NEGATIVE CONCORD IN PORTUGUESE AND ITS EVOLUTION[*]
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Abstract. This article focuses on the phenomenon of negative concord in Contemporary Standard Portuguese in the context of Archaic or better Medieval Portuguese and new tendencies of the sentential negation in Contemporary Colloquial Brazilian Portuguese. The reason why certain negative syntactic structures are (or are not) considered as grammatical will be explained by the generative syntactic theory developed by Zeijlstra and Penka on the basis of formal semantics. This theory says that the changing semantic status of the sentential negative marker *não* determines the relation of the negative marker with other negative elements.

Goal

The goal of this article is to introduce the phenomenon of negative concord in Contemporary Standard Portuguese in the context of its diachronic ancestor (Archaic Portuguese) and new tendencies of the sentential negation in Contemporary Colloquial Brazilian Portuguese. I will trace the evolution of the negative concord in Portuguese, the relevance of the position of the sentential negation marker, and how it relates to negative indefinites in the sentence. I will adopt the syntactic theory of the negative concord of Zeijlstra and Penka in order to explain the reason for (un)grammaticality in common types of constructions, subject to the negative concord.

The interpretation of multiple negation

From the perspective of the interpretation of multiple negation, the natural languages are, according to generally adopted typology, divided into two basic groups: Negative Concord (NC) languages and Double negation (DN) languages. Negative Concord means that if a sentence contains two or more negative elements they are together interpreted as a single negation, which means the negative elements do not cancel each other out. It seems to be a common characteristic for all Slavic languages, including Russian and Czech, as well as for a prevailing part of Romance languages, including Italian and Portuguese (1).

(1)   Não devemos permitir nada.
       Neg (we) should allow n-thing.
       'We should not allow anything.'

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The standard form of German languages, e.g. German, English and Dutch, belong to the second group: Double negation (DN) languages. The term Double Negation already partially explains the interpretation of multiple negation in these languages: two or more negative elements in one sentence cancel each other out so if a sentence should have a negative interpretation, only one negative element has to be present, as in the example (3).

(2)   We should not allow nothing.
        'We should allow something.'

(3)   We should allow nothing.
        'We should not allow anything.'

Let us leave the DN languages aside now and let us go back to the NC languages which represent a very heterogeneous group. The heterogeneity consists in the conditions which permit the co-occurrence of more than one negative element in one syntactic unit. The elements which count as negative elements for the purpose of the Negative Concord can be divided into two major groups:
– Negative markers which yield sentential negation and have their origin, in the case of Romance languages, mainly in the Latin *non.* In Portuguese it is the general negative marker *não* and also *nem,* utilizable mostly in coordinates, and according to Matos (2003), also *sem* (without).
– Negative words or just n-words. The term n-words was introduced by Laka in 1990 and is used for negative quantifiers or better negative indefinites with variable quantificational status that are syntactically marked for negation. It means they do not necessarily introduce negation in all possible syntactic circumstances[1] but only in particular syntactic configurations (Zeijlstra 2004). In Portuguese we refer to *ninguém* (nobody), *nenhum* (no one), *nada* (nothing) and *nunca* (never). In addition, there is one special case of n-word – *algum* (some/any/one) which yields negative reading only once appearing in singular in a post-nominal position.

(4)   Pessoa *alguma* gosta de ser maltratada.
        Person any likes to be maltreated.
        'Nobody likes to be maltreated.'

The negative elements that are not subject to the NC are:
– Constituent negation elements which can not concord with a sentential negation because their scope is different. Their co-occurrence generates a double negation reading.

(5)   A Paula *não* sai *sem* a filha.
        Paula neg goes out n-with the daughter.
        'Paula does not go out without the daughter.' or 'Paula only goes with the daughter.'

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[1] With exception of only one part of them, let us call them the true negative quantifiers (like *nothing* in English or *niets* in Dutch).

(6)　Eles não vão não prestar atenção a esse assunto.
　　　They neg will neg pay attention to this issue.
　　　'They will not ignore this issue.' or 'They will pay attention to this issue.'

