Negative expressions involving indefinites in African languages[1]

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This paper provides some typological data on the use of indefinites in negative sentences. Languages exhibit different patterns as to the interaction with sentential negation and the kind of indefinite used in negative contexts. One pattern in particular, namely negative concord (NC) has received a lot of attention in the literature and has been claimed to be very frequent. This and some other typological claims will be tested against 29 African languages.

1. Background

In recent times, the literature on indefinites, more specifically negative polarity items (NPI), and their interaction with negation has expanded considerably. In his typological study on indefinites, Haspelmath (1997) shows how languages can differ in their strategies to express negative sentences involving indefinites. On the basis of the following examples from English, the different strategies can be illustrated:

(1) I don't see anything.
(2) *I saw anything.
(3) Did you see anything?
(4) Nothing seems to work.
(5) I didn't see something.
(6) I didn't see nothing.

In sentence (1), one sees the famous and infamous negative polarity item *any* occurring in the scope of the sentential negator, yielding a negative sentence. It is an NPI, since it is ungrammatical in a positive context (2), but grammatical in non-assertive contexts, like questions or in the antecedent of a conditional (3). Sentence (4) is an illustration of how a sentence can be negative without a

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sentential negator. The inherently negative indefinite *nothing* is the sole contributor of semantic negation in this sentence. Sentence (5) is grammatical but carries a different presuppositional meaning: a discourse referent has been established about which something is said; its existence is not negated. The last sentence (6) can mean two things. In Standard English, two semantic negations cancel each other out, yielding the positive sentence: 'I saw something'. In a lot of English dialects, however, more negative elements can heap up without any of them cancelling out the other, in which case (f) means: 'I didn't see anything'. This pattern in particular, called 'negative concord', has drawn the attention of many linguists, in part because it seems to defy the principle of compositional semantics. Déprez (1997), Giannakidou (2000, 2002), Herburger (2001), Zeijlstra (2004) are just a few out that have described and tried to explain this pattern in great detail from different theoretical perspectives. In the following, I will describe the main types of negative concord that can be distinguished.[2]

2. Types of negative concord

Strict negative concord

The most straightforward type of negative concord is the strict one, where the sentential negator is obligatory whenever a negative indefinite is used, as in Romanian, Russian, Polish, Hungarian and Greek:

Romanian

(7) Nimeni nu a venit.
nobody SN has come
'Nobody came.'

(8) Nu a venit nimeni.
SN has come nobody
'Nobody came.'

Non-strict negative concord

For the second type of negative concord, the presence of the sentential negator depends on the position of the negative indefinite. An example from Spanish can illustrate this:

(9) No ha visto a nadie.

[2] The classification is not exhaustive – see van der Auwera (in print).

SN has seen nobody
'He hasn't seen anybody.'

(10) Nadie ha dicho que el amor es facil.
nobody has said that love is easy
'Nobody said love is easy.'

If the negative indefinite occurs postverbally, the sentential negator is obligatory (sentence (9)). If it occurs preverbally, however, the sentential negator is left out. This pattern results from a tendency called the Negative First principle by Horn (1989:293,449-452), which is a paraphrase of the principle described by Jespersen, according to which a speaker has to put the negation "as early as possible, so as to leave no doubt in the mind of the hearer as to the purport of what is said" (Jespersen 1933:297).

Negative spread

Multiple negation does not necessarily involve sentential negation:

(11) Personne a rien dit a personne.
nobody has nothing said to no one.
'Nobody said anything to anyone.'

In spoken French, the sentential preverbal negator *ne* is left out. Still, there are several negative indefinites that do not cancel each other out. Sentence (11) contains one single semantic negation.

3. Types of indefinites

As mentioned in the introduction, there are several types of indefinite pronouns. English has three major series: a specific *some*-series, which is confined to non-negative contexts, a non-specific negative polarity *any*-series, which can occur in all contexts except affirmative episodic contexts, and a negative *no*-series for direct negative sentences. There is, however, a lot more variation, both in regard to the division of labor between the different series as well as in regard to the nature of the negative indefinite. First of all, although the term *negative indefinite* sounds straightforward, defining a negative indefinite turns out to be more difficult than one would expect.

