Chapter 30

Contact and the expression of negation

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This chapter presents an overview of developments in the expression of negation in Arabic and a number of its contact languages, focusing on clausal negation, with some remarks also on indefinites in the scope of negation. For most of the developments discussed in this chapter, it is not possible to say for certain that they are contact-induced. But evidence is presented which, cumulatively, points to widespread contact-induced change in this domain being the most plausible interpretation of the data.

1 Overview of concepts and terminology

1.1 Jespersen's cycle

Historical developments in the expression of negation have been the subject of increasing interest in the past few decades, with particular attention given to the fact that these developments typically give the appearance of being cyclical in nature. We can date the beginning of this sustained interest to Dahl's (1979) typological survey of negation patterns in the world's languages, in which he coined the term JESPERSEN'S CYCLE[1] for what is by now the best-known set of developments in this domain: the replacement of an original negative morpheme with a newly grammaticalized alternative, after a period in which the two may co-occur, prototypically resulting in a word-order shift from preverbal to postverbal negation. The best-known examples of Jespersen's cycle (both supplied, among

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[1]The name was chosen in recognition of the early identification of this phenomenon by the Danish linguist Otto Jespersen in a (1917) article, though others did identify the same set of changes earlier: Meillet (1912), for example, but also, significantly for the present work, Gardiner (1904), who observed a parallel set of changes in Coptic and Arabic as well as French (cf. van der Auwera 2009).

others, by Jespersen himself in his 1917 work) come from the history of English (1), and French (2).

(1) English (Jespersen 1917: 9)

    a. Stage I – Old English
       ic **ne** secge
       1SG NEG say.PRS.1SG
       'I do not say.'

    b. Stage II – Middle English
       I **ne** seye **not**.
       1SG NEG say.PRS.1SG NEG
       'I do not say.'

    c. Stage III – Early Modern English
       I say **not**.

(2) French (Jespersen 1917: 7)

    a. Stage I – Old French
       jeo **ne** di
       1SG NEG say.PRS.1SG
       'I do not say.'

    b. Stage II – contemporary written French
       Je **ne** dis **pas**.
       1SG NEG say.PRS.1SG NEG
       'I do not say.'

    c. Stage III – contemporary colloquial French
       Je dis **pas**.
       1SG say.PRS.1SG NEG
       'I do not say.'

More recently, Jespersen's cycle has come to be the subject of intensive investigation, especially in the languages of Europe (e.g. Bernini & Ramat 1992; 1996; Willis et al. 2013; Breitbarth et al. 2020), but also beyond (e.g. Lucas 2007; 2009; 2013; Lucas & Lash 2010; Devos & van der Auwera 2013; van der Auwera & Vossen 2015; 2016; 2017), with a picture emerging of a marked propensity for instances of Jespersen's cycle to be areally distributed, as we will see below in the discussion of Jespersen's cycle in Arabic and its contact languages (§2).

While Jespersen's cycle is the best known, best studied, and perhaps cross-linguistically most frequently occurring set of changes in the expression of negation, two other important types of changes must also be mentioned here: Croft's cycle, and changes to indefinites in the scope of negation.

1.2 Croft's cycle

In a typologically-oriented (1991) article, Croft reconstructs from synchronic descriptions of a range of languages a recurring set of cyclical changes in the expression of negation. Unlike Jespersen's cycle, in which the commonest sources of new negators are nominal elements expressing minimal quantities, such as 'step' or 'crumb', or generalizing pronouns like '(any)thing', CROFT'S CYCLE (named for Croft by Kahrel 1996), involves the evolution of new markers of negation developed from negative existential particles. Croft (1991: 6) distinguishes the following three types of languages:

Type A: the verbal negator is also used to negate existential predicates.
Type B: there is a special negative existential predicate distinct from the verbal negator.
Type C: there is a special negative existential predicate, and this form is also used to negate verbs.

For Type A, Croft (1991: 7) cites the example of Syrian Arabic *mā fī* 'there is not' and *mā baʕref* 'I do not know' among others. For Type B he cites (1991: 9), among other examples, the contrast between the Amharic negative existential *yälläm* (affirmative existential *allä*) and regular verbal negation *a(l)...-əm*. For Type C he cites (1991: 11–12) Manam (Oceanic) among other languages, giving the example in (3).

(3) Manam (Croft 1991: 11–12; Lichtenberk 1983: 385, 499)

    a. Verbal negation
       tágo   u-lóŋo
       NEG(.EXS) 1SG.REAL-hear
       'I did not hear.'

    b. Negative existential predicate
       anúa-lo   tamóata tágo   [*i-sóaʔi]
       village-in person NEG.EXS [3SG.REAL-EXS]
       'There is no one in the village.'

A number of languages also exhibit variation between two of the types: A ~ B, B ~ C, and C ~ A. This indicates a cyclical development A > B > C > A, in which a special negative existential predicate arises in a language (A > B), comes to function also as a verbal negator (B > C), and is then felt to be the negator proper, requiring supplementation by a positive existential predicate in existential constructions (C > A).