– Lexical negation elements which constitute e.g. the quasi-affixal and affixal negation in Contemporary Standard Portuguese (CSP) – see the examples (7) and (8) from Matos (2003). It means that the Portuguese prefixal negation based on the Latin prefixes *in-/des-* has for example a completely different syntactic behavior than the Czech negative prefix *ne-*; not only because the Czech affixal negation is subject to the NC (9) but also because it constitutes the functional head of the sentential negation. The constructions which are said to be ungrammatical are prefixed with the diacritic '*'.

(7)　* O pessoal *não*-docente compareceu a nenhuma reunião.
　　　The staff neg-teaching appeared at n-one meeting.
　　　'The staff of non-teachers did not appear at any meeting.'

(8)　* O orçamento previsto *in*viabilizou nenhum projecto.
　　　The budget previewed neg-facilitated n-one project.
　　　'The previewed budget did not facilitate any project.'

(9)　Daný rozpočet *ne*umožnil žádný projekt.
　　　The budget previewed neg-facilitated n-one project.
　　　'The previewed budget did not facilitate any project.'

One part of the NC languages, so-called strict NC languages (the already mentioned group of Slavic languages, for example), are in general less sensitive to the position of n-words in one sentence. See two grammatical versions of the same Czech sentence.

(10) *Nikdo ne*říká *nic*.
　　　N-body neg says n-thing.
　　　'Nobody says anything.'

(11) *Nikdo nic ne*říká.
　　　N-body n-thing neg says.
　　　'Nobody says anything.'

The other part of the NC languages consists of so-called non-strict NC languages. These languages, for example, a big part of the Romance languages, behave in the same way as the Strict NC languages do if an n-word is situated in a post-verbal position: the verb needs to be preceded by a negative marker. If the respective n-word is situated in a pre-verbal position in the phrase, an eventual presence of the negative marker damages the grammaticality of the sentence. Penka admits a combination of preverbal negative in-definite (n-word) with a negative marker in non-strict NC languages only in one special case: the negative marker receives a double negation interpretation (not subject to NC) if the negative indefinite is intonationally prominent and the context allows it. The Italian

sentence in example (12) would be acceptable as a negative answer to a question involving negation (Penka 2007: 21).

(12)   – Who didn't eat?
        – *NESSUNO* non ha mangiato.
        N-body neg has eaten.
        'Nobody has eaten.'

Pereira de Abreu (1998) calls the pre-verbal n-words and negative markers strong negative elements and the remaining negative elements weak[2]. This division is based on Zanuttini (1994) who is of the opinion that strong negative elements are base-generated in the head of NegP[3] whereas the weak ones are not[4]. It is worthwhile using this division of the negative elements in the context of the non-strict NC languages as it reflects the syntactic status of the negative elements in these languages. A co-occurrence of a pre-verbal n-word with a negative marker (see the example 13) is not permitted, as has been said before, whereas the post-verbal n-words are not allowed to appear independently (so they are weak in this sense), without the presence of the so-called strong negative elements (14). The example (15) demonstrates that two n-words can occupy a position to the left of the verb at the same time.

Contemporary Standard Portuguese (CSP) can be seen as a model example of the non-strict NC languages, at least from the perspective of multiple negation (examples from Matos). The strong negative elements are marked in bold.

(13)   Ninguém diz nada nunca.
        N-body says n-thing n-time.
        'Nobody ever says anything.'
        * Ninguém não diz nada nunca.

(14)   Ele não cumprimentou ninguém.
        He **neg** said hello to n-body.
        'He did not say hello to anybody.'
        * Ele cumprimentou ninguém.

(15)   Nunca ninguém viu esse espetáculo.
        N-time n-body saw the show.
        'Nobody has ever seen the show.'

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[2] This division strong-weak is also used by Zeijlstra (2004) but only for negative markers and in a slightly different meaning: the strong negative markers are not attached to the finite verb and are base-generated in the head of NegP (applicable for the languages like Portuguese or Italian); weak negative markers are attached to the finite verb and are base-generated in a position attached to the finite verb (as in Czech and other Slavic languages).

[3] NegP represents a functional projection hosting sentential negation.

[4] Pereira de Abreu assumes that the weak negative elements get specified only in the logical form as the Minimalist Program calls the interpretation of structure after Spell-Out.

