

Horn, Laurence R. and Yasuhiko Kato 2000: *Negation and Polarity. Syntactic and Semantic Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (ix + 271 pp.)

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Polarity, and the system of negation in particular, is a recurrent topic in Grammar. There are several reasons for this. Negation is not restricted to the linguistic field: It has connections with several disciplines and domains such as Philosophy (work has been conducted on the acquisition and processing of negation, for example, Butterworth and Hatch 1968; Wode 1977; Volterra and Antinucci 1979), Logic (the truth, denial and value of propositions is a central area in this science), Mathematics (mathematicians use negative symbols in their formulae to explain certain principles and write their theorems), and Sociology (negation has also been studied from the perspective of language variation, Labov 1972; Tottie 1991).

Negation can be considered a universal feature of natural languages in the sense that all languages possess a system to negate utterances in one way or another. Moreover, not only does its existence seem to be universal but the way in which it is manifested in each particular language also moves in a general direction (Jespersen 1917; Dahl 1979; Payne 1985; Bernini and Ramat 1992). In spite of this apparent uniformity, however, there is a wide variety of morphological and syntactic rules.

Negation may be present in all units of the language (from the word to discourse) and also has important implications at the morphological, phonological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic levels. However, at times there is no direct relation between form and function, form and meaning. The large number of publications and conferences held on this issue also show its complexity and inherent relevance. Seifert and Welte (1987) list more than 3,200 books and articles in over 200 different languages and almost every year international meetings, seminars and conferences are held on negation and polarity.

The book by Laurence Horn, currently professor and director of undergraduate studies in the University of Yale, and Yasuhiko Kato, professor of Linguistics at Sophia University, Tokyo, deals with some of the questions which are most hotly debated in this area, such as the syntactic and semantic properties of polarity, the characteristics of negative inversion and its relevance for the distinction between

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sentential and constituent, local or subclause negation, the nature of negative polarity items (NPIs), the force of negation in *Wh* exclamatives and interrogatives, and the role of negation in coordinated structures.

This publication started as a festschrift in honour of Akira Ota, Japanese professor of English and author of *Hitei no imi: imiron josetsu (The Meaning of Negation: Prolegomena to Semantics)*, published in 1980, and was later reconceived as a collection of articles by prestigious scholars in the field like Liliane Haegeman, Ljiljana Progovac, Jack Hoeksema, William Ladusaw, Raffaella Zanuttini, etc. as well as the editors themselves mentioned above.

This book is organised in 8 chapters. It also contains an index of names, a list of topics and an index with references to 24 languages apart from English, although Dutch, Italian, Serbo-Croatian, French and Japanese are the most commonly mentioned. Apart from this, there is a very useful further reading section which includes general bibliographies, global studies of natural-language negation with a focus on semantics, collections and anthologies on negation and polarity, negation in literature and literary theory, negation from a cross-linguistic perspective, the acquisition and processing of negation and finally, negation in generative grammar beginning with the early years and finishing with current theory. In spite of the fact that the majority of the papers presented are written within the framework of Chomsky's minimalist model, there is also room for other paradigms such as Ladusaw's formal semantics, Langacker's cognitive linguistics and cross-linguistic perspectives. However, other approaches and frameworks, which should also be incorporated in a work of this nature, are completely ignored. Thus, very little attention is paid to pragmatic features of negation as well as to the expression of negative polarity in different registers and genres. The only exception is Horn's paper where real and concrete data taken from the press are used to illustrate some of the points discussed. Moreover, corpus-based approaches are completely left aside and special types of negation such as morphological or affixal negation, predication and multiple negatives are disregarded. These could be considered as the main weaknesses of this work.

We next consider briefly each of the eight contributions in particular. Haegeman's paper is mainly concerned with the differences between sentence and constituent negation as in *With no job would Mary be happy* versus *With no job, Mary would be happy*, a recurrent topic already debated in Klima (1964) and which has not yet been completely solved. In the first example given, negative inversion is identified whereas in the second we have to speak of the existence of negative preposing. A contrast between the two different structures is drawn, paying attention to criteria such as interpretive differences, the possibility of adding *neither* tags, polarity licensing and differences in prosody as reflected in punctuation. Haegemann also reinforces the parallelism existing between the syntax of negative and interrogative sentences, something she had already explored in previous works (1993, 1995). In fact, this article does not add much new to her preceding publications.

Yasuhiko Kato's paper addresses a set of asymmetries of negation in English and Japanese, and presents an analysis of them within a framework of minimal syntax. Kato first concentrates on the contrast between sentential and constituent negation in English and their Japanese counterparts. The second set of asymmetries concerns the distribution of NPIs in the two languages. While NPIs exhibit a subject/non-subject asymmetry in English, they do not in Japanese.

