

Category of Negation and its Types in the Uzbek and English Languages

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ABSTRACT

Negation is an essential grammatical category which is used to express rejection, non-existence and contradiction. Every natural language has at least one marker that can express negation: denying or reversing the truth. In Uzbek and English negation plays fundamental role in constructing negative statement, although in each language different structures and forms are utilized. In the Uzbek language negativity is formed morphologically, while in English negative adverbs and auxiliary verbs are used. Many scientists are working on negation, how it is formed and its types. However, there is not unique work that can explain characteristics of negation which can be appropriate for all languages of the world. This study focuses on giving descriptions of concept “category”, finding out different ways in which negativity is expressed, identifying types of negation and describing structure of negative sentences in Uzbek and English. This study can serve as a reference for future researches and add up to already existing literature on negation.

Keywords: Category, sentential negation, constituent negation, semi-negation, affirmation, general negation, partial negation, specific negation, wide and narrow negation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Negation is a universal linguistic category and it can be found in the grammatical structure of all languages of the world. Firstly, we dwell on the term “category” itself.

The concept of “category” was first introduced to science by the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle. The scientist firstly divided categories into 10 groups. Later in his work “Categories” he divided categories into 3 groups: ontological, logical and linguistic [1]. In linguistics, the concept of category is used to describe and classify certain phenomena of the language. Categories are utilized to systematize knowledge about language and its structure. In linguistics, categories are classified as follows [2]:

1. Grammatical categories. They are also divided into the following subdivisions:
 - a. Category of number
 - b. Category of gender
 - c. Category of time
 - d. Category of person
2. Semantic categories:
 - a. Category of modality
 - b. Category of negation
 - c. Category of aspect
3. Syntactic categories:
 - a. Types of sentences (according to the structure: declarative, interrogative, imperative)
 - b. Structure of sentences (how words are combined in a sentence [simple, complex])
4. Phonetic categories:
 - a. Category of voicelessness (vowel, consonant)
 - b. Intonation
5. Lexical categories:
 - a. Synonymy
 - b. Antonymy

This research investigates description of category of negation, its types and how negation is expressed in the Uzbek and English languages. Moreover, it also provides data on different structures of negation based on its types.

2. METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

We tried to use a qualitative and comparative linguistic methods to examine negation in the structural and semantic terms in both Uzbek and English. The methodology combines descriptive, comparative research, with information from language and media resources. We gathered data and examples on negation to analyze from electronic dictionaries, electronic news resources such as *Big Russian Encyclopedia*, *BBC News*, *The Spokesman*, *Kun.uz* and some other language resources like research papers as well as theses.

Negation (Arabic) means refusal, rejection and non-acceptance. In the linguistic encyclopedia, negation is given following definition: "Denial is one of the semantically inseparable categories characteristic of all languages of the world, which cannot be identified by simpler semantic elements" [3].

This concept is explained in detail in Aristotele's works and he gives following definition to the concept "negation": "Any judgment that affirms or denies something has the basis of existence or non-existence. There is a negation against every affirmation and an affirmation against every negation" [4].

In analyzing negation functional-semantically, it is essential to dwell on its types.

Linguists working on category of negation classify its types differently. A. M. Peshkovsky divides negative sentences into two: "general" and "partial" (private) negation. According to the scientist, this division depends on the position of the marker representing negativity in the sentence: in the general negation, this marker is used with the predicate, and in the specific negation, it can be applied with any part of the sentence [5]. He also emphasizes that only the negative marker being used before the predicate gives the meaning of negativity to the whole sentence. If the sign of negativity is combined with a specific particle (other than a verb), then it does not affect the general affirmative meaning of the sentence.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study revealed numerous types of negation characteristic to English. One of the most widely explained information on types of negation is given by Joana Serwaa Ampofo. Linguist groups negativity into types depending on some parameters:

1. According to the source of negative meaning:
 - a. Explicit negation
 - b. Implicit negation
2. According to syntactic terms:
 - a. Sentential negation (the entire sentence is negated)
John did not eat the food.
 - b. Constituent negation (the entities are negated)
[It is not John] who ate the food.
3. According to semantic terms:
 - a. Wide negation
 - b. Narrow negation

The linguist emphasizes that the semantic types coincide with the syntactic types of negation. When the entire sentence is negated, it is wide scope of negation which coincides with sentential negation. When a constituent is negated (constituent negation), negation takes a narrow scope [6].

Another major classification of types of negation is explained by a notable linguist J. Cygan. He divides negation into 3 major groups: negation, semi-negation, affirmation. He subdivides negation into 2 groups: absolute negation (no) and syntactic negation. Syntactic negation is also classified into 2 subdivisions: Sentence negation (negating whole sentence) and word negation (negating a part of a sentence) [7]. This classification of negation is well-described in the following figure.

