

Expletive negation in Middle Hungarian

Aims

- examine the syntactic properties of sentences exhibiting Expletive Negation (EN) in Middle Hungarian (MH)
- tentatively challenge unified analyses of EN

Claims

- there are three subtypes on EN in MH, each having partly different syntactic properties
- the three subtypes: quotative-like negative verbs ('deny', 'forbid'); verbs of negative evaluation ('doubt', 'fear'); until-clauses
- their differences are reflected in their later evolution

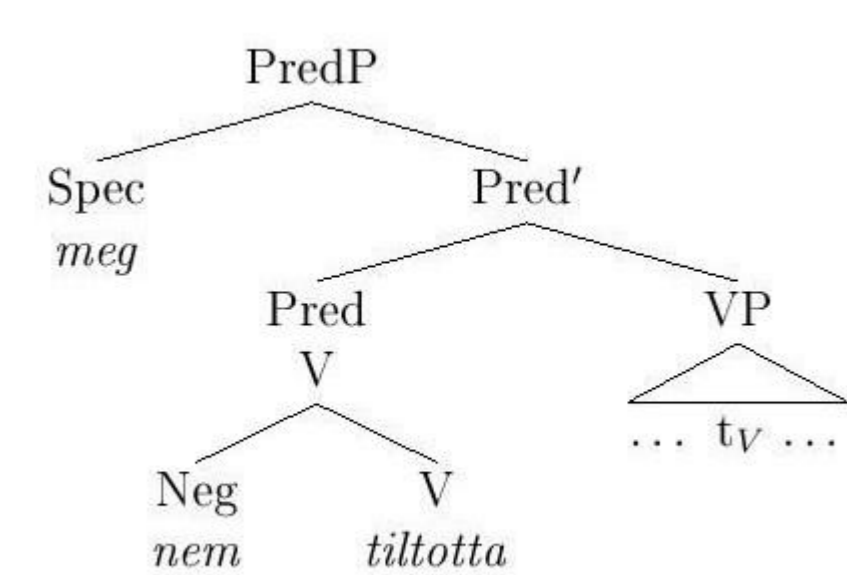
Methods

- corpus analysis:
 - Old and Middle Hungarian corpus of informal language use (Novák et al. 2017)
- environments featuring EN
- investigated variables:
 - presence or absence of the negator (*nem/ne*) in the given EN-environment;
 - polarity of the main clause;
 - pronouns in the subord. clause: indefinite (*vala-*) or negative (*se-*) [Hungarian is an NC-language]
 - mood choice in the subordinate clause: +/- indicative [- indicative can be conditional or subjunctive]
 - word order pattern in the subordinate clause w.r.t. negation (see below)

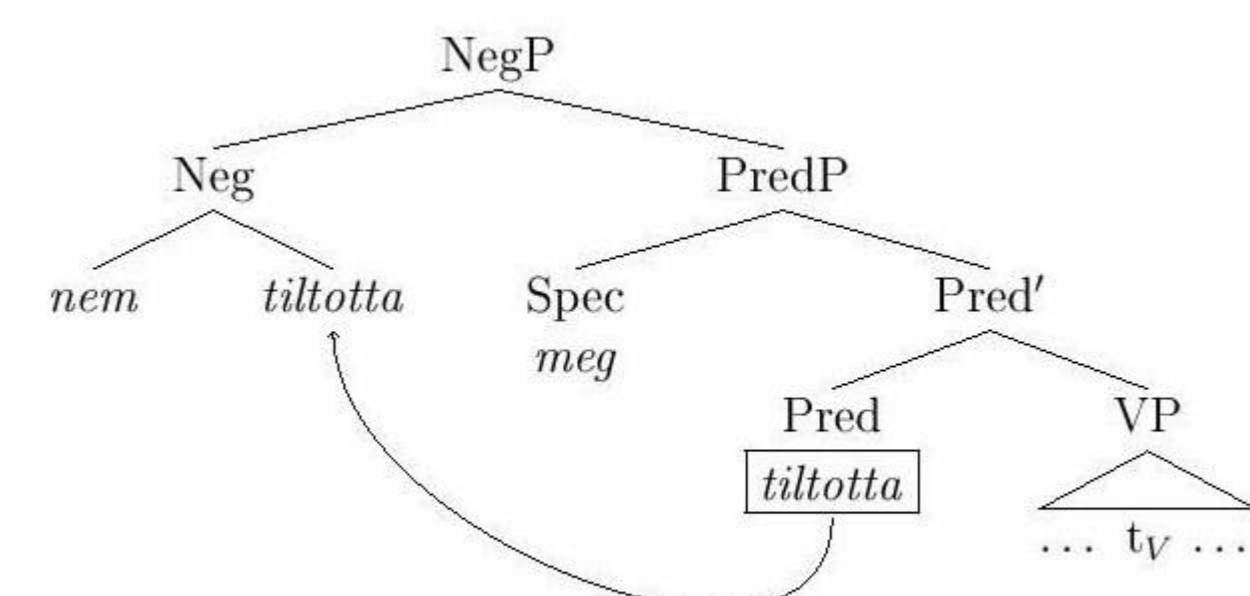
A short detour: negation in Middle Hungarian

