which some (as in French) are compatible with true imperatives and others, like the null one in central Occitan and Emilian, are not. Given, as noted above, that there are two types of preverbal negative marker, this hypothesis appears plausible, but still awaits further empirical proof. One further set of facts showing that Romance is also sensitive to the interaction between negation and modality has to do with the development of postverbal negative markers. Zeli (1968) notices that in Ticino Lombard varieties, where the postverbal negative marker has either already spread or is still spreading, there are still some contexts where this is not the case, namely embedded subjunctive clauses. The same observation is made by Martineau and Vinet (2005) for the history of French. At present, this is no more than a hint at one of the factors that might block or slow down the spreading of postverbal negative markers which requires further investigation.

Another phenomenon that shows that modality and negation interact is the phenomenon found in southern Calabrian dialects (Damonte 2008), where the preverbal negative marker interacts with the sentential particle *mu* which signals subjunctive-type modality. The modal particle and the preverbal negator cluster together forming the complex item *nommu* (with variant *nommi/nomma*). Damonte analyses this clustering of the two elements as a result of the negative marker raising to incorporate into the left of the modal particle situated in the lower portion of the left periphery:

- (40) Eu speru nommu lejunu a to littera (Locri, Cal.)
I hope not.SBJV.MRK read the your letter
'I hope they will not read your letter'

As arguments in favour of this idea, Damonte notes that the form of the negative marker attached to the modal

particle is different from the usual one that occurs within the sentential core:

- (41) a. On ava zitedi (Monasterace, Cal.)
not have children
'There aren't any children'
- b. Dommu u partiu? (Monasterace, Cal.)
NEG.SBJV.MRK SBJV.MRK left?
'Could he not have left?'

Notice that these dialects actually have two modal markers, one which has to cluster with the negation in the left periphery and the other lower down in the sentential core that does not. Furthermore, if Damonte's analysis is correct, at least some Romance varieties have retained the possibility of negation occurring in the left periphery of the clause like Latin negative elements such as *ne* 'in order that not'. This strengthens the observations made above concerning the new Sicilian negative adverb *neca* which, following Cruschina's (2011) analysis, is also located in the left periphery of the clause.

51.3.2 Negation and aspect

There are apparently no cases of interaction between the preverbal negative marker and aspect, which is in itself an interesting observation, because it seems to suggest that the aspectual domain is 'too far' low in the clause to be able to interact with preverbal negation. However, postverbal negative markers can be sensitive to aspect, at least in their first phase of development (i.e. when they only double the preverbal negative marker in specific contexts). For instance, as noted above, the type of postverbal negative marker deriving from the quantifier meaning 'nothing' can be observed to occur in some northern Italian varieties at its first stage of development only when the verb is an activity verb, but not when it is an accomplishment. The distinction is particularly clear in cases where an activity verb (cf. 42a) can be turned into an accomplishment (cf. 42b) by means of adding a preposition in a way similar to English phrasal verbs:

- (42) a. No la salta gnente, sta ranetta de
not SCL.FSG= jumps nothing, this frog of
carta (Vnz.)
paper
'This paper frog does not jump at all'
- b. **No la salta zo gnente, sta
not SCL.FSG= jumps down nothing, this
ranetta de carta (Vnz.)
frog of paper

Similar facts are found when the activity verb is turned into an inchoative verb:

- (43) a. No go dormio gnente (Vnz.)
not I.have slept nothing
'I did not sleep at all'
- b. **No me go indormesà gnente (Vnz.)
not me I.have fallen.asleep nothing
'I did not fall asleep at all'

This might indicate that the reason why this type of postverbal negative marker is excluded is that it cannot be connected to any event that takes place incrementally. This type of effect is clearly not found in those varieties that display a postverbal negative marker as the only negator (neither Pie. *nen*, nor the Ræto-Romance varieties that have *nia* as the only negator show any sensitivity to aspect), nor in those languages that have developed a postverbal negative marker of a different etymological origin (such as minimizers or the pro-sentence negator). However, one further fact that leads us to suspect that there might be much more to discover concerning the relation between negation and aspect is a strange phenomenon found in northern Italian dialects which show agreement of aspectual adverbs if a negation is present in the clause: in the Veneto the positive adverb *ancora* 'still, yet' becomes *gnancora* if the clause is negative. The phenomenon has 'leaked' into the regional Italian of the area (especially among younger speakers), where *neancora* is generally used in negative clauses. Another similar case is provided by Piedmontese where the element *nen/nin* is in some varieties attached to the adverb 'any longer' (viz. *pi(ù)*), variously yielding *pinin/pinen/piùgn*.