No one would disagree about the negative status of *no one*. The English negative indefinites of the *no*-series are normally referred to as 'negative quantifiers'. They only occur in negative contexts and always without sentential negation. The French indefinite *personne* 'no one', however, can still be found in contexts other than negative contexts:

(12) Il le fait mieux que personne.
he it does better than anyone.
'He does it better than anyone.'

Despite this, standard French is usually considered a negative concord language. That is because *personne* fulfills the conditions for an item to be qualified as an *N-word*. This terms is due to Laka (1990) and is used for indefinites that normally occur with sentential negation but can occur on their own in predicateless sentences like short answers:

(13) Qui as-tu vu hier?
who have-you seen yesterday?
'Who did you see yesterday?'
Personne.
'No one.'

As one can see, *personne* 'no one' passes the test and hence qualifies as an N-word. To say that it is inherently negative, however, is not entirely true, given the occurrence of *personne* in (12). Haspelmath (1997) avoids the question of whether negative concord is involved or not and decides to work with a semantic map on which the different functions of an indefinite are represented, direct negation being one of the functions. He does formulate implicational universals about the status of negative indefinites. Highly simplified, he says that the more functions an indefinite that also appears in negation can have, the smaller the chances are that it can occur on its own in elliptical contexts (1997:198). When the indefinite only occurs in negation, the chances that it can occur as a short answer are very high. But there are even indefinites that can only occur in negation but cannot occur on their own as a short answer. The accuracy of the diagnostic test is therefore questionable. Negative concord should be defined as the occurrence of sentence negation with an indefinite that can only occur in negation. French *personne* doesn't fit this characterization, but French *rien* 'nothing', which cannot occur in a comparative context, does. French should therefore be viewed as a negative concord language with some restrictions.

4. Types of negative indefinites

As to the form, one can distinguish two different negative indefinites: the ones that are morphologically negative and the ones that are not. Examples of negative indefinites which are morphologically negative are very easy to find in Europe:

Dutch:
(14) Niemand heeft me gezien.
nobody has me seen
'Nobody saw me.'
Italian:
(15) Non ha visto nessuno.
SN has seen nobody.
'He/she didn't see anyone.'
(Haspelmath 1997:194)
Polish:
(16) Nikt nie pryszedt.
nobody SN came.
'Nobody came.'
(Haspelmath 1997:201)

In the three cases above, the negative morpheme on the indefinite comes from the sentence negator: *niemand* < *ne* + *iemand* 'someone', *nessuno* < *ne* + *uno* 'one', *nikt* < *ni* +*kto* 'who'. As one can see, there is no direct connection between the negative morphology and the pattern of the negative indefinite with the sentential negator: Dutch is a non-negative concord language where a negative indefinite always occurs as a single exponent of the negation. Italian is an example of a non-strict negative concord language and Russian is a negative concord language. As for the morphologically non-negative indefinites in negation, they can again pattern in three different ways.

French:
(17) J'ai vu rien.
'I saw nothing.'
(18) Je n'ai vu rien.
'I didn't see anything.'
Spanish:
(19) Nadie ha dicho que el amor es facil.

No one has said that the love is easy
'Nobody said love was easy.'

Greek:

(20) Dhen idhe tipota o Janis
SN saw anything to John
'John didn't see anything.'

Again the three languages represent three different strategies: Spoken French is a non-negative concord language with negative indefinites (17). Standard French is a strict-negative concord language with negative indefinites (at least for *rien*). Spanish, with its morphologically non-negative indefinite *nadie* 'no one' from *ome ado* 'born man' (Latin *hominem natum*) (Malkiel 1945 : 204), is a non-strict negative concord language, and Greek is a non-negative concord language with an *any*-like non-negative indefinite *tipota* 'anything' used with an obligatory sentential negator.

