Negation in non-verbal and existential predications: a holistic typology

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• Cross-linguistic studies on negation tend to concentrate on *standard negation*, that is on sentences with an overt verb predicate.

(1) *Mary does not sing*

Negation of copulas and existential verbs is excluded from [X] because it may differ from standard negation.


• My current work was conceived of as a study on negation, meant to fill in the gap stated above.
Terminology used in this study

(2) Mary does not sing  
Standard/Verbal negation (SN)

(3) This is not Mary  
Ascriptive/Attributive negation (AscrNeg)

(4) Mary is not happy  
Locative negation (Neg.Loc)

(5) Tom is not at home  
Existential negation (Neg.Ex)

(6) There are no ghosts (here)  
Negation of predicative possession (Neg.Poss)

(7) Ron does not have a rat

Workflow

- A macro-sample (world coverage) and a micro-sample (family based)
- Questionnaire, http://www2.ling.su.se/staff/ljuba/negation_questionnaire.pdf; its main areas are presented below

- Identify SN

- Identify affirmative and negative versions of the non-verbal and existential predications cited above and identify their negation strategies

- Define difference

- Compare the expression of SN with the negation marker(s) for non-verbal and existential predications and establish whether they are the same or different
The data

• Macro-sample: 96 languages from around the globe
• Micro-sample: several families studied in depth
## The macro-sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macro-linguistic area</th>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Genera</th>
<th>Phyla</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurasia</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East Asia</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia-New Guinea</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The micro-sample so far

- Berber
- Slavic
- Uralic
- Turkic
- Dravidian
- Polynesian
Defining **difference** (1)

- Prototypical case: complete formal and constructional difference

(8) Turkish (Turkic), (van Shaaik 1994)

a. *Gel-ecek*
   
   come-FUT
   
   ’(she) will come’

b. *Gel-*me-*yecek*
   
   come-NEG-FUT
   
   ’(she) will not come’

c. *Su var-di*
   
   water exist-PST
   
   ’There was water’

d. *Su yok-tu*
   
   water NEG.EX-PST
   
   ’There was no water’
Defining *difference* (2)

- If the negator is formally the same, but bound in one construction and a free lexical item in another, that counts as a difference

(9) Kannada (Dravidian, South), (Sridhar 1990: 111-2)

SN -illa
Existential negator  *illa*

a.  anil  ka:le:jige  ho:gu-vud-*illa*
    name    college.DAT    go-NONPST.GER-NEG
    ‘Anil won’t/doesn’t go to college’

b.  *Khaja:neyalli haNa*  *illa*
    Treasury.LOC money  NEG.EX
    ‘There is no money in the treasury’
Defining *difference* (3)

- If the negators are formally the same, but there is a change in word order or any other constructional change, that counts as a difference, cf. Māori below.
(10) Māori, (Nuclear Polynesian, Eastern, Tahitic)  
(Harlow 2007: 161)

Standard negation (higher verb in a complex sentence)

a. \[ E \text{ tangi ana te tamaiti } \]
   GENR weep TA DET child
   ‘The child is/was crying’,

b. \[ Kāore te tamaitie tangi ana \]
   NEG DET child GENR weep TA
   ‘The child is/was not crying’

Existential negation (verb in a simple sentence)

c. \[ He whare wānanga kei Kirikiriroa \]
   DET house learning PREP Hamilton
   ‘There is a university in Hamilton’

d. \[ Kāore he whare wānanga i Taihap \]
   NEG DET house learning PREP Taihape
   ‘There’s no university in Taihape’
There are languages where several different strategies are possible for the negation of the predications under study. The distributional properties of these strategies are not always clear so they best described as *alternating*.
(11) Swedish (Indo-European, North Germanic) (own data)

a. Maia sjung-er
    Maia sing-PRS
    ‘Maia sings’

b. Maia sjung-er inte
    Maia sing-PRS NEG
    ‘Maia doesn’t sing’
c. Det finns ost i kylskap-et
   it be at cheese in fridge-DEF
   ‘There is cheese in the fridge’

d. Det finns inte ost i kylskap-et
   it be at NEG cheese in fridge-DET
   ‘There isn’t any cheese in the fridge’