Also relevant here is the phenomenon described by D'Alessandro (2010) for the eastern Abruzzese dialects of Arielli, where the adverb *ancora* 'still, yet' acquires a negative meaning when placed at the beginning of the clause in conjunction with an imperfective verb form ('you are not eating yet' > 'you have not eaten yet'):

- (44) Ancora magni (Arielli, Abr.)
still you.eat
'You have not eaten yet'

51.4 N-words and negative concord

Another phenomenon that has attracted much attention is so-called 'negative concord'. The term refers to the fact that when there are several negative elements inside a single clause, the various negations can either cancel each other

out, or result in one single semantic negation: in this latter case, we have a negative concord language. The vast majority of the Romance languages are negative concord languages of some sort, although the syntactic conditions under which negative concord apply are different depending on the language and on the negative elements involved. There are three logical possible cases of negative concord:

- (a) Two or more negative markers occur in the same clause. In this case Romance languages are generally negative concord languages and no variation is found. For instance, in French the two negative morphemes *ne* and *pas* constitute a single semantic negation, in Italian *non* and *mica* do the same; the same is true of Cat. *no* and *pas*, of the cases in Portuguese where the preverbal *não* is doubled by the sentence final *não*, and of northern Italian dialects like Emilian varieties which have a pre- and a postverbal negative marker.
- (b) The second case is when a negative marker occurs in the same clause with one or more n-words, and still the meaning is the one of a single semantic negation as in the following examples:

- (45) a. *Personne n' est venu* (Fr.)
no.one not is come
'Nobody has come'
- b. *Je n' ai vu personne* (Fr.)
I not have seen nobody
'I did not see anybody'

Negative concord languages are split into at least two types (Zeijlstra 2004): strict negative concord languages, which require the presence of a sentential negative marker irrespective of the position of the n-word in the sentence, and non-strict negative concord languages, which limit the presence of the sentential negative marker to cases where the n-word is in postverbal position. In Romance, both types are attested: Romanian is a strict negative concord language (like Slavonic), while Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish are non-strict negative concord languages.

- (46) a. *Nessuno (**non) ha telefonato* (It.)
no.one (not) has phoned
'No one called'
- b. *Nadie (**no) comió* (Sp.)
no.one (not) ate
'No one ate'
- c. *Ninguém (**nã) saiu* (Pt.)
no.one (not) went.out
'No one went out'

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- d. Neune (**non) est vennitu (Srd.)
 no.one (not) is come
 ‘No one has come’

One interesting generalization is that all languages and varieties that have a preverbal negative marker display some sort of negative concord, in that negative concord of some sort is always obligatory with preverbal negative markers. For instance, French has negative concord with both preverbal and postverbal n-words (i.e. it should be considered as a strict negative concord language), but only with the negative marker *ne*, not with the second negative morpheme *pas* (cf. 45).

If the postverbal negative marker *pas* is inserted, it triggers a double negation reading (see Déprez 1999).

- (47) *Personne n’ est pas venu* (Fr.)
 no.one not is not come
 ‘For no one it is the case that they did not come
 (= everyone came)’

This is however not true of all French-lexifier creoles; for instance, Haitian, which only has *pas* as a negative marker, obligatorily requires negative concord with *pas* (see DeGraff 1993; Déprez 1999).

