On the Behaviour of the English Negative Quantifier *no* in Sentential Negation Tests

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In this article I show that, when compared to other English negative quantifiers, *no* behaves unexpectedly when diagnostic tests of sentential negation are applied. I argue that this can be accounted for within an approach to negative quantifiers that assumes them to be complex syntactic objects involving a negative head and an existential Determiner Phrase (DP) and that allows Parallel Merge to generate multidominant phrase markers. Within this view, the verb selects just the existential part of the negative quantifier, while Negation (Neg) also (Parallel) Merges with it. In the case of *no* I claim that, unlike what is the case for other negative quantifiers, Neg only targets the D head rather than the entire existential DP. This results in a complex left-branching structure that, as such, needs to be transferred upon Merge, thus freezing Neg in the Tense Phrase (TP). As TP is the syntactic domain that sentential negation tests are sensitive to, *no* can do nothing but behave consistently in sentential negation tests, showing, unlike other negative quantifiers, no asymmetry related to the position where it occurs.

Keywords: negative quantifier; negation; multidominance; asymmetry; English; *no*

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Sobre el comportamiento del cuantificador negativo del inglés *no* en los diagnósticos de negación oracional

En este artículo se muestra que, en comparación con otros cuantificadores negativos del inglés, *no* se comporta de forma inesperada cuando se aplican los diagnósticos de negación oracional. Se argumenta que esto se puede explicar en un enfoque donde los cuantificadores negativos

son objetos sintácticos complejos con un núcleo negativo y un Sintagma Determinante (SD) existencial y que permite que el Ensamble Paralelo genere marcadores sintagmáticos multidominantes. Así, el verbo selecciona sólo la parte existencial del cuantificador negativo, mientras que la Negación (Neg) también se Ensambla (Paralelamente) con ésta. En el caso de *no* se afirma que, a diferencia de lo que sucede con otros cuantificadores negativos, la Neg sólo se combina con el núcleo D y no con el SD existencial entero. El resultado es una estructura compleja que se ramifica a la izquierda que, como tal, debe transferirse en cuanto se Ensambla, congelando así la Neg en el Sintagma Tiempo (ST). Dado que el ST es el dominio sintáctico al que los diagnósticos de negación oracional son sensibles, *no* no puede más que comportarse de forma consistente en los diagnósticos de negación oracional, sin mostrar, a diferencia de otros cuantificadores negativos, ninguna asimetría relacionada con la posición en la que ocurre.

Palabras clave: cuantificador negativo; negación; multidominancia; asimetría; inglés; *no*

1. Introduction

In this article I address a number of polarity-related puzzles that have been reported in the linguistics literature and show that they can essentially be reduced to the observation that, when used as an object, the English negative quantifier *no* does not respond to Klima's (1964) tests of sentential negation in the same way as other negative quantifiers, such as *nothing*, *nobody*, do. I further claim that such behaviour falls into place if: a) negative quantifiers are assumed to be non-atomic—i.e. decomposable into a negative part and an existential part—and b) phrase structure is allowed to be multidominant—i.e. with a certain node having two mothers.[1] Except for the assumption of multidominance (Citko 2005, 2011a, 2011b), the theoretical framework used for the analysis in this work is a minimalist approach to syntax along the lines of Chomksy (1995) and subsequent work.

The article is organised as follows. In this section, I outline the differences that can be observed between the object negative quantifier *no* and other object negative quantifiers when certain classical tests for the diagnosis of sentential negation are applied. These tests include a) adding a question tag to the main sentence, b) *either/too* licensing, c) *so-/neither*-coordination and d) following up the main sentence with a so-called expression of agreement clause such as *Yes, I guess so* or *No, I guess not*. In section 2, I review Postal's (2004) account of the ambivalent behaviour of *nothing* and in section 3 I put forward an alternative analysis, largely based on Tubau (2020), that can explain why the negative quantifier *no* does not behave like other negative quantifiers when submitted to sentential negation tests. Section 4 concludes the article.

The first polarity-related puzzle concerns the observation that, unlike other English negative quantifiers such as *nothing* or *nobody*, which can take either a positive or a negative question tag, (1), the negative quantifier *no* in object position can only take a positive question tag, as shown in (2).

(1) a. John saw *nothing*, *did he*?
     b. John saw *nothing*, *didn't he*?

(2) a. John read *no* book, *did he*?
     b. John read *no* book, **didn't he*?

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[1] Since the 1980s there has been a tradition of exploring remerge possibilities that involve (some version of) multidominance, Parallel Merge or sharing (McCawley 1982; Ojeda 1987; Blevins 1990; Wilder 1999; Nunes 2001, 2004; Chung 2004; Chen-Main 2006; Citko 2005, 2011a, 2011b; de Vries 2005, van Riemsdijk 2006, Johnson 2007, among others). Some phenomena that have been deemed to require a multidominant approach are Right Node Raising (McCawley 1982; Ojeda 1987; Wilder 1999, 2008; Chung 2004; de Vries 2005; Chen-Main 2006; Johnson 2007; Kluck 2009, among others), wh-amalgams and cleft-amalgams (Guimarães 2004; Kluck 2009, among others), Across-the-Board movement (Williams 1978; Goodall 1987; Citko 2005, among others), transparent free relatives (van Riemsdijk 1998, 2006), parasitic gap constructions (Nunes 2001, 2004), coordinated wh-constructions (Gracanin-Yeksek 2007), appositional constructions (Heringa 2009) and, more recently, the interaction between negative indefinites and ellipsis (Temmerman 2012), and the interaction between negative indefinites and Klima's tests (Tubau 2020).

