

## HOW MUCH SYNTAX IS THERE IN METALINGUISTIC NEGATION?

### Abstract:

This paper explores the syntax of unambiguous metalinguistic negation (MN) markers in European Portuguese (EP) with the main goal of demonstrating the syntactic import of MN. Taking the EP facts as a means to gain insight into the grammatical encoding of MN in natural language, the paper shows that unambiguous MN markers split into two types: *peripheral* and *internal*. This split is confirmed by their contrasting behavior with respect to different syntactic tests, e.g.: availability in isolation and nominal fragments; ability to take scope over negation and emphatic/contrastive high constituents; compatibility with VP Ellipsis. Peripheral MN markers respond positively to all the tests, whereas internal ones respond negatively. These facts are derived from a syntactic analysis where CP plays a central and unifying role. It is proposed that while the cross-linguistically pervasive peripheral MN markers directly merge into Spec,CP, the more unusual sentence-internal MN markers are rooted in the TP domain and reach Spec,CP by movement. The centrality of the CP field is motivated by elaborating on Farkas and Bruce's (2010) model of polarity features. Under the hypothesis that besides the relative polarity features [*same*] and [*reverse*], there is a feature [*objection*] that singles out MN declaratives among *responding assertions*, this is taken to be the edge feature that drives unambiguous MN markers into the CP space.

### Key words:

syntax of metalinguistic negation (MN); unambiguous MN markers; bipartite typology of MN markers; external/internal merge in Spec,CP; polarity features in responding assertions; European Portuguese

### 1. Introduction

Metalinguistic negation (MN) has been commonly handled in the literature as a pragmatic matter (cf. Horn 1985, 1989; Carston 1998, 1999, among others; a thorough state of the art overview is provided by Pitts 2009, 2011). The main goal of this paper is to demonstrate that metalinguistic negation is, non-trivially, a syntactic matter as well, and challenging enough to be worth its place on the syntactic agenda. I will pursue this goal by isolating unambiguous MN markers as the topic of research, that is to say, those words or expressions in natural language that can express only metalinguistic negation, because they sit outside the realm of negative items and ordinary negation. The focus here will be on them, because unambiguous MN markers illuminate the syntactic dimension of metalinguistic negation.

Horn (1989) defines metalinguistic negation as “a device for objecting to a previous utterance on any grounds whatever”, which “focuses, not on the truth or falsity of a proposition, but on the assertability of an utterance” (cf. Horn 1989:363). Sentences (1a-c) illustrate the metalinguistic use of negation. Because the same negative marker (i.e. *not*) expresses ordinary negation and metalinguistic negation, it is the rectification part of the sentences in (1) that undoes the interpretative ambiguity. As shown by (1a-d), metalinguistic negation, in contrast to negation proper, does not necessarily entail the untruth of the corresponding affirmative proposition (although it may).<sup>1</sup> All the examples are taken from Horn (1989: 362ff.)

- (1) a. A: Some men are chauvinists.  
B Some men aren't chauvinists – all men are chauvinists.

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<sup>1</sup> Sentence (i) below makes clear in addition that a sentence expressing metalinguistic negation does not strictly require being anchored to a previous utterance, as far as it is denial of a common ground presupposition.

(i) It's not a car, it's a Volkswagen. (VW commercial and advertisement, cited by Horn 1989)

- b. A: He is meeting a woman this evening.  
 B: No, he's not (meeting a woman this evening) – he's meeting his wife!  
 c. A: Were you a little worried?  
 B: I wasn't a little worried, my friend; I was worried sick.

Generally in the world's languages the standard predicative negation marker may express metalinguistic negation as well, as illustrated by the sentences in (1), where *not* allows a metalinguistic interpretation. Examples like (1) appear to imply that there is nothing specifically syntactic in metalinguistic negation as the sentences display the usual syntax of ordinary negation. But languages also express metalinguistic negation through certain sentence-peripheral idiomatic expressions, which lexically vary from language to language but nonetheless display a similar syntax across languages (cf. Horn 1989: 402, 566 (footnote 24)). Sentences (2) and (3) exemplify these sentence-peripheral MN markers in English and European Portuguese, respectively. As far as I am aware of, only Drozd (2001) dealt with such sentences as a syntactic issue, attributing the structure in (4) both to the adult English sentence “Like hell Al and Hilary are married” and the child English sentence “No mommy doing”.

- (2) a. Al and Hilary are married *my eye*. (cf. Drozd 2001:55)  
 b. *Like hell* Al and Hilary are married
- (3) a. Eles são casados *uma ova*.  
 they are married a fish's-roe  
 b. *Uma ova* é que são casados.  
 c a fish's-roe is that are married  
 ‘They are married my eye.’
- (4) a. [<sub>CP</sub> *Like hell* [<sub>IP</sub> *Al and Hilary are married* ] ] (cf. Drozd 2001:72)  
 b. [<sub>CP</sub> *No* [<sub>IP</sub> *Mommy doing* ] ]

Sentence-peripheral idiomatic expressions such as *like hell*, *my eye*, etc. appear to be cross-linguistically available as a means to express metalinguistic negation. European Portuguese (EP) exhibits a less trivial trait as it displays not only such sentence-peripheral MN markers (e.g., *uma ova* ‘a fish's roe’, in (3) above) but also unambiguous MN markers that are placed sentence-internally (like *lá*, originated from the deictic locative ‘there’, and *agora*, originated from the temporal adverb ‘now’).<sup>2</sup> Example (5) below, to be compared to Horn's example in (1c) above, shows this particular syntactic pattern of metalinguistic negation.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> On the diachronic change that turned the deictic locatives *lá* ‘there’, *cá* ‘here’, and the temporal adverb *agora* ‘now’ into MN markers, see Martins (forthcoming). The words *lá/cá*, *agora* preserve in contemporary European Portuguese their basic locative or temporal value at the same time that they can act as MN markers. When playing such role, they are totally devoid of locative or temporal meaning. So, throughout the paper, the glosses of the EP data will not show English equivalents for *lá* and *agora*. Exemplification of the EP facts will be restricted to these two MN markers plus the idiomatic expression *uma ova* (‘a fish's roe’).

<sup>3</sup> The MN sentences discussed in this paper feature sentential metalinguistic negation expressed by unambiguous MN markers and differ from the constituent/metalinguistic negation structures discussed by McCawley (1993) for English (see (i) below), and by Giannakidou (1998) /Giannakidou and Stravou (2009) for Greek (see (ii) below):

- (i) a. John drank not coffee but tea. (McCawley 1993:190)  
 b. John drank tea, not coffee.
- (ii) a. Grafume oxi “νερó”, ala “νερó”. (Giannakidou 1998:51)

- (5) A: Estás um pouco preocupado?  
 are-2SG a little worried  
 ‘Are you a little worried?’  
 B: Estou *lá/ agora* um pouco preocupado, estou morto de preocupação.  
 am MN-marker a little worried am dead of worry  
 ‘I’m not a little worried, I am worried sick.’

The EP facts clearly reveal that what has been mainly thought of as a purely discourse/pragmatic construct – Horn (1989) states that no language owns a specific “morpheme” to express metalinguistic negation – is after all a syntactic issue as well. Taking the EP facts not as an idiosyncrasy of this particular language but as a means to gain insight into the grammatical encoding of metalinguistic negation in natural language, it will be shown in this paper that: (i) unambiguous MN markers are part of natural language, (ii) the split between ‘internal’ and ‘peripheral’ MN markers is a matter of syntax, (iii) internal MN markers undergo overt movement (more accurately, internal merge) into Spec,CP (and concomitantly there is V-to-C movement), (iv) peripheral MN markers are directly merged in CP (more accurately, undergo external merge into Spec,CP), (v) the role played by the CP domain in both cases constitutes the unifying link between the two types of structures, (vi) cluster formation (which puts together two MN markers of different types) lends support to the proposed syntactic analysis, (vii) the concept of *responding assertion* (Farkas and Bruce 2010) is relevant to understand the role of the CP field in the syntax of MN structures, (viii) questions of cross-linguistic variation related to but not limited to MN structures can be identified as a result of the present study and constitute topics for future research.

The paper is organized in seven sections. In section 2 the classical tests devised by Horn (1989) to identify metalinguistic negation are used as proof that the European Portuguese MN markers discussed throughout the paper are in fact exclusive markers of metalinguistic negation. In section 3 the empirical basis for a bipartite typology of unambiguous MN markers will be set up, making clear that the split is solidly established and does not strictly depend on superficial word order. ‘Peripheral’ MN markers and ‘internal’ MN markers differ

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- write-1PL not *whater* but *water*  
 b. \*Grafume oxi “*νερó*”.  
 write-1PL not *whater*

The English and Greek structures illustrated above juxtapose two contrastive propositions, obligatorily requiring the second term for contrast, which is typically introduced by *but/ala*. These structures have been syntactically analyzed as akin to coordinate structures featuring two parallel S/TP constituents and involving ellipsis. The EP sentences with unambiguous MN markers, on the other hand, do not depend on such inter-propositional contrastive relation. Instead, a rectifying continuation is possible but not required and, significantly, it cannot be introduced by *mas* ‘but’:

- (iii) A: Estás preocupado.  
 are-2SG worried  
 ‘You are worried’  
 B: a. Estou *lá/ agora* preocupado.  
 am MN-marker worried  
 b. Estou *lá/ agora* preocupado, (\*mas) estou bem.  
 am MN-marker worried (\*but) am well  
 c. \*Estou *lá/ agora* preocupado, mas bem.  
 am MN-marker worried but well  
 ‘I’m not worried(, I’m fine)’.

Moreover, the European Portuguese MN markers under discussion exclusively express metalinguistic negation, while *not* and *oxi* can also express standard negation (see Giannakidou (1998: 50-51, 158, 247) on *oxi* outside structures like (ii) above). As McCawley (1993:191) clearly states, sentences (ia-b) “can be used metalinguistically, but there is nothing inherently metalinguistic about any of them”.

from each other with respect to a series of indicators, namely, (i) availability in isolation and nominal fragments, (ii) ability to deny a negative proposition, (iii) compatibility with emphatic/contrastive high constituents, (iv) compatibility with coordinate structures featuring a sequence of events, (v) compatibility with idiomatic sentences, (vi) compatibility with VP Ellipsis. Section 4 puts forth a unifying analysis for the two types of MN markers that, at the same time, can derive all the syntactic contrasts between them described in section 3. Linking together the two types of structures that unambiguously encode metalinguistic negation is the fact that MN markers merge into Spec,CP. But while the peripheral ones directly merge there (external merge), the internal ones have Spec,TP as its initial merge position and reach Spec,CP by movement (internal merge). This analysis will be shown to smoothly derive all the facts described in section 3. Section 5 builds a further argument to support the proposed analysis based on the observation of clusters of MN markers. Section 6 motivates the centrality of the CP field in the type of MN structures under discussion by elaborating on Farkas and Bruce's (2010) model of polarity features in *responding assertions*. Section 7 concludes the paper by summarizing the results attained and pinpoints the issues singled out as topics for future cross-linguistic comparative research.