While Croft's cycle is less common than Jespersen's cycle, and has not been shown to have occurred in its entirety in the recorded history of any language, I mention it here because recent work by Wilmsen (2014: 174–176; 2016), discussed below in §2.1.2, argues for several instances of Croft's cycle in the history of Arabic.

1.3 Changes to indefinites in the scope of negation

The final major set of common changes to be dealt with here involve indefinite pronouns and quantifiers in the scope of negation. Here too cyclical patterns are commonplace, and these changes have been labelled "the argument cycle" (Ladusaw 1993) or "the quantifier cycle" (Willis 2011). What we find is that certain items, typically quantifiers such as 'all' or 'one' or generic nouns such as 'person' or 'thing', are liable to develop restrictions on the semantic contexts in which they can occur, namely what are referred to as either downward-entailing or non-veridical contexts (see Giannakidou 1998 for details and the distinction between the two). In essence, this means interrogative, conditional, and negative clauses, as well as the complements of comparative and superlative adjectives, but not ordinary affirmative declarative clauses. Items that are restricted to appearing in such contexts, such as English *ever* (consider the ungrammaticality of, e.g., **I've ever been to Japan*), are generally termed NEGATIVE POLARITY ITEMS. Often, however, we find negative polarity items whose appearance is restricted to a subset of these contexts, and much the most common restriction is to negative contexts only. Items with this narrower distribution, such as the English degree-adverbial phrase *one bit*, are generally termed strong negative polarity items and those with the wider downward-entailing/non-veridical distribution may be termed weak negative polarity items in contrast.

A commonly recurring diachronic tendency of such items is that they become stronger over time. That is, an item goes from having no restrictions, to being a weak negative polarity item, to being a strong negative polarity item, to eventually being itself inherently negative. The best-known instance of this progression comes from French *personne* 'nobody' and *rien* 'nothing'. These derive from the ordinary, unrestricted Latin generic nouns *persona* 'person' and *rem* 'thing' and still behaved as such in medieval French, as in (4).

(4) Medieval French (Hansen 2013: 72; Buridant 2000: 610)
  Et si vous dirai   une   rien.
  and so 2PL   say.FUT.1SG INDF.SG.F thing
  'And so I'll tell you a thing.'

In later medieval French they grammaticalized as indefinite pronouns and began to acquire a weak negative polarity distribution, as in the interrogative example in (5).

(5) Thirteenth-century French (Hansen 2013: 72; Buridant 2000: 610)
  As   tu rien   fet?
  AUX.2SG 2SG anything do.PTCP.PST
  'Have you done anything?'

In present-day French these items have become essentially inherently negative, as shown in (6). They can no longer appear in interrogative, conditional or main declarative clauses with an affirmative interpretation (Hansen 2013: 73), though an affirmative interpretation remains possible in comparative complements, albeit largely in frozen expressions, as in *rien au monde* 'anything in the world' in (7).

(6) Contemporary French (Hansen 2013: 68)
  Qui t'   a   vu?   Personne!
  who 2SG.OBJ AUX.3SG see.PTCP.PST nobody
  'Who saw you? Nobody!'

(7) Contemporary French (Hansen 2013: 73)
  J' aime le   vin mieux que rien   au   monde.
  1SG like.PRS DEF.SG.M wine better than anything in+DEF.SG.M world
  'I like wine better than anything in the world.'

Note that French *rien* 'nobody' and *personne* 'nothing', like their equivalents in many other Romance varieties (e.g. Italian *niente* and *nessuno*), are not straightforward negative quantifiers like English *nobody* and *nothing*, even disregarding their behaviour in contexts such as (7). This is because French, like many other languages but unlike Standard English, Standard German, Classical Latin etc., exhibits NEGATIVE CONCORD. This refers to the fact that when two (or more) elements which express negation on their own co-occur in a clause, the result is not logical double negation (i.e. a positive) but a single logical negative, as illustrated in (8).

(8) Contemporary French (Hansen 2013: 69)
Personne n'   a   rien   dit.
nobody   NEG AUX.PRS.3SG nothing say.PTCP.PST
'Nobody said anything.'

Items which have this unstable behaviour are distinguished from straight-forwardly negative items by the term N-WORD (coined by Laka 1990; see also Giannakidou 2006). We will see in §3 that these distinctions and terminology are helpful in understanding developments in varieties of Arabic and its contact languages that directly parallel those described above for French.

2 Developments in the expression of clausal negation

2.1 Arabic

2.1.1 Synchronic description

One of the most striking ways that a number of spoken Arabic varieties differ from Classical and Modern Standard Arabic is in the expression of negation. In Classical and Modern Standard Arabic, and in the majority of varieties spoken outside of North Africa, negation is exclusively preverbal, with the basic verbal negator in the spoken varieties being *mā*, as in the Damascus Arabic example in (9).

(9) Damascus Arabic (Cowell 1964: 328)
hayy   masʔale **mā**   bəḍḍaḥḥək
DEM.F matter   NEG laugh.CAUS.IMPF.IND.3SG.M
'This is not a laughing matter.' (lit. 'does not cause laughter')

But in the varieties spoken across the whole of coastal North Africa and into the southwestern Levant, as well as in parts of the southern Arabian Peninsula (see Diem 2014; Lucas 2018 for more precise details), negation is bipartite, with preverbal *mā* joined by an enclitic -*š* which follows any direct or indirect pro-nominal object clitics, as in (10).

