



UDC 81'367.4=111

Original scientific article

Accepted for publication on 21.03. 2021

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## Quirky negative concord: Croatian, Spanish and French *ni*'s

This paper explores the interaction between connective negation ('neither ... nor') and negative concord, an issue that has not received much attention. It looks at different 'negative concord' languages, viz. Croatian, Spanish, and French. The approach is synchronic; the data come from existing descriptions and from native speaker judgments. The paper describes the many idiosyncrasies but also lays bare some of the similarities.

**Key words:** connective negation; negative concord; negative indefiniteness; negative spread.

*For Dubravko Kučanda, with whom I shared thoughts about Croatian što 'that' (van der Auwera & Kučanda 1985; Kučanda & van der Auwera 1987) and would have loved to discuss Croatian nešto 'something', ništa 'nothing' and išta 'anything' ...<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> But I was privileged to have help from Branimir Belaj (Osijek), Gabrijele Buljan (Osijek), Philippe Goury (Paris), Pedro Gras (Antwerp), Zlatka Guentchéva (Paris), Gašper Ilc (Ljubljana), Ann Kelly (Paris), Maj-Britt Mosegaard Hansen (Manchester), Olga Krasnoukhova (Antwerp), Motoki Nomachi (Sapporo), Iva Nazalević Čučević (Zagreb), Sofia Pérez Fernández (Antwerp), Iker Salaberri (Vitoria Gasteiz), Maria Sol Sansiñena Pascual (Leuven), Ana Šimić (Zagreb), Irena Zovko Dinković (Zagreb) and two anonymous reviewers.

## 1. Introduction

In this paper I explore how constructions that both connect and negate, hence ‘connective negation’ as with English *neither ... nor*, interact with negative concord (‘NC’), as in *We don’t need no education*. Section 2 explains what negative concord is. Section 3 explains what connective negators are and I do this with standard English, a language without NC. Sections 4 to 6 deal with the interaction in Croatian, Spanish, and French, more particularly, the Croatian of Croatia (and not e.g. the Molise Croatian of Italy),<sup>2</sup> the French of France (and not e.g. Canadian French) and the Spanish of Spain (and not e.g. South American Spanish). These languages illustrate three different NC systems and that is the reason why they were chosen – it so happens that their main connective negator is *ni*, but that is a coincidence. It will be shown that connective negation is quirky, relative to what is known now about NC. Section 7 shows that despite the quirks connective negation also allows some generalizations. Section 8 is the conclusion.

## 2. Negative concord

Jespersen (1922: 352) may have been the first to use a term like ‘negative concord’, but the study of this phenomenon took off only at the end of the previous century. Thanks to Progovac (1994), a revision of a 1988 doctoral dissertation, languages like Serbian and Croatian became a textbook illustration. Consider example (1).<sup>3</sup>

- (1) Croatian  
*Bojan nije / \*je shvatio ništa.*  
Bojan NEG.is / is understood nothing  
‘He understood nothing.’

The negation in (1) has two exponents, a *ne* particle, which is fused with the auxiliary form *je* yielding *nije*, and *ništa* ‘nothing’. Both are necessary. This much is uncontroversial. But on how to analyze or even name these two negators controversies rage until today. In this section I will essentially only sketch my own approach

<sup>2</sup> Most of my sources and all the colleagues I consulted are Croatian, they refer to the language as ‘Croatian’ and I will follow them. Progovac (1994; 2000) refers to the language as ‘Serbian/Croatian’ and Gajić (2018) uses the term ‘Serbo-Croatian’. With respect to the issues of this paper Serbian and Croatian do not seem to differ (see note 13).

<sup>3</sup> The glossing of the examples will be kept as simple as possible, with just two abbreviations, viz. ‘NEG’ for negator and ‘CONEG’ for connective negator. Examples come from the research literature, from the native speakers mentioned in note 1, or from the web, in which case the native speakers judged them.



and terminology. To start with the terminology, I call *ne* ‘not’ a ‘negative concord negator’ (‘NC negator’) and *ništa* ‘nothing’ a ‘negative concord Item’ (‘NCI’), and I will say that the NCI is ‘in concord’ with the NC negator. An NC negator and an NCI express different but overlapping aspects of negation. The NC negator in (1) expresses that a proposition within its ‘scope’ is false and the NCI marks the ‘focus’ of the negation. In (1) the focus is on what ‘he’ understood and the false proposition is ‘He understood something’. This proposition is false because ‘he’ understood nothing, not because it was somebody else that understood something or that ‘he’ saw rather than understood something. Focus marking implies scope marking, but not the other way round. In (2) the false proposition is also ‘he heard something’, but there is no focus marking.<sup>4</sup>

(2) *It is not the case that he heard something.*

Negative concord shows a good deal of variation. An important parameter involves the position of the indefinite relative to the verb. In Spanish, in clauses with just one negative indefinite, only the postverbal indefinite shows NC and if the indefinite is preverbal, NC is impossible. The NC is said to be ‘non-strict’.

(3) Spanish

a. *No / \*Ø he visto a nadie.*  
 NEG Ø have seen to nobody  
 ‘I have seen nobody.’

b. *Nadie \*no / Ø vino.*  
 nobody NEG Ø came  
 ‘Nobody came.’

Croatian NC is ‘strict’: the NC negator forces NC on both preverbal and postverbal negative indefinites. Example (1) has the negative indefinite following the verb; example (4) shows the opposite order.

<sup>4</sup> To appreciate the state of affairs in NC research it suffices to consult Déprez & Espinal (eds.) (2020). I take sides with e.g. Tanaka (1994) and de Swart (2010) in associating negators with scope and NCIs with focus. The choice for the term ‘NCI’ follows Giannakidou (2020), among others. One of the controversial points is whether NCIs are ‘really’ negative. I join e.g. de Swart (2010) and Hansen (2014) on the view that NCIs are indeed negative. On the main alternative approach, NCIs are a subtype of Negative Polarity Items. The decision is not very important for this paper: everything can be reformulated in terms of the opposing view. I use the term ‘NC negator’ instead of the simple ‘negator’, for the simple reason that even in a language that exhibits NC not all negators are involved in NC. For languages that exhibit NC the negators that are not involved in NC will be called ‘non-NC negators’.



- (4) Croatian  
*Nitko nije / \*Ø došao.*  
nobody NEG.is Ø come  
'Nobody came.'

The contrast between strict and non-strict NC is not always of the type illustrated with Spanish and Croatian (see van der Auwera & Van Alsenoy 2016, 2018; van der Auwera 2017 for other types). Strictness may come in degrees (e.g. van der Auwera & De Lissier 2019; van der Auwera to appear) and a language may have two sets of indefinites, one with strict and the other with non-strict NC (de Swart 2010: 193–199). But in part because the relatively straightforward Spanish – Croatian contrast carries over to other Romance and Slavic languages, respectively, it has received most attention and I will call it the ‘classical’ type. In this contrast, Croatian, but not Spanish, further retains the NC negator when there are two or more NCIs – when there is so-called ‘negative spread’. We again see this in other Slavic and Romance languages.

