

# The Jespersen Cycles<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

The paper analyzes the kind of renewal of clausal negators referred to with the term ‘Jespersen Cycle’ and that describes how a negator may collocate with a strengthener, which may later become an additional exponent of negation and possibly the only one. Through an analysis of a century’s worth of scholarship, giving pride of place to Jespersen (1917) but also Gardiner (1904) and Meillet (1912), the paper sets out to describe parameters such as the role of emphasis, the identity or difference of the old and the new negator, and the question whether or not the stage of the two exponents simplifies into a single exponence stage or takes us to a three negator stage. In so doing the paper also advocates taking Jespersen cycle research beyond the confines of Europe and the Mediterranean.

## 0. Introduction

This paper deals with Jespersen’s Cycle, also known as ‘Jespersen Cycle’ and ‘Negative Cycle’. I will offer an account that is more general than the one envisaged by Jespersen 1917 and others. This paper has four sections. In section 1 I sketch what Jespersen (1917) meant, how his view has been represented, and how it is partially wrong, at least for the data that he had in mind. I discuss the alternative view, also going under the label ‘Jespersen Cycle’ and spell it out in some detail. I will also argue that the alternative view has room for the original Jespersenian idea, in more than one way, and the resulting account will describe exactly eight possible trajectories or ‘cycles’. In section 2 I discuss an additional type of Jespersenian negation renewal, which is worthy of being called ‘Jespersen Cycle’ as well, not least because it fits the system described in section 1. Section 3 develops the typology even more. The typology allows at least four questions, the answers to which will be positive and lay bear yet more variation. Section 4 is the conclusion.

For the analysis of Jespersen’s original idea I will mostly rely on French, which is one of the languages that Jespersen (1917) had in mind and for which we possess an enormous amount of research. For the development of the typology I will primarily tap micro-variational and macro-variational sources. For micro-variation I will use materials and analyses concerning Dutch and esp. Belgian Dutch negation, which have recently come to the foreground (Barbiers et al 2009, Neuckermans 2008).<sup>2</sup> For macro-variation, I will use and partially reinterpret the facts of the Vanuatu language Lewo, which have stood as a challenge for Jespersen cyclists since Early (1994a, 1994b).

Despite the goal of reaching a general account, let me point to some restrictions. This paper is only about the development of negative strategies that involve something like a doubling stage. To take the text book example—and to present it in a simplified way: French once had a *ne* negator, it is heading for *pas*, but there is also a middle stage with both *ne* and *pas*. *Pas* is the newer strategy and to reach that stage the language went through a doubling *ne... pas* stage. Negative strategies need not pass through any such stage, however. Negative markers may directly develop from verbs (e.g. from a verb meaning ‘not exist’) or nouns (e.g. from a noun meaning ‘taboo’) in ways that have been described by Croft (1991), van der Auwera (2006), Van Gelderen (2008), and van der Auwera (In print b). Furthermore, this paper focuses on clausal negation, the negation that has scope over an entire clause or proposition. So not much will be said about the development of ‘negative quantifiers’, like

pronouns meaning ‘nobody’ or adverbs meaning ‘never’, even though the development of clausal negation and that quantificational negation are interconnected. There will be nothing on negative concord either. Negative polarity will be mentioned quite often, but again this matter will not be focused on. Finally, there will be nothing on language contact or areal typology, even though this dimension has been crucial in quickening the interest in the Jespersen cycle through the pivotal work of Bernini and Ramat (1992, 1996) (see also van der Auwera In print a) and remains important up to today (e.g. Lucas 2008).

As already adumbrated in the above, I prefer the term ‘Jespersen Cycle’ to ‘Jespersen’s Cycle’ (because there is too much variation to warrant the definitizing genitive) and to ‘Negative Cycle’ (to single out the cycles with a doubling stage from all other negative cycles).

## 1. The two Jespersen accounts

### 1.1. What did Jespersen (1917) mean?

The paragraph from Jespersen 1917 that has been most influential, not least because Dahl (1979: 88) drew attention to it and coined the phrase ‘Jespersen’s Cycle’, is the following:

The history of negative expressions in various languages makes us witness the following curious fluctuation: the original negative adverb is first weakened, then found insufficient and therefore strengthened, generally through some additional word, and this in turn may be felt as the negative proper and may then in course of time be subject to the same development as the original word. (Jespersen 1917: 4).

This scenario is usually represented as involving three, four or five stages. For French, the three-stage model has slots for *ne*, *ne ... pas* and *pas*. The five stage model is essentially the same but it makes explicit that the changes from *ne* to *ne ... pas* and from *ne ... pas* to *pas* involve the in-between stages of *pas*, resp. *ne* being optional. The four stage models typically<sup>3</sup> include the three stage model but either add *non* as the phonetically stronger ancestor to *ne* or make clear that the *pas* that is added to *ne* was not originally negative—I will symbolize this with the subscript X instead of NEG. The representation in (1) is limited to the French cycle. One could, of course, go back to Latin, and list *ne*—another *ne*, i.e., a Latin *ne* different from the French one—as the ancestor to *non*, as Jespersen (1917: 7) did, and recently also Muller (1991: 206) and Lenz (1996: 183). This is not represented in the schemas in (1). I have chosen French instead of English, for English is more complicated in that it has arguably started a new cycle or, at least, a new development. English has had a development from *ne* to *not* via *ne ... not*, not unlike what we have in French, but English now also has a weakened *n’t* cliticized to a preceding auxiliary and it also saw the development of *do* periphrasis. Lenz (1996: 184-5), Anderwald (2002: 19) and Zeijlstra (2004: 56) thus have the three or five stages but they add one or more stages with a *not* or *n’t* in front of the lexical verb, as in *I do not say* and *I don’t say*. When Jespersen (1917: 9-11) discusses English, he also lists *I do not say* and *I don’t say*, even as separate stages, and adds them onto a three stage model. I will leave such developments out of account, as they follow the cyclical end point of the cycle starting with *ne* and ending with *not*.

(1)	Three stages	Four stages		Five stages		
		A		B		
		1	<i>non</i> <sub>NEG</sub>			
	1	<i>ne</i> <sub>NEG</sub>	2	<i>ne</i> <sub>NEG</sub>	1	<i>ne</i> <sub>NEG</sub>
				2	<i>ne</i> <sub>NEG</sub> ... <i>pas</i> <sub>X</sub>	
					2	<i>ne</i> <sub>NEG</sub> (... <i>pas</i> <sub>NEG</sub> )
	2	<i>ne</i> <sub>NEG</sub> ... <i>pas</i> <sub>NEG</sub>	3	<i>ne</i> <sub>NEG</sub> ... <i>pas</i> <sub>NEG</sub>	3	<i>ne</i> <sub>NEG</sub> ... <i>pas</i> <sub>NEG</sub>
					4	( <i>ne</i> <sub>NEG</sub> ...) <i>pas</i> <sub>NEG</sub>
	3	<i>pas</i> <sub>NEG</sub>	4	<i>pas</i> <sub>NEG</sub>	4	<i>pas</i> <sub>NEG</sub>
					5	<i>pas</i> <sub>NEG</sub>

(2) shows where these models can be found; the list is far from exhaustive.

(2)	Three stages	Burridge (1983: 36); Bernini & Ramat (1996: 33), Haspelmath (1997: 203), Zanuttini (1997: 11-14), Horn (1989: 455), Hoeksema (1997: 140), Horn (2001: 190), Roberts and Roussou (2003: 154-155), van der Auwera & Neuckermans (2004: 458), Mazzon (2004: 5), Willis (2005), Lucas (2007), Jäger (2008)
	Four stages – A	Dahl (1979: 88), Muller (1991: 206), Lenz (1996: 183-4), Larrivé (2004: 18-19)
	Four stages – B	Schwegler (1988), Schwegler (1990: 158), Schwenter (2006: 327)
	Five stages	Donhauser (1996), Honda (1996: 207), Beukema (1999), Anderwald (2002), van der Auwera & Neuckermans (2004: 458), Zeijlstra (2004), Willis (2005)

The five stage representation has two stages with two strategies. ‘*ne*<sub>NEG</sub> (... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub>)’, for instance, in effect says that the language has both the *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> and the *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> strategy. This is a good way to visualize that two strategies are in competition. But this method obviously makes for more complex representations and one can avoid quite of bit of complication by simply stating that at one period a language could be at more than one stage, not least because some constructions may be ahead of other constructions. For instance, in Brabant Dutch of 1650 declaratives barely allowed *niet*<sub>NEG</sub> (the counterpart of to *pas*<sub>NEG</sub>) and still overwhelmingly used *en*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *niet*<sub>NEG</sub> (the counterpart to *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub>), whereas the statistics are exactly the opposite for prohibitives (Burridge 1983: 33, see also Hoeksema 1997:145, van der Auwera 2006: 18). Another point to note in this respect is that the two transition stages of the five stage model each only have two strategies. There is no reason why a construction could not at any one period allow more than two strategies. Consider the example in (3).

(3)	French						
	a.	<i>Il</i>	<i>ne</i>	<i>peut</i>	<i>venir</i>	<i>ce</i>	<i>soir.</i>
	b.	<i>Il</i>	<i>ne</i>	<i>peut pas</i>	<i>venir</i>	<i>ce</i>	<i>soir.</i>
	c.	<i>Il</i>		<i>peut pas</i>	<i>venir</i>	<i>ce</i>	<i>soir.</i>
		he	NEG	can	NEG	come	this evening
							‘He can’t come tonight.’

(3a) exemplifies the archaic strategy, (3b) is standard written French, and (3c) is typical for a casual spoken register. So the three stages may actually be said to coexist, at least for some constructions (like with the verb *pouvoir* ‘can’ illustrated in (3)). And yet there is no doubt that  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$  came first, that  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$  followed and that solitary  $pas_{\text{NEG}}$  was the last one. While admitting the value of model in which the stage show competing variants (for a plea to that effect, see e.g. Martineau and Mougeon 2003: 146), the purpose of this study nevertheless allows me to use the simpler representations, i.e., the ones without transition stages (except when in (13) below the discussion crucially concerns the nature of transitional stage).

