

# **Verbo-nominal expressions with *need*: the interaction between negation and modality**

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# Introduction

- Development of modal meanings by **verbo-nominal patterns** with noun *need*
- Unlike modal auxiliaries (and lately adjectives, Van linden forthc.), little attention so far in literature (but Loureiro-Porto 2010)
- Focus on the role of **negative polarity**, cf. *no doubt* (Simon-Vandenbergen 2007), *no question* (De Wolf & Davidse 2010)

# Introduction

- Aim: tracing the development of

(i) absence of participant-inherent need (dynamic)

*Elysian fields, where the blessed inhabitants stand in no need of each other's assistance (LModE)*

(ii) absence of participant-imposed or situation-inherent need (dynamic)

*Mr Haredale turned his eyes towards the casement whence the voice proceeded, though there was no need to do so, to recognise the speaker (LModE)*

(iii) absence of obligation (deontic)

*"My dear," said she, "you have no need of making any apology. I am not in the least offended." (LModE)*

(iv) prohibition (deontic)

*the Curia should be glad of fraternal correction. Rome has no need to defend itself (LModE)*

# Structure of the talk

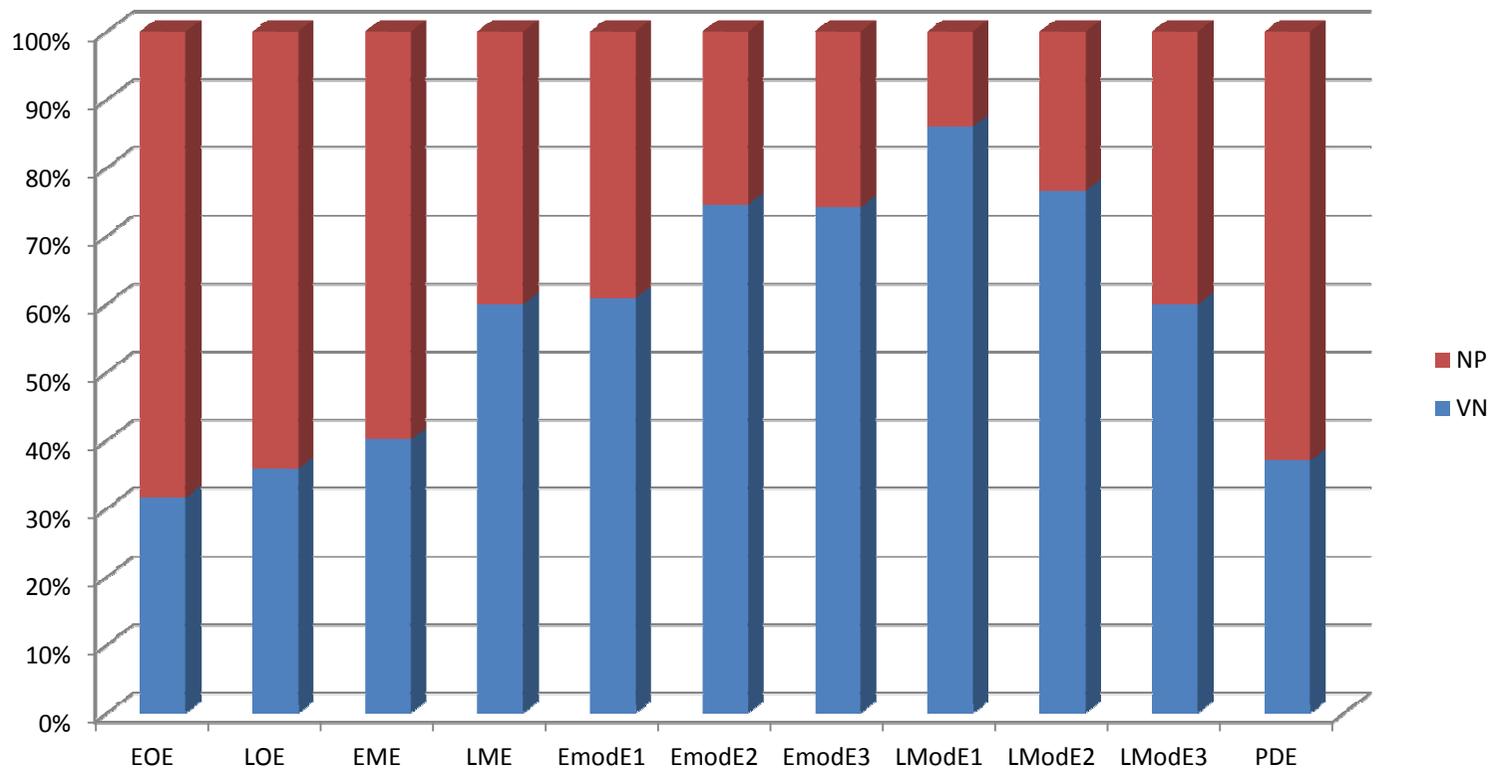
1. Corpora
2. Noun *need* in verbo-nominal patterns
3. The semantic developments of VN-patterns
4. Formal factor: role of structural type
5. Formal factor: role of type of complement of *need*
6. Conclusion

# 1. Corpora

Sub-period	Time span	Corpus	Number of tokens
OE	750–1150	<i>York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose (YCOE)</i>	1.44 mln
ME	1150–1500	<i>Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English, Second Edition (PPCME)</i>	1.15 mln
EModE	1500–1710	<i>Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Early Modern English (PPCEME)</i>	1.80 mln
LModE	1710–1920	<i>Corpus of Late Modern English texts (Extended version) (CLMETEV)</i>	14.97 mln
PDE	1972–2005	<i>Wordbanks Online Corpus (WB) (only British subcorpora)</i>	259.50 mln

## 2. *need* in verbo-nominal patterns

- The noun *need* is increasingly found in VN-patterns up to LModE (but frequency drops in LModE2-PDE):



## 2. *need* in verbo-nominal patterns

period	VN	VN %	NP	NP %	total
EOE	6	31.6	13	68.4	19
LOE	88	35.8	158	64.2	246
EME	87	40.1	130	59.9	217
LME	145	59.9	97	40.1	242
EmodE1	59	60.8	38	39.2	97
EmodE2	47	74.6	16	25.4	63
EmodE3	23	74.2	8	25.8	31
LModE1	74	86.0	12	14.0	86
LModE2	213	76.6	65	23.4	278
LModE3	311	59.9	208	40.1	519
PDE	111	37.0	189	63.0	300

## 2. *need* in verbo-nominal patterns

- Structural patterns, some with varying diachronic availability:

(1) <i>have need</i>	(available throughout)
(2) <i>there COP need</i>	(from EModE)
(3) <i>it COP need</i>	(largely restricted to OE and ME)
(4) <i>need COP</i>	(largely restricted to OE and ME)
(5) <i>need happens</i>	(restricted to OE)
(6) <i>if/when/as/etc. need COP</i>	(available throughout)
(7) <i>be/stand/seem in need</i>	(from EModE)
(8) <i>Find/feel/see need</i>	(from LModE3)
(9) complex transitive	(infrequent pattern; from LME)
(10) <i>what need?/no need</i> (no main verb)	(from LModE)
(11) <i>no need</i> as an adverbial (no main verb or complement)	(from PDE)

## 2. *need* in verbo-nominal patterns

- We looked at positive and negative variants of these patterns
- Formal marking of **negation**:
  - adnominal 'no' (*no need*) is by far most frequent
  - alternatives: *little need*, negation on main verb
  - negative element in postmodifier (*need of no judge*) is very infrequent and invariably correlates with lexical meaning (1500-1570)
  - even less frequent are emphatic items, e.g. *never so much need*, *never more need*