Progovac's study, 'Coordination, C-Command, and 'Logophoric' N-words', explains how the licensing of NPIs shows unpredictable behaviour in conjuncts and disjuncts. When the principles of grammar predict licensing, this licensing does not occur within coordinated structures. N-words in negative concord languages such as Spanish or Italian are sometimes licensed without the presence of a c-commanding licenser. Reflexives also exhibit these two peculiarities. This means that reflexivization and 'negativization' of predicates succeed or fail in similar circumstances. Consequently, according to this linguist, a unified treatment of the two phenomena could be conducted.

Jack Hoeksema's contribution focuses on a number of issues regarding the triggering of NPIs, with particular attention to matters of scope and c-command. The paper clearly shows that semantic scope and syntactic c-command do not always correspond. According to this scholar, the scope of negation has to be semantically derived rather than described in terms of a syntactic notion, such as c-command. In the first part of the paper, Hoeksema also provides a very illustrative and useful overview of NPIs in his reply to a series of questions with regard to the nature of these words: meaning, distribution and reasons for their existence in a given language.

Horn's paper, "Pick a Theory (Not Just Any Theory)", starts by considering negation as "semantic tweezer" and draws a contrast between structures containing *a bit* and *a little*, *know* and *realize*, *guess* and *suppose* in their interaction with negative structures. He next deals with structures containing *not just* versus others with *not only*. According to Horn, *not only* variants are presuppositional and optionally scalar whereas *not just* ones are not presuppositional but obligatorily scalar. In the final section of this study, Horn discusses the nature and two main values of *any* as an ambiguous universal operator or as an indefinite quantifier; he comes to the conclusion that "any is more or less always an indefinite-plus, whose use is bound up with some aspect of hearer's free choice in identifying referents or witnesses to fill out the proposition" (168).

The paper by Paul Portner and Raffaella Zanutini concentrates on the force of negation in *Wh* exclamatives and interrogatives. Analysing data taken from Paduan, a northern Italian dialect spoken in the city of Padua, these two authors explain the meaning of expletive, pleonastic or paratactic negatives expressed morphologically through a clitic *no* in dependent clauses. According to Porter and Zanuttini, interrogative and exclamative constructions contrast semantically in terms of factivity, scalar predication and conventional implicature. Furthermore, these differences are also shown syntactically as exclamatives have an additional level of

CP structure that is not present in the case of interrogatives. They finally conclude that expletive negatives, at least in Paduan exclamatives, are not meaningless; on the contrary, they are truly negative and they contribute to the meaning of the sentences in which they occur.

William Ladusaw's contribution "Thetic and Categorical, Stage and Individual, Weak and Strong" originally appeared in *SALT 4* (Proceedings of the 4th Annual Conference on Semantics and Linguistic Theory) and is the only one which is not original to the volume. Ladusaw starts by considering Gary Milsark's (1974) two-way distinction in interpretations of determiner phrases (DPs) and of one-place predicates together with the ability of the previous elements to combine. Kuroda's (1992) distinction of judgement forms between thetic and categorical is next discussed. The final section of this study relates the previous hypotheses to the areas of quantification and negation explaining the different interpretations for sentences like *Nobody left*, *Most people left*, *Each person left* and *Three people left* together with the corresponding justifications for each explanation.

The paper that closes this collection of articles, "Negative Inference, Space Construal, and Grammaticalization", written by the professor of linguistics in the Department of Information Science at Kyoto University, Masa-aki Yamanashi, is concerned with the investigation of the grammatical development of negative markers in Japanese. In this respect, this contribution is original since it can be considered as the first piece of research that considers certain types of Japanese negatives as grammaticalised items. Attention is also paid to how spatial terms change grammatically into negative markers. Yamanashi bases his arguments on Langacker's (1991) definition of primitive concepts and concludes that "the notion of negation is fundamentally dependent on our experience of spatial cognition" (p. 252). Furthermore, the author adds that indirect negatives in Japanese are similar to double negatives since they have similar psychological effects.

As will have easily been gathered from the previous account, *Negation and Polarity* provides a comprehensive view of the questions concerning negation that are at present being debated. Many of these are still very much at issue; for example, the distinction between sentence and local negation, the nature of NPIs, the connection between the notions of negation and spatial cognition, the concept, use and effects of 'neg-raising', direct and indirect modes of negation, the relations between negatives and interrogatives and exclamatives, negative concord vs. negative polarity, etc. No doubt, this volume will be helpful to anyone interested in the theoretical and descriptive nature of the syntax and semantics of negation in natural language. A second volume centred on the actual uses of negation in written and spoken language as well as in different registers and varieties would be very welcome.

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