

Vorwort

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Der jährliche „Saarbrücker Runde Tisch für Dialektsyntax (SaRDiS)“ fand im Jahr 2022 bereits zum neunten Mal statt. Die in diesem Band enthaltenen Aufsätze stammen größtenteils von diesem Treffen, teilweise jedoch auch von den Tagungen des Jahres 2021 oder von thematisch passenden Beiträgen, die nicht im Rahmen der Tagung präsentiert wurden. Auf allen Konferenzen wurde erneut eine breite Vielfalt syntaktischer Phänomene in zahlreichen Varietäten untersucht, wobei auch diachrone Perspektiven berücksichtigt wurden.

Auch thematisch lässt sich der vorliegende Sammelband in verschiedene Bereiche unterteilen. Er beginnt dabei mit zwei Aufsätzen, die Negation betrachten (Schüler und Márkus/Nagy) – einmal aus der phonologisch-prosodischen Perspektive und einmal am Beispiel des deutschen Dialekts von Deutschpilsen/Nagybörzsöny. Daran schließt sich ein Beitrag (Schäfer) darüber an, wie Dramentexte als Quelle für die historische Dialektologie und Perzeptionslinguistik dienen können. Die nächsten drei Beiträge betrachten Klitika in unterschiedlichen Frameworks und variierendem Fokus: Der erste dieser beiden Artikel (Bidese/Tomaselli) beschreibt die Auxiliarerhöhung im Zibrischen aus generativer Perspektive, bevor im nächsten Aufsatz die Numerus- und Genuskongruenz von Nebensatzeinleitern mit dem Subjekt des Satzes untersucht werden (Renkwitz). Im Folgenden werden die Beiträge kurz vorgestellt.

Julia Schülers Aufsatz beleuchtet die phonologisch-prosodische Seite des Jespersen-Zyklus im Mittelhochdeutschen. Sie argumentiert, dass die phonologische Schwäche der Negationspartikel nicht allein den Jespersen-Zyklus bestimmt, sondern dass deren Stabilität von der erfolgreichen Integration in die prosodische Satzstruktur abhängt. Diese Prosodifizierung wird durch universelle Silbenstrukturpräferenzen, varietäts-spezifische Fußtypen und andere phonologische Eigenschaften beeinflusst, die durch segmentale und suprasegmentale Regeln systematisch beschrieben werden können.

Der Beitrag von Éva Márkus und Gizella Balogné Nagy analysiert die Negationskongruenz im deutschen Dialekt von Deutschpilsen/Nagybörzsöny in Nordungarn, in dem Mehrfachnegation mit oder ohne Negationspartikel möglich ist. Die systematische Beschreibung zeigt, dass diese Strukturen durch Sprachkontakt mit dem Ungarischen, wo ebenfalls Mehrfachnegation vorkommt, erklärbar sein könnten. Alternativ wird diskutiert, ob das Pilsnerische als Teil des Südbairischen ein konservatives Negationsmuster bewahrt hat, das auch archaische Phänomene anderer Art umfasst.

Lea Schäfer untersucht syntaktische Stereotype in Dialektadaptionen von Theaterstücken des 16.–19. Jahrhunderts und zeigt deren Bedeutung für die Rekonstruktion

historischer oraler Varietäten sowie perzeptionslinguistischer Prozesse. Anhand von Fallbeispielen wie der *-li*-Diminution, der Spaltung von Pronominaladverbien und Verbstellungsvariationen argumentiert sie, dass literarische Dialektadaptionen wertvolle Einblicke in die Wahrnehmung von sprachlicher Fremdheit und Distanz bieten. Zudem wird aufgezeigt, dass sie nicht nur bestehende Stereotype verstärken, sondern auch deren Ursprünge reflektieren. Dies unterstreicht das Potenzial von Dramentexten als Quelle für die historische Dialektologie und Perzeptionslinguistik.