- (5) Croatian  
*Nitko nije / \*Ø vidio ništa.*  
nobody NEG.is Ø seen nothing  
'Nobody saw anything.'

- (6) Spanish  
*Nadie comió nada.*  
nobody ate nothing  
'Nobody ate anything.'

The strictness notwithstanding, when there is no verb, as in the elliptic answer in (7), Croatian has no concord – nor any other Slavic language or a non-strict NC language like Spanish.

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|--|--|
| (7) Croatian   |  |
| A: <i>Koga si vidio?</i><br>who are seen<br>'Who did you see?' | B: <i>*Ne / Ø nikoga.</i><br>NEG / Ø nobody<br>'Nobody.'     |
| (8) Spanish  |  |
| A: <i>A quien viste?</i><br>to who saw<br>'Who did you see?'   | B: <i>*No / Ø a nadie.</i><br>NEG / Ø to nobody<br>'Nobody.' |



There are other contexts that forbid NC, as when the negative indefinite is disjoined from a positive noun phrase (see Progovac 2000: 96).

(9) Croatian

*Želim ili to ili ništa.*  
I.want either this or nothing  
'I want either this or nothing.'

(10) Spanish

*Podría matar a millones o a ninguno.*  
could kill to millions or to nobody  
'It could kill millions or nobody.'

Again, the absence of NC does not correlate with what is otherwise the strict or non-strict NC character of the language.<sup>5</sup>

Based on the above remarks one should not conclude that NC treats all modern Slavic or Romance languages in the same way, however. In Russian, for instance, the privative negator ('without') triggers NC, but not in Croatian.

(11) Russian

*Ja prijehal bez nichego.*  
I arrived without nothing  
'I arrived without anything.'

(12) Croatian

*Stigao sam bez ičega / \*ničega.*  
arrived am without anything nothing  
'I arrived without anything.'

In (12) a form of *ništa* 'nothing' is impossible: it gives place to the Negative Polarity pronoun *išta* 'anything'. So, while the Russian privative is an NC negator, the Croatian one is a non-NC negator.

<sup>5</sup> The lack of NC in sentence fragments is usually made definitional of the notion of 'NCI' (e.g. Giannakidou 2006: 328), though, curiously, not the lack of NC in other contexts, although some of them were recognized since at least Zanuttini (1991: 135). Also, it is seldom realized that languages can have NC in sentence fragments, at least optionally, as in non-strict NC Yiddish (van der Auwera & Gybels 2014: 207) and strict NC Afrikaans (Van Olmen et al. 2021).

### 3. Connective negation in English

This section introduces connective negators and I do this with a simple sketch of English, based on Quirk *et al.* (1985). English has two ‘neither’ words, viz. *neither* and *nor*, which are the negative forms of the disjunctive connectors *either* and *or*. In (13) *neither* and *nor* occur together.

(13) *Neither Fred nor John visited Paris.*

In (13) *neither* and *nor* make a phrase within one clause and I will call this the ‘phrasal’ use, contrasting with what I will call the ‘clausal’ use. The pattern is rigorous: *neither* has to come first and cannot be repeated. To reflect this, I will say that they form a ‘connective negative’ construction (‘CoNeg construction’); one often also calls it a ‘correlative pair’ (e.g. Quirk *et al.* 1985: 937). *Neither* and *nor* will be called ‘connective negators’ or ‘CoNegs’.<sup>6</sup>

- (14) a. \**Nor Fred nor John visited Paris.*  
b. \**Neither Fred neither John visited Paris.*

Instead of *nor* one also finds *or*, though this use is disapproved by purists.<sup>7</sup>

(14) c. *Neither Fred or John visited Paris.*

In (15) the CoNegs link up two clauses – the ‘clausal use’. CoNegs typically only show up in the second clause<sup>8</sup> and *neither* and *nor* are possible.

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<sup>6</sup> I avoid the terms ‘conjunctive’ or ‘conjunction’ to steer clear of the discussion as to whether these words and constructions are in some sense ‘basically’ conjunctions rather than disjunctions. I also shy away from ‘coordinative’ because the study is not limited to markers that are coordinators in the way *and* is a coordinator. Finally, I do not use the adjective ‘emphatic’, as in Haspelmath’s (2007: 17–19) ‘emphatic negative coordination’, for I don’t see why these elements have to be emphatic. Of course, they can be emphatic (see e.g. Iza Erviti 2015).

<sup>7</sup> When there are three or more connected elements *or* is fine, probably it goes with a narrow bracketing.

- (i) *Neither Fred nor [John or Luke] visited Paris.*  
(ii) *Neither [Fred or John] nor Luke visited Paris.*

Like with two elements *neither* is used only with the first phrase. In what follows I will leave constructions with three or more elements aside.

<sup>8</sup> Horn (1989) is a text with 255 occurrences of *neither* and there is only one with a clausal *neither ... nor* construction, cited from a 1967 translation of Aristotle (Horn 1989: 37).

- (i) [...] *for neither can there be anything more extreme than the extreme, nor can there be more than two extremes for one interval.*



(15) English (Quirk et al. 1985: 937)

*They never forgave him for the insult, (and) neither/nor could he rid himself of the feelings of guilt for having spoken in that way.*

Both *neither* and *nor* may be preceded by *and*. The fact that *and* is optional can be taken as an argument that *neither* and *nor* are not coordinators here but rather ‘negative additive subjuncts/adverbs’ (Quirk et al. 1985: 604, 937). In what follows I will not get into the issue of whether *neither* and *nor*, as in (15), are true coordinators. What matters is that they ‘connect’ – as well as negate.

Another interesting feature of the clausal use is that the first clause need not be explicitly negative. There may instead be an implicit negative sense, as with the minimizer *very little* in (16).

(16) *He did very little for me and neither/nor did he help my family.*

For lack of space I will not study implicit negation.

Interestingly, the distinction between phrasal and clausal may be blurred. For one thing, the second clause may be elliptic, within the extreme case of one phrase and one CoNeg, as in (17).<sup>9</sup>

(17) A: *I don't like him.*      B: *Me neither.*

For another illustration of the fuzziness of the distinction between phrasal and clausal uses, consider also the second verb phrase in (18).

(18) *In truth the vocals add very little, nor take very little away.*

([https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/customer-reviews/R1KFU5NVDP1IXW/ref=cm\\_cr\\_arp\\_d\\_viewpnt?ie=UTF8&ASIN=B000TMWU4S#R1KFU5NVDP1IXW](https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/customer-reviews/R1KFU5NVDP1IXW/ref=cm_cr_arp_d_viewpnt?ie=UTF8&ASIN=B000TMWU4S#R1KFU5NVDP1IXW), Accessed 16 August 2020)

Because *nor* connects two verb phrases, the use is phrasal; however, there is no *neither* in front of the first verb phrase and the verb phrase is only implicitly negative. Both are properties of the clausal use and, of course, it is easy to expand the structure into a clausal rendering.

