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From constructions to functions and back: Contrastive negation in English and Finnish

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Abstract: This is a comparative investigation of contrastive negation in English and Finnish, i.e. combinations of a negated and an affirmed part construed as alternatives to one another. In both languages, there are several constructions that express contrastive negation, but their division of labour remains unclear. The aims of the paper are two-fold: first, to see what constructional strategies are available for contrastive negation in the two languages and, second, to see how the strategies are motivated by its interactional functions. In English, contrastive negation may be expressed by using the adversative conjunction *but* correctively (e.g., *It's not the bikers but the other vehicle on the road*), whereas standard Finnish has a specialised corrective conjunction *vaan* alongside the adversative *mutta*. Moreover, many constructions can express contrastive negation, including ones without a conjunction (e.g., *It's not the bikers, it's the other vehicle on the road*). An analysis of conversational data shows that English favours constructions without conjunctions, while in Finnish constructions both with and without conjunctions are frequent. The uses of contrastive negation are divided into reactive and non-reactive. The pragmatic functions largely explain the usage patterns, and these in turn can explain the cross-linguistic regularities of corrective conjunctions.

Keywords: construction grammar; contrastive linguistics; contrastive negation; corrective; interactional linguistics

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1 Introduction

This paper focuses on contrastive negation, i.e., expressions that combine a negated and an affirmed part that stand as alternatives to one another (McCawley 1991). Consider (1):¹

- (1) *Cos I mean it's ... it's not the bikers ... it's the other vehicle that's on the road.* (BNC: KCL, 363)

In (1), an explicit contrast is drawn between *the bikers* and *the other vehicle that's on the road*. From a syntactic perspective (1) shows a typical case of contrastive negation in English conversation (Silvennoinen 2017): two independent clauses refer to the same state of affairs, the first of them negative, the second affirmative. Crucially, there is no overt marker that would signal the contrastiveness of the two clauses. Rather, the construction only becomes apparent once the contrast is complete, i.e., when both the negative and the affirmative parts have been uttered.

Contrasts are not always left without an overt marker. In addition to the asyndetic coordination exemplified in (1), contrastive negation may be expressed syndetically, using a corrective conjunction (e.g. *but* in *It's not the bikers but the other vehicle that's on the road*). In English, the corrective conjunction is *but*, a general adversative conjunction, and the same is true of French *mais* and Dutch *maar*, for instance. This is not the whole story, however. At least since Anscombe and Ducrot's seminal paper (1977), a typological divide has been drawn based on whether a language makes a distinction between adversative and corrective connectives or not. Adversativity is the more general of these two. It means that there is a difference between two states of affairs. Correctivity, which is the relation that holds between the two elements in contrastive negation, means that one element is replaced by another. Languages with this distinction include German (*aber* and *sondern*), Spanish (*pero* and *sino*) and Finnish (*mutta* and *vaan*). The Finnish examples (2) and (3) show the distinction in practice. The former is adversative and thus the Finnish example contains *mutta*, while the latter is corrective and therefore the conjunction is *vaan*; in the English translations of both, *but* is used. It is constructions like (3) that will be the topic of this paper.

- (2) *Joissakin kunnissa uimahallien käyttö on jo*
some.PL.INE municipality.PL.INE swimming.hall.PL.GEN use be.3SG already
lisääntynyt, mutta köyhissä kunnissa se on vähentynyt.
increase.PTCP *mutta* poor.PL.INE municipality.PL.INE it be.3SG decrease.PTCP
'In some municipalities, the popularity of swimming halls has already increased, but in poor ones it has decreased.'

(Hakulinen et al. 2004: §1103)

¹ The explanations for the transcription and glossing conventions are given in the appendix. Contrastive negation constructions are shown in bold, unless the construction covers the whole example, in which case only the negator and, if applicable, the conjunction are bolded.

- (3) *Se ei ole loppu vaan alku!*
it NEG.3SG be.CNG end vaan beginning
'It is not the end but the beginning!'
(Hakulinen et al. 2004: §1106)

In addition to studies on coordination and conjunctions (e.g. Mauri 2009), Anscombe and Ducrot's analysis was taken up in Horn's work on negation (Horn 1985; 1989) and other subsequent research. In spite of these commonalities, studies on conjunctions and negation are associated with separate research traditions with different sets of terminology: whereas those on conjunctions have used the term 'corrective coordination', referring specifically to conjunctions like the corrective *but* and *vaan*, those on negation have discussed 'contrastive negation', which encompasses a wider range of construction types, including asyndetic ones such as (1). The term contrastive negation will be used in this article unless I am specifically considering corrective conjunctions.

The prevalence of merely combining a negative and an affirmative clause without a conjunction in English data (as in [1]) leads us to ask whether this pattern is observed more widely, given that languages like Finnish have lexicalised this type of coordinate structure. As later sections will demonstrate, both languages display many constructional strategies for expressing contrastive negation, but the division of labour concerning these strategies has not been explored in detail before, especially from a comparative perspective. For this reason, this paper considers contrastive negation using conversational data from English and Finnish, two languages on opposite sides of the typological divide identified by Anscombe and Ducrot. The approach taken in this paper is situated broadly in interactional linguistics (see Couper-Kuhlen and Selting 2018), which studies the way in which grammatical resources are deployed and created in naturally occurring interaction to produce socially relevant actions. Under the view adopted here, contrastive negation is a composite of linguistic resources that together have a schematic meaning. In both of the languages studied, contrastive negation is a family of constructions, defined as conventionalised pairings of form and function (Croft 2001; Croft and Cruse 2004; Goldberg 2006; Hilpert 2014). However, in part because of the difference in the range of adversative and corrective markers in these two languages, these families look rather different in them. This paper aims to find out whether and how this typological difference manifests itself in the usage patterns of the constructions in the two languages. A second aim is to look at the pragmatic functions of the constructions. At first sight, contrastive negation would seem redundant: if the affirmed part is what remains asserted, why does the negated part need to be expressed in the first place? The question is all the more pressing since negative expressions are generally less informative than the equivalent affirmatives (Horn 1989: 198–203). Because of this semantic redundancy and un informativeness, the use of negation in these constructions must be pragmatically motivated. I hope to show here that the pragmatics of contrastive negation motivates not only the existence of the constructions in the first place but also the choice of a particular constructional strategy among many alternatives. This in turn will provide insight into why lexicalised markers of correctivity appear in certain kinds of constructions but not in others.

The paper is organised as follows. Section 2 reviews previous research on contrastive negation, defines it as a comparative concept and presents the constructional strategies that are used to express it. Section 3 presents the data and methods. Sections 4 and 5 are the empirical core of the paper. In section 4, I investigate the constructional strategies used for expressing contrastive negation in English and Finnish conversation while section 5 explores the pragmatic functions of contrastive negation and relates these functions to the strategies presented in the previous section. Section 6 discusses the strategies and their functional motivations on the basis of the pragmatic functions. Section 7 concludes the paper.

2 Contrastive negation and constructional strategies

In this study, I approach contrastive negation as a function that can be expressed using many forms, both within one language and cross-linguistically. Following Haspelmath (2010), contrastive negation as a term refers both to a comparative concept and to a descriptive category. Contrastive negation is defined in such a way that it is in principle expressible in any language – thus, it is a comparative concept. But the term may also designate a class of expressions in one given language so that we may talk of English and Finnish contrastive negation, for instance, – in this case, it is a descriptive category.

My definition of contrastive negation is stated in (4). This definition expresses the comparative concept of contrastive negation, which guided the collection of data (see Section 3 for details).

- (4) Contrastive negation refers to expressions which are combinations of affirmation and negation in which the focus of negation is replaced in the affirmative part of the expression. The relationship between the affirmed and the negated part of the expression is not causal, concessive or conditional, and the negation must have overt scope.

The definition in (4) is a typical comparative concept in that it defines a functional domain using functional or general formal concepts such as ‘affirmation’, ‘negation’ and ‘combination’. According to the definition, contrastive negation refers to the co-occurrence of affirmation and negation, in whatever order, to eliminate the focus of negation and to replace it affirmatively. This replacement is not causal, concessive or conditional in nature. Negation refers to grammaticalized negators rather than lexical ones (e.g. ‘stop’, ‘doubt’). Additionally, the combinations cover both coordination and subordination (as well as correlation, which is also invoked for certain kinds of contrastive negation; see Svensson [2011]).²

The definition in (4) is meant for delimiting the object of inquiry. However, for other purposes, we may need other kinds of comparative concepts, for instance ones that refer to the forms used for expressing a particular functional domain. When typologists and contrastive linguists classify the constructions found in the world’s languages, they try to do this on as language-independent a basis as is feasible. Taking the coding of arguments in transitive and intransitive clauses as an example, cross-linguistically defined types

² I have not specified the type of combination in the definition. See section 4 for discussion.

such as accusative and ergative alignment are also kinds of comparative concepts even though they do not strictly speaking define functional domains but ways in which groups of functions are expressed. A strategy is a particular way of expressing a function (cf. Keenan and Comrie 1977: 64). Crucially, strategies are defined in a way that is cross-linguistically applicable (Croft Forthcoming; cited in Croft 2016: 380). In using this term, I am suggesting that speakers have a choice between two or more morphosyntactic alternatives. I am not suggesting that this choice is always intentional.