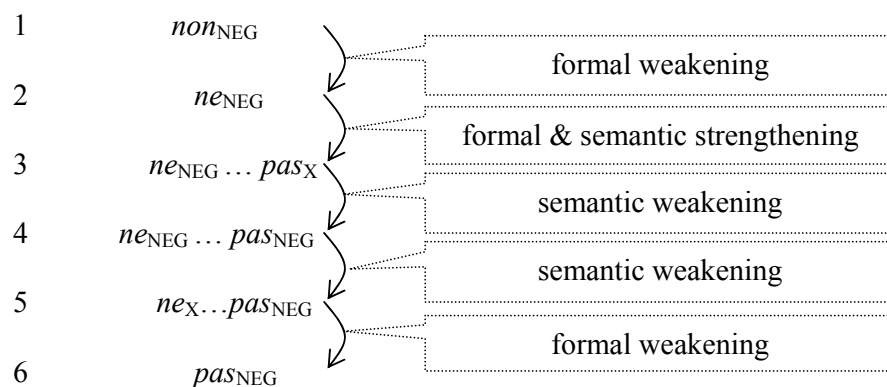
In (4) I reconstruct the cycle in six stages, again using French, and I then paraphrase it using the words of Jespersen (1917) (between single quotation marks). The reason I choose six stages is that it captures Jespersen (1917) better than the simpler schemes.

(4) Stages Strategies

1	$non_{\text{NEG}}$
2	$ne_{\text{NEG}}$
3	$ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{X}}$
4	$ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$
5	$ne_{\text{X}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$
6	$pas_{\text{NEG}}$

$Ne_{\text{NEG}}$  is the formally ‘weakened’ form of the ‘original negative adverb’  $non_{\text{NEG}}$ . At stage 2 only the weakened form occurs, at stage 1 only the original form and the weakening takes place in between. Between stages 2 and 3  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$  ‘is found insufficient’ and ‘strengthened ... through some additional word’. The strengthening is both formal and semantic: the addition of the word makes for a formally new strategy, and the additional word has a meaning of its own, but it is not that of clausal negation yet—that is why the subscript ‘X’ is used and not ‘NEG’. At stage 3 this strengthened strategy has ousted the old one. At stage 4 the ‘additional word’ partakes in the negative meaning as such and the strengthening effect is lost. Between stages 4 and 5 the second part of the negator is beginning to ‘be felt as the negative proper’, a process that is completed at stage 5 at the semantic level. Now  $ne_{\text{X}}$  is an ‘additional word’; I again mark the absence of the negative function with the subscript ‘X’. At stage 6, the process is finished at the formal level: the non-functional additional word has disappeared. The representation in (5) repeats that of (4) and it adds the notions of formal vs. semantic weakening and strengthening.

(5) Stages Strategies



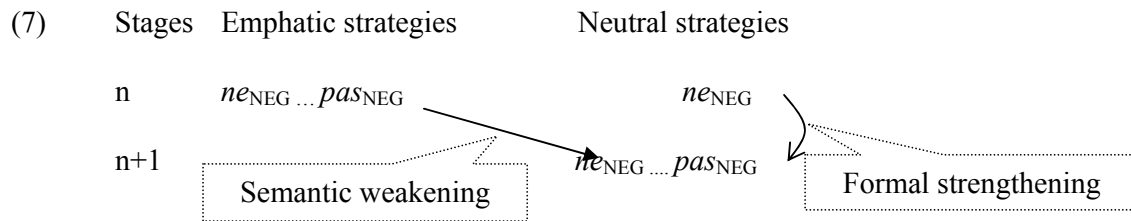
The representation in (4/5) is a little bit more detailed than the usual ‘reconstructions’. It is essentially the three stage model, enriched with the *non*<sub>NEG</sub> stage of the A type of the four stage model, the *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> *pas*<sub>X</sub> stage of the B type of the four stage model, and a parallel *ne*<sub>X</sub> *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> stage. But (4/5) is still a simplification and there are several issues that demand a comment. Let me mention two. First, it is generally assumed that *pas* was introduced in the context of movement verbs, at a stage predating the earlier texts (e.g. Buridant 2000: 60) and then spread to other verbs. Jespersen’s (1917) quote does not deal with this and for this reason (4/5) does not show this stage either nor will I not go into this matter later. Second, the schema abstracts from word order properties. The citation from Jespersen (1917) does that too. Nevertheless, it is obvious that word order does matter, as the positions of French *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> and *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> are markedly different: whereas *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> precedes the finite verb, *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> follows it. It is less clear, however, how exactly word order matters, at what stage, whether it is a consequence or a cause, and to what extent there could be cross-linguistic generalizations. In any case, I will leave these issues out of consideration, not least also because proposals positing strong correlations between the placement of negation and general word order properties and aiming to explain the cycle (e.g. Vennemann 1974, Harris 1978, Van der Horst and Van der Wal 1979) have been criticized and largely abandoned (e.g. Schwegler 1983).

### 1.2. What many other linguists mean

(4/5) is not in fact the only scenario that goes under the name of ‘Jespersen cycle’. In an alternative view (see (8) for references and see also Breitbarth (In print) for a similar and independently arrived at classification) the claim is not that *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> is weak and that it is therefore strengthened. Instead one claims that the language has both a neutral and an emphatic negative construction, and that the latter may lose its emphatic flavor, become a competitor to the erstwhile negation and eventually replace it. So what starts off the process is not the weakness of the original negator, but the general process of the inflation of an emphatic use and the consequent bleaching. (6) is a first attempt to represent the crucial stages of the alternative scenario, again illustrated with French.

(6)	Stages	Emphatic strategies	Neutral strategies
	n	<i>ne</i> <sub>NEG</sub> ... <i>pas</i> <sub>NEG</sub>	<i>ne</i> <sub>NEG</sub>
	n+1		<i>ne</i> <sub>NEG</sub> ... <i>pas</i> <sub>NEG</sub>

At stage ‘n’ the language has two strategies, an emphatic *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> and a neutral *ne*<sub>NEG</sub>. Then *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> bleaches and loses the emphatic meaning, thereby becoming a competitor to neutral *ne*<sub>NEG</sub>. At stage n+1 the fully bleached *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> has replaced the earlier and simpler neutral *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> strategy. (7) repeats (6) and identifies the changes. The loss of the emphatic meaning is semantic weakening and the simultaneous replacement of the neutral simple *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> by the more complex but also neutral *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> is formal strengthening.



Somewhat paradoxically, the appearance of  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$  in the domain of neutral negation instantiates both weakening and strengthening: the weakening is semantic and relates to the emphatic  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$  construction and the strengthening is formal and relates to the simple  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$  construction.

I stressed that under the alternative scenario  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$  is not claimed to have been weak and in need of strengthening, but this claim only concerns its function as a neutral strategy. Of course, we see that  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$  is a component of the emphatic strategy as well, and one can grant that for emphatic purposes  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$ , as an unstressed preverbal clitic was indeed weak, and it could do with formal and semantic strengthening. So something like stages 1 to 4 of scheme (4/5) are indeed relevant for the full picture of French negation, even under the alternative scenario, but, crucially, this component of formal and semantic strengthening of  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$  with an ‘additional word’  $pas_X$  only features in the history of emphatic negation. When Latin *non* formally weakened to *ne*, it remained perfect for neutral negation, but not for emphatic negation, and it is here that it accepted formal and semantic strengtheners of various types, one of them with the lexical element originally meaning ‘step’.

As implied in the preceding lines, I believe that for the development of  $pas_{\text{NEG}}$  from  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$  over  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$ , the alternative account is correct and that the original Jespersenian account, which has the process start off with phonetic erosion, is wrong. In the words of Kiparsky & Condoravdi (2006: 175), typical for a growing number of linguists: ‘The role of phonetic weakening [...], however plausible it might seem, is not backed up [by] any data as far as we know.’ And interestingly, more or less clear endorsements of the alternative account even antedate the formulation by Jespersen, with Gardiner (1904: 134), and with Meillet (1912: 393-394 [1926 139-140]). Gardiner (1904) discusses Egyptian and Coptic and notes ‘the often noted likeness’ to French and then writes about *pas* and *point*:

These words, from the Latin *passum* and *punctum*, were originally adverbial accusatives placed at the end of negative sentences for the purpose of emphasis; just like the English “not a jot”, “not a straw”. [...] *Pas* and *point*, and like them the Demotic  $\text{𓂏}$ , Coptic  $\text{ⲁⲛ}$ , next lose their emphasizing force, and become mere adjuncts of the negative words (French *ne*, Coptic  $\text{ⲛ}$ ). Last of all, they come themselves to be looked upon as negative words. (Gardiner 1904: 134)

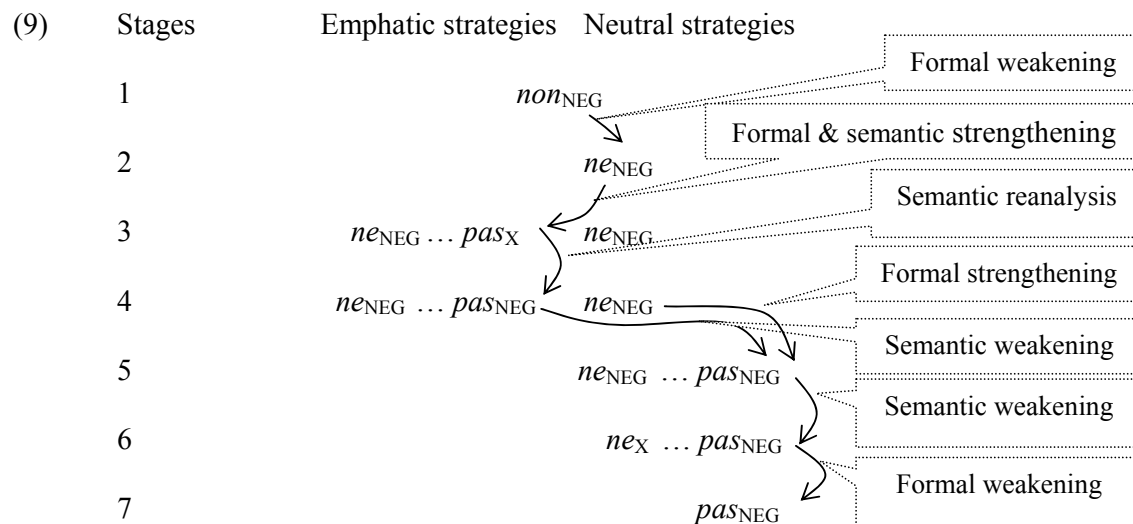
In the famous paper that seems to introduce the term ‘grammaticalization’ Meillet (1912: 393 [1926: 140]) discusses Latin, French, and German writes the following:

Là où l’on avait besoin d’insister sur la négation [...] on a été conduit à renforcer la négation *ne* ... par quelque autre mot. [...] On sait comment *pas* a perdu, dans les phrases où il était un accessoire de la négation, tout sons sens propre—sens conservé parfaitement dans le mot isolé *pas*—, comme dès lors, *pas* est devenu à lui seul un mot négatif, servant à exprimer la négation [...]. (Meillet 1912: 393 [1926 : 140])<sup>4</sup>

At this moment both accounts finds their supporters since both are after all very similar and the difference might go unnoticed or be irrelevant for the purpose of some study, there also statements that are neutral with respect to this difference. (8) categorizes some of the literature.<sup>5</sup>

(8)	Hypotheses	Supporters
	Weakness - Strengthening - Bleaching	Jespersen (1917), Wackernagel (1926), Dahl (1979), Pohl (1968), Horn (1989: 454-457), Lenz (1996), Beukema (1999: 10), van Kemenade (2000), Breitbarth and Haegeman (2008), Jäger (2008)
	Emphasis - Bleaching	Gardiner (1904); Meillet (1912 [1926]), Hock (1991), Hopper and Traugott (1993); Dahl (2001: 473); Detges & Waltereit (2002), Kiparsky and Condoravdi (2006)
	Neutral	Marchello-Nizia (1979), Bernini and Ramat (1996); Haspelmath (1997); Schwenter (2006)

(9) summarizes the discussion. It integrates the Jespersenian formal and semantic strengthening, but only for emphatic negation, and the ‘alternative’ idea of a transfer of an emphatic strategy to the realm of neutral negation, as represented in (7).



