114. Subtypes of Asymmetric Standard Negation

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1.   Definition of values

The term **standard negation** refers to the basic way(s) a language has for negating declarative verbal main clauses. In **symmetric negation** affirmative and negative structures are identical except for the presence of the negative marker(s), whereas in **asymmetric negation** the structure of negatives differs from the structure of affirmatives in other ways too. Structural differences, i.e. asymmetry, can be found either between the affirmative and negative **constructions** or between the **paradigms** that the affirmative and negative constructions form. These distinctions are defined and illustrated in connection with Map 113, which shows the geographical distribution of symmetric and asymmetric standard negation.

Map 114 shows how the different subtypes of asymmetric standard negation are distributed across the languages of the world. The asymmetry between affirmation and negation can be found in different grammatical domains, and subtypes of asymmetric negation can be established according to the domain and nature of the asymmetry. Three subtypes are distinguished in the present context, according to whether the asymmetry is connected (i) to the **finiteness** of verbal elements (A/Fin), (ii) to the marking of **reality status** (A/NonReal), or (iii) to the marking of **verbal categories** in some other ways (A/Cat). As a language can have different negative structures in different contexts, different subtypes of asymmetric negation can also be found within one and the same language. The map therefore distinguishes three futher types of language where two of the three subtypes of asymmetric negation are combined. Naturally, the subtype classification can only be applied to languages where asymmetric negation is found in the first place (Types Asy

and SymAsy in chapter 113); languages where only symmetric negation is found (Type Sym in chapter 113) are thus irrelevant to the present map (number 7 in the box).

The standard negation structure(s) found in a language can show asymmetry:

@	1.	in finiteness: Subtype A/Fin	40
@	2.	in reality status: Subtype A/NonReal	20
@	3.	in other grammatical categories: Subtype A/Cat	82
@	4.	in finiteness and reality status: Subtypes A/Fin and A/NonReal	9
@	5.	in finiteness and other grammatical categories: Subtypes A/Fin and A/Cat	21
@	6.	in reality status and other grammatical categories: Subtypes A/NonReal and A/Cat	11
@	7.	non-assignable (no asymmetry found)	114
		total	297

Some of the three main subtypes can be divided into further subtypes (see Miestamo 2003). The theoretical significance of the classification is discussed briefly in chapter 113.

In **Subtype A/Fin** negation affects the finiteness of verbal elements. Typically, the negative construction adds a new finite element (finite verb) to the clause, and the lexical verb becomes non-finite and/or subordinate to the added finite element. A negative construction of this subtype is found in Hixkaryana (Carib; Brazil; see (1)).

(1) Hixkaryana (Derbyshire 1979: 48)

    a. *k-,i-amryek-,i-no* b. *amryek-,i-hi,-ra w-ah-ko*

       1.SUBJ-hunt-IMM.PST   hunt-NEG   1.SUBJ-be-IMM.PST

       'I went hunting.'   'I did not go hunting.'

In Hixkaryana a (non-negative) copula functions as the finite element of the negative clause, and the negative marker is a deverbalizing suffix on the lexical verb. Negative verb constructions, as found for example in Finnish (see chapter 113, ex. (4)), also belong to Subtype A/Fin. A new finite element is not necessarily added in Subtype A/Fin, but the lexical verb still loses its finiteness (e.g. in Sentani, see Hartzler 1994).

      Subtype A/NonReal is asymmetric with respect to the marking of reality status of events — the negative clause is obligatorily marked by a non-realized category, whereas the affirmative is not. In Imbabura Quechua (see (2)), in addition to the negative particle *mana*, the negative clause contains the marker *-chu* that also appears in a non-realized context, viz. yes/no questions.

(2) Imbabura Quechua (Cole 1985: 83, 94)

    a.   *juzi   iskay   kaballu-ta   chari-n*
         José   two   horse-ACC   have-3
         'José has two horses.'

    b.   *ñuka wawki mana jatun wasi-ta   chari-n-chu*
         my   brother NEG   big   house-ACC have-3-NEG/Q
         'My brother does not have a big house.'

    c.   *kan-paj wawki jatun   wasi-ta   chari-n-chu*
         you-POSS brother big   house-ACC have-3-NEG/Q
         'Does your brother have a big house?'

The negative declarative is symmetric with the non-negative interrogative, since they only differ by the presence of the negative *mana*. The A/NonReal asymmetry is paradigmatic. The distinction between interrogative and declarative is not lost in negatives since there is a separate construction for negative interrogatives. Most commonly the non-realized category involved in A/NonReal asymmetry is a more general irrealis category; e.g. in Maung (see chapter 113, ex. (7)), where the

realis–irrealis distinction made in the affirmative is lost in the negative, resulting in paradigmatic A/NonReal asymmetry.

