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J. Lachlan Mackenzie
Formerly of VU Amsterdam, Netherlands

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1. Introduction

It is well understood that the cognitive operation of negation (Kaup & Dudschig 2020) corresponds to a wide range of formulation options in languages (Horn 1989: xiii–xiv). Hengeveld & Mackenzie (2018) have shown how negation is formulated in different languages by means of negative operators situated at various layers of the Interpersonal and Representational Levels of Functional Discourse Grammar (FDG; Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008). Among the layers that can carry a negative operator are those of the Discourse Act and the Communicated Content at the Interpersonal Level, and the Propositional Content, the Episode, the State-of-Affairs, the Configurational Property and the Lexical Property at the Representational Level. In addition, it is shown that the negative operator corresponds to various types of metalinguistic negation at other layers of the Interpersonal Level, while at the Representational Level the options of antonyms and zero quantification are also included. In addition, Hengeveld & Mackenzie exemplify how different strategies can co-exist within one language system.¹ Veselinova (2013), developing work by Croft (1991), has pointed out that, cross-linguistically, negation is frequently formulated with recourse to dedicated negative existentials such as Turkish *yok* ‘be non-existent’. Another option, which has not yet been explored in sufficient depth, is the formulation of the cognitive notion of negation through the use of a ‘privative’, which involves the notion of ‘withoutness’. How to analyse privatives in the framework of FDG will be the subject of this paper.

After introducing privatives as modifiers, Section 2 will move on to our main focus, the predicative use of privatives, where the ‘absentee’ is a property. The construction type in question will be described as involving ‘predicative property privatives’ (PPPs), which will be briefly exemplified and characterized from an FDG perspective. Section 3 will contain a closer examination of their occurrence in the Finnic languages Finnish and Estonian, the Celtic languages Scottish Gaelic and Welsh, and the Romance languages Spanish and Portuguese. Section 4 offers an overview of PPPs in Pama-Nyungan and Arawakan languages, where such constructions have assumed a prominent place in the overall grammar of negation. The article will conclude in Section 5 with some reflections on current research into PPPs.

2. Privatives

Privatives are also referred to in the literature as abessives or caritives. The term ‘abessive’ is particularly associated with the abessive case in Uralic languages, while ‘caritive’ (from Latin *careo* ‘I lack’) is connected to the notion of ‘lack’, typically with regard to constructions like ‘X is without Y’, meaning ‘X lacks Y’. The first and to date only major cross-linguistic survey of

¹ Generally comparable analyses of negation as appearing at different hierarchical layers are also found, in formal-syntactic frameworks, in Zanuttini (1997) and De Clercq (2013).

privatives, for which the authors use the term ‘abessives’, is Stolz et al. (2007).² They treat *without* and its equivalents in other languages as an antonym of *with*, which they take to mark comitatives or instrumentals. Their definition of an abessive (Stolz et al. 2007: 66) runs as follows: “[t]he gram used to encode the relation between two (or three) participants in a situation as being one of absence (= negated accompaniment). One participant – the absentee – fails to be co-present with the other – the accompanee or the user – in a given situation”.

From an FDG perspective, *with* is a grammatical preposition in English that expresses a range of semantic functions, principally the following:

- (a) Companion $(\pi x_i: (f_i: \diamond (f_i)) (x_i))_{Comp}$, as in (1);
- (b) Instrument $(\pi x_i: (f_i: \diamond (f_i)) (x_i))_{Instr}$, as in (2);
- (c) Manner $(\pi f_i: \diamond (f_i))_{Man}$ or $(\pi m_i: (\pi f_i: \diamond (f_i)) (m_i))_L$, as in (3);
- (d) Circumstance $(\pi e_i: ((f_i: [(f_j) (\alpha_i) (\beta_i) \dots] (f_i)) (e_i))_{Circ}$, as in (4).

- (1) *He went to the conference with his wife.*
- (2) *She calculated the results with the latest software.*
- (3) *I accepted their offer with alacrity (= ‘quickly, willingly’).*
- (4) a. *They solved the equation with their teacher helping them.*
b. *They solved the equation with help from their teacher.*

It is questionable whether it is truly necessary to distinguish the four semantic functions Comp(anion), Instr(ument), Man(ner) and Circ(umstance), since the formulation units to which they apply are all distinct: Companion tends to require an animate Individual (as in *his wife*); Instrument tends to require an inanimate Individual, as in *the latest software*;³ as shown above, there are two possible analyses of Manner, as a semantic function that requires a lexical property (as in *alacrity*) or as a semantic category (m(anner)), as proposed by Hengeveld & Mackenzie (2008: 263–267); and Circumstance requires a State-of-Affairs, a higher-order entity that can be expressed as a non-finite clause (as in *their teacher helping them*) or as a lexical nominalization (as in *help from their teacher*). A preferable analysis may therefore involve a single semantic function, say ‘Association’, that can characterize a range of different semantic categories and is expressed as *with*. Any such general semantic function should be understood as representing a network of related senses.

However all this may be, all four uses or functions of *with* can be negated by *without*, as seen in (5) – (8):

- (5) *He went to the conference without his wife.*
- (6) *She calculated the results without the latest software.*
- (7) *I accepted their offer without hesitation.*

² To this should be added the workshop Caritive Constructions in the Languages of the World, organized by the Institute for Linguistic Studies RAS, Saint-Petersburg/Online from 30 November to 2 December 2020; see [Conference-2020 | Caritive](#).

³ As pointed out by a reviewer, Companions and Instruments are only prototypically animate and inanimate respectively; for that reason, no selection restrictions have been invoked here.