Like all other representations given in this paper (9) is only a skeleton sketch. First, the sketch focuses on the neutral strategies. It brings in just one emphatic strategy and then only to the extent that it provides a source for a neutral strategy and while (9) does claim that at stage 1 the negator  $non_{NEG}$  allowed both neutral and emphatic uses, the latter, I assume requiring stress (see the discussion of example (12) below), it does not claim that there were no other emphatic strategies then nor of course at any later stage. (9) also does not sketch how the noun *step*, a ‘minimizer’ (i.e., a noun referring to a small quantity) developed into the emphatic  $pas_{NEG}$ , from the ‘not even a step’ to ‘not at all’, a phase of progressive specialization for negation going through a more general phrase of negative polarity (e.g. Muller 2004). In the Jespersenian account, this step was considered to be weakening, for it was taken to involve the loss of the emphatic effect of the ‘additional word’. But in this account, the emphatic effect remains. It is correct that *step* loses its lexical meaning, but then it gains a pragmatic meaning. So something is lost, and something else is gained: for this situation (9) uses the term ‘semantic reanalysis’. Second, (9) does not sketch the competition

that *pas* had from other minimizers, most prominently *point* ‘point’ and *mie* ‘crumb’ (see Möhren 1980 and Kawaguchi In print). Third, (9) is restricted to declarative negation and does not take into account the influence of sentence type, such as declarative vs. interrogative or imperative, a factor that is indeed important for French (Martineau and Mougeon 2003: 119-120, Martineau and Vinet 2005) no less than for Dutch (as alluded to in the paragraph just before (1)). Fourth, a full account of the history of *ne*<sub>NEG</sub>, *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> and *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> will have to provide for the fact that even when *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> was established as the main exponent of negation and left the pure negative polarity stage, it still allowed negative polarity uses, as did and do *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> and *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub>. (10) gives some older and recent examples.

- (10) a. 17<sup>th</sup> century *ne* (Muller 1991: 375)  
*Je n'ignore pas qu'il n'ait*  
 I NEG ignore NEG that he X would.have  
*voulu me nuir.*  
 wanted me damage  
 ‘I don’t ignore that he would want to damage me.’
- b. 17<sup>th</sup> century *ne ... pas* (Muller 1991: 24)  
*Vous ferez plus que vous ne estes pas proposé.*  
 you will.do more than you X are X proposed  
 ‘You will do more than you have proposed.’
- c. 18<sup>th</sup> century *pas* (Muller 1991: 25)  
*C'est la plus jolie fille qu'y a pas*  
 This is the more pretty girl that there has X  
*dans le canton.*  
 in the canton  
 ‘This is the prettiest girl there is in the canton.’
- (11) a. Present-day *ne* (Muller 1991 : 367)  
*Ils estiment que leur situation militaire est*  
 they think that their situation military is  
*suffisamment solide pour empêcher que cet assaut*  
 sufficiently solid for prevent that this attack  
*ne devienne une promenade militaire.*  
 X become.SUBJ a walk military  
 ‘They think that their military situation is solid enough to prevent that their attack would become a military walk.’
- b. Present-day French *ne pas* (Larriveé 2004: 28)  
*La Grande-Bretagne déconseille à ses ressortissants*  
 the Great Britain discourages to its citizens  
*de ne pas se rendre à Bali.*  
 of X X oneself go to Bali  
 ‘Great Britain advises its citizens not to travel to Bali.’
- c. Present-day French *pas* (Larriveé 2004: 27)  
*J'imagine que je désire plus que*  
 I imagine that I desire more than  
*j'peux pas obtenir.*  
 I can X obtain  
 ‘I imagine that I want more than I can obtain.’

The fact that each of the negators had and has negative polarity uses is a reflection of the fact that the negative polarity uses of negators, often called ‘expletive negation’, are a universal potentiality (see also Joly 1981, van der Wouden 1997: 196-204, Van der Wurff 1999 for both European and non-European examples). Of course, this potentiality can be grammaticalized or not and if so in different ways (i.e., in different negative polarity contexts) and with different strengths. The link with the Jespersen cycle seems double. First, chances that a negator has negatively polar uses are high if it has in fact developed from a negative polarity item, as is the case with *pas*. From this perspective, the older uses of *pas* and *ne ... pas*, illustrated in (10b-c) can be seen as relics of the negative polarity past of *pas* (this is also the hypothesis offered in Muller 2004 and in Eckardt 2003, 2006: 128-170). Second, a point already made by Jespersen (1917), chances that a negator has negative polarity uses are also high ‘if the negative employed no longer has its full force’ (Jespersen 1917: 75). What he had in mind were the modern uses of *ne* as in (11a) (see also Breitbarth & Haegeman 2008 for Belgian Dutch, and Wallage 2008 for Middle English).<sup>6</sup>

Another point worth observing is that (9) implicitly takes solitary *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> to disappear because of the introduction of the newcomer *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub>. This makes sense. The renewal of grammatical markers, with originally expressive markers becoming neutral and ousting the original neutral markers, is the essence of grammaticalization, with lots of examples in classic texts on grammaticalization. Of course, the fact that other domains of the grammar have new constructions oust old constructions does not predetermine the outcome of the competition between the old *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> and the new *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub>. For one thing, lots of old constructions do successfully hold competitors or potential competitors at bay and even in the domain of French negation newcomers like *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *point*<sub>NEG</sub> and *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *mie*<sub>NEG</sub> did not make it. And for another thing, *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> is less economical than *ne*<sub>NEG</sub>, and so for reasons of economy, one would actually expect *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> to hold ground. So why did *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> gain supremacy over *ne*<sub>NEG</sub>?

I suppose that there is no single answer. Part of the explanation will have to do with dialect and register variation and the competition between dialects and registers, a competition which did not merely involve *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> and *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub>, but also *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *point*<sub>NEG</sub> and *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *mie*<sub>NEG</sub> and yet other constructions. I suspect that the development of concord structures such as *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *personne* ‘not nobody’ promoted *ne ... pas* as well, in a mutual support constellation. Let me offer two additional considerations. First, a complex construction such as *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> holds one advantage over *ne*<sub>NEG</sub>. Even though *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> is not longer compositionally dedicated to emphasis (with *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> having lost its emphatic effect), it does have a component that can be stressed, viz. *pas*<sub>NEG</sub>, and thus serve emphatic uses anyway, in contrast with solitary *ne*<sub>NEG</sub>, which cannot be stressed, at least not since the end of Middle French (Martineau & Mougeon 2003: 124). There is a similar contrast in English: free standing *not* can be stressed, but cliticized *n’t* cannot.

- (12) a. *Je ne ... veux PAS!*  
 I NEG want NEG  
 ‘I do NOT want it!’  
 b. \**Je NE veux!*  
 I NEG want  
 \*‘I doN’T want it!’

Now economy is in favor of *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub>. With *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> speakers have a construction that allows both a neutral use (without emphatic stress) and an emphatic use (with emphatic stress on *pas*<sub>NEG</sub>). For this double use solitary *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> is indeed too weak, so here Jespersen (1917) is right after all.

The second consideration that helps explain why  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$  replaced  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$  concerns the timing when  $pas_{\text{NEG}}$  in  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$  was beginning to ‘be felt as the negative proper’. In (9) this is represented as happening after the demise of  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$ . But this is probably a simplification, due to the decision taken in 1.1 to avoid modeling competing variants. In fact when  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$  becomes a neutral construction it alternates with  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$  for some time and one may assume that the reinterpretation of the  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$  component of  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$  as an exponent of negation to the status of ‘additional word’ took place before the disappearance of solitary  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$ , and that this reinterpretation in fact proved a(n additional) factor in the demise of solitary  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$ . I represent this alternative scenario in (13). Stages 4 and 5 correspond to those of (9).

(13)	Stages	Emphatic strategies	Neutral strategies
	...	...	...
	4	$ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$	$ne_{\text{NEG}}$ $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}} \& ne_{\text{NEG}}$ $ne_{\text{X}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}} \& ne_{\text{NEG}}$ $ne_{\text{X}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}} \& ne_{\text{X}}$
	5		$ne_{\text{X}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$
	...		...

When  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$  bleaches to a mere ‘additional word’, one may assume that this happened first in the doubling construction, for it is only here that there was another exponent of negation, viz.  $pas_{\text{NEG}}$ . The ongoing bleaching from  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$  into  $ne_{\text{X}}$  could have infected solitary  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$  as well, and thus added to its downfall.<sup>7</sup>

A final point concerns the fact that in all scenarios so far the deemphasizing of  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$  precedes the demise of  $ne_{\text{NEG}}$  as a part of  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$ , i.e., the formal weakening of  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$  to  $pas_{\text{NEG}}$  only happens to neutral  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$ , and not to emphatic  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$ . This is indeed the case in French and in fact in all other cases I know of, yet it might not be a universal. The facts of Horn’s (2001) ‘squatitive’ negation (see also Postal 2004: 159-172, Hoeksema 2009) are suggestive. The term ‘squatitive’ refers to minimizers that employ taboo expressions, like English *squat*, *shit*, or *fuck*. In a negative context, they can mean ‘nothing at all’. Here is an attested example.

