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DIVERGENT PATHWAYS OF JESPERSEN'S CYCLE IN WEST IBERIAN ROMANCE: EVIDENCE BASED ON SPANISH AND ASTURLEONESE (PART II)^{*}

This paper is the continuation of Alonso Pascua (2024). Both address the question as to why Jespersen's Cycle (JC) evolved differently in Romance, focusing on the analysis of negation patterns in two West Iberian languages: Spanish and Asturleonese. The hypothesis that JC gets blocked when speakers are provided with evidence that negation is complex, but activated when this evidence is unavailable, will be tested. It will be contended that the alternation of two forms for negation in Old Spanish, triggered by adjacency with object clitics (OCs), provided speakers with evidence of the complex nature of negation and contributed to the blocking of JC. Conversely, it will be argued that the lack of such an alternation in Asturleonese hampered the speaker's awareness of this complexity and favoured the activation of JC. This evidence will be used to support the hypothesis tested and thus contribute to a better understanding of the long-standing question of JC triggers.

Keywords: Jespersen's Cycle, Negation, Clitics, West Iberian Romance, Spanish, Asturleonese

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4.2. Negation, clitics and JC in Asturleonese

From an empirical standpoint, the particular behaviour of Asturleonese negative markers deserves to be analysed as a part of a study on Spanish Neg because of their explanatory power with regard to Spanish. The Western boundary of Spanish was defined by its contact with Asturleonese, a language whose expansion area was considerably more widespread in the Middle Ages than nowadays, especially after the effective union of the kingdoms of Leon and Castile in 1230 (Lleal 2006). From then on, Asturleonese dialectal traits became increasingly less evident in the texts, to the extent that in the 15th century they had completely disappeared from the written corpora (Morala 2004). Castilian Spanish was seen as the gold standard for the language, progressively pushing the Western languages, including Asturleonese, aside, which remained confined to the spoken rural context (Lapesa 1981 [1942]). Moreover, even though the Northern varieties were claimed as a sign of identity in the 1500s and a literary tradition was initiated by some intellectuals of the following century that has lasted until today (Viejo Fernández 2004; Echenique and Sánchez 2005), the Asturleonese post medieval corpus of work still remains exiguous. Although dialectization was (and still is) markedly more alive in this language than in Spanish, this paper will simply differentiate two dialectal macrogroups by taking as a reference the natural boundary of the Cantabrian mountains: the Asturian side to the north and the Leonese side to the south.

As for Spanish¹, both the clitics and the Neg system of Asturleonese will first be fixed. Since this clitics paradigm is affected by a high grade of dialectization, this paper will follow the simplified version proposed by D'Andrés Díaz (2013), which reports both the standard forms and the most frequent dialectal variants:

Table 3: Asturleonese clitics system

	Accusative			Dative	Reflexive
	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter		
1 st sg.	<i>me / m'</i>				
2 nd sg.	<i>te / t'</i>				
3 rd sg.	<i>lu / llu</i>	<i>la / lla</i>	<i>lo / llo</i>	<i>-y / -ye / -lly</i>	<i>se / s'</i>
1 st pl.	<i>nos / mos</i>				
2 nd pl.	<i>vos</i>				
3 rd pl.	<i>los</i>	<i>les</i>	—	<i>-yos / -ys / -yes / -llys</i>	<i>se / s'</i>

¹ Alonso Pascua 2024.

