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Polarity Sensitivity of *much* and *many* by Register Variation

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Introduction

- Negative Polarity Items (NPIs): words or idioms which only appear in environments such as negative sentences, questions or in the protasis of an *if* conditional (Hoeksema 1997, Horn 1989, Israel 1996, Ladusaw 1997, Zwarts 1998, Giannakidou 1998)

1. I don't have *any* money.
2. Do you have *any* money?
3. If you have *any* money, lend me some.
4. *I have *any* money.

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Introduction

- In present day spoken English, *much* and *many* show polarity sensitivity (Quirk et al. 1985, Israel 1996).

1. Negation
 - a. We haven't talked *much* about the weather. (Switchboard)
 - b. ?We have talked *much* about the weather.
 - c. The other apple trees didn't have *many* blossoms that year.
2. Question
 - a. **Have** you all been able to do *much* as a family these days? (Switchboard)
 - b. ?We were able to do *much*.
 - c. **Are** there *many* of them?

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Questions

1. How does the NPI behavior of *much* and *many* differ between the spoken and the written language?
2. How has the NPI behavior of *much* and *many* changed over time?
3. Is there a connection between changes in the frequency of paucity *little* and *few* and the NPI behavior of *much* and *many*?
4. Is there a difference in the NPI behavior of *much* and *many* by construction?

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Corpora

- Corpus of Early English Correspondences Sampler (CEECS)
 - Size: 0.45 million words
 - Period covered: **1418-1680**
- Corpus of Historical American English (COHA)
 - Size: 400 million words
 - Both written and "**spoken**"
 - Period covered: **1810-2009**
- Late Modern English Prose
 - Size: 99,000 words
 - Period covered: **1861-1919**

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Corpora

- Corpus of Historical American English (COHA)
 - Size: 400 million words
 - Both written and "**spoken**"
 - Period covered: **1810-2009**
- "**Spoken**" COHA
 - Size: 172 million words
 - Movie scripts and plays
 - Period covered: **1810-2009**

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Corpora

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Corpora

- Brown Corpus
 - Size: 1 million words
 - Present Day English of **1960s**
- Switchboard Corpus
 - Size: 1 million words
 - **Spoken** Present Day English of **1990s**
- Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English
 - Size: 0.25 million words
 - **Spoken** Present Day English of **1990s**

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much, many and alternative expressions

	<i>much</i>	<i>many</i>
much and many	I don't go out <i>much</i> . (Switchboard)	Look, you don't reach <i>many</i> people that way. (COHA)
LOT <i>a lot of</i> <i>lots of</i> <i>a lot, lots</i>	You have done <i>a lot</i> for me. (COHA)	She has <i>a lot of</i> boyfriends. (COHA)
	<i>a great deal</i> He means <i>a great deal</i> to you. (COHA) <i>a good deal</i> I've seen <i>a good deal of</i> improvement both at school and the home situation. (Switchboard)	<i>quite a few</i> If you wouldn't mind, I have <i>quite a few</i> phone calls to make. (COHA)

Measure of NPI tendency

***much* in NPI contexts**
all expressions in NPI contexts
***much* in non – NPI contexts**
all expressions in non – NPI contexts

much
all expressions: *much, LOT, a, great deal, a good deal, deal*

many
all expressions: *many, LOT, quite a few*

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Measure of NPI tendency

<i>much</i> in COHA 1990 - 1999			<i>many</i> in COHA 1990 - 1999			
	NPI	non-NPI		NPI	non-NPI	
<i>much</i>	83	10	<i>many</i>	15	136	
others	10	128	others	10	159	
	0.89	0.072	12.31	0.6	0.461	1.301

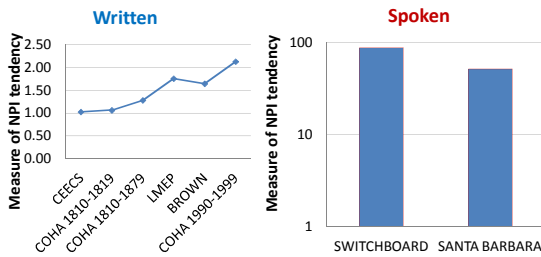
***much* in NPI contexts**
all expressions in NPI contexts
***much* in non – NPI contexts**
all expressions in non – NPI contexts

