CAN NEGATIVE CONCORD ALONE PROVE AAVE SPEAKERS BILINGUAL?

1. INTRODUCTION

African American Vernacular English (AAVE), spoken by the African American community, is an English dialect that is viewed as ungrammatical by many Standard English (SE) speakers. Some of the claims by these SE speakers is that AAVE is random and ungrammatical; it is sometimes labeled as ´broken English´ (Green, 2002, p. 7). These views are why AAVE speakers sometimes feel the need, or even pressure, to code-switch between AAVE and SE. Code-switching (CS) is when a bilingual speaker changes between two or more dialects or languages based on social register (Lundquist et al, 2020). In the case of AAVE, CS occurs everywhere from careers to basic conversation, and one of the most criticized elements of AAVE that has pushed this need of CS, is Negative Concord (NC). NC is when there are several negative elements in one sentence, where only one of them has a negative effect:

(1)   Bald-head skally-wag, **ain´t** got **no** hair in the back   (Project Pat, Three 6 Mafia, La Chat, 2001)

´Baldhead, scallywag, don´t have any hair in the back´

According to the SE speakers that criticize AAVE, NC is ungrammatical as two negatives correspond to a positive. Yet, only one of the negative elements is effective as we can see in (1), where *ain´t* is the only effective negative element. Because of the occurrence of two negatives, these SE speakers argue that the second negative element is random and not necessary, but in this essay, this will be argued against. This will be achieved by analysis of different types of NC in AAVE, and the rules that apply to them. The goal is to showcase that NC is in fact systematic, with data from music and entertainment in which NC in AAVE occurs, and use them to show that AAVE is a language of its own. This will be done to ultimately show that the rule of NC in AAVE coexists with the rule of single negation in SE, in the brains of AAVE speakers, which would make that AAVE speaker a code-switcher between SE and AAVE, and therefore bilingual.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 ATTITUDES TOWARDS AAVE

Before we get to the discussion about NC in AAVE and whether the speakers are bilingual, we have to first further discuss attitudes towards AAVE, in order to truly understand what position it lies in. Today, most linguists agree that AAVE is a legitimate variety with its own set of rules. However, it has not always been like this. When AAVE was first beginning to establish itself as a valid variety among linguists in the 60s and 70s, there were still researchers arguing against this (Green, 2002, p. 213). These researchers claimed that AAVE was not an African American variety, but rather a Southern accent spoken by African Americans. Although the theory that AAVE stems from Southern US English still exists, the belief that it is only a Southern accent is no longer widespread. This does not change the fact that AAVE is not viewed as a variety by most SE speakers. As mentioned, these SE speakers struggle to view AAVE as its own distinct language or grammar and deem AAVE sentences ungrammatical and random. A typical case like this is the YouTube video *Worst Grammar Mistakes in Rap History*, where an SE speaker named Dara Tah comments on grammatical errors in rap songs. Tah commented on a line by rapper 21 Savage in the song *Rockstar* (2018), claiming it to be ungrammatical:

(2)   And they **ain´t** got on **no** bra   (Malone, 21 Savage, 2018)
           ´They aren´t wearing any bra´

Tah´s reason that this line is ungrammatical is that it contains two negatives: *ain´t* and *no*. The argument he makes is that two negatives in a sentence correspond to a positive, making the meaning of the line *they are wearing bras* (Dara Tah, 2017, 4:40). What Tah is referring to is Logical Double Negation (LDN), where two negative elements deliberately cancel each other out (Winkler, 2006). However, this is clearly not the actual interpretation of (2). Instead of being a case of LDN, (2) is in fact a case of NC. If it were to be a case of LDN, it would have to have heavy stress on both negatives, just like in SE (Labov, 1972, p. 784). In this case, the second negation, *no,* has no stress and therefore no negative effect, which makes the meaning of the sentence *they aren´t wearing any bra*. Tah´s argument, that two negatives make a positive, is a common misconception about NC in AAVE, that will be discussed further in 3.2. Academics like Pullum come to the defense of AAVE. Pullum (1999) claims that these SE speakers believe AAVE to be a mixture of slang and a lot of grammatical mistakes (p. 41). He (1999) argues against this by claiming that NC in AAVE is not illogical, but rather that AAVE´s expression of indefinites in negated phrases, like in NC, differs from SE (p. 49).

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The misunderstanding of AAVE being ´broken English´ exists not only because of its "ungrammatical" elements, but also due to its massive similarity to SE (Green, 2002, p. 44). The similarities between them make it so that SE speakers that are spoken to by AAVE speakers base the language of the AAVE speaker on the rules of SE. Therefore, when they hear AAVE elements that differ from SE, like NC, they find the AAVE speaker´s language to be incorrect. This has been a problem in education as well, and the King case (1979) is a great example of this. In the King case, Ann Arbor school officials placed African American children into special education classes, and were claimed by the parents of the children to have diagnosed the children with learning disabilities. According to the parents, the school officials were not considering the fact that the children may have spoken a different variety of English (Green, 2002, p. 222). The variety in question is AAVE, and due to AAVE being an English variety, when a phenomenon such as NC appears, the speaker´s language gets deemed ungrammatical because of its unfamiliar nature in SE.

Due to misunderstandings and cases like this, AAVE speakers find the need to code-switch when in a formal setting outside of the African American community, including school and education. With researchers such as Pullum writing articles in defense of AAVE, one begins to wonder how large of a difference there is between AAVE and SE, and whether that difference could make the code-switcher be considered bilingual. However, before that question can be answered, the question on whether the speaker is multidialectal, and not bilingual, must be answered first.