The system above is roughly coincident with the Spanish one except for the 3rd person paradigm, where dialectal variation is more easily perceived. Asturleonese is provided with different forms for the masculine, the feminine and the neuter accusative singular, which can eventually palatalise when attaching to an infinitive. Note also that *me*, *te* and *se* may apococate when the incoming word begins with a vowel. Beyond that, a fundamental property of old and modern Asturleonese clitics is their default behaviour as enclitics, which does not constitute however an obstacle for the Neg-OCs interaction, since whenever Neg occurs enclitics become proclitics as in Old Spanish (Sánchez Vicente and Rubiera Tuya 1985; Lorenzo 1995; D'Andrés Díaz 2013). This climbing is shown in (1), where 3rd person OC *lu* appears both as a proclitic and as an enclitic:²

- (1) *Si nun lu bebe enteru y d'una vez,*
 if NEG it.ACC drink.3SG.PRS.IND whole and of.a time
sácolu fuera a pataes.
 take.out.1SG.PRS.IND.him.ACC outside to kicks
 'If he does not drink the whole glass in one go, I will kick him out'.
 (M. Rodríguez Cueto, 1993, *Románticu*)

With respect to the Neg system, contemporary Asturleonese presents an opposition between the toneless *nun* form and the stressed *non* form, the latter being the most common choice in Western and Central Asturian (D'Andrés Díaz 1995). More specifically, *nun* is used whenever it operates as a preverbal Neg while *non* mainly behaves as a metalinguistic negator (San Segundo Cachero 2016) occupying the NegP₄ position according to the cartographic model of Zanuttini (1997) and Garzonio and Poletto (2008; 2009), who recognise four positions qualified to host negative elements: [NegP₁ [TP₁ [NegP₂ [TP₂ [NegP₃ [AspP [NegP₄...]]]]]], respectively named by Poletto (2008: 58 and following) as scalar negation, minimiser, quantifier negation and focus negation.³ Compared

² All concordances have been retrieved from *CORDE* (see the first part of the paper) with respect to medieval language and from the *Eslema* corpus for contemporary Asturleonese. With respect to *Eslema*, it is a corpus of more than 10 million words composed of written and oral texts. To be consistent with the data of *CORDE*, only written texts have been considered for this study, for the most part novels and journalistic texts.

³ Following Poletto (2008), Neg₁ negates the clause on its own, like Italian *non* (*Anna non parla tedesco*, 'Anna doesn't speak German'). Neg₂ is a presuppositional negative marker, like Emilian *mia* (*Movrat mia!*, 'Don't move!'). Neg₃ is historically derives from quantifiers meaning 'nothing', like piedmontese *nen* (*A l'ha nen dine sempre tut*, 'he didn't always tell us all'). Lastly, Neg₄ is always stressed and takes the shape of the polarity emphasizer 'no', like Milanese *no* (*L'a mangià no*, 'he is not eating').

to Spanish, the well-documented Old Castilian *non* / *no*, *nin* / *ni* or *nen* / *ne* ('neither', 'nor') alternations are not attested in Asturian or Leonese documents originating from the same centuries, nor are they in today's varieties.⁴ Examples (2) to (4), which are retrieved from the *Eslema* corpus, show how the full Neg has survived to the present day, being immune to OCs adjacency:

- (2) *La niebla cuasi nun la dexaba*
 the smog barely NEG her.ACC allow.3SG.IPRF.IND
veve los pies.
 see.INF-REFL.3SG the feet.
 'The smog almost did not allow her to see her feet'.

(A. C. Díaz, 1985, *Añada pa un güeyu muertu*)

- (3) *Aquel llunes Marta non lu saludó.*
 that Monday Marta NEG him.ACC greet.3SG.PST.IND
 'On that Monday, Marta did not greet him'.

(X. Llano Caelles, 1988, *De Corinto a Grecia*)

- (4) *A les muyeres nun-yos gusta dicir*
 to the women NEG-them.DAT like.3SG.PRS.IND say.IFN
que elles tienen ingresos mayores.
 that they.F have.3PL.PRS.IND incomes higher
 'Women do not like saying they have a higher income'.

