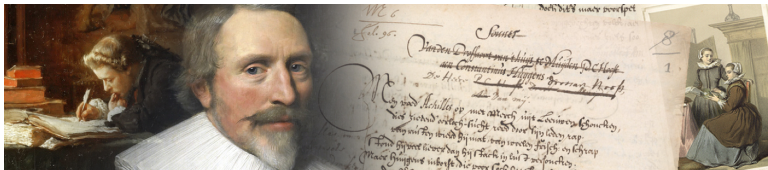


Negation in the letters of P.C. Hooft:

combining literary studies and linguistics

Marjo van Koppen
Utrecht University & Meertens Instituut

Ghent University, May 15th 2019, Discovering Linguistics



Outline

Introduction

Background

Negation in older Dutch

Variation in negation

Negation in Hooft's letters

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- ▶ This project studies intra-author variation in 17th century Dutch.

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 - ▶ In 1622 she gets a prison sentence for hosting an Armenian service in her home.
 - ▶ She has written about these events in two ego-documents.

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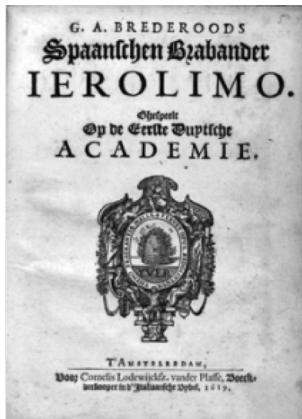
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- ▶ However: texts are heavily influenced by pamphlets written by other Arminians in the Southern Dutch provinces.
- ▶ The language of Willemken mimics the language of these pamphlets: same verbal tense, same verbs, same type of sentence structure.
- ▶ Careful with conclusions on Willemken's language as a typical representation of a middle class woman in 17th century Nijmegen.



Background

- ▶ Difference within fictional texts between “speakers”, for instance Bredero’s *Spaansche Brabander* in which the prostitutes use two-part negation but not the posh *Jerolimo*



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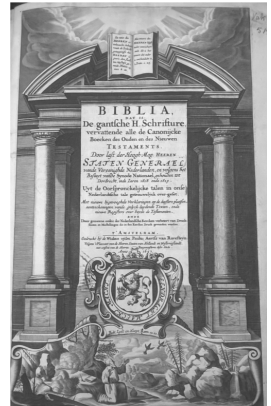
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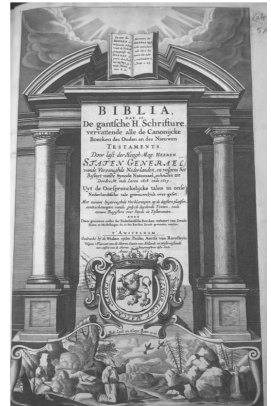
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- ▶ reflexive *zich* instead of pronoun *hem*
- ▶ only two-part negation!



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- ▶ *'Dus vint men **en** in geen gemene praat. Maar deftig werk, daar 't lam en ledig staat; Als hy **en** wou, of gy **en** zult niet doden voegt **en** iet by 't ontkende, of by 't verboden?'*

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- ▶ So one doesn't find *en* in the regular speech. But posh work, where it is without use, like he didn't want to or you won't kill, adds *en* to the negated or the forbidden texts?

Background

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Background

- ▶ Important to combine (socio)linguistic, literary, historical and philological insights to understand language variation and change.
- ▶ The project *Language dynamics in the Dutch Golden Age*, Dietz et al. (2018), combines literary, sociolinguistic, computational linguistic and formal linguistic perspectives.
- ▶ This lecture: a linguistic and literary perspective on variation in negation in the language of P.C. Hooft.

Background

- ▶ Two sentences from the same letter of Hooft to his brother-in-law Joost Baek from 1634:

- (1) 'T **en** magh mij textbfniet heughen, zoo lang zonder
it NEG can me not remember, so long without
brief van UE geweest te zijn.
letter of you been to be
'I cannot remember to have been without a letter from you
for such a long time.' (letter 629, 1634 van Tricht et al. (1976))
- (2) Maer 't moet 'er wel drok zijn, dat 'er textbfniet een
but it most there PART busy be that there not a
letterken voor ons ujt vallen magh.
letter for us out fall can
'It must be busy there, that there is even no time to sent a
letter to us.' (letter 629, 1634 van Tricht et al. (1976))

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Negation in older Dutch: Jespersen cycle (Zeijlstra 2004)

► Oud-Nederlands (800-1150)

- (3) Inde in wege sundigero **ne** stunt.
and in way sinners NEG stood
'and did not stand in the way of the sinners.'