According to Klima (1964), sentences containing an instance of sentential negation—i.e. a negation that negates the entire proposition—take a positive question tag, whereas an affirmative sentence would take a negative question tag. The data in (1) and (2), therefore, show that only the negative quantifier *no* behaves as expected from a lexical item that introduces an instance of sentential negation (cf. Quirk and Greenbaum 1973).

The second polarity-related puzzle follows from McCawley's (1998, 607) observation that both *either* and *too* are possible when a negative quantifier such as *nothing* occurs in object position, as in (3), but not when the negative quantifier object is *no*, as in (4). The possibility of licensing *either* vs. the impossibility of licensing *too* is another test that Klima (1964) uses to diagnose sentential negation and, again, only *no* uniformly licences *either* but not *too*, as is expected from a lexical item that negates the entire proposition.

(3)   a.   John said *nothing* and Mary said *nothing*, *either*.
      b.   John said *nothing* and Mary said *nothing*, *too*.

(4)   a.   John read *no* book and Mary read *no* book, *either*.
      b.   John read *no* book and Mary read *no* book, **too*.

The third puzzle comes from Jackendoff's (1972, 364) observation that both *neither* and *so* are possible with object negative quantifiers such as *nothing* and *nobody*, while this is not the case with *no*, which only allows *neither*-coordination. This is shown in (5) and, as was the case with the two previous tests, only *no* invariably behaves as a canonical negative expression.

(5)   a.   John contributed *no* idea/*nothing* and *neither* did Mary.
      b.   John contributed **no* idea/*nothing* and *so* did Mary (adapted from Postal 2004, 164).

Finally, the fourth puzzle connected to the different behaviour of *no* vs. other negative quantifiers when submitted to sentential negation diagnostics is noted in Postal (2004, 164), who shows that both expression of agreement clauses *Yes, I guess so* and *No, I guess not* are compatible with object negative quantifiers other than *no*. This is illustrated in (6) and (7).

(6)   a.   Karen sent *nothing* to them, did she? *Yes, I guess so / No, I guess not.
      b.   Karen sent *nothing* to them, didn't she? Yes, I guess so / *No, I guess not (Postal 2004, 170).

(7)   John read *no* book yesterday. *Yes, I guess so / No, I guess not (adapted from Postal 2004, 165).

All in all, the data presented above not only show that the behaviour of *nothing* in (1), (3), (5a) and (6b) is unexpected for an element that contributes sentential negation, but also that there is a clear asymmetry in the behaviour of *nothing* and *no* when these occur in object position. This leads to two main research questions, namely: 1) why it is possible for negative quantifiers in object position—other than *no*—to display variation when submitted to classical tests of sentential negation and 2) why there is a difference between *no* and other negative quantifiers. In section 2, I review Postal's (2004) answer to question 1, based on the existence of two lexical entries for negative quantifiers such as *nothing*, and in section 3 I outline the proposal by Tubau (2020), based on the existence of two available grammars in English that correlate with the availability of two distinct polarity heads. While the activation of one polarity head or the other is usually irrelevant for the syntax, its consequences become observable when sentential negation tests are used in sentences with an object negative quantifier. This is, of course, provided the negative quantifier is not *no*. The purpose of this article is to explain why this is the case, which corresponds to research question number 2.

2. The Ambivalent Behaviour of *Nothing* According to Postal (2004)

Postal (2004, 172) claims that "the curious behavior of the form *nothing* noted by McCawley receives a rather elegant account if it is recognized that in addition to a standard analysis as a [Determiner Phrase] with a negative quantifier D, *nothing* has a distinct analysis under which it is in effect a type Z vulgar minimizer based on a noun stem *nothing* taking the same *zero* D as other type Z vulgar minimizers" (italics in the original). Vulgar minimisers, which are often referred to as *squatitive negation* (Horn 2001), or *SQUAT* (Postal 2004), include taboo words such as *dick*, *jack-shit* and *squat*, among others, that can be used to express the meaning of *nothing*.[2]

Postal (2004, 160), as can be seen in the quote, also mentions a different class of vulgar minimisers, which he calls *Z-type minimizers*. This class includes lexical items such as *zero*, *zilch*, *zip* and *zippo*, and unlike vulgar minimisers, they cannot occur under the scope of negation, (8c) vs. (8a, b).

(8) a. He doesn't know jack-shit about it.
     b. He knows jack-shit about it.
     c. ??He doesn't know zippo about it.

However, Z-type minimisers cannot be assumed to contain an instance of logical negation as part of their structure, as they (i) cannot express Double Negation readings, (9a); (ii) unambiguously select a negative question tag, (9b); (iii) impose

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[2]   (i) *SQUAT* = Vulgar Minimizers = {beans, crap, dick, diddley, diddley-poo, diddley-squat, fuck-all, jack, jack-shit, jack-squat, piss-all, poo, shit, shit-all, squat} (Postal 2004, 159).

obligatory *too* licensing, (9c), as well as (iv) obligatory *so*-coordination, (9d); (v) are ungrammatical with *not even* + XP continuation clauses, (9e); (vi) cannot support a negative parenthetical, (9f); (vii) require an *I guess so* expression of agreement clause, (9g); and (viii) cannot license negative polarity items, (9h).

(9)   a.   *No professor favoured SQUAT (the sentence is ungrammatical and IT CANNOT MEAN 'Every professor favoured some proposal').
      b.   Janet read squat *did/didn't she?
      c.   Janet read squat and Hilda read squat, too/*either.
      d.   Janet read squat and so/*neither did Hilda.
      e.   Janet read squat yesterday, *not even the assigned book.
      f.   Janet read squat yesterday, *I don't think.
      g.   Jane read squat yesterday. Yes, I guess so. / *No, I guess not.
      h.   *Helga learned squat in any convent at all. (adapted from Postal 2004, 164-66, ex. (23)-(30))

In light of this evidence, Postal (2004, 166) analyses Z-type minimisers as in (10), and claims that the ambivalent behaviour of *nothing* can be explained by assuming that apart from a negative quantifier entry, (11a), *nothing* also has a Z-type minimiser lexical entry, (11b).

