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Two Types of Negative Markers

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In light of recent work on the structural properties of negation (Kitagawa (1986), Kayne (1989b), Pollock (1989), Laka (1988, 1989), Rivero (1988), among others), a question of considerable interest is whether all negative markers are the same or whether it is necessary to draw distinctions among them on the basis of their syntactic properties. Drawing evidence from two closely related Romance languages, Italian and Piedmontese, this paper shows that at least two syntactically different types of negative markers must be distinguished in Romance. One type of negative marker is a functional head, projects to a maximal category NegP, and takes TP as its obligatory complement. The other type of negative marker does not head a NegP, patterns with sentential adverbs and is free to occur in the absence of TP.

1 Distribution

Let us start by observing a contrast in the distribution of the Italian negative marker *non* and the Piedmontese negative marker *nen*. In Italian, the sentential negative marker *non* immediately precedes the finite verb, as shown in (1):

- (1) Maria *non* parla molto. (Italian)
Mary neg talks much
'Mary doesn't talk much.'

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In Piedmontese, on the other hand, the sentential negative marker *nen* follows the finite verb, as shown in (2):

- (2) Maria a parla *nen* tant. (Piedmontese)
 Mary cl talks neg much
 'Mary doesn't talk much.'

When the verb is an auxiliary, followed by a past participle, Italian *non* precedes the auxiliary, as shown in (3), while Piedmontese *nen* follows the auxiliary and precedes the past participle, as in (4):

- (3) Maria *non* ha parlato molto. (Italian)
 Mary neg has talked much
 'Mary hasn't talked much.'
- (4) Maria a l'ha *nen* parlà tant. (Piedmontese)
 Mary cl has neg talked much
 'Mary hasn't talked much.'

These contrasts are parallel to the contrast we find in French between preverbal *ne* on the one hand and postverbal *pas* on the other: French *ne* patterns with Italian *non*, while French *pas* patterns with Piedmontese *nen*. If we broaden our perspective to consider the group of Romance languages as a whole, we can make a first approximation that groups the negative markers in this language family into two categories: negative markers which pattern like Italian *non*, and negative markers which pattern like Piedmontese *nen*. For ease of exposition, we can label the Italian-looking negative markers preverbal, and we can think of the Piedmontese-type negative markers as postverbal (although what is really meant by postverbal is: following the finite verb). In Spanish, Catalan, Rumanian and Portuguese, for example, the negative markers are preverbal, as in Italian. In Occitan, Retho-Romantsch, Franco-Provençal and Milanese, on the other hand, to mention only a few languages of this type, the negative markers are postverbal, as in Piedmontese. (The postverbal negative markers are found in languages spoken in geographically contiguous areas, mainly in Northern Italy and Southern France).

Because the differences between Italian and Piedmontese reflect a difference found on a larger scale within Romance, a comparative study of negative markers in these two languages will further our understanding of the properties of negation in Romance.

I will discuss the contrast between Italian *non* and Piedmontese *nen* by asking whether their different position in finite clauses is only an artifact of other phenomena which distinguish the two languages, or whether it reflects some difference in their syntactic properties. I will ask whether one syntactic

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characterization suffices for both types of negative markers, or whether more than one is necessary. The larger question I am addressing is: is it correct to talk about Romance negation in syntactic terms as if it corresponded to one type of syntactic constituent, or is it necessary to distinguish between at least two syntactically different types of negative marker?

I will begin the discussion of the syntactic characterization of the negative markers in Italian and Piedmontese by describing three main differences between them. The first one concerns their distribution. The distribution of the Piedmontese negative marker *nen* as a sentential operator (i.e., leaving aside its occurrences with the function of constituent negation) overlaps with some sentential adverbs, for example the adverbs *già*, 'already', *anco*, 'yet', *mai*, 'never', *sempe*, 'always', *pi*, 'more'. As we can see in (5), these adverbs follow the finite verb, just like the negative marker *nen*:

- (5) Maria a parla *sempe/anco/già/pi*. (Piedmontese)
 Mary cl talks always/still/already/nomore
 'Mary always/still/already/nomore talks.'