<sup>9</sup> It also seems to be a construction on its own: with a subject pronoun, like in (17), *neither* cannot be replaced by *nor*, the pattern is confined to the first person singular, and while *neither* normally precedes a constituent, here it follows.

- (i) A: *I don't like him.*      B: *\*Me nor.*  
 (ii) A: *I don't like him.*      B: *\*You / \*We / \*Us / \*She / \*Her neither.*

(19) *In truth the vocals add very little, nor do they take very little away.*

Without a corpus study, we do not know how acceptable constructions such as (18) are or how frequent. Another potentially marginal construction is shown in (20), but this one made it into the Quirk grammar (Quirk 1985: 938–939) as a ‘mixed construction’. It starts with a phrasal *neither* but continues with a clausal *nor*:

(20) *Mary was neither happy, nor was she sad.*

Finally, phrasally connected elements may themselves be clauses.

(21) a. *I believe neither that he has visited Paris nor that he visited London.*  
b. *I do not believe that he visited Paris nor that he visited London.*

(21a) shows the phrasal *neither ... nor* and (21b) has the same meaning but it is expressed with a clausal strategy, with the clausal negator *not* followed by *nor*.

These considerations show that the distinction between phrasal and clausal uses is not always clear. This also holds for the other languages discussed in this paper. Though a comprehensive analysis is out of the purview of this paper, I will mention this fuzziness on a few occasions. I will also pay attention to the elliptic structure illustrated in English (17). The reason is that this construction is similar to the elliptic structures illustrated in (7) and (8), repeated below, which have played an important role in the NC literature.

(7) Croatian

A:	<i>Koga si vidio?</i>	B:	<i>*Ne / Ø nikoga.</i>
	who are seen		NEG / Ø nobody
	‘Who did you see?’		‘Nobody.’

(8) Spanish

A:	<i>A quien viste?</i>	B:	<i>*No / Ø a nadie.</i>
	to who saw		NEG / Ø to nobody
	‘Who did you see?’		‘Nobody.’

The similarity lies in the fact that both illustrate a clausal use, in which the second clause consists only of a phrase which is negative. In what follows I refer to the elliptic construction in (17) as the ‘clausal fragment’ use.

Yet another reason why the analysis is incomplete is that there are also constructions without the dedicated *neither* or *nor*. Example (22), for instance, has no *neither* or *nor*, but in one of its two readings, the one with Fred and John as independent visitors, it is very close to the meaning of (13).



(22) *Fred and John didn't visit Paris.*

There are also constructions with *not ... either* and *also ... not*. Example (23) illustrates phrasal uses and (24) clausal ones.

(23) a. *We allow no children and no seniors either.*

b. *We allow no children and also no seniors.*

(24) a. *They never forgave him [...] and he couldn't rid himself of the feelings [...] either.*

b. *They never forgave him [...] and he also couldn't rid himself of the feelings [...].*

The other three languages have such constructions too but I will not consider them.

After this 'Quirky' sketch of some of the parameters of variation in the domain of connective negation, we are ready to analyze how connective negation interacts with negative concord.

#### 4. Connective negation and negative concord in Croatian

As already shown in Section 2, Croatian is a strict NC language. Let us now see how Croatian speakers express connective negation and how it interferes with NC. Like English, Croatian has more than one CoNeg. One is *ni*, it is ancient and pan-Slavic; the second is *niti*, which contains *ni* and what is called a 'strengthening particle' (Kovačević 2016: 262; Matasović *et al.* 2016: 716).<sup>10</sup> Strictly speaking, *ni* is not dedicated to the 'neither' sense, for on its own it can also have the scalar 'not even' sense, like in many other languages (Haspelmath 2007: 17–18). This 'not even' phrase is in strict NC with the negative verb. Example (25) illustrates a preverbal use, but there is NC in the postverbal use too.

(25) *Ni Iris nije / \*je pročitala knjigu.*

not.even Iris NEG.is is read book

'Not even Iris read the book.'

This scalar *ni* is also the origin of the negative onset of negative pronouns like *ništa* 'nothing', again, like in many other languages (Haspelmath 1997: 159–164; de Swart 2010: 193–199; Gianollo 2018: 222–228). And in Croatian, prepositions can separate *ni* from the rest of the pronoun, which has the same form as an interrogative pronoun (Zovko Dinković 2013b: 675–677).

<sup>10</sup> This paper does not deal with the diachrony. For Croatian see Kovačević (2016: 238–255).



- (26) *Neću promijeniti mišljenje ni o čemu.*  
NEG.will change opinion NEG about what  
'I won't change my opinion about anything.'

Both uses of *ni* are left out of account in what follows.

*Ni* is typically phrasal, as in (27). The clausal negator is obligatory and just like the negative pronouns and the 'not even' *ni* phrase, the negatively connected phrase is in NC, independently of word order.<sup>11</sup>

- (27) *Ni Iris ni Lena nisu išle u kino.*  
CONEG Iris CONEG Lena NEG.are gone to cinema  
'Neither Iris nor Lena went to the movies.'

So, in that sense *ni ... ni* has strict NC. But there is more to be said. First, the NC literature is overwhelmingly a study of the interaction of clausal negators and negative indefinites. The *ni ... ni* phrase in (27) has NC, but it is not indefinite. The CoNeg construction could be indefinite, but this parameter is in fact irrelevant here. This is the first quirky feature of the NC that occurs with CoNeg constructions – 'Q' stands for 'quirky feature'.<sup>12</sup>

Q1 In the NC with CoNeg constructions (in)definiteness is irrelevant.

Second, when the two phrases are opposites, like in (28), NC is optional (see Nazalević Čučević 2016: 63–64, referring to Kovachević 2002: 87).

- (28) *Kuća nije / je bila ni lijepa ni ružna.*  
house NEG.is / is been CONEG pretty CONEG ugly  
'The house was neither pretty nor ugly.'

This optional lack of NC may be related to the obligatory lack of NC with a disjunction illustrated in (9) and to that extent it is perhaps not so special. Still, we are dealing here with a special kind of non-strict NC, not dependent on word order.

<sup>11</sup> Note that when an element has both 'not even' and 'neither' uses, its NC properties need not be the same – see Barouni (2018: 21, 29) on Greek *oute*.

<sup>12</sup> Three comments. First, quirkiness lies in the eye of the beholder. Before strictness became a standard parameter, Laka (1994: 79) considered the differential behavior of the negative pronouns in Italian, which is non-strict like Spanish, to be 'paradoxical'. Second, the adjective 'quirky' has collocated with 'negative concord' at least once before, viz. in Jabłońska (2003), but the issues are different there. Third, in the scalar use (25) we see a definite noun too (the proper name *Iris*), but the construction still involves indefiniteness: *not even Iris* refers to an indefinite set of people that includes Iris an unlikely member.



Q2 When Croatian phrasal *ni ... ni* connects opposites, NC is optional.

Third, as Gajić (2018: 3–4) pointed out, the first *ni* in a *ni ... ni* structure can be optional.