(10)   type Z <u>squat</u> = [$_{DP}$ [$_D$ zero] + [$_N$ squat]]

(11)   a.   nothing = [$_{DP}$ [$_D$ NEG + some] + [$_N$ thing]]
       b.   nothing = [$_{DP}$ [$_D$ zero] + [$_{N, vulgar\ minimiser}$ thing]]

While using the lexical entry in (11a) in a sentence would lead the sentence to be diagnosed as negative in Klima's tests of sentential negation, the use of (11b) would result in the tests not diagnosing the sentence as negative.

   As appealing as Postal's account may be, it crucially leaves one question unanswered. Supposing that the ambivalent behaviour of object negative quantifiers is a consequence of their having two different lexical entries, it is not clear why this should not also be the case for the negative quantifier *no*.

   It is also reported in the literature that the observations made for object *nothing* extend to object *nobody*, as shown in (12), thus making the behaviour of *no* even more puzzling.

(12)   John saw *nobody*, did*(*n't*) he? (Zeijlstra 2004, 48)

In addition, while object negative quantifiers may show ambivalent behaviour when it comes to the diagnosis of sentential negation, subject negative quantifiers

unambiguously behave as negative lexical items, (13a), and so does the adjunct quantifier *never*, (13b). *No*, by contrast, always behaves as a truly negative element—see examples (2), (4), (5) and (7) above.

(13) a. *Nobody* saw John, did(*n't*) they? (Zeijlstra 2004, 48)
     b. John *never* read the book, did(*n't*) he?

Syntactic analyses of the facts described above have been attempted by scholars such as Moscati (2006) and De Clercq (2010a, 2010b) under the assumption that sentences with object negative indefinites are not typed as negative when Klima's tests apply and are hence diagnosed as non-negative sentences. As discussed in Tubau (2020), though, both analyses face an essential problem. Namely, both Moscati (2006) and De Clercq (2010a, 2010b) assume that the sentence is typed as affirmative by default, which amounts to saying that the proposition is not negated. This is incompatible with the truth-conditions that the speakers attribute to these sentences, which are semantically negative.

In Moscati (2006), the functional category Force—above Tense Phrase (TP)—is assumed to bear an uninterpretable and unvalued negative feature that Probes for the matching interpretable feature contained in a negative indefinite. When the negative indefinite is more significantly embedded in the Verb Phrase (VP; i.e. when it is in object position), valuation is not possible and the feature in Force is valued as positive by default. There is no explanation as to why this is not also the case for the negative indefinite *no*, though.

De Clercq (2010a, 2010b) assumes a Polarity (Pol) head in the Complementiser Phrase (CP) domain that requires valuation. While negative indefinites can potentially value such a feature, this is not possible when they are within the VP—the complement of the phase head little *v*—which does not participate in the CP-phase. Thus, the Pol head is valued as affirmative by default.

In the next section, I put forward an analysis, along the lines of Tubau (2020), which accounts for the facts presented in this section while also offering a potential explanation to the mystery of the uniform syntactic behaviour of the negative quantifier *no*. Such an account assumes negative quantifiers to be decomposable into a negative part and an existential quantifier, an idea that goes back to Klima (1964). Decomposition of negative quantifiers gives a certain flexibility to the negative part, which can take scope independently from the existential part. A further assumption is that Neg can undergo Parallel Merge, which, as shown below, results in a multidominant phrase marker. This ensures that Neg has enough flexibility, despite having been Merged low, to engage in syntactic computations in higher domains.

In what follows, I discuss the fact that the particular way in which the negative part of the negative quantifier syntactically relates to the rest of the clause crucially determines the outcome of the different sentential negation diagnostic tests. This is

why an asymmetry exists between object negative quantifiers and subject and adjunct negative quantifiers on the one hand and between the negative quantifier *no* and *nothing*, *nobody* and *none* on the other.

### 3. On the Syntax of the Negative Quantifier *no*

In this section, I put forward a syntactic analysis of the English negative quantifier *no* that accounts for the fact that it reacts canonically to Klima's (1964) classical tests of sentential negation while other negative quantifiers in object position may not. In order to articulate this analysis, nonetheless, an outline of the main ideas in Tubau (2020) needs to be provided, as the novelty of the present article is, precisely, that it contributes an extension of that particular account to accommodate the unexpected behaviour of *no*. Recall that unlike other English negative quantifiers such as *nothing* or *nobody*, the negative quantifier *no* does not show any asymmetry when it comes to the tests of sentential negation.

3.1. Tubau (2020)

It has been reported in the literature that diagnostic tests for sentential negation fail when applied to object negative quantifiers but not when applied to subject or adjunct negative quantifiers, so a proposal is put forward in Tubau (2020) that relies on the following theoretical assumptions relating to the nature of negative quantifiers: a) negative quantifiers are not atomic, but decomposable entities that contain an instance of negation that syntactically—and morphologically—combines with an existential quantifier (cf. Klima 1964; Jacobs 1980; Ladusaw 1992; Rullmann 1995; Sauerland 2000a; Penka and Zeijlstra 2010; Iatridou and Sichel 2011; Penka 2011; Zeijlstra 2011; Temmerman 2012, among others); b) negative quantifiers are multidominant phrase markers derived by means of Parallel Merge, a type of Merge discussed in Citko (2005, 2011a, 2011b). It is the multidominant character of negative quantifiers that allows their negative part to enjoy enough flexibility to remerge in a polarity-dedicated position higher up in the clausal spine.
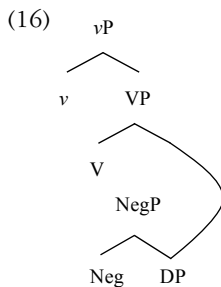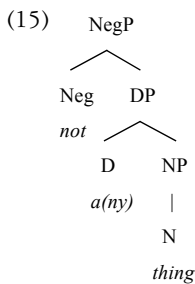
According to Citko (2005, 2011a, 2011b) Parallel Merge, (14c), emerges from the combination of the two different types of Merge discussed in Chomsky (2004). These are *External Merge*, (14a), and *Internal Merge*, (14b).
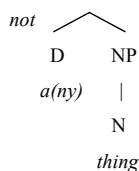
(14) a.   α   External Merge