Archaic Portuguese (AP) permitted a combination of a n-word in pre-verbal position and the negative marker *nom / nõ / não* accompanying finite or infinite verbs, in contrast to CSP. Nunes (1989) noted that this was optionally possible in Medieval Portuguese. Dias (1918) also describes briefly this phenomenon in his monograph about the Ancient Portuguese syntax and mentions it in one section together with another phenomenon: the co-occurrence of two negative markers *nem – não* in emphatic syntactic constructions where an object precedes the related verb (see the example 18). He does not specify dates of the occurrence of these phenomena but he uses a sentence of the dramatist Gil Vicente (1465–1537) as an example. From the original versions of Gil Vicente's verses one can conclude that they were rather common in the first part of the 16th century even if their utterances were far from regular in the texts which were subject to my analysis.

(16) Já ninguém não se preza da vitória em se salvar![5]
      Already n-body neg brags of victory by rescuing himself!
      'Nobody brags of victory anymore by rescuing himself!'

(17) Nenhum velho não tem siso natural.[6]
      N-one old neg has natural judgment.
      'Nobody who is old has a natural judgment.'

(18) Nem as cabras não nas vi…[7]
      Not even the goats neg them I saw…
      'I did not even see the goats…'

As Zeijlstra (2004) points out, it is crucial that the non strict NC languages do not allow the combination of preverbal n-words with negated verb. From this point of view the AP seems to belong to strict rather than to non-strict NC languages, if the only criterion would be the impossibility of a pre-verbal n-word to combine with negated verb.

Negative imperatives

There are nevertheless also other features that the non-strict languages have in common. One of them is the issue of the grammaticality of true negative imperatives. It means that a surrogate construction is required to express negative imperative mood, the subjunctive in case of CPS and few other Romance languages[8]. Zeijlstra (2004) came to the general conclusion that non-strict NC languages always block true negative imperatives. He explains it by the syntactic properties of the negative marker: whenever a negative marker is base-generated in the NegP as a bearer of negative semantics, true negative imperatives are not allowed. That follows from a syntactic scoping of imperative force and

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[5] Vicente, G., Auto da Alma.
[6] Vicente, G., O Velho da Horta.
[7] Vicente G., Auto da Mofina Mendes.
[8] Italian and Spanish for instance, according to Zeijlstra (2004); languages such as French and Romanian find other ways to distinguish the true from non-true negative imperatives.

negation – if verbal negation is a bearer of negative semantics (syntactically being head of NegP) then in imperative construction it must move with a verb into ForceP via head adjunction[9]. In strict NC languages this does not happen as the negative morphology on the verb is the only signal of the covert semantic operator which is the locus of the negative semantics as we will explain in the following chapter.

Zeijlstra also says that all non-strict languages disallow negative imperatives but this generalization does not work vice-versa (these phenomena are uni-directionally correlated): there are languages which block true negative imperatives and do not belong to the category of non-strict NC languages[10].

If we look at the CSP more closely we observe that the (un)grammaticality of true negative imperatives can only be determined with the 2nd person singular. The other persons (3rd person singular and plural[11]) use the subjunctive for both positive and negative imperative forms. The AP behaves like CSP in the 2nd person singular. The 2nd person plural is commonly used and does not allow for true negative imperative either, analogically to the 2nd person singular. Gil Vicente uses surrogate constructions regularly, for both 2nd persons: singular and plural.

(19) Não digas mal da feira...[12]
      Neg say.2SG.SUBJ bad about the market.
      'Don't speak ill of the market!'

(20) Escutai bem, não durmais![13]
      Listen.2PL.IMP well, neg sleep.2PL.SUBJ.
      'Listen well, don't sleep!'

In this aspect, both CSP and AP behave in the same way: the rule of ungrammaticality of true negative imperatives is not violated in any of them.

Conclusions about the nature of sentential negation in Archaic Portuguese

If we take into account what has been said about the interpretation of multiple negation and negative imperatives in AP, we see that we have to do with a language with ambiguous behavior which should be classified as a strict NC language that does not allow true negative imperatives, rather than a non-strict NC language. This generalization could be made

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[9] ForceP is a functional category which hosts or changes the illocutional force of the sentence. The imperative is told to raise to ForceP. As it is a head of another functional category its move results in a head adjunction.