- (29) *Bojan nije (ni) pjevao ni plesao.*  
 Bojan NEG.is CONEG sang CONEG danced  
 ‘Bojan neither sang nor danced.’

With the phrase ‘The initial *ni*-marker cannot be omitted with coordinations of subjects as [her] (12)’, similar to my (29), she suggests that the optionality depends on whether the *ni ... ni* constituent is subject or not. But this seems wrong. Irena Zovko Dinković has checked the Croatian Web Corpus (<http://nlp.ffzg.hr/resources/corpora/hrwac/>, 7 October 2020) and the parameter is the position of *ni ... ni* relative to the finite, negative verb: if *ni ... ni* follows, the first *ni* is optional and if *ni ... ni* precedes, the first *ni* is present – with virtually no exceptions. Of course, subjects are often preverbal, so one can see why one could associate *ni* drop with subjecthood. Interestingly, the situation is the same in Bulgarian (Иванова 2016: 70) and Spanish (see Section 5). Furthermore, a postverbal – preverbal parameter (with ‘verb’ referring to a finite verb or auxiliary) is well-known from NC studies: it is the parameter of what I called the ‘classical’ strict – non-strict NC contrast. But here it determines the presence of the first of two CoNegs.

Q3 When Croatian phrasal *ni ... ni* follows the finite verb, the first *ni* is optional, and when phrasal *ni ... ni* precedes the finite verb, the first *ni* is obligatory.

Like in Q2, we are again dealing with a special kind of non-strict NC. Different from the classical case and the one in Q2, this lack of NC does not concern the presence of the clausal negator, but that of a CoNeg.

Yet another quirky feature, shown in (29), is that the connected phrases do not have to be nominal: in (29) they are verbal.

Q4 In the NC with phrasal *ni ... ni* the connected elements may be verbal.

The other CoNeg, *niti*, is typically clausal. As pointed out by Gajić (2018: 5), it occurs in both of the connected clauses, obligatorily in the second one, but in the first one a non-connective negator can function instead.

- (30) a. *Niti je Iris ispekla kolač, niti je Lena kupila mlijeko.*  
 CONEG is Iris baked cake CONEG is Lena bought milk  
 'Iris neither baked a cake nor did Lena buy milk.'
- b. *Iris nije ispekla kolač, niti je Lena kupila mlijeko.*  
 Iris NEG.is baked cake CONEG is Lena bought milk  
 'Iris didn't bake a cake nor did Lena buy milk.'

This is similar to English, which also has negators other than the CoNeg in the first of two clauses (see (15)). But Croatian is different in that the first clause seems to allow a CoNeg more readily than in English. More importantly, *niti* is special with respect to NC: whereas the normal negator requires NC, the *niti* negator forbids it. Not surprisingly, when this *niti* scopes over an indefinite pronoun, we can't get a negative pronoun: we either get a negative or a positive polarity pronoun (Gajić 2018: 7; Irena Zovko Dinković p.c.).<sup>13</sup>

- (31) a. *Nije nikoga / \*ikoga / \*nekoga vidio, niti ...*  
 NEG.is nobody / anybody / somebody seen CONEG  
 'He saw nobody, nor ...'
- b. *Niti je \*nikoga / ikoga / nekoga vidio, niti ...*  
 CONEG is nobody / anybody / somebody seen CONEG  
 'He neither saw anybody/somebody nor ...'

Clausal *niti* is thus a non-NC negator like *bez* 'without' in (12). The behavior of clausal *niti* is worthy of another quirkiness claim.

Q5

Croatian clausal *niti* is outside of the NC system, even though it can be replaced by the clausal negator *ne*, which is a NC negator, and even though Croatian generally has strict NC for negative indefinites and phrasal *ni*.

As in English, the phrasal – clausal distinction is fuzzy. Gajić (2018: 4, 11) explicitly says that with embedded clauses both *ni ...ni* and *niti ... niti* are acceptable (see English (21)). Here is another illustration. Whereas (29) has *ni* with a negative connection of two past verb phrases, which necessitates an auxiliary, (32) has *niti*

<sup>13</sup> Bernini & Ramat (1996: 102) claim that *niti* occurs with a negative verb form in Croatian, but with a positive one in Serbian. This is not correct. In this respect, Serbian is just like Croatian. Slovenian is different and the counterpart to *niti* requires NC (Gašper Ilc, p.c), but Bulgarian is like Croatian and Serbian, except that the counterpart to *niti* does not go with the negatively polar 'anybody' pronoun – Bulgarian does not have them – but with a 'somebody' pronoun (Zlatka Guentchéva, p.c.).



connecting two present verb phrases, without an auxiliary.

- (32) *Bojan niti pjeva niti pleše.*  
 Bojan CONEG sings CONEG dances  
 ‘Bojan neither sings nor dances.’

The fact that Croatian is a pro-drop language no doubt makes the borderline even more fuzzy than in English. Also, in informal style *niti* may replace the phrasal *ni* and it will then add emphasis (Nazalević Čučević 2016: 85). This also happens in the clausal fragment use: the norm prescribes *ni*, but *niti* is also used and it adds emphasis (Zovko Dinković 2013a: 152). The clausal fragment has no verb and there is no concord.

- (33) A: *Ne idem u kino.*                      B: *Ni/niti ja.*  
 NEG go to cinema                              CONEG I  
 ‘I don’t go to the movies.’                      ‘Me neither.’

## 5. Connective negation and negative concord in Spanish

Spanish is a textbook example of a language with non-strict NC. The strictness parameter follows the classical preverbal – postverbal distinction, as illustrated in (3). Like English and Croatian, Spanish has more than one CoNeg, viz. *ni* and *tampoco*. *Ni* has a different etymology from Croatian *ni*. The Spanish *ni* derives from Latin *neque* ‘not also’ and *tampoco* is composed of *tan* ‘so’ and *poco* ‘little’. Both also have non-connective uses – see Albelda & Gras (2011) on the scalar use of *ni* and Schwenter (2003) on the negator use of *tampoco*. *Ni ... ni* has the phrasal use. The second *ni* can be followed by *tampoco*. The *ni ... ni (tampoco)* phrase exhibits the same NC that negative indefinites have: preverbal *ni ... ni (tampoco)* forbids the clausal negator, postverbal *ni ... ni (tampoco)* needs it – as is shown in (34). *ni ... ni (tampoco)* also exhibits something we have seen in Croatian, the drop of a first *ni*, and in identical conditions: when *ni ... ni (tampoco)* follows the finite verb, the first *ni* is optional. With a preverbal use *ni* has to be doubled (Bosque 1994: 191; Aronovich 2006: 4). Q3’ is an update of Q3.

- (34) a. *Ni / \*Ø Fulano ni (tampoco) Mengano salieron ...*  
 CONEG Ø Fulano CONEG Mengano left  
 ‘Neither Fulano nor Mengano left ...’
- b. *No somos (ni) de izquierdas ni (tampoco) de derechas.*  
 NEG are CONEG of left CONEG of right  
 ‘We are neither from the left nor from the right.’

