

The Emergence of Emphatic ‘*ne*’ in Conversational Swiss French¹

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(Received June 2005; revised May 2007)

ABSTRACT

This study explores *ne* use in a previously unexamined variety of French: Swiss French. Based on a corpus of conversation among friends and family recorded at home, the results of this study show the lowest *ne* use reported for adult, middle-class speakers of European French, 2.5%. It also shows that *ne* functions micro-stylistically to effect micro-shifts in register allowing speakers to enact the institutional talk of public discourse. Finally, a new function appears to emerge: the use of *ne* as an emphatic, where it tends to appear in foregrounded clauses often with other emphatics, functioning as speaker evaluation or involvement.

I. INTRODUCTION

The variable use of *ne* in spoken French negation is one of the most studied questions in the literature. While there is still discussion as to the ultimate fate of *ne* in spoken French, across varieties, situations, age and social groups, and in apparent and real time studies *ne* use clearly appears to be declining in favor of post-verbal negation (Ashby, 1976, 1981, 2001; Sankoff and Vincent, 1980; Leon and Tennant, 1990; Coveney, 1996, 1998; Armstrong, 2002; Armstrong and Smith, 2002; Martineau and Mougeon, 2003, Hansen and Malderez, 2004). Thus the question perhaps shifts from ‘Why is *ne* dropped?’ to ‘Why is *ne* used?’ The corpus-based study presented here considers that question. It combines quantitative and qualitative approaches to the empirical analysis of authentic discourse by (a) assessing the frequency of *ne* use in Conversational Swiss French (CSF), a variety which has not been previously examined, and (b) exploring the contexts for its use in order to give us a more nuanced understanding of how *ne* functions in CSF.

¹ I am most grateful to the Editor and the anonymous referees, as well as to Rhonda Yancey, Charles and Fayde Macune, and Dan Madigan. Their insightful comments and generous support on earlier versions of this article have improved it immensely. Any remaining weaknesses are mine alone. Je tiens également à remercier tous les participants dans mon corpus. Sans eux et leur aimable participation, cet article n’aurait jamais pu voir le jour.

2. BACKGROUND

Although all educated French speakers have access to verb-bracketing negation and can call it up for monitored language production – either written or spoken – negation in spontaneous speech, however, is typically post-verbal, where *ne* is absent and *pas*, etc., follows the verb and serves as the sole negator, as shown in examples (1a) and (1b), produced by Speaker 4, (S4), in Conversation II-A of this corpus.

- (1) a. je la fais pour les chats . . . parce que des chats cuisinent pas tous seuls. (S4, II-A)
 b. je crois que c'est un truc qui va être bénéficiaire que pour les – que pour les pays les plus riches (S4, II-A)

Negation without *ne* has become so frequent in Regular French (*le français ordinaire* (Gadet, 1989)) that according to Gadet (2003: 46) it is no longer stigmatized, as its use by this highly educated speaker, a university researcher, indicates.

2.1. Frequency

Over the years, researchers examining *ne* frequency have tended to report ever lower figures of *ne* use. Ashby (1976) reporting on the Malécot corpus, surreptitious recordings made in the 1950s of upper-middle class Parisian French found *ne* use at 55.8%. Ashby then established his own corpus, comprised of sociolinguistic interviews that he conducted and recorded with socially diverse adults and adolescents in Tours in 1976. The 1976 Tours corpus showed an overall *ne* retention rate of 37%. Ashby concluded that *ne* deletion was a case of change in progress, based on change in apparent time, because older speakers used *ne* more frequently than younger speakers (52% vs. 19%, respectively). In the mid-1980s, Coveney (1996) conducted sociolinguistic interviews to study *ne* use among a group of socially diverse summer camp employees in the Somme, in the Picardy region of northern France, and found that the speakers used *ne* in only 18.8% of potential contexts in these informal interviews where participants were already acquainted with the researcher. In 1983, Pooley (1996) established his Roubaix corpus to study the speech of working-class urban adolescents in the industrial north of France, which he supplemented twelve years later with his smaller Rouge-Barre corpus expanding his linguistic documentation of the Lille-Roubaix area. Overall he found *ne* use at less than 7%, and in the Rouge-Barre data *ne* use was practically non-existent, occurring in only 1% of possible contexts. In another corpus dating from the mid-1980s, Armstrong (2002) explores the speech of middle-class children (11–12 years old) and adolescents (16–19 years old) from Dieuze in the Moselle department in Lorraine recorded in 1986–87 in two different stylistic contexts: interview and peer conversation. Even in the interview format, the overall rate of *ne* use for the two age groups combined was only 2.9%, whereas in peer conversation it dropped to the vanishingly low 1.1%, virtually identical to Pooley's findings for working-class urban adolescents. With figures as low as this, it would seem clear that the change in

spontaneous speech is nearing completion, thus confirming Gadet's remarks about *ne* deletion no longer being stigmatized in everyday speech.

Other researchers, however, caution against interpreting these studies as conclusive evidence of *ne* loss. Blanche-Benveniste and Jeanjean (1987) point out that Ashby (1981) documents change in apparent time rather than in real time. Therefore, the lower rate of *ne* use by the younger speakers in Ashby (1981) could be attributed not to change in progress but to age-grading, whereby the same speaker would show different rates of *ne* use over the course of his/her lifetime, depending upon societal expectations of working adults vs. the accepted informality of youth. Posner, working within the framework of historical linguistics rather than the relational frequency framework of sociolinguistics, reminds readers that loss is not complete until the last 'conservative speaker' dies and the last 'resistant lexical item fall[s] out of use' (Posner, 1997: 126). By Posner's definition then, *ne* is far from dead. As Hansen and Malderez (2004) point out, despite clear signs of oral influence, *ne* is still well entrenched in the written production of 7–9-year-old schoolchildren, occurring in 33–75% of possible contexts² and they anticipate the frequency of *ne* use will rise with additional schooling. Berman and Slobin (1994) in their work on oral narratives, however, note that 9-year-olds produce the most normative narratives. Hansen and Malderez (2004) also indicate its continued role in oral production, citing Blanche-Benveniste (1997) who documented young children using *ne* at play to parody 'elegant ladies'.

Even if *ne* is still with us for the foreseeable future, at least in certain contexts, three recent real-time studies show that *ne* loss is real and ongoing. Armstrong and Smith (2002) compared the non-scripted portions of the speech of French radio announcers recorded in 1960–61 parts of the Ågren corpus (Ågren, 1973) with their counterparts recorded in 1997, and found a drop from 92.6% *ne* use to 72.5% in this 37-year period. Although clearly of a different register from the peer conversations among the adolescents or even the sociolinguistic interviews, it is also clear that the same tendency toward decreasing *ne* use is in effect among the radio announcers as among the interviewees.

In 1995, Ashby established a second Tours corpus, conducting a set of follow-up sociolinguistic interviews with the same informants or sociolinguistically comparable ones from a range of backgrounds. Thus nearly a generation later, Ashby (2001) was able to demonstrate that *ne* loss was indicative of a change in real time and not just an artifact of age-grading. The 1995 Tours corpus showed that the overall *ne* retention rate had dropped to 18%. Furthermore, although the younger group was still using *ne* less frequently than the older speakers, both older and younger groups were using *ne* less frequently than they (or their equivalents) had in 1976. In the 1995 corpus, the older speakers were using *ne* in only 25% of the possible contexts, down from 52%, and the younger speakers had slipped from

² See van Compernelle (to appear), however, for a discussion of *ne* use in another written genre, French chat, which overwhelming resembles spontaneous speech with *ne* use at only 12.4%.