[10] Zeijlstra mentions Greek, Romanian, Hungarian, Hebrew, Catalan, French and English as the examples of languages which are non-strict NC and ban true negative imperatives at the same time.

[11] The 3rd person singular is used for calling somebody Mr.(s), the 3rd person plural is in general used for calling two or more people. The 2nd person plural is not used is CSP.

[12] Vicente G., Auto da Barca do Inferno.

[13] Vicente G., Auto da Mofina Mendes.

only on condition that we disregard the fact that the original versions of the verses of Gil Vicente contained, besides the typical strict-NC structures, different sentential negative structures, typical of the non-strict NC languages – CSP for instance.

The irregularity of co-occurrence of a negated verb with preverbal n-words in the work of Gil Vicente could have more interpretations: the AP represents a diachronic stage of Portuguese in transition from strict[14] to non-strict languages where the right usage of negative elements is not yet fixed, or the distinction between strict and non-strict NC languages is not fine-grained enough, or both. The AP is not the only case of a diachronic stage of contemporary language which is showing such ambiguous behavior. Dočekal (2010) encountered a similar phenomenon while analyzing Old Church Slavonic, the ancestor of contemporary Czech which can also be seen as a transit stage, nevertheless showing opposite direction of evolution: from a non-strict to a strict NC language. It appears that the rule, saying that the negation marker should (in the case of Czech) or should not (in the case of Portuguese) precede the verb when following the preverbal n-word, was not always self-evident and got fixed relatively late in the diachronic evolution of both languages (even if much earlier in Czech). We expect that the switching between strict and non-strict NC languages is not limited to Portuguese or Czech and that more languages have followed a similar way of evolution in one of the described directions. Another possibility is that the rule was already fixed in the time of Gil Vicente and the use of the negated verb with preverbal n-words served as an indicator of less educated social group members (in the contrast with more competent individuals omitting the negative marker) does not count because the "incorrect" sentential negation has been found in dialogs of the characters such as angels. Besides this we know that the phenomenon is not limited to the dramatic pieces of Gil Vicente.

Syntactic theory of the negative concord

How does the current syntactic theory explain the asymmetric behavior of the negative elements in the non-strict NC languages in the context of all NC languages? The most recent approach which proposes how to explain the grammaticality of certain negative syntactic structures and the ungrammaticality of others has been developed by Zeijlstra (2004) and Penka (2007) on the basis of formal semantics and partially also on some tools from current version of generative grammar, the so-called minimalist program. The central assumption is that the NC is a form of syntactic agreement in terms of clause-bound feature checking: the negative elements which are subjected to NC are approached as semantically non-negative[15], thus carrying an uninterpretable feature [uNEG] which has to be checked against an element with an interpretable feature [iNEG]. This element always gets interpreted semantically as negative but it is not necessarily required to be expressed morphophonologically as we will see later.

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[14] Only under the condition that there was a stage where the AP behaved regularly as a strict NC language and it did not permit non-strict NC structures at all. We can only approach this stage as a model situation because we did not manage to collect proofs of its existence in the past.

[15] Semantic negation means that every negative element corresponds 1:1 to a negative operator. (Zeijlstra 2004: 244).

The non-strict NC languages are specific in the fact that the general negative marker (*não* in Portuguese) is base-generated in a head position of NegP and carries always the interpretable feature [iNEG] against which the remaining negative elements need to be checked. It means that the negative marker preceding the verb, lexical or auxiliary, is required to be present in the sentence because each post-verbal n-word needs to be checked against it − as in the example (21). Due to the minimalist principle of economy each sentence contains only one[16] [iNEG]-feature which can license several [uNEG]-features simultaneously.

(21) Ele não$_{[iNEG]}$ diz nada$_{[uNEG]}$ a ninguém$_{[uNEG]}$.
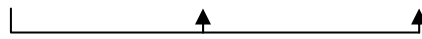
He neg tells n-thing to n-body.
'He does not tell anything to anybody.'