**Q3'** When Croatian and Spanish phrasal *ni ... ni* follows the finite verb, the first *ni* is optional, and when phrasal *ni ... ni* precedes the finite verb, the first *ni* is obligatory.

For indefinites Croatian has strict NC and Spanish non-strict NC. Judging from these two languages, there is no connection between classical NC for indefinites and the Q3' NC that determines the optionality of the first of two phrasal CoNegs.

Spanish also illustrates Q4: the connected phrases may be verbs: in (35) the verbs are finite.

(35) *Ni / \*Ø puedo ni debo exponerla a ciertos riesgos.*  
 CONEG Ø can CONEG must expose.her to certain risks  
 'I neither can nor should expose her to certain risks.'

That Ø instead of the first *ni* is not unexpected given Q3', but what is special is that *ni* alternates with *no*. I add another Q claim.

(36) *No / ni / \*Ø puedo ni debo exponerla a ciertos riesgos.*  
 NEG CONEG Ø can CONEG must expose.her to certain risks  
 'I neither can nor should expose her to certain risks.'

**Q6** When the connected phrases are finite verbs, the first *ni* of Spanish phrasal *ni ... ni* alternates with clausal negator *no*.

That the first of two CoNegs may be replaced by the clausal negator is typical for the clausal use. So, I hypothesize that what we see in (36) is due to the fuzziness of the phrasal – clausal boundary.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> For Gianollo (2017: 67) what needs to be explained here is that there is no *no* after *n*.

(i) *No puedo ni \*no debo exponerla a ciertos riesgos.*  
 NEG can CONEG NEG must expose.her to certain risks  
 'I neither nor should expose her to certain risks.'

The ungrammaticality follows, in Gianollo's view, from the fact that Spanish has non-strict NC: *ni* precedes the verb and this makes (another) *no* impossible. This contrasts with standard French, which has strict NC, and which has a counterpart to *ni no*. In my account, what needs to be explained why *no ... ni* can alternate with *ni ... ni* and I blame the fuzziness of the phrasal – clausal distinction for this. Also, the second *ni* – without *no* – needs no explanation: the pure correlative simply has two *ni*'s. In Gianollo's account, it is furthermore unclear (i) why *no ni ... ni* is impossible, for in this structure *no* precedes the verb so both NCIs should have *ni* - and (ii) why *ni ... ni* is possible.



Spanish *ni* also combines with negative indefinites, primarily with *nadie* in the phrase *nada ni nadie*, which overwhelmingly goes without *ni* in front of *nada* and without *tampoco*.<sup>15</sup> That a negative indefinite may combine with *ni*, however, is remarkable, for it makes a formally doubly negative noun phrase. Word order does not seem to matter.

- (37) a. *Escucha, nada ni nadie controla lo que*  
 listen nothing CONEG nobody controls that which  
*nos sucede.*  
 us happens  
 ‘Listen, nothing or nobody controls what happens to us.’
- b. *No paramos por nada ni por nadie.*  
 NEG stop for nothing CONEG for nobody  
 ‘We stop for nothing or nobody.’

**Q7** When Spanish phrasal *ni ... ni* scopes over *nada* ‘nothing’ followed by *nadie* ‘nobody’, the first *ni* is overwhelmingly absent, the second one stays, and *tampoco* is overwhelmingly absent too.

Q7 needs more work, at least in order to find out what negative indefinites Q7 applies to other than *nada ni nadie* and what to do with the very few counterexamples. Also, I did not mention this kind of construction for Croatian, because Croatian *ni* cannot combine negative indefinites. Croatian uses the conjunction *i* ‘and’.

- (38) *Nitko i ništa neće me natjerati da promijenim mišljenje.*  
 nobody and nothing NEG.will me make that change opinion  
 ‘Nobody or nothing will make me change my opinion.’

When *ni* has a clausal use, it mostly only appears in the second clause, optionally followed by *tampoco* and the first clause contains a non-connective negator.

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I agree with Gianollo’s analysis of the French counterpart (see next section).

<sup>15</sup> In clause-initial and thus preverbal position, where, given Q3’, *ni* should occur more often than in other positions, a Sketchengine search of the Spanish Web 2018 Corpus (more than 17 billion words) yields four attestations of *ni nada ni nadie* vs. 1.703 attestations of *nada ni nadie*. Out of a total of 20.086 occurrences of *(ni) nada ni nadie* only three had *tampoco*. ([https://app.sketchengine.eu/#dashboard?corpname=preloaded%2Festenten18\\_fl5](https://app.sketchengine.eu/#dashboard?corpname=preloaded%2Festenten18_fl5), Accessed 19 October 2020).

- (39) *No puedo explicarlo, ni (tampoco) tengo el tiempo para hacerlo.*  
NEG can explain.it CONEG have the time to do.it  
'I can't explain, nor do I have the time to do it.'

But *ni ... ni (tampoco)* is also grammatical, as in (40), due to Sánchez López (2017: 673).

- (40) *Él ni ha escrito una novela ni quiere escribirla.*  
he CONEG has written a novel CONEG wants write.it  
'He has neither written a novel nor wants to write one.'

This is due, I propose, to the fuzziness of the phrasal – clausal boundary. Since Spanish has pro drop, (40) can just as easily be taken as a phrasal construction. Thus, the typically phrasal *ni ... ni* is acceptable here.

In the second clause of (39) *ni (tampoco)* is the sole exponent of the clausal negation. So, one could treat it as a clausal negator. However, one could also take it as an NCI, like preverbal negative pronouns which are the sole exponent of negation. The fact that postverbal negative pronouns have to be accompanied by a clausal negator is not a concern for *ni (tampoco)*, for in this clausal use *ni (tampoco)* can only be preverbal. But it is, of course, quirky: with classical NC the NCI can be both preverbal and postverbal.

**Q8** Spanish clausal *ni (tampoco)* can be analyzed both as an NC negator or as an NCI in almost classical non-strict NC except that *ni (tampoco)* can only be preverbal.

Note that the question whether *ni (tampoco)* is a negator or an NCI is not settled by examples such as (41).

- (41) *No aporta beneficios a nadie, ni (tampoco) complace a nadie.*  
NEG brings advantages to nobody CONEG pleases to nobody  
'It does not bring advantages to anybody nor does it please anybody.'

Either *ni (tampoco)* is the clausal negator forcing NC (*nadie*), so it is not just a negator but an NC negator, or *ni (tampoco)* and *nadie* are NCIs illustrating a negative spread constellation, i.e., a constellation with two NCIs with a single negative sense and no clausal negator, as in (6).

*Tampoco* can occur with *no* or by itself. The choice is in accordance with the classical positional NC parameter.



(42) *No tengo opción y tampoco la tienes tú.*  
 NEG have option and CONEG it have you  
 ‘I don’t have a choice and neither do you.’

(43) *Además, no puedo regresar tampoco.*  
 besides NEG can go.back CONEG  
 ‘Besides, I can’t go back either.’