(B. R. Viado, 2005, *Les perres conviértense n'expresión de poder...*)

Accordingly, if the *nun* / *nu* or *non* / *no* alternation has not developed in Asturleonese, where *nun* or *non* (occasionally *ñon* or *ñun*) are the only outcome, it could be surmised that, contrary to Spanish, the speakers of this language are not provided with evidence about the morphological complexity of Neg. If so, two

⁴ D'Andrés Díaz (1995), as well as some specific strictly dialectological studies on several local and regional Asturian varieties (Neira 1955; Díaz Castañón 1966; Conde Saiz 1978; Cano González 1981; Díaz González 1986), also report the parallel reduced Neg forms *nu* and *no* before a vowel or a clitic, mirroring the behaviour of Neg in Old Spanish. The presence of these shortened forms has been, however, linked to the influence of Castilian on Asturian (Díaz González 1986; San Segundo Cachero 2016) and, in any case, seems to be quite a common occurrence (Conde Saiz 1978). Moreover, the academic Asturian grammar does not even mention them, and the concordances retrieved from the *Eslema* corpus are less than 5 % when looking for the reduced form, the full variants being essentially the only outcome when an OC follows.

predictions can be made. The first one being that Neg is sensitive to the phonological assimilation processes fended off by Spanish in the same way that prepositions are, and the second is that, since no signs of the morphological complexity of Neg are available, nothing should prevent JC from becoming activated in Asturleonese. To test these predictions, new evidence of medieval and contemporary Asturleonese will be analysed in the paragraphs below so as to reveal why Neg evolved in a way that is divergent to what has occurred in Castilian. To this end, we will first discuss how the Asturleonese negator is affected by phonological rules that have not appeared in the use of Spanish. Secondly, we will show how contemporary Asturleonese has become significantly prone to accept minimisers that have undergone grammaticalization processes that distinguish them from the quantificational expressions enabled to appear together with the Spanish Neg. Lastly, it will be argued that this constitutes a first step in the activation of the reinforcement process that places Asturleonese at the Stage 2 of JC (San Segundo Cachero 2017; 2018).

4.2.1. Phonological processes affecting Neg

With regard to the first prediction, a characteristic process of Asturleonese is that prepositions like *en* or *con* undergo assimilation processes identical to those found in the Cantabrian and Riojan dialects when these elements come into contact with a determiner (Menéndez Pidal 1962 [1906]; Zamora Vicente 1989 (1960); Tuten 2003; Morala 2004; Echenique and Sánchez 2005; Elsmann and Holt 2009).⁵ Examples (5) and (6) illustrate this in Old Leonese⁶ while sentences (7) and (8) are examples of this occurring in contemporary Asturian:

- (5) *El laur que yo y fezier enna*
the labour that I LOC do.1SG.FUT.SBJV in.the.F
dicha morada...
said.PTCP.F dwelling

‘The work I eventually carry out in said dwelling...’

(Lease agreement. Domínguez Sánchez (1994): *Collection of Diplomatic Documents of Leon*)

⁵ Compared to Castilian, Asturleonese OCs are highly prone to being contracted when they collide with non-verbal elements such as the adverbial interrogative *ú* ('where') as in *¿ula?*, 'where is she?' (D'Andrés Díaz 1993). For a generativist account of these structures, see Silva-Villar (2001).

⁶ The interpretation of the ancient digraph *nn* is problematic. Elsmán and Holt (2009) do not consider it as a reflection of assimilation but of palatalization. We do not agree with this claim since this digraph alternated in old Leonese with the single *n* consonant in preposition-clitic clusters (see example 55), in which case it becomes more difficult to postulate a palatal realization, as Elsmán and Holt themselves admit.

- (6) *Mando* *que se axunte cona*
 order.1SG.PRS.IND that PASS gather.3SG.PRS.SBJV with.the.F
abadesa e con don Pedro Ouarez e conno
 abbess and with mister Pedro Ovarez and with.the.M
deam don Rodrigo dAstorga.
 dean mister Rodrigo of.Astorga
 ‘I order him to assemble with the abbess and with Mr Pedro Ovarez and with the dean Mr Rodrigo of Astorga’.
 (Debt note. Casado Lobato (1983): *Collection of Diplomatic Documents of the Monastery of Santa María de Carrizo*)
- (7) *Llegamos colos pantalones y los zapatos permoyaos.*
 arrive.1PL.PST.IND with.the trousers and the shoes SUP.wet
 ‘We arrived with very wet trousers and shoes’.
 (H. J. Rodríguez, 2005, *Ñeve*)
- (8) *Nun se vía un alma peles cais*
 NEG imp see. 1SG.IMP.IND a soul by.the streets
ñevaes de Sama.
 snowy.F.PL of Sama
 ‘Not a single soul was seen in the snowy streets of Sama’.
 (P. A. Marín Estrada, 2005, *Furia*)