(10) Cairo Arabic (advertising slogan)
banda **ma** yitʔal-lahā-š   laʔ
Panda NEG say.PASS.IMPF.3SG.M-DAT.3SG.F-NEG no
'You don't say "no" to Panda.' (lit. 'Panda, "no" is not said to it.')

Finally, in a subset of the varieties that permit the bipartite construction in (10), a purely postverbal construction is also possible, as in the Palestinian Arabic example in (11).

(11)   Palestinian Arabic (Seeger 2013: 147)
       badaḫḫin[i]-**š**
       smoke.IMPF.IND.1SG-NEG
       'I don't smoke.'

2.1.2 Jespersen or Croft?

There is near unanimous agreement among those who have considered the matter that the bipartite construction illustrated in (10) arose from the preverbal construction via grammaticalization, phonetic reduction, and cliticization of *šayʔ* 'thing', and that the purely postverbal construction in (11) in turn arose from the bipartite construction via omission of the original negator *mā*. As such, Lucas (2007; 2009; 2018) and Diem (2014), among many others, view this as a paradigmatic case of Jespersen's cycle.

The only dissenting voice is that of Wilmsen (2013; 2014), who describes the parallels between the Arabic data and that of well known cases of Jespersen's cycle such as French as being "dutifully mentioned by all" (2014: 117) who write on the topic. Wilmsen (2014) turns the agreed etymology of negative -*š* on its head by arguing: (i) that the original form in Arabic was *šī*, not *šayʔ*;[2] (ii) that at an early stage this form had the full range of functions that we observe for it in different Arabic dialects today (existential predicate, indefinite determiner, interrogative particle; see Wilmsen 2014: ch. 3, 122–123); (iii) that this element was then reanalysed as a negative particle; and (iv) *šī/šayʔ* as a content word 'thing' is a later development of the function word – an instance of degrammaticalization. For a discussion of some of the numerous difficulties with these proposals, see Al-Jallad (2015), Pat-El (2016), Souag (2016) and Lucas (2018).

A specific element of Wilmsen's proposals that we need to consider in some detail here before we proceed is his suggestion that, while in his view we should not see the developments in Arabic as an instance of Jespersen's cycle, we can discern in them an instance of Croft's cycle. As we will see below, this suggestion involves a distortion or misunderstanding of both the Arabic data and the sorts

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[2]Wilmsen (2014) also attempts to trace his etymology back further to the Proto-Semitic third-person pronouns. Apart from the implausibility of the putative semantic shift from definite pronoun to indefinite determiner, this reconstruction is untenable on phonological grounds (see Al-Jallad 2015 for details).

of patterns that constitute genuine instances of Croft's cycle, but the proposal has some prima facie plausibility, because of the existence in some dialects of the south and east of the Arabian Peninsula of an existential predicate *šī/šē/šay*, as in (12).

(12)   Northern Omani Arabic (Eades 2009: 92)
      ḥmīr   šē   l-ḥmīr   barra
      donkey.PL EXS DEF-donkey.PL outside
      'There were donkeys... the donkeys were outside.'

Note that a similar element *śī* [ɬiː], with the same existential function, is found in the Modern South Arabian languages (MSAL) of Yemen and Oman, as in (13), from Mehri of Yemen.

(13)   Mehri of Yemen (Watson 2011: 31)
      śī   fśē
      EXS lunch
      'Is there any lunch?'

Though Wilmsen (2014: 126; 2017: 298–301) seems to view Arabic *šī* and Modern South Arabian *śī* as cognates, it is more likely that the presence of this item in the one set of varieties is the result of transfer from the other (cf. Al-Jallad 2015). The direction of transfer is unclear, however. At first glance, the fact that *śī* as an affirmative existential is found in essentially all of the MSAL spoken on the Arabian Peninsula, which have a long history of intensive contact with Arabic, but not in Soqoṭri, spoken on the island of Soqotra, where contact with Arabic is more recent and less intensive (Simeone-Senelle 2003), would appear to suggest that this is an innovation within Arabic originally, which was then transferred to just those MSAL with which there was most contact. On the other hand, the precise situation in Soqoṭri is perhaps instructive. Here the affirmative existential predicate is a unique form *ino*, while the negative existential predicate is *biśi* (Simeone-Senelle 2011: 1108). It is conceivable that the latter is a borrowing from Arabic, since affirmative existentials in *b-* are widespread in the Arabic dialects of Yemen. But a negative existential predicate *bīši* or similar is completely unattested in the Yemeni data provided by Behnstedt (2016: 346–348). This suggests, therefore, that: (i) existential *śī* is an original feature of MSAL; (ii) Soqoṭri is an example of a Type B language in Croft's typology, having innovated a new affirmative existential predicate *ino*, such that there is a special negative existential predicate that is neither identical to the verbal negator, nor simply a combination

of the verbal negator with the affirmative existential predicate; and (iii) *šī* as an existential predicate in Arabic dialects is the result of transfer of MSAL *śī*.