          α   β

b.   γ   Internal Merge

     γ

     γ   α

         α   β

c.   α   γ   Parallel Merge

  α   β   γ
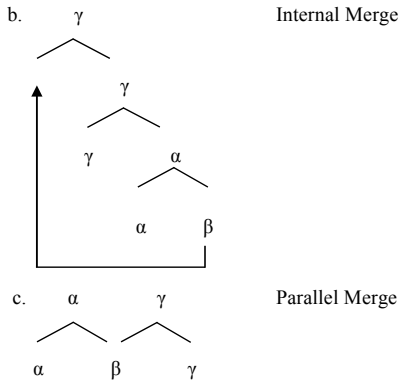
Parallel Merge (14c), allows β, which is part of the complex syntactic object α, to Merge with another syntactic object, γ, thus resulting in β having two mothers, namely α and γ. This configuration corresponds to a multidominant phrase marker.

When it comes to English negative quantifiers, Johnson (2010) and Temmerman (2012) have argued that these undergo Parallel Merge with the Verb (V) when in object position. If negative quantifiers are decompositional—i.e. made up of a Negation (Neg) and an existential quantifier, as shown in (15) for the negative quantifier *nothing*—it should be possible for the V to select only the Determiner Phrase (DP) corresponding to the existential part of the negative quantifier, but not Neg. This is shown in (16), where the curved line indicates that the DP is a multidominant phrase marker: it is selected both by Neg and by V.

(15)   NegP

     Neg   DP

     not

          D   NP

          a(ny) |

                    N

                  thing

(16)   *v*P

     v   VP

     V

          NegP

       Neg   DP

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 not  ⌒
      D   NP
    a(ny)  |
            N
          thing
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Thanks to the fact that the negative part of the object negative quantifier–NegP–is not c-commanded by the phase head (a side effect of the multidominant nature of this phrase marker), it escapes Transfer upon completion of the vP-phase.[3] This allows NegP to remerge in a higher position, as it is assumed that non-transferred material is still available for further computation.[4]

Concerning the syntax of the constructions that Klima's tests involve—namely polarity-reversed tag questions, *neither/so*-coordination and *either/too* licensing—the following assumptions are made in Tubau (2020): a) tag questions involve *or*-coordination (cf. Krifka 2016), whereas *neither/so*-coordination is an instance of *and*-coordination; b) English makes available two positions for sentential negation—one inside and one outside TP (Cormack and Smith 2002; Butler 2003; Holmberg 2003; Temmerman 2012, among others);[5] c) the TP is the relevant syntactic structure for *or*-coordination in tag questions, for *and*-coordination in *neither/so*-coordination and for *either/too* licensing.
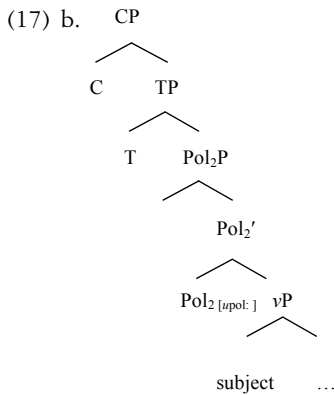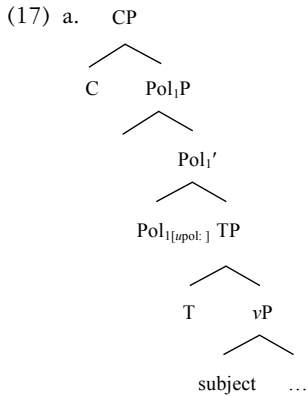
The two positions that English makes available for negation are shown in (17a) and (17b).[6] They are Polarity (Pol) heads that project into a Polarity Phrase (PolP), thus making a Specifier position available where NegP, the negative part of the negative quantifier, can remerge.

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[3] According to Chomsky (2004, 2008) Transfer is a cyclical operation that applies to narrow syntax and sends the complement of a phase head to the Phonetic Form and the Logical Form—also known as the interfaces. After Transfer, the complement of a phase head is no longer accessible for further syntactic operations. In Chomsky (2008), little v and C are phase heads.

[4] I direct the reader to Temmerman (2012, 136 and ff.) for details on the linearisation of the negative quantifier and the composition of the existential part of the negative quantifier and NegP as a single lexical unit by means of a post-syntactic operation known as Fusion Under Adjacency. Remerge of NegP to a higher position results in conflicting ordering statements, but Temmerman follows Johnson (2007) in assuming that these can be disposed of (i.e. tolerance). This allows negation to be pronounced in a different position to that where it is actually interpreted.

[5] Cormack and Smith (2002), Butler (2003) and Holmberg (2003, 2011) establish the existence of two different structural positions for English negation upon inspection of its interaction with modality.

[6] These two possible positions for the Polarity head correspond to whether the functional head is merged before or after TP. As stated by Craenenbroeck (2010), the difference between activating Pol_1 or Pol_2 has little impact in the simple English sentence, but in terms of the data considered in this paper (as well as in Tubau 2020), whether Pol_1 or Pol_2 is active becomes crucial.