Nen can even occur in combination with some of these adverbs, as we see in (6) and (7), in which case it follows them. These examples also show that *nen* need not be immediately adjacent to the verb: lexical material can intervene to separate it from the verb with which it is associated.

- (6) Maria a canta *pi nen*.
 Mary cl sings more not
 'Mary doesn't sing anymore.'
- (7) Maria a parla *anco nen*.
 Mary cl talks yet not
 'Mary isn't talking yet.'

Italian *non* differs from Piedmontese *nen* in this respect. First of all, it does not share its distribution with adverbial elements: *non* occurs between the subject (when one is present) and the verb, while sentential adverbs follow the verb, as shown in (8). Example (9) shows that adverbs in Italian cannot occur in the same position as *non*.

- (8) Maria *non* ha *ancora/mai* telefonato. (Italian)
 Mary neg has yet/never called
 'Mary hasn't yet called./'Mary has never called.'
- (9) *Maria *già/mai* ha telefonato.
 Mary already/never has called
 'Mary has already/never called.'

Furthermore, in contrast to Piedmontese *nen*, the Italian negative marker *non* must be immediately adjacent to the verb; no adverb can inter-

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vene between it and the verb, as shown by (10) and (11). The only lexical items which can intervene between *non* and the verb are pronominal clitics, as illustrated in (12).

- (10) **Maria non più canta.*
 Mary neg. more sings
 "Mary doesn't sing anymore"
- (11) **Maria non ancora canta.*
 Mary neg. yet sings
 "Mary isn't yet singing."
- (12) *Maria non gli parla.*
 Mary neg to-him talks
 'Mary doesn't talk to him.'

A second difference between the Italian and Piedmontese negative markers is that in Piedmontese, in purpose clauses the negative marker *nen* can occur to the left of the complementizer of the dependent clause:

- (13) *A l'ha fàit parèj për nen ch'a sè stofeissa.* (Piedm.)
 cl has done so for neg that cl himself bored
 'He did it that way so that he wouldn't get bored'

This property of *nen*, like the distributional properties described before, is not unique to the negative marker of Piedmontese, but is shared by other post-verbal negative markers in Romance, as shown in (14):

- (14) a *Je lui ai menti pour (ne) pas qu'il parte.* (French)
 I to-him have lied for neg that he leaves
 'I lied to him so that he wouldn't leave.'
- b *Li mentiguèri per pas que se'n anèsse.* (Occitan)
 to-him I lied for neg that he leave
 'I lied to him so that he wouldn't leave.'

Indeed in Quebecois, as shown by Daoust-Blais and Kemp (1979), this position to the left of the complementizer can be filled not only by the post-verbal negative marker *pas*, but also by the adverbs *jamais* and *plus* (as well as by the quantifiers *rien* and *personne*), as exemplified in (15):

- (15) *J'ai caché les ciseaux pour plus que ma fille se blesse.* (Quebecois)
 'I hid the scissors so that my daughter would no longer get hurt'

Leaving aside the question of the exact position of these elements in such a construction, let us simply observe that these data point in the same general direction as the data discussed above. That is, we see that the postverbal negative markers can occur in the same positions in which adverbs can occur.

Italian *non*, on the other hand, and - to the best of my knowledge -

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all of the preverbal negative markers which pattern like it in other Romance languages, cannot occur in such a position, to the left of COMP, as shown in (16)a - instead, it has to occur inside the clause, as shown in (16)b:

- (16) a *Ha fatto così per non che si stufasse. (Italian)
 has done so for neg that himself bored
 ‘He did it that way so that he wouldn’t get bored.’
 b Ha fatto così perchè non si stufasse.