This scenario is supported by the distribution of existential *šī* within Arabic varieties: the only clear cases are in dialects of Yemen and Oman with a history of contact with MSAL, and dialects of the Gulf whose speakers are known to have migrated there from Yemen or Oman (such as Šiḥḥī, §2.4). In various places Wilmsen tries to make a case for existential uses of *šī* outside this region, but this appears to be the result of confusion on his part between *šī* as a *bona fide* existential predicate and the existential presupposition that will inevitably be associated with the use of *šī* as an indefinite determiner (see, e.g., Heim 1988 on the semantics of indefinite noun phrases). For example, Wilmsen (2014: 123) cites Caubet's (1993a: 123, 1993b: 280) Moroccan Arabic examples in (14) as evidence of an existential use of *šī* as far west as Morocco. But there is no justification for Wilmsen's contradicting Caubet's uncontroversial analysis of *šī* as an indefinite determiner here: there are no existential predicates in these examples – the existence of the referents of the indefinite noun phrases is presupposed, not asserted.

(14) Moroccan Arabic (Caubet 1993a: 123, Caubet 1993b: 280)

    a. ši   nās   kayāklu-ha
       INDF people eat.IMPF.REAL.3PL-3SG.F
       'Some people eat it.'

    b. ši   nās   kaybɣēw   əl-lbən
       INDF people like.IMPF.REAL.3PL DEF-milk
       'Some people like milk.'

Nevertheless, *šī* does function as an existential predicate in a few Arabic varieties. The question, then, is whether a negated form of this predicate participates in a version of Croft's cycle, as Wilmsen maintains.

For the vast majority of Arabic varieties the answer is a clear no: these varieties straightforwardly belong to Type A of Croft's typology. The verbal negator (*mā*, *mā...-š*, or *-š*) is also used to negate existential predicates, as illustrated in (15) for Cairo Arabic.

(15) Cairo Arabic, personal knowledge

    a. ma ʕamalt[i]-š   ḥāga   b. ma fī-š   ḥāga
       NEG do.PRF.1SG-NEG thing   NEG EXS-NEG thing
       'I didn't do anything.'   'There is nothing.'

Wilmsen (2014: 173–175) suggests that Type B and Type C constructions can also be found, however. For Type B ("there is a special negative existential predicate, distinct from the verbal negator"; Croft 1991: 6), he cites Sana'a *māšī* and Moroccan *māši*. Sana'a *māšī* is certainly a negative existential predicate. But there is nothing special about it – it is a paradigmatic Type A construction, with the negation of the existential predicate (*šī*) performed by the verbal negator (*mā*). Moroccan *māši*, on the other hand, is the negator for nominal predicates (equivalent to *muš/miš/mū/mub* in dialects east of Morocco). It is not a negative existential predicate at all, and, as discussed above, the /ši/ component of this item does not function as an existential in Moroccan, unlike in Sana'a and other southern Arabian varieties. The existence of *māši* in Moroccan Arabic is thus irrelevant to the question of whether this constitutes a Type B variety.[3] Moroccan is a Type A variety: the positive existential predicate is *kāyn* and it is negated with the ordinary Moroccan verbal negator *ma...-š* (Caubet 2011).

Wilmsen's identification of Arabic varieties of Type C ("there is a special negative existential predicate, which is identical to the verbal negator"; Croft 1991: 6) depends on the idea that the Arabic predicate negator *māši/muš/miš/mū/mub* is a negative existential predicate, which, as we have seen, it is not. If it were, it would be true that there are Arabic varieties that are optionally of Type C, since in Cairo Arabic, among other varieties, it is possible to negate verbs with *miš* instead of the usual *ma...-š*, as Mughazy (2003) and others have pointed out. But Cairo *miš* (and Moroccan *māši*) are not negative existential predicates, and there is no evidence to suggest they ever were. Moreover, since the Sana'a negative existential predicate *māšī* also does not seem to be able to function as a verbal negator, there is little apparent merit in Wilmsen's (2014) attempt to recast the history of negation in Arabic as an instance of Croft's cycle.[4]

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[3]Van Gelderen (2018) argues that the definition of Croft's cycle should be expanded to encompass cases in which new negators arise from the univerbation of verbal negators with copulas and auxiliaries, as well as existentials. Wilmsen's (2014) presentation of Croft's cycle makes no mention of any predicates other than existentials participating in the cycle, however.

[4]This is not to deny, however, that some Arabic dialects show some incipient Type B tendencies of a different kind. For example, Behnstedt (2016: 347) cites the northern Yemeni dialects of Rās Maḥall as-Sūdeh, Ḥammām ʕAlī and Afk, as varieties in which different morphemes are used in positive and negative existentials, albeit the negative construction used in each case is identical to that used for ordinary verbal negation. In a different context, Stefano Manfredi (personal communication) points out that many urban speakers of Sudanese Arabic use the item *māfiš*, borrowed from Egyptian Arabic, as a negative existential, while ordinary verbal negation is performed with preverbal *mā* alone (without postverbal -*š*).