### 3. Semantic development of VN-patterns

- Broad categories: lexical, dynamic, deontic meaning
- Cross-cut by polarity:
  - Within **positive sphere** of the semantic domain: 5 semantic types
  - Within **negative sphere** of the semantic domain: 7 semantic types

### 3. Semantic development of VN-patterns (positive polarity)

(1) lexical meaning

*I thoughte I wolde take some spendyng money wyth me for I wot not what **nede** I shall haue therof* (PPCEME 1500-1570)

(2) participant-inherent need (cf. Nuyts 2006)

*I wou'd willingly know thy Condition, that I may see whether thou **stand'st in need** of my Assistance* (PPCEME 1640-1710)

(3) participant-imposed or situation-inherent necessity (cf. Nuyts 2006)

*Men may wel lye whan **it is nede** / and after amende it by counseyl /For alle trespaces / ther is mercy* (PPCME 1420-1500)

(4) dynamic + inference of obligation (deontic)

*owyr Lord seyde to hir, "Dowtyr, **it is gret nede** to prey for hir, for sche hath ben a wykkyd woman & sche xal be ded."* (PPCME 1420-1500)

(5) deontic: obligation/desirability

*And for þis alle cristene men **han nede** to knowe byleue of þe gospel, and so to knowe þe lif of Crist, and þe wisdam of hise wordis* (PPCME 1350-1420)

### 3. Semantic development of VN-patterns (negative polarity)

(1) lexical meaning

*Nis Gode nan neod ure æhta*

'God has no need of our possessions' (YCOE 950-1050)

(2) absence of participant-inherent need

*Nis Gode nan neod þæt we god wyrca*

'God has no need of us doing good' (YCOE 950-1050)

(3) absence of participant-imposed or situation-inherent necessity

*Worde was caryed to the churche, where syr Olyver was at mase and yt was no nede to yntrete hyme to come; for with speed bothe he and my lady hys whyffe departyd owte of the churche* (PPCEME 1500-1570)

(4) absence of dynamic necessity + inference of absence of obligation

*And he sayde nay, for sothe he had no nede [to confess], and sayde he stele neuer ox ne cow ne hors, ne neuer dyd no greues synne* (PPCME 1420-1500)

### 3. Semantic development of VN-patterns (negative polarity)

(5) absence of dynamic necessity + inference of prohibition

*But yf thou wylt gyue nature that she nedeth , and replenish her to [the] ful, then is it no nede for the to seke for the abundau~ce of fortune, for nature is contentyd with verye lytle thynges. And if thou wylte choke nature wyth to muche , eyther [that] thou geuyst \$will \$be vnpleasaut , or hurtfull unto the (PPCEME 1500-1570)*

(6) absence of obligation

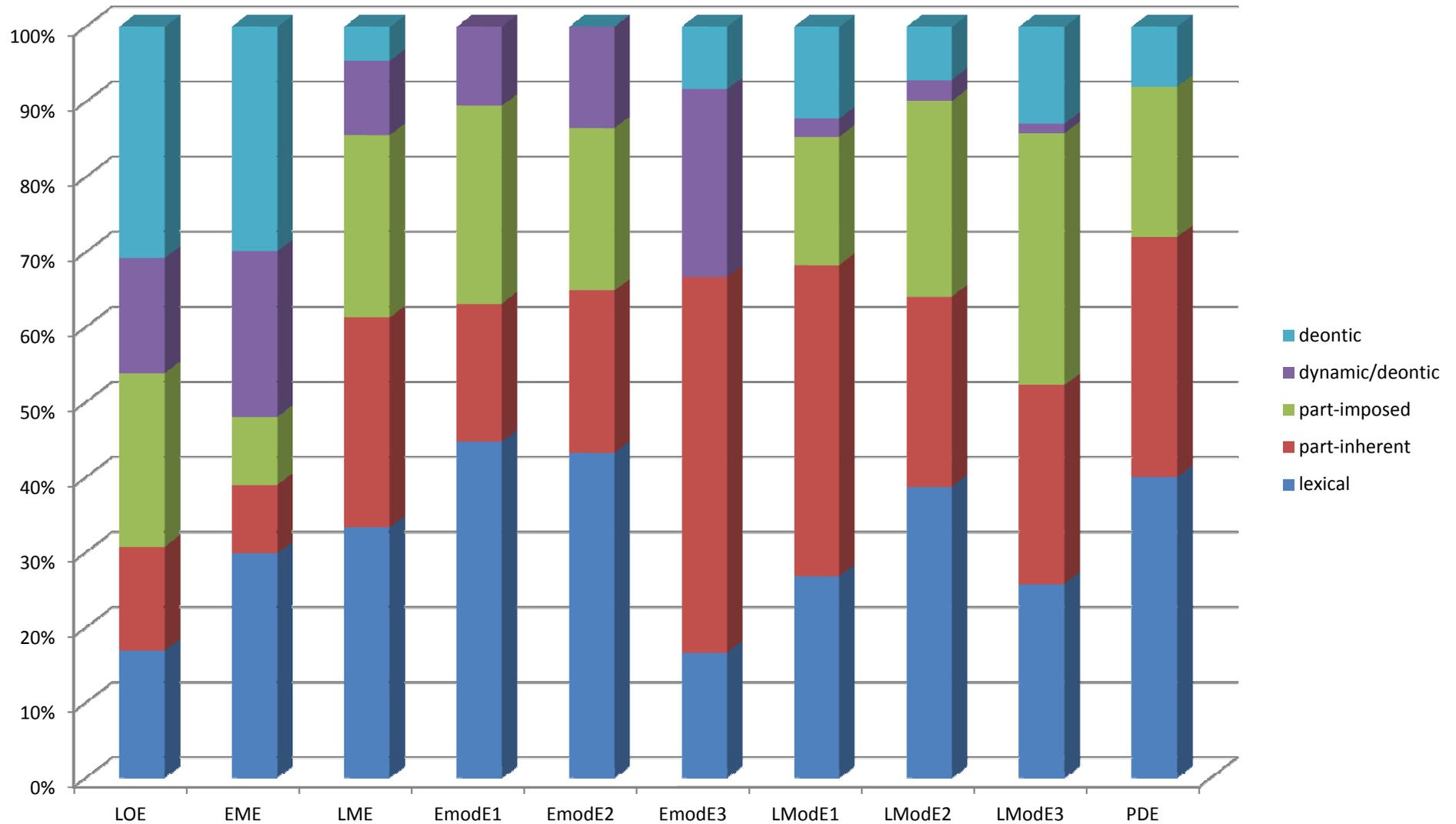
*"My dear," said she, "you have no need of making any apology. I am not in the least offended, and am convinced you will never deny me what I shall desire."  
(CLMET 1710-1780)*