Ermenegildo Bidese und Alessandra Tomaselli betrachten die Auxiliarerhöhung im Zimbrischen, einer deutschen Minderheitensprache in Norditalien, als Beispiel für eine V-zu-T-Bewegung. Es wird gezeigt, dass diese Bewegung ein postverbales DP-Subjekt ausschließt und das finite Auxiliar als Träger für Objektklitika fungiert. Ihre Analyse legt nahe, dass diese Prozesse die bekannte V₂-Asymmetrie abbauen und zu einer typologischen Veränderung in der zimbrischen Wortordnung führen können.

Julia Renkwitz untersucht die Kongruenz zwischen Numerus- und Personenmarkierung von Anfangselementen in Nebensätzen kontinental-westgermanischer Varietäten mit den Subjekten dieser Sätze. Sie identifiziert sechs Gruppen von Übereinstimmungsmarkern, die auf zwei diachrone Szenarien zurückzuführen sind: analoger Transfer oder Klitikalisierung mit anschließender Grammatikalisierung. Die Marker bilden ein Kontinuum zwischen Klitika und Flexionssuffixen, was eine Neubewertung traditioneller grammatischer Kategorien nahelegt und die Vorteile eines mikrotypologischen Ansatzes unterstreicht.

Jespersen's cycle in Middle High German

A syntactic phenomenon from a phonological perspective

JULIA SCHÜLER

1 Introduction

Historical German is well known for having undergone *Jespersen's Cycle*,¹ a term that was coined by Dahl (1979). In line with Willis et al. (2013: 6) it is used here for neutrally referring to the complete renewal of the expression of standard negation in a language.² Preverbal *ni* appears consistently in Old High German (OHG) negative clauses (Jäger 2008: 5 and 9) while Middle High German (MHG) manuscripts display the graphic variants <ne>, <n> and <en> (*ne/en*, Paul et al. 2007: 31 and 388), suggesting a phonological weakening of the old particle, which seems to be compensated by the addition of postverbal *nīeht/nīht* (< OHG *ni(o)uuiht* 'nothing'; Jespersen 1917: 4) and at some point completely replaced by it.³

Current approaches addressing this change either rather focus on the (potentially) replacing elements, their origin (Breitbarth et al. 2013) or the reconstruction of their changing syntactic characteristics while becoming the standard expression of negation (Breitbarth 2014: 133–136, 157–160, Jäger 2008: 112–114, Pickl 2017: 28–30), being less detailed on the changing phonological form of the old negation particle and a possible connection to its final loss. The same seems to hold for studies on the use of sin-

¹ Historical German also includes Low German Varieties, for which this very development has also been documented (Breitbarth 2014, Schröder 2014). The same holds for Dutch (e.g. Burridge 1993, Breitbarth 2013, Hoeksema 2014) and English (e.g. Iyeri 2001, Wallage 2005, Walkden and Morrison 2017). Elaborations on language-specific progressions in this regard have to be left out in this contribution for practical reasons, but the publications named here have also contributed crucially to the ideas to be presented in this paper and are thus referred to although they do not draw on Old High German and Middle High German data.

² Jespersen (1917) observed this change for a range of Germanic but also non-Germanic languages, summarizing and generalizing the similarities as systematic alternation between weakening, strengthening and reweakening (Jespersen 1917: 4). Note that this paper does not use the term *Jespersen's Cycle* to characterize languages or historical language periods displaying exclusively either mononegative or polynegative constructions – see Donhauser (1996) for (justifiably) criticizing this implication with regard to clauses also containing indefinites in the scope of negation, and further Elspass and Langer (2012) as well as Pickl (2017) who tie in with this very criticism.

³ Some modern Alemannic dialects display *it* or *et* instead of *nit* or *net* as their standard expression of negation (cf. Jäger 2008: 118, Schüler i. E.: 43–46), suggesting *ieht/iht* (< OHG (*io*)*uuiht* 'anything') as an alternatively supporting and replacing element.

gle *ne/en* in Middle High German exceptive clauses, treating it as a case of *exaptation* (Witzenhausen 2019: 11).

Thus, this paper exclusively concentrates on the phonological side of the development, departing from rather short remarks in the pertinent literature that hint at the role of (prosodic) phonology during the beginning demise of MHG *ne/en* being part of a contemporary bipartite negation particle that results from the change mentioned above (see 1).