e. Det finns ingen ost i kylskap-et
   it be at any cheese in fridge-DET
   ‘There is no cheese in the fridge’
• The degrees of difference between SN and the negators in non-verbal and existential predications are used as a basis for structural types. Consequently, we identify
  – Formal and constructional difference between SN and non-SN negator
  – Morphological difference only
  – Constructional difference only
  – Border-line cases where SN and another strategy may alternate
### General observations/classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(2) Mary does not sing</td>
<td>Standard/Verbal negation (SN)</td>
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<td>(4) Mary is not happy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Tom is not at home</td>
<td>Locative negation (NegLoc)</td>
</tr>
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<td>(6) There are no ghosts (here)</td>
<td>Existential negation (NegEx)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Ron does not have a rat</td>
<td>Negation of predicative possession</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- SN is used for non-verbal and existential predications 24/96 (25%)
- Special existential negator=Negative existential 56/96 (58,33%)
- Special attributive negator 30/96 (31,25%)
- Special stative negator 7/96 (7,29%)
- Special negator for possessive predications 1/96 (1,04%)
Map 1. Negators in non-verbal and existential predications

Legend
- Red circle: Negative existential (56 langs)
- Yellow star: Attributive negator (30 langs)
- Green oval: Stative negator (7 langs)
- Yellow diamond: SN or a negative quantifier are used for the negation of existential predications (1 lang)
- White box: SN is used for the negation of non-verbal and existential predications (24 langs)
SN used for both verbal and non-verbal predications


a. *den*  *tin*  *agap-ó*
   neg  she.acc  love-1.sg
   ‘I don’t love her’

b.  *O Jánis*  *den*  *íne*  *dáskalos*
   det Jannis NEG Be.3.sg.pres teacher
   ‘Janis is not a teacher’

c.  *O Jánis*  *den*  *íne*  *éksipnos*
   det Jannis NEG Be.3.sg.pres smart
   ‘Janis is not a smart’

d.  *O Jánis*  *den*  *íne*  *s-to*  *spíti*
   Det Jannis NEG vara i-DEF hem
   ‘Janis is not at home’

e.  *den*  *éiche*  *German-ous*  *sto*  *chórió*
   neg  have.3sg.pst German-pl.acc  in  village
   ‘There were no Germans in the village’

f.  *Ta chóri-á*  *den*  *émché*  *neró*
   def village-pl  neg  have-3pl.prs water.acc
   The villages don’t have water’
b. **Gel-me-yecek**
   come-NEG-FUT
   '(she) will not come'

c. **Su var-dı**
   water exist-PST
   'There was water'

e. **Hasta yım**
   ill 1SG
   'I am ill'

f. **Hasta değil-im**
   ill NEG-1SG
   'I am not ill'

i. **Ev-de değil-di-k**
   house-LOC NEG-PST-1PL
   'We were not at home'

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(13) Turkish (Turkic), (van Shaaik 1994)

a. **Gel-ecek**
   come-FUT
   '(she) will come'

d. **Su yok-tu**
   water NEG.EX-PST
   'There was no water'
Negative existentials are classified in two ways

• The first classification is based on the comparison between SN and negative existentials following the criteria for difference presented above
• The second classification is based on the semantic content of negative existentials
Map 1. Negative Existentials: Structural Types

Legend
- Distinct negative existential (form & construction) (39 langs)
- Several special negative existentials (4 langs)
- Negative existential and SN are formally identical but morphologically different (4 langs)
- Negative existential and SN are formally identical but require different syntactic constructions (17 langs)
- SN or a negative quantifier are used for the negation of existential predications (1 lang)
- No special negative existential (32 langs)
Summary of the first classification

- 56 out of 96 languages in a stratified sample use a special negative existential.
  - Negative existentials are cross-linguistically very common
- This is confirmed by their geographic distribution as well
  - The languages with special negative existentials show no special locus around the world
  - The languages without special negative existentials are concentrated in Western Europe and Central and Southern parts of South America
  - The family based sample conforms to larger areal patterns
- There is a clear cross-linguistic preference for negative existentials to be formally and constructionally different from SN.
- They do not necessity correspond to grammaticalized affirmative existential constructions
Semantic description of negative existentials