Two word order patterns in negative sentences having a Verbal Modifier (verbal particles, bare NP internal arguments, idiomatic expressions, non-verbal primary and secondary predicates)

VM – NEG – V



NEG – V – VM



- A remnant OV-property (É. Kiss 2014): negated verb as a complex head projecting a negated VP
 - sentential scope
- The dominant variant in Old and Middle Hungarian (87,3% when the VM is a preverb)
- Standard negation, licenses NC-items
- An innovation that emerged during Proto-Hungarian (for a more detailed description, see É. Kiss 2014), features verb movement
- The marginal variant in Old and Middle Hungarian (12,7% when the VM is a preverb)
- Function: assumed to be pragmatically marked; also licenses NC-items

The data / 1. Quotative-like EN constructions

Tilt 'forbid' [9 examples]

- main clause dominantly affirmative;
 - subordinate clause features EN almost exceptionlessly;
 - mood: subjunctive in all examples;
 - pronoun choice: both indefinite and negative pron. appears (cf. 1 and 2)
- (1) mert azt is tiltják tőlünk, hogy **valahova valaki** javára **ne** írjunk_{SUBJ} 'Because it is also forbidden for us that we write somewhere for the benefit of somebody.' (1715: Peregr. 1)
- (2) tiltva lévén pedig a faluban, hogy **senki** Szent György-nap előtt egy héttel s utána is egy héttel vagy gyökeret ásni, vagy fűvet szedni ki **ne** menjen_{SUBJ} 'digging up roots or gathering grass being forbidden for all people in the village before or after a week of Saint George's day' (1709: WT. 57)

The data / 1 : Quotative-like EN constructions (continued)

Tagad 'deny'

- a) **Affirmative main clause** [deny: 30 examples]
EN in the subordinate clause [20 examples – 3 with cond as well] (3) Akkor tagadta ugyan, hogy **nem** cselekedett semmit, (1741: WT. 277) 'Though then she denied that she had done anything.'
Only –indicative [cond] in the subordinate clause [9 examples] (4) Tagadja, hogy az ifjabbik Vida Jánosnak azt mondta volna_{COND}, 'She denies that she said that to János Vida Junior' (1743: WT. 289)
Neither EN, nor conjunctive [1 example] (5) Tagadom, hogy nyargaltam, (1718: WT. 564) 'I deny that I rode him.'
b) **Negative main clause** (did not deny ~ state: 15 examples)
+EN, + conj: 4; +EN, -conj: 1; -EN, - conj: 10

→ EN in this environment seems to be Evaluative negation (Yoon 2011), a special marker of subjunctive mood: complements of (non-negated) 'deny' and 'forbid' are predominantly either marked with EN or non-indicative – or both.

YET:

- negative pronouns in the subordinate clause (2, 3)
 - Different types of negation w/ 'deny' in the subordinate clause: ordinary sentential negation (6), emphatic sentential negation (7), constituent negation (8)
 - De a szolgáló tagadta, hogy **meg_{PV} nem** látta. (1703: WT. 502) 'But the servant denied that she saw it.'
 - Tagadta ugyan elsőbben, hogy ő **nem** vesztette **meg_{PV}**, (1745: WT. 290) 'Although first she denied that she bewitched him.'
 - tagadják volt, hogy **nem** ők gyújtották **meg_{PV}**. (1586: Tel. 38) 'They had denied that it was them who set it on fire.'
- Proposal: Paratactic Negation in the original sense of parataxis, cf: (9) Én tagadom, én **nem** mondtam, vallja szemembe'n, aki hallotta tőlem! 'I deny, I did not say that, the one who had heard it from me should tell it to my face!' (1734: WT. 346)

Interim summary:

- Negation in these clauses shares the properties of ordinary sentential negation of the given period
- Tagad and tilt in Standard Modern Hungarian: no EN in the subordinate clause, tilt: subjunctive, tagad: optional conditional.