*Pace* Herburger (2001: 295) *tampoco* also allows negative spread without the clausal negator.

(44) *Nadie lo escuchó (y) tampoco quiso escucharlo nadie.*  
 nobody it heard and CONEG wanted hear.it nobody  
 ‘Nobody heard it and neither did anybody want to hear it.’

In the clausal fragment use, Spanish is generous: it accepts *ni X*, and *X tampoco* and also, for emphasis, *ni ... tampoco*.

(45) A: *No voy al cine.* B: *Ni yo (tampoco) / Yo tampoco.*  
 NEG go to.the cinema CONEG I CONEG I CONEG  
 ‘I don’t go to the movies.’ ‘Me neither.’

## 6. Connective negation and negative concord in French

French indefinites follow a non-strict NC system, but not the Spanish one. Thus the ‘nobody’ word *personne* may or may not be accompanied by the clausal negator *ne*, but it does not depend as much on word order as on register.<sup>16</sup> In informal spoken French *ne* is often absent, while it is present elsewhere (which means that in this register the NC is strict).

(46) *Les gens (ne) me comprennent pas, je (ne) comprends personne.*  
 the people NEG me understand NEG I NEG understand nobody  
 ‘People don’t understand me, I don’t understand anybody.’

Example (46) also shows that with the clausal negator *ne... pas*, *ne* can also be omitted; this is again a property of the informal spoken register. This phenomenon illustrates what has come to be known as a ‘Jespersen Cycle’. In the French case the Jespersen Cycle takes the clausal negator *ne*, which can still be the sole exponent of negation in some contexts, to *ne ... pas*, the clausal negator of the formal register, and then to the informal negator *pas* (van der Auwera & Krasnoukhova

<sup>16</sup> To the extent that word order matters, it seems to work in a direction opposite from that of Spanish, with preverbal negative indefinites preferring *ne* (Ashby 1981: 680).

2020; van der Auwera *et al.* 2021a).

French has the phrasal CoNeg *ni*. Just like Spanish *ni* it probably derives from Latin *nec / neque* and it also has a scalar 'even' use.<sup>17</sup> There are different patterns for what I take to be phrasal uses, illustrated in (47).

- (47) a. *Marie n' aime (ni) le théâtre ni l' opéra.*  
Marie NEG loves CONEG the theatre CONEG the opera  
'Marie likes neither theatre nor opera.'
- b. *Marie (n') aime pas le théâtre ni l' opéra.*  
Marie NEG loves NEG the theatre CONEG the opera  
'Marie likes neither theatre nor opera.'

We see here how the expression of the connective negator interferes with the Jespersen Cycle. In (47a) the clausal negator is *ne* and in (47b) it is *ne ... pas* or *pas*. For all versions the clausal negator, whether it is *ne*, *ne pas* or just *pas*, triggers concord in the *ni* constituents.<sup>18</sup> The NC is like the type found in Croatian and Spanish, in that a first *ni* may be absent, and just like the NC of the indefinite *personne* in example (46) it is controlled by register. But it is special: the first *ni* is absent both in the most formal variant in (47a) – the one with just *ne* – and in the two less formal ones in (47b), which take care of the first negation with (*ne ...*) *pas*.<sup>19</sup>

In (47) the CoNeg constructions follow the verb. The situation is different when they precede the verb, as in (48), due to Grevisse (1980: 1234). When there is no *pas* the first *ni* can be absent in the formal register, but any version with *pas* is degraded<sup>20</sup> – the reason is that when (*ne*) *pas* co-occurs with an NCI, we normally – we will come to a 'quirky' exception later – don't get NCI, but double negation.

<sup>17</sup> Hansen (2021) points out that the development was not a linear one – it went from a negative element to a negatively polar item and then back to a negative one – and that *ni* has a marginal scalar use. Badiou-Monferran (2021: 948) mentions that *ni* might derive from *ne* (which does derive from *nec/ neque*) and either *celui* 'this' or *il* 'he'.

<sup>18</sup> This is in line with Doetjes (2005), but not with de Swart (2001), who treats the two *ni*'s differently.

<sup>19</sup> The variant with *aime pas ... ni* is probably marginal, because of the incongruity of combining the informal *ne* drop with *ni*, which is more formal. This incongruity, I assume, also explains why *ne* might not easily drop in front of *ni ... ni* (Ashby 1976: 122).

<sup>20</sup> Gaatone (1971: 126) gives an example with *pas*, repeated by Muller (1991: 293).



- (48) a. (Ni) l' instituteur ni le curé (n') ont besoin  
 CONEG the teacher CONEG the priest NEG have need  
*d'avoir un nom qui les désigne.*  
 of have a name that them designates  
 'Neither the teacher nor the priest need to have a name that designates them.'
- b. \*Ni / \*Ø l' instituteur ni le curé (n') ont  
 CONEG the teacher CONEG the priest NEG have  
*pas besoin d'avoir un nom qui les désigne.*  
 NEG need of have a name that them designates  
 'Neither the teacher nor the priest needs to have a name that designates them.'

So the preverbal – postverbal parameter is relevant in French too, but in a way that is different from its role in classical NC or its role in determining the optionality of the first connective phrasal negator in Croatian and Spanish Q3'.

Q9

When French phrasal *ni ... ni* is postverbal, the first *ni* can be omitted. When it is preverbal it can be omitted when the clausal negator does not use *pas*.

Another interesting feature is that the second *ni* can be followed by *non plus*. This is independent of word order. (49) illustrates a postverbal use.

- (49) Marie n' aime pas le théâtre, ni non plus l' opéra.  
 Marie NEG loves NEG the theatre CONEG the opera  
 'Marie doesn't love theatre and not opera either.'

*Non plus* has a negative meaning, thus giving the full construction (*ni non plus*) a double exponence. Of course, that negation can have a double exponence is not unknown in French: we have it in the clausal negator *ne ... pas*. *Ni non plus* is also similar to Spanish *ni tampoco*, illustrated in (39), except that *tampoco* itself is not negative.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Another variant is *pas plus que* 'not more than'. It is mentioned by Gaatone (1971: 42), but it needs more work, as does its counterpart in English and other languages. (i) is a nice illustration, because it shows *pas plus que* as a stylistic variant of an earlier *ni* (<https://context.reverso.net/translation/french-english/Ni+bosse>, Accessed 16 August 2020).

Like Spanish but unlike Croatian, French *ni* can scope over the negative indefinites, at least ‘nothing nor nobody’, and then the first *ni* has to be omitted (Gaatone 1971: 125; Muller 1991: 293<sup>22</sup>) or is overwhelmingly omitted, the second *ni* stays and *non plus* is not possible – example due to Hansen (2016: 321).<sup>23</sup>

- (50) \**Ni* / Ø *rien ni personne ne me fera changer d'avis.*  
 CONEG Ø nothing CONEG nobody NEG me will.make change  
 of opinion  
 ‘Nothing or nobody will make me change my opinion.’

So basically, in this respect French is like Spanish and I can propose a more general version Q7.