## 2. Unambiguous metalinguistic negation (MN) markers

Standard tests devised by Horn (1989) to identify metalinguistic negation are listed in (6) below, from (i) to (iii). To these I added (iv). Tests (i) to (iii) are illustrated in (7) to (9) with examples taken from Horn (1989: 368ff.). Sentence (7a) shows that the polarity-sensitive words *pretty*, *somewhat*, *rather* are incompatible with ordinary negation. Lack of an appropriate discourse context in (7a) blocks the interpretation of negation as metalinguistic negation; thus (7a) is ruled out, in contrast with (7b), that displays metalinguistic negation. Example (8) shows that metalinguistic negation, in sharp contrast to ordinary negation, does not license negative polarity items (NPIs); it allows instead positive polarity items (PPIs), as illustrated in (9).<sup>4</sup>

(6) Standard tests for MN:

- (i) MN does not license negative polarity items (NPIs)
- (ii) MN is compatible with (strong) positive polarity items (PPIs)
- (iii) MN requires licensing by discourse/pragmatic context
- (iv) MN is excluded from subordinate clauses

(7) a. ??He isn't {pretty/somewhat/rather} tall.  
b. A: He is {pretty/somewhat/rather} tall.  
B: He isn't {pretty/somewhat/rather} tall – he's humongous.  
(Example taken from Horn 1989:401)

(8) A: Chris managed to solve some problems.

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<sup>4</sup> For a thorough critical review of the full set of diagnosis tests for metalinguistic negation discussed by Horn (1989), see Pitts (2011). Here I will use only those tests that can be applied to the type of linguistic data I will be dealing with. As will be shown in the current section, Horn's tests produce crystal clear results when applied to sentences displaying unambiguous MN markers. This suggests that apparent problems with the workings of Horn's tests (as discussed by Pitts 2011) may boil down to difficulties in intuitively teasing apart Descriptive Negation and Metalinguistic Negation when negation is expressed by *not* and similar negators. In this paper, I rather opt to include the results of Horn's tests as part of the definition of metalinguistic negation. This option goes in the direction of restricting the concept of metalinguistics negation to include only those data that conform to Horn's tests, in particular with respect to PPI/NPI licensing. But this is somehow orthogonal to my present concerns.

- B: a. Chris didn't manage to solve *any* problems.  
b. Chris didn't manage to solve {some/\**any* problems} – he solved them easily.  
(Example adapted from Horn 1989:368)

- (9) A: You still love me.  
B: Like hell I {*still* love you / \*love you anymore}.  
(Example taken from Horn 1989:402)

On the basis of the tests application, different items that do not express ordinary negation can be identified as MN markers, in English and Portuguese:

ENGLISH: *like hell, the hell, my eye, no way, nonsense*, etc.

EUROPEAN PORTUGUESE: *lá* (literally, 'there'), *agora* (literally, 'now'), *uma ova* (literally, 'a fish's roe'), etc.

We will now concentrate on showing empirical evidence to demonstrate this point with respect to European Portuguese. In order to keep exemplification to a reasonable length, we will restrict the examples to sentences with the MN markers *lá* and *agora*. The same results would be obtained by including *uma ova* 'a fish's roe' among the elements tested. The tests provide us with unequivocal confirmation that the relevant EP words exclusively signal metalinguistic negation, not ordinary negation.<sup>5</sup>

Take the discourse-context test, requiring metalinguistic negation to be denial of (the assertability of) an earlier utterance (or denial of a common ground presupposition). Uttered out of the blue, to initiate a conversation, the sentences in (10) and (11) are descriptions of a state of affairs and the negative marker in them can only encode ordinary negation. As expected and confirmed by the grammaticality contrast between the (a) and (b) examples in (10)-(11), the unambiguous MN markers *lá* and *agora* are ruled out in such sentences.

- (10) a. Ah, *não* trouxe a carteira. Pagas-me o café?  
ah not brought-1SG the wallet pay-2SG-me-DAT the coffee  
b. \*Ah, trouxe *lá/agora* a carteira. Pagas-me o café?  
ah brought-1SG MN-marker the wallet pay-2SG-me-DAT the coffee  
'Ah, I forgot my wallet. Will you pay for my coffee?'

- (11) a. Hoje *não* estás com boa cara. O que se passa?  
today not are-2SG with good face. the what is-going-on  
b. \*Hoje estás *lá/agora* com boa cara. O que se passa?  
today are-2SG MN-marker with good face. the what is-going-on  
'You don't look good today. What happened?'

The licensing of positive polarity items constitutes a robust test to set apart ordinary negation and metalinguistic negation. While the former excludes strong PPIs, the latter is fully compatible with them. The examples in (12) and (13) show that the idiomatic expressions *do diabo* (literally, 'of the devil') and *e peras* (literally, 'and pears') are strong PPIs in European Portuguese, so they occur in affirmative declaratives (see the examples (a))

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<sup>5</sup> The European Portuguese MN markers that will be the focus of this paper are usually ignored in descriptive grammars on the Portuguese language presumably because the negative sentences they construct are considered non standard or exclusive of spoken language. An exception is Matos (2003: 771, 774, 789) who briefly refers to *lá* (literally, 'there') and *cá* (literally, 'here') as negative markers but take them to ("marginally") express ordinary sentential negation.

but are excluded from negative and interrogative sentences (see the (b) to (c) examples).<sup>6</sup> Crucially, they are perfectly fine in sentences where denial is expressed by *lá* and *agora*, which supports the view that we are dealing here with unambiguous MN markers (see the (d) examples).

- (12) a. Ele é um nadador e peras.  
 he is a swimmer and pears  
 ‘He is a great swimmer.’  
 b. \*Ele não é uma nadador e peras. (out-of-the-blue declarative)<sup>7</sup>  
 he not is a swimmer and pears  
 ‘He isn’t a great swimmer.’  
 c. \*Ele é um nadador e peras?  
 he is a swimmer and pears  
 ‘Is he a great swimmer?’  
 d. Ele é *lá/agora* um nadador e peras. (as a reply to (12a))  
 he is MN-marker a swimmer and pears  
 ‘He isn’t a great swimmer.’
- (13) a. Tiveste uma sorte do diabo.  
 had-2SG a good-luck of-the devil  
 ‘So lucky you were!’  
 b. \*Não tiveste uma sorte do diabo. (out-of-the-blue declarative)  
 not had-2SG a good-luck of-the devil  
 ‘You were not that lucky.’  
 c. \*Tiveste uma sorte do diabo?  
 had-2SG a good-luck of-the devil  
 ‘Were you really lucky?’  
 d. Tive *lá/agora* uma sorte do diabo. (as a reply to (13a))  
 had-1SG MN-marker a good-luck of-the devil  
 ‘I wasn’t so lucky.’

Sentences (14) to (16) further confirm that *lá* and *agora* are MN markers, by revealing their inability to license NPIs like *ninguém* (‘nobody’), *nem morta* (literally, ‘not even dead’) and *de todo* (‘at all’), which are regularly licensed under ordinary negation expressed by *não* ‘not’ (compare the (B-a) examples with the (B-b) examples).

- (14) A: Tu é que conheces uma pessoa que sabe arranjar isto.  
 you is that know-2SG a person that knows fix-INFIN this  
 ‘You do know someone that can fix this.’  
 B: a. Eu não conheço *ninguém* que saiba arranjar isso.  
 I not know-1SG nobody that knows fix-INFIN that  
 b. Eu conheço *lá/agora* alguém/\**ninguém* que saiba arranjar isso.  
 I know-1SG MN-marker somebody/\*nobody that knows fix that

<sup>6</sup> A reviewer notes that a rough equivalent of EP *e peras* would perhaps be the English exclamative *and how*, and asks whether a negative interrogative would make *e peras* possible (in spite of its non occurrence in standard interrogatives and under negation). *E peras* is indeed allowed in negative interrogatives that display the implied illocutionary force of positive assertions.

<sup>7</sup> Sentences (12b) and (13b) could be interpreted as instances of metalinguistic negation only if they were associated with a continuation/rectification, which is not a necessary condition for the availability of sentences (12d) and (13d), since the words *lá* and *agora* signal only metalinguistic negation.

‘I don’t know anyone who can fix that.’

- (15) A: Hoje vais sair comigo.  
today go-2SG go-out with-me  
‘Today we are going out together.’
- B: a. Eu não saio contigo nem morta.  
I not go-out-1SG with-you not-even dead  
b. \*Eu saio lá/agora contigo nem morta.  
I go-out-1SG MN-marker with-you not-even dead  
‘No way I will go out with you.’
- (16) A: Eu sei que tu gostas de marisco.  
I know-1SG that you like-2SG of seafood  
B: a. Eu não gosto de marisco de todo.  
I not like-1SG of seafood at all  
b. \*Eu gosto lá/agora de marisco de todo.  
I like-1SG MN-marker of seafood at all  
‘I don’t like seafood at all.’

An additional test enables us to separate metalinguistic negation expressed by unambiguous MN markers like *lá* and *agora* from ordinary negation. The former in contrast to the latter is excluded from subordinate clauses and confined to root domains, as illustrated in (17)<sup>8</sup>

- (17) A: O Pedro disse que vendeu o carro.  
the Pedro said-3SG that sold-3SG the car  
‘Pedro said that he sold the car.’

<sup>8</sup> This test by itself does not single out metalinguistic negation since it is also a property of emphatic negation (see (i) below), which additionally shares with metalinguistic negation the denial nature that imposes licensing by the right type of discourse context. Emphatic negation in contrast to metalinguistic negation, however, licenses NPIs (see (ii) below), thus qualifying as an instance of ordinary negation. I understand here ‘emphatic negation’ as a syntactically marked way to express denial of a previous affirmative statement. In the examples below, there is negative doubling, corresponding to the co-occurrence of a preverbal negative marker and a clause-final negative marker. In European Portuguese, sentential negation is normally expressed by the preverbal negative marker *não* only.