(17) a.   CP
```
          CP
         /  \
        C   Pol₁P
             \
             Pol₁′
            /    \
    Pol₁[upol: ]  TP
                 /  \
                T    vP
                    /  \
              subject  …
```

(17) b.   CP
```
          CP
         /  \
        C    TP
            /  \
           T   Pol₂P
                \
                Pol₂′
               /    \
        Pol₂[upol: ]  vP
                     /  \
               subject   …
```

The ultimate purpose of the remerge of NegP is the valuation of an unvalued uninterpretable polarity feature, [$u$pol:], contained in the active Pol head and necessary for clause-typing (Tubau 2008; De Clercq 2010a, 2010b, among others). If the feature [$u$pol:] is valued as negative, the sentence conveys sentential negation. It is thanks to the fact that the existential part of the negative quantifier is of a multidominant nature—Merged with both Neg and V—that the NegP of an object negative quantifier escapes Transfer upon completion of the vP-phase. This allows NegP to remerge either in the Specifier of Pol₁P—above the TP—or the Specifier of Pol₂P—below the TP—in English. This remerge results in clause-typing of the sentence as negative regardless of which Pol head is active, but the activation of either Pol₁ or Pol₂ has an observable effect in sentential negation tests, as discussed below.

Inspired by Krifka (2016) and following the assumptions by Progovac (1998a, 1998b), Tubau (2020) assumes the syntax of question tags to involve *or*-coordination. Unlike the analysis in Tubau (2020), who places the first conjunct (the anchor clause)

in the Specifier of Conjunction Phrase (ConjP), a dedicated functional head, and the second conjunct (the question tag) as its complement, I here follow the analysis by Munn (1993) on coordination, (18).[7] In the structure I assume, CP_1 (the anchor clause) is derived first, with ConjP right-adjoining to the TP of the first conjunct and its head, Conj, undergoing Parallel Merge with the TP of the second conjunct (the question tag), very much in the same way V selects the DP as its complement in (16) above.

(18)
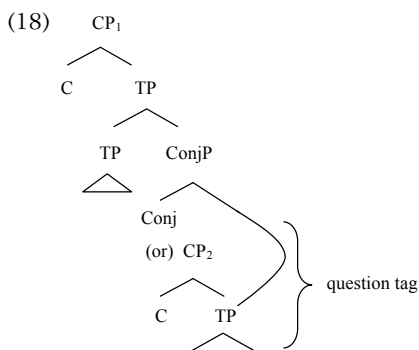
Recall that, according to Klima's (1964) tests of sentential negation, the polarity of the question tag diagnoses whether a given clause conveys sentential negation (positive question tag) or not (negative question tag). If there is a Neg inside the TP of the first conjunct, the conjunction *or* will reverse it to affirmative polarity in the complement TP—the question tag—thus resulting in (1a), repeated here as (19a). If, by contrast, there is no Neg inside the TP in the first conjunct, *or* will reverse its polarity to negative in the complement TP, and result in (1b), repeated here as (19b).

(19) a. John saw *nothing*, *did he?*
     b. John saw *nothing*, *didn't he?*

This is why whether it is Pol_1 or Pol_2 that is active in a speaker's grammar is crucial when it comes to object negative quantifiers interacting with the syntax of question tags, *neither/so*-coordination and *either/too* licensing. If Pol_2 is active, a negation in its Specifier is inside the TP and, therefore, affected by the polarity-reversal mechanism introduced by *or*. Conversely, if Pol_1 is active, a negation in its Specifier is invisible to the conjunction *or* (as Pol_1 is above TP, which is the constituent that is conjoined), which then reverses its positive polarity despite the sentence being negative.

Assuming *neither/so*-coordination to be a case of *and*-coordination, with a similar

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[7] There are different positions taken in the literature with respect to the (non-)headedness of coordinated structures. See Borsley (2005) and Chaves (2012) for non-headed analyses of coordination, and Citko (2005, 2011b) for a multidominant account of coordinated structures.

structure to the ConjP part of the representation in (18)—and the *and*-conjunction lacking a polarity reversal mechanism—the explanation as to why an object negative quantifier such as the one in (19) can give rise to the two different coordinated clauses in (20)—which repeat the examples in (5) above for convenience—is also a matter of which Pol head is active. If it is Pol_2 there will be a negation inside the TP and both coordinated clauses will have negative polarity, (20a). If it is Pol_1, by contrast, TP will lack a negation as part of its structure and both coordinated clauses will have positive polarity, (20b).

(20) a. John contributed *nothing* and *neither did Mary*.
b. John contributed *nothing* and *so did Mary*.

The sensitivity to which Pol head is active also extends to *either/too* licensing. Only a TP-internal negation allows *either* to be licensed, (21a)—corresponding to (3a) above. This is the case when Pol_2 rather than Pol_1 is active. When Pol_1 is the relevant head, only *too* can be licensed, (21b)—our former example (3b).

(21) a. John said *nothing* and Mary said *nothing either*.
b. John said *nothing* and Mary said *nothing too*.

Last but not least, it is also possible to account for the possibility that a clause containing an object negative quantifier is followed by a *No, I guess not* or a *Yes, I guess so* expression of agreement clause if, as has been argued in Tubau (2020), the relevant propositional discourse referent is the TP and the activation of Pol_1 or Pol_2 allows negation to be either TP-internal or TP-external. I direct the reader to Tubau (2020) for more specific details of the mechanisms that I have just outlined in this section to account for the quirky behaviour of object negative quantifiers in English.

In Tubau (2020) it was also shown that there is an asymmetry between object negative quantifiers vs. subject and adjunct negative quantifiers. While the former show the variation outlined above when submitted to diagnostic tests of sentential negation, the latter do not. That is, subject and adjunct negative quantifiers always require a positive question tag, *neither*-coordination, *either* licensing and a *No, I guess not* expression of agreement clause, as shown in (22) and (23).

