

Negative Markers and Bilingual Aphasia: Evidence from Italian and Northern Italian Dialects

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The aim of this paper is to investigate the agrammatic production (i.e. non fluent production in Broca's Aphasia) of negation in five agrammatic patients. Before the injury they spoke both Italian and a Northern Italian dialect (Northern Vicentino (n=4), Venetian (n=1)). The present study describes the performance of the patients on several tasks:

1. *delayed repetition*: patients were asked to repeat a sentence with a preverbal and a postverbal negative marker in both languages:

- (1) It. Gianni non beve mica vino /NID: Nane no-l beve (mia) vin
(John *not* drinks *not* wine)

2. *sentence completion*: patients were asked to complete a sentence in both languages:

- (2) It. Gianni vive a Londra, ma è italiano; Gianni vive a Londra ma ____ è inglese
(John lives in London, but is Italian; John lives in London, but ____ is English)

3. *guided production*: patient were asked to produce a sentence with at least one negative marker.

4. *sentence anagram ordering tasks*: patients were asked to order sentences with two negative markers.

Moreover, a comparison between sentence negation and small-clause negation has been investigated:

- (3) Non ritengo Gianni degno di fiducia / No ritegno (mia) Nane degno de fiducia
(Not consider-1st sing. John trust-worthy)
(4) Ritengo [Gianni non degno di fiducia] / Ritegno [Nane no degno de fiducia]
(Consider – 1st sing. [John not trust-worthy])

In the presentation I am going to show that:

- a. preverbal sentence negation (it. *non* /NID. *no*) is impaired in both languages.
- b. postverbal sentence negation (dial. *mia*) is always spared in both languages.
- c. negation of small clause (it. *non* / dial. *no*) is always spared in both languages.

These results are consistent with previous studies on negation production in aphasia (Bastiaanse, Rispens & van Zonneveld (2000)) and support linguistic theories about the different status of the two negative markers: the clitic status (X^0) of the preverbal negative marker (which is omitted as well as subject and object pronominal clitics) and the XP status of the postverbal negative markers (Pollock 1989, Belletti 1990, Zanuttini 1997, Cinque 1999 among others).

Moreover, negation of small clauses, although semantically similar, is structurally different from sentence negation. Our data support linguistic proposals (Cardinaletti & Guasti 1993, among others) on such a different status: the latter projects a NegP higher than TP whereas the former is expressed by an AdvP.

References

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