1 Introduction

Many gradable adjectives come in polar antonyms:

\[(1) \begin{array}{ll}
\text{happy} & \text{sad} \\
\text{wise} & \text{foolish} \\
\text{clean} & \text{dirty} \\
\text{friendly} & \text{hostile} \\
\text{healthy} & \text{sick} \\
\text{kind} & \text{rude} \\
\text{true} & \text{false} \\
\text{safe} & \text{dangerous}
\end{array}\]

- the positive poles of the opposition may be prefixed with un- (see (2a))
- the negative poles cannot be prefixed with un- (see (2b); Jespersen 1942:466, Zimmer 1964, Horn 2005)
- the negative poles are not resistent to negation per se, as they can be negated with not (see (2c))
Aims of this talk:

- account for this restriction and the contrast between *un- and not
- present additional data supporting the account
- in doing so, develop a proposal about the functional superstructure of gradable adjectives

2 Nanosyntax

Basic principles:

- syntax is prior to the lexicon
- the syntax works only with features and combinations of features
- lexical insertion is postsyntactic
- each feature is a syntactic head that projects
- morphemes spell out combinations of features, i.e. morphemes do not spell out heads but phrases (phrasal spellout)
- lexical insertion is subject to the Superset Principle

(3) **Superset Principle**

A lexical entry may spell out a syntactic node (SN) iff the features of the lexical entry are a superset of the features dominated by the syntactic node.

- in case two items compete for insertion, the Elsewhere Principle applies:

(4) **The Elsewhere Principle**

In case two rules, R₁ and R₂, can apply in an environment E, R₁ takes precedence over R₂ if it applies in a proper subset of environments compared to R₂.
in case two items compete, the more specific item wins

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{XP} & \langle /\alpha/, \{A, B, C, D\} \rangle \\
\text{YP} & \langle /\beta/, \{A, B, C, D, E\} \rangle
\end{align*}
\]

the syntactic tree XP dominates the features A, B, and C
both lexical items \(\alpha\) and \(\beta\) are candidates for spelling out XP, because their features are a superset of the features of the syntactic tree
\(\alpha\) will win the competition from \(\beta\) because it is a closer match for the syntactic tree
an informal way of stating the Elsewhere Principle is ‘Minimize Junk’

3 Analysis: a difference in size

The difference between polar antonyms (e.g. happy-sad) is a difference in the size of the tree, i.e. in the number of features they spell out:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Neg}_{QP} \Rightarrow & \quad \text{negative gradable adjective} \quad \text{(e.g. sad)} \\
\text{Neg}_Q & \Rightarrow \quad \text{positive gradable adjective} \quad \text{(e.g. happy)} \\
Q & \Rightarrow \quad \text{nongradable adjective} \quad \text{(e.g. nuclear)} \\
a & \sqrt
\end{align*}
\]

the features involved are \(\text{Neg}_Q\), Q, a (a categorial head feature), and a (acategorical) root feature (\(\sqrt{\ })\)
nongradable adjectives (\textit{nuclear, classical, ...}) spell out the aP node (i.e. the features a and \(\sqrt{\ })\)
positive gradable adjectives (e.g. happy) spell out the QP-node (i.e. the features Q, a, and \(\sqrt{\ })\)
negative gradable adjectives (e.g. sad) spell out the \(\text{Neg}_{Q}P\)-node (i.e. the fea-
4 Evidence for the analysis

4.1 Support for QP

- Q is a feature which denotes a positive quantity
- *much* spells out this feature

\[
(7) \quad \text{QP } \Rightarrow \text{much}
\]

- positive gradable adjectives spell out the features Q, a, and the root feature (ignored in the trees to follow):

\[
(8) \quad \text{QP } \Rightarrow \text{intelligent, tall, happy, warm, long, ...}
\]

- evidence for (8) is found in the semantics

(9) John is tall.