2.2 IS THE SPEAKER BILINGUAL OR MULTIDIALECTAL?

One interesting thing about language and dialects is that the difference between them is not as distinct as one would think. Society can sometimes call varieties ´dialects of the same language´ or call them ´separate languages´, which does not necessarily consider whether these varieties are mutually intelligible or not. For instance, most Kurdish people would say Kurmanji and Sorani are dialects of Kurdish, even though those varieties are not mutually intelligible. Meanwhile, Norwegian and Swedish are regarded as different languages, but can both be understood by most of each other´s speakers, which could be the case of AAVE and SE as well. If that turns out to be true, then it would make the code-switcher bilingual, and not multidialectal. However, before a claim like this could be made, we should know the difference between multidialectal and bilingual. Since definitions vary between academic or scientific fields and from common understandings, a problem occurs where the same word has different definitions. I will therefore in this part be discussing this problem among the

dictionary definitions that I will be referring to. The definitions will therefore all be dictionary definitions:

> (3)   able to speak or understand two or more dialects of the same language (Lexico.com 2020, "Multidialectal",)
>
> (4)   a person who can speak two languages equally well   (Lexico.com 2020, "Bilingual")

Based on these definitions, someone who has access to both AAVE and SE, is multidialectal, and not bilingual. One should however take into consideration what language (lingual) and dialect (dialectal) are defined as, and in which one of these AAVE fits in. Dialect is defined as:

> (5)   a particular form of a language which is peculiar to a specific region or social group   (Lexico.com 2020, "Dialect")

AAVE fits within the category of dialect very well as AAVE is spoken in the US by the social group African Americans. Language, on the other hand, has three different definitions, which is where the problem mentioned occurs:

> (6)   a system of communication used by a particular country or community (Lexico.com 2020, "Language")

> (7)   the principal method of human communication, consisting of words used in a structured and conventional way and conveyed by speech, writing, or gesture (Lexico.com 2020, "Language")

> (8)   the style of a piece of writing or speech (Lexico.com 2020 , "Language")

The second definition explains the concept of human language, as it is defined as "the principal method of human communication", as in *adults learn language slower than kids.* It could however be interpreted as a list of criteria for what is viewed a language, that a language should be "used in a structured and conventional way*"*. The third definition refers to phrasing and a way of speech, as in *no bad language in the house*, which would not contribute

much to finding out whether AAVE is a language or not. One way it could relate to AAVE is that an AAVE speaker´s language, their *style of a piece of writing or speech*, is sometimes regarded as ´broken English´ or incorrect, as in *her language was very incorrect.* Both (7) and (8) are mass nouns as they do not refer to a specific thing and are used in a non-countable way. This is not the case with the first definition, which describes what would count as a language. AAVE could easily be put into it because of one specific word: community. While AAVE is not a system of communication used by a particular country, it *is* used by the African American community. The only criterion that AAVE supposedly lacks is for it to be *a system of* communication. Per the logic of the AAVE critics, AAVE does not fill this criterion due to NC being perceived as random to them. AAVE would instead be a dialect as it is not stated in the definition of dialect that a dialect should be *a system of communication* or be *used in a structured and conventional way*. Instead, a dialect would just need to be a form of a language within a certain social group, which AAVE is.

Because of (6), any form of communication that has its own rules and system i.e., *a system*, is by definition a language. This would apply to AAVE as well. Therefore, the only way to find out if AAVE is a language, is to find out if there is system in it, which we will do in chapter 3., by analyzing the system of NC in AAVE.

2.3 JESPERSEN´S CYCLE

The fact that AAVE has NC and SE does not, could be explained by Jespersen´s Cycle (JC). JC is a theory proposed by Otto Jespersen and is when a language goes through a cycle of stages of sentential negation, where it evolves between being single or multiple negation (Larrivée, 2011, p. 1-2). In the first stage, the language presumably loses the impact of simple negation and evolves into multiple negations in the second stage (Jespersen, 1917, p. 4), where NC has been adapted. This happens before eventually reverting into simple negation again in the third stage, starting the cycle all over again, but sometimes with syntactical or morphological changes. This has happened to several languages, with French being one of the prime examples of the theory:

(9)	Stage 1: Je **ne** di	(Old French)	(Jespersen, 1917, p. 7)
	I not say		
	Stage 2: Je **ne** dis **pas**	(Modern Standard French)	
	I not say not		
	Stage 3: Je dis **pas**	(Modern Colloquial French)	

> I say not
>
> 'I don't say´

Here, we see that French has gone through the stages described by Jespersen. Jespersen (1917) proposes that English has gone through a similar stage as well (p. 9), where we are currently back in stage 1 (Breitbarth & Haegeman, 2010, p. 1, ex. 1):

(10) Stage 1: Ic **ne** secge   (Old English)   (Jespersen, 1917, p. 9)

 I no say

 Stage 2: I **ne** seye **not**   (Middle English)

 I no say not

 Stage 3: I say **not**   (Early Modern English)

 I say not

 Stage 1: I do **not** say   (Present Day English)   (Breitbarth & Haegeman, 2010, p. 1, ex.1)

 ´I didn´t say´

According to the theory of JC, SE may be in stage 1, and AAVE in stage 2. While the case with SE is likely, AAVE´s seems less likely. Despite it developing rather recently, AAVE´s origin is still uncertain. Some claim that it was a creole developed by slaves in the Southern states, while others argue that it started as a creole between English and West-African languages (Winkler, 2006). They both have their own share of arguments, but none of them can come with a definitive answer. Because of this, NC in AAVE cannot be directly explained by Jespersen´s Cycle, as AAVE does not have a stage 1 to evolve from, where the negation first would have been single. However, AAVE may in fact be in stage 2 (Tubau, 2008, p. 32). Languages that seem to have an ambiguous behavior in n-words, or negative elements, tend to be in an intermediate phase between stage 2 and 3 (Tubau, 2008), like in Spoken French, where *ne* is removed in 80% of instances (de Swart, 2009, p. 117). AAVE has a similar behavior, where the negative auxiliary is not always present, which we will discuss further in 3.5.

Despite AAVE appearing as if though it is in stage 2 with its ambiguity in negative elements, for one to really know if it is there, one of two cases must be true. The first case is that it must have first been in stage 1 evolved into stage 2, and the second case is that it would

have to currently be in stage 3, evolved from 2. Today, AAVE is none of the cases, and JC would therefore not explain NC being in AAVE.

2.4 NC IN OTHER LANGUAGES

As already mentioned, since SE does not have NC, many SE speakers deem the phenomenon, when heard in AAVE, as wrong and ungrammatical. However, the same people most likely recognize other languages that have NC, as actual languages. Of course, with no prior knowledge about the grammar of the language, they cannot for sure tell if it is grammatical or not. However, if the languages are recognized as being languages, despite having NC, then that would suggest that they do have a system. Japanese, Bosnian and Italian are examples of languages that have the phenomenon of NC, with Pullum (1999) presenting this with an example of Italian:

(11)   **Non** ha telefonato **nessuno**   (p. 48-49)
          Not has telephoned no one.
          ´Nobody telephoned´

The negatives *non* and *nessuno* are both required because indefinites in Italian must always be replaced by their negative counterparts when they are in the same clause as a negation (Pullum, 1999, p. 49). In this case *nessuno* ´no one´ replaced *qualcuno* ´somebody´, making the sentence negated twice, similarly to AAVE, where the indefinite *somebody* would be replaced by *nobody*. This is also the case in Bosnian, where the verb *ne* appears with the negative indefinite *niko*:

(12)   **Niko ne** igrapošteno   (BOSNIAN) (Aljovic, 2016, p. 109, ex. 12a)
          Nobody don´t play honestly
          ´Nobody plays honestly´

Contrary to the popular belief among SE speakers that NC is ungrammatical, NC has shown to be systematic in Italian, Bosnian, among other languages, and both are therefore languages per (6) and (7). Yet, AAVE is not recognized as a language, much alone as a grammar, by the majority of SE speakers. But with a proven system and set of rules, it should be.