Contrastive negation is notable for the many forms that it may take. McCawley considers the forms in (5):

- (5) a. John drank **not** coffee **but** tea.
b. John drank tea, **not** coffee.
c. John **didn't** drink coffee **but** tea.
d. John **didn't** drink coffee, he drank tea.
e. John drank tea, he **didn't** drink coffee.

(McCawley 1991: 190, simplified)

We may characterise these forms along several parameters: negation may follow or precede the affirmation, they may or may not be linked by a conjunction, and the contrasted elements may be clausal or sub-clausal. However, the division of labour between these forms, let alone the cross-linguistic analysis of such forms, is a task that has received only limited attention (but see Silvennoinen 2017, 2018). Most of the attention has been focused on forms (5a), (5c) and (5d). Mauri (2009) notes that forms such as (5d) are frequently attested in the languages of the world and that some languages do not even use conjunctions like in (5a) and (5c).

Taking one step back from McCawley's catalogue of forms, we can describe the strategies for expressing contrastive negation in English and Finnish conversation through four parameters. The parameters can have two or more values, i.e. strategies. The parameters and strategies are summarised in **Table I.3** The parameters are interdependent. Parameter (i), the number of contrasted elements, logically precedes parameter (ii), the order of contrasted elements since the order in which the elements may occur depends on how many of them there are. Parameter (iii), the nature of linking between the contrasted elements, in turn depends on parameter (ii) since corrective conjunctions only appear in negative-first constructions in English and Finnish. Parameter (iv), the syntactic rank of contrasted elements, cross-cuts each of the possible combinations of parameters (i)–(iii).

³ The parameters in **Table I** are not an exhaustive listing of the variation space in the expression of contrastive negation. The most important omission is the kind of negator used. Focusing uses of negation, for instance, are impossible with other constructions (e.g. *My ruin came not from too great individualism of life, but from too little*; Jespersen [1917: 45]). However, cases such as these are very rare in my dataset, probably owing to the formal character of focusing negation, and are thus outside of the scope of this paper.

Table 1. Constructional strategies in the expression of contrastive negation

Parameter	Values (strategies)
(i) Number of contrasted elements	Two contrasted elements More than two contrasted elements
(ii) Order of contrasted elements	Negative-first (negative+affirmative) Negative-second (affirmative+negative) Tripartite (negative+affirmative+negative or affirmative+negative+affirmative)
(iii) Nature of linking	Asyndetic (no linking element) Syndetic (with linking element)
(iv) Syntactic rank of contrasted elements	Both clausal Both sub-clausal Mixed

I argue that one instance of contrastive negation can be described as a combination of several strategies, or in other words, as several constructions that together can make up a larger, holistic contrastive negation construction. I use the word ‘can’ advisedly here: it seems likely that not all contrastive negations are in fact produced as instantiations of holistic constructions. Rather, they may be constructed piece by piece, in a way that is responsive to the interactional context. On the one hand, this means that contrastive negation may sometimes be an emergent phenomenon, in the sense of Hopper (1987; 2011); in other words, a negation may become contrastive only *post hoc*: returning to (1), *it’s not the bikers* is not a contrastively negative clause until *it’s the other vehicle on the road* is uttered. On the other, we will later see that contrastive negation may be an example of what Schegloff (1996) calls ‘positionally sensitive grammar’. This means that the form of an utterance shows its position in a sequence, for example as a preferred response to a previous turn. A responsive turn may be a particle (*sure*), a phrase (*in Germany*), a minimal clause (*I do*) or a full clause (*I’ll do it*); the latter option may have several different formats depending on how closely it is related to the previous turn (Thompson et al. 2015: 11). On the whole, I remain agnostic on whether a given token of contrastive negation is based on a holistic construction or on combining different elements part by part. I assume that contrastive negation constructions are conventionalisations of such part by part combinations but that the process of combining remains available to language users (cf. Langacker 1987).

3 Methods and material

This paper utilises the methodological toolkit of interactional linguistics to study contrastive negation in English and Finnish conversation. While some studies in interactional linguistics have discussed contrastive negation in passing (Barth-Weingarten 2009; Deppermann 2014; Ford 2001; Haddington 2005), few have identified it as a linguistic practice in its own right. It has generally been conflated with other construction types (Keevallik 2017; see also Deppermann and De Stefani 2019: 147), and even then the studies have not considered the full range of constructions that are treated here. In addition, the few existing comparative

studies (Anscombre and Ducrot 1977; Deppermann and De Stefani 2019; Jasinskaja 2012; Keevallik 2017; Mauri 2009; Rudolph 1996) have not been based on systematically collected and comparable usage data. In contrast with the previous research, this paper will focus on contrastive negation as a linguistically defined class of expressions using comparable data from English and Finnish.

The data for this study comes from corpora that represent spoken interaction in everyday settings. Care was taken to select corpora that are maximally comparable from an extra-linguistic point of view. For this reason, both the English and the Finnish corpora represent casual conversation, typically recorded in domestic or otherwise informal settings among people who know each other. The actual datasets of occurrences of contrastive negation were put together by listening to (or, in some cases, watching) the conversations and reading their transcriptions. I deemed this necessary since in some cases only listening and/or watching allowed me to fully understand what the speakers were engaging in at a given time. This procedure also allowed me to determine whether prosody was used to render the contrastive interpretation. However, a systematic prosodic analysis of the data is beyond the scope of this paper.

The English data is from the spoken component of the British National Corpus (BNC), collected mostly in the early 1990s. The original dataset is based on a subsection of the spoken BNC that comprises around 25 hours of talk (or around 250,000 words), which includes 278 cases of contrastive negation.⁴ The Finnish data is from the Conversation Analysis Archives (CAA) of the University of Helsinki as well as from the Arkisyn corpus of the University of Turku.⁵ The Finnish datasets were collected in the late 1990s and 2000s for various smaller-scale projects. Because of issues of data availability, the Finnish dataset is somewhat smaller than the English one, approximately 15 hours, and includes 104 cases of contrastive negation. Cases which represent reading aloud or talk by non-native speakers were left out from both datasets.

The corpora employ different transcription conventions: the CAA utilises conversation-analytic transcription, while Arkisyn and the BNC make do with a more coarse-grained transcription scheme. Since phenomena such as pauses and hesitations will not play a major role in the subsequent analysis, the transcriptions have not been standardised and all examples appear as they are in the corpora. Speakers in the BNC data are identified only by their initials in this article. The Finnish corpora are pseudonymised.

4 The constructional strategies

In this section, I shall review the constructions available for contrastive negation in English and Finnish. I shall also compare the frequencies of formally analogous constructions in the two languages. The analysis of

⁴ The following BNC text files are used: KBA, KBM, KBP, KBT, KBU, KCJ, KCL, KCM, KCR, KCS, KCX and KD1. For more information on this dataset, see Silvennoinen (2017).

⁵ The list of the corpus files used in this analysis is: Sg108, Sg111, Sg112, Sg113, Sg120, Sg121, Sg123, Sg396, Sg435, Sg437, Sapu115, Sapu117, Sapu118 and Sapu119. All of them are available as part of the Arkisyn corpus. The files in this list are the ones whose audio files were available at the time of writing, apart from Sg396, Sg435 and Sg437, whose video files were obtained from the CAA. For these three, I was also able to use the more detailed transcription available in the CAA. I thank Mari Siironen (University of Helsinki) and Marja-Liisa Helasvuo (University of Turku) for making these datasets available to me.

the English data reported in this section is largely based on Silvennoinen (2017) but here it is recast in terms of constructional strategies. I shall first present the strategies in English, and then in Finnish. Finally, I shall compare the frequencies of the strategies in the two languages

4.1 English

The main negator in English is *not* for both clausal and constituent negation though for the *not*-negation of lexical verbs in the simple tenses an auxiliary construction with *do* is required. English also has a number of other negators with more specific meanings and no *do*-support. As stated in the introduction, English makes no lexicalised distinction between adversative and corrective *but*. However, English has several constructional formats for expressing contrastive negation (Gates Jr. and Seright 1967; McCawley 1991; Silvennoinen 2017), and a contrastive interpretation can also be achieved through a construct that does not strictly follow an established format as we will see below. I now turn to the strategies as they appear in the English data.

(i) *Number of contrasted elements*. Canonically, contrastive negation contains two elements: one negative and the other affirmative. However, it is also possible that a construct comes to include three or more elements as it unfolds in interaction. Of the 278 cases in the English data, 271 are bipartite, such as (6), 7 are tripartite, such as (7).

(6) *It's Monday not Tuesday*. (BNC: KBP, 1052)

(7) *Number nine is gold earrings. Stud type not drop type, studs*. (BNC: KCL, 839–840)

As tripartite constructs are very rare, I shall not consider them from the point of view of the other parameters.

(ii) *Order of contrasted elements*. In bipartite constructs, there are two possibilities: negative-first and negative-second. Of the 271 bipartite cases in the English data, 215 are negative-first (such as [8]), 56 are negative-second (such as [9]).

(8) *Because I mean they don't sort of grow out, they grow up don't they?* (BNC: KBP, 2443)

(9) *Yeah I fed him, I didn't starve him* (BNC: KD1, 4489)

(iii) *Nature of linking*. As shown in **Table I**, there are two kinds of strategies in this parameter: asyndetic linking (i.e. no conjunction or other linking element) and syndetic linking (i.e. linking through a coordinate conjunction). In negative-first constructs, the coordinator is *but*, as in (10); in negative-second constructs, it is *and*, as in (12). In the negative-first cases, there are only four syndetic coordinations (such as [10]), the rest (211 cases) are asyndetic (such as [11]). In the negative-second cases, a similar distribution

obtains: there are three syndetic coordinations (such as [12]), and the remaining 53 are asyndetic (such as [13]).