- (1) *daz er ez niht enwest*
 that he it NEG NEG=knew
 ‘that he didn’t know it’

Upper German (UG) charter of 1298 (CAO⁴ 1800A: III, 116, 41)

Behaghel (1918: 245) observes single MHG *niht* more frequently with finite verbs displaying unstressed prefixes (see 2a; and also Szczepaniak 2010: 328–329) and assumes a correlation with the fact that the actual use of *ne/en* in those cases would lead to two adjacent unstressed syllables. This prosodic scenario is avoided by dropping *ne/en*.⁵

- (2) a. *dat de nemeliche man [...] die brüderschaf*
 that the namely man the membership
niet wiedder Ø gewûmne
 NEG again win.SUBJ.PRET
 ‘that the man mentioned [...] would not regain his membership of the guild’

Western Central German (WCG) charter of 1269 (CAO 53: I, 86, 45)

- b. *der da selbe nit leisten Ø will*
 who there oneself NEG serve want
 ‘who doesn’t want to serve in person’

Western Central German charter of 1292 (CAO 1638: 22, 766, 44)

- c. *vn dis lehen Ø sol man niet deilen*
 and this feud shall one NEG share
 ‘and this feud is not supposed to be shared’

Western Central German charter of around 1250 (CAO 13: I, 25, 5)

4 CAO = *Corpus altdeutscher Originalurkunden bis zum Jahre 1300* (‘Corpus of Old German original charters until the year 1300’, Wilhelm et al. (eds.) 1932–2004). See below resp. section 2 for more details on this source of Middle High German texts. In order to facilitate the examples’ readability occurrences of <f> (‘long <s>’) were substituted by today’s <s>. Also note that the last number of the reference given only refers to the line containing the negation particle.

5 “Daß bei den mit Vorsilben zusammengesetzten Verben *en-* besonders früh untergeht, hängt wohl mit dem Betonungsverhältnissen zusammen. Die größte Masse der Vorsilbe ist unbetont; es traten also durch die Verneinung zwei unbetonte Silben nebeneinander” (Behaghel 1918: 245).

Remarkably, this prosodic “setting” can be assumed as well in verb-final clauses containing auxiliaries or modal verbs that immediately follow the verbal infinitive (2-1 verb clusters, Pickl 2017: 13–14). But not only clauses like (2b) are said to display such “haplology effects” (Hoeksema 2014: 55), as they also can be detected in verb-second clauses containing a syntactic word ending in <-en> which precedes any finite verb (see 2c, further Burridge (1993: 196) on Middle Dutch).

Finally, early loss of *ne/en* is observed by Grimm (1837: 1246) and also Gärtner (1997: 89–90) for verb-first clauses in diverse manuscripts, containing rhythmic prose. This phenomenon is also documented by Breitbarth (2014: 48–49) for Middle Low German charters and explained as follows:

A likely reason for the fact that *ne/en* is lost earlier and faster from verb-initial clauses like asyndetic conditionals is that in many languages, unstressed syllables like *ne/en* in prosodically difficult positions such as the sentence-initial position are harder to produce for language-acquiring children. This has been demonstrated for determiners (*the*) and other unstressed syllables (e.g. *giraffe*) by Gerken (1994a,b, 1996), cf. also Gerken (2005:171), who attributes this to the fact that language acquirers apply a metrical foot production template to intended utterances in which a strong syllable precedes a weak syllable, eliminating weak syllables that do not fit the template [...] (Breitbarth 2014: 50; original markup and style).

It becomes evident that those specific syntactic contexts just listed do have in common certain restrictions on weak, i. e. unstressed syllables as a part of larger prosodic constituents. Drawing on the theory of prosodic phonology (Selkirk 1981a, 1981b, Nespor and Vogel 1986, 2007) to further explore and reassess the characteristics of the preverbal particle, two things are necessary. First, capturing historical phonological developments as rules, and second, relating them not to specific syntactic structures but to the particular constituent(s) with which their prosodic representations can be described.

