

## NEGATIVITY AS A COGNITIVE AND INTERACTIONAL CONCEPT

BARBARA LEWANDOWSKA-TOMASZCZYK

*University of Łódź*

### 1. Negative judgements and negative states of affairs

Negation and negative judgements have occupied the minds of philosophers, psychologists, and, later, linguists, for centuries.<sup>1</sup> The most serious controversy refers to the formal ontology of the states of affairs and concerns the relative status of *positive* and *negative states of affairs*. While it is easy to imagine that the sentence *You are reading this sentence at the moment* refers to a positive state of affairs when you are indeed reading this sentence at the moment, what does the sentence *You are NOT reading this sentence at the moment* refer to? What do we mean when we say that a sentence expresses a *negative state of affairs*? This question is especially annoying if one conforms with the idea of language as a *mirror* of the world.

For some philosophers, Wittgenstein (1953), for example, all states of affairs must be considered positive. For others (Reinach 1911), there exist both positive and negative states of affairs and although their *epistemological* properties are different, they are considered indistinguishable in their mode of being. An interesting view on these matters was proposed by a Polish philosopher, Roman Ingarden (1971), who argued for an autonomous existence of the positive states of affairs. The negative states of affairs, on the other hand, are treated by Ingarden as primarily *thought of* or *intended* – *conceptualised* – we would say today in the cognitive linguistic parlance, carried into the situation from a different source than the positive judgement, which is directly triggered by an autonomous state of affairs. The negative judgement then, could not exist with-

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<sup>1</sup> The present paper is based on a more extensive treatment of negation and negativity as presented in Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (1996a).

out the mind. The germ of such a theory, as is proposed in Gale (1976: 60), "is found in St. Thomas's *Being and Essence* in which it is held that privation and negations acquire existence because the intellect, knowing privations through characters and negations through affirmations, in some way forms in itself some sort of image of a thing lacking." I agree with Gale here that although some instances of negation involve the occurrence of positive events, another type would point rather to "a higher-order thesis" of "a timeless relation of incompatibility or otherness between abstract entities" (Gale 1976: 44). Such a philosophical tradition is an old one. We find it also in the Indian philosophical thought, where, for example in Navya-nyāya literature, negation is identified with *absence*, the absence of something (Matilal 1968). The doctrine of negation there, however, is different from Western philosophical systems. As was put by the editor of the *Harvard Oriental Series*, D.H.H. Ingalls, Navya-nyāya metaphysics "hypostatizes 'absence' into a category ... [They] insisted against the opposition of all other schools, that one can see the absence of an object in a given place" (Matilal 1968: VIII). In this sense, "pure" negation is not accepted there and while "absence of something" is not itself an *instrument of true cognition*, it is an *object of true cognition*.

Basing negation on its corresponding affirmative may be acceptable for the majority of cases. As some will say: the Ten Commandments were made up for those who were ready to act otherwise. In his recent publication, (Atlas 1989: 119) presents a traditional problem of negation in the formulation of sir Alfred Ayer (1954: 46-47):

If I say that the Mediterranean sea is blue, I am referring to an individual object and ascribing a quality to it; my statement, if it is true, states a positive fact. But if I say that the Atlantic is not blue, though I am again referring to an individual, I am not ascribing any quality to it; and while, if my statement is true, there must be some positive fact which makes it so, it cannot, so the argument runs, be the fact that the Atlantic is not blue, since this is not positive, and so, strictly speaking, not a fact at all. Thus it would seem either that the apparently negative statement is somehow doing duty for one that is affirmative, or that it is made true, if it is true, by some fact which it does not state. And it is thought that both alternatives are paradoxical.

Locke's conception of "abstract ideas", brings us closer perhaps to an interpretation of the notion of "negative facts":

The understanding seems to me not to have the least glimmering of any ideas which it doth not receive from one of these two. *External objects* furnish the mind with the ideas of sensible qualities, which are all those different perceptions they produce in us; and the *mind* furnishes the understanding with ideas of its own operations (Locke 1679: Ch.1, *On Ideas in General and their Original* Bk.II, 5).