- Semantic maps were designed for all languages under study (see Haspelmath 1997, 2003 for more detailed introduction to the method)
  - Function based approach
  - The terms function, use and sense are used synonymously
  - First step in designing a map:
    Identify all functions of the item under study. No need to commit to which functions appear basic and which appear secondary
  - Second step in designing a map:
    Decide on the spatial arrangement of the identified functions. Their arrangement has to reflect closeness in semantic space in as many languages as possible.
    The map has to be the same for all languages.
Some uses of negative existentials (1)

- **Neg.Ex**
  
  (14) Bagirmi (Nilo-Saharan, Central Sudanic), (Stevenson 1969: 164-5)

  a. *kabkinja-ge gwoto*
     
     egg-PL be.absent
     
     ‘There are no eggs’

- **Neg.Poss**
  
  b. *ma gwoto-m-jo nyiNa*
     
     I be.absent-1SG-POST spear
     
     Lit. ‘I absent-me-to spear’
     
     ‘I have no spear’

- **Neg.Loc**
  
  c. *ne gwoto lol(o)*
     
     he be.absent here
     
     ‘He is not here’
Some uses of negative existentials (2)

- Negative existentials as timeless lexemes

(15) Hungarian (Uralic, Ugric), (de Groot 1994: 149-150)

a. *Van* sör
   be.prs.3.sg beer
   ‘There is beer’

b. *Nincs* sör
   Neg.Ex beer
   ‘There is no beer’

c. *Volt* sör
   be.PST.3.SG beer
   ‘There was beer’

d. *Nem* volt sör
   NEG be.PST.3.SG beer
   ‘There was no beer’
Some uses of negative existentials (3)

- Negative existential as a pro-sentence and as the word No

(16) Teop (Austronesian, Western Oceanic, Nehan-North Bougainville), (Mosel & Spriggs 1999: 48-49)

a. Na **hiki** vakis nana
   TAM NEG.EX still IPFV:3SG
ta inu vai ta mataa
   NSP house DEM NSP good

‘There is still not a good house’
Some uses of negative existentials (4)

- Pro-sentence (Bernini & Ramat 1996)
  
  **b.** *Eam na va-kiu vatatana*

  2PL tam coop-work together

  nom *ge* **ahiki**

  IPFV:2PL or NEG

  ‘do you work together or not?’

- Short answer ‘No’

  **c.** *A ba tama-riori?*

  ART PL father-3PL

  *-ahiki, a maa moon koa*

  *-NEG, ART PL woman only*

  ‘Their fathers? -No, only women’
Some uses of negative existentials (5)

- Not NOUN

(17) Turkana (Nilo-Saharan, Nilotic) (Dimmendaal 1983: 455-6)

a. \( \text{mamùŋ } \ i-bòre \)
   NEG.EX thing
   ‘There is nothing’

b. \( \text{mamùŋ } \ i-tùanìŋ \ \varepsilon-a-bù \ \k-ìkì } \)
   not person 3-PST-come 3-reply
   Lit. ‘No person came [to] reply’ \( \rightarrow \)
   ‘Nobody replied’
Some uses of negative existentials (6)

- **Without**

(18) Evenki (Tungusic)

a. *Esiturga n’aŋn’a-du tuksu-l āchin-r*
   
   Today sky-DAT cloud-PL NEG.EX-PL
   
   ‘There are no clouds in the sky today’
   
   (Nedyalkov 1994: 28)

b. *D’ikte-ye āchin aŋnan’i*
   
   Berry-INDEF.ACC NEG year
   
   ‘A year without berries’
   
   (Nedyalkov 1994: 28)
absent, away, gone

nothing

empty

dead

Co-occurs with 'be' Restricted

+Classification

Kannada *illa*

Turkish *yok*

Hungarian *nincs*
SN.FUT

lack
dead
NEG.Emphatic
nothing

Co-occurs with 'be' _Restricted

SN.PERF +Classification
disappear
destroy

35/56
absent away, gone

NEG.Loc
none

9/56
nothing

SN.Dynamic

54/56
NEG.Poss

56/56
NEG.Ex

12/56
Generic state

16/56
lack

6/56
dead

empty

not_NOUN

16/56
Pro-sentence

16/56
No

8/56
without

NEG.Emphatic
Negative existentials are used to predicate absolute absence (1)