(14) He ... discovered writing didn’t pay squat. (Horn 2001: 186)

This is emphatic, just like ‘not even a step’ has been emphatic, but different from the French ‘step’  $not_{\text{NEG}} \textit{squat}$  didn’t neutralize, and yet it did simplify. (15) is an attested solitary *squat* in which *squat* by itself means ‘nothing at all’.

(15) Students complain that they are learning squat. (Horn 2001: 187)

Of course, these *squat* uses are still nominal or, better pronominal, for in (15) *squat* has become a negative pronoun meaning ‘nothing whatsoever’, but we know from French *pas* and English *not* that minimizing and negative indefinites can turn into adverbs. If that happened for *squat*, we would have a clausal negator that did not neutralize at the doubling stage. It would arrive at the new solitary stage as an emphatic negator, possibly, of course, neutralizing still later. Another illustration would be a variety of French (probably an imaginary one) that keeps both  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots point_{\text{NEG}}$  and  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots pas_{\text{NEG}}$ , with  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots point_{\text{NEG}}$  as the emphatic variant and *ne pas* as the neutral one, and which  $ne_{\text{NEG}} \dots point_{\text{NEG}}$  is turning into  $point_{\text{NEG}}$



- (17) Belgian Brabantic (Neuckermans 2008: 215, 213, Pauwels 1958: 443, 440)<sup>8</sup>
- a. *Hij wil geen soep niet meer eten niet.*  
 he wants no soup NEG more eat NEG  
 ‘He doesn’t want to eat any more soup.’
- b. *Els wilt niet dansen en ze wil niet zingen*  
 Els wants not dance and she wants NEG sing  
*ook niet.*  
 also NEG  
 ‘Els doesn’t want to dance and she doesn’t want to sing either.’
- c. *Ik heb niemand niet gezien niet.*  
 I have nobody NEG seen NEG  
 ‘I haven’t seen anyone.’
- d. *Ik heb niets gekregen niet.*  
 I have nothing received NEG  
 ‘I haven’t received anything.’

In these constructions the addition of the clause-final negator does not have any emphatic effect and it cannot be emphasized (Pauwels 1958: 444-445), even though its formally identical ‘clause-earlier’ negator can. At most it helps to secure the correct uptake, a reminder to the hearer that the proposition is negative, but this functionality is not necessary and its use may be fully bleached. Then the clause-final negator is simply a partial exponent of neutral negation, a part of *niet*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *niet*#<sub>NEG</sub>, just like *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> as a part of *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> *pas*<sub>NEG</sub>. *niet*#<sub>NEG</sub> has no additional semantic effect either: the sentence is negative already. The lack of any special meaning is corroborated by the fact that speakers are often not aware that they are using it, a fact specifically mentioned both by Pauwels (1958: 445), the linguist responsible for the classic description of *niet*#, and by Blancquaert (1923: 65), the linguist who first wrote about it.

So much for the synchrony of Belgian Brabantic clause-final negation. Let us now relate it to the Jespersen cycle. Can the appearance of the repetitive clause-final negation be explained with the Jespersen cycle hypothesis, in the variant that posits emphasis and bleaching? In that case, the clause-final negation must have had an emphatic effect before, even if it does not have one now. Cross-linguistically, this indeed seems the most common analysis. For Brazilian Portuguese (but also Jespersen 1917 and Bernini & Ramat 1996:43 for other languages), Schwegler (1991: 209; cp. also Schwegler 1990: 169-173), for instance, derives (18b) from (18a), a structure with a reinforcing intonationally separate pragmatic particle, which is crucially identical in form to the clausal negator.

- (18) Brazilian Portuguese (Schwegler 1991: 209)
- a. *Eu não quero, não!*  
 I NEG want no  
 ‘I don’t want to, absolutely not!’
- b. *Eu não quero não.*  
 I NEG want NEG  
 ‘I don’t want to!’

This analysis exists for Dutch too, most clearly presented by Roberge’s (2000: 146-147), supported by Biberauer (2008), with structures such as (19) as the source of clause-final negator doubling.

- (19) *Ik ga niet, nee!*  
 I go NEG no  
 ‘I am not going, no!’

The context in which this claim figures actually concerns Afrikaans clause-final negation, but Roberge traces it back to Dutch. In the Dutch case, the analysis is problematic in that the pragmatic particle in (19) is *nee* and not *niet*, and Bernini & Ramat (1996: 78) therefore reject the pragmatic hypothesis, at least for Dutch and Afrikaans (but interestingly, not for Berbice Creole Dutch, in which the clause-final negator contains the morpheme *-ne*, reconstructed from the Dutch pragmatic particle *neen* (Kouwenberg 1994: 264). Roberge (2000: 147), in turn, rejects Bernini & Ramat’s rejection pointing out that early Modern Dutch did at least allow *niet* as an answer particle, as well, next to *neen*. However, this use of *niet* was very rare and that of *neen* very common (Joop van der Horst, p.c.). Hence it is not plausible to assume that it is the rare use that grammaticalized the way Brazilian Portuguese *não* and markers in other languages did. So I in turn reject Roberge’s rejection.

In fact, there are two hypotheses that trace Belgian Brabantian clausal-final negator to a non-emphatic origin, both due to Pauwels, viz., Pauwels (1958) and Pauwels (1974). Actually in both publications Pauwels is sympathetic to the pragmatic hypothesis as well, but he offers two different hypotheses in addition. First, Pauwels (1958: 457) thinks that clause-final doubling could derive from a negative concord construction in which a negative quantifier is followed by *niet*<sub>NEG</sub>. This construction is illustrated in (20). Like clause-final negation it is typically Belgian Brabantian. This construction is not emphatic and nobody has ever hypothesized that it ever was.

- (20) Belgian Brabantian
- a. *Ik heb niemand niet gezien.*  
 I have nobody NEG seen  
 ‘I haven’t seen anybody.’
- b. *Ik zag niemand niet.*  
 I saw nobody NEG  
 ‘I didn’t see anybody.’

The idea is that the *niet*<sub>NEG</sub> of the negative concord construction may come at the clausal end, as illustrated in (20b), and that it became associated with that position. Second, in his last public pronouncement on this matter, Pauwels (1974: 76) supports the idea that clause-final negation is essentially just a repetition strategy, devoid of emphasis and devoid of additional semantics. He compares it with preposition doubling as in (21).

- (21) Belgian Brabantian (Pauwels 1974: 76)
- Ik kan nie aan het plafond aan.*  
 I can NEG at the ceiling at  
 ‘I can’t reach the ceiling.’

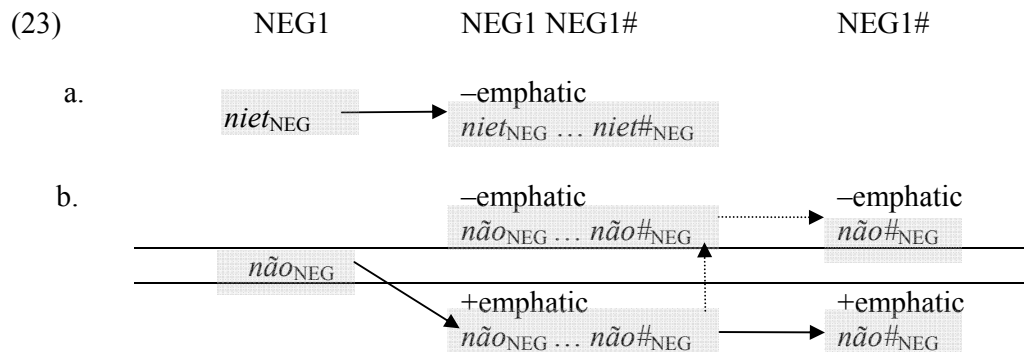
I suppose that this kind of repetition at best makes the meaning clearer, a locational one in (21), and a negative one in (17). To the extent that repetition can be said to ‘strengthen’ a meaning, the non-repeated meaning can be said to be weaker than the doubly expressed meaning, but whether expressed with just one negator or with two, the meaning is just a neutral, non-emphatic negation. This then brings us back to measure of the Jespersenian weakness idea: the simple expression is not exactly ‘too weak’, but it is a least ‘weaker’ (i.e., weaker than the doubling expression).

Belgian Brabantian clause-final doubling has not been simplified into a construction with a solitary clause-final negator. This is different from Brazilian Portuguese  $n\tilde{a}o\#_{NEG}$ , though it is not clear whether the solitary Brazilian Portuguese  $n\tilde{a}o\#_{NEG}$  is emphatic or not. Schwegler (1991: 206) thinks that this construction ‘has by and large lost its emphatic character’. Biberauer (2008), however, compares it with English (22), which would seem to imply that the construction is emphatic.

(22) She came to the party ... NOT!

So perhaps we should keep both hypotheses open, just like we did with the analyses of clause-final doubling.

(23) summarizes the facts and hypotheses about clause-final negator doubling for Dutch and Brazilian Portuguese. Full lines represent the scenarios proposed in the literature and retained as plausible: (i) the Dutch doubling is not emphatic and it never was, and it didn’t develop a new solitary stage; (ii) Brazilian Portuguese doubling is emphatic and the solitary NEG1# could have been emphatic or not. Dotted lines show hypotheses that I add myself: if solitary Brazilian Portuguese NEG1# is non-emphatic, it must have bleached, either at the doubling stage or only at the final, solitary stage.



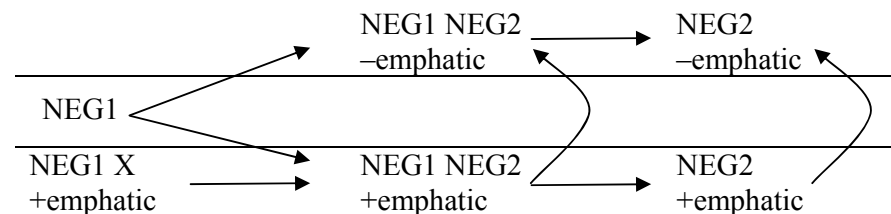
#### 1.4. Intermediate conclusion

I hope to have shown that the scholarship on classical cases of the Jespersen cycle such as the progression from French  $ne_{NEG}$  to  $pas_{NEG}$  via  $ne_{NEG} \dots pas_{NEG}$  has been interpreted in two different ways, both involving a notion of strengthening. In the approach associated with Jespersen (1917), a neutral negator is claimed to be too weak and to be ‘strengthened’ as a result. In the alternative approach the neutral negator gets competition from a construction that is originally emphatic—‘strengthened’—and undergoes bleaching in a natural process of grammaticalization. I have argued that the second approach is correct for the analysis of neutral negation. However, Jespersen was still right and even in three ways. First, for emphatic negation  $ne_{NEG}$  was indeed too weak. Second,  $ne_{NEG}$  was also too weak to as a multifunctional negator, serving both neutral and emphatic negation.<sup>9</sup> Third, although a NEG ... NEG# construction may have its origin in emphasis, it may also have a non-emphatic origin, and in that case one can compare, as strategies for expressing neutral negation, the single NEG and the double NEG ... NEG# construction, and then the former is weaker, in a trivial sense, than the latter.