We read further:

*The essence of each sort is the abstract idea.* – The measure and the boundary of each sort of species whereby it is constituted that particular sort and distinguished from others, is that we call its *essence*, which is nothing but that abstract idea to which the name is annexed: so that everything contained in that idea is essential to that sort (Locke 1679: Ch.6, 2).

If we further reach to Russell (1919 [1956]: 211), we come to the conclusion that the solution to the dilemma of negative judgements can be reached only by positing the existence of "negative facts", similar to Lockian "abstract" facts and "Abstract Ideas" quoted above, due to the fact that in Russell's view, the negative fact *the Atlantic is not blue* is the fact which is distinct from other facts in which the Atlantic has a property of any colour with the exception of blue. In other words the negative act, according to Russell, is not synonymous with a range of positive facts in which the Atlantic is green, grey, turquoise, etc. (cf. Atlas 1989: 120). Frege (1919 [1966]), in his work on negation, argues for a similar interpretation for negation:

If one thought contradicts another, then from a sentence whose sense is the one, it is easy to construct a sentence expressing the other. Consequently the thought that contradicts another thought appears as made up of that thought and negation. (I do not mean by this, the act of denial.) But the words 'made up of,' 'consist of,' 'component,' 'part' may lead to our looking at it the wrong way. If we choose to speak of parts in this connexion, all the same these parts are not mutually independent in the way that we are elsewhere used to find when we have parts of a whole. The thought does not, by its make-up, stand in any need of completion; it is self-sufficient. *Negation on the other hand needs to be completed by a thought* [emphasis added] (Frege 1919 [1966]: 131-132).

## 2. Negativity, irrealis, falsehood

### 2.1. The concept of *negativity*

There are certain traditional criteria for negativity in natural language. Hidden negative structures include, among other members, a class of lexical items with a negative element present in their conceptual structures. Lexical items such as the adjectives *fake*, *false*, *putative*, and hundreds of others, nouns such as *wig*, *denture*, *pretence*, and the like, are the cases in question. I argued in one of my papers (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk 1989a) for the negative character of all *verbs of change*, which, for this particular reason, can even be called the *negative verbs*. The reasoning is that all verbs of change can be shown to possess a negative element in their conceptual structure, whatever its location and function. Though their partly negative character is not immediately evident,

their presuppositions have to incorporate an element of negativity defined as a counterspatial element which will be dealt with later in this work. This would be true of actions, processes and states. The element of negativity is especially evident in classes of force-dynamic expressions, such as *persuade*, *insist*, *manipulate* and hundreds of others (cf. Section 3.2.).

Another manifestation of negativity can be identified in natural language. It refers to the existence of a certain *aura of meaning* connected with individual lexical items which spreads over the senses of their neighbours by creating specific semantic expectations. This phenomenon is referred to as *semantic harmony* or *semantic prosody* (cf. Sinclair 1994), which, in analogy to phonology, is understood as a fairly systematic spread of a feature from a "trigger" to other linguistic units which I call "targets" (cf. Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk 1996a, 1996b).

There are numerous instances of the triggers with some forms of explicit or implicit negation in their conceptual/semantic structure. The items in the same utterance or in a larger unit of speech (say, speech event or a paragraph) tend to harmonise with the negative nature of their triggers. It is suggested that the semantic prosodies of some triggers exhibit a universal character, while some others remain language-specific e.g., *E happen* in *What happened?*, *utterly*, or Pol. *skończony* lit. 'finished'; 'complete' as in *skończony idiota* 'a complete idiot', etc. I also include the propositional mode of *irrealis* in the concept of *negativity*, expressed both discursively, sententially and lexically. *Irrealis* sets up a counterfactuality space, which is a negative (counterfactual) counterpart of the factuality space. The range of the conceptual content which is counterfactual is expressed in the *scope* of negation. This portion of the material then is either barred for further discourse incrementation or banned from the discourse domain. World-creating predicates, or expressions setting up alternative realities (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk 1985) though, make it possible for the 'defeated' discourse material to enter discourse domain via a specially set up counterfactuality subpace. While negation cannot be equated with the *irrealis* modality, there are definitely negativity aspects in this modality. No wonder then, that in most of the grammar books, negation comes under mood or modality and, as Givón suggests (1993: 187) "among the four main propositional modalities, the status of NEG-assertion is somewhat muddled". Negation, as an expression of negativity, plays its role as a component of counterfactuality. Counterfactuality, in turn, is not synonymous here with *falsehood*, which, for me, would be counterfactuality immersed in a specific social context.