- (i) A: O Pedro disse que vendeu o carro.  
the Pedro said that sold-3SG the car  
‘Pedro said that he sold the car.’
- B: a. O Pedro não disse que vendeu o carro não. [Emphatic negation: neg-doubling]  
the Pedro not said that sold-3SG the car no  
‘Pedro did NOT say that he sold the car.’  
b. \*O Pedro disse que não vendeu o carro não.  
the Pedro said that not sold-3SG the car no  
‘Pedro said that he did NOT sell the car.’
- (ii) A: Ela não gosta de ninguém.  
she not likes of nobody  
‘She doesn’t like anybody.’
- B: Não acredito.  
not believe-1SG  
‘That can’t be true.’
- A: Não gosta de ninguém não. [Emphatic negation licensing the NPI *ninguém* ‘nobody’]  
not likes of nobody no  
‘No, she really does NOT.’

- B: a. O Pedro disse *lá/agora* que vendeu o carro.  
the Pedro said-3SG MN-marker that sold-3SG the car
- b. O Pedro *não* disse que vendeu o carro  
the Pedro not said-3SG that sold-3SG the car  
‘Pedro didn’t say that he sold the car.’
- c. \*O Pedro disse que vendeu *lá/agora* o carro.<sup>9</sup>  
the Pedro said-3SG that sold-3SG MN-marker the car
- d. O Pedro disse que *não* vendeu o carro  
the Pedro said-3SG that not sold-3SG the car  
‘Pedro said that he didn’t sell the car.’

Last but not least, the MN markers *lá* and *agora* occur sentence-internally but they are placed in postverbal position (cf. section 3.1), whereas ordinary sentential negation obligatorily surfaces preverbally in European Portuguese (see (17) above).<sup>10</sup>

### 3. A bipartite typology of MN markers: internal/peripheral MN markers

Unambiguous MN markers split into two groups when we consider their syntactic behavior. Some are sentence-peripheral elements while others are sentence-internal. As appearances may be misleading when word order alone is considered, systematic observation of a series of syntactic indicators is necessary to attain reliable results.

Table 1 gives a sketchy description of the distinct behavior of sentence-internal and sentence-peripheral MN markers. The data that confirm the results summarized in table 1 will be considered in the next subsections. The important fact to retain at this point is that EP *lá* is not some type of disguised sentence-peripheral MN marker. If that was the case, it would not differ from the canonically peripheral *uma ova* ‘a fish’s roe’ in such matters as the ability to take scope over sentential negation, high emphatic adverbs or contrastive foci and full coordinate structures. An apparent sentence-internal MN marker exists in fact in EP. This is the word *agora*, that may surface sentence-internally like *lá* but crucially behaves exactly like *uma ova* ‘a fish’s roe’ with respect to all the tests listed in table 1. Thus linear ordering is not the basis to determine whether a particular MN marker is *internal* or *peripheral* within the bipartite typology. In the ensuing subsection I will clarify the word order data, before I proceed to demonstrate the facts described in table 1 (in sections 3.2 to 3.7).

<sup>9</sup> The sentence is ungrammatical under the intended interpretation. It would be perfectly fine with *lá* and *agora* interpreted as locative and temporal, respectively, ‘there’ and ‘now’.

<sup>10</sup> There is one more test setting sentences displaying unambiguous MN markers apart from sentences displaying regular sentential negation, as the former in contrast to the latter do not allow the formation of tag-questions (see the examples below). I will return to this issue in section 6. I am grateful to Karen De Clercq for calling my attention to the relevance of tag-questions as a test to tease apart MN and ordinary negation.

- (i) a. Ele gosta de marisco, não gosta? (affirmative declarative + tag)  
he likes of seafood not likes  
‘He likes seafood, doesn’t he?’
- b. Ele não gosta de marisco, pois não? (negative declarative + tag)  
he not likes of seafood CONFIRMATIVE-WORD not  
‘He doesn’t like seafood, does he?’
- c. \*Ele gosta *lá/agora* de marisco, pois não? (MN declarative + tag)  
he likes MN-marker of seafood CONFIRMATIVE-WORD not
- d. \*Ele gosta *lá/agora* de marisco, não gosta? (MN declarative + tag)  
he likes MN-marker of seafood not likes



Table 1: Sentence-internal vs. sentence-peripheral MN markers

	internal (e.g., <i>lá</i> )	peripheral (e.g., <i>uma ova</i> , <i>agora</i> )
Availability in isolation & nominal fragments	–	+
Ability to deny a negative proposition	–	+
Compatibility with emphatic & contrastive high constituents	–	+
Compatibility with idiomatic sentences	–	+
Compatibility with coordinate structures featuring a sequence of events	–	+
Compatibility with VP Ellipsis	–	+

### 3.1. Word order patterns

The MN marker *lá* invariably occurs in postverbal position and displays strict adjacency with the verb (see (18)). The MN marker *uma ova* ‘a fish’s roe’ necessarily occurs in sentence-initial or sentence-final position (see (19)), while *agora* appears to pattern inconsistently with respect to word order (see (20)). Typically, it occurs immediately after the verb, like *lá*, but it may also surface in sentence-final position. Moreover, in Northwestern EP dialects it obligatorily occurs in sentence-initial position (Pereira 2010). Thus, with respect to word order, *lá* is consistently sentence-internal, *uma ova* ‘a fish’s roe’ systematically sentence-peripheral and *agora* seems at a first glance to be of a mixed type. Nevertheless, the fact that in all others respects *agora* consistently patterns with *uma ova* ‘a fish’s roe’ and diverges from *lá*, as will be shown at once, undoubtedly indicates its belonging to the sentence-peripheral type.

- (18) A: Ele viveu sempre em Paris. (internal *lá*)  
 he lived always in Paris  
 ‘He has always lived in Paris.’  
 B: a. Ele viveu *lá* sempre em Paris.  
 he lived MN-marker always in Paris  
 b. \*Ele viveu sempre *lá* em Paris. (see footnote 9)  
 he lived always MN-marker in Paris  
 c. \*(*Lá*) ele viveu sempre em Paris (*lá*).  
 MN-marker he lived always in Paris MN-marker  
 ‘Like hell/no way he has always lived in Paris.’
- (19) A: Ele viveu sempre em Paris. (peripheral *uma ova* ‘a fish’s roe’)  
 he lived always in Paris  
 ‘He has always lived in Paris.’  
 B: a. Ele viveu sempre em Paris *uma ova*.  
 he lived always in Paris a fish’s-roe  
 b. *Uma ova* é que ele viveu sempre em Paris.  
 a fish’s-roe is that he lived always in Paris  
 c. \*Ele viveu (*uma ova*) sempre (*uma ova*) em Paris.  
 he lived a fish’s-roe always a fish’s-roe in Paris  
 ‘Like hell/no way he has always lived in Paris.’
- (20) A: Ele viveu sempre em Paris. (peripheral *agora*)  
 he lived always in Paris  
 ‘He has always lived in Paris.’  
 B: a. Ele viveu *agora* sempre em Paris.  
 he lived MN-marker always in Paris

- b. \*Ele viveu sempre *agora* em Paris.  
he lived always MN-marker in Paris
- c. Ele viveu sempre em Paris *agora*.  
he lived always in Paris MN-marker
- d. *Agora* viveu. (Northwestern EP dialects)  
MN-marker lived  
'Like hell, he always lived in Paris.'

### 3.2. Availability in isolation and in nominal fragments

Verb-less fragments block the occurrence of the NN marker *lá* as this element must occur in strict adjacency to the verb. On the other hand, *uma ova* 'a fish's roe' and *agora* can appear independently of the verb and are thus allowed in isolation and in nominal fragments, as (21) and (22) illustrate.

- (21) A: Ele pagou o jantar, não pagou?  
he paid the dinner not paid  
'He paid for the dinner, didn't he?'

- B: a. *Uma ova!*  
A fish's-roe  
b. *Agora!*  
c. \**Lá!*  
'Like hell he did!'

- (22) A: Vamos comprar um carro vermelho/ o vermelho.  
Let-us buy a car red/ the red  
'Let's buy a red car. / Let's buy the red one.'

- B: a. (O) vermelho uma ova!  
the red a fish's-roe  
b. *Agora* (o) vermelho!  
MN-marker the red  
c. \*(*Lá*) (o) vermelho (*lá*).  
MN-marker the red MN-marker  
'Not (the) red.'

### 3.3. Interaction with negation

Strikingly contrasting with negative items and ordinary negation, unambiguous MN markers do not establish negative concord relations, as shown above by their inability to license NPIs. But MN markers do not interact with ordinary negation in a uniform way. While *lá* is excluded from negative sentences, *uma ova* 'a fish's roe' and *agora* have the ability to object to a previous negative proposition, in which case they co-occur with the predicative negation marker. Examples (23) and (24) illustrate the contrast between the two types of MN markers. Only the peripheral ones can construct sentences expressing denial of a negative proposition.<sup>11</sup>

- (23) A: Ele não pode estar bêbado. Ele não bebe.  
he not can be drunk. he not drinks  
B: a. Não bebe *uma ova*.

<sup>11</sup> MN denial of a negative proposition is also attested in English: *Like hell* Bill isn't a workaholic. (Droz 2001:57)

- not drinks a fish's-roe  
 b. Não bebe *agora*.  
 not drinks MN-marker  
 c. \*Não bebe *lá*. (see footnote 9)  
 not drinks MN-marker  
 'Like hell he doesn't drink!' / 'He certainly drinks!'

- (24) A: Eu não conheço ninguém.  
 I not know nobody  
 'I don't know anybody.'  
 B: a. Não conheces (ninguém) *uma ova*.  
 not know nobody a fish's-roe  
 b. Não conheces *agora* (ninguém).  
 not know MN-marker nobody  
 c. \*Não conheces *lá* (ninguém). (see footnote 9)  
 not know MN-marker nobody  
 'No way you know nobody.' / 'You certainly know somebody!'

#### 3.4. Compatibility with emphatic adverbs and contrastive foci

Some EP adverbs may be devoid of their basic meaning and contribute the sentence with an emphatic/modal import depending on their position relative to the verb. The adverbs *sempre* ('always') and *logo* ('immediately', 'later') behave as regular temporal adverbs when they are placed after the verb, but may turn into emphatic/modal elements when they precede the verb.<sup>12</sup> In this latter case, their presence blocks the occurrence of *lá* in the sentence but not the occurrence of *uma ova* 'a fish's roe' and *agora*, as exemplified in (25)-(26) below (cf. Pinto 2010).

