

## On (negative) indefinites in Old Italian

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In this talk, we concentrate on the morphosyntax of Old Italian indefinites in negative contexts. The main questions we address are the following: (i) What is the difference between indefinites as n-words and as NPIs? (ii) How do these indefinites behave with respect to Negative Concord (NC)? (iii) How can we account for their distribution within the clause? We propose that NC depends on an Agree mechanism (see Zeijlstra 2004) that is sensitive to the internal structure of n-words (Martins 2000, Déprez 2011, a.o.), while NPI licensing is a different type of dependency (Giannakidou 2002). Old Italian (OI) is the perfect laboratory to tackle questions (i)-(iii), since it has apparently optional NC, and there is a change around the turn of the XIV century towards non-strict NC, like in Modern Italian. The apparent NC optionality is shown in (1) (see Garzonio & Poletto 2012).

- (1) a. *E **neuno** di voi si spaventi...*  
 and no.one of you REFL= fear-SBJV  
 ‘And may none of you get scared...’ (OVI, VeV 69)
- b. ***Neuno non** andasse poscia in paradiso...*  
 and no.one not went-3SG-SBJV afterwards in heaven  
 ‘(So) no one would go to heaven afterwards.’ (*ibid.* 78)

NC is apparently optional with preverbal and postverbal n-words. However, we will show that the optionality is systematically restricted by the internal and external syntax of n-words. NC is always attested with adverbial n-words, whereas argumental n-words have a mixed behavior. Specifically, argumental n-words generally obey NC, unless they are merged a) in a copular/existential construction; b) inside a PP, where P=from/to; or c) inside a manner/reason adverbial PP. We argue that n-words can lexicalize two different structures, which in turn depend on their semantics. N-words obeying NC are QPs, on a par with NPIs like *alcuno* (=‘any’), see (2a). Negative expressions that do not obey NC are instead of an adjectival type (Giusti & Leko 2001, Cardinaletti & Giusti 2005), see (2b).

- (2) a. [<sub>QP</sub> *ne-/alc-* [<sub>nP</sub> *uno*]]                      b. [<sub>PP</sub> *da* [<sub>DP</sub> Ø] *-l* [<sub>AdjP</sub> *ni-* [<sub>nP</sub> *ente*]]]

In our talk, we will present a further test, which reveals an asymmetry in the distribution of NPIs like *alcuno*, and n-words like *neuno*, in (2a). NPIs cannot precede n-words (whether or not there is a non-veridical licenser in the clause). We thus propose that n-words can locally license an NPI. We conclude that NPI licensing is established first at a local level (cf. Haegeman & Lohndal 2010) and, if no licenser is met, it creates a non-local dependency.