More importantly, plenty of examples are detected showing assimilation of the coda of Neg, mainly regressive but also progressive, when an OC follows. It should be remembered that this phonological process was exclusively allowed for prepositions in Old Spanish, but never affected Neg:

- (9) *E fillo que aiudar apadre nonno*
 and son that help.3SG.FUT.SBJV to.father NEG.him.ACC
saquen por bando.
 consider.3PL.IMP as gang
 ‘And the son that helps his father shall not be consider as part of the gang’.
 (Anonymous, 13th century, *Letter of privileges of Zamora*, 54-55)

- (10) *Tomó una uaca de illa uestra manposta de*
 take.3SG.PST a cow of that your group of
Carualiar e nonna quier dar.
 Carballar and NEG.it.ACC.F want.3SG.PRS.IND give.INF
 'He took a cow from your herd of Carballar and he does not want to give it back'.
 (Letter of resignation. Ruiz Asencio (1993): *Documents of the Archive of the León Cathedral*)

- (11) *E se dixier: "nonna fodi nenna*
 and if say.3SG.FUT.SBJV NEG.her.ACC know.1SG.PST NEG.her.ACC
deso[n]drey"...
 dishonour.1SG.PST
 'And if he said: "neither did I know her nor did I dishonour her"...'
 (Anonymous, 13th century, *Letter of privileges of Zamora*, 32)

The fact that the preceding assimilations are registered not only in Old Asturleonese but also in the contemporary language, as noted by Rodríguez-Castellano (1952)⁷, is consistent with the absence of a widespread *non / no* alternation in this area and the resulting lack of morphological evidence of the complexity of Neg. In our opinion, the processes above are purely phonological and, unlike Spanish, do not seem to abide by any syntactic rule. In this case, Neg behaves analogously to any toneless element ending with a nasal when it is adjacent to a clitic or a determiner. It is therefore put forth that, in contrast with Castilian, Old Asturleonese Neg was an impoverished element and that this weakness constitutes a ready-made breeding ground for the activation of a reinforcement process such as JC. The outcome of this situation will be more extensively analysed in the following section.

4.2.2. Towards Stage 2 of JC in Asturleonese

With respect to the second prediction, if the speaker lacks evidence regarding the complexity of Neg, no obstacle exists for JC. Significantly, examples with simultaneous pre- and postverbal negative items have been amply attested in Asturleonese documents, especially from the Late Middle Ages onwards. With regard to contemporary Asturian, the following examples are especially enlightening:

⁷ In Southern Asturias, Rodríguez-Castellano (1952: 128-129) attests the assimilations *nun + lu* > *nu* and *nun + la* > *na*, and argues in favour of pure phonological explanation.

- (12) *Magar lla trabayo ñon se cuchó miga.*
 since it.ACC.F work.1SG.PRS.IND NEG PASS manure.3SG.PST MINIM

‘Since I have worked it [this field], it has not been fertilized’.

(J. Junquera Huergo, 1991 [1896], *Gramática asturiana*, 254)

- (13) *Nos mios estudios pasé per una asignatura*
 in.the.M.PL my.M.PL studies pass.1SG.PST.IND by a subject
nomada Historia Económica de la que
 called history economic of the which
nun m’acuerdo gota.
 NEG REFL.1SG.- remember.1SG.PRS.IND MINIM

‘During my studies I took a subject called Economic History that I do not remember at all’.