When searching through the various phonological developments in the history of German that result in a rather systematic deletion of unstressed syllables, one immediately thinks of Schwa deletion.⁶ However, while the spelling variant <ne> is easily interpreted as a reflection of the previous weakening of full vowels to Schwa (/ə/) in unstressed syllables (e.g. Fleischer and Schallert 2011: 229), the form <en> does not seem as self-explanatory (i. e. as a result of Schwa deletion) as the phonological form that is indicated by single <n> (3b). Paul et al. (2007: 31) assume the remaining nasal /n/ to

⁶ This term is used instead of the more traditional terms *apocope* and *syncope* that refer to the loss of Schwa either at the end or at the beginning or in the middle of a (content) word (cf. Paul et al. 2007: 108–109, Klein 2000, Klein 2005). Other traditional terms used for referring to regular phonological development of vowel omission in general are *pre- or posttonic vowels/syllables* and *prefixes*, e.g. the reference grammars of Old High German (by Braune and Heidermanns 2018) and Middle High German (Paul et al. 2007).

of *ne/en* as a canonical enclitic, or to be more precise, the assumption of *ne/en* to be prosodified with left-adjacent strong, i. e. stressed syllables, forming trochees or dactyls.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows: Section 2 reports on the data, made of 472 clauses containing a negation particle only. They have been collected exhaustively from a range of charters that were written in the late 13th century, and offer insights on the varying use of *ne/en* depending on dialect region and position of the finite verb. However, it turns out that the additional thorough investigation of its graphematic characteristics crucially contributes to the analysis proposal to be presented and illustrated in section 3, namely by means of their interpretation in terms of Vennemann's (1988) preference laws of syllable structure. The analysis is further based on the view of the phonological foot as a fully established universal constituent of the prosodic hierarchy (Wiese 2006, Eisenberg 1991, 2013), including the assumption of more than just one language-specific type and justified by assuming the polysyllabic types to be the domain for a Schwa-deletion rule mentioned above. Section 4 specifies two of several more advantages of the approach, i. e. how it is able to plausibly account for further empirical phenomena of Jespersen's Cycle, such as the temporarily longer use of the bipartite negation particle in Western Central German as well as in verb-final clauses (independently of the greater dialect area). Section 5 concludes by spelling out some ideas on how this phonological side of the development can be linked reasonably with syntactic accounts based on the NegP hypothesis modelling Jespersen's Cycle (especially by Jäger 2008).

2 Data and quantitative results

The following analyses are based on 472 clauses negated by either single *ne/en* or single *niht* or the combination of both. They were collected manually and exhaustively from 281 charters of the *Corpus altdeutscher Originalurkunden bis zum Jahr 1300* ('Corpus of Old German original charters until the year 1300 (CAO)') by Wilhelm et al. (eds.) 1932–2004, including the ten supplementary charters edited by Bohn and Rapp (1995a). This source of Middle High German as well as the range of texts itself were selected for the following reasons. First, Wilhelm insisted on reproducing the charters as closely to the originals as possible (Wilhelm 1932: LX). He thereby deviated intentionally from the then established editorial practice of reconstructing "original" ideal versions of literary texts on the basis of written records, mainly by "normalizing", i. e. the unification of spelling and thus potentially obscuring interpretative evidence for regularities on the phonological or morphosyntactic level.⁸ Second, as partly for-

⁸ See Becker and Schallert (2021: 200), Becker and Schallert (2022: 151) for more detailed information and further literature on the CAO, further Fleischer and Schallert (2011: 64–66) with explicit reference to Middle High German preverbal negation as a case study for the editorial practice just described.

mal documents that served for the verification of legal actions like disposals, charters mandatorily contain the date of issue (Becker and Schallert 2021: 201). That leaves us with rather well-dateable transmissions of Middle High German in contrast to many “traditional” manuscripts containing the literary texts just referred to.⁹ Last but not least, a manageable amount of the CAO consists of Western Central German texts ($n = 124$, cf. Gärtner et al. 1997: 80–106, Bohn and Rapp 1995b: 45 and 53),¹⁰ promising a more distinct picture of the areal variation of the German Jespersen’s Cycle’s that is suggested by pertinent quantitative investigations so far. According to Behaghel (1918: 85–86) and Jäger (2008: 121), selected Upper German scribal dialects of the 13th century merely display left-over evidence for the bipartite negation marker. This picture is supplemented by Pickl (2017: 25) who provides Upper German data (from sermons) also for the 12th and the second half of the 11th century, indicating that this construction is regularly used only in very few and also rather early texts and thus giving rise to the assumption that Jespersen’s Cycle progressed very quickly in this greater dialect area.¹¹ In contrast, the data sets collected for Central German so far (Jäger 2008, Schüler 2016, Schüler 2017, Hrbek 2021), especially the Western variety, contain a considerably larger proportion of clauses still containing *ne/en* next to *niht*.¹²