Following the rules of logic, one would expect the morphologically negative indefinite to occur without sentential negation and morphologically non-negative indefinites to occur with sentential negation. This does not seem to be the case. The expected pattern of a negative indefinite without sentential negation even turns out to be rare in Haspelmath's sample. As he notes (1997:202), "it is ironic that the cross-linguistic investigation reveals a picture that is almost opposite to the older prejudice against the illogical NV-NI [sentential negator + negative indefinite]." A pattern without sentential negator like in (4) and (14) may turn out to be the odd one out. Haspelmath mentions the possibility of it being an areal phenomenon restricted to Southern Africa, Northern Australia and the extreme West of Eurasia (1997:202). There seems to be a preference for the negation to be expressed on the verb. Diachronic evidence is found by Haspelmath in Slavic languages; whereas the older stages of some Slavic languages, like Old Church Slavonic, Old Czech and Old Russian, showed variation as to non-strict and strict negative concord constructions, the present-day stages only exhibit strict negative concord.

The insight that the English, German and Dutch pattern of a negative quantifier occurring as the single exponent of negation could be less common that the illogical pattern of negative concord that defies the principles of compositionality caused the literature on negative concord to expand rapidly. What may be happening now, though, is that a new prejudice is being brought to life, namely that negative concord is the default case. Two recent and important publications on negation and polarity, namely de Swart (2010:21) and Israel (2011:43), both refer to negative concord as a "widespread" phenomenon and Israel (2011:43) even refers to it as the preferred pattern. This is probably due to a significant absence of typological work on negative concord, apart from the

abundant literature on the phenomenon itself. De Swart's (2010) work is the latest typology but it hardly contains any new typological material and used to a great extent the data from Haspelmath (1997). It therefore also inherited its bias: 27 out of 40 languages in Haspelmath's sample are European. What is perhaps worse, however, is that de Swart (2010) misinterprets Haspelmath's findings, leading to the claim that negative concord is "a widespread phenomenon" (2010:21). In making this claim, she refers to Haspelmath. Although Haspelmath (1997) does say that there is a "general preference" for the NV-NI [sentential negator + negative indefinite] pattern (1997:202), he does not mean to say that there is a general preference for negative concord as de Swart (2010) seems to conclude. Haspelmath's definition of a negative indefinite is a functional definition, which does not only involve the negative indefinite in itself but the entire context. The following example from Persian taken from Haspelmath (1997:221) shows a regular indefinite pronoun that can both be used in positive contexts as well as in negative contexts:

(21)	Kas-i	zang	na-zad
	person-INDEF	phone	SN-struck
	'Nobody called.'		

According to Haspelmath's theory and method, Persian would be classified as a NV-NI language. In this sentence *kasi* is an indefinite occurring in a negative context with a sentential negative marker on the verb, hence a negative indefinite obligatorily patterning with a sentential negator (for further discussion see van der Auwera (in print)). There is one other important typological work on negative indefinites in particular and that is Kahrel (1996), who claims on the basis of his balances 40-language sample that the preferred pattern involves sentential negation combined with a neutral indefinite; 27 of the languages that he investigated exemplified this pattern and only 5 languages exhibited negative concord (Kahrel 1996:106). Since Haspelmath (1997) does not make any claims about the frequency of negative concord, and Kahrel (1996) does make a claim about it but a negative one, the statement that negative concord is a widespread and preferred pattern should therefore be strongly doubted and put to the test.

5. Negative concord and Jespersen's Cycle

When one compares the phenomenon of negative concord to the process commonly described as Jespersen's Cycle, one is bound to see the many shared properties. Jespersen's Cycle (JC) is the term used to describe the process found

in many languages whereby "the original negative adverb is first weakened, then found insufficient and therefore strengthened, generally through some additional word, and this in turn may be felt as the negative proper and may then in the course of time be subject to the same development as the original word" (Jespersen 1917:4). It is generally illustrated with French, but Dutch, German and English also underwent JC. This cycle consists of (at least) three stages: a stage where there is one negation only, a stage in which one finds two negators expressing one semantic negation: a preverbal and a postverbal negator, together also referred to as a discontinuous negator, and a stage where you have the new negator as the single negative exponent.