► Middle Dutch (1150-1500)

- (4) Ik **en** ben die beste van mijnen maghen **niet**.
I NEG am the best of my family not
'I am not the best of my family.'

► Modern Dutch

- (5) Ik ben **niet** de beste van mijn familie.
I am not the best of my family.
'I am not the best of my family.'

Negation in older Dutch: Jespersen cycle (Zeijlstra 2004)

- ▶ Early Modern Dutch (1500-1800)

- (6) Zoo veele moeite **en** is het leven my **niet** waerdigh.
So much effort NEG is the life me not worthy
'Life is not worth that much trouble for me.'
 - (7) De krijgslien zijn **niet** veer van deeze kloosterpoort.
The soldiers are not far from this monastery.door
'The soldiers are not far from the entrance to this monastery.'
- ▶ EMD has both negative concord or single negation (Burridge 1993, Zeijlstra 2004, Horst 2008, Breitbarth 2009)
 - ▶ Both these examples are from the play *Gijsbrecht van Aemstel* by Joost van den Vondel from 1638 (Sterck et al. 1927)
 - ▶ Question: How can we account for the variation of negation (within one and the same author)?

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Variation in negation: Late Middle Dutch and Early Modern Dutch

- ▶ Breitbarth (2009) argues that variation in negation in Early Modern German and Late Middle Dutch is related to meaning.
- ▶ Breitbarth (2009:89): *the postverbal element takes over the identification of sentential negation, while the preverbal marker is reanalysed as the spell-out of the features of a CP-related polarity head on the finite verb*
- ▶ Breitbarth (2009:93): *... ne is a head cliticised or affixed to the finite verb in all West Germanic languages from their earliest attestations. It identifies negation until it is reanalysed as the realisation of affective Pol.*

Variation in negation: Late Middle Dutch and Early Modern Dutch

Breitbarth (2009):

Stage I	ne/en	
	[pol=NEG]	
Stage IIa	ne/en	niet
	[pol=NEG]	[pol=NEG]
Stage IIb	ne/en	niet
	[pol=___]	[pol=NEG]
Stage III		niet
		[pol=NEG]

Variation in negation: Late Middle Dutch and Early Modern Dutch

Breitbarth (2009)'s arguments in favour of this idea: use of negative clitic in non-negative contexts

- ▶ expletive negation (Middle English from Wallage 2005:178)

(8) **Ne** doute the **nat** that alle thinges **ne** ben don aryght.
NEG doubt you not that all things NEG are done rightfully
'Do not doubt that all things are done rightfully.'

- ▶ exceptive clauses (Middle Dutch from Burridge 1993:181)

(9) Maer dat **en** mach **niet** siin het **en** waer een sempel
but that NEG can not be it NEG were a simple
wonde.
wound
'But that cannot be unless it were a simple wound'

Variation in negation: Present-day West Flemish

- ▶ Another language with variation is present-day West Flemish.
- ▶ Haegeman and Breitbarth (2014): ***en** conveys that the negative clause is unexpected in a context in which its positive counterpart is the expected state of affairs*
- ▶ *thus **en** seems to convey some form of emphasis on the polarity of the clause*

(10) Ge zou lyk peinzen dat da Valère is, mo t' **en**
You would probably think that it Valère is but it NEG
is Valère **niet**.
was Valère not
'You might think it was Valère, but it wasn't him.'

Variation in negation: Present-day West Flemish

- ▶ Negative clitic in Middle Dutch is an agreement prefix on the verb (Gestel et al. 1992, Haegeman 1992, Zeijlstra 2004).
- ▶ Negative clitic in present-day West-Flemish is in a position in the middle field (FocP) spelling out focus (Breitbarth 2009, Haegeman and Breitbarth 2014)
- ▶ Argument: word-order in verb clusters

(11) da Valère **nie** [willen dienen boek lezen] (***en**) eet
that Valère not [want that book read] (***NEG**) has
'that Valère does not want to read that book.'

