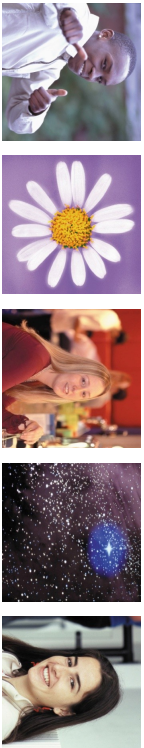




**DGfS-CNRS Summer School on
Linguistic Typology
Course “Sign Language Typology”**

Typology of negative constructions in sign languages



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Lexical negator signs and irregular negatives



Topics

- Lexical negators and irregular negatives
- Negative clitics and affixes
- Clause negation: Manual and non-manual negation
- Typological summary

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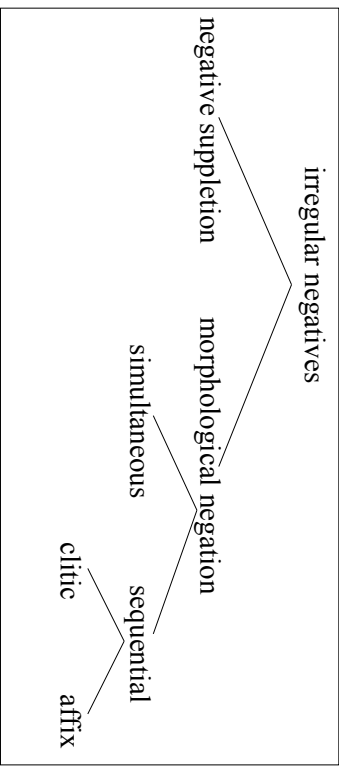


Frequency of negative categories across sign languages

<i>negative category</i>	<i>number of occurrences across language sample</i>
negative existential	29
negative modal	27
negative completive	23
negative imperative	17
emphatic negative	7
negative interjection	7
contrastive negative	3

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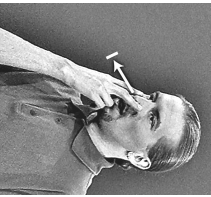
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sequential morphological negation (affix):



HEAR
HEAR-neg



SEE
SEE-neg

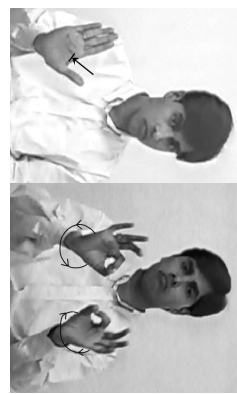
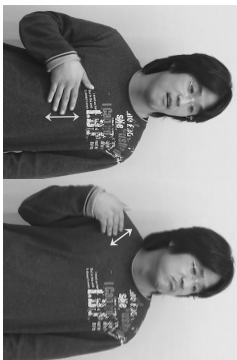


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Finland



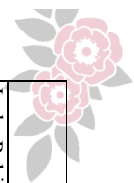
negative suppletion:



KNOW NOT-KNOW EXIST NOT-EXIST

South Korea India

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	Suppletion	Simultaneous morpheme	Clitic	Affix
Indo-Pakistani Sign Language (Karachi)	--	--	--	--
Kata Kolok (Bali)	✓ (one item)	--	--	--
Deutsche Gebärden-sprache (Germany)	✓	✓ (diagonal inward-outward movement)	--	--
Türk İşaret Dili (Turkey)	✓	--	✓ (clitic NOT)	--
Hong Kong Sign Language	✓	✓ (handshape substitution)	✓ (handshape addition)	--
Finnish Sign Language	✓	--	--	✓ (change in hand orientation)

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Negative clitics and affixes

negative clitic: <i>Türk İşaret Dilii</i> ^NOT	negative affix: <i>Finnish Sign Language</i> -neg
co-existing free form	no co-existing free form
variation between free form and clitic form	no variation between free and bound form
comparatively more productive	comparatively less productive
form more fully specified	form less fully specified
often two separate reduced movements	one main movement
no handshape assimilation	handshape assimilation possible
full compositionality of meaning	changes in meaning possible
no formational changes other than reduction	formational changes in stem and affix

A fuller set of criteria...