(22) a. *Nobody* read the book, *did they? / *didn't they?*
b. *Nobody* read the book and *neither* did they write an essay / *and *so* did they write an essay.
c. *Nobody* read the book and nobody wrote an essay, *either / *too*.
d. Speaker A: *Nobody* read the book.
Speaker B: *No, I guess not. / *Yes, I guess so.*

(23) a. They *never* read the book, *did they? / *didn't they?*
  b. They *never* read the book and *neither* did they write an essay / *and *so* did they write an essay.
  c. They *never* read the book and they never wrote an essay, *either / *too.*
  d. Speaker A: They *never* read the book.
      Speaker B: *No, I guess not. / *Yes, I guess so.*

In Tubau (2020) the data in (22) and (23) were connected to the fact that both subjects and adjuncts are complex left-branching constituents and, as such, must be Transferred upon Merge (Uriagereka 1999). This makes the negation they contain as part of their structure necessarily TP-internal, for subjects are base-generated in the Specifier of *v*P and adjuncts at the edge of the *v*P, thus explaining their uniform behaviour in sentential negation tests.

In the next section I put forward an analysis of the negative quantifier *no* along the lines of Tubau (2020) that makes two novel contributions. First, it addresses why *no* does not behave like other negative quantifiers when in object position; second, it accounts for the observed similarities between *no* and other negative quantifiers in subject and adjunct position.

3.2. *No* vs. Other Negative Quantifiers
If the data in (2), (4), (5) and (7) are compared to the distribution of subject and adjunct negative quantifiers, the parallelism is obvious, as shown in (24)-(27). The (a) examples are repetitions of (2), (4), (5) and (7), while the (b) and (c) examples include a subject and an adjunct negative quantifier respectively.

(24) a. John read *no book*, *did he? / *didn't he?*
  b. *Nobody* read a book, *did they? / *didn't they?*
  c. John *never* read a book, *did he? / *didn't he?*

(25) a. John read *no book* and Mary read *no book*, *either / *too.*
  b. *Nobody* read a book and nobody read a magazine, *either / *too.*
  c. John *never* read a book and Mary never read a book, *either / *too.*

(26) a. John contributed *no idea* and *neither* did Mary / *so* did Mary.
  b. *Nobody* contributed an idea and *neither* did they speak / *so* did they speak.
  c. John *never* contributed an idea and *neither* did Mary / *so* did Mary.

(27) a. John read *no book* yesterday. *No, I guess not / *Yes, I guess so.*
  b. *Nobody* read a book yesterday. *No, I guess not / *Yes, I guess so.*
  c. John *never* read a book. *No, I guess not / *Yes, I guess so.*

The data presented thus far do not only consistently show that when it comes to classical tests of sentential negation, the negative quantifier *no* in object position behaves differently from other negative quantifiers such as *nothing* or *nobody*, but also that *no* aligns with negative quantifiers in subject and adjunct position. Thus it seems plausible to entertain the idea that there is something common to the syntax of the negative quantifier *no* and the syntax of subject/adjunct negative quantifiers.

Given that it was argued in Tubau (2020) that the object vs. subject/adjunct asymmetry observed in the syntax of negative quantifiers was related to the fact that complex left-branching syntactic objects had to be Transferred upon Merge, which froze negation inside the TP, I claim that the negative quantifier *no* also involves complex left-branching and subsequent Transfer upon Merge. This inevitably deems the negative part of the negative quantifier *no* to always be TP-internal and, hence, uniformly diagnosed by the classical tests of sentential negation as introducing sentential negation regardless of the position the negative quantifier occupies. The present section articulates this analysis.

Earlier in the paper I have assumed that the internal structure of negative quantifiers such as *nothing* is the one in (15). I repeat it here as (28) for convenience.

(28)

```
        NegP
        /\
      Neg   DP
      not    /\
           D    NP
         a(ny)   |
                 N
               thing
```
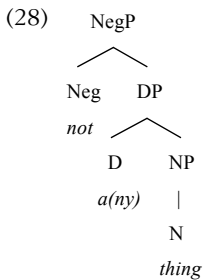
Notice, however, that *no* can occur with singular or plural NPs, as shown in (29).

(29) a. John read *no book*.
     b. John read *no books*.

In addition, numerals and adjectives can occur between the negative quantifier *no* and the NP, (30), while this is not the case with *nothing* or *nobody*.

(30) a. *No two books* are alike.
     b. John read *no long books*.

This suggests that the structural relation between negation and the DP may be different in the negative quantifier *no* and in *nothing/nobody*. While in (28) Neg merges with the entire DP—which then also gets selected by V by means of Parallel Merge, as in (16)

above—I claim that it merges only with D in the case of the negative quantifier *no*, (31). This allows material to occur between *no* and the noun it modifies without it being under narrow scope of negation. That is, in (30b) it is not the property of books being long that is negated, but the event of reading them; likewise, in (30a) it is not the existence of two books that is negated, but the fact that these two books are alike.[8]

(31)

NegP   DP

Neg   D   NP

no |

N
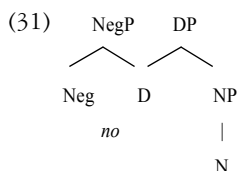
If the English negative quantifier *no* has the syntactic structure in (31), as pointed out earlier in the paper, the asymmetries that can be observed when object *no* is compared to object *nothing* or *nobody* fall into place. Notice that by having a Neg head selecting it, D is part of a complex left-branching syntactic object which, according to Uriagereka (1999), needs to be Transferred upon Merge.[9] This ensures that Neg is TP-internal and, therefore, results in the sentence responding canonically to the classical tests of sentential negation.