(J. Arbesú, 2003, *Un rapsodu en Tresmonte*)

Examples like the ones above, which are rather frequent in today’s Western and Central Asturian (García Valdés 1979), show a stage in which JC has progressed until the second step, with a postverbal Neg that still cannot work autonomously and is not required in order to assure the negative sense of the sentence. It could be thus surmised that *miga* (and its variante *migaya*), *gota* and other terms like *castra*, *cosa*, *mizcu*, *pelotada*, *plizcu*, *un res*, *un vierbu*, *rispiu*, *un sacre* (Academia de la Llingua Asturiana 2010) operate as minimisers whose negative value is still determined by their copresence with Neg, as also shown by examples (14) to (17). San Segundo Cachero (2018) has shown how these minimisers meet the criteria proposed by Roberts and Roussou (2003) for them to be considered grammaticalized elements of the m-neg type entitled to occupy the NeP₂ position and how others, namely *ná* (San Segundo Cachero 2017), behave as quantifiers (q-neg) and stand at NeP₃⁸:

⁸ The quantifier *ná* meets the five requirements proposed by Roberts and Roussou (2003: 208) to suggest that a unit has grammaticalized: it applies to morphological categories of Y, it involves a categorical change (pronoun > Neg), there is semantic ‘bleaching’ (‘nothing’ > minimiser) and phonological reduction (/’naða/ > /’na/) and it may be cyclic.

- (14) *Nun* *veo* *castra* *con* *estes* *gafes*.
 NEG see.1SG.PRS.IND MINIM with these glasses
 'I do not see anything with these glasses'.
 (Academia de la Llingua Asturiana, 2001, *Gramática de la Llingua Asturiana*, 155)
- (15) *Pero* *nun* *mira* *cosa* *pal* *patrimoniu históricu*
 but NEG look.3SG.PRS.IND MINIM for.the heritage historical
la *tierra* *del* *so* *condáu*.
 the land of.the his county
 'But he does not look at the historical heritage of the land of his county'.
 (Á. Nava 2005, *Xigantones y cabezudos*)
- (16) *Ello nun quita* *un res* *pa* *que* *la* *institución*
 that NEG prevent.3SG.PRS.IND MINIM for that the institution
siga *trabayando* *col* *mesmo* *enfotu*.
 keep.3SG.PRS.SBJV work.GER with.the same endeavour
 'That does not prevent the institution from working on the same endeavour'.
 (Academia de la Llingua Asturiana, 2006, *Estatutu y oficalidá*)
- (17) *Nun* *sé* *ná* *ónde* *tará*.
 NEG know.1SG.PRS.IND MINIM where be.3SG.FUT.IND
 'I don't know where he/she is'.
 (San Segundo Cachero, 2017)

In contrast to Asturleonese, Hernández Alonso (1971) and Rueda (1995), who provide an exhaustive list of Spanish minimising particles, do not consider these elements as equivalent to the French postverbal negative markers of the *pas* type, which are deprived of their original semantic meaning and do perform as a constituent part of Neg. In our view, this is entirely true for the great majority of Spanish minimisers included in the list, some of which hardly ever appear and do preserve their original meaning. This is easy to prove as the sentence does not make sense when the minimiser is eliminated as in (18). Nevertheless, this is not the case of the Asturleonese examples above, for which a minimal degree of grammaticalization must be assumed.⁹

⁹ Curiously, there is no dispute regarding the negator status of the French particle *mie* (< MICA, 'breadcrumb') (Hansen 2013). Also note the strong similarity of *miga* and of its disdainful

- (18) *Si aquesto non fazes, non valdrás *(un dinero).*
 if this NEG do.2SG.PRS.IND NEG be.worth.2SG.FUT.IND MINIM
 ‘If you do not do that, you will not be worth a thing’.
 (Anonymous, ca. 1220, *Libro de Alexandre*, 58d)