The general picture that emerges is represented in (24). First, one can get from a single negator to a doubling pattern by either reanalyzing an element X, a minimizer or a negative quantifier (but also a negative existential; Croft 1991: 10, 13-14), and this construction is

necessarily emphatic, or can simply repeat the negator at the end of the clause, a process which may be emphatic or not. Second, doubling constructions may turn into solitary constructions, most clearly when they are non-emphatic, but the *squat* and *não* evidence suggests that emphatic negators may also turn single. Third, emphatic constructions may bleach, most clearly at the doubling stage, but on account of the *não* evidence, one can also hypothesize bleaching at the solitary stage. For ease of understanding, in (24) NEG1# will be represented as ‘NEG2’ and I do not distinguish between full and dotted lines anymore—at this level of abstraction all lines except the one from NEG2 +emphatic to NEG2 –emphatic have in fact been proposed, either in a  $ne_{NEG} \dots pas_{NEG}$  type scenario or in a  $niet_{NEG} \dots niet\#_{NEG}$  type scenario, or in both. Like in all other schemas, negative polarity uses such as illustrated in (10) and (11) are not taken into account, essentially because they can occur at all stages of the life cycle of a negator.

(24)



## 2. Any more variation?

It is implied in (24) that the X source is always emphatic. But is that really the case? And relatedly, does this element have to a minimizer or a negative quantifier (or, if Croft 1991: 10, 13-14 is right, a negative existential)? A negative answer, an implicit one because it did not relate the issue to Jespersen cycles, was given for Arizona Tewa (Kiowa-Tanoan) by Kroskrity (1984), supported by Honda (1996: 41-44), who provides additional data (Honda 1996: 207) and does relate them to the Jespersen cycle. In 2007 two further negative answers appeared, one by Lucas (2007) and the other by De Cuypere et al. (2007: 309-312, repeated in De Cuypere 2008: 238-245). I will restrict the discussion to the latter two answers. Lucas' (2007) answer is this:

The evidence from Spoken Arabic suggests that the only condition for JC [Jespersen's Cycle] to be set in motion [...] is that some postverbal element could potentially be reanalyzed as a marker of negation. (Lucas 2007: 427)

The evidence concerns spoken Arabic *-š*, which is argued to have had negative contexts in which its original indefinite pronoun meaning ‘anything’, itself deriving from the noun ‘thing’, could have been interpreted as an exponent of negation. The case is far from clear, I find, for after all ‘anything’ comes very close to a minimizer, and the original noun ‘thing’ is arguably even closer to e.g. ‘step’, and would thus invite an account in terms of emphasis and bleaching, an invitation taken up by Bernini & Ramat (1996: 47), Roberts and Roussou (2003: 155), François (2003: 317), and Miestamo (2005: 225) for Arabic, and by Willis (2005) for Welsh. Lucas (2007: 417) is aware of this kind of approach, yet does not find ‘this explanation entirely convincing’ (Lucas 2007: 420). His phrasing still means, however, that he finds it fairly convincing anyway. I conclude that the case is not settled yet.

The other negative answer is due to De Cuypere et al. (2007: 309-312 (also De Cuypere 2008: 223-249)).<sup>10</sup> Their starting point is Miestamo's 2005 work on asymmetric

negation. Miestamo notes that positive and negative declarative sentences often differ from another in more than just the absence vs. the presence of a negative marker. Consider negation in the Salishan language Bella Coola. Third person singular positive declarative verb forms mark the information as either old or new. However, in the corresponding negative declaratives there is no choice: the verb form is obligatorily marked for old information.

- (25) Bella Coola (Miestamo 2005: 136, based on Nater 1984: 36; also in De Cuypere et al. 2007: 312 and De Cuypere 2008: 242)
- a. *ksnmak-Ø*  
work-3SG.NEW  
'He is working.'
  - b. *ksnmak-s*  
work-3SG.OLD  
'He is working.'
  - c. *ʔaxw ksnmak-Ø*  
NEG work-3SG.OLD  
'He is not working.'

This asymmetry has a functional motivation: in negatives one tends to express a negative evaluation of something that is presupposed (given, old) in the context (in a way that needs to be more precise—see note 7), and what Bella Coola has done is to grammaticalize this tendency (Miestamo 2005: 213). The relevance of this asymmetry is the following: imagine that the marker for old information disappears in the positive construction and that it remains in the negative one. This would easily allow this marker to be reanalyzed as an exponent of negation, and would thus offer a good case for the reanalysis of a marker that is not a negative quantifier or minimizer (nor of a course a repeated clause negator) and mostly importantly, not emphatic.

The Bella Coola case is an imaginary case: the old information marker has not left the positive declarative. It is problematic that De Cuypere et al. (2007) do not offer any convincing case (and neither does De Cuypere 2008: 223-249). Let me discuss one of their examples. In some Vanuatu languages a partitive marker, which at least optionally appears in negative declaratives, in which negation already has one exponent, can be interpreted as an additional exponent of negation, and one which may oust the first one. This has been argued for Lewo (Early 1994a) and for Motlav (François 2003: 317-318).

- (26) Motlav (François 2003: 313, 318)
- a. *Et igni-k te.*  
NEG wife-my NEG  
'This is not my wife.'
  - b. *Ino te, ikē!*  
I NEG he  
'It is not me, it is him!'

For both languages the grammarians remark on the similarity with the classical Jespersen cases of the French *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> type. The key question is whether the partitive once had an emphatic function or whether it was just a concomitant of a negative sentence, a marker of asymmetry, which again has a functional explanation (in this case relating to a tendency of negatives having non-referential objects—see Miestamo 2005: 232). The answer may be different from one language to the next, but at least for some Vanuatu languages it seems that the partitive was in fact used for emphasis, just like a minimizer. For Motlav, François (2003:

317) is fairly explicit: the combination of the negator with the partitive must have served to deny the event didn't even concern a (small) part of something. Paamese is interesting too. In this language, the element corresponding to *te* is not obligatory yet, and maybe for this reason Crowley (1982: 140-142) still considers it to have partitive meaning, but his gloss is more than just partitive. The combination of the negation and the partitive is not just to mean that something is partially unaffected, but rather that it is not even partially affected, i.e., not even a bit, which can surely be called emphatic in the same way as *ne ... pas* 'not even a step' is.<sup>11</sup> So at least in some Vanuatu languages, the partitives would rather plausibly have lent their service in the emphasis-*cum*-bleaching cycle. Interestingly, in Avava, yet another Vanuatu language, the second element is not related to a partitive marker, but to a marker meaning 'first' (Crowley 2006: 84-85, 99). Crowley (2006: 99) is uncertain as to how to relate to two meanings, but an emphasis-*cum*-bleaching cycle would again seem possible, with the original meaning of the now bipartite negative being that some event did not even affect the first part of something. Consider English *know the first thing about* in this respect (J. Hoeksema, p.c.).

(27) He didn't even know the first thing about checkers.

Yet our search for a Jespersen cycle that neither concerns emphasis with bleaching nor non-emphatic repetition is not in vain. The Vanuatu language Lewo may have an emphasis-driven partitive element *re*, but the element that is of interest here is the first marker, which is either *pe* (for realis) or *ve* (for irrealis).

(28) Lewo (Early 1994a: 69)  
*Pe ne-pisu-li re Santo poli.*  
 NEG.R 1SG-see-try NEG Santo NEG<sup>12</sup>  
 'I've never seen Santo.'

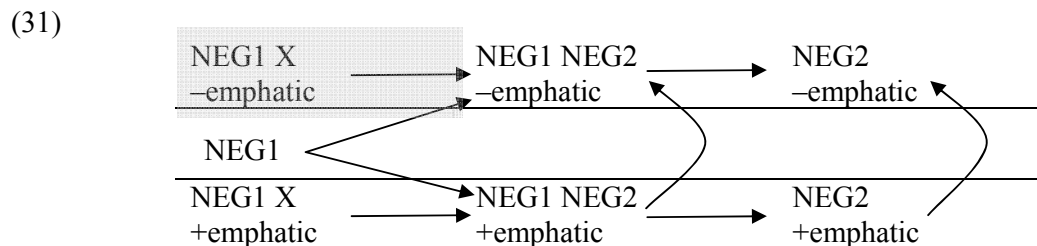
This *pe/ve* marker derives from the positive copula, which also comes in both a realis and an irrealis form. One might venture the hypothesis (see Dahl 1995: 80; Miestamo 2005: 79) that *pe/ve* is in fact the copula<sup>13</sup>, and indeed, as Miestamo (2005: esp. 75-80) makes clear, copulas are frequently used as the finite verbs in negative clauses. Yet, though the copula will indeed be the highly plausible origin of the *pe/ve* marker, at present the *pe/ve* marker is not a copula anymore. Different from a real copula, illustrated in (29), the negatively dedicated *pe/ve* markers do not carry subject markers. In fact, prefixal subject marking is attached to the lexical verbs. (29) furthermore shows that the negative unconjugated *pe* and the conjugated *pe* copula can occur together.

(29) Lewo (Early 1994a: 72)  
*Teras la na~pa pe a-pe praktis re poli ...*  
 youth PL REL NEG 3PL-be practise NEG NEG  
 'The young guys who haven't practised ...'

And interestingly, there is one construction in which the *pe/ve* marker does carry subject prefixes, viz., in second person imperatives, and here the lexical verbs lack prefixes. This use is restricted to older speakers, so from a grammaticalization point of view, this construction could be considered a relic, with the original copula construction.

- (30) Lewo (Early 1994b: 422)  
*O-pe tag re!*  
 2SG-COP cry NEG  
 ‘Don’t cry!’