- (10) [...] *so that's what I'm saying **not this Wednesday but next Wednesday** I'll be going down straight in the morning* (BNC: KCJ, 1043)
- (11) *Oh **not a bungalow, a house** you mean?* (BNC: KBP, 1472)
- (12) *Well, just something to nibble on that's **savoury and not sweet*** (BNC: KD1, 1475)
- (13) [...] *you're meant to get them **in the bin not out of the bin**.* (BNC: KBU, 1160)

(iv) *Syntactic rank of contrasted elements.* In the canonical cases, the syntactic ranks of the contrasted elements are the same: either both are clausal (such as [14]) or both are sub-clausal (such as (15)). However, there are also cases in which the negated element is sub-clausal while the affirmative element is clausal (such as (16)). The reverse pattern does not appear in my data. The three alternatives are exemplified by negative-first asyndetic cases in (14)–(16):

- (14) *Cos I mean it's ... **it's not the bikers ... it's the other vehicle that's on the road***
(BNC: KCL, 363)
- (15) *But then she said you get erm ... you put it on and you get a brush and er **not a brush, a roller***
(BNC: KCL, 970)
- (16) [...] *make it last longer cos I was telling you I says ooh **not Coalite it's briquettes** he said*
(BNC: KCX, 8764)

I assume here that all of the contrastive negation constructions are coordinate. This is the view taken by Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 811) but not by McCawley or Gates and Seright. McCawley (1991:194) argues that the combination of two full clauses in (14) is not coordination. Gates and Seright (1967:137–138) consider the negative part of the [Y, not X] construction in (13) to be subordinate and they extend this analysis to the [not X but Y] construction in (10).⁶

Table 2 summarises the quantitative patterning of the strategies in the English data. In short, by far the most prevalent combination of strategies is a combination of the bipartite, negative-first, asyndetic and clausal strategies. In other words, contrastive negation is most frequently expressed by a combination of two clauses, the first one negative and the second one affirmative. This is followed by the sub-clausal version of the [not X, Y] pattern as well as the clausal and sub-clausal versions of the [Y, not X] pattern. With the exception of the sub-clausal [not X, Y], these patterns are mentioned by McCawley (1991).

⁶ Such disagreements are one reason for defining contrastive negation as a combination rather than simply as coordination (see section 2).

Table 2. Constructional strategies in English

(i) Number of contrasted elements	(ii) Order of contrasted elements	(iii) Nature of linking	(iv) Syntactic rank of contrasted elements	N = 278	
Bipartite	Negative-first	Syndetic: [<i>not X but Y</i>]	clausal sub-clausal mixed	0 (0.0%) 3 (1.1%) 1 (0.4%)	
		Asyndetic: [<i>not X, Y</i>]	clausal sub-clausal mixed	176 (63.3%) 24 (8.6%) 11 (4.0%)	
	Negative-second	Syndetic: [<i>Y and not X</i>]	clausal sub-clausal mixed	0 (0.0%) 3 (1.1%) 0 (0.0%)	
		Asyndetic: [<i>Y, not X</i>]	clausal sub-clausal mixed	23 (8.3%) 30 (10.8%) 0 (0.0%)	
	Tripartite				7 (2.5%)

4.2 Finnish

Contrastive negation in Finnish has received less attention than in English, which is why I shall discuss it in somewhat more depth. I shall also point out a few more general typological differences between English and Finnish since they relate to the expression of contrastive and other kinds of negation.

In Finnish, standard negation is formed with the negative auxiliary *e-*, followed by the main verb in a non-finite connegative or past participle form, depending on the tense, as shown in (17).⁷ In the imperative mood, the auxiliary is *äl-*. Similarly to other verbs, the negative auxiliaries are inflected in person (see Hakulinen et al. 2004: §108; Vilkuna 2015: 458–461).

- (17) a. *Vauva nukku-u.*
 baby sleep-3SG
 ‘The baby is sleeping.’
- b. *Vauva ei nuku.*
 baby NEG.3SG sleep.CNG
 ‘The baby is not sleeping.’
- c. *Vauva nukku-i.*
 baby sleep-PST.3SG
 ‘The baby was sleeping.’
- d. *Vauva ei nukku-nut.*

⁷ See Vilkuna (2015) for an overview of Finnish negation. In Finnish, the main reference is Hakulinen et al. (2004: §108–109, 1615–1644).

baby NEG.3SG sleep-PTCP
 ‘The baby was not sleeping.’
 (Vilkuna 2015: 458)

The negative auxiliary *e-* is also the basis for the negative response particle, which makes Finnish different from English. In English, the response particle *no* is separate from *not*. In Finnish, the response particle *ei* is the same as the third person singular form of the negative auxiliary. The inflected forms of the negative auxiliary alone are not considered full clauses as the main verb is missing. Such constructs can be used as minimal negative replies (Vilkuna 2015: 468), but these will not be considered in the ensuing discussion as their English equivalent (*no* as a minimal clause, as in *No, he was actually head of staff*, cf. below) is not included either. Thus, the *tertium comparationis* is restricted to cases in which the negation has an overt scope, i.e. there are elements in the same clause or a subordinate one that are semantically potentially affected by the negation (Taglicht 1984: 99–100). Consider (18), in which the negator on line 2 does not have overt scope as the negated element (the clause ‘that Aarno Valli at some point took care of the concert office’) is not uttered as it is recoverable from the previous turn. Thus, the case is not included in the dataset:

(18) CAA: SG435_70_80, 02:35

1 Maija: mh mh. onko (.) onko /niin että Aarno Valli (.) jossaiv
 vaiheessa o- #mm# o- hoiti kanssa
 konser#ttitoimis[toa#.]

‘is it, is it so that Aarno Valli at some point #mm# also took care of the
 concert office’

2 Hanna: → [**ei.**] .hh **hän oli oikeastaa**
 NEG 3SG be.3SG.PST actually
 ‘no, .hh he was actually’

3 → .hhh **henkilökunnam päälikkö;**
 .hhh staff.GEN chief
 ‘.hhh head of staff’

4 (0.4)

5 Maija: ja/ha
 ‘right’

I now present the constructional strategies found in the Finnish data. I return to the similarities and differences with English in the following section.

(i) *Number of contrasted elements.* Like English, the Finnish data displays both bipartite and more extensive constructs, and the former are much more prevalent than the latter: there are 102 bipartite cases (such as (19)), against only two tripartite or multipartite ones (such as (20)).

(19) *mut ku Suamee-ha ei tarvi edes ostaa*
 but as Finland.PRT-PART NEG.3SG need.CNG even buy.INF
sää teet kaivosvaltauksia
 you make.2SG mining.claim.PRT
 ‘but Finland doesn’t even need to be bought, you can just make claims for mines’
 (Arkisyn: Sapu115, 359)

(20) [...] *ko nep puhuu väylä ja törmä kato*
 when they speak.3PL channel and bank PART
ei niil oj joki ja ranta
 NEG.3SG they.ADE be.CNG river and shore
niill o väylä ja törmä siäl
 they.ADE be.3SG channel and bank there
 ‘because they say *väylä* and *törmä*, look, they don’t have *joki* [‘river’] and *ranta* [‘shore’], they have *väylä* and *törmä*’
 (Arkisyn: Sapu115, 29)

In (19), the contrast is between buying land in Finland and making claims for mines. In (20), the contrast is metalinguistic (Horn 1985): the speaker is discussing a language variety whose words for ‘river’ and ‘shore’ (*väylä* and *törmä*, respectively) are different from those used in standard Finnish (*joki* and *ranta*).

Similarly to English, I shall focus only on the bipartite constructs in the rest of this section, as the number of tripartite and multipartite cases is very low.

(ii) *Order of contrasted elements.* Both negative-first and negative-second cases are found in the Finnish data. Of the 102 bipartite cases, 82 are negative-first (such as [21]), 20 negative-second (such as (22)).

(21) *ei tää sairasa oo tää ov vaa tumma kuva*
 NEG.3SG this sick be.CNG this be.3SG only dark picture
 ‘this one isn’t ill, it’s just that this is a dark picture’
 (CAA: Sg435 060-070, 7:59)

(22) *joo syökää älkää arastelko*
 yeah eat.IMP.2PL NEG.IMP.2PL be.shy.CNG.2PL

‘yeah, eat, don’t be shy’

(CAA: SG396, 6:00)

In (21), the speaker contrasts a faulty view (the person in a photograph being ill) with a correct one (the photograph in question is dark). In (22), the speaker is telling his guests to start eating rather than prevaricating.

(iii) *Nature of linking*. The biggest differences between English and Finnish are in the nature of linking, both in terms of the strategies available and in terms of frequencies as we will see below. As noted in the introduction, Finnish makes a distinction between the general adversative *mutta* and the corrective *vaan* (Korhonen-Kusch 1988; Korhonen 1993).⁸ In addition, spoken Finnish occasionally exhibits another corrective conjunction in negative-first environments, *kun* (Ikola, Palomäki and Koitto 1989: 55, 90, 95–96).⁹ *Kun* is usually a temporal, causal or adversative subordinator (cf. English *as*). Herlin (1998) considers the temporal use the primary one, from which the other ones have developed. In addition to its corrective use, *kun* has other adversative uses (Herlin 1998: 146–166). It thus exhibits the grammaticalisation path temporal>adversative (Heine and Kuteva 2002: 292), one illustration of which is the [*ei X kun Y*] construction. Finnish thus has two negative-first syndetic strategies: [*ei X vaan Y*] and [*ei X kun Y*]. There is also a possibility of negative-first asyndesis. Of the 82 negative-first cases, 27 have *vaan* (such as (23)), 9 have *kun* (such as (24)) and 46 are asyndetic (such as [25]).¹⁰

⁸ In addition to its use as a conjunction, *vaan* is an alternative form of the adverb *vain* ‘only’. Both may be reduced in speech to *vaa*. See Duvallon and Peltola (2017a; 2017b) on some other uses of *vaan~vain*.