2.1.3 Internal or external?

It is clear from the above discussion that there is no reason to doubt the majority view of the emergence of negative -*š* as an instance of Jespersen's cycle. What is less clear and more controversial is the question of whether language contact played a role in triggering these developments, or whether this was a purely internal phenomenon (cf. Diem 2014: 11–12). This is an issue about which it is impossible to be certain given our present state of knowledge. Lucas & Lash (2010) make the case that contact did play a triggering role, however, and also provide arguments against the widely held view that, in the words of Lass (1997: 209), "an endogenous explanation of a phenomenon is more parsimonious [than one invoking contact – CL], because endogenous change must occur in any case, whereas borrowing is never necessary" (cf. also Lucas 2009: 38–43). Aside from this generalized reluctance to invoke contact in explanations of linguistic change unless absolutely necessary, another factor that is likely operative in the preference for seeing the Arabic developments as a purely internal phenomenon is ignorance of the wider picture of negative developments in Arabic and its contact languages. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that everywhere an Arabic variety with bipartite negation is spoken, there is (or was) a contact language that also has bipartite negation, and – just as importantly – wherever Arabic dialects have only a single marker of negation, the local contact languages do too. The picture is similar in Europe, Ethiopia (Lucas 2009), Vietnam (van der Auwera & Vossen 2015), and many other places besides. There can therefore be no doubt that negative constructions, and especially bipartite negation (and hence Jespersen's cycle more generally), are particularly prone to diffusing through languages in contact. In the following sections I will briefly survey apparent instances of transfer of bipartite or postverbal negation in Arabic and Coptic, Arabic and MSAL, Arabic and Kumzari, Arabic and Berber, and Arabic and Domari. For more details see Lucas (2007; 2009; 2013) and Lucas & Lash (2010).

2.2 Arabic and Coptic

Based on an examination of evidence from Judaeo-Arabic documents preserved in the Cairo Genizah, among other sources of evidence, Diem (2014) comes to the conclusion that the Arabic bipartite negative construction found across coastal North Africa originated in Egypt between the tenth and eleventh centuries. This chronology and point of origin conforms closely with the conclusions I have drawn on this point in my own work (Lucas 2007; 2009; Lucas & Lash 2010), except that I have argued that what triggered the development of bipartite negation in Egypt was contact with Coptic (the name for the Egyptian language from

the first century CE onwards), which, at the relevant period, had a frequently occurring bipartite construction *ən...an*, as illustrated in (16).

(16) Coptic (Lucas & Lash 2010: 389)
    en ti-na-tsabo-ou   **an** e-amənte
    NEG 1SG-FUT-teach-3PL NEG on-hell
    'I will not teach them about hell.'

The argument made in Lucas & Lash (2010) is that native speakers of Coptic acquiring Arabic as a second language must have encountered sentences negated with preverbal *mā* only, but which also contained after the verb *šī/šāy*, functioning either as an argument '(any)thing' or an adverb 'at all',[5] and interpreted this as the second element of the bipartite negative construction that their first-language Coptic predisposed them to expect. If this is correct, then the initial transfer of bipartite negation from Coptic to Arabic in Egypt should be understood as an instance of imposition under source-language agentivity, in the terms of Van Coetsem (1988; 2000), while the presence of bipartite negation in the dialects spoken across the rest of coastal North Africa, and the southwestern Levant, should be understood as the result of contact between neighbouring dialects of Arabic.

2.3 Arabic and Modern South Arabian

Diem (2014: 73) – like Obler (1990: 148) and, following her, Lucas (2007: 416) – suggests that bipartite negation in the southern Arabian Peninsula must have spread there from Egypt. This is conceivable, but historical evidence of significant early migration flows in this direction is lacking. The alternative explanation offered by Lucas & Lash (2010) is that bipartite negation in the Arabic dialects of this region is an independent parallel development, here triggered by contact with MSAL, all mainland varieties of which have a bipartite negative construction of their own (or once had – some, such as Ḥarsūsi, have largely progressed to stage III of Jespersen's cycle and lost the original preverbal negator), as illustrated in (17) for Omani Mehri.

(17) Omani Mehri (Johnstone 1987: 23)
    əl təhɛləz   b-ɛy   **laʔ**
    NEG nag.IMPF.2SG.M with-1SG NEG
    'Don't nag me!'

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[5]Diem (2014) makes the case that *šī/šāy* had already developed an adverbial use at a very early stage, and that it is this adverbial use that should be seen as the form that was reanalysed as a negator.