(7) prohibition

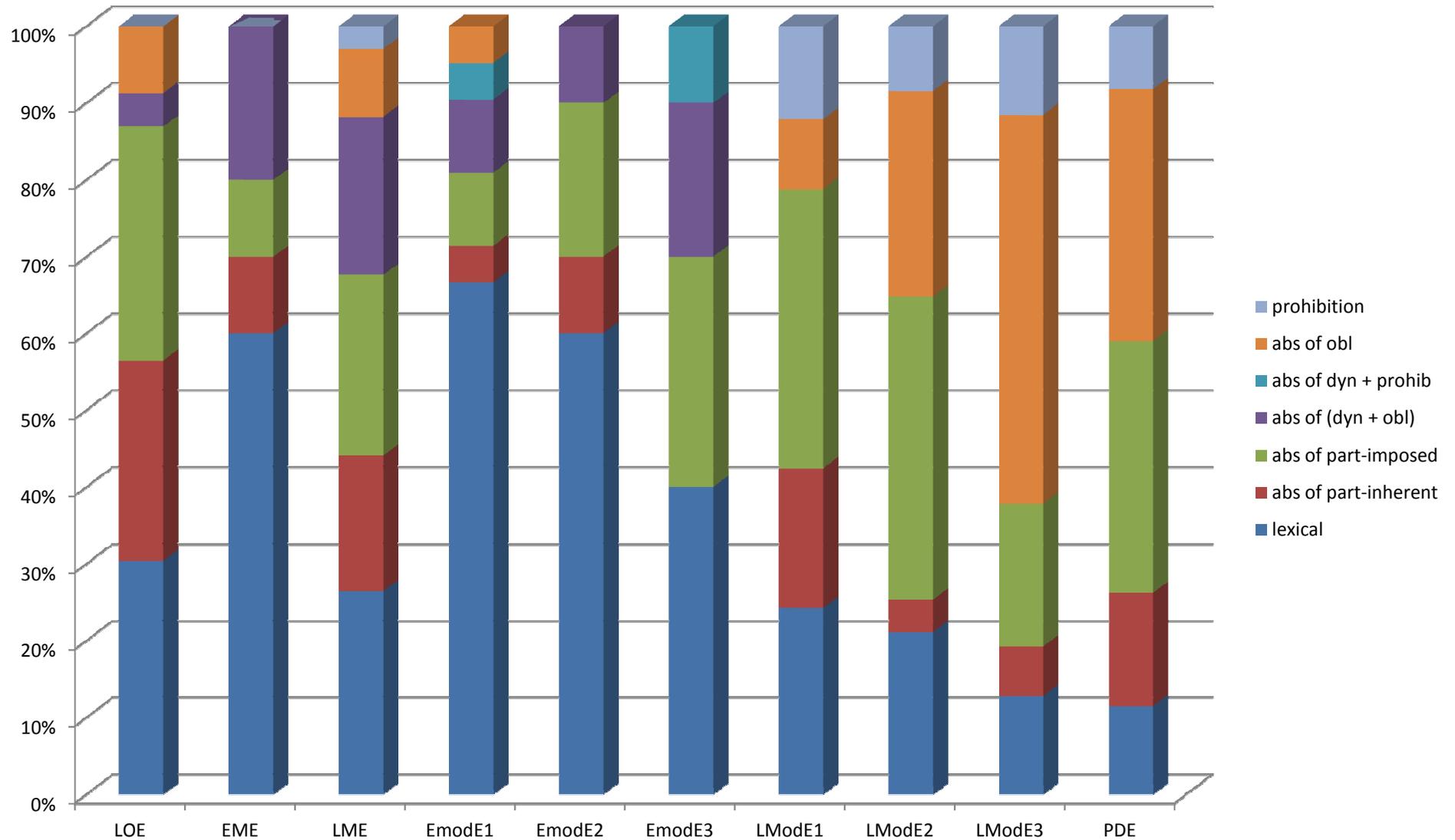
*Religion should be put before a child as a revelation of love, no need to pain and puzzle the young mind with the history of crime and punishment (CLMET 1850-1930)*

'you should not ...'

### 3. Semantic development of VN-patterns (positive polarity)



### 3. Semantic development of VN-patterns (negative polarity)



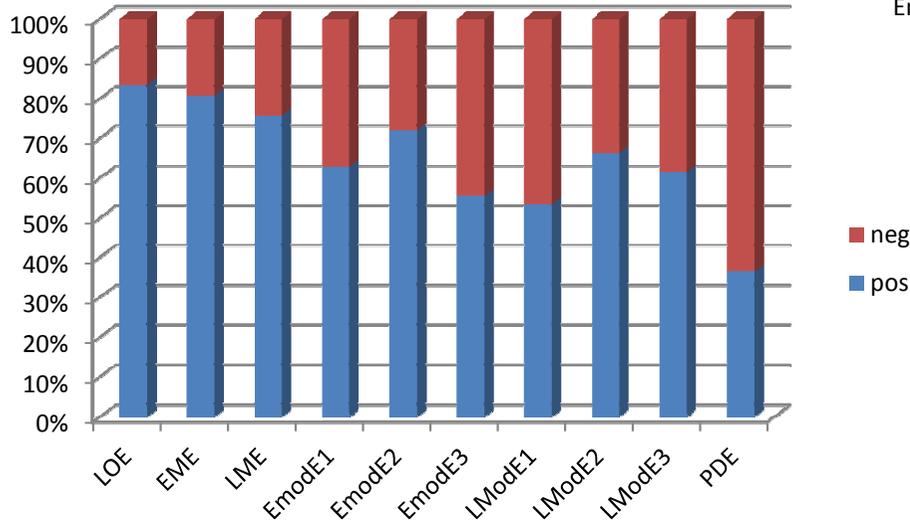
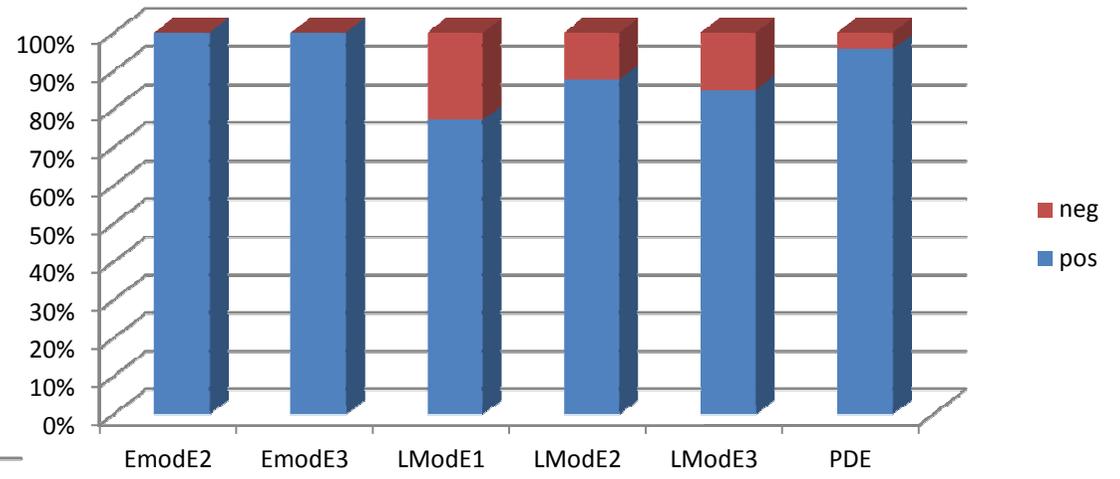
### 3. Semantic development of VN-patterns

- In general, all VN-patterns typically start off with lexical/participant-inherent meanings and develop more abstract modal meanings later on
- These patterns engage in **cyclical processes of grammaticalization** as they disappear/emerge across time
- Grammatical and lexical functions are redistributed among the patterns available in the periods at hand
- Grammaticalization of modal meanings crucially depends on interaction between negative polarity and structural patterns