⁹ *Kun* is sometimes pronounced in a reduced form (*ku*). The [*ei X kun Y*] construction is related to the repair particle *eiku*, which is a lexicalised expression of conversational repair (Haakana and Visapää 2014; Laakso and Sorjonen 2010). In her comprehensive study of the adverbial uses of *kun*, Herlin (1998: 177) also notes *eiku* briefly, considering it a sub-type of the causal subordinating use of *kun*; she does not discuss [*ei X kun Y*]. Both *kun* and *ku* are also alternative forms of standard Finnish *kuin* ‘than’. Despite the occasional homophony, however, *kun* and *kuin* are separate lexical items (see Herlin 1998: 21–22; *Kielitoimiston sanakirja* 2018: s.v. *kun, kuin*).

¹⁰ Furthermore, *mutta* sometimes appears in constructions that resemble contrastive negation. The fact that *mutta* can be used in such a way suggests that the distinction between adversatives and correctives is a gradient one. A case in point is (i), in which Pasi is discussing the price of grenade throwers and what affects it. He creates a contrast between ‘doing it in the factory’ and ‘how it is done’, the latter of which replaces the former as the more noteworthy issue.

- (i) [...] *ei se tota sen tekemine siält tehtaalt enää iso o*
NEG.3SG it part it.GEN doing there.ABL factory.ABL anymore big be.CNG

mut se et kuis se tehdää
mutta it CONJ how it do.PASS

‘so doing it from the factory there isn’t a big [issue] anymore, *mutta* how it is done’ (Arkisyn: Sapu115, 332, simplified)

The variation among *vaan*, *kun* and *mutta* appears to be at least partly dialectal in nature: *vaan* originates in the eastern dialects, *mutta* in the western ones, and their functional differentiation in the standard language appears to be recent and modelled on Swedish and possibly German (Hakulinen 1955: 309; Ikola, Palomäki and Koitto 1989: 54–61). I have chosen to omit all cases with *mutta* from this analysis; in any case, cases of *mutta* that resemble contrastive negation are very infrequent in my dataset.

- (23) *mutta siis s- se ei oo suinkaan sillon enää illalla*
 but so it NEG.3SG be.CNG at.all then anymore evening.ADE
vaan se on.h päivällä jo;
 vaan it be.3SG day.ADE already
 ‘but I mean it isn’t then, in the evening *vaan* it is already during the day’
 (CAA: SG435_172_182, 4:51, overlapping speech omitted)
- (24) *hä ei siin ollu mitää esiintyjää*
 huh NEG.3SG there be.PTCP any performer.PRT
ku ne vaam meni lavalla naimisii
 kun they only go.PST.3PL stage.ADE married
 ‘huh, there wasn’t any performer there *ku* they just got married on stage’
 (Arkisyn: Sapu119, 531)
- (25) [...] *mä aina tarkkailin niitä mut ei ne mitään koskaan*
 I always monitor.PST.1SG they.PRT but NEG.3SG they anything ever
ne aina vaan osti jotain tavaraa [...]
 they always only buy.PST.3PL some stuff.PRT
 ‘I was always keeping an eye on them but they never did anything, they always just bought some stuff’
 (Arkisyn: SG108, 238)

In (23), the contrast is between two contradictory times: ‘evening’ is replaced by ‘day’. In (24), the contrast is between two possible courses of events when a couple has gotten married on the stage of a music festival: the speaker corrects the false suggestion that there would have been a performer on stage during the wedding (‘there wasn’t any performer there’), replacing it with what actually happened (‘they just got married on stage’, i.e. without anything else happening there at the same time). In (25), the conversation is about a group of youngsters who have been caught stealing. The speaker has witnessed them previously at a shop, and on those occasions they have not done anything problematic (‘they never did anything’) but have rather conformed to expectations (‘they always just bought some stuff’); here, the contrastive interpretation is strengthened by the addition of *vaan* ‘only’ in the affirmative part of the construction.

In negative-second cases, Finnish has a choice between asyndesis and coordinate syndesis in the form of *eikä* ‘and not’, a conjunction that includes the negative auxiliary *e-* (Hakulinen et al. 2004: §1191, 1624); the regular additive coordinating conjunction *ja* ‘and’ is not used in this context. Of the 20 negative-second cases, 8 are syndetic (such as [26]), 12 asyndetic (such as [27]).

- (26) [...] *se oli mun ja Antin idea eikä sun*
 it be.PST.3SG 1SG.POSS and Antti.GEN idea NEG.3SG.PART 2SG.POSS

‘it was my and Antti’s idea and not yours’

(CAA: SG396, 53:19)

- (27) [...] *hän esiinty Norjassa nimenomaan saksalaisille*
3SG perform.PST.3SG Norway.INE particularly German.PL.ALL

ei norjalaisille
NEG.3SG Norwegian.PL.ALL

‘he performed in Norway particularly to Germans, not to Norwegians’

(CAA: SG435_202_212, 5:39; overlapping speech and paralinguistics omitted)

(iv) *Syntactic rank of contrasted elements*. Similarly to English, the contrasted elements in the Finnish data may be grouped into three: both clausal (such as [28]), both sub-clausal (such as [29]) and mixed (such as [30]). The examples are all negative-first asyndetic.

- (28) *mutta tuo ei oo korea*
but that NEG.3SG be.CNG showy
tuo o enemmän niinku miehen näkönen
that be.3SG more PART man.GEN looking

‘but that one isn’t showy, that one looks more like a man’

(CAA: SG435_040_050, 3:02)

- (29) *em mä vielä kuukauden päästä*
NEG.1SG I yet month.GEN after

‘I don’t (move) yet, in a month’s time’

(Arkisyn: SG123, 2414)

- (30) *ei ei HIärtänyh hyvä kävelläh*
NEG.3SG NEG.3SG chafe.PST.CNG good walk.INF

‘(the shoe) didn’t chafe, (it was) good for walking’

(Arkisyn: Sapu115, 48)

In (28), the contrast is between looking ‘showy’ and looking ‘more like a man’. In (29), two different occasions are contrasted with one another: ‘(not) yet’ and ‘in a month’s time’. In (30), a shoe is characterised: first in the negative (‘didn’t chafe’), then in the affirmative (‘good for walking’).

Table 3 shows the distributions of the strategies in Finnish. The most prevalent pattern is the negative-first combination of two clauses. This is followed by the [*ei X vaan Y*] construction in its clausal and sub-clausal forms. The other patterns fall below 10%. Hakulinen et al. (2004: §1193) state that when the negative and affirmative part of an [*ei X vaan Y*] construction have identical elements, they are elided in the affirmative, and indeed, sub-clausal uses of [*ei X vaan Y*] appear to be quite common (although [23] presents a counter-example). Extrapolating from an example found in Whitney’s (1956) textbook for foreign

language learners of Finnish, Horn (1989: 568 n32) claims that sub-clausal uses would be ‘characteristic’ of *vaan* in the same way as they are of English *but*; this stronger claim is not supported by the current data in which the clausal uses are more frequent. Hakulinen et al. (2004: §1191) also note the [*Y eikä X*] construction as a site for sub-clausal coordination (or, in their words, ‘polar ellipsis’). This claim is borne out by my data, although the numbers are low.

Table 3. Constructional strategies in Finnish

(i) Number of contrasted elements	(ii) Order of contrasted elements	(iii) Nature of linking	(iv) Syntactic rank of contrasted elements	N = 104
Bipartite	Negative-first	Syndetic: [<i>ei X vaan Y</i>]	clausal	15 (14.4%)
			sub-clausal	11 (10.6%)
			mixed	1 (1.0%)
		Syndetic: [<i>ei X kun Y</i>]	clausal	3 (2.9%)
			sub-clausal	5 (4.8%)
			mixed	1 (1.0%)
	Negative-second	Asyndetic: [<i>ei X, Y</i>]	clausal	42 (40.4%)
		sub-clausal	2 (1.9%)	
		mixed	2 (1.9%)	
		Syndetic coordinate: [<i>Y eikä X</i>]	clausal	1 (1.0%)
			sub-clausal	7 (6.7%)
			mixed	0 (0.0%)
		Asyndetic: [<i>Y, ei X</i>]	clausal	9 (8.7%)
			sub-clausal	2 (1.9%)
			mixed	1 (1.0%)
Tripartite				2 (1.9%)

4.3 English vs. Finnish

We can now compare the tendencies of how contrastive negation is expressed in English and Finnish. As above, I proceed parameter by parameter.¹¹ The comparison is shown in **Table 4**.

There is no statistically significant difference on parameter (i), the number of contrasted elements, between the English and Finnish datasets (Fisher’s exact: $p=1$): in both languages, bipartite cases (e.g. (6), [19] clearly outnumber tri- and multipartite ones (e.g. [7],[20]). Similarly, there is no statistically significant difference in parameter (ii), the order of the contrasted elements in bipartite cases, between the two languages ($X^2(1)=0.0066539$, $p=0.935$): in both languages, the negative-first strategy is more common than negative-second.