The upshot of the discussion is that an element involved in the asymmetry that characterizes negation in the sense of Miestamo (2005), such as a copula, can indeed provide a non-emphatic source for a second negator. It is time, therefore, to update the figure in (24). All we have to do is to add one source construction (marked in (31) with shading): next to the emphasis neutral NEG1 source and the +emphatic NEG1 X source, there is a –emphatic NEG1 X source, which can feed directly into an equally non-emphatic NEG1 NEG2 construction.



If one wants to count cycles, one will find that there are eight possible cycles, i.e., eight different trajectories to get from one of three possible single negator source constructions to either of the two possible single negator outcome constructions. The basic idea remains relatively simple though: either through the repetition of a clause negator or through the reanalysis of something else one arrives at a bipartite negative construction, which is either emphatic or neutral; in the bipartite construction the new negator can oust the old one, and at both the bipartite or the new simple stage the emphasis can disappear.

### 3. Even more variation?

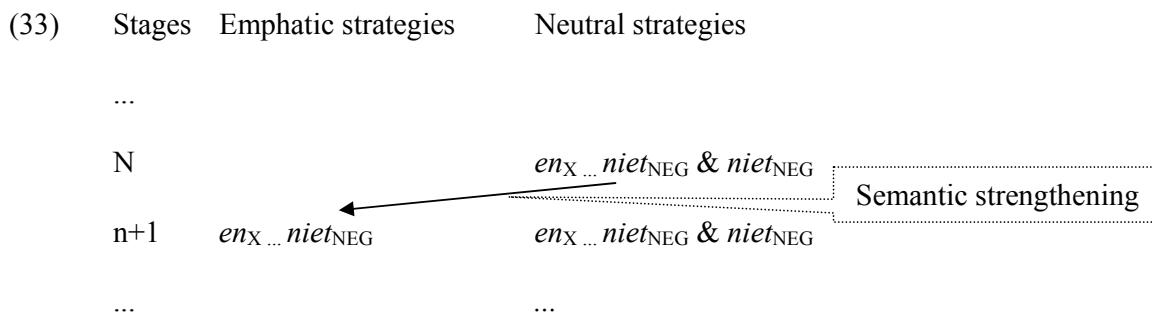
The schema in (31) is also useful as a starting point. First, in (31) the doubling strategy cannot stay emphatic: it either neutralizes at the doubling stage (as with *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub>) or it loses one exponent of negation, and then it may stay emphatic, but it is not of course a doubling construction any more. So the question is whether a doubling strategy cannot in some way become emphatic (again)? I will discuss this in 3.1. Secondly, in the schema in (31) the two solitary stages are interestingly different: the first solitary stage has a negator (NEG1) and either some marker X or nothing, whereas the second solitary stage has a negator (NEG2) or nothing, i.e., all the first negator seems to be able to do is to disappear. I will discuss this in 3.2. Thirdly, in (31) the reinterpretation of a marker X into a negator (NEG2) or the mere addition of this negator is only allowed after a stage of a solitary negator. But would it be ruled out that a doubling construction can also receive a new exponent of negation, either through reinterpretation or addition, thus resulting in a tripling construction? This will be discussed in 3.3. Fourth, when NEG1 X is followed by NEG1 NEG2 there are two bipartite stages, the difference is, of course, that the second part of the first stage is not negative yet. One wonders whether the second bipartite stage is absolutely essential, i.e., whether a language cannot also go directly from NEG1 X to  $\emptyset$  NEG2. I will discuss this in 3.4.

### 3.1. A new emphatic strategy at the doubling stage

The first question that I asked in the introduction to this section is whether a doubling construction is really fated to weakening, either semantically (reinterpretation of emphatic negation as neutral negation) or formally (with a double negator turning into a solitary one). That the situation is more complex has been claimed by Haegeman (2002:181) and again by Breitbarth and Haegeman (2008) relative to contemporary West and East Flemish dialects. The hypothesis is this: at the stage where  $en_X \dots niet_{NEG}$  is in competition with  $niet_{NEG}$ , speakers could find the  $en_X \dots niet_{NEG}$  strategy useful for emphasis. Haegeman (2002: 181) provides a minimal pair: in (32) the conditional without  $en_X$  is claimed to be an open conditional, but with  $en_X$  it is emphatic and presuppositional: the speaker expects rain.<sup>14</sup>

- (32) West Flemish (Haegeman 2002:181)
- a. *Oat nie regent, moe-j de blommen wouter geven.*  
if.it NEG rains must-you the flowers water give  
'If it doesn't rain, you must water the flowers.'
- b. *Oat nie en regent, moe-j de blommen wouter geven.*  
if.it NEG1 X rains must-you the flowers water give  
'If it DOES NOT rain, you must water the flowers.'

Haegeman (and Breitbarth) do not explain why the contrast is the way it is, maybe in part because they consider it obvious. To me it would indeed seem obvious: if the contrast sketched in (23) is real, then the motivation will be iconic: stronger, heavier, marked form is for the stronger meaning (see Horn 1991: 86 for many examples). (33) schematizes the possible reanalysis.



It is important that this emphatic use of Flemish  $en_X \dots niet_{NEG}$  has not become the only use, and, to be judged from the large dialectological literature (see Neuckermans 2008 for an overview), which does not mention any emphatic use of  $en_X \dots niet_{NEG}$ , the neutral  $en_X \dots niet_{NEG}$  use must be considered remains the more important use. Also, if  $en_X \dots niet_{NEG}$  indeed allows a secondary emphatic use now, one would expect this to have been possible earlier as well, and thus there might even be a continuity of emphatic  $en_X \dots niet_{NEG}$  uses (weakly suggested for subordinate clauses in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century South-Holland dialect of Katwijk aan Zee by Overdiep 1933a: 22—repeated in Overdiep 1937: 453, 1940: 203). If there was continuity, note that the nature of the emphatic use will have changed. Emphatic  $en \dots niet$  started out as combination of the neutral negator  $en$  and the ‘additional word’  $niet$ , but now emphatic  $en_X \dots niet_{NEG}$  does not contrast with solitary  $en_{NEG}$  but with solitary  $niet_{NEG}$  and thus the ‘additional word’ is  $en_X$  now. And in between both  $en$  and  $niet$  were exponents of negation.

## (34) Emphatic strategies

$en_{NEG} \dots niet_X \rightarrow en_{NEG} \dots niet_{NEG} \rightarrow en_X \dots niet_{NEG}$

## 3.2. Denegativizing

In the Jespersen cycles the new solitary stage does not have the old NEG1 anymore. It is legitimate to say that it actually already disappears as the doubling stage whenever it is no longer a true exponent of negation but only an ‘additional word’ X. We have already mentioned that when the old NEG1 marker has reached this X-stage, it is particularly liable to allow negative polarity uses. In this connection I will discuss two questions.

First, is it possible for an old NEG1 marker to have negative polarity uses and to have lost the negative proper use? For example, would it be possible for a future variety of French to allow (11a), repeated as (35a), yet not a simple negative declarative like (35b)?

## (35) French

- a. *Ils estiment que leur situation militaire est  
they think that their situation military is  
suffisamment solide pour empêcher que cet assaut  
sufficiently solid for prevent that this attack  
ne devienne une promenade militaire.  
X become.SUBJ a walk military*  
‘They think that their military situation is solid enough to prevent that their attack would become a military walk.’
- b. *Cet assaut ne devient pas une promenade militaire.  
This attack NEG becomes NEG a walk military*  
‘This attack does not become a military walk.’

This scenario has not materialized for French, obviously, and it has not happened for Dutch either. Of particular interest here are dialect data for Belgian Dutch. Belgian Dutch has the  $en_{NEG} \dots niet_{NEG}$  counterpart for  $ne_{NEG} \dots pas_{NEG}$ , and like French  $ne_{NEG}$ , Belgian Dutch  $en_{NEG}$  allows negative polarity uses. It appears from Neuckermans (2008: 181) that whenever a dialect allows *en* with negative polarity uses, it also allows the strictly negative uses, but not vice versa.<sup>15</sup> For Middle Low German and Middle English, however, the literature does contain the claim that an old negator may lose its negative uses and become entrenched in a negative polarity use. First, the Middle Low German case concerns ‘exceptive clauses’, i.e. ‘unless clauses’, exemplified in (36) in which *en* is hypothesized to have survived longer than in simple negative clauses (Breitbarth In print)

## (36) Middle Low German (Breitbarth In print)

- Vnde dar moste nummentyn, he ne gheue V mark  
and there must nobody.in he NEG would.give five  
mark  
vp dat minste  
up that least*  
‘and nobody must be admitted unless he gives at least five marks.’

The problem is though, in my view, that the *ne* marker still carries negative force, as we see when we paraphrase (36) as follows ‘if nobody is admitted, then any potential person trying to

be admitted did not give at least 5 marks'. Of course, the point remains interesting, because the exceptive clause is a very special type of negative clause.

Second, the claim about Middle English is found in Wallage (2008: 666-668), with Breitbarth (In print) in support. It says that when in (Late) Middle English *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> did not exist anymore, it still had a negative polarity use in complements of negated doubt.

- (37) Middle English (Wallage 2008: 666)  
 No man douteth that he ne is strong in whom he seeth strengthe  
 no man doubts that he X is strong in whom he sees strength  
 'No one doubts that that person is strong in whom he sees strength.'

I now come to a second question: can a NEG1 marker develop uses that are not even negatively polar anymore? Here the answer is positive, and for Dutch it has been claimed twice. The first case concerns the South Holland Katwijk dialect, again, and its grammarian Overdiep (Overdiep 1933a:23, Overdiep 1933b:45, Overdiep 1937: 455, Overdiep 1940). (38) is a case in point.

- (38) Katwijk  
*Toen ze bij de poort en kwamme ...*  
 when they at the gate X came  
 'When they arrived at the gate ...'

This *en* was restricted to subordinate clauses, it was optional, but under certain prosodic conditions<sup>16</sup> quite common, and because of the relevance of these prosodic conditions, Overdiep calls this use of *en* its 'rhythmical' use. A similar case has also been documented for present-day Belgian Brabantic dialects.

- (39) Belgian Brabantic (Neuckermans 2008: 176)  
*Ze pakte eu portefueille waar dase eu sleutel*  
 She took her wallet where that.she her key  
*in en doet.*  
 in en does  
 'She took the wallet of hers in which she puts her key.'

Here too the use is optional and restricted to subordinate clauses.