A final difference between the Italian and Piedmontese negative markers concerns their interaction with movement. Piedmontese *nen* does not interfere with verb movement or with clitic movement: the finite V moves to the left of *nen* (just as it moves to the left of adverbs), and so do clitics, as shown in (17)a. Parallel facts are found in the other languages with postverbal negative markers of the type of Piedmontese *nen*, as exemplified in (17)b.

- (17) a A-m lo da *nen*. (Piedmontese)
 cl_{subj} - cl_{dat} . cl_{obj} . gives neg
 ‘He/she won’t give that to me.’
 b Mè lo donna *pa*. (Franco-Provençal)
 cl_{dat} . cl_{acc} . gives neg
 ‘He/she won’t give that to me.’

Italian *non*, on the other hand, does interfere with verb movement and with clitic movement (as do the negative markers of the type of Italian *non* in other Romance languages). The verb can never move to the left of *non*, as shown in (18):

- (18) *Maria parla *non*. (Italian)
 Mary talks neg
 ‘Mary doesn’t talk.’

That Italian *non* interferes with clitic movement is shown by cases of long clitic climbing, exemplified in (19). Certain Italian verbs, given an infinitival embedded clause, allow the clitic to be attached either to the embedded V, as in (19)a, or to the matrix V, as in (19)b. As has been noted in the literature (in particular, Kayne (1989b) and references therein), the presence of the negative marker *non* in the embedded clause interferes with the possibility of long clitic climbing, decreasing the acceptability of the sentence, as shown in (20)b, which contrasts with (19)b.

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- (19) a Devo parlarti.
 must talk-to-you
 'I must talk to you.'
- b Ti_i devo parlare e_i .
 To-you must talk
 'I must talk to you.'
- (20) a Devo non parlarti.
 must neg talk-to-you
 'I must not talk to you.'
- b ?? Ti_i devo non parlare e_i .
 To-you must neg talk
 'I must not talk to you.'

2 Structural Claim

On the basis of these differences between Italian *non* and Piedmontese *nen*, I suggest that the two negative markers need two distinct syntactic characterizations. In accord with many suggestions in the literature, I will take the fact that Italian *non* resembles the pronominal clitics in always adjoining to V, and the observation that its presence interacts with long clitic climbing as indications that it is an element of the same type as the pronominal clitics in terms of X-bar theory, namely a head. More precisely, I will follow Kayne (1989b) in assuming that we can interpret the blocking effect of the negative marker by viewing it as the head of a functional category, NegP, which lacks the ability to L-mark its sister constituent. Then we can say that the clitic cannot move out of a maximal projection which is a sister of *non* because this constituent, not being L-marked, will constitute a barrier to government. (The existence of a functional projection NegP was first suggested by Kitagawa (1986) for Japanese, then extended to Romance by Kayne (1989b), and since adopted by many others).

On the other hand, because the distribution of Piedmontese *nen* overlaps with that of adverbs, and because its presence does not interact with clitic movement, I will suggest that Piedmontese *nen* is not a functional head, but that it is an adverb-like element which occurs in an adjoined position. Being in such position, *nen* does not govern any head lower down in the structure, and consequently plays no role in head-to-head movement¹.

¹For the exact position of Piedmontese *nen*, see Kayne (this volume), where a proposal is made based on comparative evidence concerning the order of the verb with respect to clitics and adverbs.

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I further propose that the NegP headed by Italian *non* is structurally higher than inflection or, adopting a split INFL framework as suggested by Pollock (1989), higher than both projections of Infl. I suggest that Piedmontese *nen*, on the other hand, occupies a position which does not c-command all inflectional projections².

In the remainder of this paper, I will show how this proposal allows us to give a more precise characterization of the preverbal marker, to capture some properties of sentential negation in Romance, and to account for some other important differences between the preverbal and the postverbal negative markers. First I will present some reasons for having the NegP in a position structurally higher than INFL in Romance. Then I will suggest that Italian *non*, as a sentential operator, can only occur in the presence of a syntactic representation of tense. Finally I will conclude that it is the combination of these two properties of the preverbal negative marker, which are not shared by the postverbal negative marker, which accounts for the observed differences between Italian *non* and Piedmontese *nen*.