It is not anyhow our intention here to suggest that JC has been completed in Asturian, which is evident as far as the second element cannot operate alone, or that postverbal particles, such as those mentioned above, behave as full negators. We do consider, however, that there are signs pointing to an incipient grammaticalization of the postverbal minimisers in the same way that Italian *mica* and other particles acquire a negative sense in the presence of *non*, although they still have not been reinterpreted in the standard as pure negators (Willis, Lucas and Breitbarth 2013). If this is enough to confer a Stage 2 status in a broad sense to the Italian standard, the same claim should be made for Asturleonese. In this respect, Garzonio and Poletto (2009: 98) differentiate two types of postverbal minimisers or m-negations, some of which became negative markers while others specialised as reinforcers of negation. In turn, this last group is divided into adverbs (equivalent to ‘at all’ in English) and negative morphemes ‘used to express the fact that an explicit or implicit assumption made by the interlocutor is wrong’. As shown by San Segundo Cachero (2017), Asturleonese postverbal particles probably belong to the first group of reinforcers and, as such, are instantiated in a position higher than aspect or tense adverbs. A characteristic trait of this group of minimisers that separates them from quantity nouns,¹⁰ with which they share a high degree of similarity, is that no lexical restriction applies to minimiser DPs (Garzonio and Poletto 2009). This is illustrated by the fact that they are entitled to negate elements with which no lexical relationship stands, apart from having been morphologically neutralised so that neither gender nor

variant *migaya* with the Aragonese postverbal negative marker *mica* (Tomás Arias 2016) or the Italian *mica* (Zanuttini 1997), which can even appear as the sole Neg in Gallo-Italic languages (Camus 1987).

¹⁰ The term ‘quantity nouns’ refers to those expressions emphasising a negative value that ‘is obtained negating the smallest grade of a scale’ (Garzonio and Poletto 2009: 101). Thus, they tolerate PP complements that quantify the head, as shown in (a) and (b):

- (a) No nos queda una gota de vino.
 NEG us.DAT remain.3SG.PRS.IND a drop of wine
 ‘We have not a drop of wine left’.
- (b) No he entendido una palabra de tu intervención.
 NEG AUX.1SG.PRS.IND understand.PTCP a word of your speech
 ‘I have not understood a word of your speech’.

number variation arises (García Mouton and San Segundo 2014)¹¹. The following example shows this:

- (19) *Pos como nun gasta migaya de bobu...*
 EXPR since NEG use.3SG.PRS.IND MINIM of silly
 'Well, since he is not silly at all...'
 (J. C. Acebal y Morán, ca. 1835, *Los Trataos*, 9)

In Garzonio and Poletto's (2009) view, this behaviour, which is also shared by the Italian minimisers, signals an incipient grammaticalization process, whose second step is manifested when the minimiser can also be used in positive contexts. In the case of Asturian Neg, it does not seem to have already moved to this stage, since no positive examples of the above minimisers have been found in the absence of lexical restriction:

- (20) *Dioume *(una) migaya de toucín.*
 give.3SG.PST.me.DAT *(a) MINIM of bacon
 'He gave me a little piece of bacon'.
 (O. J. Díaz González, 1986, *El habla de Candamo*, 229)

- (21) *Con [...] *(una) migaya de trabayo las fincas de la*
 with *(a) MINIM of work the fields of the
quintana te darán pa vivir a lo señor.
 estate you.DAT give.3PL.FUT.IND to live.INF à la lord
 'With a bit of work, the fields of the estate will allow you to live like a lord'.
 (*Burla burlando*, 2)

If these data are transposed into terms of Garzonio and Poletto's (2014) proposal, it can be suggested that the greater use of minimising particles in this group of dialects would be driven by the lack of evidence of the morphological complexity of Neg1, which would trigger the activation of the cycle. Note that this radically distinguishes Asturleonese from Spanish, where the consciousness

¹¹ The vast majority of minimisers listed by Rueda (1995) in Spanish do not meet this characteristic, therefore, they experiment a lower (sometimes null) degree of grammaticalization.

of a complex negator impeded the activation of the process preventing sentences like the following:

- (22) **Desde que la trabajo no se*
 since that it.ACC.F work.1SG.PRS.IND NEG PASS
ha abonado miga / cosa / gota.
 AUX.3SG.PRF.IND manure.PTCP MINIM / MINIM / MINIM
 ‘Since I have worked it [this field], it has not been fertilized’.