- not: John has a degree on the scale of tallness
- but: John’s degree of tallness is above the standard degree of tallness, i.e. *John is much tall.*

- an obvious question raised by this analysis is why (10) is impossible:

(10) *John is much tall*

- *much* cannot spell out the tree in (8) because the features of the lexical item *much* (Q) are a subset of the features in the syntactic tree (Q, a, √)
- in contrast, any positive gradable adjective can spell out the tree in (8) because the features of positive gradable adjectives and those of the tree in (8) are an exact match
*much tall* is ruled out because *tall* already spells out the Q-feature of *much*. The alternative derivation in (11) is ruled out:

(11) \[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{QP} \Rightarrow \text{much} \\
\text{Q} \quad \text{aP} \Rightarrow \text{tall}
\end{array} \]

- *tall* spells out *aP* (this is possible in virtue of the Superset Principle)
- *much* spells out *QP*
- we take this derivation to be ruled out because there is a competing, simpler, derivation, represented in (8)

Support for the analysis comes from the phenomenon of *much*-support (Corver 1997):

(12) a. John is fond of Mary. Maybe he is **too much** so.
    b. John is fond of Mary. Maybe he is **as much** as Bill.
    c. The weather was hot in Cairo—**so much** so that we stayed indoors all day.

- *much*-support occurs when the adjective is replaced by pro-form *so*, and is preceded by a degree-modifier like *too/as/that/so*
- schematically: \[ \text{Deg} + \text{much} + \text{so} \]
- *much* is obligatory:

(13) John is very fond of Mary. *Maybe he is **too** so.*

- pro-form *so* spells out *aP*
- *much* is needed to spell out *QP* since *so* cannot spell out *Q*

(14) \[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{DegP} \Rightarrow \text{too} \\
\text{Deg} \quad \text{QP} \Rightarrow \text{much} \\
\text{Q} \quad \text{aP} \Rightarrow \text{so} \\
\text{a} \quad \sqrt{ }
\end{array} \]

- *much* is also visible as a spellout of a Q-feature with nonadjectival predicates (i.e. *PP, VP, DP*) that semantically may function like gradable predicates
(Neeleman et al. 2006):

(15)  a. He is too much [PP under scrutiny] to be elected at this time.
b. He [VP likes venison] too much for his own good.
c. He is too much [DP a scientist] to care about such problems.

▷ schematically: \textbf{Deg + much + PP/VP/DP}

(16) \[
\begin{aligned}
\text{DegP} & \Rightarrow \text{\textbf{too}} \\
\text{Deg} & \quad \text{QP} \quad \Rightarrow \text{much} \\
\text{Q} & \quad \text{PP/VP/DP} \quad \Rightarrow \text{UNDER SCRUTINY LIKES VENISON A SCIENTIST}
\end{aligned}
\]

▷ Q occurs with whatever can be interpreted as gradable
▷ PP/VP/DP cannot spell out QP because no lexical item exists that spells out this structure
▷ as a result, much is needed to spell out the Q-feature
▷ the restriction against *much tall discussed above does not hold in these cases:

(17)  a. He is [QP much [PP under scrutiny]]
b. He doesn’t [QP [VP like venison] much]
c. He is [QP much of [DP a scientist]]

▷ the reason is that no lexical items exist that spell out the entire QP
▷ this is confirmed semantically by the fact that, when much is absent, the ‘high degree’ interpretation also must disappear:

(18)  a. He’s under scrutiny
b. He likes venison
c. He’s a scientist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▷ The feature Q is present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o semantically: in the high degree reading of gradable adjectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o visibly: in the phenomenon of much-support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Support for NegP

- recall the contrast in (2) above: *unsad vs not sad
- De Clercq (2013): negation is internally complex
- different negative markers spell out different Neg-features:

(19) \[
\begin{align*}
\text{Neg}_{Pol} & \Rightarrow \text{not} \\
\text{Neg}_{Pol} & \Rightarrow \text{not} \\
\text{Neg}_{Foc} & \Rightarrow \text{non} \\
\text{Neg}_{Deg} & \Rightarrow \text{un-}
\end{align*}
\]