The [iNEG]-feature which is carried by the negative marker is called overt. As stated before, the interpretable feature can be of a different nature: it could be present even if there is no morpho-phonological element available to carry it. In this case we talk about a covert [iNEG]-feature carried by an abstract negative element, written as Op¬. This operator licenses n-words in some restricted environments when the overt licenser, the negative marker, is not available. That is when the n-words are situated to the left of the verb as we saw in the example (15).

(15) Op¬$_{[iNEG]}$ nunca$_{[uNEG]}$ ninguém$_{[uNEG]}$ viu esse espetáculo.
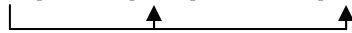
An overt licenser added to this sentence would not be in line with the economical restriction of [iNEG]-feature: [iNEG] would be present twice. The reason why in the non-strict NC languages the overt licenser gets substituted by the covert one in this kind of constructions is not that obvious at first sight and has an explanation in the position of the [iNEG] operator in the syntactic constituent structure tree. The element which carries [iNEG]-feature, even if it is Op¬, is required to c-command[17] the element with the [uNEG]-feature, it means it needs to be higher in the surface syntax tree, otherwise it is not able to license it. In other words, the negative marker in the sentence (15b) does not c-command the n-words *nunca* and *ninguém* (once they are situated to the left of it); that is why its [iNEG]-feature is not able to agree with the [uNEG]-features and the whole sentence must be seen as ungrammatical.

(15b) * Nunca$_{[uNEG]}$ ninguém$_{[uNEG]}$ não$_{[iNEG]}$ viu esse espetáculo.

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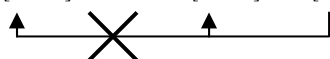
[16] It contains no [iNEG]-feature only in the case where there are no [uNEG]-features in the sentence to be licensed; on the contrary two [iNEG]-features could be present under specific circumstances − see the example (12) − in which they cancel each other out as it is usual in the DN languages.

[17] α c-commands β if every phrase that contains α contains β, and at the same time α does not contain β.

In addition, the morpho-phonological realization of the overt negative operator would not contribute to the interpretation of the sentence in this case. That is why it is functionally absent, similar to the strict NC languages where the negative marker is argued to carry a [uNEG]-feature. On the other hand, the omission of the negative marker (the substitution of the overt operator by the covert one) in the sentence (21) could generate ambiguous interpretations.

As we have seen before, the AP behaves as a strict NC language making the sentence (16), syntactically almost identical to (15b), acceptable. This would of course pose a serious problem for the theory of Zeijlstra and Penka if the semantic status of the sentential negative marker remains the same. Nevertheless Zeijlstra argues that the negative marker has a different status of interpretability in the strict NC languages: it is not semantically negative, which means it is not able to license other negative elements in the sentence (n-words always carrying the [uNEG]-feature). The theory predicts that the negative marker *não* in AP carries [uNEG]-feature and it merely marks a presence of the covert negative operator Op¬, as well as all n-words in the sentence do. In order to be interpreted as semantically negative, the negative marker needs to be checked against the abstract negative operator.

(16) Op¬ $_{[iNEG]}$ já ninguém$_{[uNEG]}$ não$_{[uNEG]}$ se preza da vitória em se salvar!

If the theory counts also for AP, which should be the case, there are still two problematic questions to be answered.

1. Why should the negative marker be present in phrases like (16) if it does not carry the [iNEG]? From this point of view it is redundant (which is a serious violation of the economy principle) and it does not seem to contribute to the interpretation of the sentence either.

2. How is it possible that the negative marker *não* in sentence (22), which is grammatical in both AP and CSP, carries once an [uNEG] (in AP) and once an [iNEG]-feature (in CSP) without any impact on the morpho-phonological reality?

(22) Isto não revela nada.[18]
       This neg reveal n-thing.
       'This does not reveal anything.'

Negation in Contemporary Colloquial Brazilian Portuguese

Ramos (2006) presented a very interesting study about the Contemporary Colloquial Brazilian Portuguese (CCBP) where she described tendencies of admitting new structures of sentential negation. There are three possible structures to be distinguished – examples from Armstrong (2008):

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[18] Vicente G., Auto de Inês Pereira.

NEG1 – with the pre-verbal negative marker, the structure is identical to the correct structure in the CSP.

(23) O João **não** come carne.
    John neg eat meat.
    'John does not eat meat.'