In our opinion, there is one more piece of evidence that supports the weakness of Neg, which has to do with the coexistence of both the *non* / *nun* forms in today’s Western Asturleonese. As claimed above, the difference between them is that the first one is a stressed element behaving as a metalinguistic Neg while the second one is a toneless marker that only arises as a preverbal Neg. Unlike Spanish, this difference highlights that Asturleonese negators are vulnerable to being eroded. Either way, the lack of an exhaustive specific corpus in Asturleonese (especially for the Southern dialects) seriously hampers the study of the evolution of Neg from the 14th century onwards.¹² Still, these findings significantly support the theses that provide evidence for the weak nature of Asturleonese Neg. Some decades ago, García Valdés (1979) in fact proposed that in Asturian the presence of a sole negator is not usually enough; it tends to become reinforced by a postverbal element as shown by the exhaustive list of examples provided. Moreover, she called attention to the high frequency of use of Neg1 + V + Neg2 constructions such as that in sentence (23):

- (23) *Non fairá falta non.*
 NEG do.3SG.FUT.IND lack NEG
 ‘I don’t say that it will not be necessary’.
 (García Valdés 1979: 78)

As shown by San Segundo Cachero (2016), the postverbal negator above behaves however as a metalinguistic Neg standing at NegP₄ and not as

¹² Studies on Asturian such as that of García Mouton and San Segundo (2014) retrieve data from the *Atlas Lingüístico de la Península Ibérica (ALPI)*, an unfinished geolinguistic atlas covering the whole Iberian domain.

a postverbal emphatic Neg like minimisers¹³. With regard to these elements, the same San Segundo Cachero (2017; 2018) is by contrast firm in her belief that contemporary Asturian stands at Stage 2 of JC. This thought is supported by the data gathered through a filed research about Neg in which *nun* + *V* + *ná* structures are analysed.

5. Concluding remarks

The aim of this paper together with Alonso Pascua (2024) was to research as to why JC became blocked in Spanish but went on to be developed, or at least activated, in other Iberian Romance languages. To address this issue, corpus

¹³ *Non* is not limited to the content of the previous utterance, but it may affect to its semantics, morphology or even phonetics and cancel its implicatures. This kind of utterances “involve the same extended use of negation as a way for speakers to announce their unwillingness to assert something in a given way, or to accept another’s assertion of it in that way” (Horn 1989: 375). In order to obtain the right interpretation of a metalinguistic negator, a pragmatic reanalysis is, thus, needed. Since metalinguistic negators are not able to license negative polarity items (NPI), a good test to identify them is checking its behaviour with NPI. See the following Asturian example borrowed from San Segundo Cachero (2016: 70; 2018: 41):

- (a) *Xuan nun ve gota non, tien una vista de lince.*
 Xuan NEG see.3SG.PRS.IND MINIM NEG have.3SG.PRS.IND a sight of lynx
 ‘I don’t claim that Xuan doesn’t see anything at all, he has farseeing eyes indeed.’

On the contrary, a metalinguistic negator is compatible with positive polarity items (PPI), which are only licensed in positive contexts. See the following example from the same author, where the PPI *pela vida* (‘a lot’, ‘really much’) may cooccur with metalinguistic *non* since the PPI is outside IP:

- (b) *Supiéronme pela vida non, comiles a la fuerza.*
 taste.3PL.PST.IND.me.DAT really good NEG eat.1SG.PST.IND.them.ACC.F to the force
 ‘I don’t say that they tasted really good to me, I was obliged to eat them.’