¹¹ The statistical analysis was conducted in R (R Core Team 2016). In the statistical significance testing, I have used the X^2 test. For counts involving expected values below 5, I have used Fisher’s exact; the results were the same with both tests. For significant effects, I have calculated effect sizes using Cramér’s V with the *vcd* package (Meyer, Zeileis and Hornik 2017).

In comparing parameter (iii), the nature of linking between the two languages, I combined [*ei X vaan Y*] and [*ei X kun Y*] into one syndetic strategy to maximise the comparability of the datasets. This creates four strategies in both languages: negative-first syndetic (e.g. [10], [23]–[24]), negative-first asyndetic (e.g. [11], [25]), negative-second syndetic (e.g. [12], [26]) and negative-second asyndetic (e.g. [13], [27]). Here the difference between the two languages is significant when all four strategies are compared, and the effect size is strong (Fisher's exact: $p < 2.2e-16$, Cramér's $V=0.529$). I also analysed the differences among negative-first and negative-second cases separately. The differences between the languages were again statistically significant for both negative-first ($X^2(1)=86.458$, $p < 2.2e-16$, Cramér's $V=0.551$) and negative-second (Fisher's exact: $p=0.0006567$, Cramér's $V=0.434$) cases; in the first case, the effect was strong, and in the second, moderate. Finally, I tested the statistical significance of syndesis vs. asyndesis independently of ordering (i.e. all syndesis vs. all asyndesis) in the two languages. This difference was also statistically significant with a strong effect ($X^2(1)=99.851$, $p\text{-value} < 2.2e-16$, Cramér's $V=0.526$). Thus, the nature of linking is a significant difference between English and Finnish: adding to the qualitative differences between the two languages in this domain, Finnish uses more syndetic constructions of all stripes, but the difference is more pronounced in negative-first cases than in negative-second ones.

These differences are compounded when we take into account parameter (iv), the syntactic rank of the contrasted elements. Recall that each of the four linking strategies may theoretically combine with three syntactic rank strategies: clausal, sub-clausal and mixed (see [14]–[16] and [28] for illustration). When testing for the significance of this parameter, I have again pooled together *vaan* and *kun*. I tested each strategy separately against all others, which means that there were altogether 13 2x2 comparisons. The statistical significances are reported in **Table 4** (tripartites are also reported in the table for the sake of completeness; they were found not to differ in a statistically significant way in the two datasets, as reported above). There are six strategies that show a statistically significant difference between the two languages. They concern clausal and sub-clausal negative-first strategies and the sub-clausal negative-second strategies. In Finnish, the clausal and sub-clausal negative-first syndetic strategies are more frequent than in English (i.e. *not today but tomorrow* and *#It's not today but it's tomorrow*, the latter of which is not attested as contrastive negation at all in the English dataset). By contrast, in English, the clausal and sub-clausal negative-first asyndetic strategies are more frequent than in Finnish (i.e. *not today, tomorrow* and *It's not today, it's tomorrow*). Of the negative-second sub-clausal strategies, English prefers the asyndetic strategy (i.e. *tomorrow, not today*), Finnish the syndetic one with *eikä* (i.e. 'tomorrow and not today'). Because of the large number of categories, the individual effect sizes are small, with the exception of the negative-first syndetic clausal strategy, which is relatively frequent in Finnish but unattested in the English data. The findings suggest that not only are the linking strategies used to different degrees, they are also different in their syntactic behaviour: the Finnish *vaan* in particular is syntactically freer than its English counterpart, the corrective *but*.

Finally, I tested whether the differences between clausal, sub-clausal and mixed contrasted elements were statistically significant. They were not, whether this was tested among all bipartites or among negative-first and negative-second bipartites separately (figures not reported here for reasons of space). This suggests

that the differences reported in the previous paragraph cannot be attributed to an overall preference for or against clausal, sub-clausal or mixed-rank contrasted elements in either language.

Table 4. The statistical significance and effect size of nature of linking and syntactic rank combinations (for statistical significance, ***: $p < 0.001$, **: $p < 0.01$, *: $p < 0.05$, —: $p > 0.05$; for effect size, $V = 0.1 \dots 0.3$: small effect, $V = 0.3 \dots 0.5$: moderate effect, $V = 0.5 \dots 0.7$: strong effect)

(i) Number of contrasted elements	(ii) Order of contrasted elements	(iii) Nature of linking	(iv) Syntactic rank of contrasted elements	English (N = 278)	Finnish (N = 104)	Statistical significance	Effect size
Bipartite	Negative-first	Syndetic	clausal	0	18	***	0.364
			sub-clausal	3	16	***	0.293
			mixed	1	2	—	—
		Asyndetic	clausal	176	42	***	0.210
			sub-clausal	24	2	*	0.119
			mixed	11	2	—	—
	Negative-second	Syndetic	clausal	0	1	—	—
			sub-clausal	3	7	*	0.158
			mixed	0	0	—	—
		Asyndetic	clausal	23	9	—	—
			sub-clausal	30	2	*	0.142
			mixed	0	1	—	—
Tripartite			7	2	—	—	

The BNC data shows that the clausal constructions, especially the negative-first combination of two clauses, are the most frequent way of expressing contrastive negation in English conversation. The other constructions are more marginal, with a share of 11% at most ([*Y not X*]). This contrasts sharply with written genres, in which other constructions such as [*not X but Y*] also have a notable presence (Silvennoinen 2017). The most common constructions in the spoken English data are those in which the link between the affirmed and the negated part of the construct is asyndetic. This is in line with the fact that English conversation tends to have fewer conjunctions than fiction or academic prose (Biber et al. 1999: 81–83). On the other hand, the one conjunction that is relatively frequent even in speech is *but*. Thus, given the rarity of the [*not X but Y*] construction, *but* seems to be mostly adversative in conversational speech, while in writing its corrective use is also recurrent.

There are no corpus studies of contrastive negation in written Finnish so I cannot make a quantitative comparison between my Finnish data and the written language. Therefore, I shall only compare the Finnish results to English conversation in this study. Compared with English, my Finnish data has a preference for syndetic coordination. In particular, while Finnish also makes use of asyndetic coordination, this has a much smaller share of cases than in English. Rather, unlike English, conjunctions do not seem to be barred from effecting contrastive negation, even in spoken language, and among the negative-second constructions there

seems to be a preference towards syndetic rather than asyndetic coordination. The [Y, *ei X*] form is so rare, however, that it is debatable whether it is really a construction of its own or a free variant of [Y *eikä X*].

5 The functions

In the previous section, I showed that the vast majority of contrastive negations in both English and Finnish occur in bipartite constructions and that, among bipartite constructions, those in which the negative precedes the affirmative form the majority. In both languages, the asyndetic strategy was preferred over the syndetic strategies to link the negative and affirmative parts together though in Finnish the syndetic strategies are more entrenched and also more numerous. Negation, clause combining and the interactions between the two differ in the two languages, and this affects the realisation of constructions that are superficially similar in them, such as sub-clausal [Y *not X*] and [Y, *ei X*].

This section turns to the uses of contrastive negation. To do this, I analyse the actions that the constructions of contrastive negation perform or in which they participate in my data. The starting point for the analysis in this section is that '[g]rammars code best what speakers do most' (Du Bois 1985: 363). Usage has been shown to affect which grammatical distinctions are made and how they are coded (Bybee 2006; Haspelmath 2006; 2008). Thus, if we want to explain the findings of the previous section, the best place to start is in the uses to which the contrastive negation strategies are put. I do this by looking at the actions that contrastive negation performs in interaction.

Action formation and ascription are based on multiple cues, not all of them linguistic. First, I shall consider whether contrastive negation is used reactively or not. A reactive use of contrastive negation is one that reacts to prior talk in the interaction by repeating it (see Linell 2009: 100).¹² An example of a reactive use of contrastive negation is (31), in which M reacts to the previous turn's suggestion that it is too hot by negating it. An example of a non-reactive use of contrastive negation is (32), in which the negated element *sweet* has not been mentioned in the previous discourse; rather, the contrast here is a canonical opposition between *savoury* and *sweet* that the hearer can accommodate even without prior mention (cf. Jones et al. 2012), i.e. the content is not activated but the hearer is invited to treat it as known (Lambrecht 1994: 67).

(31) BNC: KCX, 3079–3080

- 1 Unknown speaker: Still [...] too hot.
2 M: → [laugh] **It's not too hot, it's just right.**

(32) BNC: KD1, 1474–1475

- 1 C: Why you is it, why you eating a piece of luncheon meat?
2 L: → Well, just something to nibble on that's **savoury and not**
3 → **sweet**

¹² Keevallik (2017) has noted cases where contrastive negation deals with non-verbal elements. Since such cases do not appear in my data, I shall talk about the words that are reacted to.

If a case is reactive, a second parameter that I consider is whether the negated content is ascribed to the speaker or the hearer. In (31), for example, the negated content can be ascribed to the hearer as it is her previous turn's words that are recycled in the negative part of the construction. The analysis according to the producer of the negated content is similar to previous studies (Deppermann 2014; Deppermann and De Stefani 2019; Roitman 2015). These studies have also considered negation ascribed to a vague, generic or collective party in addition to the speech-act participants; I shall analyse these under non-reactive uses. In addition to the theory-driven analysis into reactive/non-reactive and speaker-ascribed/hearer-ascribed, I examine the sequential context of the cases in a more data-driven way. This results in a classification of the cases into specific action types that emerge from the data but which are often familiar from previous studies in conversation analysis and interactional linguistics.