- negative gradable adjectives are like positive ones, but add a NegQ-feature:

(20) \[
\begin{align*}
\text{Neg}_Q & \Rightarrow \text{sad, short, bad, cold, small, ...} \\
\text{Neg}_Q & \Rightarrow \text{QP} \\
\text{QP} & \Rightarrow \text{happy}
\end{align*}
\]

- adjectives with the negative prefix un- have the same structure, but spell it out differently:

(21) \[
\begin{align*}
\text{Neg}_Q & \Rightarrow \text{un-} \\
\text{Neg}_Q & \Rightarrow \text{QP} \\
\text{QP} & \Rightarrow \text{happy}
\end{align*}
\]

- QP spells out as happy: the lexical features of happy (Q, a, √) are identical to those dominated by QP
- the lexical entry for un- is given in (22):

(22) \[
\begin{align*}
\text{Neg}_Q & \Rightarrow \text{un} \\
\text{Neg}_Q & \Rightarrow \text{un}
\end{align*}
\]
un- spells out the Neg\textsubscript{Q}-feature in (21).
un- cannot occur with negative adjectives, because they already spell out the entire Neg\textsubscript{Q}P:

\begin{equation}
\text{Neg}\textsubscript{Q}P \Rightarrow *\text{un- sad}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation}
\text{for this reason, un- cannot also spell out the Neg\textsubscript{Q} feature}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation}
\begin{array}{c|c|c}
\text{Neg}\textsubscript{Q} & Q & a \\
\hline
\text{sad} & \\
\text{un} & \text{happy}
\end{array}
\end{equation}

*unsad would not fit into the space provided in (24).

a negative adjective could in principle spell out QP because of the Superset Principle:

\begin{equation}
\text{Neg}\textsubscript{Q}P \Rightarrow \text{un-}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation}
\text{however, the Elsewhere Principle will ensure that positive gradable adjectives always win the competition from their negative counterparts for spelling out QP.}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation}
\text{why is (26) good?}
\end{equation}

(26) not sad

\begin{equation}
\text{not is internally complex (see (19) above)}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation}
\text{this complex negative marker may be merged on top of a positive gradable adjective:}
\end{equation}
(27) \[ \text{Neg}_{Pol} \]
\[ \text{Neg}_{Pol} \Rightarrow \text{not} \quad \text{QP} \Rightarrow \text{happy} \]
\[ \text{Neg}_{Pol} \quad \text{Neg}_{Foc} \quad \text{Q} \quad \text{aP} \]
\[ \text{Neg}_{Foc} \quad \text{Neg}_{Deg} \quad \text{Q} \quad \text{aP} \]
\[ \text{Neg}_{Deg} \quad \text{Neg}_{QP} \]

\[ \triangleright \text{not may also be merged on top of a negative gradable adjective:} \]

(28) \[ \text{Neg}_{Pol} \]
\[ \text{Neg}_{Pol} \Rightarrow \text{not} \quad \text{Neg}_{QP} \Rightarrow \text{sad} \]
\[ \text{Neg}_{Pol} \quad \text{Neg}_{Foc} \quad \text{Neg}_{QP} \quad \text{Q} \quad \text{aP} \]
\[ \text{Neg}_{Foc} \quad \text{Neg}_{Deg} \quad \text{Q} \quad \text{aP} \]
\[ \text{Neg}_{Deg} \quad \text{Neg}_{QP} \]

\[ \triangleright \text{in general, negation markers can be stacked, provided they spell out a different set of Neg features:} \]

(29) a. He isn’t sad  
    b. He’s not sad  
    c. He isn’t not sad  
    d. He isn’t unhappy  
    e. He’s not unhappy

\[ \triangleright \text{however, negative markers spelling out the same features in the same position cannot be stacked:} \]

(30) a. *unsad  
    b. *ununhappy  
    c. *He isn’tn’t happy
Summary

- Negative gradable adjectives spell out an additional Neg\(_Q\)-feature, as compared with positive ones.
- Since negative gradable adjectives spell out Neg\(_Q\)P, prefixal un- cannot also spell out this feature (whence *unsad).
- Not is internally complex and combines with negative adjectives.