## 2.2. Langacker on negation

In his attempt to characterise the meaning of the negative particle *not* and that of negation generally, Langacker, after Givón (1979: Ch. 3), argues that in

negation "we are primarily concerned with what *is*, and we say that something *is not* only in response to some evocation (perhaps implicit) of the positive situation (e.g. I would hardly announce *We're not having pizza for supper* unless there were some expectation that we were). In the terminology of cognitive grammar, NEG is conceptually dependent, for it makes salient (though schematic) internal reference to the situation it denies. Also relevant is the dictum that *existence* is always *existence in some location*, which suggests the corollary that *non-existence* is always *non-existence in some location*". (Langacker 1991: 132). Langacker characterises negation as a *complex* structure with two conceptions, one – a *potential* structure (a positive scene) and the other – the *active* structure (a negated counterpart).

On the other hand, the perennial problem for the language analyst is that of the representation. Logicians or formal semanticists assume a symbolic logical notation for negation which is not an imagistic representation of the reality. For those language theoreticians, however, who assume a diagrammatic image-schematic representation of linguistic senses the situation is far from clear. Uwe Geist (1985) writes in his paper on negation that even though it has those deep biological and psychological roots, "negation is difficult, if not impossible, to express in symbolic codes more analogous to reality than language. One can find negation in pictographs, highly conventionalised language-based signs, but not in pictures." (Geist 1985: 1). This is probably an indication that negation may be conceptually ineffable, though effable, as will be seen later, in linguistic terms.

## 2.3. Qualia and negation

The discussion on the interpretation of the concept of negation from the point of view of negative judgement leaves still one theoretical possibility unexplored. This is a possibility of considering negation as one of the epistemological *qualia*. The definition of *qualia* by Dennett (1988) a well-known advocate of the eliminativism of *qualia*, quoted by Spencer-Smith (1995: 122) says that this traditional philosophical conception refer to "the *way things seem to us*' and which, in addition, possess this list of features: they are intrinsic, ineffable, essentially private, and immediately apprehended in consciousness." A classical example of a *quale* is the sensation of *pain*. Other researchers mention qualities of quite a distinct origin, composition or value (Einstein gives the taste of soup as an example, Crick (1994) – the redness of red, while Pustejovsky et al. (1993) – constitution, form, and the like). Negation fulfils the definitional condition of *qualia* at the level of cognition – it is intrinsic, shareable but private as a cognitive state, conceptually ineffable as there is no available *mental model* of negativity dissociated from the object of negation, and indeed, negation is

immediately apprehended in consciousness. At the level of language – negation is effable, in the same sense as one can *use* a word form for *pain* or talk *about* it. However, similarly to abstract terms, absolute concepts of colour or sensation, negativity and negation, though can have a symbolic notation, such as a conventionally accepted minus sign for all manifestations of negation, they cannot be felicitously represented by any pictorial, world-mirroring representation. For that reason, I would see reasons to consider negativity as one of the conceptual qualia.

### 3. Negativity as a cognitive universal

There exist certain properties of the surrounding reality which seem to be naturally acquired by human beings. People are able to perceive and represent certain dimensions directly, such as spatial relations, distance, shape, objects detachable from other objects and from the background, colour. Some other categories, negation among them, seem to be acquired indirectly.