(19) Erzya (Uralic, Mordvin)

a.  *Ezéme-ś  a  tarka-so-nzo*
    Bench-SG.DEF.NOM NEG place-INE-PX3.SG
    ‘the bench is not in its place’ (Hamari, 2007: 164)

b.  *Ezéme-ś  araś  tarka-so-nzo*
    Bench-SG.DEF.NOM NEG.EX place-INE-PX3.SG
    ‘the bench is not in its place’ (Hamari, 2007: 175)
Negative existentials are used to predicate absolute absence (2)

(20) Bulgarian (Indo-European, South Slavic) (own data)

a. Todor ne e v kəshtï
   Todor NEG is in at.home
   ‘Todor is not at home’

b. Todor go njama (v kashtï)
   Todor OBJ.3SG.M NegEx in at.home
   ‘Todor is not at home’
Negative existentials are used to predicate absolute absence (3)

(21) Hungarian (Uralic, Ugric) (de Groot 1994: 148-9)

a.  \textit{nincs} sör
   NEG.be.PRS.3.SG beer
   ‘There is no beer’

b.  Zsuzsa \textit{nincs} itt, és Péter sincs
    Zsuzsa NEG.be.3.SG here, and Peter neither.be.3.SG
    ‘Zsuzsa is not here, and neither is Peter’

c.  Nem Péter van itt, hanem János
    NEG Peter be.3.SG here but John
    ‘It is not Peter who is here, but John’

d.  *Péter \textit{nincs} itt, hanem János
    Peter NEG.EX here but John
Negative existentials are used to predicate absolute absence (4)

(22) Samoan (Austronisian, Oceanic, Polynesian, Outlier),
(Mosel & Hovhaugen 1994: 526)

a. E leai ni ta’vale i Sāmoa nei
   GENR NEG.EX ART.NSP.PL car(SP.PL) LOC.DIR Samoa now
   ‘There are no cars in Samoa now’

b. ‘O Sāmoa e lē i ai Fualuga
   PRES Samoa GENR NEG LOC.DIR ANAPH Fualuga
   ‘Fualuga is not in Samoa’
Structural characteristics of negative existentials

- **Morphology**
  - Typically unclear word class status, often bordering on verbs; less commonly on nouns
  - Defective morphology in comparison with other major classes of the language in question

- **Syntax**
  - Typically they replace the affirmative existential (if any)

(23) Turkish (Turkic) (van Shaaik 1994: 44)

a. Su var-di
   water exist-PST
   ’There was water’

b. Su yok-tu
   water NEG.EX-PST
   ’There was no water’
Origins of negative existentials (1)

- Univerbation between a negator and a collocate

(24) Ukrainian  \textit{nema} < \textit{ne} 'NEG'+\textit{ima} 'have'

(25) Ket  \textit{bən’s’aŋ} < \textit{bən} ‘NEG’ + \textit{us’aŋ} ‘there is’

(26) Samoan  \textit{leai} < \textit{le} ‘NEG’ + \textit{ai} ‘exist’
Origins of negative existentials (2)

- Lexical items with a negative content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Negative existential</th>
<th>Lexical sense for the negative existential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bagirmi</td>
<td>(e)li</td>
<td>gʷoto</td>
<td>absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkana</td>
<td>ji-</td>
<td>a-mamaka-ʊ</td>
<td>lack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kewa</td>
<td>na-</td>
<td>dia</td>
<td>there is not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nez Perce</td>
<td>wéeʔu</td>
<td>cáʔya</td>
<td>absent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## Origins of negative existentials (3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Nr of languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Univerbation between SN and another word</td>
<td>17 (30.36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical item with a negative content</td>
<td>25 (44.64%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently identical with at least one SN marker, origin unknown</td>
<td>14 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of languages with negative existentials</strong></td>
<td><strong>56</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Negative existentials are constantly renewed

(27) Tamil (Dravidian, South)

a. *peey un-ṭu
   ghost exist-3SG.N
   ‘Ghosts exist’, (Lehmann 1993: 230)

b. *peey ill-ai
   ghost not.exist-3PL.N
   ‘Ghosts do not exist’, (Lehmann 1993: 230)

c. *peey kiṭaiˑy-aa-tu
   ghost exist-NEG-3SG.N
   ’There are no ghosts’
   (Lehmann 1993: 81)
Conclusions on negative existentials

- They appear to be a unified linguistic phenomenon in the following senses
  - Negative existentials are cross-linguistically very common
  - It is possible to outline a semantic prototype
    - Predicate absolute absence
    - Often used as pro-sentence or negative interjection
    - Timeless
  - Similar morpho-syntactic behavior
    - Replace the item they are supposed to negate
    - Indeterminate word-class status
    - Defective morphological marking or none when some is expected
  - Similar diachronic origins in many different languages
  - Tend to be easily lexicalized

→ a separate functional domain, the domain of ABSENCE, rather than a negation marker proper
Attributive negators (1)

• They are observed in 30 languages in stratified sample of 96. Thus they are a stable cross-linguistic phenomenon but much less frequent than negative existentials.