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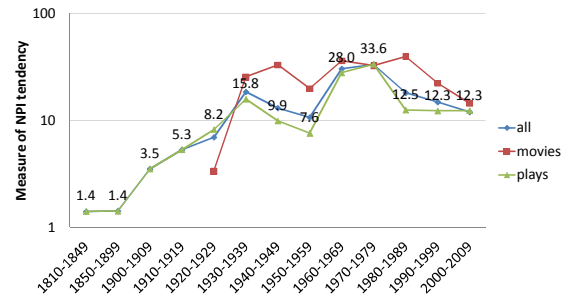
Difference between the spoken and the written language (Biber et al. 1999)

NPI tendency of *much* in the spoken and the written language



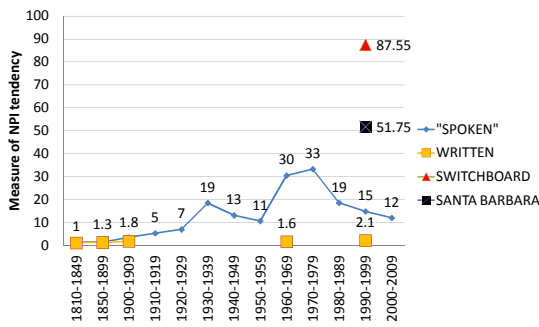
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NPI tendency of *much* in the "spoken" language



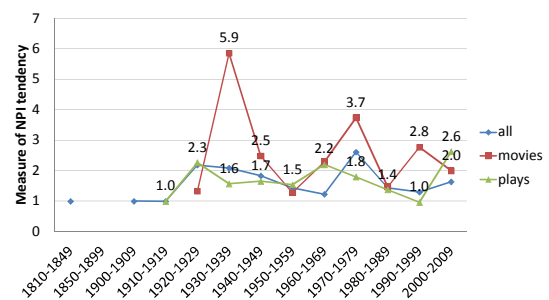
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Comparing the spoken and the written language for *much*



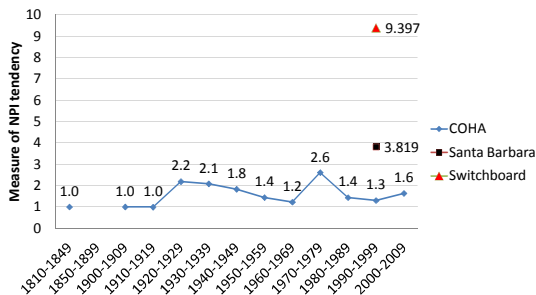
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NPI tendency of *many* in the "spoken" language



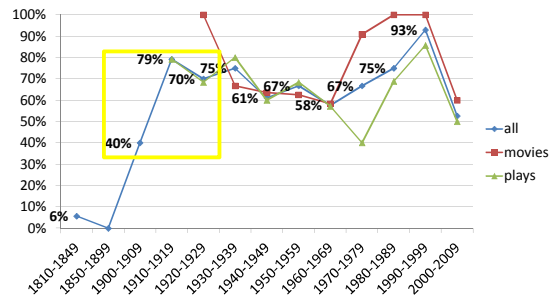
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NPI tendency of *many* in the spoken language

