

***NEG-NEG: an argument against lexicalism from negation stacking**

Karen De Clercq (LLF/Université Paris Cité/CNRS)
(work with Guido Vanden Wyngaerd, KU Leuven)

We present evidence showing that the distinction between the word and the morpheme is epiphenomenal. The evidence concerns the fact that positive adjectives may be prefixed with *un-*, but negative ones cannot, though they can be negated with *not* (Zimmer 1964, Horn 2005):

(1) a. unhappy b. *unsad c. not sad

A classical account of these facts runs like this (Zimmer 1964:15):

(2) Negative affixes are not used with adjectival stems that have a ‘negative’ value.

We argue that (2) is inadequate for two reasons. First, we show that the restriction in (1) is not only observed with morphological negation, but also with certain cases of syntactic negation. Second, we argue that it is no coincidence that certain *negative* markers are excluded with *negative* adjectives. We provide a principled syntactic account of the pattern in (1), explaining (1b) as the result of a ban on two consecutive NEG features in the functional sequence. Furthermore, we present arguments against a semantic explanation that would rely on the distinction between contradictory and contrary negation.

Horn, Laurence. 2005. “An un-paper for the unsyntactician.” *Polymorphous Linguistics. Jim McCawley’s Legacy*, ed. by Salikoko Mufwene, Elaine Francis & Rebecca Wheeler, 329–365. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Zimmer, Karl. 1964. *Affixal Negation in English and Other Languages* (Supplement to *Word*, Monograph 5).