If this is correct, then here too, exactly as with the Coptic–Arabic contact in the previous section, we must have had an instance of transfer under source-language agentivity, with MSAL-dominant acquirers of Arabic imposing a bipartite construction on their second-language Arabic by reanalysing *šī/šay* as a negator. The key point is that in all dialects in which *šī/šay* functioned as an indefinite pronoun or adverb 'at all', the potential was there for reanalysis as the second element in a bipartite negative construction. But aside from in the dialects of Egypt and the southern Arabian Peninsula (and latterly dialects adjacent to Egyptian) this reanalysis never took place. Why the reanalysis did take place in Egypt and the southern Peninsula can be understood as being the result of the catalysing effect of contact with languages which themselves had a bipartite negative construction.[6]

2.4 Arabic and Kumzari

Kumzari is an Iranian language with heavy influence from both Arabic and MSAL that has only recently been described in detail (see van der Wal Anonby forthcoming). It is spoken on the Musandam Peninsula of northern Oman, where its primary contact language of recent times has been the Šiḥḥī variety of Arabic (see Bernabela 2011 for a sketch grammar), which is clearly of the originally southern Arabian type described by Holes (2016: 18–32).

Šiḥḥī Arabic has no Jespersen stage II (bipartite) negative construction, but it has both a typical eastern Arabic stage I construction with *mā*, as in (18a), perhaps due to recent influence from other Gulf Arabic varieties, alongside a unique (for Arabic) stage III postverbal construction with -*lu*, as in (18b). The latter construction is apparently a straightforward transfer of the postverbal negator *laʔ/lɔʔ* of MSAL (17).

(18)   Šiḥḥī Arabic (Bernabela 2011: 87)

    a.   **mā** mšēt   ḫaṣāb əl-yōm
        NEG go.PRF.1SG Khasab DEF-day
        'I didn't go to Khasab today.'

    b.   yqōl-**lu**   bass il-kilmatēn
        say.IMPF.3SG.M-NEG only DEF-words.DU
        'He doesn't just say the two words.'

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[6]For further discussion of the details of these changes, including the issues of the semantics and positioning in the clause of the second negative element in each of the three languages, see Lucas & Lash (2010: 395–401).

The Kumzari negator is the typical Iranian (and Indo-Iranian) *na*. What is less typical is that *na* occurs postverbally in Kumzari, as shown in (19).

(19)　Kumzari (van der Wal Anonby forthcoming: 211)
　　　 mām-ō 　　 kōr 　 bur 　　　　　　 **na**
　　　 mother-DEF blind become.3SG.REAL NEG
　　　 'The mother didn't become blind.'

It seems very likely that contact with Šiḥḥī Arabic has played a role in this shift to postverbal negation, though not enough is known about the historical sociolinguistics of these two speech communities to say with confidence which of the two languages the agents of this change were dominant in.

2.5　Arabic and Berber

Berber languages are spoken from the oasis of Siwa in western Egypt in the east, across to Morocco and as far south as Burkina Faso. The most southerly of the Berber varieties – Tashelhiyt, spoken in southern Morocco, Zenaga, spoken in Mauritania, and Tuareg, spoken in southern Algeria and Libya, Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso – have only preverbal negation, as illustrated by the Tuareg example in (20).

(20)　Tuareg (Chaker 1996: 10)
　　　 ur 　 igle
　　　 NEG leave.PFV.3SG.M
　　　 'He didn't leave.'

These languages have, until recently, either had little significant contact with Arabic, or otherwise only with varieties such as Ḥassāniyya that have only preverbal negation with *mā*. All other Berber varieties which are in contact with Arabic varieties with bipartite negation also themselves have bipartite negation, illustrated for Kabyle (Algeria) in (21), or, in a few cases, purely postverbal negation, as in Awjila (Libya), illustrated in (22). The one exception is Siwa (23), which negates with preverbal *lā* alone – clearly a borrowing from a variety of Arabic, though which variety is not clear (see Souag 2009 for further discussion).

(21)　Kabyle (Rabhi 1996: 25)
　　　 ul 　 ittaggad 　　 **kra**
　　　 NEG fear.AOR.3SG.M NEG
　　　 'He is not afraid.'

(22) Awjila (Paradisi 1961: 82)
akellim iššen-**ka**   amakan
servant know.PFV.3SG.M-NEG place
'The servant didn't know the place.'

(23) Siwa (Souag 2009: 58)
lā   gā-nūsd-ak
NEG FUT-come.1PL-DAT.2SG
'We won't come to you.'

Different Berber varieties have postverbal negators with a range of different forms, but in most cases they either derive from two apparently distinct Proto-Berber items *kʲăra and *(h)ară(t), both meaning 'thing' (Kossmann 2013: 332), or are transparent loans of Arabic *šay/ši*. This fact, when combined with the respective geographical distributions of single preverbal and bipartite negation in Arabic and Berber varieties, is sufficient to conclude that the presence of bipartite negation in Berber is in large part a result of calquing the second element of the Arabic construction, pace Brugnatelli (1987) and Lafkioui (2013a) (see also Kossmann 2013: 334; and see Lucas 2007; 2009 for more detailed discussion).[7] Given that, until recently, native speakers of Arabic in the Maghreb acquiring Berber as a second language will always have been greatly outnumbered by native speakers of Berber learning Arabic as a second language, we must assume that the agents of this change were Berber-dominant speakers who made the change under recipient-language agentivity in a process akin to what Heine & Kuteva (2005) call polysemy copying and contact-induced grammaticalization (see also Leddy-Cecere, this volume; Manfredi, this volume; Souag, this volume).