The restriction of this 'meaningless' *en* to subordinate clauses makes sense. It has long been known that *en* survives best in subordinate clauses. Perhaps Overdiep was the first to make this observation and it has been confirmed many times including also for the current dialects (Barbiers et al. 2009; see also for references). What we see in (39) can be considered as a final stage in the demise of the *en* marker: *en* still optionally occurs in its last stronghold, the subordinate clause, but it has totally lost its negative and its negative polarity meaning. At most, it can still be considered a marker of embeddedness, and an optional and rare one, for that matter. The fact that it currently only survives in Belgian Brabantic makes sense, too, for here *en*<sub>NEG</sub> only survives in subordinate clauses. So we don't have the subordinateness marker in dialects which have completely lost the negative use.

### 3.3. Tripling

The third question addressed in section is whether Jespersenian accumulation can only set in at a stage with a solitary negator. If it can also set in at the doubling stage, then we will effectively have tripling. The question was already asked by Blancquaert (1923: 68): he specifically asked whether Dutch *niet*<sub>#NEG</sub> could be combined with *en*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *niet*<sub>NEG</sub>. It was a real question, in the sense that Blancquaert did not himself know the answer. We have to wait until Pauwels (1958: 454) for an answer, and it is positive. He claims that in the Belgian Brabant dialect of Aarschot of the first part of the twentieth century, *niet*<sub>#NEG</sub> could be added to subordinate *en*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *niet*<sub>NEG</sub>.

- (40) *Pas op dat ge niet en valt nie.*  
 fit on that you NEG NEG fall NEG  
 ‘Take care that you don’t fall.’

Note that each of the negators is clausal: we are not dealing with a clausal negator in concord with some negative pronouns or negative adverbs of time, place or manner. There is no information as to whether this construction carries emphasis, but since at the time of the study neither *en*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *niet*<sub>NEG</sub> nor *niet*<sub>#NEG</sub> carried emphasis, I suspect that the tripling didn’t carry emphasis either.

A second positive answer takes us back to Lewo. According to Early (1994a, 1994b) reinterpreted a little by van der Auwera (2006), the language has two tripling strategies, one realis and the other irrealis. I will here focus on the irrealis strategy, because it is more transparent than the realis one (but see (27) for an example of realis tripling). With a second person subject prefix, the irrealis strategy has a prohibitive use. It comes in both a doubling and a tripling pattern.

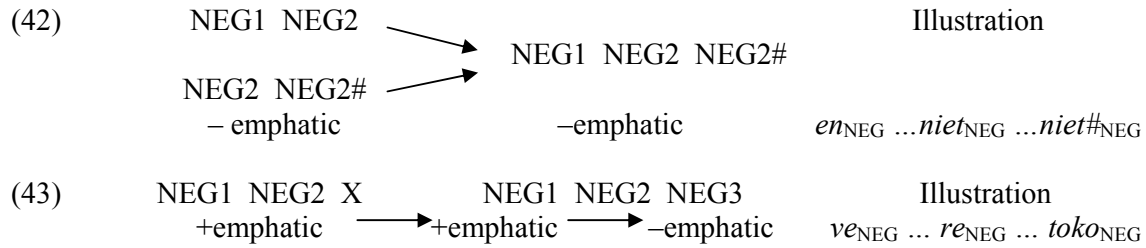
- (41) Lewo (Early 1994a: 76)
- |    |                          |     |     |
|----|--------------------------|-----|-----|
| a. | <i>Ve a-kan re!</i>      |     |     |
|    | NEG 2SG-eat              | NEG |     |
|    | ‘Don’t eat it!’          |     |     |
| b. | <i>Ve a-kan re toko!</i> |     |     |
|    | NEG 2SG-eat              | NEG | NEG |
|    | ‘Don’t eat it!’          |     |     |

The tripling structure is an innovation. The marker *toko* derives from a verb meaning ‘desist’. As a verb it combines with a nominalization, which also expresses prohibition.

- (41) Lewo (Early 1994a: 76)
- |    |                         |        |
|----|-------------------------|--------|
| c. | <i>Na-kan-ena toko!</i> |        |
|    | NOM-eat-NOM             | desist |
|    | ‘Desist from eating!’   |        |

In the pattern in (41b) *toko* is therefore not a verb with a complement ‘eating’: the form of the verb ‘eat’ is wrong and if it were the complement, the construction as a whole would have to mean ‘desist from not eating’, i.e., the opposite from what is actually meant. Early (1994a: 77) stresses that (41b) has no phonological break between *ve akan re* and *toko* and that it does not therefore mean ‘Don’t eat it, desist!’ or ‘Don’t it, don’t!’. However, I find it rather plausible to suppose that this double clause structure was the point of origin, an emphatic prohibition, which then, in good Jespersenian fashion, bleached to a neutral prohibition.

(42) and (43) schematize the two cases of tripling discussed above.



Note, finally, that what happens in Lewo tripling is a bit like Flemish reemphasizing. In both languages we had a –emphatic doubling strategy which became emphatic. In Flemish it happened through reanalysis of the doubling construction, and Lewo through the addition of yet a third negator.

#### 3.4. Skipping the reanalysis of doubling

Leaving out of account the tripling just discussed, we see that in the scenarios discussed so far a bipartite construction with two markers both of which are or become negative. If the new marker is not negative already (like Belgian Brabantic *niet*#), the reanalysis crucially takes place at a bipartite stage through the influence from the old negative marker. However, there is at least one situation where the old marker can be absent and the context can have a negation-inducing infect. Interestingly, the cases documented concern emphatic negation only. The example in (44) (discussed in Detges & Waltereit 2002: 187) concern French *pas du tout* ‘not at all’. In the context of *pas du tout* occurring as an answer to a polar question, it can be shortened to *du tout*.

- (44) - *Est-ce*        *votre avis?*  
 Is-this        your opinion  
 ‘Is this your opinion?’  
 - *Du tout!*  
 of all  
 ‘Not at all!’

The *pas* that could have been present is still fully negative, of course. It is not the case that *du tout* is taking over from *pas*. Rather, *du tout* is just an economical, i.e., elliptical version of *pas du tout*. It is hard to imagine how this phenomenon could ever make *du tout* a general negator and thus this phenomenon does not really deserve the ‘Jespersen cycle’ label. Yet these facts are of course related to the Jespersen facts, and the use of *du tout* should not be relegated to pragmatics. The elliptic uses of *du tout* has been conventionalized, in a way that distinguishes it from English *at all*, which does not allow this elliptic use.

#### 3.5. Another intermediate conclusion

The schema in (31) served as the intermediate conclusion of section 3. It already showed more Jespersen cycles than usually accepted. But this section pointed at even more action. (31) showed that if constructions change in emphasis, they invariably lose emphasis. But 3.1 showed that if Overdiep, Haegeman and Breitbarth are right, constructions might also gain an emphatic value, at least to a limited degree. (31) showed that an old negator will disappear.

3.2 did not contest this, but it documented a stage in which an old negator may survive without negative and even without negative polarity meanings, in the case at hand, it survives as a marker of embeddedness. (31) embodies the claim double negators can only simplify: this is not correct, after doubling one may get tripling. Finally, 3.4 reminds us of an ellipsis phenomenon that allows an emphasizing element to function as an exponent of negation without any intermediate doubling stage.

#### 4. Conclusion

By now there are too many possible Jespersen cycles to try to represent them all in one schema. I will use two schemas. The schema in (45) shows what happens to the negative constructions. In (45a) I describe the development of the combinations of NEG1 and either X (a minimizing or negative quantifier or any element of Miestamo (2005) asymmetry) or  $\emptyset$  (in case the new negator is the clause-final repetition of the existing one). The interesting stage is the third one: we either get a simplified solitary negator or we get negator tripling. In (45b-d) I show what happens to the components of the two source constructions. (45b) shows what happens to the old negator; the X in the third stage stands the Middle English expletive and for the subordinateness marker of Belgian Brabantic. (45c-d) show how the new negators, arising through either reanalysis ((45c)) or addition ((45d)), become second negators in the doubling constructions, and then either new solitary ones or third negators.

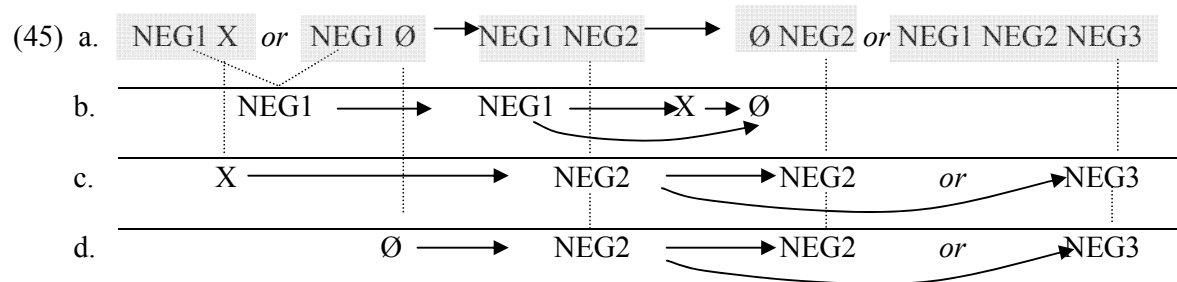
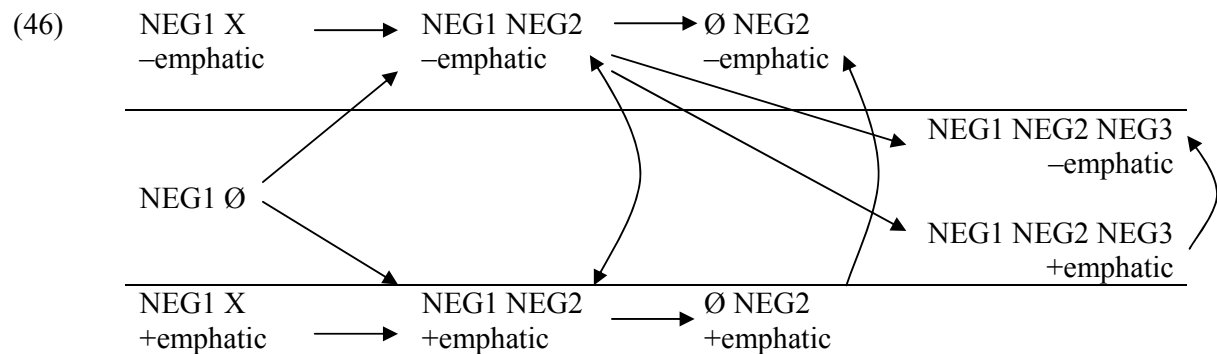


Diagram (46) describes the evolution of emphasis marking. Source constructions can be either –emphatic or +emphatic, and both reanalysis of an X element and the repetition of a negator can yield –emphatic and +emphatic constructions, independent of whether the results are doubling or tripling constructions. Constructions can more easily change from +emphatic to –emphatic (this is simply inflationary bleaching), but a change from –emphatic to +emphatic is not to be ruled out (the Flemish reemphasizing scenario discussed in 3.1.)