NEG2 – with both pre-verbal and post-verbal negators; this structure is not common in CSP but according to Matos (2003) – see her example (25) – it is also acceptable there as a way to emphasize the action or state expressed by the verb. It appears typically in exclamations. The post-verbal *não* in the NEG2 of CCBP has apparently such emphatic function too, rather than a function of the negative marker. That is why Schwegler (1986) proposes to call it emphatic negative element or just empathizer and distinguishes it from regular post-negative markers, also called negative adverbs, which in fact have developed from empathizers, as for example *pas* in Standard French. Schwegler observes that such repetition of negators is common in Romance languages[19]. It is also important to note that the emphatic negative element is intonationally prominent (that is why it is usually preceded by a comma) and should appear, in contrast to the French negative adverb *pas*, in the final position of the phrase. That means it could never be followed by any complement of the verb – compare the examples 24a and 24b. Cavalcante (2007) therefore proposes to call it sentence final negation and approaches it in a different way than negative adverbs.

(24a) O João **não** come carne, **não**.
    John neg eat meat neg.

(24b) Jean ne mange pas de la viande.
    John neg eat neg meat.
    'John does not eat meat.'

(25) Não saio de casa hoje, não!
    Neg leave.1.SG the house, neg!
    No, I don't leave the house.'

NEG3 – with the post-verbal negator only; this structure is completely ungrammatical in CSP. The position of the post-verbal *não* is analogous to the status of the empathizer in NEG2, it is in fact also a sentence final negation marker.

(26) O João come carne, **não**.
    John eat meat neg.
    'John does not eat meat.'

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[19] In addition to Brazilian and Peninsular Portuguese he provides examples from Spanish, Palenquero, Chocó and some French and Romansch dialects.

Ramos (2006) observes that the negative marker in CCBP frequently gets reduced to the monophthongized form *num* [nũ][20] under the condition that it is pre-verbal (it means only in NEG1 and NEG2 structures). The phonetic reduction of the pre-verbal negative marker (27) and its distinction from the fully pronounced post-verbal *não* (28) was most probably an important step towards the innovative structure NEG3. The reduced pre-verbal negative marker in NEG2 became optional. Let us mark the following steps as NEG1a and NEG2a.

NEG1a.
(27)   O João **num** come carne.
　　　 John neg eat meat.
　　　 'John does not eat meat.'

NEG2a
(28)   O João **num** come carne, **não**.
　　　 John neg eat meat neg.
　　　 'John does not eat meat.'

I suppose it is quite evident that the negation in the CCBP has followed one of these variants (if not both at the same time) of the chronological process:

　　　 NEG1 $\rightarrow$ NEG2 $\rightarrow$ NEG2a $\rightarrow$ NEG3.
　　　 NEG1 $\rightarrow$ NEG1a $\rightarrow$ NEG2a $\rightarrow$ NEG3.

Similar diachronic developments are characteristic for several languages, e.g. French[21] and Dutch, and are known as the Jespersen Cycle. Jespersen published in 1917 a study *Negation in English and other Languages* in which he introduced a famous model of cycle for a gradual change of sentential negation in various languages. By a number of examples he demonstrated a general tendency for languages to change in the common direction:

　　　 – from phase I (negation is only expressed by a single negative marker attached to the verb, mostly proverbially – this phase corresponds to our form NEG1)
　　　 – via phase III (the negative marker attached to the verb has to be obligatorily completed by a negative adverb following the verb – to be compared with the form NEG2)
　　　 – via phase V (the negative adverb is the only available negative marker. No negative marker attached to the verb is available – to be compared with the form NEG3)
　　　 – back to phase I. The phases II, IV and V correspond to transition states.

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[20] There are regions in Brazil where this does not happen (i.e. to the South from Minas Gerais). On the other hand, there are also regions in Portugal where the monophthongized form replaces the standard form of the negative marker. In this case it is a rather archaic feature as the Latin negative marker *non* was also monophthongized.

[21] With respect to French: this process has not yet been concluded in the Standard French, only in the Colloquial French so far.

In the typological study of Zeijlstra (2004) it has been shown on the example of Dutch that the development from phase I up to the phase V could take a long time, approximately eight centuries in the case of Dutch. Of course a successive change of standard written language is much more complex than fast changing colloquial tendencies as shown in CCBP, for example. The principle is the same, anyway.