Q7' When Spanish and French phrasal *ni ... ni* scope over ‘nothing’ and ‘nobody’, the first *ni* is overwhelmingly omitted, the second one stays, and a strengthener (*tampoco* or *non plus*) is (overwhelmingly) absent.

In (51) there is an example of a CoNeg construction scoping over a finite verb.

- (51) *Il ne parlait (pas) ni ne mangeait.*  
 he NEG talked NEG CONEG NEG ate  
 ‘He neither talked nor ate.’

Different from Croatian and Spanish, the first VP cannot have *ni*. This *ni* is similar to that the ones illustrated in (47) to the extent that it is in concord with the negator *ne*.

- 
- (i) *Ni Fréart de Chambray, ni Bosse, [...] ne sont présents, pas plus que Blondel et d'Aviler.*  
 CONEG Fréart de Chambray CONEG Bosse NEG are present NEG  
 more than Blondel and d'Aviler  
 ‘Neither Fréart de Chambray nor Bosse [...] were present, no more than Blondel and d'Aviler.’

<sup>22</sup> Muller (1991: 294) considers the absence of the first *ni* ‘banal’. He does not discuss the presence of the second *ni*, which, I think, is not banal, but, once again, quirky.

<sup>23</sup>A Sketchengine search of the French Web 2012 (of nearly 10 billion words) yielded 14,400 attestations of *rien ni personne* as against 87 for *ni rien ni personne*. There were no attestations of *non plus* following *personne* ([https://app.sketchengine.eu/#dashboard?corpname=preloaded%2Ffritent12\\_2](https://app.sketchengine.eu/#dashboard?corpname=preloaded%2Ffritent12_2); Accessed 20 October 2020)



**Q10** When in French the connected phrases are finite verbs the first verb has a non-connective negator and the second one has *ni* in concord with the non-connective *ne*.

Example (51) is a formal structure. An informal variant is shown in (52).

(52) *Il (ne) parlait pas et (il) (ne) mangeait pas non plus.*  
 he NEG talked NEG and he NEG ate NEG CONEG  
 ‘He didn’t talk nor did he eat.’

In (52) the connecting negator *non plus* is, I propose, an NCI, just like *ni non plus* in (49) or *ni* in (51), in concord with a clausal negator. This is also quirky, for elsewhere in the grammar the combination of *(ne ...) pas* with an NCI does not yield negative concord but double negation (with e.g. *ne ... pas personne* meaning ‘not nobody’).<sup>24</sup>

**Q11** French clausal *non plus* differs from other French NCIs in that it is in concord with *(ne ...) pas*.

Note also that (52) comes in two versions: with the repeated subject *il* the use is clausal and without *il* the use is phrasal, but the connected phrases are VPs and this is a construction on the fuzzy boundary between phrasal and clausal uses. Also, while *ni* can cooccur with *non plus* in the phrasal use, illustrated in (49), it cannot in the clausal uses. In Present-day French *ni* has no clausal functions anymore and has been replaced by *non plus* (Grieve Smith 2009: 32; see Badiou-Monferran 2004: 82 for examples of the earlier clausal *ni*) and, to a lesser extent, also by *davantage* ‘more’.<sup>25</sup> Example (53), from <https://www.senate.be/www/?MIval=/publications/viewPub.html&COLL=S&LEG=4&NR=1630&VOLGNR=1&LANG=fr>, Accessed 11 September 2020) is a good example, with *ne ... pas davantage* following an earlier *ne pas ... non plus*.

<sup>24</sup> Van Lente (2003: 113) considers the NCI to be *pas non plus*, which is in concord with *ne*. This avoids the issue of *pas* combining with an NCI, but it introduces the problem that the NCI itself (*pas non plus*) has two negators.

<sup>25</sup> This claim is too strong, for some rare examples of clausal *ni*, see Gaatone (1971: 127-128, Roig 2016: 48-49). *Davantage*, like *pas plus que*, needs more study and probably isn’t a CoNeg (yet) (see Corblin 2005).



(53) [...] *Les armes nucléaires n' ont pas non plus empêché*  
 the arms nuclear NEG have NEG CONEG prevented  
*la défaite*  
 the defeat

[...] *Les États-Unis n' ont pas davantage utilisé d' armes*  
 the United States NEG have NEG CONEG used of arms  
*nucléaires [...]*  
 nuclear

'[...] Neither have nuclear arms prevented the defeat [...] Nor have the United States used nuclear arms [...].'

Example (54) illustrates the clausal fragment use.

(54) A: *Je n' aime pas le thé.* B: (*Ni moi non plus.*)  
 I NEG love NEG the tea CONEG me CONEG  
 'I don't like tea.' 'Me neither.'

What is interesting here is that in this use *non plus* can occur on its own and thus count as a connecting negator all by itself. In this respect *non plus* resembles Spanish *tampoco*, but *tampoco* can also be a connecting negator by itself in a non-elliptical clausal use.

## 7. Generalizations

The previous sections showed that CoNeg constructions are quirky. Some of the observations are highly specific, like Q8 about the Spanish clausal *ni (tampoco)*, and some very general, like Q1 saying that for the NC of CoNegs (in)definiteness is irrelevant. In this section I formulate some more generalizations. Of course, these generalizations depend on a data set of just four languages.

G1 seems like to be a robust generalization.

G1 If one of the two CoNegs is absent, it is the first one.

Just how the first CoNeg is absent, depends on whether the use is phrasal or clausal.

G2 If one of the two phrasal CoNegs is absent, it is the first one. Its place is empty or, when the connected elements are verbal, the place is taken up by a clausal non-connective negator.



- G3 If one of the two clausal CoNegs is absent, it is the first one. Its place is taken up by a non-connective negator.

For both G2 and G3 the details differ from one language to the next, as shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Ø or non-connective negator instead of first phrasal CoNeg

1st of 2 phrasal CoNegs	
must be absent, when the construction scopes over finite verbs	French <i>ni</i>
is overwhelmingly absent, when the construction scopes over 'nothing' and 'nobody'	Spanish <i>ni</i> French <i>ni</i>
may be absent, when the construction scopes over finite verbs	Spanish <i>ni</i>
may be absent, depending on whether the CoNeg construction is preverbal or postverbal	Croatian <i>ni</i> Spanish <i>ni</i>
may be absent, depending on whether the CoNeg construction is preverbal or postverbal and the nature of the clausal negator	French <i>ni</i>
may not be absent	English <i>neither</i>

Table 2. Non-connective negator instead of first clausal CoNeg

1st of 2 clausal CoNegs	
must be replaced by a non-connective negator	French <i>ni</i>
may be replaced by a non-connective negator	English <i>neither</i> , Croatian <i>niti</i> , Spanish <i>ni</i>

For the phrasal use, it is noticeable that none of the four languages allow an unconditional omission of the first of two phrasal CoNegs. This is not to say that it is impossible. At least Dutch allows an empty first phrasal CoNeg without any of the conditions discussed in the above.