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Table from Zeshan (2004)



Phonological characteristics of the negative morpheme

- Does not form a syllable of its own (monosyllabic sign with a single movement)
 - Location assimilation
 - Handedness assimilation
 - Phonologically simple (open handshape)
- Neither of the two negative morphemes is a phonological word on its own.

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Clitic or affix?

- Turkish Sign Language (TID) negative is a clitic:
 - Does not have to occur together with its host (corresponding free form).
 - Low selectivity of host sign (can occur with any predicate).
 → Cf. English *not* vs. *n't*, *will* vs. *'ll*, *them* vs. *'em*
- Finnish Sign Language (FinsL) negative is an affix :
 - Has no corresponding free form.
 - High selectivity of host sign (occurs only with a few signs).
 - May affect form and meaning of host sign in idiosyncratic ways.
 → Closer bond between stem and affix than between stem and clitic.

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Clause negation

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The relative prominence of manual and non-manual markers of negation differs across sign languages and across construction types.

One and the same form may have quite a different function in different sign languages.

These differences can be captured in a typology of relationships between manual and non-manual marking of clause types.

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Clause negation in sign languages

- | | |
|--|--|
| Manual marking | Non-manual marking |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative signs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – basic clause negation: NOT – Negative existential: NOT-EXIST – Negative quantifier: NONE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head movements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Side-to-side headshake – Backward head tilt • Facial expressions |

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Non-manual marking	+	-	+	-
Manual marking	-	+	+	-
	Non-manual dominant	Manual dominant	Balanced	Mixed

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+ strong feature
- weak feature



Note:

This typology applies to individual constructions within a given sign language, not to the language as a whole.

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Example systems of negation within the four-way typology:

- Non-manual dominant system: German Sign Language
- Manual-dominant system: Turkish Sign Language
- Mixed system: Indian Sign Language
- Balanced system: Not attested yet.

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Non-manual dominant system



Clause negation in German Sign Language (DGS)

ICH VERSTEH _____ neg _____
IX1 UNDERSTAND
'I don't understand.'

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Characteristics of non-manual dominant systems	Characteristics of manual dominant systems
non-manual negation is obligatory	
clause can be negated non-manually only, manual basic clause negator is optional	
choice of non-manual marking does not depend on manual signs	
non-manual negation spreads freely over the clause	
4	0

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Clause negation in Turkish Sign Language (TİD)



neg-tilt

INDEX₁ SPEAK KNOW^NOT

23 'I cannot speak.'

neg-tilt

* INDEX₁ SPEAK KNOW



Manual dominant system

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Characteristics of non-manual dominant systems	Characteristics of manual dominant systems
	clause cannot be negated non-manually only, manual negator is required
	choice of non-manual marking depends on choice of manual clause negator (if there is more than one non-manual configuration)
	scope of non-manual negation is over the manual negator only or is closely tied to the manual negator
0	3

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Mixed system

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Characteristics of non-manual dominant systems	Characteristics of manual dominant systems
clause can be negated non-manually only, manual basic clause negator is optional	non-manual negation is not obligatory
	choice of non-manual marking depends on choice of manual clause negator (if there is more than one non-manual configuration)
non-manual negation spreads freely over the clause	
2	2



Clause negation in Indian Sign Language

___top ___neg ___nod

EXAM PASS NEG, FAIL

'I didn't pass the exam, I failed.'

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Negation: Typological summary

- strong preference for post-placement of all kinds of negatives
- limited number of irregular negatives and morphological negation
- irregular negatives drawn from a limited number of semantic domains
- sequential morphology relatively uncommon

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<i>Parameter</i>	<i>Spoken languages</i>	<i>Sign languages</i>
Frequency of negation strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Morphological negation (affixing) is general across a word class and common across languages.- Negative particles are common.- Intonation is extremely uncommon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Morphological negation is limited.- Negative particles are very common.- Intonation is extremely common.
Morphological negation	Almost always affixation (both prefixes and suffixes), other morphological processes are very rare.	Only suffixation, no prefixes, plus simultaneous internal modification of signs.
Syntactic position of negative particles	Predominantly pre-verbal.	Predominantly clause-final.
Double marking of negation	Relatively uncommon, especially as a combination with negative intonation, but some instances of double particle constructions.	Extremely common, especially with manual and nonmanual negation, but no double particle construction.
Form of negative morpheme	Arbitrary and not recurrent in unrelated languages.	Often iconic and recurrent in unrelated languages.