- (8) a. *They solved the equation without their teacher helping them.*
 b. *They solved the equation without help from their teacher.*
 c. (Portuguese) *Resolveram a equação sem que o professor os ajudasse.*

These examples run parallel to (1) – (4), with negation of the (sub)functions Companion, Instrument, Manner and Circumstance respectively. Notice that in the Manner (sub)function *without* is typically applied to lexical properties with a negative value, such as *hesitation*, *delay*, *demur*, etc., thereby creating a litotes effect; cf. *?without alacrity*. Certain languages, such as Portuguese in (8c), permit a negative circumstance to be expressed as a finite clause (with the preposition *sem* ‘without’). The existence of negative Circumstances was already noted by Hengeveld (1998: 357), whose example is (9):

- (9) *She left without saying goodbye.*

A similar example from Paraguayan Guaraní (Gerasimov 2020) is (10):

- (10) *O-ho o-japo-’ŷ-re maitei paha.*
 3A-go 3A-make-CAR-REL greeting final
 ‘S/he left without saying goodbye.’

Withoutness may be ‘flagged’ (Haspelmath 2019) in various ways (see also Stolz et al. 2007 for further detail). Here are some of the major techniques:

- (a) by a (grammatical) adposition (this applies to Indo-European languages generally);
 (b) by a negated *with*-adposition, as in Lezgian *gwa-čiz* ‘with-NEG’ or Hixkaryana *-akoro-hra* ‘with-NEG’ (Stolz et al. 2007: 67, 71) – this origin is generally assumed for Latin *sine* ‘without’, Arabic *bi-lā* ‘without’ and Biblical Hebrew *bě-lō* ‘without’ (Modern Hebrew: *bli*);
 (c) by a complex adposition (combining a grammatical and a lexical adposition), e.g. Arabic *bi-duun-i/min duun-i* ‘with-under-ADV/from under-ADV’ (Ryding 2005: 390–391), where *duun* ‘below, under’ has a derived, implicationally negative sense ‘other than’, cf. Persian *bedun(-e)* ‘without’, borrowed as an unanalysed morpheme;
 (d) by an affix, as in Turkish *-sız* in *şemsiye-siz* ‘umbrella-PRIV’, ‘without an umbrella’ or *-mEdEn*, as exemplified in (11):

- (11) *Şemsiye al-madan ev-den çok-ma.*
 umbrella take-PRIV house-ABL leave-NEG
 ‘Don’t leave the house without (taking) an umbrella.’ (Van Schaaik 2020: 362–363)

In Uralic languages the corresponding affix is said to mark the abessive case. In Finnish the affix takes the form *-ttA*, now used chiefly for negative Circumstances, as in *syö-mä-ttä* (eat-INF3-ABE) ‘without eating’. Otherwise Finnish uses the preposition *ilman* ‘without’, as in *ilman auto-a* (without car-PARTV). In Estonian, by contrast, the cognate case-marker *-ta* is used quite freely, as in *auto-ta* (car-ABE), although it may be reinforced by *ilma*, cognate to Finnish *ilman*:

- (12) *Kas (ilma) auto-ta on vöimalik ela-da?* (Internet)
 y/N without car-ABE be.PRS.3S possible live-INF
 ‘Is it possible to live without a car?’

(e) by a converbal negated existential (i.e. ‘with there not being ...’), as again in Turkish (Kornfilt 1997: 228):

- (13) *Ben konser-e Hasan ol-ma-dan git-ti-m.*
 1S concert-DAT Hasan exist-NEG-ABL go-PST-1S
 ‘I went to the concert without Hasan.’

or (f), by a participial form of a caritive verb (i.e. ‘lacking ...’), as in Tundra Nenets (Nikolaeva 2014: 34):

- (14) *pad-s’ada n’enec’h*
 bag-lack.IMPF.PTCP person
 ‘a man without a bag’

While negation is “uncontroversially” (Bond 2023: 484) a universal of language, the grammatical expression of absence through privatives is not. Vinogradov (2021) identifies a lack of dedicated means of expressing privative meaning as an areal feature of Meso-American and South-West USA Indigenous languages. He shows how such languages have developed alternative strategies for encoding the absence of a participant: (a) borrowing the Spanish preposition *sin* ‘without’;⁴ (b) adaptation of certain lexemes to act as privatives with body parts or clothes (but not absentees in general), e.g. Ch’orti’ *koror* ‘without’ [garment] from *kori* ‘take off’; (c) the use of a regular negative construction, notably including negative existentials – “[these] constructions can literally be translated as something akin to ‘John came, there was not Mary.’”, according to Vinogradov (2021: 392).

All the examples cited so far have been of privatives as modifiers. However, they can also be used predicatively (and then typically occur as Focused Ascriptive Subacts). Consider the following examples from English:

- (15) *I was without friends.*
 (16) *I was without power for many hours.*
 (17) *Her failure to appear in court was without sufficient cause.*

Whereas in corresponding sentences such as *I lived without friends*, *I tried to work without power for many hours* and *She failed to appear in court without sufficient cause* the *without*-phrases function as modifiers, in the three example sentences they are predicated of the Subject referent and as such are Subacts of Ascription. Whereas Companion, Instrument and Manner readings are all possible (cf. (15) to (17) respectively), English does not permit

⁴ The Cuvabo language, spoken in Mozambique, lacks a privative marker and analogously uses *sé* ‘without’, borrowed from Portuguese *sem* ‘without’ (Guérois *fc.*: 323).

predicative use of *without*-phrases with a Circumstance reading. Corresponding to *I went away without returning* there is no equivalent of the form shown in (18):

(18) **I was without returning.*

However, there are several languages that do include such a predicative use of privatives in their armoury of formulation options. Here are some preliminary examples; more detail about each will be given below:

Finnish (Vilkuna 2015: 468)

(19) *Tule tai ole tule-ma-tta.*
 come or be.IMP.2s come-INF3-ABE
 ‘Either come or don’t come!’ (lit. ‘Come or be without coming’)

Spanish (personal knowledge and informants)

(20) *El problema está sin resolver(se).*
 DEF problem be.PRS.3s without solve.INF(SE)
 ‘The problem is not solved.’ (lit. The problem is without solving/being solved’)

Scottish Gaelic (personal knowledge)

(21) *Bha e fhathast gun till-eadh.*
 be.PST 3SM still without return-NMLZ
 ‘He still hadn’t returned.’ (lit. ‘He was still without returning.’)