(22)

a. Je ne l'ai vu.
b. Je ne l'ai pas vu.
c. Je l'ai pas vu.
'I didn't see him.'

It is the second stage that appears to be very similar to negative concord: negative concord as well as the JC are characterized by two negative elements that do not cancel each other out. Moreover, the diachrony of JC is sometimes mirrored in the diachrony of negative indefinites, as is exemplified by the French *personne. Personne* used to be a regular noun meaning 'person' that could occur in positive polarity contexts in Old French (Hansen in press). In Middle French however, it was increasingly used in negative polarity contexts, starting out as a scalar marker of negative emphasis, and eventually it grammaticalized to an n-word (Hansen in press), reaching stage (b). In non-standard French, however, *personne* has reached stage (c): it does not need the sentential negator in order to express negation, as is shown in example (17). In other words, the indefinites in French were clearly involved in the same cycle the sentential negator was involved in.

The similarities have caused people to hypothesize about the actual relation between the two phenomena. De Swart (2010:184) concludes from her analysis of French that "a crucial condition for the development of a discontinuous negation along the lines of French is for the language to be a type III language, and display strict negative concord"[3]. Although she adds "along the lines of French", she seems to say here that a language has to have strict negative

[3] As van der Auwera (in print) also points out, De Swart probably means type II, since a type three language is not a strict negative concord language in the book.

concord in order to develop discontinuous negation, given the fact that she treats the phenomenon of discontinuous negation uniformly across her work. She goes on to say: "It would be worth exploring this issue in more detail, but currently I do not have all the cross-linguistic data needed to substantiate this claim, so the connection is left for future work."
In the next section, I would like to answer the following questions: how rare is the English pattern with a negation on the indefinite only? How widespread is negative concord? Does a language that has discontinuous negation also have negative concord? I will do this on the basis of typological data from African languages in an attempt to fill the gap of typological data. I will use a representative 29-language sample, which is derived from but not identical to Miestamo's (2005) sample. For reasons of space, I will not include the whole list of references.

6. Negative patterns in African languages

The first major observation is the fact that Haspelmath's (1997) suggestion that languages like English with a negative quantifier without sentential negator are rare is confirmed for the African sample. Of the 29 languages there is not one language that exhibits a pattern like Dutch or English for all indefinites. In every language, I found negative sentences involving indefinites where the presence of a negator on the verb is required.
There is perhaps one exception, namely Egyptian/Palestinian Arabic, where one finds an English-type negative pattern:

Palestinian:
(23) Maḥaddiš aja
NEG.INDEF come.PRF.3MSG
'No one came.'
(Lucas 2009:206)

The indefinite *maḥaddiš* 'no one' is derived from the negative polarity indefinite *aḥad* 'anyone' plus the circumfix *mā-... -š* that normally serves as a sentential negator on the verb, as one can see in the following example, where the negative *maḥaddiš* co-occurs with sentence negation, resulting in a positive sentence:

Egyptian:
(24) Maḥaddiš min al-bašar ma-lu-š

NEG.INDEF from the-mankind SN-have.3MSG-SN
maḥāsin
good.qualities
'No one in existence doesn't have some good qualities.'
(Woidich 1968:73, cited in Lucas 2009:206)

The two negations cancel each other out in sentence (24), which proves that *maḥaddiš* is a negative quantifier. However, the use of *maḥaddiš* is very restricted: it can only occur in subject position before the verb. Whenever this is not the case, the negative polarity item must be used:

(25) ma šaf-nī-š ḥadd/ḥada
SN see.PRF.3MSG-me-NEG anyone
'No one saw me.'
(Lucas 2009:207)

Apart from this highly constrained occurrence of a negative indefinite without a negative verb, no other language exhibiting this pattern is attested in the sample. What has to be concluded from this Egyptian/Palestinian Arabic example, however, is that a language can apparently sometimes use different strategies depending on the indefinite item and the context. The results of my typological work are therefore probably tentative and may give a general picture rather than a very accurate description of all polarity phenomena, since not all contexts and indefinites are always found in the grammars.