Table 1. Summary of frequency of *ne* use in previous studies

Study	Corpus	+ <i>ne</i> %
Ashby (1976)	1950s: Malécot's corpus of upper-middle class adults: Paris	55.8%
Ashby (1981)	1976: Socially diverse adolescents & adults: Tours	37%
Ashby (2001)	1995: Socially diverse adolescents & adults: Tours	18%
Coveney (1996)	mid-1980s: Socially diverse adults: the Somme, Picardie	18.8%
Pooley (1996)	1983 (Roubaix)/1995 (Rouge-Barre) Working-class urban adolescents: Lille-Roubaix	>7%
Armstrong (2002)	1986–1987: Middle-class schoolchildren 11–19: Dieuze, Moselle, Lorraine	1.1%
Armstrong & Smith (2002)	1960–61 (Ågren, 1973): French radio announcers' non-scripted speech	92.6%
Hansen & Malderez (2004)	1997: scripted speech	72.5%
	1972–74 (Péretz-Juillard Corpus): Sociolinguistic interviews in	15.8%
	1989–1993 (Hansen–Malderez Corpus): the Paris region	8.2%

Table 2. Linguistic & Extra-Linguistic Constraints on *Ne* Retention (Ashby, 1976)

Linguistic	Extra-linguistic
Second negatives other than <i>pas</i>	Earlier stages of the recorded interview
Reinforcing adverbs	Narration and explanation
Full NP subjects	Women
Subject clitics <i>nous</i> and <i>vous</i>	Administrators and other professionals
Dependent clauses	Older speakers
Verbal moods other than indicative	
Presence of a third negative	
Negative utterances without <i>non</i>	
Slower speech rate	
Intervocalic position	
Formal pronominal address, e.g., <i>vous</i>	

19% to 14%. Declines in *ne* use between 1976 and 1995 were also evident across social class and sex.

Finally, in the third study in real time, Hansen & Malderez (2004) examined *ne* use in two sets of sociolinguistic interviews conducted in the Paris region: the first in 1972–74 (the Péretz-Juillard corpus), and the second in 1989–93, (the Hansen-Malderez corpus), and found a drop from 15.8% to 8.2% *ne* use. Speaker age had more influence on the results than education level, particularly in their more recent, pooled corpus.

Table 1 summarizes the findings of these studies in apparent and real time.

2.2. Variables favoring retention or deletion

In his first study on *ne* deletion, Ashby (1976) uncovers a series of linguistic, stylistic, and demographic variables favoring *ne* retention in Malécot's informal corpus of upper-middle class Parisian French. In it, he finds that certain variables favor *retention*. These are presented in Table 2 and reclassified as linguistic or extra-linguistic variables.

Among the linguistic variables, Coveney (1998) also found that *nous*, NPs, and verbal moods other than the indicative favor *ne* retention, and reports that Moreau (1986, cf. Coveney, 1998) found likewise with the addition of *vous* and *qui*. Hansen and Malderéz (2004) found, in contrast with previous studies, that phonetic environment and the presence/absence of an object clitic did not influence *ne* use.

2.3. *Style*

Ever since the use of *ne* became optional, it has been associated with stylistic formality. Even in Montreal French, where *ne* loss occurred significantly earlier than in Europe, Sankoff and Vincent (1980) noticed residual productive stylistic use of it for discussing education, religion, and morals. Likewise, Ashby (1981, 2001) and Coveney (1996, 1998) find higher *ne* use for speakers when they were recorded in their office than when these same speakers were recorded in a more informal setting. Armstrong (2002) compares the *ne* use of French children and adolescents across two stylistic contexts: the relatively formal interview with the researcher and the highly informal peer conversation. With these two age groups, *ne* use was already minimal (less than 2% overall in both contexts aggregated), but whether in the interview or the peer conversation, Armstrong found that when speakers used *ne*, it was to signal seriousness of tone.

2.4. *Background, foreground, and evaluation in narrative/explanation*

As for the function of *ne* in the discourse, Ashby (1976) found that narrative and explanation favored *ne* retention, in contrast with banalities and reflection, which favored deletion. He suggested that this distinction could be accounted for by degree of speaker involvement where greater speaker involvement triggers a more informal style, and therefore lower *ne* use. Thus, he speculated that banalities and reflections would be more personally involving whereas narratives and explanations would be less so, based on the patterns of *ne* use.

In their study of narrative structure, Hopper (1979) and Hopper and Thompson (1980) divide narratives into background and foreground. Background sets the stage for the listener. Foreground relates the main events. In his classic analysis of narrative structure, Labov (1972) found that what makes a narrative compelling is the speaker's evaluation of the situation being narrated. These evaluative strategies convey the speaker's sense of newsworthiness of the story and fend off a 'So what?' response from the listener. Labov found that speakers use two types of evaluation, external and internal, which Blyth (2002) summarizes as follows. External evaluation includes: complex syntax, negation, repetition, future, or conditional. Internal evaluation is signaled by the use of intensifiers such as: expressive phonology, interjections, direct speech, marked word order, and repetition. Cheshire (1997) suggests that high-involvement utterances are more apt to show non-standard grammar than low-involvement utterances, a finding that seems to parallel Labov's (1972) earlier

finding that narratives tend to elicit the vernacular, as speakers focus not on form but on meaning.

So, far from being less personally involved in narratives than in banalities or reflections, one might expect speakers instead to show higher levels of personal involvement, as narrators drive home their point through the evaluation they provide of their foregrounded main event clauses. By extension, one might expect to see a similar pattern for explanations, as speakers present their ‘closing arguments.’ Perhaps then the reason why Ashby found higher rates of *ne* retention in narrative may be that emphatic *ne* was already starting to emerge. Perhaps it was not that speakers were less involved in their narratives but rather that they were more so, and were using the emerging emphatic *ne* for evaluation. As such, it could serve both as external evaluation, through its residual role in negation, and internal evaluation, where its marked word order would contrast with the basic post-verbal negation. If *ne* was already taking on an emphatic meaning, available for narrative evaluation for example, this could perhaps also account for why Ashby found higher rates of *ne* retention with intensifying adverbs, if narrators were also using these for internal evaluation and to signal speaker involvement.

2.5. *Emphasis*

In what follows, I argue that, besides the ongoing loss of *ne* and its undeniable stylistic function, a new use of *ne* seems to be emerging – emphasis. Trask (1995: 89) defines emphasis as ‘any phenomenon which serves to draw attention to some element in the sentence or utterance,’ and goes on to add, ‘English and other languages also exhibit a range of grammatical means for expressing emphasis, such as, *particles* [emphasis added], distinctive word order and clefted constructions’ (Trask, 1995: 89). Clancy Clements (p.c.) remarks that languages as diverse as Russian and certain African languages have emphatic negative particles. In fact, one could argue that the uncontracted *not* of conversational English is an emphatic negative particle, in contrast with the more usual *n’t*.

2.6. *Dynamic synchrony*

Jakobson’s (1971a, 1971b) concept of dynamic synchrony captures the interrelatedness between linguistic variation and linguistic change, and may serve as a model of what is happening in French regarding these two phenomena and the role of *ne*. Jakobson explains that, at any given time in a language (synchrony), a variety of different forms may co-exist; some of these may be the final stages of one change while another may be the early stages of a new change (dynamic, i.e., the synchronic slice of language is not static within itself). That is, one change does not necessarily run to completion before another change begins, despite the tendency for language change to accelerate as it approaches the tail-end of the shift, according to Chen’s S-curve model first developed to account for exceptions to sound change and later generalized to other linguistic environments (Chen, 1972). In particular,

prescriptively favored forms, such as *ne*, tend not to disappear completely. Instead, they may develop new, additional meanings, as appears to be the case for *emphatic 'ne'*. It could be that the loss of *ne* in pre-verbal negation, as a residual stylistic use reminiscent of Bell's (1984) concept of referee shift where speakers tailor their speech to hypothetical audience members, has not quite run its course as a stylistic device, while at the same time a new function, emphasis, emerges, also conveyed by the form *ne*. These two forms, while formally identical, may be functionally distinct. If stylistic *ne* is a stereotype (Labov, 1972), these uses discussed by Sankoff and Vincent (1980) may represent Trudgill's (1999) vestigial variant, provided it is actually leaving the speech community. In contrast, emphatic *ne*, the new marked function, may be the embryonic variant just entering the speech community. Trudgill also cautions that variationist methodology is not particularly well suited for studying embryonic and vestigial forms given their limited distribution.

In light of the substantial changes occurring within French negation across age, social class, style, and region, this study asks two fundamental research questions:

1) How often is *ne* used in Conversational Swiss French?

and

2) What communicative function(s) does *ne* serve in the discourse when it is used?