5 Further support

5.1 Dutch

- The restriction observed in (2) above holds identically in Dutch.
- The prefixal negative marker on- ‘un’ combines only with positive adjectives:

(31) 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ongelukkig/*oordroef, *ontriest</td>
<td>‘unhappy/unsad’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onverstandig, onwijs/*ondom</td>
<td>‘unwise/unfoolish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onvriendelijk, onaardig/*onvijandig</td>
<td>‘unfriendly/unhostile’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ongezond, onwel/*onziek</td>
<td>‘unhealthy, unwell/unsick’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oninteressant/*onvervelend, *onsaaai</td>
<td>‘uninteresting/unboring’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onfraai/*onlelijk</td>
<td>‘unnice/unugly’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onaantrekkelijk/*onafstotelijk</td>
<td>‘unattractive/unrepulsive’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ongemakkelijk/*onmoeilijk</td>
<td>‘uneasy/undifficult’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onprettig/*onvervelend</td>
<td>‘unpleasant/unannoying’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The account is identical: negative adjectives already spell out Neg\(_Q\)P, so that on- cannot spell out the Neg\(_Q\) feature.
- Additional data supporting this analysis comes from the polar antonyms veel/weinig ‘much/little’:

(32) 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>veel meer meest</td>
<td>‘much’ ‘more’ ‘most’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weinig minder minst</td>
<td>‘little’ ‘less’ ‘least’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The presence of the degrees of comparison indicates that veel and Weinig are adjectives (Jespersen 1913, Bowers 1975, Kayne 2007).
- Veel ‘much’ cannot modify adjectives, suggesting that veel is the equivalent of...
much (recall *much tall)

• however, weinig can modify adjectives

\[(33)\] weinig/*/veel actief ‘little/much active’
weinig/*/veel waarschijnlijk ‘little/much likely’
weinig/*/veel geloofwaardig ‘little/much credible’
weinig/*/veel verstandig ‘little/much intelligent’
weinig/*/veel duidelijk ‘little/much clear’

• weinig ‘little’ shows the same restriction as the negative prefixes on-/un- in not combining with negative adjectives:

\[(34)\] weinig actief/*passief ‘little active/passive’
weinig aangenaam/*vervelend ‘little pleasant/annoying’
weinig vriendelijk/*vijandig ‘little friendly/hostile’
weinig duidelijk/*verward ‘little clear/confused’
weinig interessant/*vervelend ‘little interesting/boring’

• weinig does not modify adjectives with the negative prefix on-:

\[(35)\] weinig geloofwaardig/*ongeloofwaardig ‘little credible/incredible’
weinig verstandig/*onverstandig ‘little intelligent/unintelligent’
weinig aantrekkelijk/*onaantrekkelijk ‘little attractive/unattractive’
weinig duidelijk/*onduidelijk ‘little clear/unclear’
weinig geduldig/*ongeduldig ‘little patient/impatient’
weinig zichtbaar/*onzichtbaar ‘little visible/invisible’

• this looks like a classical case of complementary distribution:
weinig aangenaam/*weinig vervelend/*weinig onaangenaam

• the distributional evidence suggests that negative adjectives with and without on- share an essential property

• we propose that on- spells out the Neg_Q-feature, and that weinig spells out the features Neg_Q and Q:

\[(36)\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Neg}_Q \Rightarrow \text{on-} \\
\text{Neg}_Q \quad \text{QP} \\
\end{array}
\]

11
the difference is motivated by the fact that *weinig* is itself a gradable adjective:

\[(37) \text{Hij kocht weinig potgrond} \quad \text{he bought little potting-compost}\]

the absence of aP is motivated by the fact that *weinig* is defective as an adjective:

\[(38) \*Zijn verdiensten zijn weinig \quad \text{his merits are little} \quad \text{‘His merits are few.’}\]