Subtype A/Cat involves changes in the marking of grammatical categories (such as tense, aspect, mood, person, number, etc.) under negation. For example, in Karok (Hokan; California; see (3)) the affirmative and the negative use different person–number affixes, and in Koyraboro Senni (Songhay; Mali; see (4)) the negative imperfective marker replaces the positive imperfective marker.

(3) Karok (Bright 1957: 67)
    a.   *kun-iykár-at*   b.   *pu-ʔiykar-áp-at*
           3PL>3SG-kill-PST   NEG-kill-3PL>3SG-PST
           'They killed [him/her].'   'They did not kill [him/her].'

(4) Koyraboro Senni Songhay (Heath 1999a: 8–9)
    a.   *n*   *ga koy*   b.   *war*   *si*   *koy*
           2SG.SUBJ IMPF go   2PL.SUBJ NEG.IMPF go
           'You (SG) are going.'   'You (PL) are not going.'

The constructional asymmetry in Lezgian past imperfectives (see chapter 113, ex. (6)) is also a case of A/Cat asymmetry. In Páez (Paezan; Colombia; see (5)) the negative construction is symmetric but the paradigm is asymmetric.

(5) Páez (Jung 1989: 102–104)
    a.   *âts,h-a'*   *ts,hab-na*   *u'x-we-ts-thu*
           now-TOP   village-to   go-IMPF-PROG-DECL.1SG
           'I'm going to the village right now.'
    b.   *u'x-we-ts-me:-th*
           go-IMPF-PROG-NEG-DECL.1SG
           'I don't go.' / ['I'm not going.']
    c.   *skwela-na-t,*   *u'x-we-'*
           school-to-FACT.3PL   go-IMPF-HAB
           'They go to school.'

d. *u'x-we-'-me:-th*
    go-IMPF-HAB-NEG-DECL.1SG

As can be seen in (5b), the negative suffix *-me:* is simply added to the corresponding positive (5a) with no further structural change (the loss of the final vowel is morphophonological). But the habitual cannot appear in the negative (see 5c, d) and the distinction between the progressive and the habitual is neutralized. This is a case of paradigmatic A/Cat asymmetry. In Burmese (see chapter 113, ex. (5)) the affirmative paradigm makes a distinction between actual, potential (future), and perfect, but as the negative construction replaces the tense-aspect-mood marker with the negative suffix *-bû,* the distinction is lost, and both the construction and the paradigm show A/Cat asymmetry. In Swahili the paradigm is thoroughly asymmetric, since affirmatives and negatives use different sets of tense-aspect markers (see Contini-Morava 1989).

Sometimes a construction involving an auxiliary or an auxiliary-like element in the positive is negated by the replacement of the auxiliary by a corresponding irregular/suppletive negative auxiliary. The asymmetry is derived from the asymmetry in the negation of the auxiliary, and the idiosyncrasy in the negation of this particular element is not usually relevant to standard negation. But in cases where the auxiliary is used in a productive periphrastic verbal construction, the asymmetry is relevant. These constructions belong to Subtype A/Cat. In Ladakhi (Tibeto-Burman; Kashmir; see (6)) the auxiliaries *yin* and *yod* jointly mark present continuous tense, but in the negative the latter is replaced by its negative form *med*.

(6) Ladakhi (Koshal 1979: 238)
    a. *pəlldənni   ṣpečhə   ḍi-yin-yot*
        Paldan.ERG   book.ABS   write-AUX-AUX
        'Paldan is writing a book.'

b. *pəlldənni   ṣpečhə   ɖi-yin-met*
    Paldan.ERG   book.ABS   write-AUX-NEG.AUX
    'Paldan is not writing a book.'

A similar case is found in Latvian third person periphrastic tenses.

As we have seen, the marking of grammatical categories changes under negation in all three of the subtypes. But in Subtype A/Cat no generalizations can be made about the functional effects of the changes as can be done in the two previous types — changes infiniteness in A/Fin and non-realized marking in A/NonReal. The negative past imperfective marker in Lezgian and the negative person-number markers in Karok neither change the finiteness of the verb, nor mark irrealis or any other non-realized categories. They are merely variants appearing under negation with no further generalizations made about their functions elsewhere in the grammars of these languages. Sometimes A/Cat asymmetry does have an identifiable semantic effect, e.g. when distinctions made in the affirmative are neutralized in the negative, but these effects do not lend themselves to relevant cross-linguistic generalizations and give no grounds for distinguishing new subtypes of asymmetric negation; note that perfectives or completives do not show a tendency to be excluded in negatives, as is often claimed (e.g. Schmid 1980, see Miestamo 2003: 149-150 for discussion). There is, however, one case where generalizations can be made: there are languages where negatives use a form that expresses emphasis in non-negatives; these structures are treated as an independent (although marginal) subtype of asymmetric negation (A/Emph) in Miestamo (2003). The negation of simple tenses in English has A/Emph asymmetry, as the distinction between emphatic and non-emphatic is lost in the negative (*Chris reads* vs. *Chris does read* vs. *Chris does not read*). A/Emph asymmetry is found in only a few languages and is treated here as A/Cat, since too many distinctions cannot be