3. NEGATIVE CONCORD IN AAVE: DATA

3.1 NEGATION RULES

According to Sidnell (2002), in English, all negative sentences start off positive and are turned negative by the addition of the negative element *not* to either the auxiliary or one of the indefinites. This creates what we in this essay refer to as negative elements. When the modal auxiliary, the *do*-support, the indefinite subject and the indefinite object are turned negative, they have undergone one of the three negation rules:

(i)   Add *not* to the indefinite in the subject position (Sidnell, 2002, p. 17-19)

(ii)   Add *not* to the auxiliary verb

(iii)   Add *not* to the indefinite noun phrase which is the object of the sentence

3.1.1 FIRST NEGATION RULE

According to Sidnell, the first negation rule creates the negative indefinite preverbal:

(13)   **<u>Nobody</u>** gets out of this alive

Even though the sentence is negative, Sidnell (2002) argues that it starts off as positive and is turned negative by the addition of *not* to the indefinite subject *anybody*. Meaning that (13) originally was:

(14)   *<u>Anybody</u> gets out of this alive

Even though Sidnell only mentions *anybody* in his 'subject position' rule, in principle this could and should apply to any indefinite, not just those ending with *-body*. This would mean that any indefinite in the subject position, starting with *any* or *some*, are affected by this rule. Thus, we can conclude that his formula is *not* + indefinite in subject position.

3.1.2 SECOND NEGATION RULE

The second negation rule applies for auxiliaries:

(15)   We **<u>can´t</u>** afford to be neutral

In this case, the modal auxiliary *can* has been negated with the addition of the negative element *not,* meaning that the sentence originally was like this:

(16)   We <u>can</u> afford to be neutral

When there is a *do*-support present in the sentence but no modal auxiliary, this negation rule would apply to the *do*-support:

(17)   We <u>don´t</u> want new pair of shoes

The line above would also have been positive first:

(18)   We <u>do</u> want new pair of shoes

The formula for this negation rule would be *not* + modal auxiliary or *do*-support. It is therefore the only negation rule that can create a sentential negative marker (SNM) and make a sentence strict NC, which we will discuss in 3.5. For both SE and AAVE, this rule cannot be applied to more than one auxiliary verb in a verb phrase or in a clause, unless it is a case of LDN. Hence why it is exclusive for modal auxiliaries or *do*-support.

3.1.3 THIRD NEGATION RULE

The third negation rule states that *not* is added to the indefinite in the object position:

(19)   We´ll settle for **<u>nothing</u>**

(19) started off positive with the indefinite noun phrase *anything* and initially looked like this:

(20)   We´ll settle for <u>anything</u>

This negation rule is like the first negation rule, only with a different position for the indefinite. The formula for negation rule three would therefore be *not* + indefinite in object position.

3.1.4 NEGATION RULES´ APPLICATION TO AAVE AND SE

As presented, the three negation rules apply to AAVE exactly as they do to all other English varieties, by turning certain elements negative with the addition of *not.* However, there is one important restriction for SE, that does not apply to AAVE, which is that these three rules are limited to apply one at a time (Sidnell, 2002). If the second negation rule is applied, where the clause contains *not + auxiliary verb*, then neither rule one nor rule three could be applied. Meaning that none of them can occur in the same clause together in SE. This is not the case with AAVE, where these rules can be used simultaneously (Sidnell, 2002):

(21)   **Nobody** gave me **nuthin´**   (Brown, 2019a)
         ´Nobody gave me anything´

Here, rapper Danny Brown has applied both negation rule one and negation rule three in his sentence, despite there being a restriction against doing this in SE. The lack of restriction in AAVE is what leads to the creation of NC. However, this does not mean that AAVE could use the negative elements randomly. As mentioned in 2.3, negative elements have to be in agreement with each other in NC, and therefore be used in certain instances. For instance, if there would have been a negative indefinite subject present with a non-negative indefinite object in (21), then that non-negative indefinite object would have to undergo negation rule three so that it could be in agreement with the negative indefinite subject. Otherwise (21) would become ungrammatical:

(22)   a: *Anybody gave me **<u>nothing</u>**   (AAVE)
         b: ***Nobody** gave me <u>anything</u>   (AAVE)

(22b) would be grammatical in SE, but since it is an alternative to (21), which is spoken in AAVE by an AAVE speaker, it is safe to say that it is an AAVE sentence. Because of AAVE requiring NC when there are indefinites present together, (b) would be ungrammatical in AAVE. The same with (22a). In the case of the negation rules´ application to AAVE, this means that a negated indefinite object always agrees with either the negated auxiliary or the negated indefinite subject (Sidnell, 2002). Therefore, contrary to SE, AAVE must use these negation rules simultaneously everytime there is an opportunity for it.

The agreement rule´s effect on the negative indefinite object applies for SE as well, where a negative indefinite object cannot appear alone with a non-negative indefinite subject (21a):

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(23)   a: *Anybody gave me **<u>nothing</u>**   (SE)

          b: ***Nobody** gave me **<u>nothing</u>**   (SE)

          c: **Nobody** gave me <u>anything</u>   (SE)

However, because of the restriction of only having one negation rule applied at a time, (23a) and (23b) would be considered ungrammatical by most SE speakers. In (a), the negative indefinite object must become positive, which would mean that the indefinite subject becomes negative, creating the grammatical (23c).

  According to Labov, the third negation rule being NC is obligatory, and not an option (Sidnell, 2002). The ungrammaticality of (22a, b) also show that the three negation rules are not used randomly in AAVE, but rather in certain conditions where they must agree with each other. Despite the negation rules not having the same restrictions in AAVE as in SE, the negation rules are still the same in AAVE as in SE.