## 4. Role of structural type

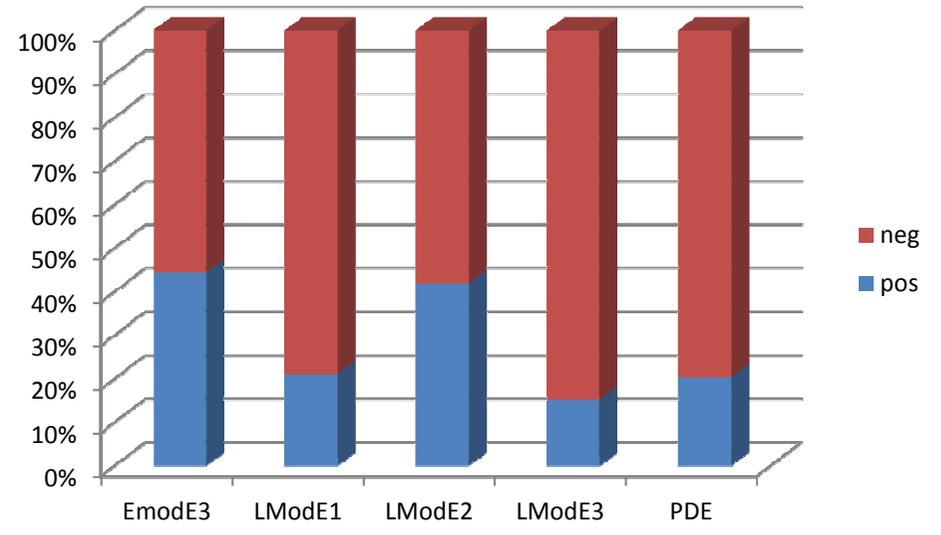
- The more abstract the verbo-nominal pattern is, the more readily it combines with negative polarity
- **Comparison** of *be/stand in need, have need, there COP need*, as from at least 5 occurrences in the corpus

be/stand in need →

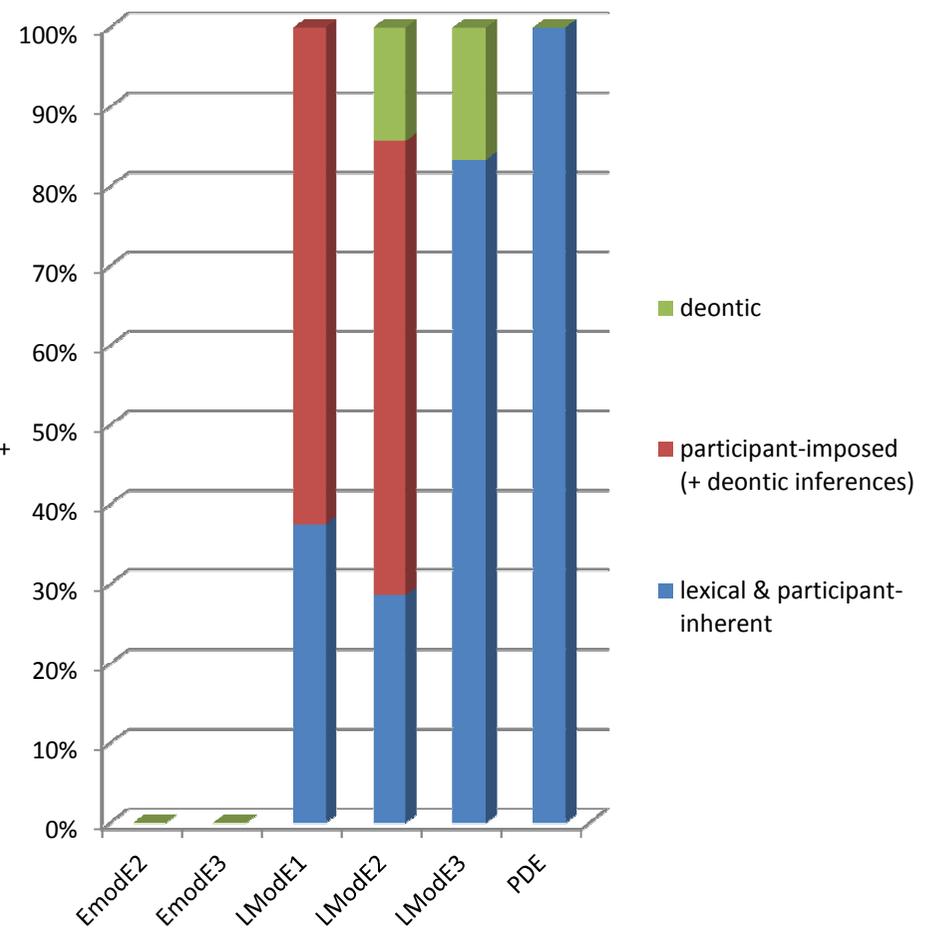
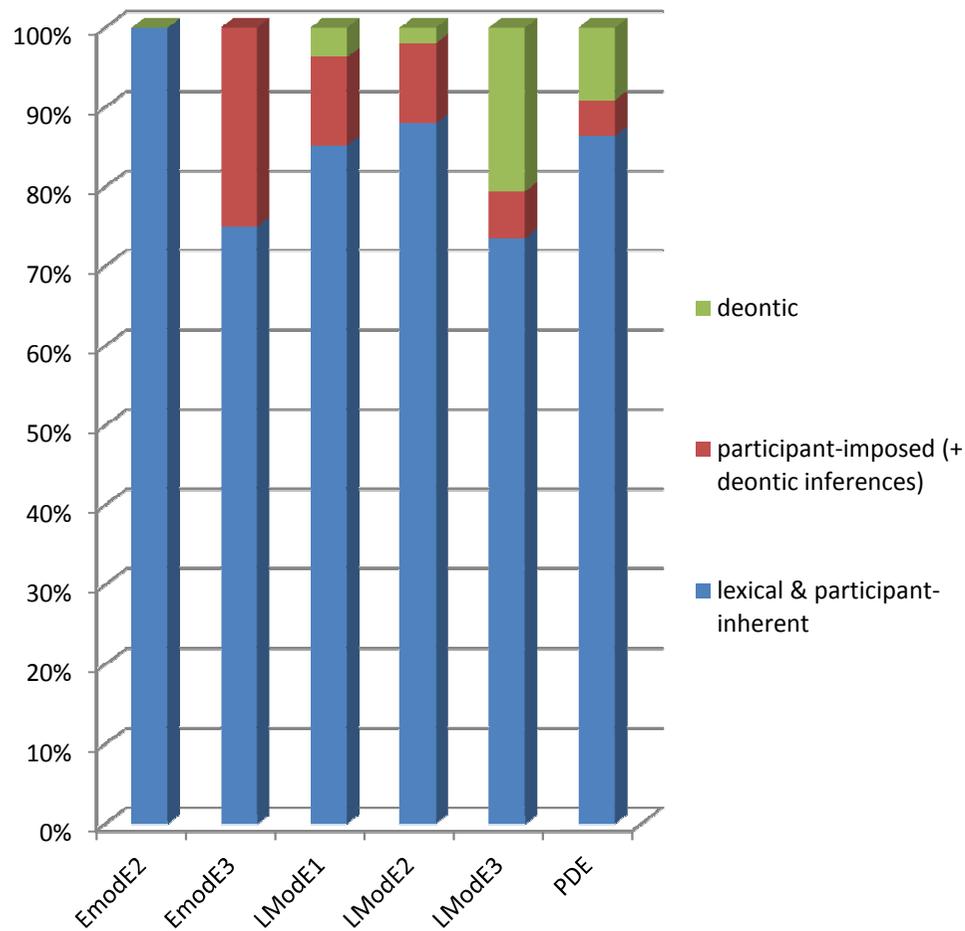