Before finally presenting the distribution of preverbal *ne/en* depending on the scribal dialect and the finite verb’s position it needs to be mentioned that the data’s quantitative examination was preceded by careful methodical considerations, e.g. the exclusion of ambiguous items as in (4a). Here, <en> can be analyzed either as preverbal particle or as a phonological weak variant of the coordinating conjunction *unde/und/unt* ‘and’ (see Burridge 1993: 198 for similar cases of Middle Dutch).¹³ The aforementioned verb-second exceptive clauses as in (4b, written as <-n>) were also taken into account separately.

⁹ This text-specific advantage has also already been stated for Middle Dutch charters (Van Reenen and Mulder 2000) and Middle Low German charters (Breitbarth 2014).

¹⁰ In total, the CAO comprises 4,617 charters of which 4,289 are written in German language and were mainly issued in Upper German regions (cf. Ganslmayer 2012: 46–47).

¹¹ The quantitative investigation by Hrbek (2021: 161–162) on the basis of the *Referenzkorpus Mittelhochdeutsch* (ReM, cf. Petran et al. 2016) however indicates that there are indeed more texts of the 12th century (mainly verse!) that contain a larger proportion of the bipartite negation marker.

¹² The texts of the CAO are all randomly handed down to us, naturally representing not a perfect source for Middle High German. Next to the Upper German focus, 87 % of the charters were produced and issued between 1280 and 1299 (cf. Ganslmayer 2012: 40), which however makes it unsurpassable in terms of regional resolution (cf. Becker and Schallert 2021: 201). See also Schüler (i. E.: 151–166) for the discussion of apparant as well as actual drawbacks of this text genre.

¹³ This variant might be comparable to the one used in the variety of Standard German *Leben und Tod* ‘life and death’ [‘le:bənən’tod] (Hall 1999: 119). Further, it does not seem impossible that <en> was written (by mistake?) for the coordinating conjunction’s strong variant.

- (4) a. *Ein ieclich goltsmit sal lodic burnen vndir so*
 A any goldsmith shall fine burn under so
sime ceichine en tede he des nicht
 his sign and do.SUBJ.PRET he this NEG
 'Every goldsmith is to forge (coins) according to the required
 standard (and) if he didn't do so, then ...'
 Western Central German charter of 1299 (CAO 1161A: II, 440, 30)
- b. *ern tu ez mit vnser beider rat vnde willen*
 he=EXZ do.SUBJ.PRES it with our both advice and consent
 '... unless he would do it according to our both's advice and consent'
 Upper German charter of 1282 (CAO 517: I, 455, 1)

Table 1 shows the distribution of the three negation particle variants in Western Central German charters as opposed to Upper German charters. The highly resolved snapshot provided by those data matches the results of previous studies mentioned above. First, the both shares of single preverbal *ne/en* as negation particle are below 1.8 % and confirm its general loss (Witzenhausen 2019). Second, only about 10 % of the Upper German clauses contain bipartite negation, confirming its extensive loss in this dialect area by 1250 (Behaghel 1918: 85–86, Jäger 2008: 117–118, Pickl 2017: 8–9). It is in stark contrast to the still rather high share of 78.2 % in Western Central German charters,¹⁴ that indicates that the omission of *ne/en* seems to have started only recently in this dialect area, making the texts especially precious for exploring the phonological conditions of Jespersen's Cycle.