As to the question whether there are a lot of negative concord languages, the answer is definitely no. Only 3, possibly 4 out of 29 languages exhibit negative concord, viz.: Ewe, Kanuri, Somali and possibly Ijo. Of those 4 languages, 2 have a clear negative concord system: Ewe, a Niger-Congo language spoken in Ghana and Togo, and Kanuri, a Nilo-Saharan language spoken in Nigeria.

Compare the following sentences from Ewe:

(26) Ame aɖeke me-fe le abɔ
Person NEG.DET SN-play be.atPRES garden
la me o.
DEF in SN
'Nobody played in the garden.'

(27) Ame aɖe me-fe le abɔ
Person INDEF.DET SN-play be.atPRES garden
la me o.
DEF in SN

‘Someone didn’t play in the garden.’
(Nada Gbeble, p.c.)

The generic word for ‘person’ is combined with a determiner *aɖeke* that consists of the numeral one and an emphatic marker *–ke,* which is exclusively used in negative sentences. Furthermore, *ame aɖeke* can also be used as an answer to the question “Who played in the garden?”, which can be seen as additional evidence, but not sufficient evidence as explained in section 3. Ewe’s equivalent for ‘nothing’ is the univerbated *naɖéké*/*nánéké* from *nu* ‘thing’ and the negative determiner *aɖeke* (Ameka 1991: 67). The negative determiner is used with both mass, count and plural nouns.

The other language that exhibits negative concord in a very convincing way is Kanuri. Just like in Ewe, the negative indefinites do not carry negative morphology but consist of the interrogative form, not the generic noun as in the case of Ewe, plus an emphatic marker *–ma*. The negative indefinites are accompanied by sentential negation on the verb, which is a suffix on the verb in the case of Kanuri.

For the other two languages, the situation is more complicated. For Somali (Afro-Asiatic, Somalia), there is no doubt that there is negative concord. Nevertheless, it does not seem to be obligatory. As noted by Haspelmath (1997:56), Berchem (1991:79-84) denies the existence of indefinite pronouns in Somali but mentions that a limited number of generic nouns may take the negative suffix *–na* and function as negative pronouns, as in:

(28) Nin-na ma iman.
person-NEG SN came.
‘Nobody came.’

There is, however, another way to express indefinites in negation:

(29) Wáx-ba má cunín ee waa+tu baxay
thing-FOC SN ate and he left
‘He didn’t eat anything and left.’
(Saeed 1999:121)

(30) Wax-bá má aan síin
thing-FOC SN I gave:SN

‘I didn’t give him anything.’
(Saeed 1999:186)

Although Saeed (1999) glosses the indefinite in (30) as negative and Orwin (1995:273) translated *waxbá* as ‘nothing’, these indefinite constructions consisting of a generic and a focus marker are not restricted to negative contexts (Lecarme 1999:304). There is thus one negative concord construction with a inherently negative pronoun and one non-negative concord construction with an indefinite plus focus marker.

In Ijo (Niger-Congo, Nigeria), we find the same pattern as in Ewe: a generic combining with a scalar focus particle and the numeral *one*. Due to the fact that this was the only example, I am unable to say whether this pattern is obligatory and unemphatic.