← have need

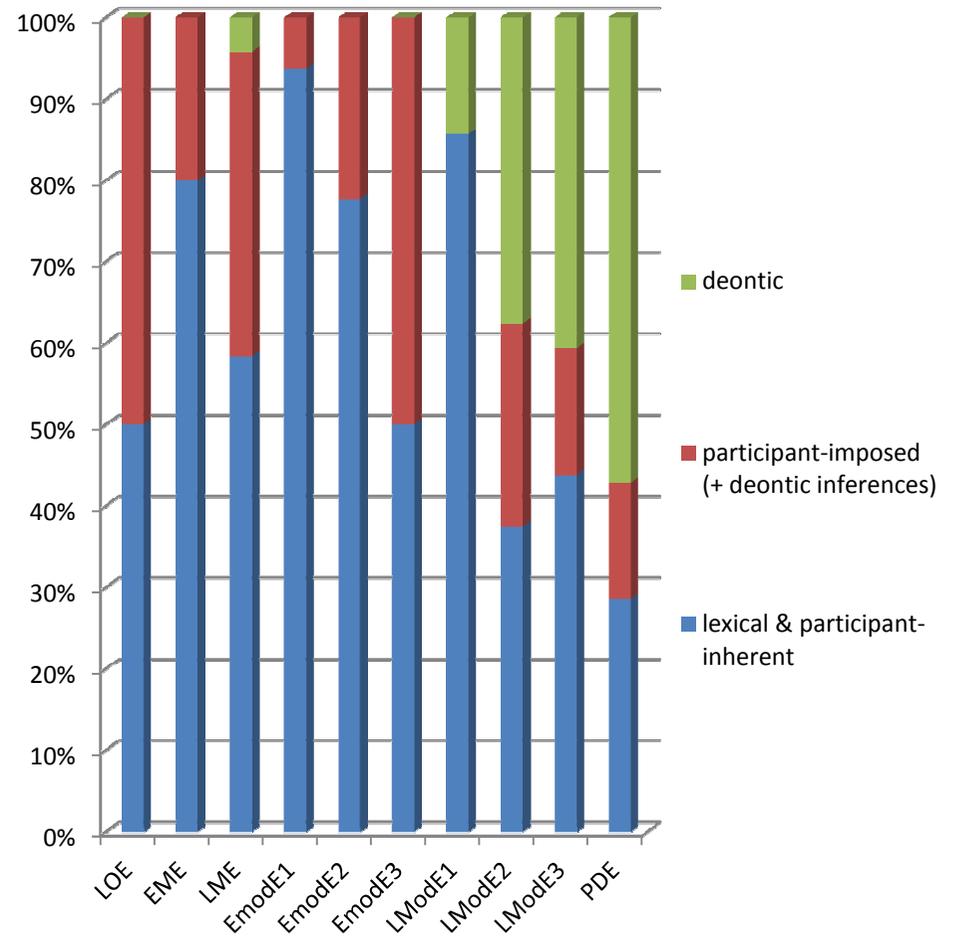
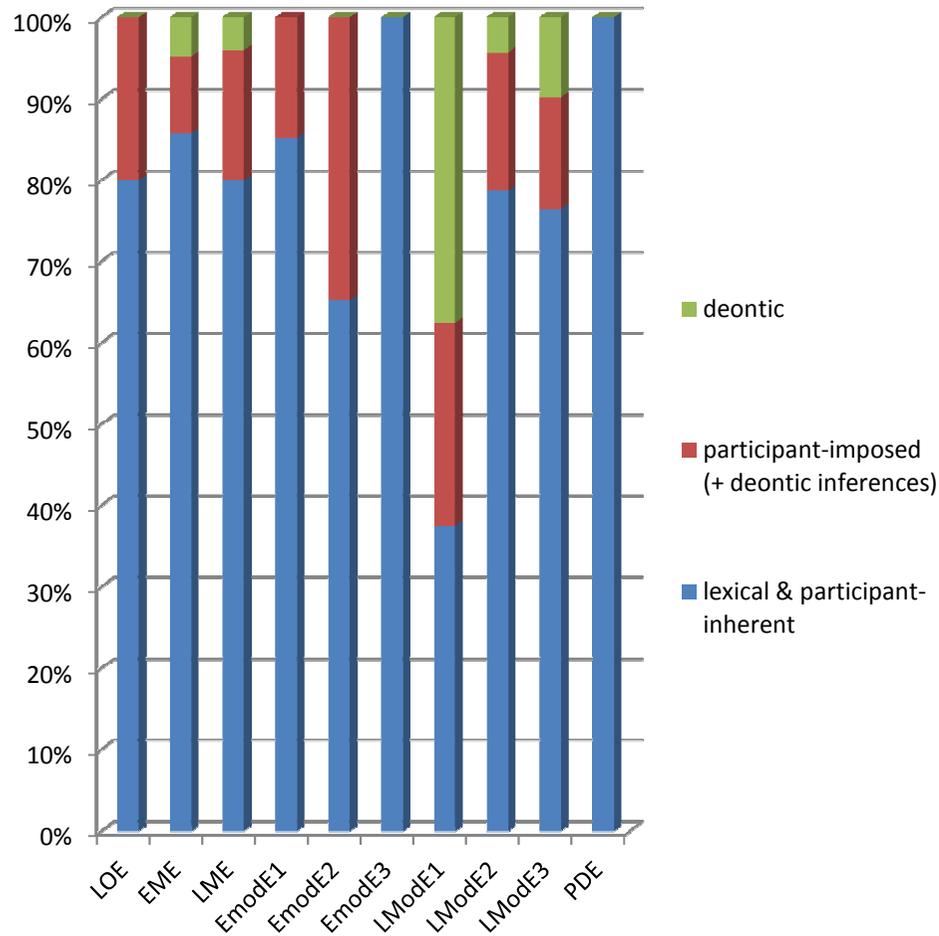
there COP need →