Let us go back to CCBP. We got acquainted with the forms NEG1 (NEG1a), NEG2 (NEG2a) and NEG3. They share all the same propositional meaning and are used at the same time, it means they co-exist synchronically. In addition, Ramos (2006) has shown that the reduced form *num* as well as the use of the negative marker *não* as a post-verbal negative adverb are mainly used in the spoken expression of the young generation, thus the sociolinguistic distribution of the basic three forms of sentential negation in CCBP is in a very progressive way of change. Another important observation has been made by Armstrong and Schwenter (2005: 1): each of the forms has a different informational status.

"The discourse licensing conditions for these forms are tied to the accessibility of the negated proposition in the common ground. The discourse licensing conditions for these forms are tied to the accessibility of the negated proposition in the common ground. The canonical form NEG1 can be used to negate a proposition that has any degree of accessibility. Noncanonical NEG2 and NEG3, however, can only be used to negate propositions previously activated in the ongoing discourse record. The crucial distinction between NEG2 and NEG3 is that NEG2 is felicitous where the negated proposition is either explicitly evoked in the discourse or merely inferable on the basis of other activated propositional content; this is not the case for NEG3, which must negate a proposition that has been explicitly evoked in the discourse".

From what has been said in this chapter we can conclude that the adoption of new structures of sentential negation in CCBP (NEG2 and NEG3) in fact does not mean any menace to the grammaticality of the standard CSP structure NEG1 and does not seem to change anything on the classification of CCBP as non-strict NC language as the negator *não* appearing in the post-verbal position is of an emphatic nature, rather than a real negative element. Its further analysis would therefore be a challenge for the pragmatics rather than for the syntax. The arguments that it has an identical morphosyntactic form[22] as the pre-verbal sentential negation marker and it is in the sentence's final position are, in my opinion, legitimate for such classification. At least this is obvious as regards NEG2. The structure NEG3 seems to be more complicated from this point of view once it does not make use of a pre-verbal negative marker. Nevertheless, Rizzi (1997) proposed a solution: to approach the sentence final negation markers as topic phrase markers which, in a way similar to negative polarity items, give a positive or negative interpretation to the rest of the sentence without having direct impact on its syntactic structure. They are mechanically added to a sentence which has just been completed. From this point of view NEG2 and NEG3 do not differ in a significant way.

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[22] The reduced form still needs to be seen, in my view, as a first step towards the morphosyntactic changes which would result in the functional evolution of the element: from the sentence final (emphatic) negative element to the post-verbal negative adverb.

Conclusion

The Sentential negation, and the negative concord in particular, is a complex phenomenon which is far from being diachronically invariable. We could observe in the example of Portuguese, that the main reason for the diachronic variation in the field of negation is the changing semantic status of the sentential negative marker *não*, according to the theory developed by Zeijlstra and Penka. The non-strict negative concord language as it is now has developed from Archaic Portuguese which could be considered a strict NC language. The negative marker was originally required to accompany the semantically negated verb at any time, even in the co-occurrence with pre-verbal n-words. The negative marker was semantically non-negative which means that it had to participate, together with the remaining negative elements in the sentence, in a feature-checking relation with an abstract negative operator, free of phonological content.

Later on, in Contemporary Standard Portuguese, the negative marker adopted the function of a semantically negative operator against which other negative elements in the sentence (so called weak n-words) need to be checked. Where the negative marker could not license the n-words due to syntactical constraints (those n-words were pre-verbal) it was not desirable to appear anymore and was simply replaced by the abstract negative operator for reasons of economy.

The acceptance of new structures of sentential negation in Contemporary Colloquial Brazilian Portuguese is proof that the system of sentential negation in Portuguese tends to evolve further in the common direction described by O. Jespersen. It is problematic however to examine the new structures of sentential negation within the Penka/Zeijlstra's theory. Contemporary Colloquial Brazilian Portuguese is without doubt still a non-strict NC language which makes use of the negation marker *não* in a different way than is common in Standard Portuguese: it places it in the sentence's final position to give a negative interpretation to the content of the sentence and to emphasize it at the same time.

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