3.2 LOGICAL DOUBLE NEGATION

As mentioned in 2.1, LDN is when there are two negative elements purposefully cancelling each other out in a sentence, leading to the sentence being interpreted as positive. A case of LDN, would look like this:

(24)   Why ***<u>can´t</u>*** we ***<u>not</u>*** be sober?   (Tool, 1993)

          ´Why can´t we be intoxicated? ´

Here, vocalist of Tool, Maynard James Keenan, asks why "we" cannot be in a state where we are not sober*,* meaning that he wishes to be in a state of intoxication. He achieves this by making the auxiliary *can* negative and by purposefully adding the negative phrase *not be sober*, ultimately cancelling out both negative elements. Thus, the sentence becomes positive.

  The main difference between NC and LDN is that all the negative elements in LDN have a negative effect, while in NC, only one does. This would mean that NC has the same negational effect as single negated SE. LDN is also deliberate in its usage of negative elements, where both negatives are stressed equally (Labov, 1972, p.784). This leads to the results of LDN sentences being positive and NC sentences remaining negative. Also mentioned in 2.1, non-standard English varieties have the same stress pattern as SE when it

comes to LDN, where there is heavy stress on both negatives (Labov, 1972, p. 784). This includes AAVE:

(25)   It's like ***<u>nothin'</u>*** ***<u>not</u>*** <u>broke</u>   (Run The Jewels, Brown 2017a)
           ´Something has broken´

It is worth mentioning that El-P, one of the members of Run The Jewels, natively speaks SE but sometimes uses AAVE in his music. The sentence above could be SE, but based on *broke* being used as past participle instead of *broken*, the absence of a copula (presumably *is*) which is frequent in AAVE (Wolfram, 2008, p. 527), and the phrasing of *nothing* as *nothin´*, it seems like an AAVE sentence.

        Because of AAVE and SE having the same pattern of stress in LDN, an LDN sentence could be ambiguous between the two varieties, where both would formulate (26) in the exact same way:

(26)   I ***<u>don´t</u>*** know how to ***<u>not</u>*** <u>spit like a lout</u>   (Run The Jewels, 2017b)
           `I rap well´

Here, we have El-P once again using LDN, but with no clear indication on whether it is AAVE or SE, as he, like mentioned, uses both in his music.

        One way to summarize LDN is with this formula: $\neg\ (\neg\ p) = p$ (de Swart, 2009, p. 1; Winkler, 2006), with *-n´t* (not) in *don´t* in (26) being "$\neg$" and *not spit like a lout* being "$(\neg\ p)$". There is a fallacy that the logic of this formula applies to NC in AAVE as well, this is not true as the heavy stress is only on one of the negative elements in NC. Therefore no NC sentences in AAVE are LDN, unless there is deliberate heavy stress on the intended negatives.

3.3 AIN`T
Before discussing the different types of NC in AAVE, we have to establish perhaps the most distinguished negative word in it: *ain´t*. While it does not exclusively occur in NC, *ain´t* is still very present in it. It is generally a replacement of the perfect auxiliary *not + have* (27) and present tense *not + be* (28) (Wolfram, 2008, p. 523-527):

(27)   I **ain´t** seen **no** Chinese since we landed   (Jedi Mind Tricks, R.A. The
           Rugged Man, 2006)

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´I haven´t seen any Chinese [soldiers] since we landed´

(28)   Wu-Tang Clan **ain´t nuthin´** ta fuck wit   (Wu-Tang Clan, 1993)
         ´Wu-Tang Clan aren´t people to mess with´

Ain´t does not exist in SE but can be found in other US English varieties such as Alabaman English and other Southern varieties. There is however one important distinction between AAVE and the other varieties, which is that AAVE is the only variety where *ain´t* is not restricted to present tense, making it tense neutral (Sidnell, 2002). This means that it can be used both in present (28) *and* past tense (29) (Sidnell, 2002):

(29)   Nigga I **ain´**t got **no** preference   (Flatbush Zombies, 2016)
         ´I have no preferences´

(30)   Got ´em all hype and shit, I **ain´**t even do **nothing** (Calmatic1, 2010, 1:20)
         ´Made them existed, I didn´t even do anything´

Ain´t is not an obligatory substitute for the auxiliaries it changes, as we can see in these consequent lines in Tech N9ne´s *This Ring* (2001):

(31)   a: I **ain´t never** wanted **no** parts of this   (Tech N9ne, 2001)
            `I never wanted to be a part of this´
         b: I **don´t never** want to break another heart for this
            ´I don´t want to hurt another person for this´

Both (31a) and (31b) are present tense, similarly structured, and include NC, with the latter indicating that both are AAVE. Yet, Tech N9ne uses *ain´*t in one line and *don´t* in the other, where *ain´t* could have been used as well, hinting that the usage of *ain´*t may be optional.

Because of AAVE being able to have *ain´t* in past tense, it has a more frequent usage there compared to other US varieties. It is therefore often present both in NC in AAVE and in another phenomenon called Negative Inversion (NI).

3.4 NEGATIVE INVERSION

NI is when the negative auxiliary switches positions with the subject of the phrase (Wolfram, 2008, p. 523). In the case of AAVE, NI is often present as NC (32), contrary to negative inversion in SE, which in most cases occurs in negative imperative sentences (33):

(32)   **Ain´t no** sunshine when she´s gone   (Withers, 1971)
                ´There is no sunshine when she is gone´

(33)   **Don´t** you dare point that at me   (Tool, 2019)

NI is in other terms a negative version of subject-auxiliary inversion, which is when a subject and an auxiliary switch position. Sentences with subject-auxiliary inversion, both in SE (34) and AAVE (35), are most often interrogative:

(34)   Will I die?

(35)   Do you drink? Is you dead?   (Open Mike Eagle, 2018)
                ´Do you drink, are you dead?´

When NI in AAVE is single negated, it also often formulates a question (36), although is sometimes does not (37):

(36)   All over some dumb shit, **ain´t** that some shit?   (DMX, 1998)
                ´All over some dumb stuff, isn´t that something?´

(37)   Pharoahe fuckin´ Monch, **ain´t** a damn thing changed   (Monch, 1999)
                ´It´s Pharoahe Monch, nothing has changed´

While SE has NI and subject-auxiliary inversion, they are not often present in other forms other than questions, with some exceptions like occurring as imperative like in (33). AAVE on the other hand, has a frequent usage of NI with NC often being involved. When NC is involved, the sentences seem to be conveying the message in a way that is very unusual to SE. The similarity between AAVE and SE in this respect, is that the interrogatives formed by NI for AAVE and subject-auxiliary inversion for SE, are identically structured. Therefore, the cases where NI is distinct to AAVE, is when NC is involved, like in (32).