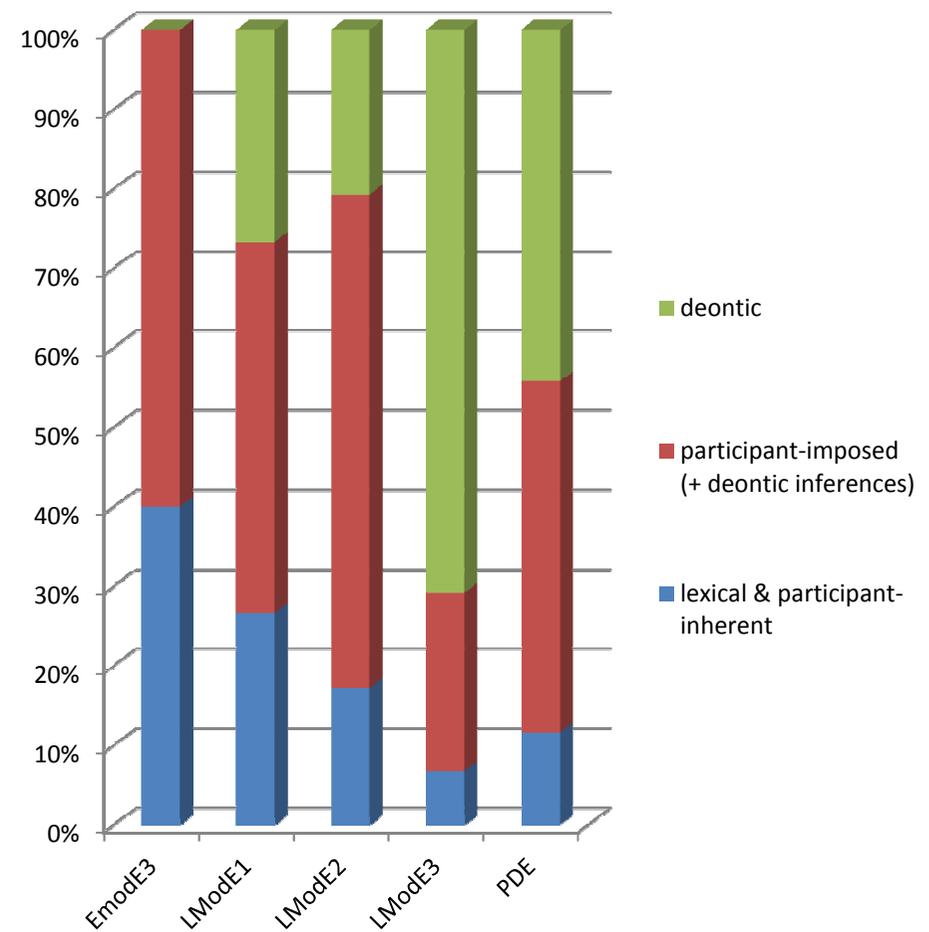
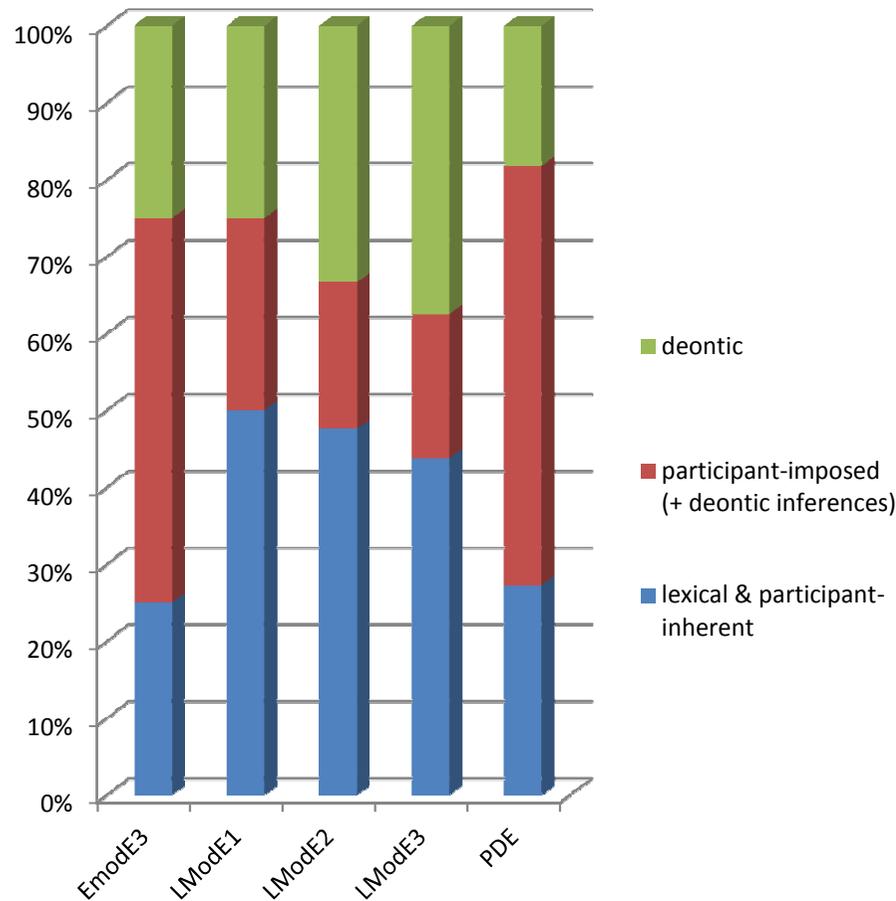
- *be/stand in need*: positive meanings (left) versus negative meanings (right):
- closely associated with lexical meanings, even when combined with negative polarity



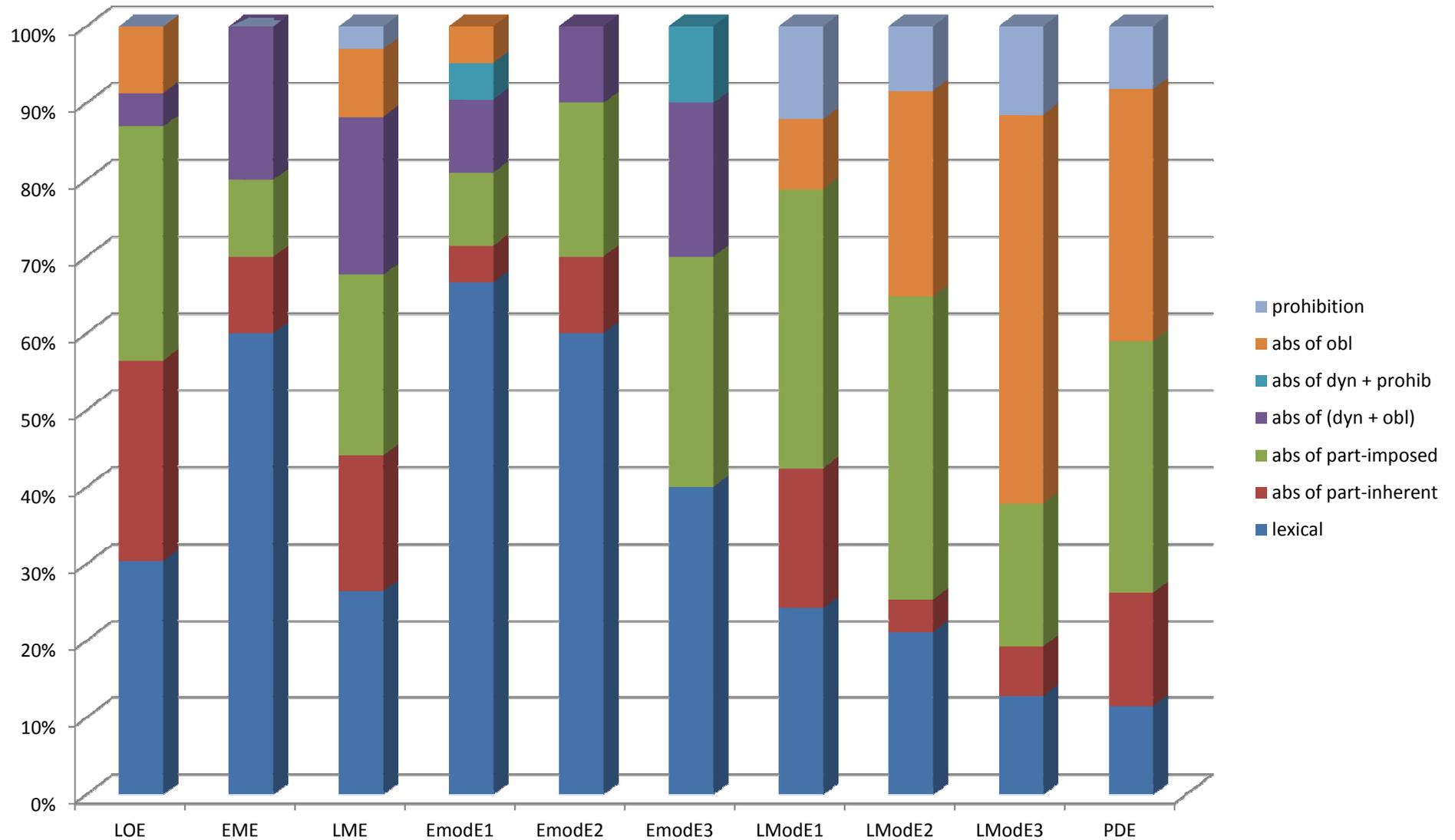
- *have need*: positive meanings (left) versus negative meanings (right):
- clear tendency to express more abstract modal meanings when combined with negative polarity