#### 3.1. Negativity and first language acquisition

Sentential negation from its first use by a child is, to put it generally, a negative response to undesired and/or false contextual stimuli. First manifestations of children's sensitivity to some negative elements in the surrounding, is the verbal play which can be observed in infants' peek-a-boo or hiding objects games. These would be instances of what I would call 'negative' games, where expectancy of the infants is violated and which are, according to Gardner and Winner (1986), first steps towards understanding sarcasm. Much later in children language development there come cases of the violation of children's sense of linguistic literalness. In connection with this kind of situation, Gardner and Winner (1986) gathered materials concerning children's understanding of metaphor and sarcasm. Gardner and Winner propose that in understanding metaphor children face a pragmatic and a conceptual problem. The former refers to the realisation that the speaker says one thing and he means by it another thing. When compared with the recognition of sarcasm with children, the authors obtained very interesting results. In both kinds the utterances are discrepant from the truth. This recognition was easier for sarcasm than for metaphor. However, the speakers' intentions and their negative attitude conveyed by their sarcastic remarks were not readily recognised by children even as old as between 6 and 13 years. Similar results were obtained by Gardner and Winner when they extended the experiments to cover also other truth violating interactional strategies such as understatement and hyperbole. It turns out that although preschoolers can hold contradictory elements in mind, use the same principles of categorisation as adults and are able to infer other persons' internal states,

they commit errors in understanding metaphor, sarcasm, hyperbole, and, the subtlest of them all, understatement, into the early elementary school years. In their paper on literal and nonliteral falsehood, Winner et al. (1987: 29) suggested that sarcasm may be easier to understand by children because "sarcasm presents the listener with a more blatant violation of truth". The hypothesis proposed by Gardner and Winner (1986) is that though children are conceptually ready for these tasks, they are linguistically not ready to infer the conveyed message. One could argue here as to whether inferential knowledge is actually a linguistic knowledge. The interpretation of the results obtained by Gardner and Winner, in the framework of cognitive linguistics, would point to insufficient cognitive rather than an autonomous linguistic development.

An extension of children's understanding of 'alternative realities' (cf. Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk 1987) are their early abilities to participate in *pretend plays* and their ability to conceptualise *pretence* as a mental representational state rather than a simple action (cf. Lillard 1993a, 1993b). There are many studies geared towards children's ability to understand and draw conclusions from sentences containing what we would call negative predicates such as *pretend*, *forget*, etc. Harris (1975), for example, examined children's and adults' comprehension of presuppositional consequences for the truth of the complement clause involving factive predicates (*know* and *be happy*), nonfactive predicates (*say* and *whisper*) and counterfactive predicates, which carry the presupposition that the complement clause is *false*, (*wish* and *pretend*). No children in the experiment (ages 4 to 12) were able to recognise that nonfactives carry no presupposition concerning the truth of the complement, they tended to judge them as true. Children had also problems with the recognition of presupposed falsity of counterfactive complements. DeHart and Maratsos (1984) report also other studies on presuppositional usages of different group of predicates, such as e.g. the examination of the differences in children's understanding between the nonfactive *think* and factive *know* and found out that while 3-year-olds do not grasp this distinction, 4-year olds do. Macnamara et al. (1976), interested in the children's ability to infer truth-falsity of the complement of *pretend*, *forget*, and *know*, confirm that 4-year-olds show partial understanding of these matters. All such studies, however, suggest that, in DeHart and Maratsos wording (1984: 267) after Hopmann and Maratsos (1978): "the evidence across studies argues for gradual acquisition of the factivity distinction on a verb-by-verb basis, rather than more general, sudden, once-and-for-all acquisition." Even such studies though do not give us much interesting material concerning the indirect negatives in language acquisition. De Villiers notes that there is very little attention paid to indirect negatives so, consequently the analysis of all form-function intricacies of negation and their acquisition is greatly impoverished. (de Villiers 1984: 231).