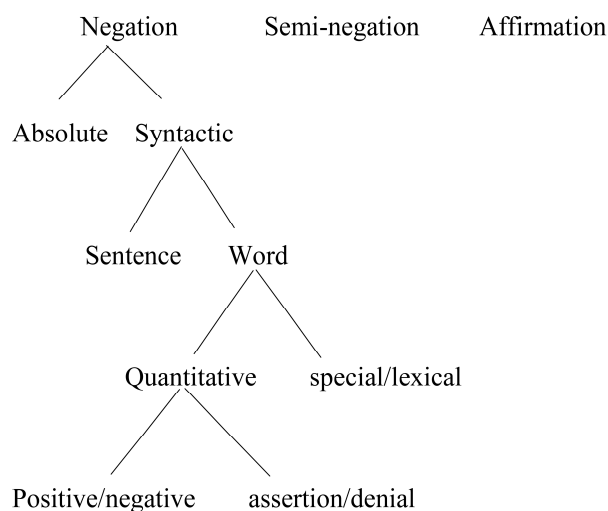


Figure 1

According to him, word negation is sub-categorized into “quantitative” and “special/lexical.” What’s more, quantitative is classified into two; based on its “form” (positive/negative) and “function” (assertion/denial). Nowhere, nothing, nobody, and none are used to form quantitative negation. Special/lexical negation is expressed in two ways:

- a. by adding not (not important)
- b. with negative affixes (un-, dis-, mis-)

Other two major types of negation are: semi-negation (is formed using words like hardly, seldom, scarcely) and affirmation (refers to implicit type of negation).

Furthermore, R. Huddleston defined 4 types in expressing negativity in English [8]:

- a. Verbal vs Non-verbal
- b. Analytic vs Synthetic
- c. Clausal vs Subclausal
- d. Ordinary vs Metalinguistic

The linguist emphasizes that the first two describe how negation is structured, while the other two refer what negation signifies in the context. In verbal negation, negative marker is attached to the verb (I don't like coffee), however non-verbal negation is formed by attaching negative exponent to the dependent of the verb (It is not important). According to the linguist, verbal negation is also sub-divided into "primary," "imperative" and "secondary negation." In primary negation negative marker attaches itself to the main verb, in imperative negation the verb "do" is required to be inserted into the construction, while in secondary (non-imperative) negation the negative marker attaches itself to constructions containing a secondary verb-form: infinitives, subjunctives, gerund-participles. For example:

1. "If you did see something, it is not important why you did not stop but we want to hear from you." (BBC News.26.01.2020) [primary]
2. "Don't be taken in by anti-vaccine myths on social media" (BBC News. 01.11.2018) [imperative]
3. But it remains to be seen if CNN can get consumers to subscribe for products outside of live news coverage. (The Spokesman. 05.02.2025) [secondary]

As stated by R. Huddleston, analytic negation is expressed by using separate negative markers (no, not), while synthetic negation is built through morphological changes (negative prefixes: do-undo) [9]. The linguist sub-divides synthetic negation into 3 types:

1. **Absolute negators (no)**
He repeated that the plan would involve resettling Palestinians, and that no American soldiers would be deployed. (BBC News.07.02.2025)
2. **Approximate negators (few, little, barely, seldom)**
The UK economy barely grew between July and September, with uncertainty about the Budget being blamed for the weak growth. (BBC News.15.11.2024)
3. **Affixalnegators (un-, non-, -less)**
Tariff changes will also be introduced from next January so non-EU residents - including UK tourists - pay more to visit. (BBC News.28.01.2025)

An Uzbek linguist V. A. Vositov classifies units representing quantitative negation as follows [10]:

1. No and its absolute form: none
2. Nouns formed from pronouns through no: no one, nobody, nothing.
3. Negative adverbs: nowhere, never.
4. Negative conjunctions: neither...nor, not only...but also.

He focuses on such types as general and specific negation and states that general negation is the very verbal negation. In the Uzbek language verbal negation is expressed through the negative morpheme *-ma* and it comes in the part of the predicate. In addition, In Uzbek, the negative words such as, *yo'q* (no) and *emas* (not) sometimes act as a predicate of the sentence, give negative meaning, moreover, they express general or verbal negation [11]. For example: *Onam uydaemas – Onam uydayo'q.* (In this example, both sentences mean “My mother is not at home) or *Abayko'chasi dagimojaroliqurilishdanvozkechil ganiyo'q. - Abayko'chasi dagimojaroliqurilishdanvozkechil ganemas.* (Kun.uz.28.10.2021) (in these examples, both sentences mean “The controversial construction on Abay Street has not been abandoned”)

A notable linguist O. Jespersen classifies negation into 2 groups:

- a. Nexal negation (sentence negation)
- b. Special negation (all other types of negation)

For example:

- a. We had no food. (nexal)
- b. We had **only** water, not food. (BBC News.18.07.2018) (special)

A famous Greek Philosopher Aristotle also investigated negation logically and divided it into 2 types [12]:

- a. Predicate denial
- b. Term negation

“Predicate negation” involves adding negative exponent to the verb or descriptive part of a sentence. “Term negation” is used to negate a part of a sentence making it opposite or denial of the original meaning. For instance:

- a. It is not white car (predicate negation)
- b. It is not-white car (term negation)

4. CONCLUSION

The study identifies insights into the concept of negation and its classification as well as differences in the structure expressing negativity in both languages in part ,but there are still more issues that deserve further research in this field. In the Uzbek language there is a lack of information on the types of negation and by improving this field of area, there will be much more data provided for further researches which can add up to already existed database.

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