• Geographically, they are much more localized
Attributive negators (2)

- In terms of degree of difference from SN, attributive negators fall into two groups
  - Formally and constructionally different from SN (22 langs)
  - Fixed phrase where SN is one of the elements → ~constructionally different from SN (8 langs)
Attributive negators: completely distinct from SN

(28) Lezgian (Northeast Caucasian, Lezgic)

a. xürünwi-jr.i ada-waj meslät-ar ṣaču-zwa
   villager-PL (ERG) he-ADEL advice-PL take-IPFV
   ‘The villagers take advice from him’ (Haspelmath, 1993: 127)

b. xürünwi-jr.i ada-waj meslät-ar ṣaču-zwa-č
   villager-PL (ERG) he-ADEL advice-PL take-IPFV-NEG
   ‘The villagers do not take advice from him’ (Haspelmath, 1993: 127)

c. A: am won ja-ni Ali?
   that:ABS you:ABS COP-Q Ali
   ‘Is it you, Ali?’

   B: am zun tuš!
   that:ABS I:ABS COP.NEG
   ‘It’s not me!’ (talking about a murder) (Haspelmath, 1993: 312)
Attributive negators as a phrase that includes SN

(29) Vietnamese (Austro-Asiatic, Mon-Khmer)

a. ông ấy sẽ đi sàigòn
   M.RESP DEM FUT go Saigon
   ‘He will go to Saigon’, (Thompson 1965: 208)

b. ông ấy sẽ không đi sàigòn
   M.RESP DEM FUT NEG go Saigon
   ‘He will not go to Saigon’, (Thompson 1965: 208)

c. ông â'y là lính
   gentleman that COP soldier
   ‘He is a soldier’, (Thompson 1965: 315)

d. tôi không phải là ngu’òi ngèo
   I NEG be.true ID.MARKER person poor
   ‘I am not a poor person’
Attributive negators (3)

- Formally and constructionally different from SN (22 languages)
  - Particle (14 langs)
  - Negative copula (5 langs)
  - Negative polarity copula (2 langs)
  - Indefinite determiner (1 lang)
Attributive negators (4)

particle

(30) Yimas (Papuan) (Foley, 1991: 262)

a. \textit{kpa-}n \textit{amayak}  
   big-class1sg cop.1sg  
   ‘I am big’

b. \textit{ama} \textit{kpa-}n \textit{tampan}  
   1sg big-class1.sg cop.neg  
   ‘I am not big’

c. \textit{yaw} \textit{kawŋkra-}k-\textit{wa} \textit{yak}  
   road.ix.sg long-irr-ix.sg cop.ix.sg.invis  
   ‘The road is long’

d. \textit{yaw} \textit{kawŋkra-}k-\textit{wa} \textit{tampan}  
   road.ix.sg long-irr-ix.sg cop.neg  
   ‘The road is not long’
Attributive negators (5) ~negative copula

(31)   Turkish (Altaic, Turkic), (van Shaaik 1994)

a.  Gel-ecek
come-FUT
'(she) will come'

b.  Gel-me-yecek
come-NEG-FUT
'(she) will not come'

c.  Su  var-dı
water  exist-PST
'There was water'

d.  Su  yok-tu
water  NEG.EX-PST
'There was no water'

e.  Hasta  yım
ill  1SG
'I am ill'

f.  Hasta  değil-im
ill  NEG-1SG
'I am not ill'

g.  Ev-de-ydi-k
house-LOC-PST-1PL
'We were at home'

i.  Ev-de  değil-di-k
house-LOC  NEG-PST-1PL
'We were not at home'
Attribute negators (5)
Negative polarity copula