Baure (Arawakan; Michael 2014: 281)

(22) *Mo-yono-wo=ro.*
 PRIV-walk-COP=3SM
 ‘He doesn’t walk.’ (lit. ‘He is without walking.’)

Central Tunebo (Chibchan; Van der Auwera & Krasnoukhova 2020b: 6)

(23) *Asra kamá-bar-kerá.*
 1SG sleep-PRIV-FUT
 ‘I will not sleep.’ (lit. ‘I will be without sleeping.’)

The basic structure of the PPP constructions exemplified in (19) – (23) involves predicating a Configurational Property (f_1)⁵ of an Individual (x_1) or, as in (20), of a State-of-Affairs (e_2). This suggests an analysis of the State-of-Affairs (e_1) underlying the entire construction as in (24a) or, if there is evidence for State-of-Affairs status of the PPP, as in (24b):

⁵ Without a thorough analysis of the five languages exemplified, we cannot be certain that the (f_1)-layer is the correct one to identify here rather than, say, the State-of-Affairs (e_1) layer. In Spanish, PPPs can accept certain operators that are diagnostic for Configurational Properties, such as participant-oriented modality, as for example in (i):

- (24) a. $(e_1: (f_1: [(f_2: \blacklozenge_{VN} (f_2)) \dots]) (f_1))_{Priv} (x_1/e_2)_U (e_1)$
 b. $(e_1: (e_2: (f_1: [(f_2: \blacklozenge_{VN} (f_2)) \dots]) (f_1)) (e_2))_{Priv} (x_1/e_3)_U (e_1)$

The lexical item shown as \blacklozenge_{VN} ('verbal noun') lies somewhere on the nominalization scale (cf., in (19) to (21), the third infinitive in Finnish, the infinitive in Spanish, and the verbal noun in Scottish Gaelic). The proposed semantic function Priv(ative) is assigned to the unit (f_1) whose head is that nominalization and is realized as a case-marker in Finnish, a preposition in Spanish and Scottish Gaelic, a prefix in Baure, and a suffix in Central Tunebo. The (partially) nominalized status of the lexicalized item in (24) is associated with a loss of valency (cf. Mackenzie 1985, 1996) such that the arguments of that item within the Configurational Property (f_1) remain implicit and in interpretation will be supplied by inference. The implications hereof will become apparent in §3 below.

Note that the examples (19) – (23) are all translated into English as negatives. This suggests the question of the extent to which the privative construction has in some languages become the standard or unmarked form of negation. Where this is the case, the construction exemplifies insubordination: the lexical property $(f_2: \blacklozenge_{VN} (f_2))$, where the lexical item \blacklozenge is situated somewhere on the nominalization scale, rises in status to become the principal verb of the clause, while the Privative semantic function concurrently comes to be reanalyzed as a Neg(ative) operator. How this might be formalized in FDG will be sketched in Section 4.1 below.

The possibility of interchangeability of privatives and negatives presupposes a semantic equivalence of 'withoutness' and negation. This question has been examined for English *without* and Greek *khoris* (χωρίς) 'without' by Giannakidou (1998). She shows that these prepositions have 'antiveridical' status (1998: 106), i.e. they reverse the polarity of the

-
- (i) *Los consumidores seguimos sin poder identific-ar*
 DEF.P consumers continue.PRS.1P without ABIL identify-INF
qué empresa-s son socialmente responsables.
 which business-P COP.PRS.3P socially responsible-P
 'We consumers still can't identify which businesses are socially responsible.'

Another indication is the option of applying a qualitative aspect such as inchoative, as again in Spanish (ii):

- (ii) *Es otra de las sala-s que está sin*
 COP.PRS.3S another of DEF.P room-P REL be.PRS.3S without
empez-ar a arregl-ar.
 INCH-INF PREP fix-INF
 'It's another of the rooms that hasn't begun to be fixed.'

On the other hand, we find evidence for (e_1) -status in such examples as (iii), where the PPP contains a marker of relative tense (auxiliary *haber* + past participle), which is diagnostic for States-of-Affairs:

- (iii) *El proyecto está sin haber-se puesto en marcha.*
 DEF project be.3SM without AUX-SE put.PCTP PREP action
 'The project hasn't been launched.'

Whether the PPP is a Configurational Property or a State-of-Affairs at the Representational Level, it will always correspond to an Ascriptive Subact (T_1) at the Interpersonal Level.

proposition ($Op \rightarrow \neg p$) and thus are semantically equivalent to negation. Both negatives and privatives, she argues, also license strong Negative Polarity Items (NPIs), underlined in (25) – (28), all examples inspired by Giannakidou (1998: passim), showing the identical NPI behaviour of *not/n't* and *without*:

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| (25) | <i>She didn't buy <u>anything</u>.</i> | <i>She left without buying <u>anything</u>.</i> |
| (26) | <i>He didn't <u>even</u> look at me.</i> | <i>He left without <u>even</u> looking at me.</i> |
| (27) | <i>I wasn't <u>all that</u> thrilled.</i> | <i>I listened without being <u>all that</u> thrilled.</i> |
| (28) | <i>He didn't <u>give a damn</u>.</i> | <i>He screamed without <u>giving a damn</u>.</i> |

On this basis, then, let us now progress to a consideration of the PPP construction in various languages.