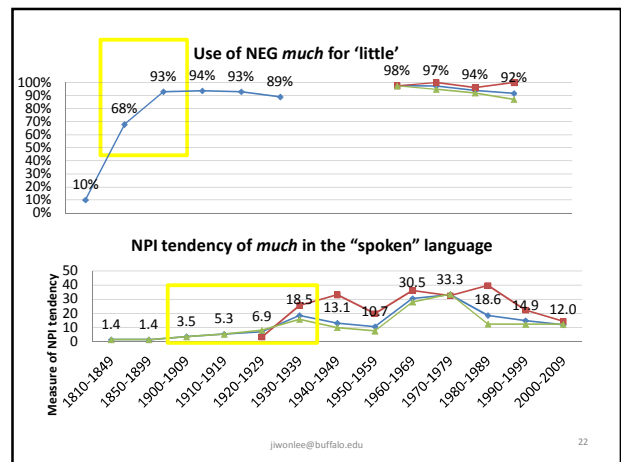
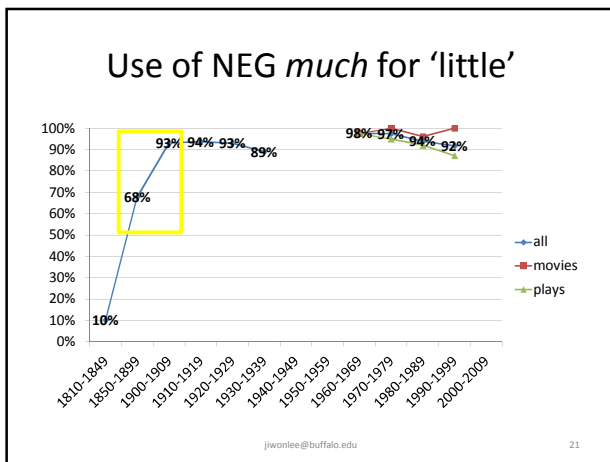
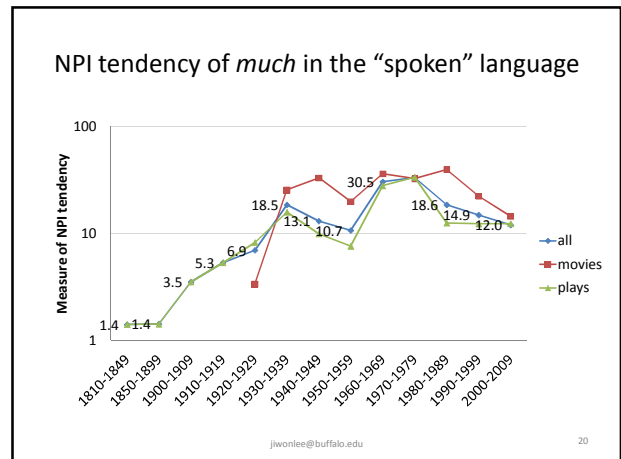
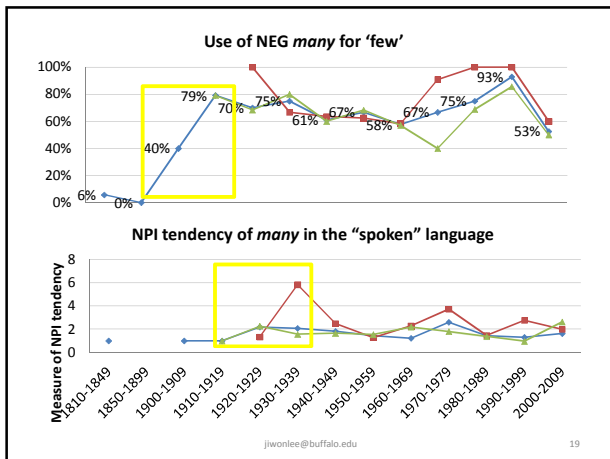


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Use of NEG *many* for 'few'