(32) Cuaiquer (Barbacoan)

a. \textit{Santos=}na \textit{shi} \textit{i-ma-y}
   \textit{Santos=}TOP \textit{NEG go-neg-NONLOCUT}
   ‘Santos did not go’ (Curnow 1997: 332)

b. \textit{Pala=}na \textit{shi} \textit{waa-ma-y}
   \textit{plantain=}TOP \textit{NEG there.is-NEG-NONLOCUT}
   ‘There were no plaintains’ (Curnow 1997: 332)

c. \textit{Ricardo=}na \textit{ap aympihsh} \textit{i}
   \textit{Ricardo=}TOP \textit{my brother be.(NONLOCUT)}
   ‘Ricardo is my brother’ (Curnow 1997: 77)

d. \textit{ap} \textit{gallo} \textit{shi} \textit{ki-a-zi}
   \textit{my} \textit{rooster} \textit{NEG be.NEG-PST-NONLOCUT}
   ‘It wasn’t my rooster’ (Curnow 1997: 333)

d. \textit{Miguel=}na \textit{blanco=}ma \textit{ka}
   \textit{Miguel=}TOP \textit{white=}INTER \textit{be:permanently.(IPFV.PART) Q.NONLOCUT}
   ‘Miguel is white, isn’t he?’ (Curnow 1997: 329)
Attributive negators

- Not be so
- Not be
- Not NOUN
- NOUN Poss
- NOUN Progress
- Other
- TAG-question
- Pro-sentence
- No

Limited scope
SN.FUT
SN.Stative
SN.COMPL
Attributive negator > Constituent negator

(33) Eastern Mari (Uralic, Mari) (Riese et al. 2010: 91)

\[ \text{a. } \text{oməl’} ‘\text{not.be.1SG.PRS’ < om ul ‘NEG.AUX.1SG.PRS be.CNG’} \]
\[ \text{otəl’} ‘\text{not.be.2SG.PRS’ < ot ul ‘NEG.AUX.2SG.PRS be.CNG’} \]
\[ \text{ogəl’} ‘\text{not.be.3.PRS’ < og ul ‘NEG.AUX.3.PRS be.CNG’} \]

b. \text{myj} \quad \text{ogəl’}
   1SG.ACC \quad \text{NEG}
   ‘\text{not me’}

c. \text{jüshtö} \quad \text{ogəl’}
   \quad \text{cold} \quad \text{NEG}
   ‘\text{not cold’}

d. \text{šuko} \quad \text{ogəl’}
   \quad \text{much} \quad \text{NEG}
   ‘\text{not much’}

e. \text{Tače} \quad \text{ogəl’}
   \quad \text{Today} \quad \text{NEG}
   ‘\text{not today’}

f. \text{ludaš} \quad \text{ogəl’}, \quad \text{vozaš}
   \quad \text{writing} \quad \text{NEG} \quad \text{reading}
   \quad \text{‘You have to read, not write’} 
   \quad \text{küleš} \quad \text{need.2SG}
Attributive negator as SN.FUT

(34) Kanuri (Nilo-Saharan, Saharan, Western, Kanuri)

a. cídà bâ
work not exist
‘there is no work’ (Hutchison 1981: 170)

b. káremá kúlolan cidajîn-bâ
Now farm.LOC work.3SG.IPFV.NEG
‘now she is not working on the farm’
(Miestamo 2005: 286-7) citing (Cyffer 1998: 39)

c. Álì bàrèmà gə̀nyi
Ali farmer not.be
‘Ali is not a farmer’, (Hutchison 1981: 178)

d. wanée músa kû silemân cúru-nnýí
maybe Musa today film see.3SG-FUT.NEG
‘Maybe Musa will not see a film today’
(Miestamo 2005: 286-7) citing (Cyffer 1998: 40)
Stative negators (1)

• Typically, they are used for the negation of predications of identity, property assignment and existence

• They are observed in 7 languages in the stratified sample. Consequently, they can be described as relatively rare

• They appear to be diachronically unstable
(35) Usan (Trans-New Guinea, Madang)

a. Se itumut ye me is-au
   now in.the.morning I NEG go.down-NMLZ
   ’This morning, I did not go down’, (Reesink 1987: 141)

b. Munon enŋ yonou bain ue
   Man the my older.brother NEG
   ’The man is not my older brother’, (Reesink 1987: 143)

c. Munon ue
   Man NEG
   ’There are no men’ (as a species), (Reesink 1987: 274)

d. Munon me ig-our
   Man neg be-3PL.PRS
   ‘The men are not (here)’ (Reesink 1987: 274)
Stative negators