Tab. 1 Diatopic distribution of bipartite and single negation particles

scribal dialect	<i>ne/en</i>	<i>ne/en ... niht</i>	<i>niht</i>	total
Western Central German	3 (1.7 %)	136 (78.2 %)	35 (20.1 %)	174 (100 %)
Upper German	1 (0.4 %)	29 (9.7 %)	268 (89.9 %)	298 (100 %)
total	4 (0.8 %)	165 (35 %)	303 (64.2 %)	472 (100 %)

In fact, the Western Central German data displays the asymmetry regarding the position of the finite verb remarked earlier. As can be seen in table 2 (which disregards the three clauses containing single *ne/en*), over a third of the verb-first clauses already

¹⁴ $\chi^2(1, n = 468) = 231.41, p < .01, V = 0.7$.

contain single *niht* (5, see first conjunct) whereas the share is only 15.7 % in verb-final¹⁵ clauses and with 6.1 % even lower in verb-second clauses.¹⁶

Tab. 2 Distribution of bipartite negation vs single (i. e. postverbal) negation in Western Central German charters (13th century)

position of the finite verb	<i>ne/en ... niht</i>	<i>niht</i>	total
first	8 (34.8 %)	15 (65.2 %)	23 (100 %)
second	31 (93.9 %)	2 (6.1 %)	33 (100 %)
final	97 (84.3 %)	18 (15.7 %)	115 (100 %)
total	136 (79.5 %)	35 (20.5 %)	171 (100 %)

Note that there seems to be a difference between absolute verb-first clauses and verb-first conjuncts (see second conjunct in 5: *vn̄de en̄hilfet niht*). The latter items ($n = 13$) do not seem to be affected by the loss of *ne/en* as strongly as the clauses not preceded by coordinating syntax material ($n = 10$), missing the preverbal particle in every single case.

- (5) ... *bit deime merrendeile des Rathes/Ø Get er dan nit dar*
with the majority the.gen council goes he then neg there
zv vn̄de en̄hilfet niht dar zv [...] so ist er meineidec [...]
to and NEG=helped neg there to so is he perjured
‘... with the council’s majority. If he doesn’t participate then and is not of any
help with it, [...] he is perjuring himself’
Western Central German charter of 1287 (CAO 903: II, 263, 29)

Tab. 3 Distribution of bipartite negation vs single (postverbal) negation

finite verb’s position	<i>ne/en ... niht</i>	<i>niht</i>	total
first	0 (0 %)	74 (100 %)	74 (100 %)
second	0 (0 %)	40 (100 %)	40 (100 %)
final	29 (15.9 %)	154 (84.1 %)	183 (100 %)
total	29 (9.8 %)	268 (90.2 %)	297 (100 %)

In comparison to the Upper German data shown in table 3 another difference with regard to the position of finite verb becomes visible. All 29 clauses still containing the

¹⁵ This label also refers to clauses with the finite verb in later position than the second.

¹⁶ Verb-first vs. verb-second: $\chi^2 (1, n = 56) = 22, p < .01, V = .6$; verb-first vs. verb-final: $\chi^2 = 1, n = 138) = 26, p < .01, V = .4$.

bipartite negation marker are verb-final, confirming another observation by Behaghel (1918: 245) who considered a preserving effect for *ne/en* in verb-final clauses when positioned immediately left-adjacent to *niht* (see 1). This is indeed the case in 83 % ($n = 26$) of this data set.

Tab. 4 Spelling variants of *ne/en* (as part of bipartite negation)

spelling	<ne>	<n>	<en> or <in>	total
compound right	0	0	119	119 (71.3 %)
compound left	1	0	2	3 (1.8 %)
seperate	0	0	45	45 (26.9 %)
total	1 (0.6 %)	0 (0 %)	166 (99.4 %)	167 (100 %)

Last, but not least: table 4 summarizes two central observations concerning the spelling of preverbal *ne/en*. First and somewhat disappointing, there are only three instances of compound spelling with the preceding syntactic word (*compound left*), among which is the only finding for <ne> as spelling variant. Likewise unexpectedly, there is no case for single <n> at all either, which leaves <en>/<in> as the major spelling variant,¹⁷ indicating the prevalence of a supporting vowel, the aforementioned epenthetic /ə/ on the phonological level. The analysis to be proposed in the following section is thus based especially on closer views on what triggers epenthetic vowels universally, and at the same time taking into account the comparatively high share of over a quarter of “separate spelling” against the compound spelling with the finite verb. The analysis is also going to cover plausibly the shown diatopic and surface syntactic variation in the use of the preverbal element as a part of the bipartite particle.