3. The PPP in Finnic, Celtic and Romance languages

3.1. Finnish, Estonian and Skolt Saami

Miestamo (2022: 930) states that in Finnish “non-finite verb forms cannot be combined with negators”. Consider first the following examples of affirmative subordination, with finite and non-finite subordination respectively, but otherwise synonymous:

- | | | | | |
|------|----|---------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| (29) | a. | <i>Kati sano-i,</i> ⁶ | <i>että ajaa</i> | <i>Rauma-lle.</i> |
| | | Kati say-PST.3S | COMP drive.PRS.3SG | Rauma-ALL |
| | b. | <i>Kati sano-i</i> | <i>aja-va-nsa</i> | <i>Rauma-lle.</i> |
| | | Kati say-PST.3S | drive.PTCP1.3SG.POSS | Rauma-ALL |
| | | 'Kati said she was driving to Rauma.' | | |

The same message may be expressed either with a finite complement clause as in (29a) or with a non-finite participle as in (29b), the latter being more literally ‘Kati said her driving to Rauma’. Since negation in Finnish involves a necessarily finite auxiliary verb *ei* ‘fail to’ (with the lexical verb in a ‘connegative’ form), if the subordinate part of the message is negated, then only finite complementation is possible:

- | | | | | | |
|------|----|---|---------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| (30) | a. | <i>Kati sano-i,</i> | <i>ett-ei</i> | <i>aja</i> | <i>Rauma-lle.</i> |
| | | Kati say-PST.3S | COMP-NEG.3S | drive.CONN | Rauma-ALL |
| | b. | <i>*Kati sano-i,</i> | <i>ei</i> | <i>aja-va-nsa</i> | <i>Rauma-lle</i> |
| | | Kati say-PST.3S | NEG | drive.PTCP1.3SG.POSS | Rauma-ALL |
| | | 'Kati said she was not driving to Rauma.' | | | |

The incompatibility of the finite negative verb *ei* and non-finite verb forms opens opportunities for the Finnish PPP construction to play a suppletive role. Miestamo (2022: 931) states that “[s]ome Uralic languages, e.g. Finnish ... , can combine a negative non-finite form with the copula to form a special, pragmatically marked negative construction”. What is

⁶ As in German, finite clauses in Finnish are separated by commas without any correspondence with a prosodic break. See [Finnish Commas Rules - PART 1: Pilkkusäännöt - Uusi kielemme](#).

meant here is a construction where the non-finite form appears in the abessive case, with the meaning ‘without V-ing’. Miestamo (2022: 931) mentions that the construction has “lower frequency” than standard negation with *ei* in declarative main clauses and that its use entails “special semantic and pragmatic effects”. This abessive construction is, we may conclude, far from supplanting the finite negative verb as the basic form of negation in Finnish.

The Finnish PPP construction is found chiefly after one of the verbs *olla* ‘be’, *jäädä* ‘remain’ or *jättää* ‘leave’. (31) shows an example with *olla* ‘be’ from Vilkuna (2015: 467), and (32), found on the internet, shows an example with *jäädä* ‘remain’:

- (31) *Jätteenkuljetus on järjestä-mä-ttä.*
 waste_transport be.PRS.3S organize-INF3-ABE
 ‘Waste transport has not been organized.’ (lit. ... is without organizing.)
- (32) *Uhri jäi tunnista-ma-tta.*
 victim remain.PST.3S identify-INF3-ABE
 ‘The victim remained unidentified.’ (lit. ... remained without identifying.)

Vilkuna comments that “[c]omplex predicates involving the abessive infinitive are too restricted to count as standard negation”. Rather, very much in keeping with Miestamo, she identifies the construction with the abessive third infinitive as a suppletive use to which speakers have recourse where standard negation with a finite negative verb is not possible (Vilkuna 2015: 465), for example in a clause with nominalized *jättää* ‘leave’:

- (33) *Äänestä-mä-ttä jättä-minen on tyhmä-ä.*
 vote-INF3-ABE leave-NMLZ be.PRS.3S stupid-PARTV
 ‘Not voting is stupid’ (lit. ‘Leaving without voting is stupid’)

Similar constructions exist in other Finnic languages, such as Estonian:

- (34) *Rong jäi tule-ma-ta.* (Wikipedia, s.v. Abessive case)
 train remain.PST.3S come-INF-ABE
 ‘The train did not come.’

and Skolt Saami (Miestamo 2022: 931):

- (35) *Di tōt pue’l-kani paa’33i ij puállam.*
 So it burn-V.ABE remain.PST.3S NEG.3S burn.PTCP.PST
 ‘So it remained unburned (lit. remained without burning), it did not burn.’

In (35), the message is expressed twice, first with the PPP, and then with the regular negative construction. According to Miestamo (2002: 931), the use of the PPP signals a stronger than usual expectation of the affirmative: the altar was expected to burn but did not. As observed by a reviewer, PPP formulations appear to be quite generally associated in Finnic with a more emphatic, corrective form of negation (see Krifka 2005 on such expressive meanings that operate in parallel to truth-conditional meanings, of the type handled at FDG’s Interpersonal Level).

3.2. Scottish Gaelic and Welsh

In Scottish Gaelic, negation in finite clauses is signalled by a clause-initial negative particle which also indicates the illocution of the clause (*cha(n)* = negative-declarative; *nach* = negative-interrogative; *na* = negative-imperative (prohibitive)):

- (36) *Cha robh an dorchadas fada air falbh.*
 NEG.DECL be.PST.DEP DEF darkness far away
 ‘The darkness was not far away.’