3. METHODOLOGY

This study takes a complex discourse analytic approach incorporating quantitative and qualitative dimensions to assess the frequency and function of the pre-verbal negator *ne*, in a corpus of Conversational Swiss French (CSF). The corpus of 117,000 words or 8 1/2 hours of talk, including 1,982 negative utterances, represents seven spontaneously occurring, informal, face-to-face conversations, typically over food, between family members, friends, and (less often) acquaintances. In this sample of convenience, the fourteen educated middle-class speakers of Swiss French, six men and eight women ranging in age from 26 to 67 years old, included skilled trades people, service sector employees, retired teachers, and researchers from the cantons of Geneva, Vaud, Neuchâtel, Jura, and Valais for broader coverage of *la Suisse Romande*, given this study's focus on Swiss French as a whole instead of regional variation within French-speaking Switzerland. These conversations were audio-recorded by the discourse analyst or one of the participants in the homes of at least one of the participants in Switzerland and the United States, in the late 1990s. Corpus-based approaches, such as this one, which document spontaneous, unplanned discourse among friends and family members, have the advantage of minimizing the prescriptive tendencies that can surface when French speakers are asked to consciously reflect on their language or even to participate in a sociolinguistic interview with an interviewer who is not a member of their ongoing social network. The researcher was a participant observer in the first three conversations, but as an ongoing member of the speakers' social network, effects attributable to the observer's paradox can be expected to be minimal,

and participants gave their informed written consent to having the conversations recorded. Thus, as Waugh et al. (2007) recommend, every effort has been made to collect language that was not produced for the analyst but is socio-culturally and cognitively defined as a form of talk that is typical of the given speech community (not based on artificial situations), spontaneously produced by the participants (not planned in advance), and in which there is little or no prior intervention of the analyst (not elicited by the analyst), so that the analyst will not bias what the participants say to each other and how they say it. The recordings were transcribed and analyzed by the researcher. Transcriptions may at times reflect non-standard orthography, not to make speakers appear less educated than they are (see Edwards, 2001, and Gadet, 2003, for a discussion of this point) but to reflect systematic morphosyntactic changes occurring in the spoken language through the grammaticalization of the pre-verbal zone. These changes may be obscured by the use of standard orthography, which maintains visible separation between morphemes, which currently behave more as bound than free. Once transcribed, the data were analyzed with the help of the electronic concordancer WordSmith for 1) the presence or absence of *ne* in negative utterances and 2) the communicative function(s) of *ne* in these utterances. If the second question, 'communicative function' was not more specifically defined going into the research, it stems from the discourse analytic tradition of letting the data speak for themselves. Thus, rather than presupposing a particular research question in advance, the analyst observes the patterns of use that emerge during a fine-grained textual analysis of the data transcripts. With respect to the *on ± ne* sequences, with these speakers, it appears possible to distinguish between the *on -ne* sequences and geminated *on +ne* sequences in pre-vocalic contexts, given the added length in the geminated sequences. One might expect that the overall informality of the recording context, i.e., among family and friends in the homes of the participants, coupled with the absence of any formal interview format, relying solely on unplanned, spontaneous talk instead, would favor low *ne* use frequency. This finding is resoundingly borne out by the results, discussed in the next section.

4. RESULTS

An analysis of this corpus shows *ne* use to be strikingly different not only from the bracketing negation of Standard Written French but also from previous studies of spoken French.

4.1. *Ne frequency*

As for frequency of *ne* use in CSF, in this conversational corpus, *ne* is used in only 2.5% of the total negative utterances produced ($n = 1,982$). In other words, *ne* is all but gone from Conversational Swiss French. To my knowledge, this result represents the lowest figure attested so far for *ne* use in studies that include educated adult middle-class speakers of European French. It is considerably lower than

Ashby's recent 18% from his 1995 Tours corpus, itself down from 37% in his 1976 Tours corpus (Ashby, 1981, 2001) and Coveney's 18.8% mid-1980s Picardy corpus (Coveney, 1996). It is lower even than the 8.2% reported by Hansen and Malderez (2004) for their Paris area corpus dating from the early 1990s, and notably so if we compare just the figures for same-age adults (24–67 years old) in the Paris vs. the Swiss corpora – 13.8% vs. 2.5%. Although lower *ne* use figures have been reported for France, this has been in the speech of children or adolescents, e.g., Pooley's 1% in the speech of working-class urban youth in Rouge-Barre (Pooley, 1996) and Armstrong's 1.1% in peer conversation among middle-class schoolchildren, aged 11–12 and 16–19 in Lorraine (Armstrong, 2002). As such, it is not directly comparable to the Swiss corpus of adult speech. Although the speakers may not be comparable, the figures are. The middle-class adult Swiss figure of 2.5% *ne* use is closer to the figures for Armstrong's (2002) middle-class schoolchildren than Ashby's (1981, 2001), Coveney's (1996), and Hansen and Malderez's (2004) adults. Age is a known variable affecting *ne* use. Younger speakers use it less. Older speakers use it more. And yet, the Swiss adult figures look more like those of the French adolescents.

However, two other factors could contribute to this difference: methodology or region. Methodologically, the sociolinguistic interview format, which Ashby (2001), Coveney (1996), and Hansen and Malderez (2004) all use to collect their data, attempts to elicit the vernacular (Labov, 1972) – and at times comes close to doing so when speakers shift out of their careful style to recount high involvement narratives. Still, I consider it likely that the data in the present corpus – naturally occurring, mealtime conversation where the researcher and/or researcher's assistant is a member of the speech community – is more consistently able to tap an even less-monitored style – the vernacular itself. This difference could be particularly relevant in the case of *ne*, because French speakers tend to be sensitive to the sociolinguistic nuances of this positively valued, formal variant, as Gadet (1989) demonstrates in the difference between her own speech at the family breakfast table versus during her university lectures.

Regional factors could also play a role. The Ashby, Coveney, and Hansen-Malderez corpora document the French of France, Tours, Picardy, and Paris area respectively. This corpus, in contrast, presents the French of *la Suisse romande*, French-speaking Switzerland. While it seems that in both French and Swiss varieties, the clitic + verb sequence has become reanalyzed as agreement marker + verb (for a discussion of this change, see Harris (1978) for French French and Fonseca-Greber (2000) for Swiss French), it may be that this change is further advanced in the French of Switzerland than that of France, a situation which may be linked to corresponding changes in negation. Coveney (1996) and Hansen and Malderez (2004) note lower *ne* use in northern France, but *la Suisse romande* occupies a third space, the traditional franco-provençal area.

Without further analysis of this correlation, which would be beyond the scope of this article, it would perhaps be unwise to overstate the regional factor because Offord, in his *Varieties of Contemporary French*, concludes that 'it is best to consider

the standards of Belgium and Switzerland as the same as standard French [of France], with minor modifications,' (Offord, 1990:18). He indicates that these are usually considered to be lexical or phonological, rather than morpho-syntactic. Indeed, Offord's observation concurs overall with this preliminary investigation. Although reported studies show that *ne* use is higher for France (8.2%–18%) than Switzerland (2.5%), this difference is perhaps just an artifact of the recording context, with the Swiss data coming closer than the French data to capturing the vernacular. In any case, this is a difference of degree and not of kind, since the loss is clearly well advanced in both varieties.

Given that *ne* is all but gone from the Swiss corpus (see Appendix for a categorization of *ne* tokens in this corpus), what communicative need prompts speakers to insert *ne* (given its quasi-absence from CSF, it seems more appropriate to speak of insertion than deletion) into their utterances? With regard to this second research question, two functions emerge from the data: 1) a micro-stylistic function to allow speakers to enact institutional talk through micro-shifts in register, and 2) a previously unattested use of *ne* as an emphatic reinforcer, just as the post-verbal negation had originally functioned (Harris, 1978; Posner, 1985). The emergence of emphatic *ne* would therefore constitute a reversal of markedness (Waugh, 1982), whereby the originally marked member of the opposition (e.g., *pas*, etc.) would become unmarked, while the previously unmarked member of the opposition would become marked (e.g., *ne*) as it takes on its new function.

4.2. Micro-stylistic *ne*

While there seems to be little if any indication of a *ne* of interpersonal formality considering how well the participants know each other, an initial inspection of this corpus leads one to conclude that one of the major uses of *ne* seems to be that of topic formality, where through micro-shifts in register *ne* appears when otherwise informal conversations turn to 'institutional talk' broaching topics such as work: teaching in the case of (2), or various manifestations of the legal system, whether in contrast with the American legal system, (3), or specific laws regarding choice of married name, (4), insurance reimbursements (5), international transport, (6), or naturalization (7).

