Synchrony and diachrony of a multifunctional particle: Latin *nec*

Latin *nec* and the non-apocoped form *neque* derive, quite transparently, from the combination of the Indo-European negative morpheme **ne* with the postpositive enclitic coordination particle *–que* (= *–c*, cf. the pair *atque* / *ac* 'and'). The particle knew three uses: (i) discourse-structuring connective 'and not', at the beginning of new textual units (not shown); (ii) correlative particle 'neither', cf. (1); (iii) stand-alone focus particle with an additive ('also not') or a scalar ('even not') interpretation, cf. (2).

(1) Caput dolet **neque** audio **nec** oculis prospicio satis.
head:NOM hurt:3SG and.not hear:1SG and.not eyes:ABL see:1SG well
'I have a headache, I can't hear, and I can't see well with my eyes' (Pl. Amph. 1059, 3rd BCE)

(2) nemo mundus, **nec** infans
nobody:NOM pure:NOM and.not infant:NOM
'No one is pure, not even an infant' (Leo M. Serm. 21, 5th CE)

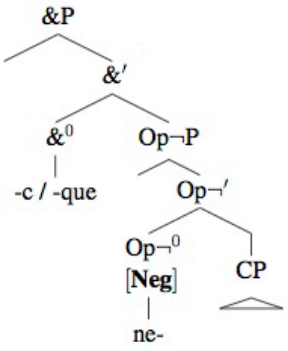
The coordinative functions (i) and (ii) are historically primary for *neque* / *nec*. The particles are continued by the Romance languages in function (ii) (e.g. French *ni*, Italian *né*, Romanian *nicĭ*). The use as stand-alone focus particle for *nec* appears later in time (I cent. CE) and becomes particularly frequent in Late Latin. The Late Latin example in (2), where the particle has a clear scalar import (even the most likely candidate for purity is not pure), represents the context of grammaticalization for many Romance indefinite determiners, incorporating a formally negative morpheme that derives from *nec* (e.g. Spanish *ninguno*, Italian *nessuno*, Old Italian *niuno*). We see thus, that Latin *nec* manifests a multifunctional nature, reminding us of better studied cases, like Japanese *mo* or Hungarian *ki*, and of a crosslinguistically frequent scenario (Haspelmath 1997, Szabolcsi 2013, Mitrović & Sauerland 2013). The analysis that I propose for *nec* contributes to this research field by examining the behavior of a conjunction particle which intrinsically combines with a negative morpheme and by highlighting the role of focus in its semantic development.

I define the different uses of *nec* on the basis of the contextual conditions determining its various readings: I show that not only in function (iii), but also in function (ii) it qualifies a focus-sensitive particle. I then propose a parsimonious syntactic implementation: capitalizing on its bimorphemic nature (*ne-c*, *ne-que*), I propose that the particle has a complex internal structure, and I discuss how it is integrated in the clause.

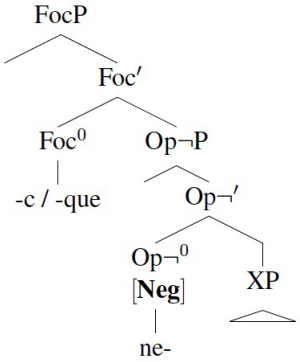
As a discourse-structuring particle (i), *nec* introduces a full clause belonging to a new discourse unit, which may be connected in the discourse to a previous clause, independent of the polarity of the latter. In its function as correlative negation (ii), *nec* relates two or more negative constituents, which can be of various types, comprising CPs. However, unlike with the discourse-structuring version, they belong to the same discourse unit. The discourse-structuring use, where the preceding conjunct can be positive, clearly shows that *nec* is the bearer of a semantic negation operator and can perform a switch in polarity, expressing sentential negation by itself. In this, it conforms to the Double Negation system of Latin, where each negatively marked element introduces a semantic negative operator, independently of its position in the clause. Thus, in the discourse-structuring use *nec* has the meaning $\wedge \neg$, where the negation is outscoped by the conjuction: this is consistent with the particle's etymology and ensures that the negation only takes scope over the conjunct directly introduced by the particle. According to the analysis shown in (3), *-que / -c* is the head of a Conjunction Phrase &P, which takes the CP it introduces as its complement. The reverse surface order is due to prosodic factors, namely to the enclitic status of *-que / -c*, which forces prosodic inversion. The negative particle *ne-* is itself proclitic: the two elements together form a prosodically acceptable unit for Latin. Similarly, a meaning ($\neg$ x $\wedge \neg$ y) can be attributed to the correlation introduced by *nec*, which according to one of De Morgan's Laws, is logically equivalent to a reading where the correlation is interpreted as a disjunction outscoped by

negation: ¬ (x ∨ y). However, in my analysis, the correlative particle itself does not contain a Boolean conjunction operator in its lexical entry (cf. Szabolcsi 2013, Mitrović & Sauerland 2013). Rather, the correlative particle is a focus particle with an additive component: in the case of correlative *neque* / *nec*, the morpheme *-que* / *-c* realizes an additive Focus operator, not a conjunction, requiring the presence in the context of a salient alternative proposition with the same truth value. The proposed structure is shown in (4): the reverse surface order is due, as for (3), to prosodic restructuring. The conjuncts in correlative constructions like (1) are asyndetically coordinated, as in Bianchi & Zamparelli (2004).

(3) discourse-structuring particle



(4) correlative and focus particle



The structure in (4) has the advantage of positing the same scope relation between the negative morpheme and *-que / -c* for both coordinative functions (i) and (ii). The difference resides in the meaning contribution of *-que / -c*, which is a conjunction in the discourse-structuring use and an additive focus particle in the correlative use. The proposal also allows us to treat *nec* as unambiguously negative ([Neg]) across its uses. A further advantage is that it can account for the later development of the stand-alone focus particle (iii). In the use in (iii) *nec* can have an additive or a scalar interpretation, with the latter becoming more frequent with time. The internal syntax for the stand-alone use remains unchanged and conforms to the structure in (4). The precise meaning contribution of *nec* in (iii) depends on the way alternatives are retrieved, which in turn influences the structure that the set of alternatives has. The use as additive focus particle is possible only when suitable alternatives for the focus are explicitly provided in the context, by means of correlation or by anaphoric linking to the previous discourse. In the absence of these preconditions, additivity leads to presupposition failure; thus, only a scalar interpretation is possible: in that case alternatives have to be accommodated by evoking a scale, whose dimension is usually suggested by the element in focus. This process of presupposition accommodation may have been responsible for the establishment of the scalar meaning for *nec*: accommodation processes on the part of the hearer are costly and, if systematic enough, may lead to a reanalysis of the conditions imposed by the lexical entry (cf. Traugott & Dasher 2002, Eckardt 2006, and for presupposition accommodation especially Schwenter & Waltereit 2010). In turn, the scalar contribution makes the particle a suitable item to strengthen negation, according, again, to a crosslinguistically frequent pattern which witnesses 'even' as a component of polarity-sensitive quantificational expressions (Haspelmath 1997, Lahiri 1998, Chierchia 2013).

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