### 3.2. Negativity as a spatial relation

Clark and Clark (1977: 537) mention a distinction maintained by some psychologists, who differentiate between direct dimensions of the external reality, calling them perceptual categories, and the indirectly acquired properties, named cognitive categories, such as number, negation, cause and effect, time and propose that "there may be no principled way to distinguish these from perceptual categories" (Clark - Clark 1977: 537). More along the lines of cognitive linguistics we could propose that the perceptual categories act as a cognitive anchor for the cognitive ones. Number, cause and effect, time, may be thought of as metaphoric conceptualisations of the perceptual categories in terms of spatial relations, which, being perceptually most salient, function as genuine universals. I think that negativity may be partly conceptualised in terms of spatial relations such as BLOCKAGE or RESISTANCE, LESS rather than MORE, OUTSIDE rather than INSIDE a container or bounded area, DISJOINING rather than CONJOINING, SPLITTING rather than COMBINING, etc.

An example of phrases with an incorporated strong negativity element are force-dynamic expressions. In force-dynamic expressions negation is found in the form of a parameter signifying a real or potential resistance of the agonist against the antagonist. It is present at the conceptual level of language and this fact can be accounted for spatially and topologically. Johnson proposed (1987: 41-42) that the dimension of what he calls "forceful interaction" is one of the most prominent "ever-present dimension of our experience". He adds further, that

the ... schemata of CONTAINMENT gave prominence to the limitation, restriction, and channeling of forces. By paying more attention to our experience of force as such, we uncover new considerations that did not arise in the analysis of boundedness. These considerations include motion, directedness of action, degree of intensity and structure of causal interaction (including motions of both agency and patienthood, for animate and inanimate things alike). These new factors constitute further kinds of internal structure that an image schema (as gestalt) might manifest.

The prototypical negation thus, such as in *I am not tired* is conceptualised in terms of exclusion (OUT in fig. 1), as the unit outside the category of *tired*.

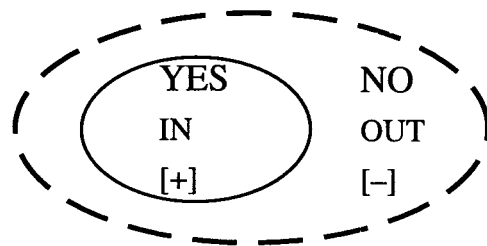


Figure 1: Spatial schema of prototypical negation

An observation which can be of interest here is that even though negation tends to express conceptually the notion of less rather than more, morphologically it is realised as MORE rather than LESS both at the lexical and the sentential level e.g., *interesting* versus *uninteresting*, *I am not tired* as opposed to *I am tired*. This may be connected with the fact that conceptually, from the point of view of cognitive processing, the negative is MORE COMPLEX than the positive. Negation opens up a larger range of options. It takes up more effort to define what something is *not* rather than what something *is*. The fact then, that negative statements are physically longer can be accounted for by the fact that they are more complex conceptually, which agrees with the *principle of iconicity*. This, however, refers only to direct, explicit negation. In the case of implicit negatives, the situation is different. They are also conceptually complex, but if the negation is incorporated in the conceptual/semantic structure of a lexical item (e.g., *enemy*), it is represented as a SHORTER form and processed more readily. Similar thought expressed as an explicit negative (*not a friend*) requires more processual effort as is consequently represented as a longer form.

Problems which may arise in connection with the distinction between the positive and the negative are those of salience and markedness. A positive statement or a positive attribute are probably more salient than a negative one, representing the absence. On the other hand, from the point of view of linguistic markedness, the negative is more marked, less frequent and interactionally less preferred option.

### 4. Negativity as an interactional concept

In the course of communicative interaction, each participant builds up a system of conceptual domains ("discourse domains", cf. Seuren 1985), based on their knowledge of reality in the form of *knowledge frames* (Minsky 1975) or *Idealised Cognitive Models* (Fillmore 1982) and (incrementally or non-incrementally) enriched during the interaction. The linguistic material as used by the speaker has a potential to evoke relevant parts of the hearer's knowledge, rearrange it, and set up new domains with old or new referential addresses in them. The domains do not necessarily reflect the state of affairs perceived by an interactant. Mental representations are gradually built up and modified by the incoming verbal material. Each lexical item is associated with a value which designates its meaning and its function in the discourse (these two may coincide in the case of some predicates, such as e.g., *not*). The value called the *increment value* by Seuren (1985) covers the lexical (including the presuppositional) as well as technical information, concerning the conceptual/semantic material of an item and the way which this material is to be included in the process of building a discourse domain (cf. Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk 1987).