(12) da Valère **nie en** ee [willen dienen boek lezen]
that Valère not (NEG) has [want that book read]
'that Valère does not want to read that book.'

- ▶ Back to Early Modern Dutch, more specifically 17th century Dutch:

(13) Zoo veele moeite **en** is het leven my **niet** waerdigh.
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'Life is not worth that much trouble for me.'

(14) De krijgslien zijn **niet** veer van deeze kloosterpoort.
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- ▶ Question: How can we account for the variation in the use of negation (within one and the same author)?

Variation in negation: Hypotheses

- ▶ Hypothesis: The negative clitic in 17th century Dutch has lost its pure negative meaning and has gained an emphatic use (Breitbarth 2009, Haegeman and Breitbarth 2014):

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 - ▶ Addition: Extraposition and Topicalization
- ▶ Negative clitic spells out a Focus position: finite verb appears at the beginning of the cluster.

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Negation in Hooft's letters : Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft

- ▶ P.C. Hooft (Amsterdam, March 16th 1581-The Hague, May 21st 1647)
- ▶ Hooft is born in Amsterdam as are his parents
- ▶ Poet, play writer, historian
- ▶ Language innovator, actively thinking about and shaping Dutch



- ▶ van der Wouden (2007), Paardekooper (2006): P.C. Hooft, but also Joost van den Vondel, agreed to stop using the negative clitic after 1638.

Date of letters by Hooft	% of negative concord
Before April 19 th 1638	36 %
After April 19 th 1638	0 %

- ▶ Vondel replaces all negative concords in his play Palamedes (1625) in the reprint from 1652:

(15) Version 1625: 'Ten leed geen seven jaar ...'
 it.NEG took no seven year
'It didn't take seven years ...'

(16) Version 1652: 'Het leedt geen seven jaer ...'
 it took no seven year
'It didn't taak seven years ...'

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 - ▶ Meaning (literary studies)

Negation in Hooft's letters : Syntactic analysis

Corpus of Letters by P.C. Hooft (based on van Tricht et al. 1976)

- ▶ Currently annotated corpus:
- ▶ ± 108.000 words
- ▶ 5.700 sentences
- ▶ 333 letters
- ▶ Letters written between 1610-1638
- ▶ Annotation of parts-of-speech information and literary information like type of letter, addressee, part of the letter, topic of the letter, etc.

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 - ▶ 4 with a special coordinative structure (i.e. balansschikking)

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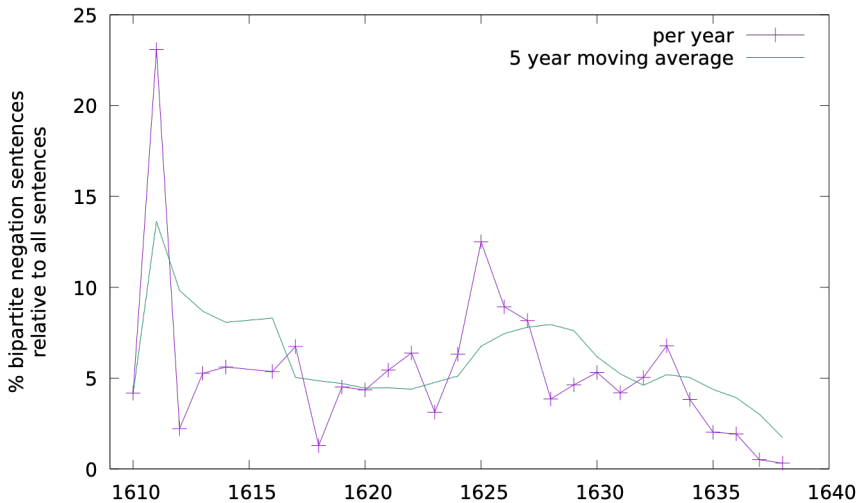
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 - ▶ position of the clitic+ verb in clusters
2. The negative clitic is related to emphatic meaning.
 - ▶ Subcorpus of 100 sentences with negative concord and 100 sentences with single negation without a negative clitic

Negation in Hooft's letters



Negation in Hooft's letters : Syntactic analysis

Negative concord

- ▶ 77 without a cluster, 23 with a cluster
- ▶ 4 examples with V1 at the end or middle of the cluster
- ▶ 3 out of 4 are participles → possibly adjectives → possibly not a real cluster.