As mentioned by Mackenzie (2009: 897), a feature of Gaelic is a cosubordinate *agus*-construction, which lacks a finite form of the verb *bith* ‘be’ and which for that reason cannot be negated in the usual manner; here the language has recourse to a privative predicative construction with *gun* ‘without’:

- (37) *Bha sinn a’ ruith dhachaigh agus an dorchadas gun a bhith fada air falbh.*
 be.PST 1P PROG run homewards and DEF darkness without
 INF be far away
 ‘We were rushing home with the darkness not far away.’ (lit. ‘... and the darkness without being far away’)

This PPP construction is also used in finite contexts, expressing negative resultative aspect:

- (38) *Tha an duilgheadas fhathast gun fhuasgl-adh.*
 be.PRS DEF problem still without LEN.solve-NMLZ
 ‘The problem has still not been solved.’
 (39) *Bha an òraid gun èist-eachd.*
 be.PST DEF speech without listen-NMLZ
 ‘The speech went unheard.’

Welsh, also a Celtic language, has an analogous construction (King 2003: 283):

- (40) *Dw i wedi cysgu.*
 AUX.1S I after sleeping
 ‘I have slept.’
 (41) *Dw i heb gysgu.*
 AUX.1S I without LEN.sleeping
 ‘I haven’t slept.’

The restriction of this PPP construction to negative resultative aspect means that here too, privatives have a role to play in the grammatical system but have not supplanted the dominant forms of expressing negation.

3.3. Spanish and Portuguese

With certain verbs, Spanish and Portuguese have the option of using a privative predicative construction. In Spanish, the verbs in question are *estar* ‘be’, *seguir* and *continuar* both ‘continue’, and *llevar* ‘have been’; all four are recognized by Olbertz (1998: 166-187, 299-302) as verbs partaking in periphrastic constructions and can be classified as ‘aspectual auxiliaries’. The focus here is on their occurrence in constructions of the form X + {*estar/seguir/continuar/llevar*} + *sin* + V_{infin}, where *sin* means ‘without’. In Portuguese, the verbs in question are *estar* ‘be’, *ficar* ‘remain, become’, and *seguir* and *continuar* both ‘continue’, occurring in constructions of the form X + {*estar/ficar/seguir/continuar*} + *sem* + V_{infin}, where *sem* means ‘without’.

Examination of Davies’s Spanish (n.d.a) and Portuguese (n.d.b) corpora shows that the lexical verbs, ‘nominalized’ as a single infinitive, tend to be one-place, as in (42), from Spanish:

- (42) *El coche sigue sin funcion-ar.*
 DEF car continue.PRS.3S without function-INF
 ‘The car is still not working.’

Where the verb is two-place, e.g. *hacer* ‘make’ or *identificar* ‘identify’, neither the first nor the second argument is overt, as in (43) and (44), where, in keeping with the above-mentioned valency-reducing nature of elements on the nominalization scale, the passive understanding of the ‘nominalization’ is not explicitly marked:

- (43) *La cama está sin hac-er.*
 DEF bed be.PRS.3S without make-INF
 ‘The bed has not been made.’
- (44) *La víctima hasta el momento está sin identific-ar.*
 DEF victim up_to DEF moment be.PRS.3S without identify-INF
 ‘The victim has so far not been identified.’

However, in Davies (n.d.a), the *se*-passive⁷ is found with certain semantically two-place verbs, namely *resolver* ‘solve’, *conocer* ‘know’, *actualizar* ‘update’, and a few others, as in:

- (45) *El problema continua sin resolver-se.*
 DEF problem continue.PRS.3S without solve-SE
 ‘The problem has still not been solved.’

Table 1 gives an overview of the most frequent Spanish verbs occurring in the construction, marking with an asterisk those verbs that are not found with the *se*-passive; where the verb is not so marked, the percentages indicate the distribution of the presence and absence of the *se*-passive. As is apparent from the table, the forms with *se*-passive are quite marginal.

⁷ The ‘*se*-passive’ is technically an impersonal construction; it is frequently interpreted in context as a passive.

Table 1. Most frequent Spanish verbs occurring in the {*estar/seguir/continuar/llevar*} + *sin* + *V_{inf}* construction

ASPECTUAL AUX + SIN + INFINITIVE	TRANSLATION	ASPECTUAL AUX + SIN + INFINITIVE + SE
<i>está sin identificar</i>	‘has not been identified’	* <i>está sin identificarse</i>
<i>está sin resolver</i> (85%)	‘has not been solved’	<i>está sin resolverse</i> (15%)
<i>está sin confirmar</i> (96%)	‘has not been confirmed’	<i>está sin confirmarse</i> (4%)
<i>está sin diagnosticar</i>	‘has not been diagnosed’	* <i>está sin diagnosticarse</i>
<i>está sin definir</i> (88%)	‘has not been defined’	<i>está sin definirse</i> (12%)
* <i>está sin mover</i>	‘has not been moving’	<i>está sin moverse</i>
<i>está sin pavimentar</i>	‘has not been paved’	* <i>está sin pavimentarse</i>
<i>sigue sin conocer</i> (76%)	‘is still not known’	<i>sigue sin conocerse</i> (24%)
<i>sigue sin resolver</i> (18%)	‘is still not solved’	<i>sigue sin resolverse</i> (82%)
<i>lleva sin actualizar</i> (32%)	‘has not been updated’	<i>lleva sin actualizarse</i> (68%)

As for Davies’s (n.d.b) Portuguese corpus, the commonest lexical verb there is *receber* ‘receive, get’. This verb is generally associated with a two-place frame but in this construction typically occurs without an Undergoer argument:

- (46) *O plantel composto por 11 jogador-es portugues-es está sem receb-er.*⁸
 DEF squad composed by 11 player-P Portuguese-P be.3S.PRS
 without get-INF
 ‘The squad made up of 11 Portuguese players is without getting.’ (... their wages)

Comparison of the corpora shows there is little overlap among the most frequent lexical verbs of the two languages used in the construction, suggesting entrenchment of certain {auxiliary + lexical verb} combinations within each language system. There is, in addition, considerable uncertainty among users I have consulted about the acceptability of many uses of these constructions. In both Romance languages, the PPP construction is available as a grammatical option, but – much as in the cases of the Finnic and Celtic constructions considered in Sections 3.1 and 3.2 – is not showing signs of advancing to a dominant formulation option for negation.