*weinig* is a functional, rather than a lexical, adjective

*weinig* may modify positive adjectives:

\[(39) \text{Neg}_Q \text{P} \Rightarrow \text{weinig}\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Neg}_Q \\
\text{QP} \\
\text{Q} \\
\text{aP} \Rightarrow \text{verstandig}
\end{array}
\]

*verstandig* spells uit aP (Superset Principle)

*weinig* spells out the Neg_Q and Q features

as we saw, *weinig* does not combine with

- negative adjectives
- on-prefixed adjectives

it does so for the same reason that *un-* does not combine with negative adjectives: negative adjectives already spell out the entire Neg_Q-P, so that *weinig* or *un-* cannot also spell out the same Neg_Q-feature

\[(40) \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neg_Q</th>
<th>Q</th>
<th>a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vvervelend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>weinig</td>
<td>aangenaam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on-</td>
<td>aangenaam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 French

the French data show exactly the same patterns as the Dutch data
negative adjectives cannot be prefixed with the negative prefixes *in-, dé(s), or mal-:

(41)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>injuste</td>
<td>*infaux</td>
<td>‘unjust/unfalse’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ingénieuses</td>
<td>*inavare</td>
<td>‘ungenerous/unstingy’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incroyant</td>
<td>*imméfiant</td>
<td>‘unbelieving/undistrusting’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incomplet</td>
<td>*infragmentaire</td>
<td>‘incomplete/unfragmented’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immmodeste</td>
<td>*inorgeuilleux</td>
<td>‘immodest/unfragmented’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inactif</td>
<td>*impassif</td>
<td>‘inactive/unpassive’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>désagréable</td>
<td>*désennuyeux</td>
<td>‘unpleasant/unannoying’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>désordonné</td>
<td>*démonchalant, *dénégligent</td>
<td>‘sloppy/unsloppy’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malheureux</td>
<td>*maltriste</td>
<td>‘unhappy/unsad’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malhonnête</td>
<td>*malméchant</td>
<td>‘dishonest/unbad’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

beaucoup/peu ‘much/little’ show the degrees of comparison:

(42)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>beaucoup</td>
<td>plus</td>
<td>le plus ‘much’ ‘more’ ‘most’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peu</td>
<td>moins</td>
<td>le moins ‘little’ ‘less’ ‘least’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

peu ‘little’, but not beaucoup ‘much’, may modify adjectives:

(43)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>peu/*beaucoup actif</td>
<td>‘little/much active’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peu/*beaucoup probable</td>
<td>‘little/much likely’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peu/*beaucoup crédible</td>
<td>‘little/much credible’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peu/*beaucoup frais</td>
<td>‘little/much fresh’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peu/*beaucoup clair</td>
<td>‘little/much clear’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

peu only modifies positive adjectives:

(44)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>peu actif/*passif</td>
<td>‘little active/passive’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peu agréable/*embêtant</td>
<td>‘little pleasant/annoying’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peu aimable/*hostile</td>
<td>‘little friendly/hostile’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peu clair/*embrouillé</td>
<td>‘little clear/confused’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peu intéressant/*ennuyeux</td>
<td>‘little interesting/boring’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

peu does not modify *in*-prefixed adjectives:
5.3 English

- English has a slightly different system of functional adjectives:

  (48) a. much more most
  b. many more most
  c. little less least
  d. few fewer fewest

- *many* and *few* add a feature [+count], and are only used adnominally (ignored in this context)

- different from Dutch and French, neither *much* nor *little* may modify adjectives:

  (49) a. *much/*little intelligent/foolish
  b. *much/*little likely/unlikely
  c. *much/*little happy/sad

- but with the indefinite article, we do get a contrast:
(50)  
* a much happy/sad     a little ??happy/sad  
* a much early/late   a little early/late  
* a much clean/dirty a little ?clean/dirty  
* a much pleasant/annoying   a little ??pleasant/annoying