- (17) Overmits ick tot alsoch toe niet **becomen en hebbe** [...]
Because I till now till not become₂ NEG have₁ [...]
'Because I didn't get [...] till now.'
(van Tricht et al. 1976:31,1612)

- ▶ 19 examples with V1 at the beginning of the cluster

- (18) [...] waeraen het minste deel niet **en zal hebben**.
[...] which.of the least part not NEG shall₁ have₂
'[...] of which not in the least will have.'
(van Tricht et al. 1976:637,1634)

Negation in Hooft's letters : Syntactic analysis

	Single negation	Negative concord
No cluster	61	77
V1 first	12 (31% clusters)	19 (95% clusters)
V1 not first	27 (69% clusters)	1 (5% clusters)

- ▶ The correlation between the type of negation and the type of cluster is significant ($p < 0.05$)
- ▶ Middle Dutch still has a negative affix (see also Breitbarth (2009)):
- ▶ Corpus Gysseling (Middle Dutch texts till 1350):
 - ▶ $V_2 \text{ NE } V_1 = 802$
 - ▶ $\text{NE } V_1 V_2 = 532$

Negation in Hooft's letters : Syntactic analysis

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Negation in Hooft's letters : Syntactic analysis

- ▶ exceptive clauses (van Tricht et al. 1976:664, 1634)

(21) Zulx dit de tweede mael zoude zijn, 't en zij het, gelijk ik
if this the second time would be it NEG be it, as I
waene, de zoon is.
think the son is
'If this would be the second time, unless, as I suspect, it
concerns the son.'

Negation in Hooft's letters : Syntactic analysis

- ▶ expletive negation (van Tricht et al. 1976:302, 1629)

(22) [...] **en** valt zoo zoet **niet** oft ick **en** leer 't meer
[...] NEG falls so sweet not or I NEG learn it more
vlieden als volgen.
flee than follow
'[...] does not bode well and I rather learn to do it differently.'

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- ▶ Topicalization does not differentiate between sentences with single negation and negative concord ($p > 0.05$):
 - ▶ Single negation: 46 main clauses, 25 with XP-V-S
 - ▶ Negative concord: 50 main clauses, 24 with XP-V-S

Negation in Hooft's letters : Syntactic analysis

Syntax shows that the negative clitic:

- ▶ triggers movement of the finite verb to a position preceding the vP (arguably a low FocP)
- ▶ the negative clitic has lost some of its negative content (exceptive clauses and expletive negation)
- ▶ negative concord is related to the presence of another way to add focus to the sentence

Now let us explore an argument from a literary studies which shows (more convincingly) that negative concord is related to emphasis.

Negation in Hooft's letters : Syntactic analysis

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 - ?? meaning → literary studies

Negation in Hooft's letters : Literary analysis

- ▶ Qualitative research on a subset of letters to Tesselschade Roemer Visscher (1594-1649).
- ▶ Tessel was a writer of poetry, part of the famous circle of writers from the Golden Age, the Muiderkring, and friend of Hooft.
- ▶ Letters of Hooft to Tessel are literary in nature.



Negation in Hooft's letters : Literary analysis

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Hooft writes 27 letters to Tessel:

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- ▶ Entire corpus 70% of the letters contain negative concord
- ▶ Difference might be due to the literary nature of the letters → negative concord should be avoided according to certain language innovators.

Negation in Hooft's letters : Literary analysis

- ▶ 50% of the letters contain negative concord (in total 14 letters with negative concord)
- ▶ Negative concord occurs in 12 of the 14 letters together with single negation → negative concord is used to enforce negation in contrast to other negative sentences.
- ▶ Position of the negative concord within the letters is also significant:
 - ▶ 12 x beginning of the letter
 - ▶ 7 x end of the letter
 - ▶ 4 x middle of the letter, but at the end of a specific topic of the letter
- ▶ In all cases the negative concord enforces the main point of the letter.

Negation in Hooft's letters : Literary analysis

594 Aen m^e Joffrouwe, M^e Joffre Tesselscha Vischers, huisvrouw van
Sr Allart Crombalgh

- ▶ In this letter Hooft celebrates Tessel's writing that is very good and very witty. He also wants to get more letters from Tessel.