made on the maps. Some languages show asymmetries that cannot easily be connected to the marking of any category, e.g. the order of auxiliary and main verb changes in negatives in contemporary standard Basque (Saltarelli et al. 1988; José Hualde, p.c.); such asymmetries are found in only a few languages and are treated as A/Cat here.

Due to space limitations, it is not possible to give examples from languages with multiple subtypes. I will, however, mention one or two languages belonging to each category.

Subtypes A/Fin and A/NonReal: In Copainalá Zoque (Mixe–Zoque; Chiapas, Mexico; Harrison et al. 1981) the nonpast uses a negative verb construction (A/Fin), whereas the past negative construction contains a suffix that also marks some irrealis categories (A/NonReal). In Squamish (Salishan; British Columbia; Kuipers 1967) the negative construction has both A/Fin asymmetry in that the negative element is a verb, the negated content being expressed in a subordinate clause, and A/NonReal asymmetry in that the subordinate clause is introduced by the irrealis modal clitic.

Subtypes A/Fin and A/Cat: In Kolokuma Ijo (Ijoid, Niger–Congo; Nigeria; Williamson 1965) a negative copula appears as the finite element in future negation, which is thus of Subtype A/Fin; many other tense–aspects show A/Cat asymmetry: there are changes in how the tense–aspect categories are marked, and the paradigm also shows A/Cat asymmetry.

Subtypes A/NonReal and A/Cat: In Warndarang (Maran; Northern Territory, Australia; Heath 1980) past and present negatives are irrealis-marked (vs. realis-marked affirmatives) (A/NonReal), and in the future the negator replaces the potential (future) prefix (A/Cat).

Note that as was the case in chapter 113, the map has nothing to say about the prominence of the different types in individual languages. The combination of all three subtypes was found in two languages, Imonda (Border family; Papua New

Guinea) and Nivkh (isolate; Russian Far East), but for the sake of simplicity, no separate symbol was given to this combination — the map shows Imonda and Nivkh as having A/Fin and A/NonReal asymmetry.

Sometimes a language seems to have asymmetry of two different subtypes, but on closer examination, one of these asymmetries turns out to be derived from the other. In these cases the derived asymmetry is not represented on the map. In Sentani (Sentani family; Papua, Indonesia) the lexical verb loses all verbal marking and thus loses its finiteness. From this A/Fin asymmetry it follows that all distinctions made in the verb are lost, and the paradigm seems to have A/Cat asymmetry. But the paradigmatic asymmetry is subordinate to the A/Fin asymmetry and hence is not taken into account. In Maung (see chapter 113, ex. (7)) the punctual-continuous distinction is lost in the negative, suggesting A/Cat asymmetry in the paradigm. It is, however, the irrealis category which is responsible for the loss of this distinction. Irrealis verbs cannot be distinguished for punctual/continuous, and since the negative is irrealis-marked, the distinction is lost in all negatives too.

2.   Geographical Distribution

Subtype A/Fin asymmetry is found in most parts of the world; the strongest areas are in northern and eastern Eurasia, South America, New Guinea, and northeastern Africa; a local hotbed is found in the northwestern United States and southwestern Canada. Subtype A/NonReal is frequent in Australia, and some cases are also found elsewhere in the Pacific Rim; in other parts of the world this subtype is rare. Subtype A/Cat is common almost everywhere in the world; it is very frequent in Africa and frequent in North America and South Asia as well; the Caucasus presents a local hotbed of this subtype.

Some connections between Maps 113 and 114 deserve to be pointed out. In the areas where A/Cat asymmetry is common,

Type SymAsy is also very common; this is due to the circumstance that often A/Cat asymmetry only affects some verbal categories in a language and negation is symmetric elsewhere, or that asymmetry is only found in the paradigm while the negative construction is symmetric. Many of the languages with A/NonReal asymmetry are also languages of Type SymAsy; in A/NonReal asymmetry the construction is often symmetric, the asymmetry being in the paradigm. Languages that have only Subtype A/Fin asymmetry often belong to type Asy; this is explained by the fact that A/Fin asymmetry is almost always constructional, not paradigmatic (paradigmatic asymmetry is in principle irrelevant to type Asy).