- (48) a. *Mo te wa pe(r)son* (Lou.)
 I PRT. see no.one
 ‘I did not see anyone’

- b. *A(r)jen gruj pa* (Lou.)
 nothing moves not
 ‘Nothing moves’

- (49) a. *Pa fer narien* (Sey.)
 not do nothing
 ‘It does not matter’

- b. *Person pa kontan mua* (Sey.)
 nobody not loves me
 ‘Nobody loves me’

- (50) a. *M pa we pèsonn* (Hai.)
 I not see no.one
 ‘I did not see anyone’

- b. *Pèsonn pa rele ’m* (Hai.)
 nobody not called me
 ‘Nobody called me’

This does not seem to be related to the fact that *pas* is the only negator in these creoles: Mauritian creole also still has some contexts in which a preverbal negative marker occurs, but the result of a combination between *pas* and n-words is

still negative concord and not a double negation reading. Summing up: if a Romance language has a preverbal negative marker, this must co-occur with a n-word at least when the n-word is located in postverbal position (Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese); Romance and some northern Italian dialects such as Venetian require the presence of the negative marker also when the n-word is preverbal. The Venetian area is a very interesting field of investigation, as it seems that strict negative concord is spreading through neighbouring varieties and is favoured by the presence of either a postverbal n-word or the adverb *più* ‘any more’.

If a language has a postverbal negative marker, this can either induce a double negation reading (as in French) or negative concord (as in French creoles), depending on the language. We conclude that pre- and postverbal negative markers do not always behave the same with respect to the phenomenon of negative concord.

- (c) The third case in which there are two negative elements in the same clause occurs when two or more n-words are present in the same clause, irrespective of their position, and when no negative marker is present, as in the following cases:

- (51) *Nessuno ha visto niente* (It.)
 nobody has seen nothing
 ‘Nobody has seen anything’

This case is rather stable in Romance, inasmuch as the combination of two n-words never yields a reading of double negation, as happens in other languages (in which case the sentence is interpreted as positive), but always a negative concord reading in which all negative elements are ‘clustered’ into a single negation.

One interesting fact is that n-words can also be found in some special contexts without a negative meaning, for instance in yes/no questions in Italian and Spanish and in rhetorical wh-questions in Spanish:

- (52) *Hai visto nessuno?* (It.)
 you.have seen nobody?
 ‘Have you seen anybody?’

- (53) *¿Cuàndo me has regalado nada?* (Sp.)
 when me= you.have given nothing?
 ‘When did you give anything to me?’

Portuguese allows for n-words to occur in non-negative contexts in comparative clauses (the superlative usage seems to be out of fashion):

- (54) *Ele fala melhor (do) que ninguém* (Pt.)
 he speaks better of.the that no.one
 ‘He speaks better than anyone’

Corblin and Tovená (2001) list the possible contexts where *n*-words can have a non-negative meaning: clauses introduced by ‘before’, comparative and superlative clauses, conditional antecedents, yes/no questions, rhetorical *wh*-questions, and complement clauses of negative predicates such as ‘deny’. They also note that the distribution varies across languages, and that there is a general tendency to increasingly reduce these cases across Romance.

The fact that *n*-words sometimes have no real negative meaning also finds a parallel in the fact that negative markers can also occur in non-negative contexts, i.e. where they do not really have a negative meaning. This is the case of Italian exclamative clauses, comparative clauses, and temporal clauses with *finché* ‘until’:

- (55) a. Vedessi cosa non mangia! (It.)
see.IPF.SBJV.2SG what not eats!
 ‘You should see the things he eats!’
- b. È più bello di quanto non
it.is more beautiful of how.much not
mi aspettassi (It.)
me = I.expected.SBJV
 ‘It is nicer than I thought’
- c. Ti aspetto finché non vieni (It.)
you= I.wait until not you.come.IND
 ‘I will wait for you until you come’

All these cases have been dubbed ‘expletive negation’, insofar as it is not clear what the actual semantic contribution of the negative marker is in these sentences.

51.5. Negation and focus

It has frequently been noted in the sections above that the development of new negative markers is related to emphasis, which is not a well-defined syntactic or semantic concept. One of the possible ways emphasis syntactically manifests itself is through focus (cf. §34.2), and there are indeed clear indications that focus and negation interact.