2.6 Arabic and Domari

The final instance of contact-induced changes to predicate negation to be mentioned here concerns the Jerusalem variety of the Indo-Aryan language Domari, as described by Matras (1999; 2007; 2012; this volume).

Matras (2012: 350–351) describes two syntactic contexts in which negators borrowed from Palestinian Arabic are the only options in this variety of Domari. The first is with Arabic-derived modal auxiliaries that take Arabic suffix inflection, as in *bidd-* 'want' in (24). Here negation is typically with the Palestinian Arabic stage III construction *-š* (without *mā*), as it is would be also in Palestinian Arabic.

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[7]Another postverbal negator – Kabyle *ani* – derives from the word for 'where' (Rabhi 1992), and so should perhaps be seen as more of an internal development, or at least less directly contact-induced. Tarifiyt also has a postverbal negator *bu*, whose etymology is uncertain, but which has also been transferred to the Moroccan Arabic dialect of Oujda (Lafkioui 2013b).

(24)   Jerusalem Domari (Matras 2012: 351)
    ben-om   bidd-hā-**š**   žawwiz-hōš-ar
    sister-1SG want-3SG.F-NEG marry-VITR.SBJV-3SG
    'My sister doesn't want to marry.'

The second is when the negated predicate is nominal, as in (25a), or, to judge from Matras's examples, when we have narrow focus of negation with ellipsis, as in (25b). Here the negator that would be used in these contexts in Arabic – *miš* – is transferred to Domari and functions in the same way.

(25)   Jerusalem Domari (Matras 2012: 350)

    a. bay-os   **mišš** kury-a-m-ēk
        mother-3SG NEG house-OBL.F-LOC-PRED.SG
        'His wife is not at home.'

    b. day-om   min ʕammān-a-ki   **mišš** min ʕēl-oman-ki
        mother-1SG from Amman-OBL.F-ABL NEG from family-1PL-ABL
        day-om
        mother-1SG
        'My mother is from Amman, she's not from our family, my mother.'

In addition to these straightforward borrowings, Domari has a bipartite negative construction in which both elements involve inherited lexical material, as illustrated in (26).

(26)   Jerusalem Domari (Matras 2012: 117)
    ʕašān   ihne ama **n**-mang-am-san-**eʔ**   l-ʕarab
    because thus 1SG NEG-want-1SG-3PL-NEG DEF-Arabs
    'Because of this I don't like the Arabs.'

In Lucas (2013: 413–414) I pointed out that the second element of this construction – *-eʔ* – was apparently not attested in varieties of Domari spoken outside of Palestine, and suggested that its presence in Jerusalem Domari could therefore be the result of influence from the Palestinian bipartite negative construction. Herin (2016; 2018), however, has since convincingly shown that this is incorrect, and that the Jerusalem Domari bipartite construction is an internal development with cognates in more northerly varieties, the latter being in contact with Arabic varieties that lack the bipartite negative construction. What is unique about the Jerusalem variety of Domari is that here a stage III construction with *-eʔ* alone is possible, omitting the original preverbal negator *n(a)* that appears in (25b). Herin

(2018: 32) argues that it is this stage III construction, not the stage II bipartite construction, that should be seen as the result of contact with Palestinian Arabic.

Overall, therefore, while the details naturally vary from one contact scenario to another, we see that negative constructions appear just as liable to be transferred between varieties of Arabic and neighbouring languages as they are between the languages of Europe and beyond.

3 Developments in indefinites in the scope of negation

3.1 Loaned indefinites

The organization and behaviour of indefinites in the scope of negation seem to be much more resistant to transfer between languages than is the expression of clausal negation, at least in the case of Arabic and its contact languages.[8] Direct borrowing of individual indefinite items is rather common, however. I make no attempt at an exhaustive list here, but note the following two examples for illustrative purposes.

First, Berber varieties stand out as frequent borrowers of Maghrebi Arabic indefinites. The negative polarity item *ḥadd/ḥədd* 'anyone' is borrowed by at least Siwa (Souag 2009: 58), Kabyle, Shawiya, Mozabite (Rabhi 1996: 29), and Tashelhiyt (Boumalk 1996: 41). The n-word *walu* 'nothing' is borrowed by at least Tarifiyt (Lafkioui 1996: 54), Tashelhiyt, and Central Atlas Tamazight (Boumalk 1996: 41). *ḥətta*, in its function as an n-word determiner, is borrowed by at least Tashelhiyt (Boumalk 1996: 41). *qāʕ*, in its function as a negative polarity adverb 'at all', is borrowed by at least Tarifiyt and Central Atlas Tamazight (Boumalk 1996: 42). And the negative polarity adverb **ʕumr* '(n)ever' (< 'age, lifetime') is borrowed by at least Kabyle, Mozabite (Rabhi 1996: 30), and Tarifiyt (Lafkioui 1996: 72). Why these items should have been so freely borrowed, when each of them, with the possible exception of *ḥətta*, have direct native equivalents, is unclear. But it is perhaps to be connected with the high degree of expressivity typically associated with negative statements containing indefinites, which therefore creates a constant need for new and "extravagant" (in the sense of Haspelmath 2000) means of expressing these meanings.