(31) Kẹ̀nị̀ kị́mị̀-kpọ́, ụ́wụ́-ẹ́rị̀-a
one man-even him-see-SN
‘Nobody saw him.’
(Williamson 1965:79)

The next question concerns the absence or presence of negative polarity in African languages. As noted above, Eyptian Arabic has a negative polarity item *ḥadd*/*ḥada*. Its distribution mirrors that of the English NPI-item *any*: it can occur in conditionals, questions and negation:

(32) Fih háddĭ mawgúud?
there.is anyone here?
‘Is there anyone here?’
(Mitchell 1956:29)

There are two more language that exhibit polarity sensitivity although the exact distribution is not entirely clear. Sandawe, a Khoisan language spoken in Tanzania, has at least two series of indefinite pronouns: one series involving the bound evidential morpheme *–ké ː,* which “is used with negative verb forms and conditional constructions and conveys the meaning ‘not even’ or ‘even’, as appropriate” (Eaton 2008:199) and another which doesn’t involve this morpheme. I found two instances of the *–ké* ː pronouns in a conditional context and one in negation. The other indefinite pronoun was found in a non-specific context, namely an imperative. Although the details are left for further investigation, the scalar focus particle on the first series, of which the basis are interrogative pronouns, seems to suggest that this series is confined to negative

polarity environments. The other language is Maale (Afro-Asiatic, Ethiopia), one of three languages in the sample that uses an interrogative as its derivational base (next to generics and the numeral *one*):

Maale
(33) ʔóóní-ya táná zag-ibá-se.
who:NOM-INCL 1SG:ABS see-PF:SN-NEG:DCL
'No one saw me.'
(Amha 2001:72)

An inclusive suffix is added to the interrogative, which is not used in positive contexts, but is probably also used in other non-affirmative contexts. For reasons of space, I will not go into the distributional details of this item.

Apart from these languages, no negative polarity phenomena involving indefinites have been detected, which means that the other languages mark negation on the verb and express the indefinite by means of either a noun, with or without an additional marker of indefiniteness (either the indefinite numeral one or an indefinite adjective, like *certain*, *other*), an interrogative pronoun or via an existential construction, all of which can also occur in positive sentences. 17 out of 29 languages use bare generics:

Dogon (Niger-Congo, Mali)
(34) Kidɛ yɛ-li-m.
chose voir-AOR:SN-1SG
'I didn't see anything.'
(Plungian 1995:21)

5 out of 29 use generics with the numeral or another indefinite item, like *certain* and *other*:

Gbaya-Bossangoa (Niger-Congo, Central African Republic)
(35) ŋma mɔ ké ré wen-dɛ wenáa gan bó ná.[4]
some thing of us to do about it is not
'There is nothing we can do about it.'
(Samarin 1966:84)

[4] No glosses were available for this sentence.

Two languages are attested that use an existential construction combined with a generic. In the example from Kinyarwanda, *ntaa* is said to be a negative copula:

Kinyarwanda (Niger-Congo, Rwanda)

(36)	Ntaa	baantu	ba-ta-aa-gi-í-ye.
	NEG.COP	people	they-SN-PST-go-ASP

'There aren't any people who didn't leave.'
or 'No one didn't leave.'
(Kimenyi 1979:184)

One last pattern involves the reduplication of the indefinite item:

Jola-Fonyi (Niger-Congo, Senegal)

(37)	Ibajut	wafɔwaf.	∀ ¬
	SN.V	thing-thing[5]	

'I have nothing.'

(38)	Nababaj	wafɔwaf.	∀
	V	thing-thing	

'He has everything.'
(Sapir 1965:70)

It is found in two languages: Jola-Fogny and Yoruba (Niger-Congo, Nigeria). The reduplicated generic can also be used in positive sentences, as one can see in (38), in which case it yields a universal meaning. As is translated in logical notation above, a universal combining with a negative element can yield the wanted negative quantification: a universal in the scope of a negation means 'not all', hence 'some', but when the universal outscopes the negation, the result can be negative quantification: 'all not' (∀ ¬), hence 'no'. Both languages also use other items to express negative indefinites. The reduplication of generics in negation probably serves emphatic purposes in these languages.