One last issue to address is how the Pol head in a clause with the negative quantifier *no* can have its [*u*Pol:] feature valued via Agree with Neg. The syntactic operation of Agree is defined on the basis of c-command, as can be seen in (32), and c-command is traditionally defined as in (33).

(32) Agree according to Chomsky (2000, 2001)
    α can agree with β iff:
    a. α carries at least one unvalued and uninterpretable feature and β carries a matching interpretable and valued feature.
    b. α c-commands β.
    c. β is the closest goal to α.
    d. β bears an unvalued uninterpretable feature.[10]

[8] According to Ionin and Matushansky (2004a, 2004b) numerals are nouns that act as nominal modifiers taking NP complements. Zweig (2005) further suggests that some numerals are adjectives that modify a covert noun.
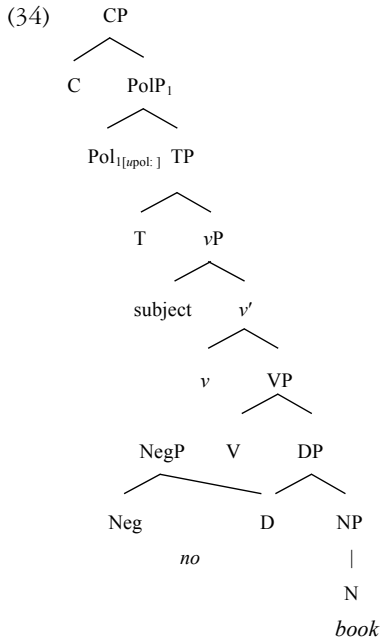
[9] A complex Specifier is, for all intents and purposes, a syntactic terminal, something "akin to a word" (Uriagereka 2002a, 49). In this case, I take it to be a 'negative' word, which ensures the presence of negation inside the TP that is inspected for polarity-reversal by *or*. Scholars such as Boeckx (2008) and Narita (2009) assume that only simplex objects can Merge. Thus, they assume that left-branching complex objects are first built in a separate workspace, then reduced to simplex objects (by means of Transfer), and then Merged. I assume the interpretable negative feature of NegP to continue to be part of the after-Transfer simplex object so that it can be Probed by a higher Goal such as Pol.

[10] The statement in (32d) is known as the Activation Condition, which Pesetsky and Torrego (2007) and Bošković (2009) dispense with. I follow these scholars in assuming that only (32a-c) are necessary for Agree between a Probe α and a Goal β to obtain.

(33) Standard definition of c-command:
   X c-commands Y iff X and Y are categories and X excludes Y, and every category that dominates X dominates Y.

As can be seen in the tree representation in (34), there is no standard c-command between the Probe—Pol, which carries a [uPol:] feature and is in need of valuation—and the Goal, Neg, as despite both being categories and Pol excluding Neg, not every category that dominates Pol also dominates Neg.[11]

(34)

```
                CP
              /    \
            C      PolP₁
                  /     \
          Pol₁[uPol: ]   TP
                        /   \
                      T      vP
                            /   \
                      subject    v'
                                /   \
                              v      VP
                            /   \   /   \
                        NegP     V      DP
                        /             /    \
                     Neg            D       NP
                      no                    |
                                            N
                                          book
```

Fortunately for us, though, the standard definition of c-command is not problematic just for the kind of data presented here, but indeed for all multidominant structures (Citko 2011a). This has motivated a redefinition of c-command to accommodate multidominant phrase markers and ensure that they are correctly linearised. Linearisation is usually assumed to be operated by Kayne's (1994) Linear Corresponding Axiom, which relies

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[11] A reviewer suggests that Neg could itself be multidominated by NegP and Pol. This would ensure that the negative feature of Neg is accessible to Pol. As appealing as I find this idea, I leave the exploration of its potential for further research.

on c-command.[12] Citko (2011a, 139) adopts Wilder's (1999) definition of c-command, (35), based on full dominance, which is a stricter version of standard dominance.[13]

(35) a. X fully dominates α iff X dominates α and X does not share α.
   b. α is shared by X and Y iff (i) neither of X and Y dominates the other, and (ii) both X and Y dominate α.
   c. X c-commands Y only if X does not fully dominate Y.
   d. d(A) = the set of terminals fully dominated by A. (Wilder 1999, 590-91, quoted in Citko 2011a, 139)

Notice that under the new definition of c-command given in (35), a Pol head either above or below TP c-commands Neg, the negative part of the negative quantifier *no* in a sentence such as (29a), *John read no book*, represented here as (34). Given the full structure in (34), let X, Y and α in (35) correspond to Pol_1, NegP and Neg in (34) respectively. According to (35c), Pol_1 c-commands NegP only if Pol_1 does not fully dominate NegP. Given that Pol_1 does not dominate Neg and Pol_1 does not share Neg, it turns out that Pol_1 does not fully dominate Neg, which is the condition for c-command to obtain. We know that Pol_1 does not share Neg because while it is true that Pol_1 and NegP do not dominate each other and hence condition (i) in (35b) is met, condition (ii) in (35b) does not obtain. NegP dominates Neg, but Pol_1 does not—so it is not the case that both X and Y dominate α.

Earlier in the article it has been stated that in English there are two available positions for a Pol head. The tree representation in (34) contains Pol_1, above TP, but the same exact discussion on c-command applies if the sentence is represented with Pol_2, which is below TP and above *v*P. Under the definition of c-command in (35c), then, the [*u*Pol:] feature of the Pol head—either Pol_1 or Pol_2—can be valued as [*u*Pol:neg].[14] This results in a sentence such as (29a)—or (29b) for that matter—being clause-typed as negative. In addition, as negation has been Transferred upon Merge in a position within the *v*P—which is the complement of T, the head of TP—the sentence will also be diagnosed as negative by the classical tests of sentential negation.