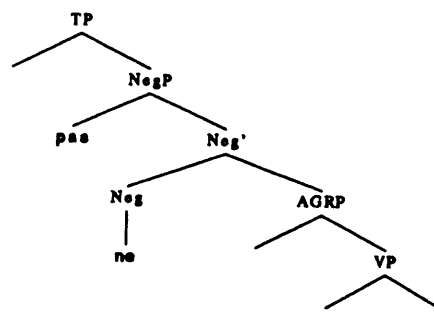
As already mentioned, there are many properties that the Italian negative marker *non* shares with other preverbal negative markers within the Romance family – for example, with French preverbal *ne*. Therefore, a natural question to ask is whether we could extend to Italian *non* the suggestion made by Pollock (1989) concerning the treatment of French *ne*. Pollock suggests that French (as well as English) has a maximal projection NegP, which is between TP and AGRP in the structural configuration, as shown in Fig.1; and that the preverbal negative marker *ne* is the head of the NegP. He assumes that *ne* obligatorily raises to the head of TP, by virtue of its clitic nature, and thus always precedes the verb in linear order.

Extending Pollock's proposal to Italian would require assuming that Italian *non*, in a fashion parallel to French *ne*, raises to the head of TP. Given the parallelism between Italian *non* and other preverbal negative markers in Romance, a unitary account of them would require assuming that all preverbal negative markers are base generated lower than TP but raise to the head of T by virtue of their clitic nature. I would like to suggest that this assumption is neither justified nor desirable.

It is not justified because Italian *non*, though it resembles a pronomi-

²I am here adopting Pollock's (1989) proposal, in which the functional projection TP precedes AGRP. For an alternative proposal, see Belletti (1988), where it is claimed -on the basis of morphological evidence- that the correct order of functional categories is in fact the opposite, i.e. AGRP preceding TP.

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Figure 1: Pollock's analysis of French *ne*

nal clitic *in* always adjoining to the verb, differs from the pronominal clitics *in* (at least) two important respects:

1. It can bear stress, while pronominal clitics never can:

(21) *Maria dice che non andrà.* (Italian)
 Mary says that neg go (Fut.)
 'Mary says that she won't go.'

2. While the clitics precede the finite forms of the verb but follow the non-finite forms of the verb, *non* always obligatorily precedes the verb, whether finite or not:

(22) a *Lo vedo.*
 it see (1st sg.)
 'I see it.'
 b *Vederlo.*
 'To see it.'

(23) a *Non lo vedo.*
 neg it see
 'I don't see it.'
 b *Non vederlo.*
 'Not to see it.'

Moreover, if once again we broaden our perspective and consider a larger number of Romance languages with preverbal negative markers, we observe the following: while languages show idiosyncratic variation in the ordering of their object clitics, the negative marker precedes the string of clitic elements and is not subject to reordering with them. If the negative marker had raised to the head of TP on a par with the pronominal clitics, we might expect some reordering among them to be possible³.

³There is one dialect where some reordering between the negative marker and object

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If, on the other hand, we assume a structure in which the NegP is higher than TP, there is no need to assume that the negative marker should be clitic in nature and that it must raise: the preverbal negative marker occurs to the left of the verb because it is base-generated there, and not because some kind of obligatory movement has applied. Moreover, if the negative marker is not necessarily clitic in nature, then the fact that it can bear stress is not surprising. By saying that the negative marker doesn't behave syntactically as a pronominal clitic, we also avoid having to explain why it does not behave like the pronominal clitics in preceding the finite verb while following the non-finite verb. Finally, assuming a structure in which the Negative Phrase is higher than both projections of INFL, it follows that *non*, the head of the NegP, is not part of the same constituent as the pronominal clitics, which -following Kayne (this volume)- can be said to be adjoined to an (empty) inflectional head; therefore, reordering among them is not expected.