I hope to have shown that pluralizing the label ‘Jespersen cycle’ makes sense. The Jespersen cycle is more than a straightforward progression from elements like *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> to *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> over *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub>, and even this cycle is far from straightforward. I am, not of course, claiming that every variation will be equally frequent in the world’s languages. Most certainly not: a tripling cycle might be rare, as might be the cycle that makes clause-final negators that start as repetitions of clause-earlier negators. But just how rare these phenomena are we don’t know. Tripling, for example, is at least not exceedingly rare: it is also attested in a few Italian dialects (Parry 1997: 251) and more widely in Bantu (Devos, Kasombo Tshibanda and van der Auwera 2008). I agree with Van Gelderen (2008) that to get the whole picture, we have to look at the whole world.

## Notes

1. This paper was presented at the April 2008 Tempe conference on Linguistic Cycles and at the May 2008 Helsinki NORMS Workshop on dialectology (NORMS = Nordic Center of Excellence in Microcomparative Syntax). I have also profited from attending the June and August 2008 Leverhulme Trust Seminars on cycles of grammaticalization (Birmingham). Special thanks are due to Theresa Biberauer (Cambridge), Ludovic De Cuypere (Ghent), Gunther de Vogelaer (Ghent), Robert Early (Port Vila), Franck Floricic (Paris), Eitan Grossman (Jerusalem), Liliane Haegeman (Lille), Jack Hoeksema (Groningen), Mark Janse (Ghent), Mena Lafkioui (Ghent), Pierre Larrivé (Birmingham), Mair Parry (Bristol), Amina Mettouchi (Nantes), Matti Miestamo (Helsinki), Samia Naïm (Paris), Lene Schøsler (Copenhagen), Joop van der Horst (Leuven), Elly van Gelderen (Tempe), Willy Van Langendonck (Leuven), and Klaas Willems (Ghent). Special thanks are also due to Jean Winand (Liège), who drew my attention to his 1997 paper, which then directed me to Gardiner (1904). I also acknowledge project P6/44 on Grammaticalization and (Inter)Subjectification of the Belgian Federal Government for financial support.

The paper uses the following abbreviations: COP ‘copula’, NEG ‘negation’, NOM ‘nominalization’, PL ‘plural’, R ‘realis’, REL ‘relative’, SG ‘singular’, SUBJ ‘subjunctive’, X ‘element other than negation’, 1 ‘first person’, 2 ‘second person’, and 3 ‘third person’.

2. Barbiers et al (2009) and Neuckermans (2008) emanate from a Flemish Dutch dialect syntax project called ‘SAND’ (‘Syntactische Atlas van de Nederlandse Dialecten’), which received funding from 2000 to 2003, but continues to spawn and influence publications and new projects. Of course, Belgian Dutch negation had become important in theories of negation before, esp. thanks to Haegeman (e.g. Haegeman 1995). Other publications generated by SAND referred to in this paper are van der Auwera & Neuckermans (2004) and Zeijlstra (2004).
3. An example of an untypical case is Van Kemenade (1999: 148; also in Fischer et al 2000: 305). Here the four stages are stages 1, 2, 4, and 5 of the five stage model.
4. On the next page he writes in a way that could have seduced Dahl (1979) to honor Meillet rather than Jespersen:

Les langues suivent ainsi une sorte de développement en spirale : elles ajoutent des mots accessoires pour obtenir une expression intense : ces mots s’affaiblissent, se

dégradent et tombent au niveau de simples outils grammaticaux ; on ajoute de nouveaux mots ou des mots différents en vue de l'expression ; l'affaiblissement recommence et ainsi sans fin. (Meillet 1912 : 394 [1926 : 139-140])

Note that when Dahl (1979: 88) coins the phrase ‘Jespersen’s cycle’, he didn’t say that Jespersen (1917) was the first to make the relevant observation. This has been misunderstood later (e.g. Burridge 1983: 36, Postma 2002: 44, Mazzon 2004: 5, Roberts 2007: 142). Note that I do not claim that Gardiner (1904) was the first either. For French, for instance, the idea that the weakness of *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> plays a causal role is nicely expressed in Perle (1878: 407). So the historiography of the idea of the Jespersen cycle remains to be written, and an important part will concern scholars of Egyptian, Coptic, Berber and Arabic working independently of Jespersen (1917) and of the name giving Dahl (1979) (e.g. Gardiner 1904, Winand 1997 for Egyptian and Coptic and Chaker & Caubet eds 1996 for Arabic and Berber).

- 5 A full classification would also categorize accounts that neither follow Jespersen or Gardiner nor count as neutral but offer yet a different analysis. A recent account that belongs here is Breitbarth (In print), followed by Breitbarth & Haegeman (2008). Breitbarth (In print) claims that in West Germanic there was never a stage in which negation had two exponents. She argues (again only for West Germanic) that as soon as the strengthener became compulsory, it was the only negator. The reason for this is that by then the old negator had expanded its territory to non-negative uses and it was already used with negative pronouns and adverbs. I find the argument problematic, for the expansion of negators to non-negative yet still negatively polar contexts is a general property of negators (see the discussion around examples (10) and (11) below) and so is the collocation of a clausal negator with a negative pronoun or adverb (‘negative concord’) and it is at least not obvious how these general properties imply that the negativeness of the negator is damaged. With respect to the negative concord property, it is suggestive that in present-day Belgian Dutch dialects all allow negative concord: if they don’t have it with the old *en*, they do it with the new *niet*, and in the middle area they allow both *en... niet*, (thus combining with e.g. *niemand* ‘nobody’ and yielding *en... niemand, niemand ... niet*, and *en ... niemand ... niet* (van der Auwera and Neuckermans 2004). This suggests that the old *en* is no less negative than the new *niet*. Furthermore, the arguably most progressive dialect has denegativized the pronoun *niemand* but kept the clausal negator *niet*, thus yielding *iemand niet* ‘nobody’, literally ‘somebody not’ (van der Auwera, De Cuypere & Neuckermans 2006).
- 6 The negative that no longer has its full force is always an old negative. I venture the hypothesis that the likelihood of negative polarity is also partially a function of age: the older the marker the longer it had a chance of developing negative polarity uses. Thus all (?) the old Romance and Slavic markers corresponding to French *ne* all also have negative polarity uses, whether or not the languages have set on a Jespersen trajectory.
- 7 Note that this period of the ‘cohabitation’ of *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> and *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> was essentially all of Old and Middle French and a bit beyond (9<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century). There has been quite a bit of work, most recently Hansen (In print), Hansen and Visconti (In print), largely inspired by work of Schwenter (2006 on Catalan, Italian and Brazilian Portuguese) aiming to show out whether for some of this time the two strategies were different in terms of discourse status. Simplifying these accounts, one could say that the *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> ... *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> strategy was more ‘presuppositional’ (or ‘discourse-old’). I find this rather

plausible given that typical ‘not even a step’ and ‘not at all’ uses are also more presuppositional than the simple ‘not’. Bleaching then would first take away emphasis but leave the higher presuppositionality. Note though that the Schwenter approach has been criticized for French (Larrivée 2008, Schøsler 2008).


- 8 Here and elsewhere, no attempt is made to represent to faithfully represent the sounds or forms of the Dutch dialect facts.
- 9 This claim follows from the first one, but it is worthwhile separating both claims, for the second one, and not the first one, was argued to help explain the demise of the neutral *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> use.
- 10 A terminological difference between Lucas (2007) and De Cuypere et al (2007) and De Cuypere (2008) is that the latter do not consider the scenario described as a ‘Jespersen cycle’ but rather as an alternative.
- 11 When something is not even partially unaffected, it means that it is completely unaffected. So one might imagine a completeness marker to slide in the pragmatic Jespersen path and De Cuypere et al. (2007: 310) actually mention that the second of two negation exponents of the Barbacoan language Awa Pit is diachronically linked to a completive aspect marker (Curnow 1997: 332).
- 12 Note that there is even a third NEG marker *poli*. I will discuss tripling in 3.3.
- 13 The interpretation by Dahl (1995) and Miestamo (2005) is supported by some of Early’s phrasing. Early (1994a: 66) says that the *pe/ve* marker is ‘identical in form to that of the copula’, but it is clear from the rest of the analysis that it is really only the stem that is identical. Early (1994a: 80) also asked speakers whether they felt the negative markers and the copula to be the same and the answer ‘was somewhat confirmatory, and it certainly was not the same as some of the other homophones of the *ve* (verbs meaning ‘to weave’ and a commonly reduced form of one of the verbs ‘to say’.’ This somewhat confirmatory stand can easily be interpreted as meaning that speakers still felt the negative markers and the copulas to be related. Or as Robert Early (p.c.) puts it: ‘while speakers are readily aware of the phonological identity of the two forms, they generally understand the negative *pe/ve* as meaning ‘no’ and are somewhat bemused, and certainly don’t show any clear agreement, when asked if they think that it is the “same” as the copula *pe/ve*.’
- 14 Note that in subordinate clauses *niet*<sub>NEG</sub> precedes *en*<sub>X</sub>. It will be remembered from 1.1 that word order matters are not dealt in this paper.
- 15 Breitbarth & Haegeman (2008) argue that the fact that *en* allows negative polarity uses helped maintain *en* in negative *en ... niet* contexts. Given the dependency of negative polarity uses on negative uses, one would rather say the opposite. As already adumbrated by Jespersen (1917): though negative polarity uses of negative markers are always possible, they are particularly likely when a language is at *ne*<sub>NEG</sub> *pas*<sub>NEG</sub> stage. A further critical remark on the claim that negatively polar *en* helped maintain *en ... niet* concerns that the fact negatively polar *en* was common in Middle Dutch in areas where it no longer is now (i.e., whether it is either gone completely or where its use is very restricted) (Neuckermans 2008: 316-318; cp. also Postma 2002, Van der Horst 2008:

519, 753) So for these areas the negatively polar uses did not in fact save *en ... niet*. This remark is the diachronic counterpart to the synchronic that there are currently no dialects with negative polar *en* without negative *en ... niet*.

- 16 With the trisyllabic alternative past tense *kwaeme*, for instance, the *en* particle is impossible (Overdiep 1933b: 45).

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