3.5 STRICT AND NON-STRICT NC

Languages with NC could be distinguished between being strict and non-strict. Strict NC demands that the NC sentence has an SNM: an obligatory negative modal, auxiliary or verb (de Swart, 2009, p. 38-39; Giannakidou, 2006, p. 346). Non-strict NC, on the other hand, does not demand an SNM, meaning that the sentence does not have a negative auxiliary (Zeijlstra, 2004, p. 64). Tubau (2008) states that AAVE has shown to be mostly strict (p. 208):

    (38)   You **<u>can´t</u>** tell me **nothing**   (West, 2007)

                ´You can´t bother me´

In (38), we can see that the SNM *can´t* has been applied to create an agreement with *nothing*, which cannot be the only negative element if there is a preverbal indefinite, or in this case, an auxiliary present:

    (39)   *You <u>can</u> tell me **nothing**   (AAVE)

                ´You can´t bother me´

(39) would be a grammatical SE sentence, but since AAVE seems to be strict NC, there must be an SNM present for it to be grammatical. If an AAVE speaker who can code-switch between AAVE and SE says the line in (39) with the purpose of speaking SE to SE speakers, it would be perceived as grammatical. However, if they were to code-switch to AAVE when speaking to an AAVE speaker, it would not be perceived as grammatical, simply because of the requirement of an SNM in strict NC. Therefore, the correct way to convey the message of (39) in AAVE, would be like in (38).

        The reason why Tubau may claim AAVE to be mostly strict, is because of the frequent appearances of auxiliaries in English with only auxiliaries being able to be negated in a verb phrase. While it is usual for languages to only be either non-strict (Italian) or strict (Greek), AAVE has shown signs of being both, making it non-strict as well. Meaning, as mentioned in 2.3, that AAVE does not always require a negative auxiliary. According to Zeijlstra (2004), this is possible when there is an indefinite in the preverbal position, i.e., subject position (p.64). Therefore, if (38) would have had a negative indefinite subject instead of *you*, the auxiliary could be non-negative:

(40)　　　　**Nobody** can tell me **nothing**

　　　　　　　´Nobody can bother me´

This can also be seen in Stevie Wonder´s song *I Don´t Know Why*, where he says the same line twice, but includes an SNM in the first (41a), and omits it in the second (41b):

(41)　　　　a: **Can´t** do **nothing** about it　　　　　　(Wonder, 1968)

　　　　　　　　´[We] can´t do anything about it´

　　　　　　b: **Nobody** can do **nothing** about it

　　　　　　　　´Nobody can do anything about it´

Because of the presence of the negative preverbal indefinite *nobody* in (b), the agreement needed for the negative postverbal indefinite *nothing* is fulfilled, making the SNM non-required. This allows Stevie Wonder to not negate the auxiliary *can* even though this is a NC sentence. (a), on the other hand, despite being identical to (b), requires an SNM because of the lack of a negative preverbal. Therefore, the auxiliary *can* must undergo negation rule two and turn into *can´t*, so that *nothing* will have a negative element to agree with.

　　　　Like Labov, Aljovic (2016) as well claims AAVE to be optional between being strict and non-strict (p. 110-111), as we could easily insert an SNM in (41b) and (40):

(42)　　　　**Nobody** **can´t** do **nothing** about it

　　　　　　　´Nobody can do anything about it´

(43)　　　　**Nobody** **can´t** tell me **nothing**

　　　　　　　´Nobody can bother me´

An SNM is always required in NI, since NI always includes a negative auxiliary:

(44)　　　　Ain´t no industry devil ever getting my soul　　(R.A. The Rugged Man, 2013a)

　　　　　　　´I will never sign for any major record label´

Like (41), Freddie Gibbs´ dialogue in the YouTube video *Storage War$ | Loiter Squad | Adult Swim*, showcases a case of optionality between strict and non-strict NC. Here, Freddie Gibbs includes an SNM in the first sentence, but omits it the second one, where he repeats it:

(45)   <u>**Ain´t nobody**</u> seen **nobody**. Right, right? **Nobody** seen **nobody.**

              (Adult Swim, 2014, 1:23)

              ´Nobody saw anyone´

The difference between (45) and (41) is that there is no auxiliary in (45) when the phrase is repeated, while there is one in both (41a) and (41b), where the auxiliary was not negated in (b). The reason for this is that *seen* in (45) is used as the simple past form of *to see*, meaning that the auxiliary *ain´t* is not needed as simple past form does not require one. However, because of the presence of the negative preverbal *nobody* in both (45) and (41b), an SNM is not needed, meaning that *can* in (41b) does not have to undergo negation rule two and become negative, and (45) does not have to include an auxiliary.

      This behavior is unusual when compared to other NC languages. Zeijlstra (2004) states that some languages have strict NC and require SNM even though there already is more than one negative word present in the sentence. What this means is that SNM is obligatory for languages such as Catalan, Greek and Slavic, which are therefore always strict NC (Giannakidou, 2006, p. 336). It is different for AAVE, where, like discussed, it does not have to be strict when a negative indefinite subject and a negative indefinite object are already present together. AAVE therefore shows a nature of optionality between being strict and non-strict NC.

3.6 TYPES OF NEGATIVE CONCORD

What the three negation rules create when they are used simultaneously, are the different types of NC. Even though some of them have already been briefly discussed or used as data, they will in this part be further analyzed.

3.6.1 NEGATIVE INDEFINITE SUBJECT AND NEGATIVE AUXILIARY

In this type of NC, there is an occurrence of a negative indefinite subject, i.e., a preverbal, and a negative auxiliary (Wolfram, 2008, p. 523), which would make it strict NC:

   (46)   Is he still a fly guy clapping if **nobody ain´t** hear it?   (Madvillain, 2004)

            ´Is he still a cool guy having sex if nobody is hearing about it?´

In other words, this type of NC is when negation rules one and two are used together. It is usually structurally identical to that of SE with the negative verb phrase being the distinct element. In the example above the auxiliary has both turned negative *and* lexically changed, but in most cases the auxiliary is changed only with the addition of *not*:

(47)   **Nobody <u>can´t</u>** do you like that
        ´Nobody can treat you like that´

This type of NC is the one that appears as NI most frequently, as the only requirement for NI is to switch between a negative preverbal and a negative auxiliary (Aljovic, 2016, p. 115):

(48)   **Ain´t nobody**´s business   (Jackson, 1987)
        ´It isn´t anybody´s business´

Negative indefinite subject and negative auxiliary could also be used as LDN (Wolfram, 2008, p. 523):

(49)   *Nobody doesn´t* like Sara Lee   (Wolfram, 2008, p. 523)

