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Negative concord in English and Romance

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Negative concord in English and Romance:

Syntax-Morphology interface conditions on the expression of negation

Negative Concord in English and Romance: Syntax-Morphology Interface Conditions on the Expression of Negation studies the distribution of the sentential negative marker (*not*, *no*, *non*, etc.) and n-words such as *nobody*, *nothing* and the like in Standard English, Non-Standard varieties of English and a number of Romance languages.

The author shows that the restrictions observed in the field of negation (i.e. whether the negative marker can or cannot co-occur with n-words, for example) follow from the interaction of syntax and morphology. Languages may disallow, to different extents, redundancy of certain kinds of linguistic features (e.g. negative features) in given contexts. Whenever too many negative features co-occur in a syntactically-defined particular domain, languages resort to a number of 'repair' morphological operations that manipulate the output of syntax in different ways. This results in a fair amount of variation in the systems of negation and Negative Concord (i.e. the fact that in a given language more than one apparently negative element results in just one semantic negation) across languages.

This study opens up a new line of research in placing the phenomenon of Negative Concord in the syntax-morphology interface. Moreover, by assuming that variation across languages with respect to Negative Concord is the result of how sensitive languages are to some morphological constraint and how they use a limited number of repair operations when the latter is violated by the syntactic output, Standard English, Non-Standard varieties of English and Romance languages such as Catalan and Spanish can be uniformly analysed.

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