7. Negative concord and double negation

Double or discontinuous negation in attested in five languages: Gbeya-Bossangoa (Niger-Congo, Central African Republic), Ewe (Niger-Congo, Ghana), Supyire (Niger-Congo, Mali), Kresh (Nilo-Saharan, Sudan) and Somali

[5] Again, no detailed glosses were available.

(Afro-Asiatic, Somalia). Two of those languages also exhibit negative concord. A language clearly doesn't have to have negative concord in order to develop double negation, pace De Swart (2010:184). Moreover, if one looks at the pattern in French and compare it to Ewe, for example, another language which has double negation and negative concord, there is a striking difference:

(39) Je ne l'ai pas vu. 'I didn't see him.'
(40) Je n' ai vu personne. 'I didn't see anyone.'
(41) Ame aɖeke me-fe le abɔ
Person INDEF.DET SN-play be.atPRES garden
la me o
DEF in SN
'Nobody played in the garden.'

Whereas the second sentential negator cannot pattern with the negative indefinite in French (40), it must co-occur with the negative indefinite in Ewe (41). This is indicative of the relation between the Jespersen cycle and negative concord: in French, *pas* used to be a noun describing a minimal quantity just like *personne*. The source construction for the negator *pas* must have been a context involving movement where the original meaning 'a step' in combination with a negation yielded an emphatic negation ('not even one step'), as is shown in the example from medieval French (42). In contexts involving an indefinite participant, however, *personne* and *rien* were probably used, as shown in the contemporary French example (43):

(42) Onc n'i passastes un pas…
'Never did you walk a step…'
(ca. 1130; Hansen in press)
(43) Je n'ai vu PERSONNE/ RIEN
'I didn't see even one person/ one thing.'

The reanalysis of *pas* as a marker of negation must have run parallel to the reanalysis of *personne* as a negative indefinite. In contrast, Ewe developed a sentence-final negative morpheme *o* which is formally and functionally very different from the indefinite determiner with an emphatic marker. The JC can be but must not be linked to the development of negative concord. The hypothesis is that whenever the newer sentence negator cannot co-occur with a negative indefinite, JC and NC are intertwined in the sense that the new negator and the indefinites undergo a similar grammaticalization process.

8. Conclusion

First, the pattern of a negative quantifier without negation on the verb is very rare. It is only found in a very restricted use in Egyptian/Palestinian Arabic. This confirms Haspelmath's hypothesis that this pattern may be an areal phenomenon. As to the areas where it is predicted to occur, my data contradict the hypothesis: it does not occur in Southern Africa, but in Northern Africa. Second, negative concord, although it has been extensively described and recently claimed to be very frequent, doesn't seem to be very frequent at all. It is found in Somali, Kanuri, Ewe and possibly also in Ijo. What is remarkable is that it only involves negative morphology on the indefinite in the case of Somali. The other three languages use emphatic morphology to form negative indefinites. Since the emphatic morphology on the indefinites in Kanuri and Ewe is obligatory and unemphatic, the indefinites are assumed to have grammaticalized to negative indefinites. Negative polarity phenomena also seem to be very limited: Egyptian Arabic, Maale and possibly Sandawe exhibit different strategies according to the polarity of the sentence. As to the derivational base, the sample meets the expectations. Haspelmath notes that generic noun-based indefinites are typical for Africa and indeed, the majority of languages use generic nouns, either with or without indefinite marker. Only three languages use interrogatives as the base: Kanuri, Maale and Sandawe. In regards to the relation between double negation and NC, it has been noted that although double negation may be accompanied by negative concord, the one is never a necessary conditions for the other. Although the two may be intertwined, as is shown by the example from French, the development of negative concord can also occur independently of DN, as is the case for Ewe.

9. Abbreviations

ABS absolutive; AOR aorist; ASP aspectual marker; CO copula; DCL declarative; DEF definite marker; DET determiner; INCL inclusive marker; INDEF indefinite marker; MSG masculine gender; NEG negative marker; NOM nominative; PRES present; PRF perfect; PST past; SG singular; SN sentential negation

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