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Chain Shift

- NEG *much* (*many*) replaces *little* (*few*) in the paucity sense

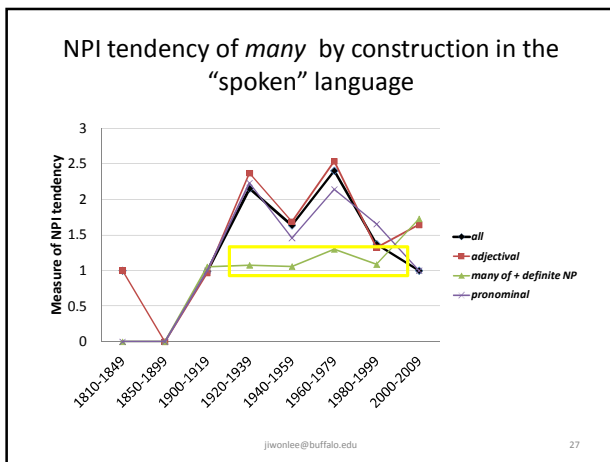
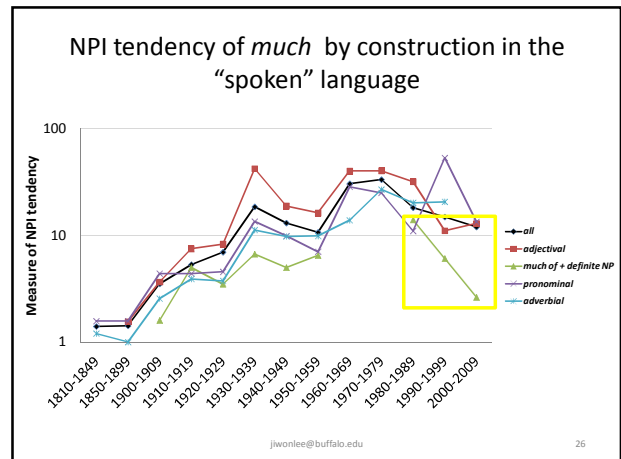
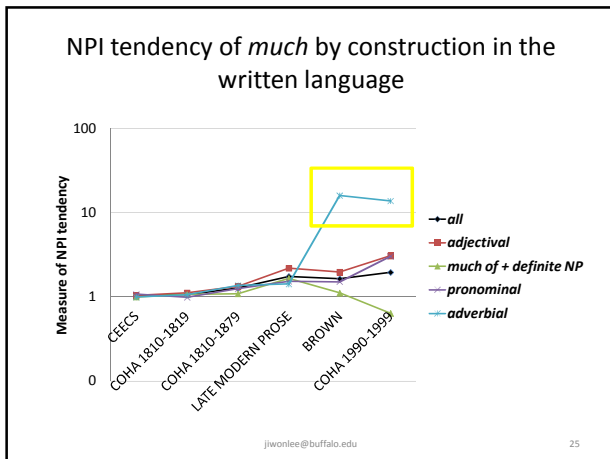
- LOT replaces *much* (*many*) in non-NPI contexts

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NPI behavior by construction

- Adjectival
 - I haven't been watching *much* TV lately. (Switchboard)
- *much of* + definite NP
 - *Much of* the tonal analysis can be done without any study of intonation. (Brown)
- Pronominal
 - There is not *much* between us and the North Pole. (Switchboard)
- *much* used as an adverb
 - She doesn't enjoy it *much*. (Brown)
 - I don't *much* care for them. (Switchboard)
 - We just don't wear coats *much*. (Switchboard)

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Conclusions

- How does the NPI behavior of *much* and *many* differ between the spoken and the written language?
 - The spoken language shows a stronger NPI behavior.
- How has the NPI behavior of *much* and *many* changed over time?
 - There was an abrupt change in the NPI behavior of *much* and *many* in the spoken language.
 - The change in *much* in the written language, however, is more gradual.

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Conclusions

- Is there a connection between changes in the frequency of paucity *little* and *few* and the NPI behavior of *much* and *many*?
 - NEG *much* (*many*) replaces *little* (*few*)
 - LOT is used in non-NPI contexts
- Is there a difference in the NPI behavior of *much* and *many* by construction?
 - Much* (*many*) of + definite NP behaves like a PPI (Positive Polarity Item).
 - Adverbial *much* shows the strongest NPI tendency in the written language.

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- NEG *much* (*many*) replaces *little* (*few*) (a.k.a. *little* and *few* fall out of use)
- NPI tendency of *much* (*many*) strengthens
- Is not an isolated incident but a manifestation of a broader trend in the language processing

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no-negation versus *not*-negation

The combination of *not*-(*n't*) and the "any" word is more colloquial and idiomatic than the "no" variant (Quirk et al. 1985).

1. *no* vs. *not ... any*

- We haven't had any lunch. (more colloquial)
- We've had no lunch. (less colloquial)

2. *no one* vs. *not ... anyone*

- I wasn't speaking to anyone. (more colloquial)
- I was speaking to no one. (less colloquial)

3. Switchboard

- Well they didn't have much choice. (more colloquial)
- I see that even he was met with little success, even though I guess quite a bit of money and other, uh, planning efforts went into that. (less colloquial)

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Questions?

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