Table 5 displays the distributions of the reactive/non-reactive parameter. At this level, the distributions are largely similar in the two languages. Indeed, there is no statistically significant difference between the proportions of reactive, non-reactive and unclear reactive cases in the two languages (Fisher's exact: $p=0.9402$). In both languages, over 40% of the instances are reactive, the rest non-reactive apart from a few isolated unclear cases. Thus, we may conclude that contrastive negation is used for the same or at least very similar functions in the two languages.

Table 5. Reactive vs. non-reactive uses of contrastive negation

	English (N = 278)	Finnish (N = 104)
Reactive	114 (41.0%)	45 (43.3%)
Non-reactive	159 (57.2%)	57 (54.8%)
Unclear	5 (1.8%)	2 (1.9%)

Let us now look at reactivity and non-reactivity against the constructional strategies examined in the previous section. **Table 6** sets out the reactive/non-reactive parameter mapped across the strategies.

Table 6. Reactive vs. non-reactive uses of the constructional strategies

(i) Number of contrasted elements	(ii) Order of contrasted elements	(iii) Nature of linking	(iv) Syntactic rank of contrasted elements	English (N = 278)			Finnish (N = 104)		
				Reactive	Non- reactive	Unclear	Reactive	Non- reactive	Unclear
Bipartite	Negative- first	Syndetic coordinate	clausal	0	0	0	5	10	0
			sub-clausal	2	1	0	3	8	0
			mixed	1	0	0	0	1	0
		Syndetic subordinate	clausal				1	1	1
			sub-clausal				5	0	0
			mixed				1	0	0
	Asyndetic	clausal	84	89	3	25	16	1	
		sub-clausal	12	12	0	2	0	0	
		mixed	5	6	0	0	2	0	
	Negative- second	Syndetic	clausal	0	0	0	0	1	0
			sub-clausal	0	3	0	1	6	0
			mixed	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asyndetic		clausal	3	20	0	1	8	0	
		sub-clausal	6	22	2	0	2	0	
		mixed	0	0	0	0	1	0	
Tripartite				1	6	0	1	1	0

Looking at the relationship between the constructional strategies and reactives/non-reactives, we see an interaction between reactivity and parameter (ii), the order of the contrasted elements. Negative-second cases are concentrated in the non-reactive category in both languages; the effect is small in English but moderate in Finnish (English: $X^2(1)=17.176$, $p=3.406e-05$, Cramér's $V=0.264$; Finnish: $X^2(1)=10.067$, $p=0.001509$, Cramér's $V=0.342$). The difference between the languages is not statistically significant (Fisher's exact: $p=0.8931$). An example of this tendency was seen in (32). Parameters (iii) and (iv), the nature of linking and the syntactic rank of contrasted elements, did not show up statistically significant differences within the datasets in terms of reactivity. By contrast, there was a statistically significant difference between the languages in the interaction of the nature of linking and reactivity ($X^2(3)=104.67$, $p<2.2e-16$, Cramér's $V=0.528$), but this is due to the overall difference in the proportion of syndetic constructions.

More specific findings on the connection between reactivity and the constructional strategies will be presented in the remainder of this section. I first examine the reactive cases and their sub-types, then the non-reactive cases.

5.1 Reactive uses

Table 7 shows the proportions of reactive uses in the data, grouped according to whether the negation focuses on content ascribed to the speaker or to content ascribed to the hearer.

Table 7. Reactive uses of contrastive negation

	English (N = 114)	Finnish (N = 45)
Content ascribed to speaker	23 (20.2%)	12 (26.7%)
Content ascribed to hearer	91 (79.8%)	33 (73.3%)

As **Table 7** shows, most reactive uses of contrastive negation target something said by the hearer, followed by around a fourth or fifth of the cases that target something said by the speaker. The difference between the English and Finnish datasets is not statistically significant ($X^2(1)=0.45893$, $p=0.4981$). Thus, it makes sense to look at the languages together and only point out differences as they pertain to constructional strategies. I shall begin by looking at cases where speakers react against their own words, followed by cases where they react to the hearer.

5.1.1 Content ascribed to speaker

Speakers may treat their own words (or actions) as something to react to. When this happens, it is overwhelmingly non-turn-initial. In other words, contrastive negation that reacts to the speaker's own words is a side element in a larger whole. While the number of such cases in my data is low, there are two action types into which the data falls. The first is 'Self-repair'. In Self-repair, there is something problematic in the speaker's own words that needs to be fixed (Schegloff et al. 1977). Of the 23 cases in the English data that react to content ascribable to the speaker, 8 are self-repairs. Of these, 4 are of the sub-clausal [*not X, Y*] construction, as in (33), in which M uses negation to locate a repairable (*a brush*) and immediately corrects it (*a roller*).¹³

(33) BNC: KCL, 970

M: [...]But then she said you get erm ... you put it on and you
→ get a brush and er **not a brush, a roller.**

The Finnish dataset contains 7 Self-repairs. While the figures are so small as to preclude far-reaching generalisations, we may note that the constructional formats used are different. In 4 cases, the [*ei X kun Y*] construction is used for self-repair, as in (34), in which Matti self-repairs, replacing the wrong name that he has produced (*Pekka*) with the correct one (*Paavo*).

¹³ The use of this construction for Self-repair was noted already by Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977: 376). They note that Self-repair is mostly done using other means than negative constructions.

(34) CAA: SG435_152_162, 00:24

1 Matti: se on Pekka Pohjola (.)
‘it is Pekka Pohjola’
2 >eikä #ee oo# ku< Paavo .
NEG.PART NEG.3SG be.CNG kun Paavo
‘no, it isn’t, it’s Paavo’
3 =Paavo] Pohjola #nii#
‘Paavo Pohjola, yeah’

The second action type in which the speaker uses contrastive negation to react to his/her own words is ‘Re-orientation’. In these cases, contrastive negation appears as part of a narrative or some other extended turn to deny a view that the speaker has taken up explicitly in the preceding context. Unlike in Self-repairs, there is no real problem in the previous discourse; rather, the negation is part of the speaker’s interactional project to relate a narrative or a viewpoint in a vivid way. There are 15 cases in English, 5 cases in Finnish. An example is (35). Here, Kathleen is relating a story about a friend. She uses contrastive negation to indicate her changed perception of the friend’s behaviour. In contrast to self-repair, the negation does not address a ‘trouble source’ (Schegloff et al., 1977: 363) in the interaction but rather helps the speaker in strategically constructing a narrative whose flow mirrors (or is construed to mirror) her own thought process in the event: first she held an incorrect view (*thought she was gonna stab me with screwdriver*), then she found out it was incorrect (*she weren’t*) and upon realising this, she also saw what the friend was really doing (*she were looking for a pencil so she could rub it out*).

(35) BNC: KCX, 4796–4797

K: So what I did is I writ thirty plus thirty four, adding up to sixty four and she [laughing] jumped up and she's grabbing thing off table and she had hold of the screwdriver and I says to Linda [...] thought she was gonna stab me with screwdriver [] and **she weren't, she were looking for a pencil so she could rub it out**, well she couldn't and she found this pencil and she scribbled thirty four out. ... So it says thirty plus now even though she's sixty four.

This case is formatted differently from the Self-repairs seen earlier: there is compactness but through a minimal clause¹⁴ rather than a single phrase, contrary to the Self-repairs seen above. Typically, the

¹⁴ In line with Thompson et al. (2015: 11), I call the negative part of the contrastive negation construct in (35) a ‘minimal clause’ rather than VP ellipsis. In interactional linguistics and constructional approaches to language, ellipsis is sometimes viewed with caution as these traditions find it problematic to view a construction as ‘incomplete’ compared to some other construction (Schegloff 1996: 106–109; Fried and Östman 2005: 1755; Thompson et al. 2015: 6–8).

contrastive negation is preceded by a conjunction or particle, such as *and* in (35) or *but*. In the Finnish data, the figures are too low for generalisations, but the data follows the same pattern as English: Self-repairs tend to have more compact forms than Re-orientations.

Both Self-repair and Re-orientation are embedded in larger actions. In the case of Self-repairs, they are deployed in order to safeguard the progression of the main action, while in the case of Re-orientation, contrastive negation is used strategically for narrative or other interactional effect. This embeddedness in larger actions explains why both of them favour non-turn-initial contexts.

5.1.2 Content ascribed to hearer

Reacting to content ascribable to the hearer is by far the larger category of contrastive negation used reactively in both datasets. The reactions come in two main types: Disagreement or Answer to a polar question. There are also isolated cases of other or unclear reactive functions, which are not discussed here for reasons of space.