- (2) ouais certains—certains ils n'ont pas appris à..à être autonomes dans les études.. (S9, IV-B)
- (3) le système judiciaire américain permet cela... tandis que chez nous il ne le permet pas. (S7, IV-A)
- (4) non non c'est d'abord Schulz et après mon nom – [overlap] situ – situation [overlap] – je ne peux plus changer (S3, VI-A)
- (5) je suis content que l'assurance.. ne.. ne n'assure pas quelque chose comme ça (S1, III-B)
- (6) donc s'ils ont pas c'tte vignette... ils ne traversent pas... (S11, VI-A)
- (7) tu n'as pas le droit de ravoir la nationalité... (S3, VI-B)

By adding *ne* in the context of these otherwise informal conversations, speakers appear to effect micro-shifts allowing them to enact the register of written French or scripted oral texts so frequently read or heard in the public discourse on these topics. Such a use would be similar to that of *ne* in Montreal French. At a time when *ne* loss had already become nearly categorical in that variety, Sankoff and Vincent (1980) found it was still occasionally used when talking about education, religion or morals. Armstrong evokes the Sankoff and Vincent findings when he discusses the linguistic behavior of the Lorraine adolescents who use *ne* to convey the seriousness of their topic (Armstrong, 2002). As seen in (2)–(7), the Sankoff and Vincent observation applies to the Swiss data too, but at the same time, these micro register shifts according to topic are not the sole determiner of *ne* use/non-use in CSF. A public or institutional topic does not guarantee a micro-shift in register to include *ne* usage, as the utterances without *ne* show in (8)–(9).

- (8) alors ils arrivent... euh: .. à l'école technique... pis tout à coup on vient pas contrôler ce qu'ils font... ou ils font pas... (S9, IV-B)
- (9) ouais mais c'est officiel et je peux pas signer autrement... (S3, VI-B)

To understand the role of *ne* in these examples of institutional talk, or more generally in CSF, we must look not just at the utterance level as in (2)–(7) and (8)–(9) but at the discourse level, (10)–(11), to see the focus function of *ne*, which allows us to see the relationship between the examples of institutional talk with and without *ne* discussed above.

- (10) c'est – c'est le choc entre les études de lycée et – l'université... ouais-ouais... avant on leur remâchait tout pis on – voilà tout qu'il faut apprendre... pis tout à coup ils sont... pouf!... ici aussi c'est le grand problème... même au tec... [S1] non, après le gymnase... alors ils arrivent... euh: .. à l'école technique... pis tout à coup on vient pas contrôler ce qu'ils font... ou ils font pas... et pis... tout à coup ils voient qu'ils devraient vraiment les... j'ai un des professeurs qui m'a dit ouais mais c'est un problème... il surveillait comme – [S10] ouais, certains – certains ils n'ont pas appris à... à être autonomes dans les études... ouais-ouais c'est le même problème... encore un petit morceau:? (S9, IV-B)
- (11) ouais mais c'est officiel et je peux pas signer autrement... et j'ai toujours le droit de – mais c'est choisi... non-non... je dois signer... euh Schulz... mais j'ai gardé l'autre... après mais je suis obligée... tu peux choisir de garder avoir après mais – non non c'est d'abord Schulz et après mon nom – [S11: mais dans toutes les situations?] situ – situation je ne peux plus changer... j'ai choisi comme ça... (S3, VI-B)

Analyzing +*ne* (2) and (4) and –*ne* (8) and (9) utterances independently of each other without the larger discourse context that contextualizes them in (10) and (11) is to lose sight of how the remnants of *ne* can be used by speakers for discursive effect, as they foreground their main point, whether in summary before changing topics from professional talk back to mealtime interaction as in (10) or in one

final attempt to make her audience understand the changes in the legally-binding naming system, as in (11).

In combination with topics of public institutional talk or not, it is this focalizing, foregrounding function of *ne* that correlates with the emerging emphatic function of *ne* discussed in the next section.

4.3. *Emphatic ne*

Given the nearly categorical loss of *ne*, its use would appear to be communicatively significant. Indeed, it seems to be so in this corpus. As we have just seen in the previous section, speakers use it to effect stylistic micro-shifts in register by enacting public institutional discourse when the conversational topic turns to work or legal ramifications in various domains ranging from marriage to international transport. In addition, however, another new communicative function of *ne* seems to be emerging, that of pragmatic emphasis. In other words, when these speakers want to stress a point, they foreground their negative utterance, and their focal negation is more apt to include *ne* than their surrounding background negative clauses. Furthermore to strengthen negative impact, speakers often include other markers of emphasis, such as repetition, pitch prominence, or contrast, in the same utterance with emphatic *ne*, all of which contribute to the overall 'newsworthiness' of their turn at talk.

As we have seen, emphasis is a linguistic device that highlights a part of an utterance. Trask offers the following examples. 'English and other languages also exhibit a range of grammatical means for expressing emphasis, such as, *particles* [emphasis added], distinctive word order and clefted constructions' (Trask, 1995: 89). To extend this definition beyond the utterance to the discourse level, we could see emphasis then as any phenomenon which serves to draw attention to one part of the narration, or explanation, over another. Thus in Hopper (1979) and Hopper and Thompson's (1980) distinction between foreground and background in oral narrative, we could see the foreground as encoding emphasis through its focus on the main events of the narrative and speaker reaction to them, i.e., Chafe's (1994, 1998) climax or Labov's (1972, 1973) complicating action and evaluation, in contrast with neutral, non-emphatic background clauses. Both Chafe and Labov underscore the importance of the conversational impact of speakers' contributions, that in recounting an event, speakers hope to elicit from their interlocutors the reaction, 'Oh, wow!' and not, 'So, what? According to Chafe and Labov, speakers use various rhetorical devices to highlight an event's newsworthiness. These may include negation, repetition, expressive morphology, direct speech, and marked word order, which are all, according to Labov, characteristic of evaluative sections of the narrative. This parallels findings by Cheshire (1997, cf. Armstrong, 2002: 171) about British English, in which non-standard morpho-syntactic phenomena are more frequent in cognitively prominent utterances, e.g., interrogatives and negatives, given their higher level of speaker involvement. Considering the massive loss of *ne* as the basic negative, arguably this apparent new use of *ne* as an emphatic

could perhaps even represent a non-standard, read 'non-traditional' use, indicative of cognitively prominent, high involvement speech, especially since the emphatic *ne* tokens tend 1) to appear after the early stages of the conversations when any initial speaker discomfort with the recording sessions would have had time to wane, and 2) to be used as a form of internal evaluation, co-occurring with repetition and various types of expressive phonology such as slower speech rate and pitch prominence.

Coveney (2002) summarizes discourse findings as they relate specifically to French, including Yaeger-Dror (1999), Morel (1994), and Schwenter (2001). Yaeger-Dror suggests that 'interactive intent,' which she found contributed to the choice between English *not* (in supportive turns) and *n't* (in face-threatening turns) may apply to French as well. Similarly, working on French, Morel suggests that speaker attitude influences *ne* (non-)use whereby a speaker-defined, or monologic, attitude encourages *ne* omission whereas a dialogic attitude favors *ne* use. Schwenter argues, however, that *ne* loss is so far advanced that discoursal-pragmatic factors no longer play a role.

In what follows, I examine emphatic *ne* in five different contexts and then contrast these uses with non-emphatic *-ne* negatives in the surrounding backgrounded discourse. These five emphatic contexts are 1) *Ne* + Lexical Emphasis, 2) *Ne* + Repetition, 3) *Ne* + Slower Speech Rate, 4) *Ne* + Pitch Prominence, and 5) *Ne* + Contrast. In the orientation leading up to or in the resolution or coda following the focally foregrounded emphatic *ne*, negative utterances sometimes appear in these backgrounded portions of the narration or surrounding discourse, and typically they are now the basic, post-verbal negation without *ne*. It is by examining stretches of discourse beyond the utterance level that we can begin to understand how emphatic *ne* functions for speakers to create pragmatic effect, as they choose to foreground or background different elements of their narration or explanation, providing evaluative impact and evidence of speaker involvement.