The data / 2: Negative evaluatives

Kétli ('doubt')

- Bad luck: all of them appear with negative main clauses (do not doubt ~ be certain)
→ Neither EN, nor special mood marking could be expected.
YET: sporadic counterexamples; out of 39 examples, 4 contain negation: two of them „real” negation (10), two EN (11)
(10) Nem kétlem, meg nem neheztem, mert nem haragból írom. (1708: Bark.102) 'I don't doubt that you would not get sore at me, as I did not write out of anger.'
(11) De azt nem kétlem, hogy Kegyelmed hamarabb meg **nem** csinálnát_{COND}. (1706: Bark. 150) 'But I do not doubt that you would get it done earlier.'

Féltő ('it is to be feared that')

- All main clauses are affirmative [25 examples]
EN and -ind in the subordinate clause [17 examples] (12) Féltő mindazonáltal, hogy addig valami **ne** történjék_{SUBJ} (1641: Zr. p. 20) 'It is to be feared though that something would happen till that.'
Negative conjunction and -ind in the subordinate clause [2 examples] (13) féltő, nehogy pestis támadjon_{SUBJ} (1729: Peregr. 1. 109.) 'It is to be feared lest plague break.out'
-ind in the subordinate clause [2 examples] (14) De úgy féltő, füstös lenne_{COND} (1708: Bark. 186) 'But so it is to be feared that it would be smoky.'
Neither EN, nor -ind [4 examples] (15) de **féltő**, csak úgy szukcedál, amint a többi. (1732: Peregr. 1. 117) 'It is to be feared that he would succeed just like the others.'

Pronoun choice: one example, with indefinite pronoun (*valami*, 12)

Interim summary:

- In the case of *féltő*, nonveridicality is marked (or doubly marked) in the majority of the cases;
- EN in this case is truly Expletive (and: Evaluative) Negation: indefinite pronoun, only standard negation (=no pragmatically marked negation)
- Modern Hungarian: no EN in the subordinate clause, optional mood marking with 'doubt'

The data / 3. Until-clauses

A robust category, four conjunctions: *míg* [798 examples], *valamíg* [55], *amíg* [41] *mígnem* [5]

Focus on *míg*-clauses:

- Use of -ind: rare (5.5%; mostly conditional)
- EN appears in 35.7%
- Pronoun choice: 7 examples with indefinite (4 with EN (20), 3 in ass.), no negative
- Clauses containing EN: exclusive use of the (then-)standard negative pattern, i.e. no instances of pragmatically marked negation

Negative main clauses

Polarity of the main clause: important factor; e.g. in *míg*-clauses containing a preverb, EN appears in 94,3% (N=105) of the cases if the main clause is negative (16), but only in 38,4% EN (N=151) of the clauses if the main clause is assertive. *Míg* 'while', simultaneity.

(16) addig meg **nem** gyógyul, míg az ő leányát el **nem** veszi. (1701: WT. 18) 'he won't recover until he marries her daughter'

Assertive main clauses

Míg, no EN: either simultaneity ('while', 17) or endpoint ('until', 18; or possibly 'by the time', 19) – depending on the aspectual properties of the clauses

(17) Én is úgy voltam, Szívem, míg ifjabb valék, de már kinőttem belőle. (1706: Kár. 89) 'I was just like that, my love, while I was younger, but I have already grown out of it.'

(18) itt már meg ke_{PV} várom, míg érkezik. (1710: Bark. 247) 'Yet I have to wait for her here until she arrives.'

(18) Károlyt is haszontalan építjük, Ferus míg felnő, elpusztul. (1712: Kár. 117) 'We build Károly in vain as well, by the time Ferus grows up, it collapses.'

Míg with EN: endpoint-interpretation due to disjoint intervals ('while not' - until)

(19) míg ezt **nem** cselekedik, mi kontároknak mondjuk mindazokat (1592: JLev. MNy. 52) 'Until they do this, we will call all of them botchers'

(20) s mindaddig ott ült, míg a németek el **nem** mentek (1723: WT. 39) 'And she sat there up until the Germans left.'

→ Expletive Negation without a characteristic modal function; either LF-movement of the negator (Ürögdi 2009) or does not get scope over the sentence for other reasons.

Modern Hungarian: retained expletive negation in this environment. The VM – NEG – V pattern is a relic from a diachronic point of view: the change from predominant VM – NEG – V to predominant NEG – V – VM was probably driven by the overuse of the pragmatically marked form, but EN cannot be emphatic (?| EN in French with *ne* [Delfitto et al. 2019], Late Middle English *ne* [Greco 2019])

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Summary

	Negative quotatives	Negative evaluatives	Until-clauses
Mood	-ind: not infrequent	- ind: characteristic	-ind: rare
Negative pronouns	licensed	-	-
Emphatic negation	appears	-	-
Analysis	standard clausal negation	Evaluative negation	Expletive negation
Modern Hungarian	EN extinct, obligatory /optional mood marking	EN extinct, if marked, marked with mood	Productive pattern in the given environment

References

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