- *there COP need*: positive meanings (left) versus negative meanings (right):
- even stronger tendency to express more abstract modal meanings when combined with negative polarity



## 4. Role of structural type (conclusion)



## 4. Role of structural type (conclusion)

- Within the **negative modal domain**: external negation (absence of obligation) diachronically precedes internal negation (prohibition)
- Prohibition emerges as an invited inference in EModE, and crystallizes in LModE
- More restricted set of structural types than with positive polarity
- Constructions must have developed meanings further away from the lexical meaning of *need* to combine with negative polarity
  - negative polarity both motor and reflex of increasing grammaticalization in sense of increasing abstraction of grammatical functions expressed (cf. De Wolf & Davidse 2010):
    - negation interlocks with **delexicalization**

## 4. Role of structural type conclusion

- in literature so far, increase in grammaticality (advance in grammaticalization) conceived of as
  - more schematic constructional template licensing more lexical types (Trousdale forthc)
  - increased integration of construction into one grammatical paradigm (Diewald & Smirnova forthc.)

## 4. Role of structural type conclusion

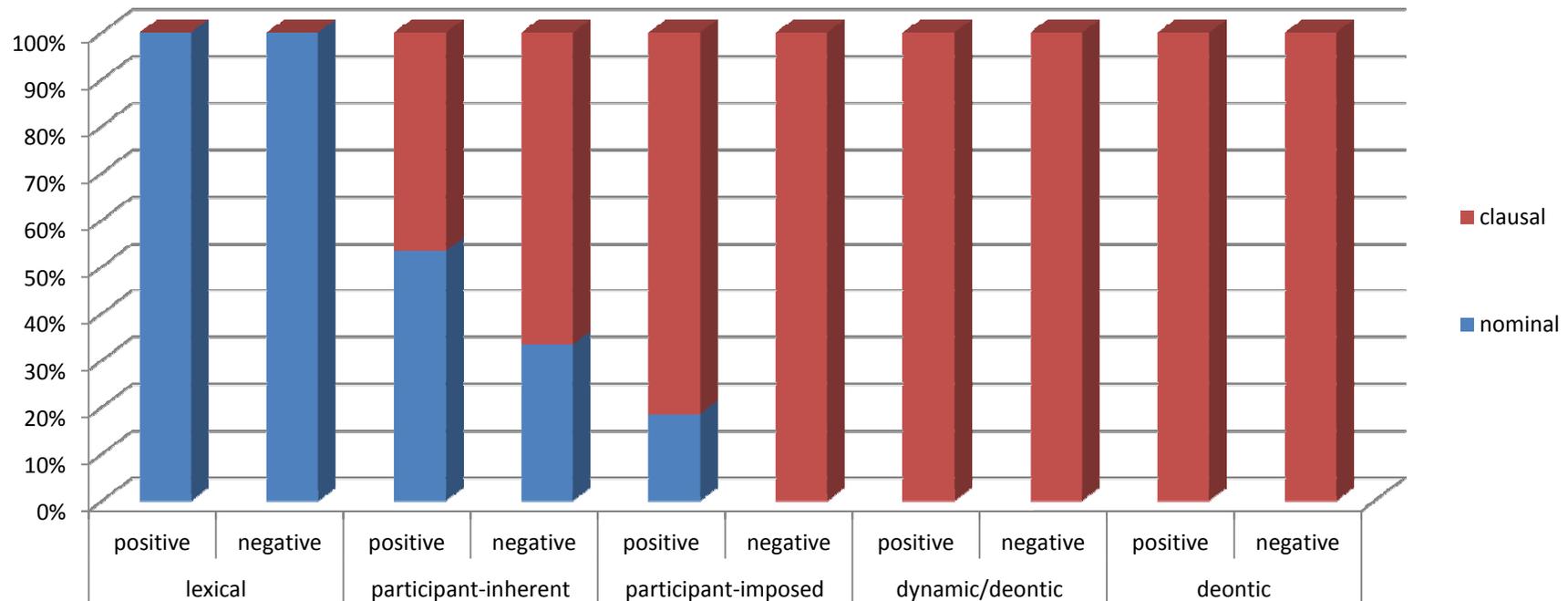
- our proposal: increased '**systemicness**' (De Wolf & Davidse subm.):
  - paradigmatic organization of grammar conceived of in terms of interdependencies between features of different systems, e.g. polarity and modality (Halliday 1961, 1991, 1992)
  - increased grammaticalization involves not just extension to values within one but within several interrelated systems
  - grammaticalizing expression comes to express more inter-related grammatical features belonging to different systems

## 5. Role of type of complement of *need*

- More **lexical meanings** tends to correlate with **NP-complements** (with or without Action-State-Event-features)
  - Abstract **modal** meanings tend to correlate with **clausal complements**
  - Shift from nominal to verbal probably via NPs with ASE-features
- Semantic developments interact with structural developments

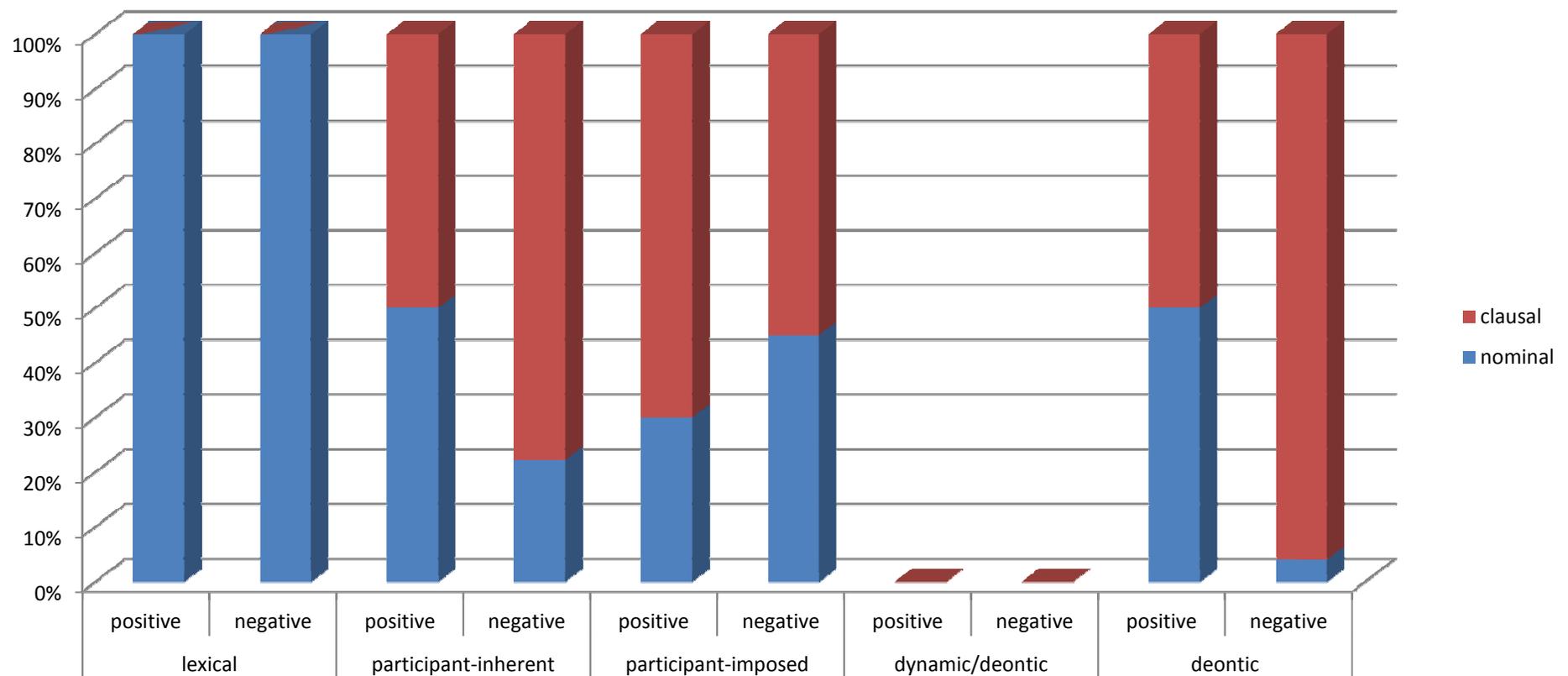
## 5. Role of type of complement of *need*