4.3.1. *Ne* + lexical emphasis

Examples (12)–(14) show emphatic *ne* accompanied by lexical emphasis. In (12), we see S1 uses the intensifying adverb *strictement*, coupled with the emphatic post-verbal negator *aucune*, to make his point.

- (12) mais j'ai eu des patrons – j'ai entendu des patrons qui mettaient une plaque au four... qui r'venaient... elle était brûlée... pis qui engueulaient un apprenti... l'apprenti **n'**avait *strictement aucune* idée... il était de l'autre côté de la: de la laboratoire... donc il a jamais appris à s'ha – moi j'étais habitué pis voilà... (S1, I-B)

In addition, he inserts *ne* to further emphasize his point. Yet in the following discourse, he wraps up his story with a neutral summary statement, and a return to the basic post-verbal negation in the resolution. In this negative statement, the lexical emphasis given by the intensifying adverb is gone and so is *ne*. Granted, Ashby (1976) shows that NPs (*l'apprenti*), intensifying adverbs (*strictement*), second negatives

other than *pas*, and pre-vocalic position all favor *ne* retention, but the question here is not whether they do, but to what communicative effect. Therefore, it is possible that the proclivity to use *ne* for emphasis was already starting to emerge then.

Similarly, in (13), S7 intensifies his lack of interest by the adverb *absolument* – and inserting *ne* for emphasis, even in a linguistic environment that in earlier studies was viewed as disfavoring *ne* insertion, given the adjoining object clitic *me*. And although Coveney (1998) finds that a preceding *qui* favors *ne* retention, such does not seem to be the case in this corpus, because this is the only negative *qui* token that includes *ne*.

- (13) c'est dommage . . . parce que l'année passée j'y étais pas allé simplement parce qu'y'avait un sujet qui **ne** m'intéressait absolument pas . . . (S7, IV-A)

Furthermore, in the absence of emphasis, lexical or otherwise, he does not insert *ne* in the preceding neutral, background orientation, even though the linguistic environment may, according to earlier studies, favor insertion, given the prevocalic environment.

Finally, in (14), we see S3 break the bond emerging (Bybee & Hopper, 2001) between *qui* and the inflected verb to insert lexical emphasis through the adverb *franchement* and then emphatic *ne*.

- (14) – aux Américains . . . de tout ce qui s'est passé à la guerre du Vietnam et pis des machins comme ça . . . et des trucs un peu – des gens qui franchement **n'en ont rien à cirer** parce que ces gens là qu'est-ce qu'ils – maintenant . . . (S3, VI-A)

Other work on spoken French shows that just like the other subject clitics, *qui-* is becoming increasingly bound to the following verb stem. The result of this ongoing grammaticalization is that it is vastly more frequent for speakers to place the adverb after the sequence *qui* + inflected verb than it is to break up this emerging bond (Fonseca-Greber, 2001). Yet in this emotionally-charged utterance on the failings of American foreign policy, the youngest speaker in the corpus, the young woman who has the overall lowest rate of *ne* retention in the corpus, pairs a lexically emphatic adverb with emphatic *ne* to highlight her opposition to American imperialism.

4.3.2. Ne + repetition

As we have seen above, speakers also mark emphasis through the use of repetition. In this corpus, when S12 wants to make sure that all of her conversational partners have indeed grasped her point that it is the *father's* wishes not to have an answering machine, she repeats practically verbatim her two-part utterance, inserting *ne* each time when focusing on the father's resistance to answering machines, (15).

- (15) S1: et ben les répondeurs ça sert à quelque chose . . . non . . . (. . .)
 S12: mais nous on a même pas de répondeur . . . mais papa il n'en veut pas . . .
 S13: hein non
 S12: nous on a même pas de répondeur . . . et papa il n'en veut pas . . .
 S13: non (S1, S12, S13, V-B)

In (16), we see an even more complex linguistic maneuver, when the married couple S7 and S8 co-construct their emphatic repetition, as S7 reaffirms S8's line of argumentation, both inserting *ne* which is further emphasized by the choice of *point*, semantically a negator of absolute negative quantity, instead of the more common *pas* for the post-verbal negator.

- (16) S8: n'oubliez pas que je **ne** suis point riche . . .
- S7: c'est vrai que je **ne** suis point riche . . . voilà exactement . . . (IV-A)

While *point* is still productive in Swiss French in contrast with French French, it does, as we have seen, emphasize negative quantity. In fact, one of the reasons why post-verbal negators other than *pas* show higher rates of *ne* retention in Ashby's (1976, 1981), Coveney's (1998), and Hansen and Malderez's (2004) studies could be that they are semantically more emphatically negative, in quantity, duration, etc. Again, these studies examined linguistic variables favoring *ne* retention/deletion, not a discourse analysis of these variables.

Finally, (17) shows a triple repetition by the same speaker, as he repeatedly warns an English-speaking colleague of the pragmatic force of a newly acquired French word.

- (17) pis euh . . . je dis non t'as: t'as meilleur temps . . . c'est juste comme tu le prononces mais l'utilise pas . . . hh c'est tout ce que je te disais . . . **ne** l'utilise pas parce que tu risques bien de vexer quelqu'un . . . donc moi ça va mais . . . l'utilise pas avec n'importe qui . . . (S1, III-B)

As the speaker highlights *why* not to use the new word, i.e., so as not to offend, he inserts emphatic *ne* into this foregrounded clause. It is sandwiched between two backgrounded clauses both without *ne*. In the introductory one, the speaker focuses on the word's pronunciation more than its pragmatic force. In the concluding one, the speaker attenuates the force of his preceding remarks and concedes that his colleague may use the word around him, although the general warning still stands.

4.3.3. *Ne + slower speech rate*

A third example of an emphatic use of *ne* is shown in (18)–(19) where it is accompanied by a slower speech rate, as the speakers use speech rate and exaggerated diction to focus their interlocutors' attention to their utterances. In (18), S9 slows down, breaking the normal rhythm (as indicated by the 1–2 dot pauses in the transcription) and enunciating overly precisely, as he adopts a comically theatrical manner when he attributes emotions to the tape recorder, which appeared to have been malfunctioning.

- (18) S9: . . . il tourne pas . . . (. . .)
- S1: j'ai l'impression qu'il se coince de temps à autre . . . hh
- S9: le parler . . . neuchâtelois **ne.lui.convient.pas** (dramatically) . . . (S9, IV-B)

In addition, he inserts *ne* to further emphasize the tape-recorder's purported dislike of the accent of this new region. This emphatic manner of speaking contrasts with

his initial neutral *ne* negation when he first notices that the tape-recorder doesn't seem to be functioning properly.

Similarly, in (19), S2 also slows down and repeats/reformulates his negative utterance with exaggerated diction to further emphasize how little Spanish they knew at the time.

- (19) *c'était dans les-ouais . . . c'tait dans les deux premières semaines où on savait encore pas beaucoup d'espagnol . . . si c'n'est pas.du.tout, t'vois . . .* (S2, I-B)

In addition to this intensifying strategy, he, too, also inserts emphatic *ne*. This utterance contrasts with his first reference to their limited Spanish proficiency where it was serving as background orientation to set the scene for the rest of the narrative and did not include *ne*. Although intuition might lead us to anticipate that *ne* retention would be invariable with *pas du tout*, since it is a lower frequency negator than *pas*, this corpus shows that such is not the case. Nine tokens of *pas du tout* occur in the corpus, and *ne* is inserted with only one of them – the token in (19) where *pas du tout* is exaggeratedly drawn out as the speaker emphasizes his point.

4.3.4. Ne + pitch prominence

A fourth example of the use of *ne* for emphasis shows it co-occurring with emphasis marked by pitch prominence, as in (20) and (22), where in (20), *ne* is inserted and *rien* receives heavy, focal stress.