3 Qualitative analysis: a proposal

The account to be presented in this section basically draws on the theory of prosodic phonology as sketched by Selkirk (1981a, 1981b) and elaborated in more detail by Nespor and Vogel (1986, 2007).¹⁸ One of the main ideas of the theory is that the pho-

¹⁷ The spelling variant <in> seems to be a specific of the Western Central German scribal dialect that is not mentioned by Paul et al. (2004) but in the grammar of Early New High German (ENHG) by Moser and Stopp (1973). However, Paul et al. (2004: 113) do mention the common use of <i> instead of or at least next to <e> for expressing the vowel of unstressed syllables (not only in Western Central German but also in Upper German and Eastern Central German, cf. Paul et al. 2004: 52–53), which is why <in> is seen as a purely graphic variant of the preverbal particle.

¹⁸ Note that there are also pretheoretic versions of a prosodic hierarchy, e.g. by Saran (1907). See also Booij (1983: 249).

nological representation of a clause is organized exhaustively and hierarchically into the units listed in (6), which do not necessarily coincide with syntactic units.

- (6) Prosodic Hierarchy:
 Phonological Utterance (PU)
 Intonational Phrase (IntP)
 Phonological Phrase (Φ)
 Prosodic Word (ω)
 Foot (F)
 Syllable (σ)

Still, subsequent studies (e.g. Selkirk 1996, Hall 1999, Kabak and Schiering 2006, Truckenbrodt 1999, Bögel 2021) can be characterised as more or less “syntax-determined” (cf. Lahiri and Plank 2010: 372), as they consider lexical heads or syntactic phrases to play a decisive role regarding the prosodic structure of a clause, either by focusing on the prosodic word or the phonological phrase and thereby ostensibly agreeing with Nespor’s and Vogel’s (2007: xv) characterization of syllable and foot as “‘purely phonological’, that is, not involving an interface with other components of grammar”. The approach presented here, however considers that every single syntactic word – content words as well as strong function words and especially weak function words – are first and foremost represented by (parts of) syllables and (parts of) feet on the level of p-structure. Hence, I do not assume a substantial difference between content words and function words regarding their prosodic structure, as suggested e.g. by Selkirk’s (2011) *Match Theory* that is questioned by Tyler (2019) and also Bögel (2021). However, their accounts as well either continue to rely on the prosodic word interfacing with the morpho(-syntax) of a language (Tyler 2019), or center on a unit originally not being provided by the prosodic hierarchy, i.e. the recursive prosodic word. Instead, all syntactic words are said to match to whole or partial feet (dominating syllables at all times) at the syntax-phonology/prosody interface. This idea is fundamentally inspired by Lahiri and Plank (2010: 372–375), who remind of the older school “of thought concerning phonological phrasing at the levels between those of word and clause in Germanic”.¹⁹ According to seminal phoneticians-cum-prosodists as Joshua Steele (1779), Henry Sweet (e.g. 1877) and Eduard Sievers (1901a, 1901b), an “utterance is divided up into parts which begin with a strong and typically end with a weak constituent, [...] forming rhythmic patterns of trochees and also dactyls [...]” (Lahiri and Plank 2010: 374). On this view, phonological phrasing can occur at the expense of morphosyntactic integrity: “[...] initial weak (unstressed) syllables are phrased with a strong (stressed) syllable preceding them across morphological word boundaries” (Lahiri and Plank 2010: 374). This is illustrated by the following

¹⁹ Note that the authors use *phonological phrasing* as a cover term for grouping at all levels of the prosodic hierarchy and that, as just indicated, I do not focus on the unit of the phonological word.

clause in (7a) that contains a past participle displaying the prefix *ge-*, with square brackets marking the syntactic constituents. Its (simplified) prosodic structure is shown in (7b), by using capital letters for stressed syllables and minuscules for unstressed syllables. Further, full stops mark syllable boundaries and round brackets phonological feet. Here *ge-* is assumed to belong to the preceding dactyl at the interface instead of forming a joint phonological lower-level unit with the phonological representation of *-scheitert*.