- (25) A: O tubarão sempre sobreviveu.  
 the shark after-all survived  
 'The shark survived after all.'  
 B: a. Sempre sobreviveu *agora*.  
 after-all survived MN-marker  
 b. Sempre sobreviveu *uma ova*.  
 after-all survived a fish's-roe  
 c. \*Sempre sobreviveu *lá*.  
 after-all survived MN-marker  
 'No way the shark survived after all.'
- (26) A: Ele logo nos paga, não te preocupes.  
 he ±at-some-point us will-pay, not yourself worry  
 'He WILL pay us, don't worry.'  
 B: a. Logo nos paga *agora*.  
 ±at-some-point us will-pay MN-marker  
 b. Logo nos paga *uma ova*.  
 ±at-some-point us will-pay a fish's-roe  
 c. \*Logo nos paga *lá*.  
 ±at-some-point us will-pay MN-marker

<sup>12</sup> In this case, they construct *modalized sentences* in the sense of von Stechow and Gillies (2007:33): "epistemically modalized sentences give rise to speech acts beyond just the assertion of the possible worlds proposition they express".

‘Like hell he will!’

Similarly, when a preverbal constituent is focused through clefting we obtain the same effect of exclusion of *lá* in parallel with the availability of *uma ova* ‘a fish’s roe’ and *agora* (see (27)). These data indicate that the sentence-peripheral MN markers *uma ova* ‘a fish’s roe’ and *agora* have scope over high constituents that stay outside the scopal reach of the sentence-internal MN marker *lá*. The same rationale accounts for the facts relative to the interaction between MN markers and negation proper described in section 3.3, i.e. only sentence-peripheral MN markers can deny (thus, take scope over) a negative sentence.

- (27) A: O João é que pagou (o jantar).  
the João is that paid (the dinner)  
‘It was João who paid for the dinner.’
- B: a. O João é que pagou *uma ova*. Quem pagou fui eu.  
the João is that paid a fish’s-roe. who paid was I  
b. O João é que pagou *agora*. Quem pagou fui eu.  
the João is that paid MN-marker. who paid was I  
c. \*O João é que pagou *lá* (o jantar).  
the João is that paid MN-marker the dinner  
Quem pagou fui eu.  
who paid was I  
‘Like hell he did! I had to pay for it myself!’

### 3.5. Idioms

Certain EP idiomatic sentences can be expanded/modified with the sentence-peripheral MN markers *uma ova* ‘a fish’s roe’ and *agora*, but not the sentence-internal ones, like *lá*. Under the general assumption that idioms display a certain degree of frozenness and do not allow for grammatical or syntactic alterations on a regular basis, the data shown in (28) and (29) below lend support to the proposed bipartition, because the peripheral markers can be thought of as less disruptive of the idiosyncratic structure of idioms.

- (28) A: Já correu muita água sob a ponte.  
already passed much water under the bridge  
‘Too much changed already.’
- B: a. (Já) correu *agora* muita água sob a ponte.  
already passed MN-marker much water under the bridge  
b. (Já) correu muita água sob a ponte *agora*.  
already passed much water under the bridge MN-marker  
c. (Já) correu muita água sob a ponte *uma ova*.  
already passed much water under the bridge a fish’s-roe  
d. \*(Já) correu *lá* muita água sob a ponte.  
already passed MN-marker much water under the bridge  
‘No way too much changed already’
- (29) A: Isso traz água no bico  
that brings water in-the beak  
‘That’s suspect/doubtful/shady.’
- B: a. Traz *agora* água no bico.  
brings MN-marker water in-the beak  
b. Traz água no bico *agora*.

- brings water in-the beak MN-marker  
 c. Traz água no bico *uma ova*.  
 brings water in-the beak a fish's-roe  
 d. \*Traz lá água no bico.  
 brings MN-marker water in-the beak  
 'Like hell/no way that's suspect/doubtful/shady.'

### 3.6. Coordination

The fact that the MN marker *lá* is internal to the sentence makes it unfit to deny the sequence of events expressed by coordinate structures like (30).<sup>13</sup> The peripheral and large-scope MN markers *uma ova* 'a fish's roe' and *agora* have the ability to deny the sequence of events expressed by the coordinate structure.

- (30) A: Eles casaram e tiveram um filho.  
 they married and had a baby  
 'They got married and had a baby.'
- B: a. Eles casaram e tiveram um filho *uma ova*, eles casaram  
 they married and had a baby a fish's-roe, they married  
 porque tiveram um filho  
 because had-3SG a baby
- b. Eles casaram *agora* e tiveram um filho, eles casaram  
 they married MN-marker and had a baby, they married  
 porque tiveram um filho  
 because had-3SG a baby
- c. Eles casaram e tiveram um filho *agora*, eles casaram  
 they married and had a baby MN-marker, they married  
 porque tiveram um filho  
 because had-3SG a baby
- d. \*Eles casaram *lá* e tiveram um filho, eles casaram  
 they married MN-marker and had a baby, they married  
 porque tiveram um filho  
 because had-3SG a baby  
 'They didn't get married and have a baby, they got married because they had a baby.'

### 3.7. VP Ellipsis

The internal MN marker *lá* blocks VP Ellipsis while the peripheral MN markers *uma ova* 'a fish's roe' and *agora* allow it. In fact VP Ellipsis is the unmarked option with the latter. It will be shown in the next section that the facts about VP Ellipsis correlate with the facts about the availability of peripheral MN markers isolated or in nominal fragments, in contrast to internal MN markers.

- (31) A: O João ofereceu um cão à filha.  
 the João offered a dog to-the daughter

<sup>13</sup> Example adapted from Horn (1989:373): "They didn't have a baby and get married, they got married and had a baby." A reviewer observes that, unlike in Horn's example, "it is not the sequence as such that is being objected to in (30) but rather the lack of a causal connection in the original formulation". However, the causal connection introduced by the rectification can only hold if the event of having a baby precedes the event of getting married. Therefore, the sequence of events displayed by the coordinate sentence is also being objected to. I slightly changed Horn's original example just to make it sound more natural in Portuguese.

‘João offered a dog to his daughter.’

- B: a. Ofereceu *agora*.  
 offered MN-marker  
 b. Ofereceu *uma ova*.  
 offered a fish’s-roe  
 c. \*Ofereceu *lá*.  
 offered MN-marker  
 d. Ofereceu *lá* um cão à filha.  
 offered MN-marker a dog to-the daughter  
 ‘Like hell/no way he did.’

(32) A: O João tem lido todos os livros.  
 the João has read all the books  
 ‘João has been reading all the books.’

- B: a. Tem *agora*.  
 has MN-marker  
 b. Tem *uma ova*.  
 has a fish’s-roe  
 c. \*Tem *lá*.  
 has MN-marker  
 d. O João tem *lá* lido todos os livros.  
 the João has MN-marker read all the books  
 ‘Like hell/no way he has been reading all the books’

### 3.8. Concluding remarks

Table 1 above summarizes the empirical observations that lie behind the proposed partition of European Portuguese MN markers into two groups, namely internal and peripheral MN markers. Although the word *agora* may somehow unexpectedly surface immediately after the verb (when this is not the sentence-final position), it behaves in all other respects like a peripheral element. Moreover and crucially, with respect to every feature that has been tested beyond word order, it does not display a different syntactic behavior depending on its medial or final placement. In contrast, the MN marker *lá* consistently displays the behavior of an internal element closely dependent on the verb.

In the ensuing sections we will concentrate on the study of the MN markers *lá* and *agora* (putting aside for future research other peripheral MN markers, such as *uma ova* ‘a fish’s roe’). We will see that having demonstrated, on a contrastive basis, their belonging to two different types of MN markers is of non-trivial significance.

## 4. A unifying syntax: MN markers merge in Spec,CP

In section 6 below, MN declaratives displaying unambiguous MN markers will be characterized as *responding assertions*, in the sense of Farkas and Bruce (2010), associated with the ‘relative polarity’ feature [*objection*] – adding to the features [*same*] and [*reverse*] postulated by Farkas & Bruce (2010). I take this to be the edge feature that drives sentence-internal MN markers to the CP domain and to a certain extent unifies the syntax of the two types of MN markers. In subsection 4.1, I will clarify what is the structure I have in mind for each type of unambiguous MN declaratives and put in evidence their common and particular traits. In subsection 4.2, I will give evidence for V-to-C movement in MN declaratives with *lá* (i.e. the internal MN marker), and finally, in subsection 4.3, I will show how the empirical facts described above in section 3 can be thoroughly derived from the proposed analysis.



respect to word order since IP-topicalization can derive sentences with *agora* placed in sentence-final position (see (34)), and focus-movement followed by remnant IP-topicalization can derive sentences with *agora* placed in sentence-medial position (see (35)).

[*The syntax of the external MN marker agora*]

[I. Sentence-initial position (Northwestern EP dialects): *agora* externally merges in CP]

- (34) [<sub>CP</sub> *Ágora* [<sub>C'</sub> [<sub>ΣP</sub> [<sub>Σ'</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> [<sub>T'</sub> deu<sub>i</sub> [<sub>VP</sub> ...  
MN-marker gave

[II. Sentence-final position: IP-topicalization follows external merge of *agora* in CP]<sup>16</sup>

- (35) a. O João deu um carro à Maria *agora*.  
the João gave a car to-the Maria MN-marker  
'Lilke hell/no way João gave Mary a car.'

b. [<sub>TopP</sub> [<sub>ΣP</sub> O João<sub>n</sub> deu<sub>i</sub> um carro à Maria]<sub>k</sub> [<sub>Top'</sub> [<sub>CP</sub> *agora* [<sub>C'</sub> [<sub>ΣP</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> [<sub>T'</sub> deu<sub>i</sub> [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> [<sub>T'</sub> deu<sub>i</sub> um carro à Maria]]]]]]]<sub>k</sub> ] ] ] (C = [<sub>C2</sub> C1[C2]])

[III. Sentence-medial position: VP-Focus-movement precedes external merge of *agora* in Spec,CP, which is followed by IP-topicalization]<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> The fact that *agora* behaves in a constant way with respect to all the tests described in section 3 independently of word order variation, supports the proposal that the position of *agora* in clause structure is the same no matter whether it surfaces in initial, medial or final position. Particularly significant is the observation that *agora* does not change its scope-taking properties as a function of word order. These facts about *agora* extend to all the idiomatic expressions that work as peripheral MN markers in European Portuguese, English and other languages. As already mentioned in footnote 15, Topicalization in the type of MN sentences under discussion is facilitated by the fact that MN sentences are reactions to a previous assertion and display an echoic relation with this obligatory linguistic antecedent.

<sup>17</sup> The MN marker *agora* usually prompts VP Ellipsis (or TP Ellipsis), giving rise to patterns that parallel those found in answers to *yes/no* questions (compare (i-B-a) with (ii-B-a)). Constituents that escape deletion under VP/TP Ellipsis (and are not topicalized/left dislocated) display contrastive discourse prominence, and the relevant sentences are normally followed by a rectification (which is unnecessary otherwise). The examples in (ii) and (iii) demonstrate that the constituent moved to Spec,FocP in structures such as (36b) receives contrastive prominence.

