

## Negation and negative dependencies

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Every language is able to express negation. However, languages differ to quite a large extent as to how they express this negation. Some languages, like German, employ a single word (nicht); in other languages a single negative sentence may contain more than one negative word. In Italian "Non telefona nessuno" (not calls nobody) means 'nobody calls'. Negation is indissolubly connected to the phenomenon of negative and positive polarity. Negative Polarity Items (NPIs) are items, like English "ever", that may only appear in sentences that in some sense count as negative. NPIs surface in various kinds. Positive Polarity Items (PPIs) form the mirror image of NPIs. These are elements, such as English "rather", that are banned from appearing in negative sentences. These phenomena, as well as a number of other, related phenomena, call for an explanation. However, whereas each of these phenomena have all been analysed in various ways, no single theory has ever been presented that offers an overarching explanation to all these phenomena in the domain of negation and negative dependencies. The book will present such an overarching perspective, based on novel data from language variation, language acquisition and language change.

### Projektbeteiligte

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