The first set of phenomena where we see interaction between focus and negation is the one where a clause already present in the domain of the discourse is either confirmed or negated by the speaker. The Romance languages generally do this by means of a pro-sentence positive or negative element followed by the whole clause:

- (56) a. Sí que ha llovido hoy (Sp.)
yes that it.has rained today
 ‘It HAS indeed rained today’

- b. No che non ha piovuto oggi (It.)
no that not it.has rained today
 ‘No, today it DID NOT rain’

While Spanish generally only uses positive *sí*, Italian and French also use a pro-sentence negative marker to negate a clause present in the discourse:

- (57) a. Oh que non que je ne vous
oh that no that I not you=
le vendrai pas! (Fr.)
it= will.sell not
 ‘I will certainly not sell it to you!’
- b. Et comment que oui qu’ à Jean, on
and how that yes that to Jean one
va lui envoyer de l’ argent! (Fr.)
will him= send.INF of the money
 ‘That’s rather certain that we are going to send money to Jean!’

In all cases there is one (or in French even two) complementizer(s) located after (or after and before) the emphatic positive/negative adverb. These constructions have recently been analysed in terms of a complex left periphery and, in particular, in relation to the Focus projection located inside this domain (cf. §31.3.4; see Authier 2013 for French; Batllori and Hernanz 2013 for Spanish; Martins 2013 for Portuguese; and Poletto and Zanuttini 2013 for Italian).

Another case of interaction between focus and negation is evident in Romance constructions such as Fr. *ne...que*, It. *non...che*, Ro. *nu...decât* (lit. ‘not...that/than’) which have the meaning of the focalizing adverb ‘only’:

- (58) Nu l- am decât pe el (Ro.)
not him= I.have than ACC.MRK him
 ‘I only have him’

Another phenomenon that shows that negation and focus interact is noted by Penello and Pescarini (2008), who survey the gradual extension of postverbal minimizer negation across the dialects of northern Italy: they observe that the element *mica* can be used in several dialects in embedded clauses if it occurs with a focused constituent.

Etxepare and Uribe-Etxebarria (2008) show on the basis of Spanish and Catalan that there are three possible interactions between negation and focus: under the first construal, negation takes scope over the whole clause which is interpreted as focalized (wide focus; 59a). Under the second construal, negation only takes scope over the element in final position, which constitutes the focus of the sentence (narrow focus; 59b). Finally, in the third reading, the focus

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in final position falls outside the scope of negation (free focus; 59c).

- (59) a. No ha venido Pedro, sino que se
not has come Pedro but that self=
ha ido María (Sp.)
has gone María
'It is not the case that Pedro has come, but rather
that María has left'
- b. No ha venido Pedro, sino María (Sp.)
Not has come Pedro, but María
'The one who came isn't Pedro, but María'
- c. No ha venido Pedro, y no María (Sp.)
not has come Pedro and not María
'The one who hasn't come is Pedro, and not María'

Each of these semantic interpretations is marked by distinct syntactic constructions in Spanish with different types of movement inside the clause.

Another case in which negation and focus interact is when an element is clearly located in a left-peripheral focus position and modified by the negative marker. Espinal (1991) studies this case in Catalan: here the focused element is precisely the one that requires an additional negative marker, and not only the usual sentential negation 'no' occurring after the subject and in front of the inflected verb.

- (60) No pas LA MARIA no va aprovar (Cat.)
not pas the Maria not AUX.PST.3SG PASS.INF
'It was not Maria who passed' (cancelling or confirming the speaker's expectations about Maria)

The last case of interaction between negation and focus is related to the possibility of having a double negation interpretation in the clause. As noted in the previous sections, the Romance languages are negative concord languages. Furthermore, the presence of a preverbal negative marker is mandatory in all Romance languages that have it when there is a postverbal n-word and the reading associated to the sentence is one of negative concord. Notice, however, that if the postverbal n-word is focused, the reading is different and the clause turns into a case of double negation, i.e. a positive sentence:

- (61) Non ha mangiato NIENTE, ha mangiato
not has eaten N-THING she.has eaten
un panino! (It.)
a sandwich!
'It's not correct that she didn't eat anything: she ate a sandwich!'

More generally, we can conclude that the presence of focus can change the interpretation of negation.