⁸ A reviewer assures me that constructions parallel to (46) are also grammatical in Spanish (and in Catalan).

4. Australian and Arawakan languages

There are two language families for which it has been established that PPPs have developed into core negative constructions to a greater extent, namely in Indigenous Australian languages (principally in the Pama-Nyungan family) and the Arawakan languages of southern Meso- and northern South America. Let us consider these in turn.

4.1. Australian (and especially Pama-Nyungan) languages

Dixon (2002: 77) points out that “[a]lmost all Australian languages have comitative (‘with’) and privative (‘without’) derivational suffixes”; in fact, he finds this (2002: 81) “a particularly characteristic feature of Australian languages”. Constituents marked with the privative suffix can occur in the modifying functions that were identified for English *without* in §2 above (Dixon 2002: 141). However, it can also indicate clausal negation: in Nyungar, he writes (2002: 83), “clausal negation is shown by including the privative suffix *-puru* or *-part* (these are dialect variants) after the verb. Similarly, in the adjacent ... Karlamay, *-paŋ* can be the privative suffix to a noun or the ‘not’ suffix to a verb”. Dixon (2002: 84) specifically mentions the possibility of adding a privative suffix to a nominalized clause as a formulation of negation in Kayardild, e.g. (Evans 1995: 373-374):

- (47) *Ngada* *kurri-n-marri* *dathin-ki* *bijarrba-y*
 1S.NOM see-NMLZ-PRIV that-MLOC⁹ dugong-MLOC
 ‘I didn’t see that dugong,¹⁰ lit. I was without seeing that dugong.’

At the FDG Representational Level, the State-of-Affairs expressed by (48) will appear as follows:

- (48) (e_i: (f_i: [(f_j: kurri-n_{VN} (f_j)) (x_i: -dathin-ki bijarrba-y- (x_i)_U] (f_i))_{Priv} (x_j: -ngada- (x_j)_A] (f_i)) (e_i))

where the semantic function Priv(ative) is expressed as the suffix *-marri*.

Further data and analysis have been adduced in recent years with specific reference to Pama-Nyungan languages, in particular by Phillips (2020, 2022, 2023, 2024) and Koch (2025).

Phillips (2020: 42) describes Djambarrpuyngu *-miriw* as a privative suffix:

- (49) *gapu-miriw*
 water-PRIV
 ‘(be) without water’

The same suffix also occurs in environments like the following (Phillips 2020: 42), where *-miriw* attaches to a nominalized verb form (IV, the fourth inflection):

⁹ The ‘modal locative’ applies to “events that could have happened but didn’t” (Evans 1995: 378).

¹⁰ A dugong is a marine mammal commonly known as a ‘sea cow’.

- (50) *Łuka-nha-miriw ŋayi ŋunhi dharpa-ny.*
eat-IV-PRIV 3S that tree-PROX
‘This tree is not edible.’ (lit. ‘This tree is without eating.’)
- (51) *Manutji ŋorra-nha-miriw ŋunhayi wāŋa.*
eye lie-IV-PRIV DIST place
‘It is impossible to sleep at that place.’ (lit. ‘That place is without eye-lying.’)

Phillips (2020: 42), adopting a particular formal-semantic framework, describes this construction as involving negative quantification over eventualities. This may be a way of understanding the meaning of examples like (50) or (51), but in FDG terms, the strategy involves the Privative semantic function: $(f_1: [(f_2: \blacklozenge_{VN} (f_2)) \dots]) (f_1)_{Priv}$.

Phillips (2020) moves on to discuss the situation in central-Australian Arandic languages (specifically varieties of Arrernte and Kaytetye), where we find a negative marker *-tye(a)kenye*, which is composed, at least diachronically, of a nominalizer *-tye* and a ‘nominal negator’ (i.e. a privative) *-kenye*, which can separated, as in (52), where it occurs in modifying function (Phillips 2020: 43):

- (52) *angk-err-etye-arlke-akenhe* (Arrernte)
speak-REC-NMLZ-also-PRIV
‘also without speaking to each other’

However, the same morpheme (the form is clearly variable) functions – at least once – as a sentential negator in (53):

- (53) *angk-etye-akenhe-kwenye*
speak-NMLZ-PRIV-PRIV
‘(She was) not not talking (in the sense that she was talking a lot).’

Phillips (2020: 43) indeed regards *-tyekenye* as Arrernte’s “primary means of sentential negation”, arguing as follows (2020: 44):

the distributional differences between privatives ... and sentential negators is simply due to differences in the types of sets over which they quantify. Canonical uses of the privative ... quantify over the domain of properties of individuals ... “[E]xpanded” uses of the privative, as with ... Djambarrpuyŋu *-miriw*, quantify over properties of events. Finally, sentential negators (including Arrernte *-tyekenhe*) can be thought of as quantifying over propositions.

Interpreting these findings in FDG, we would deny that the negative operators ‘quantify’ but otherwise the progression suggested by Phillips can be translated into a diachronic scenario, as follows:

- (54) $(x_1: (f_1: \blacklozenge_N (f_1)) (x_1))_{Priv} > (f_1: [(f_2: \blacklozenge_{VN} (f_2)) \dots] (f_1))_{Priv}$
 \downarrow
 $(Neg\ e_1: (f_1: \blacklozenge_V (f_1)) (e_1)) > (Neg\ p_1: (ep_1: [\dots (f_1: \blacklozenge_V (f_1)) \dots]) (ep_1)) (p_1))$

The Privative semantic function initially is assigned to Individuals with a nominal head (\diamond_N). Then it comes to be assigned to Configurational Properties with (partially) nominalized heads (\diamond_{VN}). The Privative comes to be understood as standard negation of the verb (\diamond_V), as in (55), from Phillips (2020: 44):

- (55) *Kweye, the ng-enhe aw-etyekenhe.*
 oops 1s.ERG 2s-ACC hear-NEG
 ‘Sorry, I didn’t hear you.’