(55) Dutch

(*Noch*) *oesters noch mosselen konden hem bekoren.*  
 CONEG oysters CONEG mussels could him tempt  
 'Neither oysters nor mussels could tempt him.'

But, interestingly, even in Dutch there is a difference between the two versions: the pattern with an empty first CoNeg is more bookish and less frequent (see Haeseryn *et al.* 1995: 1504). Perhaps the preference for an overt first CoNeg is a general property of phrasal CoNeg constructions. Bernini & Ramat (1996) or Haspelmath (2007) do not draw attention to it, but Salaberri (to appear) can confirm it.

With Spanish and French *ni*, the preverbal vs. postverbal parameter may be argued to be motivated at least in part in the same way as it is in classical NC, viz.



with the Neg Early principle.<sup>26</sup> In its most general formulation the Neg Early principle states that it is preferable and sufficient to express negation early in the sentence. In (3b) this takes the form of forbidding a clausal negator if preceded by a negative indefinite. In (29), (34) and (47) it allows a first CoNeg to be absent if it follows a clausal negator. In (37) and (50) an initial negative indefinite constituent (overwhelmingly) forces a  $\emptyset$  first CoNeg. The three manifestations are related but independent. Spanish shows all three effects, French the second and the third, and Croatian only the first. The fact that Dutch (55) prefers *noch ... noch* to  $\emptyset ... noch$  is yet a fourth effect of the Neg Early principle.

When the second CoNeg is present and the first one is not, the second is trivially heavier than the first. We see this in a different way also in Spanish and French, in which only the second CoNeg can be strengthened – by *tampoco* in Spanish and by *non plus* in French.

G4 In phrasal uses, if either of the two CoNegs is more complex, it is the second one.

G5 relates the phrasal and clausal CoNegs.

G5 If phrasal and clausal CoNegs differ and if first and second phrasal CoNegs may differ, then the clausal CoNegs are more similar to the second than to the first of two phrasal CoNegs.

It is in these domains that Spanish and French allow strengthening with *tampoco*, resp. *non plus*. It is in the clausal domain that the strengthening leads to a renewal, not unlike what happens in a Jespersen Cycle. *Tampoco* has gone the furthest: it can do without *ni* in any clausal use, French *non plus* allows this only in the clausal fragment use.

With respect to the status of the CoNeg constructions in the NC systems, most of them were analyzed as NCIs, some strict, some non-strict in both a classical sense and a non-classical sense. As to non-classical non-strict NC discussed in this paper, five out of six cases concern the absence of a first CoNeg, the importance of which is captured in G6.

G6 Non-strict NC does not just concern the presence or absence of a clausal negator, but also the presence or absence of the first of two CoNegs.

<sup>26</sup> The negator does not have to be first, only early. So I renamed ‘Neg First’, proposed by Horn (1989: 293) for an idea credited to Jespersen (1917: 5) (e.g. van der Auwera, to appear).



Table 3 surveys NC in the three languages.

Table 3. NC in Croatian, Spanish, and French

	Croatian	Spanish	French
NCI strict	phrasal <i>ni</i>	phrasal <i>ni (tampoco)</i>	
NCI strict, Q11			clausal <i>non plus</i> clausal <i>davantage</i>
NCI non-strict, Q2	phrasal <i>ni</i>		
NCI non-strict, Q3'	phrasal <i>ni</i>	phrasal <i>ni (tampoco)</i>	
NCI non-strict, Q6, Q8		phrasal <i>ni (tampoco)</i>	
NCI non-strict, Q7'		phrasal <i>ni (tampoco)</i>	phrasal <i>ni (non plus)</i>
NCI non-strict, Q9			phrasal <i>ni (non plus)</i>
NC negator, Q8		clausal <i>ni (tampoco)</i>	
non-NC negator, Q5	clausal <i>niti</i>		

Two uses are special. Spanish clausal *ni (tampoco)* can be analyzed both as an NCI and as an NC negator. Croatian clausal *niti* is a non-NC negator. That NCIs can become negators is well known: it happened to French *pas* (assuming, of course, that *pas* was an NCI just like e.g. *personne*). What we see here is that this scenario is available for CoNegs too.

Table 4 compares the three NC languages in the clausal fragment use.

Table 4. Clausal fragment CoNegs

Croatian	phrasal <i>ni</i> Y or clausal <i>niti</i> Y
Spanish	clausal <i>ni</i> Y, <i>tampoco</i> Y, <i>ni</i> Y <i>tampoco</i>
French	clausal <i>ni</i> Y, Y <i>non plus</i> , <i>ni</i> Y <i>non plus</i>

Croatian is interesting: it allows both the typically phrasal *ni* and the typically clausal *niti* – a result, I propose, of the fuzziness of the phrasal – clausal distinction and because *niti* has the potential of being emphatic. Also, the three languages treat the CoNegs as NCIs here, but they are NCIs in the special context that, by definition, allows them to be without NC. It is a bit paradoxical, as is the most famous as well as infamous example of the clausal fragment use.

(56) French

(<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&q=je+t%27aime+moi+non+plus>, Accessed 18 August 2020)

A: <i>Je t' aime.</i>	B: <i>Moi non plus.</i>
I you love	ne CONEG
'I love you.'	'Me neither.'

## 8. Envoi

This is an exploratory study. Section 2, in particular, made clear to what extent a fair number of issues are shelved for future research. But even with these limitations I hope to have shown that the NC of connective negators is special, i.e., 'quirky', relative to the NC we are used to with negative indefinites. And although languages and constructions show idiosyncrasies, there are similarities. Further study should take into account more languages and tie up the current findings with work on Greek (Barouni 2019), Maltese (Čéplö & Lucas 2020), Ossetic (Erschler & Volk 2011; Erschler 2013), and Turkish (Şener & İşsever 2003; Jeretič 2018). Interestingly, the latter studies only treat the more or less exceptional presence or absence of negators patterning with CoNegs, not the presence or absence of first CoNegs. Meanwhile, a follow-up study is in place for the Balto-Slavic languages, dealing with both phenomena (van der Auwera *et al.* 2021b). On a language-specific level, we also need solid corpus work, no more than hinted at in the present study.

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### NEKONVENCIONALNO NIJEČNO SLAGANJE: NI U HRVATSKOM, ŠPANJOLSKOM I FRANCUSKOM

U ovom radu razmatra se međudjelovanje vezivne negacije (poput primjerice ‘neither ... nor’ u engleskom jeziku) i niječnog slaganja, što je pitanje koje dosad u literaturi nije bilo dovoljno obrađeno. Promatraju se neki jezici u kojima se provodi niječno slaganje, točnije hrvatski, španjolski i francuski. Spomenuta se pojava promatra iz sinkronijske perspektive, a podaci su prikupljeni iz postojećih opisa i temelje se na prosudbama izvornih govornika. U radu su opisane brojne idiosinkratičnosti niječnog slaganja u tri promatrana jezika, ali se ukazuje i na neke međusobne sličnosti.

**Ključne riječi:** vezivna negacija; niječno slaganje; niječna neodređenost; širenje negacije.