The sentence above is a case of LDN in SE and translates to *everybody likes Sasha*. One reason this may not be AAVE is the usage of *doesn´t*. Although *doesn´t* can be found in AAVE, the form *don´t,* is generally more often used as third person singular (Wolfram, 2008, p. 521). Therefore, a likely direct translation of (49) to AAVE would be:

(50)   *Nobody don´t* like Sara Lee

While (50) is a LDN AAVE sentence, it could very easily be a NC sentence, if it would have had a normal stress pattern. An example taken from Wolfram (2008), has identical structure, only with a different object:

(51)   **Nobody don´t** like it   (p. 527)

Wolfram (2008) identified this sentence as NC and a case of preverbal indefinite (p. 527), i.e., a negative indefinite subject, and not a case of LDN. This is despite its phrasing being very similar to that of SE LDN (49) and AAVE LDN (50). Wolfram (2008) did also state that this type of NC can be ambiguous between NC and LDN and would therefore depend on context,

the delivery of the speaker and on the emphasis on the negative auxiliary (p. 523). This means that even if there would be AAVE distinct elements like *ain't,* or in this case, third person *don't,* in the sentence, it could still be LDN and not an NC AAVE sentence. Therefore, the main way to differentiate between LDN and NC in AAVE, within this type of NC, is on the emphasis of the speaker, i.e., the stress pattern. This method applies to differentiating between LDN SE and NC AAVE as well, as there are verbal negatives that both share (can't, won't, etc.), which could make the sentence LDN SE, LDN AAVE and NC AAVE:

(52)   ***Nobody won´t*** like Sara Lee   (LDN SE)
         ´Everybody will like Sara Lee´

(53)   ***Nobody won´t like Sara Lee***   (LDN AAVE)
         ´Everybody will like Sara Lee´.

(54)   **Nobody won´t** like Sara Lee   (NC AAVE)
         ´Nobody will like Sara Lee´

3.6.2 NEGATIVE INDEFINITE SUBJECT AND NEGATIVE INDEFINITE OBJECT
This type of NC is the simultaneous use of negation rule one and three:

(55)   (repeated from (21))
         Nobody gave me **nuthin´**   (Brown, 2019a)
         ´Nobody gave me anything´

Here, there is a presence of both a negative indefinite subject and a negative indefinite object, but no SNM, making this type a non-strict NC. These two negative elements are in agreement, as, as mentioned in 3.1.4 and 3.5, the negative indefinite object cannot be used in AAVE if the present indefinite subject or auxiliary is not negated. In this type of NC, it is the indefinite subject that the indefinite object agrees with. Meaning that the only effective negation in this type of NC is the subject *nobody*, making this type of NC have the same structure and negative effect as the SE translation.

LDN can apply to this type of NC as well, but since AAVE tends to omit the affix in verbs or use different forms, there is a bigger distinction between LDN SE and NC AAVE here than that of the last type of NC, making this one less ambiguous:

(56)   **Nobody** seen **nobody**   (Adult Swim, 2014, 1:35)

´Nobody saw anyone´

3.6.3 NEGATIVE AUXILIARY AND NEGATIVE INDEFINITE OBJECT

This type of NC has a negative auxiliary and an negative indefinite object (Wolfram, 2008, p. 523), which means that it is a mix of negation rule two and three, where there is an SNM present:

(57)   You **don´t** really know about **nothin´**   (Kid Cudi, Ratatat, MGMT, 2009)

´You know nothing´

The agreement rule applies in this case as well:

(58)   (repeated from (38) and (39))

a: You **can´t** tell me **nothing**   (West, 2007)

b: *You can tell me **nothing**   (AAVE)

´You can´t bother me´

(58b) would be ungrammatical in AAVE according to the agreement rule, but would work in SE, for two reasons. The first is that the agreement rule in NC does not apply to SE the same way, where SE only allows one negative element per clause. The second reason is that in order for a sentence to be non-strict and occur without SNM, it should have a negative preverbal (Zeijlstra, 2004, p.64), which there are none of in this type of NC.

This type can also be used with *but* to indicate ´only´ or ´no more than´ (Wolfram, 2008, p. 523):

(59)   You **couldn´t** do **nothing** <u>but</u> look   (Gibbs, 2019)

´All you could do was look´

Wolfram (2008) states that *ain´t* and *don´t* may be used with *but*, but does not mention that other auxiliaries that have undergone negation rule two, such as *was*, could do so as well:

(60)   Damn, and that <u>**wasn´t**</u> **nothing** but the intro   (Big Boi, 2010)

´That was only the intro´

There are also instances where the usage of *but* can be done outside of NC (Wolfram, 2008, p. 523):

(61)   She **ain´t** but three years old   (Wolfram, 2008, p. 523)
         ´She is only three years old´

This usage of *but* is not possible in the other two types of NC:

(62)   a: ***Nobody ain´t** but spending money   (NC TYPE 1, RULE 1 + 2)
            ´All they do is spend money´
         b: ***Nobody** want **nothing** but fame   (NC TYPE 2, RULE 1 + 3)
            ´All they want is fame´
         c: He **ain´t** read **nothing** but Chomsky   (NC TYPE 3, RULE 2 + 3)
            ´He only reads Chomsky´

The reason why may be that this usage of *but* has a specific subject. There is nothing general about it, making the negative indefinite subject, which is general and indefinite, unfitting for the sentence. Which is the reason why the first negation rule, or the two other types of NC, cannot use this, except for cases of LDN:

(63)   a: *Nobody ain´t* but spending money   (NC TYPE 1, RULE 1 + 2)
            ´Nobody only spends money´
         b: *Nobody* want *nothing* but fame   (NC TYPE 2, RULE 1 + 3)
            ´Nobody only wants fame´

LDN applies the same to this type of NC like the first two:

(64)   He *ain´t* read *nothing* but Chomsky   (NC TYPE 3, RULE 2 + 3)
         ´He does not only read Chomsky´

3.6.4 NEGATIVE INDEFINITE SUBJECT WITH NEGATIVE AUXILIARY AND NEGATIVE INDEFINITE OBJECT

This type of NC is generated when all three of the negation rules are used simultaneously:

(65)　　　　**Nobody can´t** tell me **nothing**
　　　　　　´Nobody can bother me´

This type seems to have the same effect and convey the same type of message as the second type of NC in 3.6.2. Because of the presence of SNM, this type of NC acts as an optional version of the second type, where the negative auxiliary could be omitted and still have the message:

(66)　　　　**Nobody** can tell me **nothing**
　　　　　　´Nobody can bother me´

The reason the negative auxiliary is optional is because of the appearance of the negative indefinite subject, which, as mentioned several times, always makes the presence of SNM non-required, resulting in the creation of non-strict NC. The appearance of the negative indefinite subject also fulfills the agreement with the negative indefinite object, making the presence of the negative auxiliary unvaluable.