The thesis defended in this work is that negation, so broadly understood, is the property of human language pervading all its manifestations, which can be understood as a *cognitive state* or *disposition*, present all the time, since the moment we are born, in our mental setup and activated when necessary. Such a notion of negation should be differentiated from a more conventional narrower sense of *negation* and contrasted with its hyponymic concepts, those of *lexical negativity* and *utterance negatibility*.

#### 4.1. The notion of *negatibility*

Any linguistic item (word, phrase or sentence), by the very fact of its having been selected to form a communicative unit, implies a potential existence of all other possible forms ("parallel" or "alternative" items) which *could have been* but were *not* selected for informative purposes. These "unselected" items then, *counterfactual* by implication, are "dormant" in unmarked contexts as in:

- (1) *I was transposing a trio written for two oboes and a cor anglais into recorders* (Svartvik – Quirk 1980: 732)

as an answer to the question:

- (2) *What are you writing, are you copying out parts for a quartet or something Barry or what?* (Svartvik – Quirk 1980: 732)

In (1) above *write* implies any activity of the *write* domain or any other domain members. As the reply indicates though it is the activity of transposing of the trio that has been chosen to increment the Discourse Domain (DD) set up in this interaction. Other activities lie outside it. In (3), however

- (3) A: *and how did you become enamoured of South Africa*  
B: *well, could you explain what you mean in SIMPLER English, Barry* (Svartvik – Quirk 1980: 733)

the contrastive stress on *simpler* marks a *scope of projected negation* in the preceding context which could be expressed as a version of the statement *you are not speaking simple English*, signalled as a self-correction in the following utterance:

- (4) *do you mean did I like it a lot, what?* (Svartvik – Quirk 1980: 733)

Thus a variant of (3A), in this particular case *I like it a lot*, is present (evoked and explicitly mentioned) in the domain of discourse as a variant of *enamoured of*. The discourse function of the contrastive sentence (3B) then is to *expel* the phrase *enamoured of* from the DD and to introduce *like* instead. The emphasis on the word *simpler* in (3) is a negativity marker as it pertains to the profiled entity, i.e., to use Langacker definition "a substructure within the base that ...

functions as the focal point within the objective scene, and achieves a special degree of prominence" (Langacker 1987: 491).

In terms of such an understanding of selection versus "unselection" of alternative items, the *negatibility* of an utterance, to use the term introduced by Huebler (1983: 12), is based exactly on the existence of such alternative, unselected options. The negatibility of an utterance becomes evident in what Huebler calls "the hearer's right to *refute* a sentence". Any sentence, according to Huebler, requires *ratification* to a greater or lesser extent and thus reveals, similarly to lexical items, its negatibility.

#### 4.2. Mental spaces and discourse domains

In his 1985 publication, Gilles Fauconnier introduced the concept of *mental spaces*, "constructs distinct from linguistic structures but built up in any discourse according to guidelines provided by the linguistic expressions. In the model, mental spaces will be represented as structured, incrementable sets – that is, sets with elements (*a, b, c ...*) and relations holding between them (*R<sub>1ab</sub>, R<sub>2a</sub>, R<sub>3cbf</sub> ...*), such that new elements can be added to them and new relations established between their elements. (In a technical sense, an incrementable set is an ordered sequence of ordinary sets, but it will be convenient to speak of the mental space as being built up during ongoing discourse, rather than to refer to the corresponding sequence of sets.)" (Fauconnier 1985: 16).