- (i) A: O João vai comprar um carro?  
the João goes buy-INFIN a car  
'Is João buying a car?'

B: a. Vai.  
goes  
'Yes, he is.'

- (iii) A: A Maria vai comprar uma casa.  
the Maria goes buy-INFIN a house  
'Maria is buying a house.'

B: a. Vai *agora*.  
goes MN-marker  
'No, she is not.'

- b. Vai *agora* comprar uma casa. Vai é alugar um estúdio.  
goes MN-marker buy-INFIN a house. goes is rent-INFIN a studio  
'No way she is buying an apartment. She is renting a studio.'

- (iv) A: O Vladimir morreu no sábado.  
the Vladimir died in-the Saturday  
'Vladimir died last Saturday.'

B: a. Morreu *agora*.





*First*, subject-verb inversion deriving the order VSO is extremely restricted with direct transitive verbs in European Portuguese (Ambar 1992, among others), as illustrated in (37). Nevertheless, MN declaratives with *lá* allow it smoothly as shown in (38). This is an expected consequence of V-to-C movement, whenever the subject is not topicalized.

- (37) a. O meu irmão não perdia uma oportunidade destas.  
the my brother not would-miss a opportunity of-these  
b. \*?Não perdia o meu irmão uma oportunidade destas.  
not would-miss the my brother a opportunity of-these  
‘My brother wouldn’t miss an opportunity like that.’
- (38) a. O meu irmão perdia *lá* uma oportunidade destas.  
the my brother would-miss MN-marker a opportunity of-these  
b. Perdia *lá* o meu irmão uma oportunidade destas.<sup>20</sup>  
would-miss MN-marker the my brother a opportunity of-these  
‘Like hell/no way my brother would miss an opportunity like that.’

*Second*, *-ly* adverbs like *frequentemente* ‘frequently’ may regularly appear in post-verbal or preverbal position (in between the subject and the verb) in declarative sentences in EP, adjoining respectively to VP or TP (Costa 1998), but are excluded from the preverbal position in MN declaratives with *lá*, as exemplified in (39). Assuming that the verb is in C in the relevant MN declaratives, it comes as no surprise that the adverb must follow the verb, be the adverb adjoined to VP or TP. In regular declaratives, on the other hand, the verb does not move beyond T, so the *-ly* adverb will be postverbal if it is adjoined to VP and preverbal if it is adjoined to TP.

- (39) A: a. O João fica *frequentemente* em casa.  
the João stays frequently at home  
b. O João *frequentemente* fica em casa.  
the João frequently stays at home  
‘João stays at home often.’
- B: a. O João fica *lá* *frequentemente* em casa.  
the João stays MN-marker frequently at home  
b. \*O João *frequentemente* fica *lá* em casa.<sup>21</sup>  
the João frequently stays MN-marker at home  
‘Like hell/no way João stays at home often.’

<sup>20</sup> In (37c) the postverbal position of the subject gives it a contrastive/emphatic flavor, adding a comment on top of the mere assertion of the proposition, which allows the inference that ‘my brother would be a most improbable person to miss such an opportunity’. In broad information focus root declaratives where the subject is not narrow information focus, subject-verb inversion may have precisely this interpretative effect, as illustrated in (i).

(i) A: Não compramos filetes, compramos antes o peixe inteiro.  
not buy-1PL fish-filets, buy-1PL rather the fish whole  
‘Let’s not buy fish filets, but a whole fish.’

B: Cozinhas tu.  
cook-2SG you  
‘You cook it!’ (with the inference ‘I won’t’)

<sup>21</sup> The sentence is of course perfectly fine in a discourse context where *lá* might be interpreted as locative: ‘João often stays there, in my/our place’.

Third, the EP adverb *bem* ‘well’ is basically a manner adverb that adjoins to VP (Costa 1998), but it may occur in a structurally higher position, in which case it is devoid of the manner interpretation displaying instead a modal import:

- (40) a. O Pedro falou bem.  
the Pedro spoke well  
‘Pedro spoke well.’  
b. Bem disse o Pedro que era verdade.  
well said the Pedro that was true  
‘Pedro was right in saying that it was true.’ / ‘Pedro actually said that it was true.’  
c. Ele bem sabe que é verdade.  
he well knows that is true  
‘He definitely knows that it is true.’ / ‘I’m sure that he knows that it is true.’

Revealingly, MN declaratives may display the word order [verb-*lá*-subj-*bem*], as illustrated in (41) below, where *bem* is not a manner adverb.

- (41) Sei lá eu bem se isso é verdade.  
know-1SG MN-marker I bem if that is true  
‘The hell if I know whether that’s true or not.’

This word order demonstrates that in (41) the subject is outside VP. Moreover, since the modal *bem* regularly appears in preverbal position when the verb is in T, the subject in (41) above must be placed in Spec,  $\Sigma$ P (which according to the view on EP clause-structure assumed in this paper is the regular position for the subject when it moves out of the VP). Since the verb precedes the subject in the sequence [verb-*lá*-subj-*bem*], it must have moved to C. By the same token, this word order also demonstrates that *lá* itself has moved to the CP area. This is how the order verb-*lá* with the two elements displaying strict adjacency arises. If the verb were to move to C while *lá* would remain in Spec,TP, the subject and adverbs like the modal *bem* would be able to intervene between *lá* and the verb. Example (42b-c) proves that this is not allowed (in (42c) the subject may be topicalized or stay within IP).<sup>22</sup> In section 5, cluster formation with MN markers will be discussed and shown to lend further support to the generalization that Spec,CP is where all unambiguous MN markers end up, even when they begin in a lower position.

- (42) a. Eu bem sei.  
I well know-1SG.  
‘I (do) know.’  
b. (\*Bem) sei (\*bem) lá (bem) se isso é verdade.  
(\*well) know-1SG (\*well) MN-marker well if that is true

<sup>22</sup> We would expect the modal adverb *bem* to behave like the emphatic/modal adverbs *sempre* and *logo* discussed in section 3.4 in creating an intervention effect for movement of *lá* to the CP domain (cf. section 4). In fact that is what usually happens (see (i) below), except when *lá* co-occurs with the verb *saber* ‘to know’. I do not have an explanation to offer with respect to this exception, but it is worth noting that *sei lá* (know-1PL *lá*) is a very frequent collocation unit.

(i) A: Ele bem disse que era verdade.  
he bem said that was true  
‘He actually said that it was true.’

B: Ele. (\*bem) disse lá (\*bem) que era verdade.  
he bem said MN-marker that was true  
‘No way he said that it was true.’

- c. (*Eu*) sei                    (*\*eu*) lá                    (*eu*) se isso é verdade.  
 I. know-1SG (*\*I*) MN-marker (I) if that is true  
 ‘I don’t know whether that’s true or not.’

The same tests that demonstrate the existence of verb movement to C in MN declaratives with the internal MN marker *lá* show that there is no verb movement to C in MN declaratives with peripheral MN markers, like *agora*. This is illustrated by (43) and (44a-b), which are to be contrasted with (41) and (38b) respectively. Because the verb does not move beyond T in MN declaratives with *agora*, it comes as no surprise that VSO order with direct transitive verbs and the order verb-*bem* where the adverb has modal import be not allowed.<sup>23</sup>

- (43) *\*Sei agora (eu) bem se isso é verdade.*  
 know-1SG MN-marker (I) well if that is true  
 ‘The hell if I know whether that’s true or not.’

- (44) a. *\*Perdia agora o meu irmão uma oportunidade destas.*  
 would-miss MN-marker the my brother a opportunity of-these  
 b. *\*Perdia o meu irmão uma oportunidade destas agora.*  
 would-miss the my brother a opportunity of-these MN-marker  
 ‘Like hell/no way my brother would miss an opportunity like that.’

Before concluding this section a word is due with respect to what motivates verb movement to C in the sentences with *lá* as well as what makes morphological merger between *lá* and the verb necessary. I take the two facts to be related and a consequence of *lá* being a weak grammatical word (in the sense of Cardinaletti and Starke 1999). What I have to say in this respect is very tentative but supported by two observations. First, the deictic locatives *lá* ‘there’ and *cá* ‘here’ are weak elements in European Portuguese in contrast with the deictic locatives *ali* ‘there’ and *aqui* ‘here’.<sup>24</sup> Second, MN sentences are

<sup>23</sup> The test based on the placement of *-ly* adverbs cannot be productively applied to MN declaratives with *agora*. In fact, *-ly* adverbs resist to appear in preverbal position in MN declaratives with *agora* for independent reasons. That is to say: either they are deleted due to the tendency of MN declaratives with *agora* to maximize ellipsis or they move to Spec,FocP, in which case they surface after the verb (see the structure in (36) above). With other peripheral MN markers, however, *-ly* adverbs are unproblematic in preverbal position. Contrast (i) below with (39b).

- (i) O João *frequentemente* fica em casa *uma ova*.  
 the João frequently stays at home a fish’s-roe  
 ‘Like hell/no way João stays at home often.’

<sup>24</sup> There are two series of deictic locatives in European Portuguese. The *-á* series is a binary system including *cá* ‘here’ and *lá* ‘there’. The *-i* series displays a three-forms system: *aqui* (‘here’), *ai* (‘there’ – close to addressee), *ali* (‘there’ – distant from speaker and addressee). Only the *-á* series can act as emphatic and metalinguistic negation markers (cf. Martins 2012). The contrast may be accounted for under the hypothesis that there is a weak/strong distinction between the two types of locatives (cf. Cardinaletti and Starke 1999). Only the weak deictic locatives underwent a diachronic process of upward integration in the functional system in the sense of Roberts and Roussou (2003). The weak deictic locatives (i.e. the *-á* series) in contrast to the strong ones (i.e. the *-i* series) cannot occur with gestures (see (i)-(ii)), are incompatible with *transposed* deictic use (see (iii)-(iv)), and are generally disallowed in isolation (compare (v) with (vi)).