　　　Much like the first type of NC, this type of NC could also be a case of NI:

(67)　　　　Freeze, **<u>don´t</u> <u>nobody</u>** move **nothin´**, y´all know what this is
　　　　　　(Grandmaster Flash & The Furious Five, 1982)
　　　　　　´Freeze, nobody move, you know what is happening´

NI in this type of NC is not as frequent as in the first type of NC as the presence of a negative indefinite object is not required for NI. Therefore, when NI happens in a sentence without a negative indefinite object, that sentence becomes the first type of NC "negative indefinite subject and negative auxiliary". When NI occurs in this type of NC, the negated auxiliary can be left out because of the lack of need for an SNM, which shows a nature of optionality:

(68)　　　　(repeated from (45))
　　　　　　Ain´t nobody seen **nobody**. Right, right? **Nobody** seen **nobody.**
　　　　　　(Adult Swim, 2014, 1:23)
　　　　　　´Nobody saw anyone´

3.6.5 CROSS-CLAUSAL NC

NC could also occur across clauses (Wolfram, 2008 p. 523; Matyiku, 2011):

(69)   [It **ain´t no** cat [**can´t** get in **no** coop]]   (Labov, 1972, p. 773)

          ´There isn´t any cat that can´t get in any [pidgeon] coop´

Because of this type being cross-clausal, the multiple auxiliaries, i.e., SNMs, can appear in the same sentence, each appearing in their respective clauses:

(70)   [We **<u>don´t</u>** cause trouble [and we **<u>don´t</u>** bother **nobody**]]   (R.A. The Rugged Man, 2013b)

          ´We are bothering no one´

This still does not mean that negative auxiliaries can appear within the same verb phrase and clause.

      Although the famous example of Labov´s, (69), has a cross-clausal negative that may be unique to AAVE (Wolfram, 2008, p. 523), cross-clausal NC is still structurally similar to SE. It is possible for SE to have cross-clausal negation as well, but with only one negative element per clause:

(71)   [I **can´t** do [what you **can´t** do]]

When there is cross-clausal LDN in SE, there is no need for two negations per clause; the negative elements can be spread across the clauses, which is also the case with AAVE:

(72)   [I *never* seen a goalkeeper [that does *nothing* quite like De Gea]]   (SE)

          ´I have never seen a goalkeeper that does less than De Gea´

(73)   [I **ain´t** *<u>never</u>* seen a goalkeeper [that do *<u>nothing</u>* like De Gea]]   (AAVE)

          ´I have never seen a goalkeeper that does less than De Gea´

The three negation rules could also be used simultaneously several times in a sentence:

(74)   **[Nobody can´t tell me nothing about [how nobody can´t hug nobody]**

´Nobody can tell me anything about how nobody can hug anyone´

4. **THEORIES**

4.1 UNIVERSAL BILINGUALISM AND OPTIONALITY

Universal Bilingualism (UB), proposed by Roeper in 1999, is a theory that suggests that every speaker has developed multiple grammars, ultimately becoming multilingual between those grammars (Eide & Åfarli, 2020). If, for instance, there are elements of your SE sentence that would make the sentence seem ungrammatical to the average SE speaker, like *me* in the phrase *me am big*, the sentence is not ungrammatical, it simply belong to *one* of your grammars, in which it is grammatical (Roeper, 1999). Roeper (1999) argues that children grow up having two versions of the phrase *I want*, the first being the one mentioned, and the second one being *me want*. Because of its breach of subject-verb agreement, *me want* would seem ungrammatical to SE speakers. However, according to UB, these two are not alternate versions of one phrase within the same grammar, they are both in fact sentences in their own respective grammars. Meaning that *me want* belongs to its own grammar, and *I want* to a different one (Roeper, 1999), with the prior being grammatical in its grammar. Therefore, every time a speaker seems to choose between two elements of a grammar, or say something ungrammatical, they are not, they are in fact using one of their many grammars.

The premise of optionality is having the option to choose between elements, including those that would make the sentence ungrammatical, within the same grammar. If we were to use the example of the child who chooses between *me want* and *I want*: in optionality, the child does not choose between the grammar of *me want* and the grammar of *I want*, but rather chooses between the elements *me* and *I* within the same grammar. As UB justifies phrases like *me want* as simply being part of its own separate grammar, independent from the established ones, optionality suggests that the element *me* in *me want* is just an option within one grammar. Optionality´s main notion to ungrammaticality would then be that it allows the speaker to have the liberty to make use of an element that would usually make a sentence ungrammatical, without the sentence being considered ungrammatical (Roeper, 1999), like *me* in *me want*.

As discussed, UB and optionality may recognize a sentence like *me want*, that would be viewed as ungrammatical by the average speaker, as a valid sentence based on certain requirements and criteria. If AAVE is in fact non-systematic and random, then UB and optionality would not recognize an AAVE sentence as AAVE. They would instead recognize

the sentence as an SE sentence under optionality rule. One criterion for AAVE to be counted as a variety by optionality, is that that NC should *not* be a case of optionality, i.e., that it should not be non-systematic. This is because if NC in AAVE is recognized as non-systematic, then it would mean that AAVE is not a grammar, but rather SE with the ungrammatical NC, or double negation, as an option. In the case of UB, AAVE would be recognized as an alternate SE grammar where the ungrammatical NC is present. Meaning that a potential bilingual speaker of AAVE and SE is not bilingual per (4), because AAVE would not be a language per (6). The speaker would instead be multilingual between SE grammars, according to UB.

Therefore, the only way for a potential bilingual speaker of AAVE and SE to be bilingual between them, is that AAVE has a system and a set of rules, which the discussion in 3. shows it has. The discussion and data shown in 3. has shown that NC in AAVE is in fact not errored, but systematic with its own set of rules. None of the different types of NC presented, are random or wrong, and therefore cannot be viewed as a case of optionality or UB, or ´broken SE´.

4.2 CODE-SWITCHING

As already mentioned, code-switching (CS) is when a bi- or multilingual speaker changes between different languages, or dialects, for specific purposes (Lundquist et al, 2020). This is also the case with AAVE speakers that code-switch between AAVE and SE. Among the AAVE characteristics that differ from SE, NC is generally the most notable one. It often alters the syntax of SE and makes the AAVE speaker´s language come across as wrong and informal because of the multiple negative elements and structural change from SE.