Further support for an analysis in which the NegP is structurally higher than both projections of INFL comes from a study of the rules of sentential negation in the presence of negative quantifiers. It is a well-known fact that in Italian negation can take scope over the whole sentence when a negative quantifier is in preverbal subject position, as in (24).

- (24) *Nessuno è venuto.*
'Nobody came.'

On the other hand, when a negative quantifier is in a position lower than the V in the structure, for example within the VP, then it must be licensed by the presence of another negative element in a position higher than INFL: either another negative quantifier, or the negative marker *non*, as shown in (25). (In Zanuttini (1988) I have shown that the quantifiers exemplified in (25) are in fact full fledged negative quantifiers, and not polarity items.)

- (25) a **Ha detto niente.*
has said nothing
'He/she said nothing.'
b *Nessuno ha detto niente.*
nobody said nothing
'Nobody said anything.'
c *Non ha detto niente.*
'He/she said nothing.'

clitics is attested, namely Cairese, a variety of Piedmontese spoken in Cairo Montenotte, which has both a preverbal and a postverbal negative marker. In this dialect, the preverbal negative marker *n* precedes the third person object clitics but follows the first and second person object clitics and the clitic *s*, as noted in Parry (1989).

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This pattern, which is not unique to Italian but seems to be shared by the languages which have a preverbal negative marker, can be successfully captured by postulating the following constraint on sentential negation in Romance (Zanuttini (1989)):

(26) Negation can take sentential scope in Romance only if it is higher than INFL.

This constraint is reflected in a straightforward way in the structure suggested here for sentential negation, in which the NegP is higher than both projections of INFL.

3 Negation and Tense

Having presented some reasons for having the NegP higher than INFL in the structure, let me now discuss the second half of my proposal, which stems from that assumption. The present proposal views *non* as a functional head which takes TP as its complement. I want to suggest that this is not an accidental property of the preverbal negative marker *non*, but rather a crucial property which distinguishes it from postverbal negative markers of the type of Piedmontese *nen*. While *non* is a functional head which takes the Tense Phrase as its obligatory complement, *nen* is not a functional head with an obligatory complement.

This proposal makes the following prediction: whenever the Tense Phrase is missing, Italian *non* should not be able to occur as the sentential negative marker. To see whether this prediction is borne out by the data, let us focus on two constructions which have been said to lack the temporal element: absolute constructions and imperatives.

3.1 Absolute Constructions

Absolute constructions are dependent clauses which consist of a past participle followed by a lexical NP and, possibly, some other complement of the verb. In Italian, as noticed by Belletti (1981, 1989), they are acceptable with unaccusatives and with transitive verbs, while they are impossible with intransitives and highly restricted with passives. Two examples of this construction are given in (27) and (28):

- (27) *Arrivata in ritardo*, Maria non ha trovato posto a sedere.
 arrived late, M. neg has found place to sit
 'Having arrived late, Mary couldn't find a place to sit.'

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- (28) *Passato quell' esame*, Maria è andata avanti senza problemi.
 passed that exam, M. has then proceeded without problems
 'Having passed that exam, Mary went on without any problem.'

Although I paraphrased them in English by means of a gerundive, in Italian they are clearly distinct from clauses with gerundives. Belletti (1989) suggests that absolute constructions should be viewed as being AGRP's which lack a temporal specification and have no Tense projection at all. Kayne (1989a), though differing from Belletti in his account of some of the properties of these constructions, also suggests that they should be represented as simple AGRP's.

Given these analyses, the present account predicts that *non* should not be able to occur within these structures, since its obligatory complement, TP, is not present. This prediction is correct: as already noted by Belletti (1989), absolute constructions cannot be negated by *non*:

- (29) **Non arrivata in tempo*, Maria non ha trovato posto a sedere.
 neg arrived in time, M. neg has found place to sit
 'Not having arrived in time, Mary couldn't find a place to sit.'
- (30) **Non passato quell'esame*, Maria ha avuto molto problemi.
 neg passed that exam, M. then had many problems
 'Not having passed that exam, Mary then had many problems.'