- (20) *et yena un qui a laissé des pommes . . dans la bagnole le lendemain matin il avait des traces . . d'une patte d'ours . . sur la vitre . . (. . .) mais yena un . . il a dit . . euh . . parce qu'il disait . . **ne** laissez RIEN . . et pis il nous a averti quand on est arrivés parce que nous on est arrivés au milieu de la nuit parce qu'on – on avait des – des petits soucis . . euh n: . . comment dire . . non . . parce que j'ai fini tard . . et pis euh . . encore d'autres – d'autres – d'autres – idées en tête . . bon bref . . et . . et pis euh . . on était comment dire . . il disait **NE** laissez RIEN dans les – dans les voitures . . et dans les – dans les cabanes . .* (S1, VI-B)

Then in the repetition both *ne* and *rien* receive heavy, focal stress. This second pass is particularly striking because clitics like *ne* cannot normally bear stress, and yet in this utterance, it does. This is perhaps another indication that a new function is emerging for *ne*. In contrast with the previous examples where emphatic *ne* occurred in the preverbal zone of an inflected verb, in (20) *ne* precedes an imperative. This difference suggests that *ne* can serve as an emphatic in CSF, regardless of the mood of the verb. Although Ashby (1976) found that *ne* occurred in 100% of negative imperatives, forty years later this is no longer the case, (21), a finding which points up the need for ongoing corpus research in order to document empirically change in progress, especially given that native-speaker intuitions tend to be notoriously unreliable for French.

- (21) *fais ce que j'dis **fais pas** c'que j'fais comme on dit* (S1, I-B)

Therefore, negative imperatives also become a potential context for emphatic *ne*. Finally, (20) shows the interaction between emphatic *ne* and micro-stylistic *ne*, because in this example S1 is 'directly' quoting the park ranger/camp guardian as he explained the rules for bear safety to S1 as he arrives at camp.

In (22), we see that S10 also uses pitch prominence and heavy focal stress to highlight the seemingly unthinkable news that only one of the original seven houses remains, and to drive home the impact of this revelation she also inserts *ne* in this utterance.

- (22) ..ils ont..peu à peu vendu toutes les maisons il en reste plus que deux maintenant ils ont vendu encore une une il n'en reste PLUS QU'UNE.. donc ça peut pas être grand .. ça peut plus être grand comme avant ils peuvent plus avoir tellement de .. (S10, IV-B)

The use of *ne* for emphasis at the climax of her narration contrasts with the four other neutral *-ne* negatives that surround it, where pitch prominence, as well as any other kind of emphasis, is also lacking. The contrast is highlighted by a comparison of one of the negatives in her background orientation, which also contains *que* but not *ne*, and the foregrounded negative, which contains both *que* and emphatic *ne*. Granted, *que* is the post-verbal negator that showed the highest *ne* retention rates in Ashby's (1976), Coveney's (1998), and Hansen and Malderez's (2004) studies, but as discussed above, this could also stem from it being semantically emphatic as compared to *pas*.

4.3.5. Ne + contrast

A final context where *ne* is used for emphasis occurs when speakers contrast ideas, whether to change topic (23), to contrast teaching styles (24), or to clarify potential confusion (25).

S3 uses marked word order and *ne*, in (23), to forcefully change topics, when she seems to tire of her interlocutor's belaboring the new name-taking law, hoping to find consensus instead in a new topic – *les origines*.

- (23) S3: mais tu te maries – dès que tu te maries tu prends la décision .. iya pas de raison que ..
S12: mais j'ai trouvé drôle que .. [etc., etc.] euh ça-ça leur a-ça leur a fait drôle aussi .. à elles ..
S3: une chose qui n'a pas changé ici c'est les origines .. hein .. les: .. je suis originaire de Wohlen dans le canton de Berne .. du côté de mon papa ..

While *les origines* carry legal weight in Switzerland (and are related by marriage to the old topic of name-taking), S3's use of *ne* here seems less a way of enacting institutional talk, which as we have seen can trigger a micro-shift in register to the *ne* characteristic of pre-planned public discourse, and more a form of emphatically contrastive topic management, shifting from the recently changed name-taking laws

to the still unchanged laws surrounding attribution of a town of origin (historically an early form of social security).

In (24), language teacher S₉ contrasts his way of structuring and implementing the language curriculum at the language school he had previously directed.

- (24) mais oui . . alors les autres . . si tu les fais pas bien . . moi je me donnais de la peine que . . les débutants c'est un bon enseignement qu'ils recevaient . . les moyens aussi . . pis ils progressaient . . si tu **ne** fais plus ça . . comme ça pis tu dis à la dernière minute ah ben plutôt que deux débutants alors pis ils font rien du tout . . tu vois . . (S₉, IV-B)

The new directors were administrators not language teaching professionals, and S₉ pointedly attributes the current difficulties to their unwillingness to implement the language curriculum in the same way he had designed it, signaling this shortcoming with the insertion of emphatic *ne*.

In (25), S₁₃ foregrounds two separate points of confusion, in which he uses contrast to clarify the potential misunderstandings between him and his brother, S₁. He seeks clarification through contrast, and inserts *ne*, as he, from lush green Switzerland, tries to fathom why his brother, now acculturated to the mores of arid, water-thrifty Arizona and therefore not noticing S₁₃'s confusion, would tear out a perfectly good (but water-guzzling) lawn to replace it with naturally occurring dirt punctuated with a few native, low water use bushes. S₁₃ inserts *ne* emphasizing the points of contrast as he gradually comes to an understanding of environmentally responsible Arizona landscaping and the difficulty of permanently eliminating Bermuda grass.

- (25) S₁₃: ouais mais t'as le problème pour faucher . . ou t'as le problème que l'herbe . . **ne** devait pas pousser . .
S₁: l'herbe . . **ne** devait pas pousser théoriquement . .
S₁₃: ah: bon!
S₁: enfin elle devait repousser . . oui mais . . disons elle devait pas repousser à ce point-là . .
S₁₃: (marqueur de discours indistinct)
S₁: parce qu'à – ya autant d'herbe qu'à l'origine . .
S₁₃: ah! parce que c'était un coin de buissons . . ce n'est pas un coin d'herbe! . .
S₁: ouais-ouais ouais-ouais . . (S₁, S₁₃, V-A)

S₁ confirms his brother's correct deduction with an emphatic, attention-getting pause before the emphatic *ne* that leads into the remainder of his utterance. Yet, as he moves away from the focal contrast and elaborates on the presumably now clarified gardening question, he resumes a more neutral manner of speaking, and among other things, no longer emphasizes his negative utterances, through *ne* or any other emphatic rhetorical device. By the end of his explanation, brother S₁₃ has definitively seized on the source of the misunderstanding and clarifies – contrasting an affirmative statement with a negative one and including *ne* to emphasize the

contrast this time – for himself and the others, that the area in question was for bushes, *not* grass.

4.3.6. *Summary: emphatic ne*

To summarize this exploration of emphatic *ne*, the corpus shows that now that *ne* has reached the final stages of loss in CSF, a new pragmatic use of *ne* as an emphatic is emerging. At a time when *ne* in CSF is massively lost in quantitative terms, only a close qualitative analysis of the surrounding discourse context can effectively reveal the emphatic function that *ne* has developed in CSF. As an emphatic, it occurs in foregrounded clauses, where it often co-occurs with other emphatics such as: 1) lexical intensifiers, 2) repetition, 3) slower speech rate/exaggerated enunciation, 4) pitch prominence, and 5) contrast, whether for topic management or clarification. Therefore it is perhaps better to think of emphasis not as [+Emph.] or [-Emph.] but as a continuum with degrees of emphasis, (26)–(28), where the more emphatics co-occur, the more emphatic the utterance.

(26) un sujet qui **ne** m'intéressait absolument pas . . (S7, IV-A)

(27) pis moi je suis absolument pas religieuse . . (S4, II-B)

(28) j'aime pas trop (S3, I-A)

Considerably after the recordings were made, one of the participants unfamiliar with the nature of the current study explained this continuum of emphasis to me, in my role of a second language learner, not linguist, that although (26) and (27) were both strong negatives, I should not equate their pragmatic force. This participant explained that (26) was a 'stronger negative' than (27) because of the presence of *ne* in (26), whereas (28) was just an 'ordinary' negative. Now, intuitional data tend to be notoriously inaccurate for spoken French, but in this case, the speaker's production data in (12) and (25) seem to corroborate his intuitional data, such that, at least for S1, emphatic *ne* seems to have psychological reality. It remains to be seen whether there are differences in production and/or interpretation between the older and younger speakers here. Fueling such a change could be the possibility of younger speakers interpreting as emphatic what older speakers did not intend as emphatic, and conversely, older speakers could miss younger speakers' emphatic intent.