Although CS often is on a sentential level, it has in the context of the essay referred to the act of changing an entire grammar or language, not within and in between sentences and phrases. It is still important to mention one of the four different types of sentential CS: *intra-sentential switching,* which is when CS occurs within a sentence (Myers-Scotton, 1989):

(75)	a: I **don´**t give a fuck about **nothing**	(Brown, Run The Jewels, 2019b)
	b: I don´t give a fuck about anything	(SE)
	´I don´t care about anything´	

Only one element has changed between the AAVE line in (75a) and the SE direct translation in (75b). The indefinite *anything* has been turned into *nothing* by negation rule three*,* creating

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the phenomenon of NC within the sentence. What is interesting is that the three rappers singing this line simultaneously, all come from different backgrounds with different dialects. The members of Run The Jewels, Killer Mike, an African American, and El-P, a Caucasian, are respectively from Atlanta and Brooklyn. El-P, as briefly mentioned in 3.2, speaks SE with no usage of NC in interviews and speech, but sometimes uses AAVE and NC in music. Killer Mike, on the other hand, speaks AAVE with very infrequent usage of NC in all the three mediums just mentioned. Meanwhile, Danny Brown, from Detroit, has a frequent usage of NC in general and speaks AAVE. We have three artists with three different backgrounds and dialect with different levels of usage of NC. This leaves us with three scenarios, where that one changed word; is a case of optionality within SE; makes (75a) AAVE; is a case of intra-sentential CS where *nothing* is counted as an AAVE element.

Since SE is the general variety of English, it is much more frequent in the general English community than AAVE. This is the reason why many SE speakers view AAVE as ´broken English´, because of SE being the standard. In their eyes, (75a) would be SE and not AAVE, as AAVE is only an errored version of SE to them. This would mean that the addition of *nothing* is a case of optionality. But since there is a simultaneous usage of *nothing* and *don´t*, (75a) may be intra-sentential, because of the function of *nothing*. In AAVE, indefinites must be negative, as it is a requirement for NC languages to replace the indefinite words with their negative counterpart (Pullum, 1999, p. 49). Even though *nothing* is within the vocabulary of SE as well, it cannot be used simultaneously with another negative element like in AAVE, unless it is LDN, meaning that *nothing* functions in (75a) like it would in AAVE, while the rest of the sentence would be proper SE. However, because of *nothing*´s function and the rules of NC in AAVE, NC has been created within the sentence, which suggests that the sentence is AAVE. The function of *nothing* is that it creates an agreement with the first negative element *don´t*, which then creates the type of NC we call "negative auxiliary and negative indefinite object". Now, because of the presence of NC, (75a) has now become strict NC, where *don´t* has been given the role of SNM. Since the agreement rule or the concept of strict NC do not exist in SE, (75a) would not be intra-sentential CS nor a case of optionality, but rather an AAVE sentence. A more likely case of CS would instead look like this:

(76)   a: Killer Mike: *May our tombstones read, "They were **nothing** to fuck with"*
        (Run The Jewels, 2020)
        El-P: *please say that shit again, Mike*
        b: Killer Mike: *"**Wasn´t nothing** to fuck with"*

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Here, we see that in (76a), Killer Mike phrased his message in SE, while he phrased the same message in AAVE in (76b). This is evident by NC and NI being in (b), which both are very present in AAVE. None of those elements are present in SE like in AAVE and are therefore not in (a). The change from *were* to *wasn´t* is also a clear indication that (b) is AAVE, as AAVE speakers tend to use *was* as third person plural. (b) shows no signs of optionality or intra-sentential CS because of the many AAVE elements. The change from (a) to (b) shows the grammatical and syntactical changes that occur when AAVE speakers code-switch.

Because of the similarities between AAVE and SE, NC AAVE sentences like (75a) may come across as intra-sentential CS or as SE with optionality. However, none are any of those two, they are rather always AAVE sentences with a certain type of NC present. In the case of (75a), it is "negative auxiliary and negative indefinite object", and in the case of (76b), it is "negative indefinite subject and negative auxiliary" with NI. Killer Mike has therefore code-switched between the two languages that are SE and AAVE, in (76).

5. CONCLUSION

As presented, NC in AAVE has shown to be systematic and not random at all. The occurrence and absence of an SNM is not random, but rather based on whether there already is a negative preverbal present. AAVE has shown that it has an optional nature when it comes to being strict or non-strict NC, but changes between them based on a system. For instance, the negative indefinite object cannot be present with a indefinite subject or an auxiliary that is not negated. SE on the other hand does not allow for two negative elements to be present simultaneously.

The fact that AAVE is a language means that it can have ungrammatical elements of its own, which is not understood by most SE speakers. According to optionality, AAVE is a language, or grammar, because AAVE sentences have shown to not be ungrammatical SE sentences. So, when two negatives appear in what would be perceived as a ´broken English´ sentence, then that "ungrammatical" sentence would not be viewed as a case of optionality, but as an AAVE sentence with the systematic NC. AAVE even has its own cases of optionality (77b), where, for instance, a sentence lacks both an SNM and a negative preverbal with a negative indefinite object present, which would otherwise be perceived as ungrammatical (77a):

(77)   a: *You <u>can</u> do **nothing**   (AAVE)

        b: You <u>can</u> do nothing   (AAVE with optionality)

        ´You can´t do anything´

According to UB, an AAVE sentence that comes across as ungrammatical to SE speakers, is not one of the code-switchers many SE grammars, but rather one of their AAVE grammars. UB would therefore regard an AAVE speaker as multilingual, but if NC would have turned out to not be systematic, and AAVE not a language per (6), that speaker would still be regarded as multilingual. According to optionality, AAVE is a grammar as optionality´s demand of ungrammaticality does not make AAVE sentences an SE case of optionality, as no AAVE sentences are ungrammatical SE.

      Contrary to popular belief, AAVE sentences that contain NC are not cases of LDN, except if they are intended, nor are they random. With different types with different functions and purposes, NC has instead proven AAVE to be language, as AAVE has shown to be systematic, and therefore *a system of communication* that is *used by a particular community* (Lexico.com 2020, "Language"). This would mean that AAVE fits into the description of a language that the dictionary definition has defined, and can thus be referred to as one. Therefore, speakers of AAVE and SE that have access to both varieties and can code-switch between them, are in fact code-switching between two languages, and are therefore, per (4), bilingual.

WORD COUNT: 8 121

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