- (i) A: Mostra-me no mapa onde fica Portugal.  
 show me on-the map where stays Portugal  
 B: {*Aqui* / *\*Cá*}. (pointing to the map)  
 here / here  
 (ii) Põe a mesa {*aqui* / *ali* / *\*cá* / *\*lá*}. (pointing with the hands or the eyes)  
 put the table here / there / here / there  
 (iii) Ele magoou-se {*aqui* / *\*cá*} no braço (showing where)

emphatic/evaluative in the sense that they denote the speaker's attitude towards an uttered proposition. Other emphatic/evaluative sentences in EP trigger verb movement to C when [evaluative] is a feature of C that is not independently licensed by some particular element (for example, a quantifier or a focus-marker; see Ambar 1999, and Costa and Martins 2012). With these ingredients in mind, I hypothesize that *lá* is unable to license the emphatic/evaluative component of MN sentences (cf. footnote 14) because it is a weak element and by the same token it requires morphological support. Verb movement to C satisfies both needs as it licenses evaluative C and is the morphological host of the weak deictic. I am aware that this is only the beginning of a possible answer but at this point it is all I can offer. In section 5 it will be proposed that the feature driving *lá* to the CP domain and unifying the syntax of the different MN markers discussed in this paper is the relative polarity feature [objection], not the feature [evaluative]. Hence movement of *lá* and movement of the verb to the CP domain are independently triggered.

#### 4.3. The syntactic basis of the bipartite typology

In section 3 above, a series of syntactic differences (on the empirical level) between internal and peripheral MN markers have been described. We are now in a position to account for those facts, deriving the relevant contrasts from the analysis put forth in section 4.1.

The distinct base generation of internal MN markers and peripheral MN markers can account for the contrasts with respect to scope (and presumably idioms). Recall that peripheral MN markers can take scope over high emphatic/modal adverbs, contrastive foci, whole coordinate structures and negative propositions while internal MN markers cannot. The question is why the scope of internal MN markers would necessarily be established in their base position, not in the higher position where they normally move. The answer is that while movement is crucially involved in the derivation of sentences with internal MN markers, no specific instances of movement arise when sentences with peripheral MN markers are derived. Hence, constraints on movement may affect internal MN markers preventing them from reaching Spec,CP and taking scope over the relevant constituents (i.e. high emphatic/modal adverbs, contrastive foci, whole coordinate structures and negative propositions), whereas no such constraints apply to the peripheral MN markers, that directly

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- (iv) he hurt-himself here / here on-the arm  
 {*Aqui* / \**cá*} começa a história dos dois amantes.  
 here / here begins the story of-the two lovers (introducing a scene in a play)
- (iii) A: Onde queres que deixe o livro?  
 where want-2SG that leave-1SG the book  
 'Where do you want me to leave the book.'  
 B: a. \**Lá*.  
 There (outside the speaker's field of vision)  
 b. *Lá* no gabinete.  
 there in-the office  
 'In our office.'  
 b. Deixa-o *lá*.  
 Leave it there.'
- (iv) A: Onde queres que ponha a mesa?  
 where want-2SG that put-1SG the table  
 'Where do you want me to leave the book.'  
 B: a. *Ali*.  
 There (within the speaker's field of vision)  
 b. *Ali* ao canto.  
 There in-the corner  
 b. *Põe ali*.  
 Put there  
 'Put it there.'

merge in Spec,CP. To make the argument concrete, let us consider the different types of intervention effects displayed by the sentences where the presence of an internal MN marker leads to ungrammaticality.

Non-argumental *lá* (i.e. the internal MN marker) moves from Spec,TP to Spec,CP, creating an operator-variable chain. MN *lá*, contrastive foci and high emphatic/modal adverbs can all be analyzed as operators.<sup>25</sup> If contrastive foci or high emphatic/modal adverbs intervene between the base generation position of *lá* and its expected landing site in the CP space, movement is blocked and the MN marker cannot successfully reach Spec,CP.

As for negative sentences, it is another type of movement in the derivation of MN declaratives with *lá* that is at stake, namely head-movement. The predicative negation marker is a head directly merged is the polarity-encoding head  $\Sigma$ , which dominates TP. Because it intervenes between T and C, a necessary step in the derivation of MN sentences with *lá* is blocked, namely verb movement to C.

Finally, the internal MN marker *lá* is unable to scope over a coordinate structure featuring a sequence of events (in contrast with the peripheral MN markers). That is to say, internal MN markers cannot escape the member of the coordinate structure where they are first merged. This is an expected effect of the Coordinate Structure Constraint (Ross 1967, 1986), that bars extraction out of members of a coordinate structure. Across-the-board (ATB) extraction of *lá* from both members of the coordinate structure would not do either, because verb movement to C would still violate the Coordinate Structure Constraint.

Besides the contrasts with respect to scope taking, internal and peripheral MN markers differ in their ability to occur isolated and in nominal fragments. The inseparability between the internal MN marker *lá* and the verb is directly linked with its unavailability in isolation and in nominal fragments, in sharp contrast with the peripheral MN markers. In MN sentences with *lá* there is morphological merger under adjacency between the MN marker and the verb, following movement of each to the CP space (see the structure in (33) above), which is not the case in sentences with peripheral MN markers, as in the latter verb movement to C does not arise.

This difference between the two types of MN markers also accounts for the incompatibility with VP Ellipsis that internal MN markers manifest, while peripheral MN markers strongly favor VP Ellipsis. In European Portuguese, differently from English, VP Ellipsis requires strict lexical and structural parallelism between the verb in the ellipsis clause and the verb in the antecedent clause (cf. Matos 1992; Cyrino and Matos 2005, 2006). Because in MN declaratives with *lá* the verb moves to C and undergoes morphological merger with the MN marker, the parallelism requirement on VP Ellipsis is not satisfied and ellipsis is not licensed.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Note that verb movement to C in non V2 languages is often related to operator movement.

<sup>26</sup> As expected, MN declaratives with *lá* allow other kinds of ellipsis, in which strict parallelism is not a licensing requirement. This is the case of Null Complement Anaphora (NCA), which is not subject to lexical nor structural parallelism between the ellipsis clause and the antecedent clause (Hankamer and Sag 1976, Depiante 2001; Cyrino and Matos 2006; Gonçalves and Matos 2009). Sentences (i)-(ii) below illustrate the compatibility of the MN marker *lá* with NCA.

(i) A: Ele bebe muito, não bebe?  
he drinks much not drinks  
'He drinks a lot, doesn't he?'

B: Sei *lá*.  
know-1SG MN marker  
'Hell if I know!'

(ii) Disseeram-lhes para limpar o jardim, mas eles {sabem/querem} *lá*.  
told-3PL-them to clean the garden but they {know-want} MN marker  
'They were told to clean the garden, but no way they {know how/wish to}.'

We are left with the issue of idioms, which I will not be able to satisfactorily handle here. Intuitively, peripheral MN markers can associate with idioms more freely than internal MN markers because they always merge at the edge of the idiom as a whole, even though further movement of constituent-parts of the idiom (under topicalization or focus-movement) may result in the MN marker linearly surfacing “inside” the idiom. The idea I will put forth here for future exploration is that once external merge of material that is not part of the idiom takes place, only internal merge is still available for material that is part of the idiom. This idea seems to be supported by the fact that internal MN markers are excluded from idioms corresponding to a full sentence (say IP/ $\Sigma$ P; see (28)-(29) above) but may be allowed when the idiom is a sentential constituent, like the VP *bater a bota* (literally, beat the boot, meaning ‘to die’) in (45) below.

- (45) A: O hamster bateu a bota.  
the hamster beat the boot  
‘The hamster died.’
- B: a. Bateu *agora* a bota. [external MN marker]  
beat-3SG MN-marker the boot  
b. Bateu a bota *agora*. [external MN marker]  
beat-3SG the boot MN-marker  
c. Bateu a bota *uma ova*. [external MN marker]  
beat-3SG the boot a fish’s-roe  
d. Bateu *lá* a bota. [internal MN marker]  
beat-3SG MN-marker the boot  
‘No way it died.’

### 5. Further support for the analysis: MN clusters

EP unambiguous MN markers can cluster together in particular conditions. The ways of cluster formation and cluster availability bring further support to the analysis put forth in the preceding section.

MN clusters are necessarily formed with MN markers of different types as for the peripheral/internal dichotomy. Thus the peripheral MN marker *agora* can cluster together with the internal MN marker *lá* as well as the internal MN marker *cá* (originated in the EP deictic locative ‘here’), giving rise to the clusters *agora lá*, *agora cá* or, with the inverse order, *lá agora*, *cá agora*. The two internal MN markers, on the other hand, are not allowed to cluster together, so the sequences *\*lá cá* and *\*cá lá* are excluded. This is illustrated in (46) and is predicted by the analysis since two MN markers of the same type would compete for the same structural position. This is not the case for *agora* and *lá*, which can cluster together because the former is peripheral and the latter internal.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Further restrictions apply to cluster formation, which is only available to deixis-related MN markers. Idiomatic expressions like *uma ova* (literally, ‘a fish’s roe’) are not permitted in MN clusters nor allowed to co-occur with another MN marker in the same sentence as discontinuous elements (see (i) below). So the only peripheral MN marker available for cluster formation in European Portuguese is *agora*, which corresponds to the temporal deictic ‘now’.

- (i) A: Ele gosta do gato.  
he likes of-the cat  
‘He loves the cat.’
- B: a. Ele gosta *lá* do gato.  
he likes MN-marker of-the cat  
b. Ele gosta do gato *uma ova*.  
he likes of-the cat a fish’s-roe  
c. \*Ele gosta *lá* do gato *uma ova*.





If this analysis is on the right track, it is predicted that the cluster *agora lá* behaves like the peripheral MN markers and differently from the internal ones with respect to the facts discussed in sections 3-4 that are dependent on the existence/absence of verb movement to C and subsequent morphological merger between the verb and an adjacent MN marker. This prediction is thoroughly confirmed by the data, as illustrated in (49) to (51). So, while *lá* by itself cannot occur in isolation and in nominal fragments, always requiring the presence of the verb, the cluster *agora lá* (similarly to *agora* by itself) is perfectly fine in such instances, as shown in (49). Also in contrast with *lá*, the cluster *agora lá* is compatible with VP Ellipsis because in the absence of verb movement to C plus morphological merger the required lexical and structural parallelism between the ellipsis clause and the antecedent clause is respected. Example (50) shows that the cluster *agora lá* patterns with the peripheral MN marker *agora* and diverges from the internal MN marker *lá* in being compatible with VP Ellipsis. Finally, because there is no V-to-C movement in the derivation of sentences like (48), a neg-head can merge in  $\Sigma$  without inducing a violation of the head movement constraint. Hence, the cluster *agora lá* can scope over negation like the peripheral MN marker *agora* and in sharp contrast with the internal MN marker *lá*, as illustrated in (51).<sup>28</sup>

(49) A: Ele tem lido toda a bibliografia recomendada.  
 he has read all the bibliography recommended  
 ‘He has been reading all the recommended bibliography.’