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[12] Linear Correspondence Axiom (Kayne 1994, 6)

d(A) is a linear ordering of T.

Let X, Y be nonterminals and x, y terminals such that X dominates x and Y dominates y. Then, if X asymmetrically c-commands Y, x precedes y.

X asymmetrically c-commands Y if X c-commands Y—according to the definition in (33)—and Y does not c-command X.

[13] The fourth condition in Wilder's (1999) redefinition of c-command is relevant for linearisation.

[14] See also footnote 9.

4. Conclusion

In this article I have reviewed the principal ways in which the English negative quantifier *no* behaves differently from other negative quantifiers such as *nothing* or *nobody* in diagnostic tests for sentential negation. These tests include attaching a question tag to the clause, coordinating the clause with another one introduced by *so* or *neither*, the licensing of *too* or *either* and the possibility of using a *Yes, I guess so* or a *No, I guess not* expression of agreement clause as a discourse follow-up.

When a sentence introduces an instance of sentential negation, it takes a positive question tag, it can be coordinated with a clause introduced by *neither*, it licenses the polarity item *either* and it is followed by a *No, I guess not* expression of agreement clause. Interestingly, it has been discussed in the literature that clauses containing an object negative quantifier exhibit variation in these tests. That is, the tests do not always diagnose the sentences containing a negative quantifier in object position as negative, as speakers allow these sentences to take a negative question tag, be coordinated with a clause introduced by *so*, license *too* and be followed by a *Yes, I guess so* expression of agreement clause. However, when negative quantifiers are used in subject position—or as an adjunct in the case of *never*—the tests unambiguously diagnose the sentences they occur in as negative.

The variation attested with object negative quantifiers also disappears when the negative quantifier is *no* and this article has attempted to explain why by extending Tubau's (2020) account of the object vs. subject/adjunct asymmetry observed in negative quantifiers such as *nothing* and *nobody*. Two main assumptions are at the core of the analysis offered in the present article: 1) English negative quantifiers are decomposable into a negation and an existential quantifier following a well-established tradition that started with Klima (1964); and 2) they are multidominant phrase markers, as the existential part of the negative quantifier has two mothers, with the negative part of the quantifier, Neg, always being one of them.

It is precisely multidominance that allows the Neg in object negative quantifiers—except for *no*—to enjoy remerge flexibility. Not being dominated by the verb, Neg escapes Transfer upon completion of the *v*P-phase and can remerge in the Specifier of one of the two higher Pol heads that English makes available. One Pol head is below TP and the other is above, but only one of them is active at a time. While activation of one or the other is usually irrelevant for the syntax of negation, it results in different outcomes for the tests of sentential negation, which are sensitive to the material inside the TP. Thus, any negation outside the TP is not visible to the tests, though it is used to clause-type the sentence as negative. This is the reason why remerge of the Neg inside an object negative quantifier such as *nothing* or *nobody* in the Specifier of the Pol head above TP results in speakers interpreting the sentence as negative but sentential negation tests fail to diagnose it as such.

When it comes to subject and adjunct negative quantifiers, by contrast, variation in the sentential negation tests disappears and negative quantifiers behave as is expected

from an expression that introduces an instance of sentential negation. Subjects and adjuncts, though, are complex left-branching constituents and, according to Uriagereka (1999), have to be Transferred upon Merge as a result. This necessarily freezes a negation inside the TP regardless of which Pol head is active, thus resulting in the sentence not only being clause-typed as negative, but also uniformly diagnosed as such by the sentential negation tests.

It was shown that the negative quantifier *no* parallels the behaviour of subject and adjunct negative quantifiers. That is, regardless of the position *no* occurs in, speakers only allow a positive question tag, *neither*-coordination, *either* licensing and a *No, I guess not* expression of agreement clause. This parallelism suggests that the internal structure of *no* may also involve complex left-branching with subsequent Transfer upon Merge and freezing of a negative feature inside the TP—as was the case for subject and adjunct negative quantifiers. This is indeed the analysis of *no* that has been developed in this piece of research. I have argued that if Neg Merges only with the D head that is part of the existential part of the negative quantifier instead of Merging with the entire DP—as has been claimed to be the case for *nothing* and *nobody*—a complex left-branching syntactic object is formed. In support of this analysis, it has been highlighted that Merge of Neg and D allows numerals and adjectives to intervene between *no* and the noun phrase it modifies, but with the negation scoping over the entire proposition rather than only the numeral or the adjective. The complex left-branching nature of *no* not only explains why this negative quantifier is unambiguously diagnosed as conveying sentential negation in the classical tests for sentential negation regardless of its function in the clause, but also why it parallels the syntactic behaviour of subject and adjunct negative quantifiers.

Last but not least, it has also been discussed that the clause can be typed as negative by means of an Agree relation between the Neg in the negative quantifier *no* and any of the two available higher Pol heads—only one of which is active at a time—despite the multidominant nature of the negative quantifier. Such an Agree relation allows an unvalued uninterpretable feature [*u*Pol:] to be valued as negative, [*u*Pol:neg]. However, given that Agree is defined on the basis of c-command and that the traditional definition of c-command is not compatible with multidominant structures, I have used Citko's (2011a) redefinition, based on Wilder (1999) and a stricter view of dominance, and have shown that there is c-command between any of the two possible higher Pol heads and the negative component of the negative quantifier *no*.

All in all, I hope to have convincingly shown that adopting a decompositional approach to negative quantifiers and embracing multidominance as a possible structural configuration of complex syntactic objects allows us to solve a number of polarity-related puzzles that are found in the literature on English negative quantifiers. In this article I have given a possible explanation for the (lack of) variation that is attested when sentences containing different negative quantifiers in

different positions in English are put through sentential negation diagnostic tests, which means that the outcome of these tests is no longer mysterious. [15]

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