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 - ▶ Part II: Hooft refers to an incident pertaining to another mutual friend, Franciska, and again congratulates Tessel as well as her husband 'Crommetje' with their sharpness of mind.

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 - ▶ Part II: Hooft refers to an incident pertaining to another mutual friend, Franciska, and again congratulates Tessel as well as her husband 'Crommetje' with their sharpness of mind.
 - ▶ Part III: Hooft asks for a letter from Tessel, saying that if she won't send it to him, he will come and get it.

Negation in Hooft's letters : Literary analysis

This letter contains two sentences with negative concord:

- (24) Wat hij meent met het topswaer van lauwer, **en** kan ik
what he means with the top.heavy of laurel, NEG can I
niet anders vatten, dan 's prinssen triomfwaeghen.
not else take than GEN prince triumphcar
'What he means with top heavy of laurel, I cannot take any
differently, than the triumph car of the Prince.'
(van Tricht et al. 1976:594,1633)
- (25) Zoo UE ons **geene en** zeindt van haere vruchten, lichtlijk
if you us no NEG send of her fruits likely
dat wij die, zelf komen haelen.
that we those self come get
'If you do not send us any of her fruits, probably we will come
to collect them ourselves.'
(van Tricht et al. 1976:594,1633)

Negation in Hooft's letters : Literary analysis

594 *Aen mê Joffrouwe, Mê Joffr' Tesselscha Vissers, huisvrouw van S' Allart Crombalgh, inde Langestraet, tot Alkmaer.*

* Loont.

[1] Mê Joffr^e

[2] Mij is lief dat UE den swakken Huighens, met een tooghjen inks² [3] gelaeft hebt. Wat hij meent met het topswaer van lauwer, en kan ik' [4] niet anders vatten, dan 's prinssen triomfwaeghen. Maer wat zeght⁵ [5] ghij van die overdiefsche ooghen van Franche: die niet alleen meê-³ [6] slepen 't geen zij belonken, maer in de ziellooze dingen, een zucht [7] verwekken om haer nae te loopen, als zij schoon uit hun gezicht is. [8] Geestigh is deze inval. Heeft hem Crommetjen gezaeit, UE ont-

[9] fangen en gebaert, ik zagh noit paer beter gepaert, om de werelt,

[10] met geestighe kinderen te bevolken: en deze werelt niet alleen,

[11] maer alle de geene, daer Alexander af dróómd. Want UE baert al¹¹ [12] ontfangende, ende behoeft geen' neghen maenden om te draeghen. [13] Aij lieve, zeindt ons altemets zoo een houkindt t'hujs. Zij zullen ons¹³ [14] beter kortswijl strekken, dan de apen en meerkatten van Tassoos¹⁴ [15] venster. Ende ik zie 't 'er toe komen, dat het uwe wel haest met

[16] gelijken gedierte zal gestoffeert zijn. Zoo daer eenighe keerssen¹⁶ [17] t'Alkmaer zijn, zij moeten onsteken aen de loogh uwer toortse, en¹⁷ [18] als kleene starren om de maene swerven. Zoo UE ons geene en [19] zeindt van haere vruchten, lichtlijk dat wij die, zelf komen haelen.¹⁹ [20] Doch 't is noch onzeker oft het ons, dezen zoomer, gelukken zal.²⁰ [21] Evenwel wij willen hoopen tegens alle reden van wanhoop aen, [22] ende zoo zoet een speelpop, niet, uit de armen van 't gedacht,²² [23] ontslaeken. Ondertussen zij UE eerbiedelijk gegroet, ende Gode [24] bevolen nevens alle de haeren,

[25] Mê Joffr^e van [26] U E

Negation in Hooft's letters : Literary analysis

- (26) Wat hij meent met het topswaer van lauwre, **en** kan ik
what he means with the top.heavy of laurel, NEG can I
niet anders vatten, dan 's prinssen triomfwaeghen.
not else take than GEN prince triumphcar
'What he means with top heavy of laurel, I cannot take any
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- ▶ By using the negative concord, Hooft strongly negates the opposite and emphasizes the need of his honour: he definitely cannot take it any differently.
- ▶ Stressing the most important message of Part I: Tessel's writing is amazing.