▷ a much cannot modify adjectives, but a little can (with a preference for negative ones)
▷ a little is internally complex, just like not
▷ like not, it may be merged on top of both positive and negative gradable adjectives
▷ possibly, *a much is ruled out for semantic reasons (Q is already spelled out by the adjective, and a much would double this)
▷ the preference of a little for negative adjectives is a topic for future research

6 Comparatives

6.1 Synthetic comparatives

▷ the synthetic comparative morpheme -er spells out a feature Cmpr (Bobaljik 2012)

(51)  
\[
\text{CmprP} \Rightarrow -er \\
\text{CmprP} \Rightarrow \text{Q P} \Rightarrow \text{happy}
\]

▷ CmprP dominates QP (in the case of positive adjectives) or NegQ P (in the case of negative adjectives):

(52)  
\[
\text{CmprP} \Rightarrow -er \\
\text{Cmpr} \Rightarrow \text{QP} \Rightarrow \text{happy} \\
\text{Q} \Rightarrow \text{aP}
\]
happy/sad move into the Spec of CmprP, yielding happi-er and sad-der

6.2 Analytic comparatives

... both more and less can modify adjectives (unlike the positive degree items much/little):

(54) a. more/less intelligent
    b. more/less likely
    c. more/less interesting

... both more and less can modify negative adjectives:

(55) a. more/less foolish
    b. more/less annoying
    c. more/less dangerous

... both more and less can modify un-prefixed adjectives:

(56) a. more/less unfriendly
    b. more/less unhealthy
    c. more/less unkind

... in sum, none of the restrictions that we observed for much and little in the previous sections is found in the analytic comparative

we showed this only for English, but the same is true for Dutch (meer/minder) and French (plus/moins)

this suggests an analysis which allows for more than one NegQ-feature (e.g. less foolish/unfriendly)

we propose an analysis like the one for not sad above

the lexical items for more and less are internally complex

more is the suppletive comparative of much:
(57) \[ \text{CmprP} \Rightarrow \text{more} \]
\[
\text{Cmpr} \quad \text{QP} \\
\quad \text{Q}
\]

▷ *less* is the suppletive comparative of *little*:

(58) \[ \text{CmprP} \Rightarrow \text{less} \]
\[
\text{Cmpr} \\
\quad \text{Neg}_Q \quad \text{QP} \\
\quad \text{Neg}_Q \\
\quad \text{QP} \\
\quad \text{Q}
\]

▷ *more* and *less* are merged on top of the adjective:

(59) \[ \text{CmprP} \]
\[
\text{CmprP} \Rightarrow \text{more} \\
\quad \text{QP} \\
\quad \text{Q}
\quad \text{Neg}_Q \quad \text{QP} \\
\quad \text{Q} \\
\quad \text{Neg}_Q \\
\quad \text{QP} \\
\quad \text{Q} \\
\quad \text{aP}
\]

(60) \[ \text{CmprP} \]
\[
\text{CmprP} \Rightarrow \text{less} \\
\quad \text{Neg}_Q \quad \text{QP} \\
\quad \text{Neg}_Q \\
\quad \text{QP} \\
\quad \text{Q} \\
\quad \text{aP}
\]

\[ \text{Neg}_Q \quad \text{QP} \]
\[ \text{Q} \]

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7 Conclusion

Summary:

- the difference between positive and negative gradable adjectives is a difference in size, which is a difference in the number of features that they spell out.
- this proposal allowed us to account for a number of curious restrictions, hitherto unexplained and/or unobserved:
  - un- does not combine with negative adjectives
  - Dutch weinig and French peu do not combine with negative adjectives
- not is internally complex and can be combined with positive and negative adjectives alike
- the markers of the analytic comparative (more/less, meer/minder, plus/moins) are internally complex like not, and can be combined with positive and negative adjectives alike

References


Zimmer, Karl. 1964. *Affixal negation in English and other languages* Supplement to Word, Monograph No. 5.