Cases of 'Disagreement' appear 55 times in the English data, and 18 times in the Finnish. In Disagreements, the speaker reacts to the hearer's previous turn to distance themselves from its content. This is shown in (36), which includes three contrastive negation tokens, each of which performs Disagreement (the second token is co-constructed by L in line 6 and R in line 8):

(36) BNC: KBM, 182–193

- 1 C: Good.
2 How the hell did Margaret get one of those?
3 L:→ **Not an Uno she's got, it's the one up.**
4 What, what's [the name of it?]
5 C: [Yeah, she's got] an Uno!
6 L:→ **It isn't, it's**
7 C: It is!
8 R: **Tipo.**
9 C: No!
10 → [**It's not**
11 L: [Well
12 C: **a Tipo, it's an Uno!**

As (36) shows, not all reactive tokens need to have minimal clauses. In the first contrastive negation, in line 3, L reacts to C's suggestion that a family friend has a Fiat Uno by producing a full clause with the negation and its focus in a marked position before the rest of the clause, thus signalling the reactivity of the construct overtly. In the second contrastive negation, starting in line 6 and completed by R in line 8, the negation is a

To summarise the findings of this sub-section, reactivity affects the form of contrastive negation. In English, we see it in the variation between clausal and sub-clausal [*not X, Y*] on one hand, as this reflects whether a case is Self-repair or not. On the other hand, reactivity shows in the use of minimal clause negations in the clausal [*not X, Y*] construction. The variant with a minimal clause negation may be seen as a sub-construction that specialises in reactive contexts. In Finnish, the conjunction *kun* appears to favour reactive contexts. This finding needs to be treated with caution, however, as the figures are low. The idea of *kun* as a reactive conjunction is strengthened by the fact that Finnish has a specialised repair particle, *eiku*, a combination of the negative particle *ei* and the conjunction *kun* (see Haakana and Visapää 2014; Laakso and Sorjonen 2010). The orientation towards repair is reflected in the fact that constructions with *vaan* are generally longer and less symmetric than the ones with *kun*. Constructions with *vaan* can also be used non-reactively, and indeed this is more frequent.

5.2 Non-reactive uses

The majority of contrastive negations in the two datasets are not reactive. That is, the negation does not target anything that is explicitly mentioned in the previous discourse that is ascribable to any of the participants. As they are less conspicuous from the point of view of turn-taking and the unfolding of the interaction than the reactive uses, the non-reactive uses are considerably more difficult to categorise. The categories also overlap to some extent. For this reason, I do not offer figures or proportions of data on the categories to be presented below.

In spite of not being explicitly reactive, most of the cases in this category are related to the previous context and/or the on-going discourse context more generally. The negation directs the discourse in a way that suits the speaker's needs. The negated element is accommodated and the negation seems to be 'Blocking an inference' that the hearer might have arrived at without having expressed it explicitly (see Deppermann 2014). We have already seen (32), in which the unwanted inference was paired with its canonical antonym. For a case with a somewhat less lexicalised pairing of contrasted alternatives, consider (38):

(38) BNC: KCS, 806–810

- 1 S: Japan this cou did this country er good, even though they
2 bombed er Pearl Harbour they did this country a good ... a
3 good what's it shall we say
4 J: Oh they did, they brought they brought the Americans in, yeah
5 S: they brought the Yanks in, aye, they brought the Yank
6 J: → and that that's why the Americans came into the war, **they**
7 → **didn't come into the war to look after us, they came in to**
8 → **look after their own interest in the**
9 S: No, I know

In (38), the two speakers, J and S, are co-constructing a narrative about the Second World War, the specific point being that the United States joined the war as a reaction to the bombing of Pearl Harbor, not to help its European allies. The main storyteller is S, part of whose narrative is seen in lines 1–3. J aligns with the narrative project by providing an interpretation of it in line 4 (*they brought the Americans in*), something that S then concurs with by slightly reformulating it in line 5 (*they brought the Yanks in, aye*). J then makes a more extensive summary of the narrative that evaluates the Americans’ conduct, in lines 6–8. He starts with an indirect question that paves the way for a contrastive negation summarising the content of the narrative and the interlocutors’ stance towards it. In line 9, S shows agreement with the summary with the negative-polarity response particle *no* and with the fixed expression *I know*.

Blocking an inference is a very general category that subsumes other, more specific ways of using contrastive negation. The accommodated, non-reactive negation may be used for contextualising the affirmative that is deemed less salient. The negation provides a reference value that helps the hearer to calibrate the intended value of the affirmative element. These cases presuppose a scale, which may be entirely situational. An example of this is (39), in which M is able to express the time of an event more precisely by first noting what it is not in line 3. Here, the scale is temporal distance.

(39) BNC: KCX, 8957–8959

1 M: What's your bread situation if they've got any?
 2 K: Ah ... if they've got any just fetch us a couple. ...
 3 M:→ Cos I when I went, **not last time the time before**, they only
 4 had that thirty nine P and I wouldn't pay it.

Another case is (40), in which a waiter is taking orders from a group of customers. She has previously told the customers that the restaurant offers two kinds of salmon soup, one as an appetiser, the other as a main course. One of the customers, Päivi, returns to this topic after a while:¹⁵

(40) 16Arkisyn: Sapu117, 111–112

1 Päivi: mä kuunteli vähän huonosti sen lohikeittojutun
 ‘I listened to the thing about the salmon soup a bit badly,’
 2 ni siis olik se joku tommonen teijän
 ‘so I mean, was yours something like that’
 3 → siis **ei** **alkuruoka-annosmäärä**
 so NEG.3SG appetizer-portion.amount
 ‘I mean, not the amount of an appetiser’

¹⁵ Since I only had the audio of this situation, I cannot verify whether Päivi uses gestures in line 1 to indicate the size that she has in mind though her use of the deictic *tommenen* ‘like that’ would indicate that.

4 → **vaan joku vähä isompi satsi** vai
vaan some slightly big.COMP batch or
‘but a slightly bigger portion, or?’

5 Waiter: joo se on semmone niinku ruokasa keitto
‘yeah, it’s like a meal-like soup’

6 mitä tos ulkona mainostetaan
‘that is advertised outside’

Here, Päivi uses negation to contextualise her question. She uses contrastive negation with *vaan* to put forward two alternatives, and to seek confirmation for the second of these alternatives. Again, the alternatives are on a scale, this time a scale of size. The construction is prefaced in line 3 by the particle *siis* ‘so’, which is associated with self-repair and reformulation (Laakso and Sorjonen 2010: 1165–1166). Rather than correcting, these kinds of uses may be designed to prevent the interaction from getting to a point in which repair becomes necessary.

Non-reactive cases may also show and/or create alignment between speaker and hearer, as in (41). Alignment means that the speaker and hearer(s) arrive at a shared stance towards some object (Du Bois 2007). In (41), several elderly people have gathered together to recognise people in old photographs left behind by a deceased co-worker. Liisa, who is younger, has convened the gathering. At the point of the extract, the participants have just come back from a break and are re-orienting themselves to the task.

(41) CAA: SG435_102_112, 8:04

01 Jussi: mikäs nyt on /seuraava annos.
‘what is now /the next portion.’

02–04 ((omitted))

05 Liisa: [>käydä läpi<] ja sit (.) hei tota (0.3)
‘go through and then, well hey’

06 → **ei oo /tarkotus niin kun (0.6) näännyttää**
NEG.3SG be.CNG purpose PART starve.INF

07 **täällä \itseänsä vaa me voimme**
here oneself vaan we can.1PL

08 (.) **voimme järjestää /toisen session (1.0)**
can.1PL organise.INF other.GEN session.GEN

09 mth .hhh **toisella kertaa ja kattoo**

In both (40) and (41), an [*ei X vaan Y*] construct is used proactively to direct the course of the interaction. In (40), the direction concerns the interpretations at which the hearer might arrive, while in (41), the construct has a persuasive character and tries to effect a course of action.

To summarise the constructional strategies in non-reactive cases, we may note that in combinations of two clauses, full clauses are used almost exclusively, unlike reactive cases, which frequently use minimal clauses. In Finnish, the conjunction *vaan* appears in both reactive and non-reactive contexts, unlike *kun*, which seems to be mostly restricted to reactive uses. As noted above, non-reactive cases are also much more frequently negative-second in both languages.

6 Discussion

In the previous section, I examined the reactive and non-reactive uses of contrastive negation in English and Finnish conversation. On the whole, reactive uses were more readily associated with specific constructional strategies. In this section, I return to the four constructional parameters and the ways in which the usage patterns of the constructional strategies can be related to the interactional functions of contrastive negation.

(i) *Number of contrasted elements*. Contrastive negation constructs are overwhelmingly bipartite. Tripartite and multipartite constructs are very rare in my data, and for reasons of space I have not examined them in detail here. The fact that speakers favour bipartite constructs falls out rather naturally from general principles of economy (Haiman 1983) and the Gricean Maxim of Manner, specifically its third sub-maxim: ‘Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity)’ (Grice 1975: 46).

(ii) *Order of contrasted elements*. In both languages, the negative-first strategy prevailed over the negative-second one. Negative-second cases preferred non-reactive contexts, and conversely, the reactive contexts seemed to shun the negative-second strategy. In the reactive cases, the negated element is highly activated. Given the information-structural tendency of placing known elements before unknown ones, it is natural that reactive cases prefer the negative-first strategy: after all, the discourse element being reacted to in reactive constructions has generally been mentioned immediately prior to the construction; it is highly accessible and thus given (Prince 1981). Indeed, returning to the reactive examples above, it is often difficult to see how the same effect could be reached with a negative-second construction. Assuming that negating contextually activated content responds to the hearer’s communicative needs and is thus informative, one may invoke the Gricean maxim of Quantity to explain this, in particular its first sub-maxim: ‘Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange)’ (Grice 1975: 45). By contrast, in the non-reactive cases, the negative-second strategy does not disrupt the flow of interaction, though the negative-first strategy might still be favoured by the continuing discourse topic even in the absence of explicitly recycled elements.

