(Q) Supporting evidence

- French *peau* and Dutch *weining* 'little'
  - French and Dutch do not only show the pattern in (1), but the same pattern with a case of syntactic, not morphological, negation.

(13) "peau + act"/"passé" active/passé
  (14) "little + act"/"passé" active/passé
  "amiable/Hostile" friendly/hostile
  "non voulant"/"voulant" want/undesire
  "plein"/"vide" full/empty

(15) "little + act"/"passé" active/passé
  "le petit + act"/"passé" active/passé
  "correct/incorrect" correct/wrong
  "intrigant/insipide" interesting/boring
  "dominant/secondaire" dominant/secondary
  "petit patient/impatient" small/patient

These data can be explained by the same account if we assume that

- peau/weining are the phrasal suffix of Neg = "little"

- Weining in the Spec of a negative adjective leads to the same violation against the ban on double negation (*Neg* < Neg).

The derivation which respects the feq is given in (15), and the one that violates the feq is in (16):

(16) "petit patient/impatient"

These data provide a further argument against (2) and (3), since they show that the pattern in (1) is not restricted to morphological negation, but extends to certain cases of syntactic negation.

- The suffixes -less and -ful
  - Nouns suffixed with -less resist monopronunciation, though not negation per se.
  - Nouns suffixed with -ful do not resist monopronunciation.

(17) "breathless"/"unbreathless" not breathless
  "unhappy"/"happy" not happy
  "unmerciful"/"merciful" not merciful

These data can be explained if we assume that -less spells out Neg, while -ful does not.

- The same pattern extends to Dutch syntactic negation with weining, which does not combine with lists negatively, un-adjuncted, pre-negation, or post-negation.

(18) "unharmed, unscathed, undefeated, unblamable, unobjectionable"

(von) The same logic applies to the positive Dutch un-preixed adjective onscheidt, on-grammar, on-usage, on-usefulness, . . . ‘little usable, useless, disinterested’

- The same data are reflexes of a ban on structurally adjacent negative morphemes, ruled out by (4).

(Reference)

A Constraint on Double Negation

Karen De Clercq & Guido Vanden Wyngaerd
Ghent University/FWO & KU Leuven
WCCFL 34, Salt Lake City, 29 April – 1 May

(Q) The account

- Preferring a positive adjective with un-
  - yields (10)

(10)

- Preferring a negative adjective with an un-
  - yields (11)

(11)

- In contrast, not taking scope over TP or FocP

(12)

(Reference)

A natural history of negation