5. DISCUSSION

Three main findings emerge with respect to the role of *ne* in CSF. The first relates to frequency of use, while the second and third relate to discourse function. First, *ne* has been lost almost entirely in the everyday conversational language, being produced in only 2.5% of the total negative utterances ($n = 1,982$) in the corpus. To my knowledge, this figure represents the lowest *ne* insertion rate reported thus far for adult, middle-class European French.

A figure this low suggests the importance of combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to arrive at a more complex understanding of the form's

discursive function, as recommended by Waugh et al. (2007). Such an analysis yielded two distinct discourse functions. In the first of these, micro-stylistic *ne* allows speakers to effect micro-shifts in register to enact the institutional talk of pre-planned public discourse regarding the world of work or the legal system with its laws extending into multiple domains. This function is similar to what Sankoff and Vincent (1980) have long observed for Montreal French, where this stage of *ne* loss was reached much earlier than in European French and yet where speakers would still use *ne* to discuss education, religion, or morals. Armstrong (2002) noticed a similar finding for middle-class school children in Lorraine who used *ne* to set a formal tone within otherwise informal conversations.

In a second previously unattested discourse function, emphatic *ne* lets speakers emphasize certain foregrounded sections of their turn at talk, often in conjunction with other linguistic markers of emphasis. The emergence of emphatic *ne* is particularly intriguing because it represents a reversal (Waugh, 1982) in the historical (Harris, 1978) markedness of French negation. The historical stages of French negation are shown schematically in (29), where in Old French pre-verbal *ne* was the sole negator.

(29) *ne* → *ne* . . . (***pas***, etc.) → *ne* . . . *pas*, etc. → (*ne*) . . . *pas*, etc. → (***ne***) . . . *pas*, etc.

Subsequently, *pas*, etc. were optionally added for emphasis. In time, *pas*, etc. lost their emphatic quality and became the basic post-verbal negators. Meanwhile, *ne* became increasingly infrequent. See Martineau and Mougeon (2003) for a full discussion of this evolution. Now, *ne*, the formerly unemphatic negator, is starting to make a re-appearance – as an emphatic. This change is in keeping with the principles of markedness. Basic, unmarked forms are less morphologically complex than are marked forms, and the insertion of additional grammatical material in marked constructions is not uncommon in the languages of the world, including for emphasis. In CSF, the basic, unemphatic, unmarked negation has reasserted itself as a one-part structure, although it has moved from being pre-verbal to post-verbal. Simultaneously now, the second particle, the emphatic, marked reinforcing particle, has also switched places from being (optionally) post-verbal to (optionally) pre-verbal.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, as we have seen in this corpus analysis, *ne* is all but gone in Conversational Swiss French. Now, as it goes through the final stages of loss, new uses emerge, as predicted by Jakobson's concept of dynamic synchrony (Jakobson, 1971a, 1971b): (a) micro-stylistic *ne* to enact institutional talk via micro-shifts in register, and (b) emphatic *ne* to highlight utterances for pragmatic impact, and often in conjunction with other emphatics, e.g., foregrounding, lexical intensifiers (adverbs and emphatic negators), repetition, pitch prominence, contrast, etc. Directions for further research include determining whether emphatic *ne* exists

in other varieties of Regular French (*le français ordinaire*) and the role of speaker age with respect to emphatic *ne*.

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APPENDIX: OF NE TOKENS IN CORPUS

STYLISTIC (micro-shifts in register)

- je suis content que l'assurance . . **ne . . ne n'**assure pas quelque chose comme ça (S1, III-B) [*insurance*]
- ces avocats **ne** font que ça (S8, IV-A) [*comparative law*]
- par bonheur vous **ne** connaissez pas ça en Europe . . (S8, IV-A) [*quoting from TV news analysis on comparative law*]
- le système judiciaire américain permet cela . . (S8: oui bien sûr . .) tandis que chez nous **ne le** permet pas . . (S7, IV-A) [*comparative law*]
- S1: mm ben c'est ceux qui viennent de commencer à l'université . .
- S10: ah-ha ah-ha
- S9: ouais ils **n'ont pas** la base . . (S9, IV-B) [*teacher on the educational system*]
- S9: alors ils arrivent . . euh: . . à l'école technique . . pis tout à coup on vient pas contrôler ce qu'ils font . . ou ils font pas . . et pis . . tout à coup ils voient qu'ils devraient vraiment les . . j'ai un des professeurs qui m'a dit ouais mais ces problèmes . .
- S10: faut qu'ils apprennent à se surveiller comme des–
- S9: il surveillait comme–
- S10: ils ont–ils ont pas appris à être indépendant . .
- S9: ouais certains–certains ils **n'ont pas** appris à . . à être autonomes dans les études . . (S9, IV-B) [*teacher on the educational system*]

- mais tu vois là? .. Andréa âge de trente-six ans .. Anna .. euh sept ans .. onze ans .. trente et un ans .. cinquantante ans .. donc c'est déjà repertorié .. donc les papiers existent toujours .. pis tu comprends .. l'autre avantage des Etats-Unis .. c'est qu'ils n'ont pas eu de guerre .. (S2: mmhmm) ya pas des archives qui ont été détruites comme chez nous .. pas chez nous m'enfin .. (S2: ouais-ouais en Europe ..) en Europe bien souvent .. hein .. (S1I, V-B) [*archives/public records*]
- ah ouais .. d'ailleurs c'est marqué .. à un endroit .. ne pas rentrer quand il pleut .. (S1, V-B) [*quoting from written road sign*]
- S3: non non c'est d'abord Schulz et après mon nom-
- S1I: mais dans toutes les situations ..
- S2: ouais ..
- S3: situ-situation je ne peux plus changer .. j'ai choisi comme ça .. (S3, VI-A) [*legally allowable options for married names in Switzerland*]
- les-les-les camions étrangers ne paient rien du tout .. quand ils traversent la Suisse .. (S2, VI-A) [*international business transport*]
- mais .. et pis .. des camions qui traversent le Brenner .. donc qui traverse l'Autriche .. ils doivent avoir un macaron vert .. pis c'est marqué .. D dessus .. donc ça veut dire .. qu'ils sont considérés comme étant non-polluant .. et en ordre .. (S2: ouais ..) donc s'ils ont pas c'tte vignette .. ils ne traversent pas .. (S1I, VI-A) [*international business transport*]
- euh la majeure partie n'avait pas de double voie .. une double voie .. ils étaient obligé de doubler-doubler la voie à peu près dans toute la ligne du sud .. (S1, VI-A) [*transportation infrastructure maintenance*]
- S3: fais très attention Armand
- S1: ouais je sais
- S2: ils ont pas les deux dans les double nationalités là
- S3: si tu dis oui .. tu n'as pas le droit de ravoir la nationalité .. donc si tu dis oui pour l'américaine ..
- S2: si tu prends chez-
- S3: tu perds la suisse ..
- S2: ouais ..
- S1: ouais
- S2: si tu prends la citoyennité américaine
- S3: tu perds le passeport suisse ..
- S2: tu perds le suisse .. (S1-S3, VI-B) [*nationality & naturalization rules*]

EMPHATIC

- [LEXICAL EMPHASIS] mais j'ai eu des patrons-j'ai entendu des patrons qui mettaient une plaque au four .. qui r'venaient .. elle était brûlée .. pis qui engueulaient un apprenti .. l'apprenti n'avait strictement aucune idée .. il était de l'autre côté de la: de la laboratoire .. donc il a jamais appris à ça .. moi j'étais habitué pis voilà .. (S1, I-B)