- B: a. *Agora lá* (toda a bibliografia). [availability in isolation and  
 MN cluster all the bibliography nominal fragments]  
 b. \**Lá* (toda a bibliografia).  
 MN-marker all the bibliography  
 c. *Agora* (toda a bibliografia).  
 MN-marker all the bibliography

(50) A: Ele tem lido toda a bibliografia recomendada.  
 he has read all the bibliography recommended  
 ‘He has been reading all the recommended bibliography.’

- B: a. Tem *agora lá*. [Compatibility with VP Ellipsis]  
 has MN-cluster  
 b. \*Tem *lá*.  
 has MN-marker  
 c. Tem *agora*.  
 has MN-marker  
 ‘No way he has been reading all the recommended bibliography.’

(51) A: Ele não gosta de carros. [Ability to deny a negative proposition]  
 he not likes of cars

<sup>28</sup> There would be much more to say about MN clusters in European Portuguese, especially because (48b) is presumably not the only structure that derives them. My aim in this section was just to illustrate how their own existence and their non trivial syntax may offer arguments supporting the ideas developed in the paper.

Judgments of EP speakers are variable and can be fuzzy with respect to sentences where the cluster *agora lá* co-occurs with operators such as contrastive foci and high emphatic/modal adverbs. The fact that such sentences are allowed by some speakers (without inducing the type of intervention effects signaled in section 4.3) suggests that for those speakers a variant of (48b) is available with *lá* externally merged in Spec,CP1 (external merge of *lá* being restricted to contexts where there is no verb movement to C). EP speakers also diverge on their judgments about whether the clusters *agora lá* and *lá agora* (with inverse order) behave alike or differently, which further supports the hypothesis that cluster formation may arise through different syntactic derivations.

- ‘he doesn’t like cars.’
- B: a. Não gosta *agora lá*.  
not likes MN cluster
- b. \*Não gosta *lá*.  
not likes MN-marker
- c. Não gosta *agora*.  
not likes MN-marker
- ‘Like hell he doesn’t like cars.’

## 6. Motivating the MN-CP connection

MN declaratives are typically “objections” to a previous utterance, that constitute its required licensing context (Horn 1989:363). Hence, MN declaratives can be characterized as ‘reactive/responding’ assertions in the sense of Farkas & Bruce (2010), who distinguish between *initiating* and *responding* assertions, the former associated with *absolute* polarity features only, the latter also bearing *relative* polarity features (cf. Pope 1976).

We call here *responding assertions* those assertions that perform a responding move, and *initiating assertions* those subtypes of assertions that are not responding. Since initiating assertions and polar questions place an issue on the Table in the form of a proposition-denoting radical, moves that react to them are responding and therefore confirming or reversing.

In order to capture the common denominator of responding moves, we propose to introduce two relative polarity features, [*same*] and [*reverse*], the former marking confirming moves and the latter marking reversing ones. (Farkas & Bruce 2010: 106-107)

In the system devised by Farkas & Bruce (2010), the absolute polarity features are [+] and [-], roughly corresponding to aff(irmation)/neg(ation) in current syntactic literature, and ‘positive’/‘negative’ in Pope (1976). The relative polarity features, on the other hand, are [*same*] and [*reverse*], roughly corresponding to ‘agreement’/‘disagreement’ in Pope (1976). The relevant set of features is represented in Table 2 below and exemplified with the sentences in (52)-(53).

Table 2: Absolute and relative polarity features, Farkas and Bruce (2010)

Absolute polarity features:	[ + ]
	[ - ]
Relative polarity features:	[ <i>same</i> ]
	[ <i>reverse</i> ]

- (52) Anne: Sam is home./Is Sam home?  
Ben: Yes he is. [*same*, +]  
Connie: No, he isn’t. [*reverse*, -]
- (53) Anne: Sam is not home./Is Sam not home?  
Ben: Yes, he is. [*reverse*, +]  
Connie: No, he isn’t. [*same*, -] (Farkas and Bruce 2010:109)

Inspired by Horn’s definition of metalinguistic negation (i.e. “a device for objecting to a previous utterance”), I propose to add to the set of relative polarity features introduced by Farkas and Bruce (2010) the relative polarity feature [*objection*], which I take to be the edge feature that drives sentence-internal MN markers to the CP domain and to a certain extent unifies the syntax of the two types of MN markers (cf. Chomsky 2005, 2008).

The revised version of Farkas & Bruce (2010) that I am proposing (revised in what concerns the set of relative polarity features) is represented in Table 3 and illustrated with the sentences in (54)-(55).

Table 3: An extension of Farkas & Bruce (2010) to integrate MN

Absolute polarity features:	[ + ]
	[ - ]
Relative polarity features:	[same]
	[reverse]
	[objection]

- |         |                              |                |  |
|---------|------------------------------|----------------|--|
| (54) A: | Sam is (already) home.       | [+]            | <i>Three types of responding assertions:</i> |
| B: a.   | Yes he (already) is.         | [same, +]      | <i>confirming</i>                            |
| b.      | No, he isn't (yet).          | [reverse, -]   | <i>reversing</i>                             |
| c.      | The hell he (already) is.    | [objection, +] | <i>objecting</i>                             |
| (55) A: | Sam is not home (anymore).   | [-]            |  |
| B: a.   | No, he isn't (anymore).      | [same, -]      | <i>confirming</i>                            |
| b.      | Yes, he (still) is.          | [reverse, +]   | <i>reversing</i>                             |
| c.      | The hell he isn't (anymore). | [objection, -] | <i>objecting</i>                             |

The data in (54) and (55) show that reversing answers and objecting answers interact with polarity items in opposite ways, which gives clear empirical evidence that the two types of responding assertions differ from each other in their polarity features composition. Bear in mind that by definition the relative polarity features automatically determine the value of absolute polarity features. So a reversing answer to a positive assertion (i.e. an assertion carrying the absolute polarity feature [+]), as illustrated in (54), necessarily bears the absolute polarity feature [-] and this is why in (54b) the NPI *yet* is licensed while the PPI *already* would be excluded. Now if the answer in (54c), displaying metalinguistic negation, would bear the feature [reverse], it would be undistinguishable from (54b) as for polarity features composition and licensing of polarity items, contrary to fact. Since in (54c) the PPI *already* is licensed, not the NPI *yet*, we have proof that the absolute polarity feature of (54c) is [+], not [-]. Therefore, the relative polarity feature of (54c) cannot be [reverse], which would entail [-]. It cannot be [same] either because [54c] performs a disagreeing move not a confirming move. The logical exclusion of the features [reverse] and [same] in (54c) and similar cases argues for the necessity of the third feature [objection], without deviation from Occamist principles. The same line of reasoning applies to the paradigm in (55), where again the sentence displaying metalinguistic negation (i.e. (55c)) patterns with the '[same]-answer' (55a), not the '[reverse]-answer' (55b), with respect to the licensing of polarity items, although it does not perform a confirming move. Note that in (55c) the NPI *anymore* is licensed by standard negation (i.e. [-], expressed by the negation marker *n't*), while the presence of the unambiguous MN marker *the hell* contributes the interpretative effect of double negation due to the introduction of the feature [objection] (compare the interpretation of (55a) with the interpretation of (55c)).

To clarify matters with respect to the syntax of polarity in responding declaratives, I must say that I take the exclusive features of responding assertions, that is, relative polarity

features, to be grammatically encoded in the CP domain, whereas absolute polarity features are encoded in  $\Sigma P$ , the topmost functional projection in the IP domain (cf. (33)-(36) above).<sup>29</sup>

Thus the two sets of features are independently expressed by different functional heads, and all combinations of features from different sets are available (as illustrated in (54)-(55) above). The feature [*objection*], however, does not interact with the absolute polarity features [ + ] and [ - ] in the way [*reverse*] does. While [*reverse*] entails the inversion of the absolute polarity feature value of the antecedent sentence, [*objection*] copies that value. In this respect it shares a property with [*same*]. Although [*objection*] and [*reverse*] both express disagreement, only [*reverse*] makes a specific move to update the discourse *common ground*, by reversing the previously asserted proposition. *Objections* (as christened here) form with *confirmations* and *reversals* the three-term set of responding assertions

Empirical evidence supporting the hypothesis that MN declaratives displaying unambiguous MN markers (i. e. *objections*) are of a particular kind with respect to polarity encoding comes from consideration of tag-interrogatives. MN declaratives are incompatible with tag-questions, in sharp contrast to ordinary declaratives. This is demonstrated in (56). Examples (56a)-(56b) show how standard tag-questions are constructed in European Portuguese.<sup>30</sup> Examples (56c)-(56d) reveal that neither type of tag-question is allowed when the declarative anchor includes an unambiguous MN marker.<sup>31</sup> Relevantly, the other types of responding assertions (i.e. *confirmations* and *reversals*) are not incompatible with tag-interrogatives, as attested by (57). Thus the formation of tag-questions is blocked by the feature [*objection*], whereas no such blocking is induced by the features [*same*] or [*reverse*]. This piece of empirical evidence thus argues for the very existence of the feature [*objection*] and the particular type of declarative sentences it identifies.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> I diverge in this respect from Farkas & Bruce (2010), who take both the absolute and the relative polarity features to be hosted by PolP, their leftmost functional projection. PolP dominates CP, whose polarity agrees, by definition, with the absolute polarity feature in PolP.

<sup>30</sup> Tag-questions are a particular type of polar question made up of a *declarative anchor* and an *interrogative coda* – that is, the *tag* stricto sensu, although the term *tag-question*, or simply *tag*, is used lato sensu to designate the whole sequence. Tag-questions may display an invariable interrogative coda or an interrogative coda that shows sensitivity to the polarity and to the tense and verbal agreement features of the declarative-anchor. The variable type of tag-question constitutes the standard option in European Portuguese. The EP system is asymmetric in that the interrogative coda displays reversed polarity when the declarative anchor is positive but constant/non reversed polarity when the declarative anchor is negative. Moreover, the tag that follows a positive anchor is verbal and duplicates the tense and agreement features of the anchor while the tag that follows a negative anchor does not include a verb form and is therefore unable to show sensitivity to such features.