The idea of mental spaces in the sense of Fauconnier (1985) has coincided to a large extent with a similar construct proposed by Pieter Seuren in the same year (Seuren 1985) and to the concept of *alternative realities* (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk 1985). Seuren proposed that *semantics* is not synonymous with a truth-conditional specification of a proposition. Instead, he argues (1985: 27), semantics "must primarily define a proposition in terms of what it does to any given discourse domain". In other words, the meaning of a linguistic unit should be characterized first of all in terms of *changes* it brings about to a given *discourse domain*. Seuren (1985: 29) proposes that "The meaning of a sentence, in so far as its structural propositional part is concerned, now consists in the specification of its associated function *R<sub>i</sub>*, i.e. in the systematic modification, or increment, which it brings about whenever it is added to an appropriate given discourse domain *D<sub>j</sub>*."

In fact, it is the speaker herself/himself that constructs a discourse domain, i.e. builds up "a picture of a partial world" (Seuren 1988: 213). All true sentences (expressed as non-negative sentences) are *incremented* in a discourse domain and their elements assigned to the discourse entities, called *addresses*. Building up a discourse domain then, involves incrementation, i.e. "a cognitively backed *storage procedure*" (Seuren 1988: 213). Negation, as can be proposed after Johnson (1987: 40), is basically conceptualised in terms of the CONTAIN-

MENT schema as something *outside the container*, or *bounded area* (cf. fig. 1). It is thus significant that the negated elements do not freely enter a domain of discourse and are kept, in quite a real sense, *outside* it. If a sentence is of an intra-negative type ("minimally false" in Seuren's parlance), it is not totally but only partly incremented in a discourse domain ("quasi-incremented"). Seuren means by this that such a sentence is excluded from a discourse domain proper and stored in a "counter-domain". In the case of radical negation (metalinguistic negation), the increment of one of the sentence presuppositions, which was included in a discourse domain before, is removed from this domain together with any of the faulty "addresses". Seuren proposes here an interesting solution to ban a genuine incrementation of the sentence content to the discourse domain (i.e. metalinguistically negated sentence remains *without* its standard incrementation value), but, at the same time, make it possible to keep it in the discourse domain only as an address denoted by its (quoted) form (i.e. its name) (cf. Seuren 1988: 219-221).

### 5. Conclusions

Negativity appears to be a cognitive-interactional phenomenon. Positive judgements are handled here as conceptualisations of the outside world objects, frames, scenarios, which are represented in terms of a variety of complex conceptual structures composed via a meaningful compositional path. The negative utterance comprises a conceptualisation of a *positive* scene in terms of abstract counter-spatial or counterfactual models incorporating one or more types of instruction which determine their possible functions in discourse incrementation. The ban on incrementation of the material in the negative scope of predication is a typical function of negation. The analysis of a full interactional context of negative utterances can reveal both the inherent negability of linguistic items as well as the sociolinguistic principles of face saving and politeness which function as a trigger for a number of discourse functions of negative utterances.

Prototypical negatives have a lot in common with their positive counterparts. Both from the epistemological point of view, as well as from the point of view of semantic processing, the positive and the negative share a number of parameters. Implicit and incorporated negations function in discourse similarly to their positive counterparts when, for example, covert negations are processed more readily than constructions with overt negation. Negativity in covertly negative items is weaker and that is one of the reasons that in order to uncover it extra processing effort is needed. Explicitly conveyed negation on the other hand, is cognitively more *salient* than implicit or incorporated negation. Such a conclusion is confirmed in the material discussed by Langacker (1987: 226), who argues that cognitive salience is always reduced at the *sublexical* level.

In the case of lexical senses such as that of force-dynamic expressions, negativity is detectable at the sublexical level.

Negativity can be considered as one of the conceptual qualia – ineffable in its conceptual content, effable in the metaconceptual discourse as a verbal representation of negativity. What has been proposed here is thus the treatment of negativity (negation) as a *mental state* and *disposition*, while the function of the broad negativity units – as an *instruction* eliminating a profiled verbal material from a discourse domain or banning the incrementation of a profiled part of material from a discourse domain. The means to achieve this goal is the setting up of counter-spatial and counterfactual mental models, while its conceptual representation are spatial image-schemata of the OUT versus IN and a number of other patterns such as BLOCKAGE, RESISTANCE, DIVERSION, COUNTERFORCE, and the like, which incorporate the basic IN/OUT dimension as one of their subspaces.

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