By assuming that *non* is the head of the NegP and that it takes TP as its obligatory complement, we can account for the impossibility of the presence of *non* in these constructions by deriving it from the absence of a tense projection.

3.2 Imperatives

Imperatives can also be said to lack a temporal projection. Italian has a true imperative form only in the second person singular; that is, only the second person singular form is unique to imperatives, while the form employed for the second person plural is formally indistinguishable from the corresponding form in the indicative.

- (31) a Telefona! (2nd sg. - imperative form)
 b Telefonate! (2nd pl.- same form as the indicative)
 Call!

Let us therefore assume, as suggested by Rivero (1988) and Kayne (in preparation), that while the second person singular is a true imperative form, the second plural is a suppletive form: that is, a form of the indicative

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used in place of the missing imperative form. In the presence of negation, the pattern is as shown in (32):

- (32) a **Non telefona!* (2nd sg.)
 b *Non telefonate!* (2nd pl.)
 Don't call!

The Italian negative marker *non* cannot occur with the true imperative form, but it can occur with the suppletive form. In fact, the negative counterpart of the second person singular imperative is expressed by means of another suppletive form, the infinitival form:

- (33) *Non telefonare!* (2nd sg. - same form as the infinitive)
 Don't call!

The present account provides a simple explanation of this contrast by suggesting that *non* cannot occur with a true imperative form because such form lacks a TP. In contrast, *non* can occur with a suppletive form because such forms, borrowed from the indicative, the subjunctive or the infinitive, have a tense projection.

This conclusion is further supported by the fact that Spanish, which has true imperative forms for both 2nd person singular and 2nd person plural, doesn't allow the presence of the negative marker *no* with either form, and expresses the negative imperative by negating the subjunctive - a tensed form. On the other hand, Piedmontese - which has a true imperative form - doesn't have the same constraint on the co-occurrence of the negative marker *nen* with the imperative, as shown in (34):

- (34) a *Parla!* (2nd sg.) (Piedmontese)
 Talk!
 b *Parla nen!*
 Don't talk!

This is precisely what we would expect if the postverbal negative marker *nen* is not a functional head which takes TP as its obligatory complement⁴.

⁴An alternative account of the impossibility of the co-occurrence of preverbal negation with imperatives is found in Rivero (1988), where such constraint is discussed with respect to the Balkan languages. Rivero's suggestion is that the imperative verb moves to COMP and that the negative phrase is an intervening barrier which blocks such movement. A similar proposal cannot be extended to Italian, since this language has constructions in which the verb moves to COMP and yet the preverbal negative marker is allowed to occur, as in (i):

- (i) *Non essendo io arrivata in tempo, non ho più trovato posto a sedere.*
 not having I arrived in time, I couldn't find a place to sit.
 'Not having arrived in time, I couldn't find a place to sit.'

Examples of this type, known as AUX-to-COMP constructions, are discussed in Rizzi (1982), Ch.3.

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4 Conclusion

In this paper I have shown that at least two syntactically different types of negative marker must be distinguished in Romance. These two different types are exemplified by the Italian preverbal negative marker *non* and by the Piedmontese postverbal negative marker *nen*. I have proposed that the negative markers of the type of Italian *non* are the head of a NegP which is structurally higher than both projections of INFL. The negative markers of the type of Piedmontese *nen*, on the other hand, are adverb-like elements occupying a position which is not higher than all inflectional projections. Moreover, the two types of negative markers differ in yet another important respect: while the preverbal negative marker takes TP as its obligatory complement, and therefore can occur only in the presence of a syntactic representation of tense, the postverbal negative marker is not subject to this restriction. This contrast provides an explanation for some interesting differences found in their distribution.

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