On the level of the specific actions, Self-repair is oriented to the smooth progression of interaction. Placing the affirmative element after the negative one serves this goal. Similarly, Disagreements aim at establishing the speaker’s viewpoint, which makes it natural to express the speaker’s point of view at the end

of the construct in the affirmative. Finally, in negative Answers to polar questions, it is more natural to begin with the negation as it connects more directly with the question.

(iii) *Nature of linking*. Asyndetic linking was the favoured strategy in both languages, irrespective of whether the order is negative-first or negative-second. The English data displays a remarkable absence of syndetic linking in the negative-first cases, which is in line with the relative lack of conjunctions in informal spoken discourse more generally (see Mithun 1988). The Finnish data, by contrast, did include conjunctions even in negative-first contexts. In fact, Finnish has two corrective conjunctions: the more general *vaan* and *kun*, which seems to be specialised in reactive contexts.

In line with previous research, the negative-first conjunctions are more constructionalised than the negative-second ones: *vaan* and *kun* can be regarded as corrective conjunctions, whereas *eikä*, which appears as the linking element in syndetic negative-second constructs, is a general negative coordinator in Finnish. Contrary to the corrective uses of *vaan* and *kun*, it is not restricted to contrastive contexts.

The cross-linguistically typical existence of corrective conjunctions in negative-first but not negative-second contexts may be related to the frequency of these contexts. While a conjunction is optional in contrastive negation in any case, the negative-first cases are more frequent and thus more conducive to the constructionalisation of syndetic constructions (cf. Rostila 2006; Traugott and Trousdale 2013). It is therefore not surprising that *kun* appears to have an affinity with reactive contexts as these favour the negative-first. The wider use of *vaan* also in non-reactive cases may be evidence of its further grammaticalisation.

(iv) *Syntactic rank of contrasted elements*. The syntactic rank of contrasted elements varies according to the other strategies: clausal contrasts are more typical in negative-first than negative-second contexts. Reactive contexts favour more condensed expressions, for example minimal negative clauses and the sub-clausal [*not X, Y*] construction. This is in line with the idea of ‘positionally sensitive grammar’ (Schegloff 1996: 63, 109). This means that the shape of a construct depends on its position in an interactional sequence. In this case, the reactivity means that the constructs are sequentially linked to a previously mentioned element, either in the same turn (e.g. Self-repair) or in a previous one (e.g. Answer to a polar question). The speaker shows this link by the format of the negation, the part of the construction that recycles the previously mentioned element and which typically comes first in reactive cases of contrastive negation, as seen above. For example, Self-repair is a deviation from the successful progression of interaction and therefore speakers will wish to get done with it as quickly as possible. It also requires that the hearer is able to understand just which part of the message or of the inferences to which it gives rise is being repaired. Both of these factors favour sub-clausal or minimal clausal negation, and, accordingly, both English and Finnish use compact constructions for Self-repair in my dataset. This minimises the trouble caused as the repairable and its replacement are close together and often presented symmetrically.

Non-reactive contexts in turn favour clausal negative-first and sub-clausal negative-second strategies. The use of clausal contrasts may be explained by the low activation of the non-reactive contrasted elements. This, too, is a positionally sensitive account of the constructs’ form: when there is no prior element that the

construction recycles, the negation as well as the affirmation need to be as explicit as possible, and the highest degree of explicitness is offered by a full clause. As to the sub-clausal negative-second cases, it may be that there is pressure to keep negative-second constructs as short as possible. Because of the relative un informativeness of negation, the negative part of contrastive negation needs the affirmative part in order to make an understandable contribution to the exchange. Thus, negative-second cases require going back in time in order for the contrast to be understood (on the temporality of negation, see Ono and Thompson 2017). This presumably increases processing cost, which is typically avoided (Hawkins 2004: 49–61).

In summary, several functional motivations may be seen to affect the formatting of contrastive negation. Reactiveness, for example, favours the negative-first strategy, and Self-repair as an action type often requires condensed expression such as phrases or minimal clauses. These recurring motivations thus lead to recurring syntactic patterns, which in turn are likely to become conventionalised, for instance in the form of specialised conjunctions.

7 Conclusion

This paper has examined a fragment of the grammars of English and Finnish: contrastive negation. The aims were two-fold: first, to see the usage patterns in these two languages and, second, to consider the pragmatic functions of the constructions in order to see the motivations of the usage patterns.

As to the first aim, I analysed the forms of contrastive negation in the two datasets according to four formal language-independent parameters: (i) number of contrasted elements, (ii) order of contrasted elements, (iii) nature of linking and (iv) syntactic rank of contrasted elements. I hope to have shown that English and Finnish have slightly different resources for expressing contrastive negation and that they also use similar resources in different ways. Finnish has two lexicalised markers of correctivity (*vaan* and *kun*), whereas English has none. English favours asyndetic clausal coordination, while in Finnish both negative-first and negative-second constructions are often overtly coordinated. Furthermore, in Finnish the conjunctions seem to be functionally specialised: *vaan* tends to be used in a broad range of contexts, whereas *kun* is prototypically used in corrections. From a contrastive point of view, my study shows that even analogous constructions such as [*not X but Y*] and [*ei X vaan Y*] have language-specific properties, including differing degrees of entrenchment as shown in their prevalence in the data. This conforms to the thesis that constructions are language-specific (Croft 2001). These differences are set against the background of broader typological differences between English and Finnish negation, clause combining and information structure. For example, in Finnish, the standard negation construction is an auxiliary verb inflected in person that has a propensity for becoming fused with various linking elements (e.g. *eikä*, *eiku*).

As to the second aim, I have suggested that the shapes that the construction families of contrastive negation have taken in English and Finnish are explained by the functions of the constructions. A major distinction was drawn between reactive and non-reactive uses. The former are less frequent than the latter but display more differentiated actional characteristics, which also motivate the forms of contrastive negation used to perform those actions. Reactive uses include Self-repair, Re-orientation and Answer to a polar

question. In all these, contrastive negation is formatted in a way that enables the interaction to proceed as smoothly as possible. Non-reactive uses are arguably oriented to preventing problems in the interaction; because the negated content in them is generally less accessible, the constructions are also usually longer. The intersubjective nature of negation underlies much of its behaviour in interaction, and this is also evident in the ordering of negation and affirmation, for instance. While the functional motivations affecting the two languages are largely similar, the contrastive design of this study has shown that these motivations lead to slightly different outcomes in the two languages.

Methodologically, my study used conversation data and the methodology of interactional linguistics to get to the functions that contrastive negation has and the ways in which these functions motivate syntactic choices. On the one hand, this allowed me to relate the constructional strategies to their pragmatic functions. On the other, it enabled me to consider language-internal variation in a comparative perspective. It is well-known that coordinating conjunctions are grammaticalised to varying degrees. Mithun (1988) notes that conjunctions that mean ‘and’ are by no means universal and goes on to suggest that their emergence may be related to whether the language is used for formal writing. Similarly, in Lehmann’s (1988) typology of clause combining, the distinction between syndesis and asyndesis is one parameter by which languages (or their constructions) may vary (see also Stassen 2000). Mauri’s (2009) typological study of coordination suggests that corrective conjunctions are cross-linguistically less frequent than adversatives (‘but’) or additives (‘and’). However, this is to my knowledge the first study to examine usage data to see whether and how the degrees of conventionalisation of corrective coordinators are shown in practice. These degrees of conventionalisation cannot be viewed without considering a wider range of constructional alternatives in the languages concerned. In the case of contrastive negation and corrective coordination/subordination, this entailed looking at not only the alternation between the constructions with and without a corrective coordinator but also between negative-first and negative-second as well as tripartite constructions. I hope my study shows the benefits of going beyond dichotomies such as languages with or without an adversative/corrective distinction to consider the actual arrays of constructional strategies that languages present to their speakers.

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Abbreviations and transcription conventions

ADE = adessive case; AFF = affirmative particle; CNG = connegative; COMP = comparative; CONJ = conjunction; ELA = elative case; INE = inessive case; INST = instructive case; PART = discourse particle; PRT = partitive case; Q = question particle.

(.)	a pause shorter than 0.2 seconds
(0.4)	a pause (length in seconds)
...	a pause in the BNC data
[]	Overlap
=	Latching
wor-	an incomplete word
word_word	two words pronounced together within the same turn
>word<	a sequence spoken at a higher rate than its surroundings
°word°	a sequence spoken more quietly than its surroundings
#word#	creaky voice
emphasis	stressed syllable
.hh	inhale (each h stands for 0.1 seconds)
hh	exhale (each h stands for 0.1 seconds)
. , ?	kinds of intonation: falling, flat, rising
↑	a higher pitch than in the surrounding speech
↓	a lower pitch than in the surrounding speech
(word)	uncertain passage in the transcript
((sneezes))	Action

References

Data sources

Arkisyn: A morphosyntactically coded database of conversational Finnish. Database compiled at the University of Turku, with material from the Conversation Analysis Archive at the University of Helsinki and the Syntax Archives at the University of Turku. Department of Finnish and Finno-Ugric Languages, University of Turku.

BNC = Audio BNC: the audio edition of the Spoken British National Corpus. Phonetics Laboratory, University of Oxford. <http://www.phon.ox.ac.uk/AudioBNC>

CAA = Conversation Analysis Archive. Database compiled at the University of Helsinki. Department of Finnish, Finno-Ugric and Scandinavian Studies.

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