- (7) a. [Alle Hoffnungen] [[sind] [ihm] [gescheitert]].
 b. (AL.le) (HOFF.nu:jen) (SINT ihm ge) (SCHEI.tert)
 all hopes are him failed
 ‘All hopes have failed him.’

New High German (NHG), taken from Sievers (1901b)²⁰

With regard to a fresh look at the phonological characteristics of the Middle High German preverbal (negation) particle and their further development to be reconstructed, two further assumptions are necessary. The first one is made on the syllable, more precisely on universal tendencies regarding its structure and how they can be related to *ne/en*. Second, somewhat more innovative ideas are presented about the foot, i.e. phonological rules explicitly defining the foot as a unit of the prosodic hierarchy and that there is more than one language-specific foot type.

4 The role of preference-laws for syllable structure (Vennemann 1988)

According to Vennemann (1988), the optimal structure of a syllable can be captured cross-linguistically by the so-called head law (8), coda law (9) and nucleus law (10).

- (8) *Head Law*: A syllable head is the more preferred,
 a. the closer the number of speech sounds is to one,
 b. the greater the consonant strength value of its onset, and
 c. the more sharply the consonantal strength drops from the onset within a complex syllable head.

(Vennemann 1988: 13–14)

- (9) *Coda Law*: A syllable coda is the more preferred,
 a. the smaller the number of speech sounds,
 b. the lower the consonantal strength rises toward its offset, and
 c. the more sharply the consonantal strength rises toward the offset within a complex syllable coda.

(Vennemann 1988: 21)

²⁰ This example is also quoted, next to others in Dutch and English, by Lahiri and Plank (2010: 374).

- (10) *Nucleus Law*: A syllable nucleus is the more preferred,
 a. the closer the number of its speech sounds is to one,
 b. the lower the consonantal strength of its speech sounds.
 (Vennemann 1988: 27)

Those preference-laws (Mailhammer et al. 2015: 450–462) are based on a concept generally known as *sonority*, a relational measure in inverse proportion to the scalar feature of consonantal strength that expresses the “deviation from unimpeded voiced airflow” (Vennemann 1988: 8). According to the scale in (13), stops are the least sonorous whereas vowels are the segments with high or even highest sonority.

In this paper, it is assumed that these universal tendencies, while being well-observed for a range of modern languages (Neef 2002: 36–37), also hold for historical languages (Foley 1970, Lavoie 2001). This can be illustrated by the historical development of the mentioned German *ge-/ke-*prefix (< OHG *gi-/ki-*) in modern dialects (Schirmunski 2011: 214–216). Not only as part of past participles it can either be observed to be given up completely (11) or to be preserved as outer head segment of the verbal stem syllable (12) in the course of Schwa deletion.

- (11) a. *blibe* ‘stay.PTCP’
 b. *degd* ‘cover.PTCP’
 c. *grābe* ‘dig.PTCP’
 (Schirmunski 2010: 214–216)

- (12) a. *gfonde* ‘find.PTCP’
 b. *gsoje* ‘sing.PTCP’
 c. *gmaxd* ‘make.PTCP’
 (Schirmunski 2010: 214–216)

The examples given by Schirmunski (2010) for UG strongly suggest that each of both options depends on the sonority of the initial segment of the stem-syllable. If it happens to be a stop, the total loss of the prefix can be explained with the low or practically non-existent sonority of initial *g-/k-* (8b), preventing resyllabification with the following stem syllable because it would lead to a complex syllable head (not preferred according to 8a) within which sonority would not rise towards the preferably high-sonorous nucleus (as expressed in 8c and 10b). This is however exactly the case, when the stem syllable’s segment is a fricative as in (12a) and (12b) or a nasal as in (12c).²¹

²¹ Also known as *sonority sequencing generalization* or *sonority principle*.