- [SLOWER SPEECH RATE] c'était dans les-ouais..c'tait dans les deux premières semaines où on savait encore pas beaucoup d'espagnol..si c'n'est pas.du.tout, t'vois... (S2, I-B)
- [REPETITION] pis euh..je dis non t'as: t'as meilleur temps..c'est juste comme tu le prononce mais l'utilise pas..hh c'est tout ce que je te disais..ne l'utilise pas parce que tu risques bien de vexer quelqu'un..donc moi ça va mais..l'utilise pas avec n'importe qui.. (S1, III-B)
- [LEXICAL EMPHASIS] j'ai dû-j'ai dû écrire pour dire que malheureusement-c'est dommage..parce que l'année passé j'y étais pas allé simplement parce qu'iyavait un sujet qui ne m'intéressait absolument pas.. (S1: mmhmm) un sujet disons..pour lequel je n'étais pas d'accord.. (S7, IV-A)
- [REPETITION] S8: n'oubliez pas que je ne suis point riche..
- S7: c'est vrai que je ne suis point riche..voilà exactement..
- [LEX EMPH] oh la qualité n'est nullement..ben la meilleure..loin de là.. (S1, IV-A)
- [SLOWER SPEECH RATE] S9:..il tourne pas..amuse-toi..
- S1: j'ai l'impression qu'il se coince de temps à autre..hh
- S9: le parler..neuchâtelois ne lui convient pas (exagéré à la Cl.).. (IV-B)
- [CONTRAST] mais oui..alors les autres..si tu les fais pas bien..moi je me donnais de la peine que..les débutants c'est un bon enseignement qu'ils recevaient..les moyens aussi..pis ils progressaient.. (S1: mmhmm-mmhmm) si tu ne fais plus ça..comme ça pis tu dis à la dernière minute ah ben plutôt que deux débutants alors pis ils font rien du tout..tu vois.. (S9, IV-B)
- [PITCH PROMINENCE]..ils ont..peu à peu vendu toutes les maisons il en reste plus que deux maintenant ils ont vendu encore une il n'en reste PLUS QU'UNE..donc ça peut pas être grand..ça peut plus être grand comme avant ils peuvent plus avoir tellement de.. (S10, IV-B)
- [CONTRAST] S11: ouais mais t'as le problème pour faucher..ou t'as le problème que l'herbe..ne devait pas pousser..
- S1: l'herbe..ne devait pas pousser théoriquement..
- S13: ah:: bon
- S1: enfin elle devait repousser..oui mais..disons elle devait pas repousser à ce point-là..
- S13: (mrq.disc.)
- S1: parce qu'à-ya autant d'herbe qu'à l'origine..
- S13: ah parce que c'était un coin de buissons..ce n'est pas un coin d'herbe.. (S1 & S13 V-A)
- [REPETITION] S1: et ben les répondeurs ça sert à quelque chose..non..(..)
- S12: mais nous on a même pas de répondre..mais papa il n'en veut pas..
- S13: hein non
- S12: nous on a même pas de répondre..et papa il n'en veut pas..
- S13: non (S12, V-B)
- [CONTRAST] S13: qu'est-ce qu'iya..t'as trop mangé..

- S12: ouff: hh
- S13: hein t'as trop mangé . .
- S12: ça serre un peu?
- S14: non-non! . . tu vois ça serre un peu . .
- S13: même pas
- S12: pas seulement un peu non alors . .
- S13: un peu beaucoup . .
- S11: c'est que la première fois que tu remets tes jeans..Stephane. va t'aider . . hein . .
- S14: non-non moi j-moi je-moi je fais-je ne peux pas supporter d'être serrée dans un pantalon . . je ne pourrais pas . . dire . . viens voir vite m'aider à boucler mon jean
- S13: alors mets des jupes . . (S14, V-B)
- [LEXICAL EMPHASIS] _____ aux Américains . . de tout ce qui s'est passé à la guerre du Viet-Nam et pis des machins comme ça . . et des trucs un peu des gens qui franchement n'en ont rien à cirer parce que ces gens là qu'est-ce qu'ils __ maintenant . . (S3, VI-A)
- [CONTRAST] une chose qui n'a pas changé ici c'est les origines . . hein . . les: . . je suis originaire de Wohlen dans le canton de Berne . . de côté de mon papa . . et ma maman a décidé d-ils ont décidé de les marquer les deux . . et je suis originaire de la Chaux-de-Fonds . . de côté de Neuchâtel de côté de ma maman . . et: (S11: ouais . .) bon dans mon passeport . . _____ un carnet et tout c'était toujours marqué . . jusqu'à ce je me marie . . mais maintenant . . Silenen dans le canton Uri prime sur le: sur mon papa . . (S3, VI-A)
- [PITCH PROMINENCE] et yena un qui a laissé des pommes . . dans la bagnole le lendemain matin il avait des traces . . d'une patte d'ours . . sur la vitre . . (. . .) mais yena un . . il a dit . . euh . . parce qu'il disait . . . ne laissez RIEN . . et pis il nous a averti quand on est arrivés parce que nous on est arrivés au milieu de la nuit parce qu'on—on avait des—des petits soucis . . euh n: . . comment dire . . non . . parce que j'ai fini tard . . et pis euh . . encore d'autres—d'autres—d'autres idées en tête . . bon bref . . et . . et pis euh . . on était comment dire . . il disait NE laissez RIEN dans les—dans les voitures . . et dans les—dans les cabanes . . (S1, VI-B)

VESTIGIAL

- c'que Claude-André n'avait pas c'est l'attention . . et le jugement . . de voir quelqu'un qui se foutait de lui et quelqu'un qui fait du sal boulot. (S3, I-B)
- hein, oui ça n'a rien à-ça n'avait rien à voir avec la . . . (S3, I-B)
- ça n'a rien à voir avec la boulangerie, non. (S1, I-B)
- parce(q)ue ça n répondait pas dans notre chambre (S3, I-B)
- ça j'ai—ça j'ai fait une fois du req—du requin . . je n'avais jamais goûté et une fois euh—(S5&S1: mhmm-mhmm) je crois _____ était là je me suis fait une tranche de requin . . (respiration) (S4, II-A)

- ça n'a pas aidé tout ce mauvais temps: des choses comme ça (S4, II-B)
- c'est dur pour toi de pasde ne pas le faire pendant un—un bout de temps? (S5, II-B)
- hhh on sait que t'es spécial . . n'insiste pas . . (S1, III-A)
- je s—ne me demande pas je me rappelle plus des mots donc . . (S1, III-B)
- S7: il n'existe plus . .
- S8: il n'existe plus . .
- S1: ah bon?!
- S8: non il a muté . .
- S7: c'est Le Temps (IV-A)
- euh l— (lent&précis) là il(w.l)s ne mettent pas où il est imprimé mais (+ vite) iya une rédaction à Genève . . une à Lausanne . . une à Berne . . une à Zürich . . (S8, IV-A)
- euh—je ne suis pas retourné depuis fort longtemps à . . La Chaux-de-Fonds . . (S7, IV-A)
- un sujet disons . . pour lequel je n'étais pas d'accord . . (S7, IV-A)
- n'oubliez pas que je ne suis point riche . . (S8, IV-A)
- en Angleterre: ou en Allemagne . . ou en France on fait du pain . . les f—la farine n'a pas la même qualité . . (S7, IV-A)
- bon la farine bise n'existe pas . . (S1, IV-A)
- ah oui ils ont des—oui ils ont des ___ point du progrès pour un tas de choses . . mais pour ça ils s'en fichent pas mal parce que ça ne rapporte pas . . (S7, IV-A)
- ah oui ça se fait une occasion ___ . . à ne pas rater . . c'est tous les vingt-cinq ans . . (S10, IV-B)
- elle ne doit plus même (lent et précis pour se faire entendre) digérer elle—elle doit avoir tout un tas de carences . . à—due à une mauvaise digestion et tout passe tout droit . . hh (S10, IV-B)
- à un moment donné ça n'allait plus . . alors j'ai dû la mettre dans un home pendant . . un mois (S9, IV-B)
- comme il dit mon patron: l'intelligence n'a pas été répartie la même chose pour tout le monde . . hh (S1, IV-B)
- mais tu ne sers pas toi? (S9, IV-B)
- alors il arrive des gens . . qui . . n'ont jamais compris . . ça . . (S9, IV-B)
- e(II)es_ont été sauvées parce que—les gens n'avaient pas l'argent . . (S11, V-A)
- si les gens n'avaient pas eu des ronds . . on aura eu une grande rue à La Tour . . (S11, V-A)
- pis après bon la—la directrice de thèse elle a dit si vous avez vraiment pas . . le 100% . . c'est vraiment pas . . la mer à boire . . ne perdez pas votre temps . . à chercher la moindre petite parole qui est derrière . . mais vous avez au moins le ___ . . (S1, VI-B)