

## Verifying negative sentences

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In the long history of psycholinguistic research on sentential negation, an often-reported finding is that participants take longer to correctly judge negative sentences true than false, while being faster to judge their positive counterparts true (e.g. Clark & Chase, 1972; Carpenter & Just, 1975). While many linguists (e.g. Horn) and psycholinguists (e.g. Wason) have strongly favoured the idea that the costs and complexity of negation can be explained by appeal to context, context-based approaches have not been able to provide a satisfying account of this polarity\*truth-value interaction. This when compared to the alternative theory of negation processing, which says that negation is processed by separately representing the prejacent. Our own proposals (Tian et al., 2010; Tian et al., 2016 etc.) provide a means for reconciliation between the two views since we argue that negation is a strong cue to a positive context. Here I will present our account of why and when negation is often apparently processed via the prejacent. I review many of the factors that are at play in sentence verification involving negation. I present evidence that participants' adoption of the prejacent-first strategy is conditioned by context.