Second, while Arabic itself seems to have been much more constrained in its borrowing of indefinites from other languages, we can here point at least to the

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[8]Though for recent discussion of a related case – namely the acquisition of a determiner function by the Berber indefinite *kra* 'something, anything' via a calque of the polyfunctionality of Maghrebi Arabic *ši* – see Souag (2018).

n-word *ḥīč* 'nothing', borrowed from Persian, which Holes (2001: 549) includes in his glossary of pre-oil era Bahraini Arabic, citing also Blanc (1964: 159) and Ingham (1973: 547) for its occurrence in Baghdadi and Khuzestan Arabic respectively. It remains in use in the latter (cf. Leitner, this volume), but consultations with present-day speakers of Baghdadi Arabic indicate that, in this variety at least, this item has since dropped out of use.

3.2 The indefinite system of Maltese

While most or perhaps all Arabic varieties have at least some items that qualify as n-words according to the definition in §1.3, it is only Maltese that has developed into a straightforward negative-concord language with a full series of n-word indefinites in largely complementary distribution with a separate series of indefinites that cannot appear in the scope of negation, as is the situation in French, described in §1.3. These two series are shown in Table 1, adapted from Haspelmath & Caruana (1996: 215).

Table 1: Maltese indefinites

	n-words	non-n-words
Determiner	ebda	xi
Thing	xejn	xi ħaġa
Person	ħadd	xi ħadd
Time	qatt	xi darba
Place	imkien	xi mkien

All the lexical material that makes up the Maltese indefinite system illustrated in Table 1 is inherited from Arabic, but the neat paradigm of n-words for determiner, 'thing', 'person', 'time', and 'place' is much more typical of European Romance languages than of Arabic. The extent to which, for example, *xejn* 'nothing' (deriving from *šayʔ* 'thing')[9] is felt by Maltese speakers to be inherently negative, is shown by the existence of the denominal verb *xejjen* meaning 'to nullify', as illustrated in (27).[10]

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[9]As pointed out in Lucas (2009: 83–84) and argued in greater detail in Lucas & Spagnol (forthcoming), the final segment of this item represents a fossilized retention of the indefinite suffix (so-called nunation or *tanwīn*), as found in Classical Arabic.

[10]This is despite the fact that it may also occur in interrogatives with non-negative meaning (cf. Camilleri & Sadler 2017). Compare the French n-word *rien*, which, as illustrated in (7), retains a non-negative interpretation in a restricted set of negative-polarity contexts.

(27)   Maltese (Lucas 2013: 441)
       Iżda xejjen   lil-u   nnifs-u
       but   nullify.PRF.3SG.M OBJ-3SG.M self-3SG.M
       'But he made himself nothing.'

As such, it seems likely that the intensive contact that occurred over several centuries between Maltese and the negative-concord languages Sicilian and Italian (cf. Lucas & Čéplö, this volume) played a role in these developments in the Maltese indefinite system. Precisely how this influence was mediated is hard to say, since both borrowing under recipient-language agentivity and imposition under source-language agentivity were likely operative in the Maltese–Romance contact situation, and either are possible here. See Lucas (2013: 439–444) for further discussion.

4 Conclusion

As we have seen, the overall areal picture of bipartite clausal negation in Arabic and its contact languages (and also, to a lesser extent, indefinites in the scope of negation) strongly suggests a series of contact-induced changes, and not a series of purely internally-caused independent parallel developments. What is required in future research on this topic, to the extent that textual and other historical evidence becomes available, is a detailed, case-by-case examination of the linguistic and sociolinguistic conditions under which these constructions emerged in the languages in question. Such investigations would serve to either substantiate or undermine the contact-based explanations for these changes advanced in the course of this chapter. Ideally, they would also allow to understand in more detail the mechanisms of bilingual language use and acquisition that give rise to changes of this sort.

Further reading

➢ Chaker & Caubet (1996) is an edited volume providing a wealth of descriptive data on the expression of negation in a number of Berber and Maghrebi Arabic varieties.
➢ Diem (2014) is a detailed study of the grammaticalization of Arabic *šayʔ* as a negator, with particular attention paid to early sources of textual evidence for this development.
➢ Willis et al. (2013) and Breitbarth et al. (2020) are two volumes of a work examining in detail the history of negation in the languages of Europe and the Mediterranean.

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Abbreviations

1, 2, 3	1st, 2nd, 3rd person	NEG	negative
ABL	ablative	OBJ	object
AOR	aorist	MSAL	Modern South Arabian
AUX	auxiliary	OBL	oblique
CAUS	causative	PASS	passive
DAT	dative	PFV	perfective
DEF	definite article	PST	past
DEM	demonstrative	PL	plural
DU	dual	PTCP	participle
EXS	existential	PRED	predicate
F	feminine	PRF	perfect (suffix conjugation)
FUT	future	PRS	present
IMPF	imperfect (prefix conjugation)	REAL	realis
IND	indicative	SBJV	subjunctive
INDF	indefinite	SG	singular
M	masculine	VITR	intransitive marker

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