A special behaviour may also be observed with clitics, since metalinguistic Neg (c) does not trigger proclitization as Asturian Neg1 does (d) (on this clitic movement, see example (16) of the first part of the paper):

- (c) *Compré-ylos non, dio-ylos el güelu.*
 buy.1SG.PST.IND-him.DAT.them.ACC.M NEG give.3SG.PST.IND-him.DAT.them.ACC.M the granddad
 ‘I don’t say that I bought them to him, the granddad gave them to him.’

- (d) *Nun-ylos compré, dio-ylos el güelu.*
 NEG-him.DAT.them.ACC.M buy.1SG.PST.IND give.3SG.PST.IND-him.DAT. them.ACC.M the granddad
 ‘I did not buy them to him, the granddad gave them to him.’

For further evidence on the difference between *nun* and *non*, see San Segundo Cachero (2016).

evidence has been provided regarding the behaviour of Neg in both Spanish and Asturleonese, two closely related Iberian languages with different negation patterns, namely Neg V and Neg V (Neg), which respectively place them at Stage 1 and Stage 2 of JC. The data have been examined from the perspective of Garzonio and Poletto's (2014) hypothesis, according to which speakers do not activate JC when there is evidence that makes the morphological complexity of Neg recognisable. This analysis confirms that two forms for Neg (*non* and *no*) alternated in Old Spanish and reveals that Neg was sensitive to adjacency with clitics. Specifically, it has been observed that when a 3rd person OC is adjacent to Neg in Old Spanish, both the coda of Neg and the clitic itself compete for Fun^O, which is filled by the clitic as a result of a feature checking operation. Evidence has been offered that supports the existence of a process driven by a syntactic rule, not a phonological one, in terms analogous to those described for Italo-Romance (Garzonio and Poletto 2014). It has been suggested that this alternation provided speakers with evidence of the morphological complexity of Neg, which has been argued as one of the factors that governed the blockage of JC in this language.

The data obtained for Asturleonese Romance have revealed, however, that Neg in this language has not experienced alternations along its history and that this has had an impact on the nature of Neg and, consequentially, on its behaviour. Firstly, it has been shown that phonological processes, unknown to the Spanish negator, affect Asturleonese negative markers, an observation that is consistent with the divergent paths followed by Neg in each language. Secondly, as speakers of Asturleonese are deprived of evidence of the complexity of Neg, nothing prevents JC from being initiated. This phenomenon is indeed easily traceable through the examples provided, which show how Asturleonese is prone to Neg1 V (Neg2) structures. More specifically, and as already shown by previous works on the syntax of Asturleonese Neg, it has been claimed that Neg2 behaves as an m-Neg or a q-Neg after having suffered grammaticalization and having become a kind of a postverbal negative reinforcement. Lastly, this has been used as evidence of the fact that JC is now underway in Western Romance languages, which would have progressed to Stage 2. This condition confers to this language a status similar to standard Italian and distinguishes it from Spanish, where JC has not yet been activated and only a Neg V pattern has been confirmed.

In any event, it should be made clear that this paper does not postulate the morphological complexity of Neg as the sole factor behind the (non) activation of JC. In this sense, it has been shown that the strong nature of Neg is traceable not only through its morphological structure but also through syntactic and even phonological cues. Accordingly, and together with Garzonio and Poletto (2014), it is claimed that JC results from a general strategy of economy in which morphological factors are just a part of the complex web of mechanisms behind the impoverishment of Neg. Proof of this is that research should still be carried

out to more extensively account for the counterexamples collected in late medieval Spanish, which do not seem to abide by the described syntactic rule of alternation when apparently nothing should hamper it being applied. Finally, and as it could not be otherwise, it would be desirable to explore the predictive power of the hypothesis tested here with respect to the rest of Iberian Romance languages, not only in light of contemporary evidence but also throughout the history of the various negation systems in line with the evidence presented here.

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