<sup>31</sup> When the declarative anchor is a negative sentence, the negative word *não* ('not') surfaces in the interrogative coda even when negation is expressed by some other negative word in the declarative anchor:

- (i) a. Ele nunca gostou dela, pois {nãõ/\*nunca}?  
 he never liked of-her, CONFIRMATIVE-WORD {not/\*never}  
 b. Ninguém gosta dela, pois {nãõ/\*ninguém}?  
 nobody likes of-her, CONFIRMATIVE-WORD {not/\*nobody}

In EP tag-questions, the repetition in the interrogative coda of the MN marker that is part of the declarative anchor does not save ungrammatical sentences like (56c-d):

- (ii) a. \*Ele gosta lá/agora dela, lá/agora gosta?  
 he likes MN-marker of-her MN-marker likes  
 b. \*Ele gosta lá/agora dela, pois lá/agora?  
 he likes MN-marker of-her CONFIRMATIVE-WORD MN-marker

<sup>32</sup> It also makes the testable prediction that the incompatibility between declaratives including unambiguous MN markers and tag-interrogatives should hold across languages. English seems to support this prediction:

- (i) A: They are married.  
 B: a. They aren't married, are they?  
 b. \*Like hell they are married, {are they/aren't they}?

A reviewer comments that there might be "another factor tending to rule out confirmatory (opposite polarity) tags" in the relevant context, namely "the clash between the uncertainty or hesitancy characteristic of such tags"

- (56) a. Ele gosta dela, não gosta? [affirmative declarative + tag]  
 he likes of-her not likes  
 ‘He likes her, doesn’t he?’
- b. Ele não gosta dela, pois não? [negative declarative + tag]  
 he not likes of-her CONFIRMATIVE-WORD not  
 ‘He doesn’t like her, does he?’
- c. \*Ele gosta *lá/agora* dela, não gosta? [MN declarative + tag]  
 he likes MN-marker of-her not likes
- d. \*Ele gosta *lá/agora* dela, pois não? [MN declarative + tag]  
 he likes MN-marker of-her CONFIRMATIVE-WORD not
- (57) A: O João está em casa?  
 the João is in house  
 ‘Is João at home?’
- B: a. Está, não está?  
 is not is  
 ‘He is, isn’t he?’
- b. Não, pois não?  
 no CONFIRMATIVE-WORD not  
 ‘He isn’t, is he?’

Another piece of evidence signaling the particular status of MN declaratives with respect to other types of responding assertions is their incompatibility with evidential adverbs, as illustrated in (58). The exclusion of evidential adverbs from MN declaratives can be accommodated within the general account developed in the paper, which takes merge into Spec,CP as the unifying factor behind the syntax of unambiguous metalinguistic negation markers. According to Cinque (1999), evidential adverbs belong in the COMP space. So evidential adverbs and unambiguous MN markers may well compete for the same structural position or a parallel grammatical role, being either alternative licensors for certain C-features or licensors for mutually exclusive C-based features.

- (58) A: (Evidentemente) ele (evidentemente) bateu no cão.  
 evidently he evidently beat in-the dog  
 ‘Evidently he beat the dog.’
- B: a. (Evidentemente) ele (evidentemente) não fez isso.  
 evidently he evidently not did that
- b. \* (Evidentemente) ele (evidentemente) fez {*lá/agora*} isso.  
 evidently he evidently did MN-marker that
- c. \* (Evidentemente) ele (evidentemente) fez isso *agora*.  
 evidently he evidently did that MN-marker  
 ‘Evidently he didn’t do that.’

To conclude this section, I would like to strengthen that declarative sentences expressing metalinguistic negation through unambiguous metalinguistic negation markers (be they peripheral idiomatic expressions or internal markers like the EP deictic *lá*) necessarily feature

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and the extreme certainty accompanying peripheral MN markers like *like hell*, *my eye*, and *no way*”. Actually, the “extreme certainty” effect arises with *uma ova* ‘a fish’s roe’ but not with the deictics *lá* and *agora* (in this respect the English translations with *like hell/no way* throughout the paper might be misleading). But the crucial point here is that sentences (56c-d) are not semantically/pragmatically odd, they are outright ungrammatical.

reactions to a previous assertion, thus are only licensed as responsive moves. This is the reason why the model of conversational update proposed by Farkas and Bruce (2010) seems to be particularly fruitful in dealing with the facts discussed in this paper, once it is slightly adapted to accommodate the feature [objection].<sup>33</sup>

## 7. Conclusion and avenues for future research

This paper explores the syntax of unambiguous metalinguistic negation markers in European Portuguese, with the main goal of demonstrating that metalinguistic negation is a challenging, though neglected, topic in syntax. The EP facts discussed in the paper clearly reveal that what has been commonly handled in the literature as a pragmatic construct is, after all, a syntactic matter as well.

Taking the EP facts not as an idiosyncrasy of this particular language but as a means to gain insight into the grammatical encoding of metalinguistic negation in natural language, a series of new results were attained:

(i) Unambiguous MN markers are part of natural language and split into two types: *peripheral* MN markers, that are pervasive across languages, and *internal* MN markers, that appear to have a very restricted cross-linguistic distribution.

(ii) The split between peripheral and internal MN markers is confirmed by their contrasting behavior with respect to a series of syntactic tests, namely: availability in isolation and nominal fragments; ability to take scope over negation, emphatic/contrastive high constituents and whole coordinate structures; compatibility with idiomatic sentences; compatibility with VP Ellipsis. Peripheral MN markers respond positively to all these tests, whereas internal MN markers respond negatively. Word order is not a central factor in establishing the internal/peripheral dichotomy.

(iii) Peripheral MN markers are directly merged in CP (more accurately, undergo external merge into Spec,CP); internal MN markers undergo overt movement (more accurately, internal merge) into Spec,CP, and concomitantly there is V-to-C movement. The role played by the CP domain in both cases constitutes the unifying link between the two types of structures,

(iv) Cluster formation in EP, which puts together two MN markers of different types (as for the peripheral/internal partition), can be shown to lead support to the proposed syntactic analysis.

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<sup>33</sup> A reviewer points out that there are examples in the literature of metalinguistic negation sentences that do not require an antecedent, thus are not responsive assertions. This fact must indeed be acknowledge. However, all the relevant cases discussed in the literature feature metalinguistic negation (ambiguously) expressed by standard negation markers and this is not the type of metalinguistic negation structures that constitute the focus of the present paper. I am dealing here with the syntax of unambiguous MN markers only and make no claim that the current analysis should be taken to unify all the different instances of metalinguistic negation discussed in the literature. In fact, I would rather stand for the hypothesis that sentences displaying unambiguous MN markers (i.e. items that cannot express ordinary negation under any conditions) syntactically differ from other MN sentences, but I am unable to pursue the matter further at this point.

On the other hand, the fact that I have adopted Farkas and Bruce (2010) as a means to articulate syntax and pragmatics and motivate movement operations in the type of MN structures here discussed should not be seen as an alternative to semantic analyses of metalinguistic negation such as Giannakidou and Stravou (2009)/Giannakidou and Yoon (2011). I believe that components of the two approaches can be shown to be complementary, although this goes well beyond the central aim of this paper, which is to show in what respects metalinguistic negation is a syntactic issue. Note, for example, that the grammatical encoding of emphatic/expressive content in CP (as a kind of illocutionary force) may offer a motivation for V-to-C movement in the sentences with *lá* since other types of evaluative sentences are reported in the literature on European Portuguese that also display V-to-C (cf. the final paragraph of section 4.2, footnote 14, Ambar (1992, 1999), and Costa and Martins (2011)).

(v) The concept of *responding assertion* (Farkas and Bruce 2010) is relevant to understand the role of the CP field in the syntax of MN declaratives. Under the hypothesis that besides the relative polarity features [*same*] and [*reverse*], that characterize *confirmations* and *reversals* respectively, there is a feature [*objection*] that singles out MN declaratives, this will be the edge feature that drives unambiguous MN markers into the CP space. Supporting the view that MN declaratives are a particular type of responding assertion, and that polarity lies behind its uniqueness, is the observation that they are sharply incompatible with polar tag-questions.

As a result of the present study, questions of cross-linguistic variation related but not circumscribed to MN structures can be identified and constitute topics for future investigation. Cross-linguistic research is likely to mainly focus on peripheral MN markers, as internal MN markers appear to be typologically rare (an observation that by itself appeals to further inquiry). Example (59) below shows how EP and English differ from each other, syntactically, when metalinguistic negation is expressed by an idiomatic expression. While in English the idiomatic MN marker is always juxtaposed at the beginning or end of the sentence, in European Portuguese the sentence-initial position requires that a cleft-type structure be constructed. This contrast between English and EP may turn out to correlate with other systematic grammatical contrasts between the two languages. Observation of other languages strengthens the case for consistent variation in the domain of peripheral MN markers. A last illustrative set of data is introduced in (60) below. Spanish idiomatic MN markers cannot be merely juxtaposed in sentence-initial position. But the grammatical option in Spanish is not a cleft-type structure, as in EP, it is instead the type of structure that usually expresses emphatic affirmation (cf. Martins 2006).

- (59) a. *The hell* they are friends. English  
 b. \**Uma ova* eles são amigos. EP  
     a fish's-roe they are friends  
 c. *Uma ova* é que eles são amigos. EP  
     a fish's-roe is that they are friends  
 d. Eles são amigos *uma ova*. EP  
     they are friends a fish's-roe  
     'The hell they are friends. / They are friends my eye.'

- (60) a. *Tu tía* sí que están casados. Spanish  
     your aunt AFF that are married  
 b. \**Tu tía* están casados. Spanish  
     your aunt are married  
 c. *Están casados tu tía*. Spanish  
     are married your aunt  
     'The hell they are married.' / 'They are married my eye.'

Besides cross-linguistic variation with respect to the same kind of peripheral MN markers (i.e. idiomatic expressions), language-internal variation dependent on certain basic features of the MN markers (like 'deictic', 'quantifier' or 'wh-', for example) is also observed. In European Portuguese, only peripheral MN markers that are basically deictics or quantifiers can occur in clause-medial position (for example, *agora* 'now' and *alguma vez* 'some time'). At the same time, these MN markers can be juxtaposed in sentence-initial position (dispensing with, and actually excluding, the cleft-type structure that idiomatic expressions require). On the other hand, *wh-* peripheral MN markers like *qual* ('which'), *qual quê*

(‘which what’) and *o quê* (‘the what’) are limited to juxtaposing either to the sentence-initial position or to the sentence-final position.

These last and very sketchy observations evidence that the behavior of peripheral MN markers may vary across languages and within the same language. Much to the point, syntax is the locus of variation.

### Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to the participants in the *Workshop Minimalism and Interfaces*, in S. Paulo, and the *34th GLOW Colloquium*, in Vienna, for their insightful questions and comments on earlier versions of this work. The present paper owes a great deal to the three anonymous reviewers and the Editor-in-Chief of *NLLT*. It goes without saying that all shortcomings are mine. Research for this paper was funded by FCT – *Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia* within the project WOChWEL (PTDC/CLE-LIN/121707/2010).

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