Phillips (2023: 420) expresses this as follows: “diachronically, Mparntwe Arrernte negation has likely emerged out of a complex morphosyntactic process of deriving a nominal predicate from verbs and predicating the absence of a relation between the subject and the described property”. That said, not at all Pama-Nyungan languages have pursued this course. Phillips (2023: 421) concedes that “there is a significant amount of variation in the functional distribution of [privative] markers: from highly restrictive and unproductive, to the basic marker of non-possession relations, to an alternative (or even primary) strategy for predicative, propositional or imperative negation”, but observes “uses of privative marking” that “appear to be expanding outside the canonical domain of this category”.

4.2. Arawakan languages

Among the Arawakan languages, the situation is again very varied but there is evidence of partial or complete development of privatives into standard negation, at least for a while in the past. Michael (2014) gives a typological overview of negation in 27 Arawakan languages, which show great diversity in this respect. The Proto-Arawakan privative **ma-* prefix has reflexes in 20 Arawakan languages. The grammatical development that Michael sketches is one from privative stative predications with nouns (i.e. ‘be without N’) to privative stative predications from nominalized or stativized verbs (‘be without [V-ing]_N’), through to standard negation, essentially in accordance with (55) above. In some Arawakan languages privative predications are restricted to (certain) complement clauses, or to prohibitions, or to habitual or permanent SoAs; that is, in those languages it is one formulation option among others.

Thus in Baure (an Arawakan language of Bolivia), we see the privative prefix *mo-* in (56) and (57) (from Danielsen 2007: 163):

- (56) *moes* ‘blind’ < *mo-kis* ‘PRIV-eye’
 (57) *moeron* ‘orphan(ed)’ < *mo-iron* ‘PRIV-parent’

The Baure language also has a PPP construction, which is favoured in litotes:

- (58) *Nka mo-sompoeko-no* (Danielsen 2007: 345)
 PROH PRIV-listen-PTCP.NMLZ
 ‘Don’t be a without-listening one, i.e. don’t be stubborn.’

There is some evidence of *mo-* extending to become a general negativizer:

- (59) *ri=mo-ki'in=ro noi y San Antonia-ye.* (Danielsen 2007: 188)
 3SF=PRIV-want=3SM there S.A.-LOC
 'She doesn't want him there in San Antonio.'

In Lokono, a language of French Guiana, there are two strategies for negation: the particle *kho(ro)* is used for "symmetric negation" (in the sense of Miestamo 2005), i.e. it is simply omitted in the affirmative counterpart, while the privative prefix *ma-* (cf. Baure *mo-*) "has developed functions as a negative operator" according to Patte (2011: 1). Rybka & Michael (2019) argue that this was the form of standard negation in the eighteenth century. The following data represent the current language:

- (60) *Ma-mana dayadoalan.* (Patte 2001: 8)
 PRIV-cutting_edge my.knife
 'My knife is blunt.' (lit. "my knife is without a cutting edge.")

- (61) *M-aithi-n d-a no.* (Patte 2001: 11)
 PRIV-know-INF 1S.A-DUM 3SF.U
 'I don't know.' (lit. "I am without knowing it.")

(61), which displays its privative origins, exists alongside the symmetric negation construction shown in (62):

- (62) *D-aitha kho no.* (Patte 2001: 11)
 1S.A-know NEG 3SF.U
 'I don't know.' (lit. "I know not it.")

The following example again shows litotes, i.e. a double occurrence of negation interpreted as an emphatic affirmative:

- (63) *Ma-seme-tho khoro kokorhiti wa-dukha.* (Patte 2001: 13)
 PRIV-tasty-NMLZ.F NEG maripa 1P.A-see
 'We saw delicious maripa fruit.' (lit. "We did not see maripa fruit without tastiness.")

In Garífuna (spoken in Belize, Honduras and Guatemala) symmetric negation has the *m-* prefix on the verb (from the Proto-Arawakan privative prefix *ma-*), which appears in a connegative stem (glossed :N); the data are from Munro & Gallagher (2014: 17). Compare affirmative (64) with negative (65):

- (64) *Áfara n-umu-ti.*
 hit:B 1S-TR-3M
 'I hit him.' (with a B-stem)
- (65) *M-áfaru n-umu-ti.*
 NEG-hit:N 1S-TR-3M
 'I didn't hit him.' (with an N-stem)

Where the verb cannot accept an N-stem, the negative existential *úwa* ‘there isn’t’ is used. The negative copula *máma*, possibly (or possibly not, it’s unsettled) from Proto-Arawakan **ma-*, is also used in negative clefts:

- (66) *Máma Gatsby éigi ba-nu barúru.* (Munro & Gallagher 2014: 46)
 NEG Gatsby eat.PST AUX-3SF plantain
 ‘It wasn’t Gatsby who ate the plantain.’

In Tariana (spoken in Brazil), a prefixed verb is negated by the circumfix *ma- ... -kade*, with *ma-* replacing the prefix of the affirmative form; a non-prefixed verb is negated by *-kade* alone (Aikhenvald 2014: 86):

- (67) *Hema ipe ma-hña-kade-ka.*
 tapir INDF.meat NEG-eat-NEG-REC PST.VIS
 ‘(I) have not eaten tapir meat.’