- **not_be**
  - **NEG.Poss**
  - **NEG.Ex**
  - **SN.COMPL**
  - **Generic state**
- **NEG.Loc**
- **Pro-sentence**
- **No**
Stative negators as an unstable phenomenon (1)

(36) Komi-Zyryan (Uralic, Permic)
a.  o-g śet
NEG.PRS-1SG give.CNG
‘I don’t give/I won’t give’ (Hamari 2007: 84)

b.  Maša abu ićęt
Maša NEG small
‘Maša is not small’ (Hamari 2011)

c.  Naję abu ićęt-eś
3PL NEG small-PL
‘They are not small’ (Hamari 2011)

d.  [--] kor mi abu tan-eś
[--] when we NEG here-PL
‘when we are not here’ (Hamari 2007: 90)
Stative negators as an unstable phenomenon (2)

(36) Komi-Zyryan (Uralic, Permic)

e. \textit{tani kerka abu}
here house NEG
‘There is no house here’ (Hamari 2011)

f. \textit{tani kerka-jas abu-eš}
here house-PL NEG-PL
‘There are no houses here’ (Hamari 2011)

g. \textit{Maša-leñ kerka-jas abu-eš}
Maša-GEN house-PL NEG-PL
‘Maša doesn’t have houses’ (Hamari 2011)
Stative negators as an unstable phenomenon (3)

(37) Persian (Indo-European, Irania (Don Stilo, p.c.)

a. *na-mi-xar-am*
   NEG-DUR-buy-1SG
   ‘I am not buying’

b. ‘emrikai *nist-æm*’
   American NEG.be-1SG
   ‘I am not an American’

c. Âqâ *nist-an[d]*
   Master NEG.be.PRS-3PL
   ‘The master is not [at home]’
Stative negators as an unstable phenomenon (3)

(37) Persian (Indo-European, Iranian) (Don Stilo, p.c.)
d. *tu-ye hæyat d oxtær nist*
in-ez courtyard girl not.be
‘There is no girl/There are no girls in the courtyard’
Stative negators as an unstable phenomenon (4)

(38) Hebrew (Afro-Asiatic, Semitic)

a. *hu lo mevashel*
   he neg cooks
   ‘He doesn’t cook’ (Glinert 1989: 294)

   Purist use

b. *Eyn dan rəcini*
   not.be dan serious
   ‘Dan is not serious’ (Berman 1978: 220)

c. *Dan eyno rəcini*
   Dan not.be+pro serious
   ‘Dan is not serious’
Stative negators as an unstable phenomenon (5)

(38) Hebrew (Afro-Asiatic, Semitic)

d. \textit{dan eyno baxéder}
   Dan is.not+pro in the room
   ‘Dan is not in the room’ (Berman 1978: 220)

e. \textit{eyn yəladim rəciniyim}
   neg.ex children serious
   ‘There are no serious children’, (Berman 1978: 220)

f. \textit{Eyn lədan et (ha)sfarim}
   not to Dan ACC (the)books
   ‘Dan doesn’t have (the) books’, (Berman 1978: 220)
Conclusions

- There is a strong cross-linguistic strategy to distinguish between the negation of actions and the negation of non-action, existence in particular. This is attributed to the fact that action and non-action are two different cognitive domains; consequently, expressions of their negation will be distinct as well.

- The negators used in non-verbal and existential predications can be grouped in three broad groups with regard to their semantic range:
  - Negative existentials
  - Ascriptive/Attributive negators
  - Stative negators

- The negators identified here show a number of common characteristics in terms of their use, origin and distributional properties. Consequently, I argue that they should be described as cross-linguistic phenomena on their own right and not as deviations from an assumed standard.
Большое спасибо!


References (2)


Hamari, Arja. 2007. The negation of stative relation clauses in the Mordvin languages, Faculty of the Humanities, University of Turku: Ph.D.


References (3)


References (4)


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Abbreviations (2)

RESP  respectful
SG    singular
TA    tense-aspect
TAM   tense-aspect-mood
TOP   topic