Negation in Hooft's letters : Literary analysis

- (27) Zoo UE ons **geene en** zeindt van haere vruchten, lichtlijk
if you us no NEG send of her fruits likely
dat wij die, zelf komen haelen.
that we those self come get
'If you do not send us any of her fruits, probably we will come
to collect them ourselves.' (van Tricht et al. 1976:594,1633)

- ▶ Hooft aims to win Tessel over: please, send me some writings!
He uses a threat as a rhetorical strategy, and the negative concord seems to emphasize that.
- ▶ Again this stresses the most important aspect of Part III: He wants to get letters by Tessel.

Negation in Hooft's letters : Literary analysis

Note that these sentences also show how negative concord and extraposition work together:

- (28) [...] **en** kan ik **niet** anders vatten, **dan 's** **prinssen**
[...] NEG can I not else take than GEN prince
trionfwaeghen.
triumphcar
'[...] I cannot take any differently, than the triumph car of the
Prince.'
(van Tricht et al. 1976:594,1633)
- (29) Zoo UE ons **geene en** zeindt **van haere vruchten** [...].
if you us no NEG send of her fruits [...]
'If you do not send us any of her fruits, [...].'
(van Tricht et al. 1976:594,1633)

- In both cases the extraposed element refers to Tessel's excellent writing, the main topic of the letter.

Negation in Hooft's letters : Literary analysis

Literary analysis shows that the negative clitic:

- ▶ is used at important rhetorical points of the letter.
- ▶ is used to emphasize the main point of the paper, through:
 - ▶ litotes (see example (28))
 - ▶ contrastive contexts (Tessel in contrast to other people, or situation X but not the expected situation Y) (see (30) and (31))
 - ▶ other rhetorical means like threats (see (29)).

(30) dat haere miltheit zoo verre **niet en** gaet als te water diep is.
 that her mildness so far not NEG goes as the water deep is
 'that her mildness is not so great as the waters are deep. (In
 contrast to Tessels mildness that is as deep as the deepest ocean)'
 (van Tricht et al. 1976:492,1631)

(31) Indien 't het beste maxel niet en is, laet het UE niet nieuw
 if it the best making not NEG is let it you nog new
 geeven.
 give.
 'if it is not the best poem, let it not surprise you.' (van Tricht et al.
 1976:346)

Negation in Hooft's letters

We also see that meaning of contrast in other (literary) work in the 17th century:

► Jacobus Revius: 'Hy droech onse smerten'

T'**en** zijn de Joden **niet**, Heer Jesu, die u cruysten,
Noch die verradelijck u togen voort gericht,
Noch die versmadelijck u spogen int gesicht,
Noch die u knevelden, en stieten u vol puysten,

T'**en** sijn de crijchs-luy **niet** die met haer felle vuysten
Den rietstock hebben of den hamer opgelicht,
Of het vervloecte hout op Golgotha gesticht,
Of over uwen rock tsaem dobbelden en tuyschten:

Ick bent, o Heer, ick bent die u dit heb gedaen, [...]

Negation in Hooft's letters

► Michiel de Ruyter (van Koppen (2018))

- (32) Wy hoorden de lant see ruysen, maer wy **en** sagen **geen**
we heard the land sea rustle, but we NEG saw no
lant.
land.
'We heard te surf of the sea on the land, but we couldn't see
the land.' (Verhoog and Koelmans 1961:Oct, 19 1664)

Negation in Hooft's letters : Literary analysis

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 - ▶ Exceptive clauses

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 - ▶ Topicalization and extraposition
 - ▶ Meaning

Negation in Hooft's letters : Literary analysis

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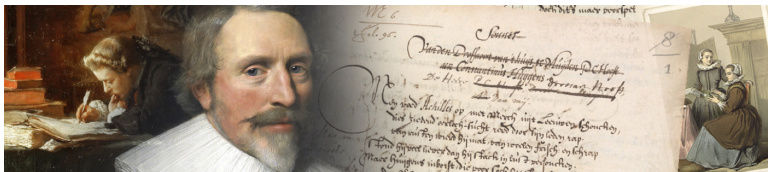
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 - ▶ the meaning dimensions of linguistic patterns in historical language

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

<https://languagedynamics.wp.hum.uu.nl>

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