The original privative sense of *ma-* is visible in forms such as those in (68) and (69):

- (68) *ma-sa-nirite* (Aikhenvald 2014: 96)
 NEG-spouse-M.ANIM
 ‘an unmarried woman’ (lit. “one without a male spouse”)
- (69) *itfiri ma-inu* (Aikhenvald 2014: 97)
 game NEG-kill
 ‘the one who does not kill game’ (lit. “the one without killing game”)

5. Conclusions

We can conclude from this brief overview of current research into predicative property privative (PPP) constructions that while they are absent from many languages, they are found in certain European, Australian and Central and South-American languages. Where they do occur, they typically have one or more special functions within the inventories of negative constructions that are available in the languages in question: (a) they may have a suppletive function, e.g. allowing negation of non-finite clauses; (b) there may be language-specific lexical preferences, restrictions and/or collocations that determine which (nominalized) verbs can accept the PPP construction; (c) aspectual effects are possible, for example being associated with stativity or with resultative meanings (i.e. ‘not yet’); and (d) various subtle, and currently ill-described pragmatic effects may be involved. Whereas, in the European languages we have considered, these special functions reflect PPP’s relatively marginal status within the negative repertoire, in the two other areas there is evidence, still being investigated by the language specialists, for some degree of a development of PPP constructions towards standard negation, in an instance of secondary grammaticalization: this was seen in various Australian, and especially Pama-Nyungan languages, and in several

representatives of the Arawakan language family with regard to the Proto-Arawakan privative prefix **ma-*.¹¹

Because of the identical semantic impact of privatives and negatives (Giannakidou 1998; see Section 2 above), distinguishing PPP in an individual language may be tricky, so that there may be more cases than have been considered here.¹² The following example, from the Cariban language Apalai spoken in Brazil (from Koehn & Koehn 1986: 64, cited in Miestamo & Van der Auwera 2011: 74), is a case in point:

- (70) *Isapokara* *on-ere-pyra* *a-ken*.
 jakuruaru-lizard 3-see-NEG 1-be.IMMPST
 ‘I did not see a jakuruaru lizard.’

This construction is described as representing standard negation in Apalai, with the negative marker attaching to the lexical verb that loses its finiteness such that the copula carries the finite verbal categories (subject) person and tense (immediate past). However, this construction could as easily be analyzed as a PPP construction, lit. ‘I was without seeing a jakuruaru lizard’. After all, the meaning ‘without’ with a clausal complement is also available in Apalai (Koehn & Koehn 1986: 43):

- (71) *Mame t-okare* *pyra* *t-osar-y* *t-akoh-se*.
 Then NONF¹³-tell NEG 3.REFL-place-POSS PST-cut-COMPL
 ‘Then, without telling anyone, he made a clearing.’

Similarly, Singerman (2018) treats the suffix *-’om* in Tuparí (a Tupian language of North-West Brazil) as involving obligatory nominalization of verbs, as in (72):

- (72) *W-arop* *ko-ro-’om* *’on*.
 1s-food eat-NMLZ-NEG 1s
 ‘I haven’t eaten my food.’

where, given the nominalization of the verb *ko-* ‘eat’, analysis as a privative is again possible, lit. ‘I am without eating my food’.

Van der Auwera & Krasnoukhova (2020a: 109) describe the diachrony of the development of privative-marked nominalizations into negative main clauses as being “[c]urrently under discussion”. Similarly, with a focus on Uralic languages, Wagner-Nagy has

¹¹ An additional instance of a preposition meaning ‘without’ developing into a clausal negation marker is considered by Pat-El (2013), namely Phoenician *bl*. The general Semitic negative particle **lā* is unusually absent from Phoenician and *bl* is used as a general negative particle for finite indicative verbs alongside its use as a privative.

¹² Phillips (2023: 420, fn. 20) mentions that the suffix *-t/* in the extinct Australian language Ngandi, described by Heath (1978) as a ‘non-existence’ marker, might be a privative marker and points to the possibility that negative existentials, mentioned in the Introduction above, are a “special case of privatives”.

¹³ The morpheme *t-* either marks non-finiteness or functions as an adjectivalizer; Koehn & Koehn apply the latter gloss, but that seems incorrect in this context. In the last word of the example, *t-akoh-se*, it functions as part of a circumfix indicating ‘past completive’.

written (2011: 21) that “the caritive and abessive formatives deserve to be the subjects of further investigation. This holds especially true for participles with the abessive that in several languages are even capable of expressing sentence negation”. The current paper is intended as a contribution to that discussion, from the perspective of FDG.

Abbreviations

:B	B-stem	N	noun
:N	N-stem	NEG	negative
1	first person	NMLZ	nominalization
2	second person	NOM	nominative
3	third person	NONF	non-finite
A	actor	P	plural
ABE	abessive	PARTV	partitive
ABIL	abilitative (modality)	POSS	possessive
ABL	ablative	PREP	preposition
ACC	accusative	PRIV	privative
ADV	adverb	PROG	progressive (aspect)
ALL	allative	PROH	prohibitive
ANIM	animate	PROX	proximal
AUX	auxiliary	PRS	present (tense)
CAR	caritive	PST	past (tense)
COMP	complementizer	PTCP	participle
COMPL	completive	PTCP1	first participle
CONN	connegative	REC	recipient
COP	copula	RECPST	recent past (tense)
DAT	dative	REFL	reflexive
DECL	declarative	REL	relative
DEF	definite	S	singular
DEP	dependent form	SE	se-passive
DIST	distal	TR	transitive
DUM	dummy	U	undergoer
ERG	ergative	V	verb
F	feminine	VIS	visual (evidence)
FUT	future (tense)	VN	verbal noun
IMMPST	immediate past (tense)	Y/N	yes-no interrogative
IMP	imperative		
IMPF	imperfect		
INCH	inchoative (aspect)		
INDF	indefinite		
INF	infinitive		
INF3	third infinitive		
LEN	lenition		
LOC	locative		
M	masculine		
MLOC	modal locative		

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