- Late Middle English:
- Within a semantic type, positive meanings combine more often with nominal complements than negative ones (see participant-inherent and –imposed meaning)



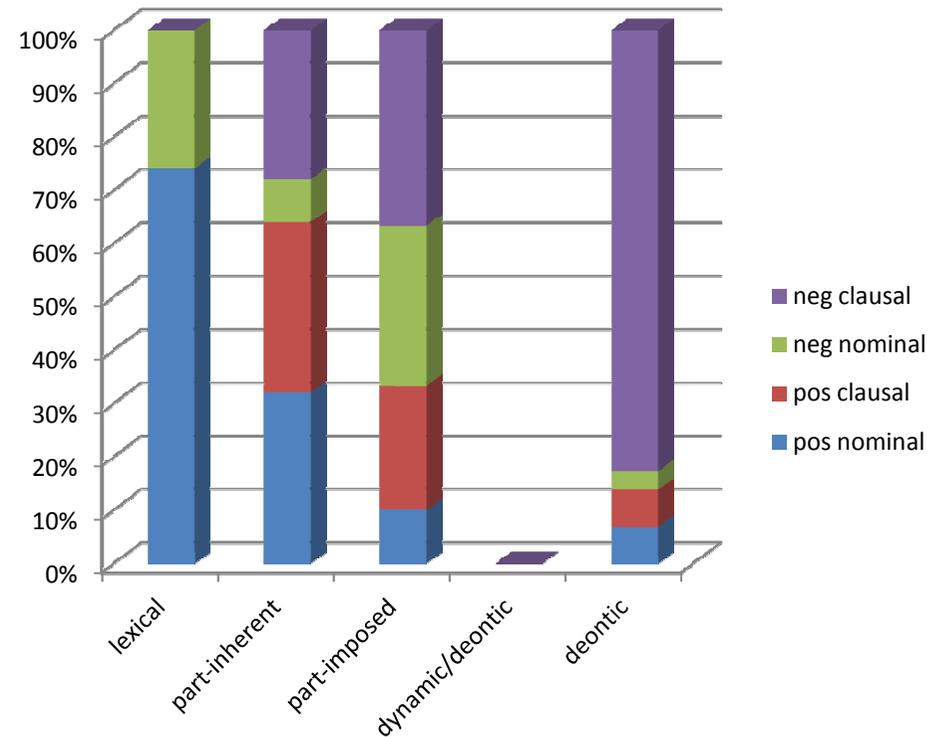
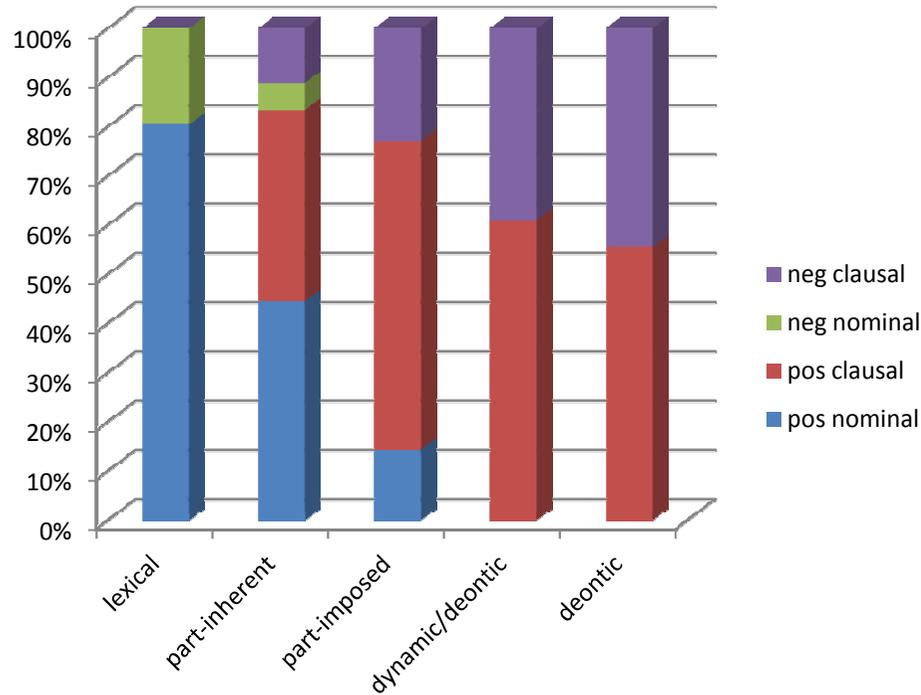
## 5. Role of type of complement of *need*

- The same goes for PDE  
(except for participant-imposed meaning: nominal pos < neg)



## 5. Role of type of complement of *need*

- LME (left) compared to PDE (right):
  - share of negative expressions has increased
  - correlation between negative polarity and abstractness of modal meaning: increase of negative expressions especially in the deontic realm



# 6. Conclusions

- **Semantic development:** evidence for lexical > participant-inherent need > participant-imposed necessity > deontic pathway (reflected in synchronic slices) or: lexical > dynamic > deontic (cf. modal adjectives, see Van linden 2010, Forthc)
- Lexical and participant-inherent necessity, i.e. semantic types closest to source meaning of *need*, predominantly **positive polarity**
- Situation-inherent /participant-imposed necessity and deontic modality, i.e. semantic types further removed from source meaning, predominantly **negative polarity**

→ Correlation between delexicalization and negation

## 6. Conclusions

- Participant-inherent need: predominance of **ASE-nominal complements** (e.g. *need of help, need of advice*)
- All other semantic modal types: more **verbal complements**  
→ Shift from N to V complements via ‘nominalized’ complements of participant-inherent necessity (cf. *in the midst of* from spatial to aspectual expression, Van Rompaey & Davidse 2009)
- **Correlations** between:  
type of complement of *need* and type of meaning expressed  
type of polarity and meaning expressed  
type of patterns and polarity and meaning

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