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Negation in Liangmai

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Abstract

The present study aims to find out some of the grammatical uses of Negation in Liangmai language. Negation plays a very important role in communication system of language. It is also affects the logical structure as well as the semantic analysis of a sentence used in a particular language .The study of negation also plays a very important role in determining the acceptability of various grammatical constructions.

The present study is to explore the descriptive model and tries to describe in detail the construction of negative sentences in Liangmai. This study deals with prohibition, let negation, double negation, negative strengthening, polarity items, morphological negation, etc.

1.1. Introduction

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1.2. Ethnically and linguistically, Liangmai belongs to the mongoloid group of race and speak Liangmai, a Tibeto Burman language under Naga-Kuki section of family. Liangmai is the name of the people as well as community that speaks the language. It is consider as a sub tribes of Zeliangrong which consists of Zeme, Liangmai and Rongmei coined on 15th February 1947 at the Keishamthong, Imphal conference. This is the combination of the first syllable of the three tribes' i.e: **Ze** from **Zeme**, **Liang** from **Liangmai** and **Rong** from **Rongmei** (Ze + Liang + Rong=**ZELIANGRONG**).

1.3. Liangmai is one of the 33 tribes recognized by the government of Manipur which includes Aimol, Anal, Hmar, Maram, Mao, Paite, Simte, Thangal, Thangkhol, Thadou, Zeme, etc. In Nagaland Liangmais are recognized as Zeliang which comprises of Zeme and Liangmai. The language spoken by the people of Liangmai is known as Liangmai language. It is mainly spoken in Manipur and Nagaland.

1.4. In Manipur, Liangmai speakers are found in Tamenglong headquarter Tamei sub division and in Senapati district. They are also found in Tening Sub-division, Jalukie of Peren district, Dimapur and Kohima of Nagaland. According to 2001 census report, the total population of Liangmai in Manipur was above 34,232 with 17,477 males and 16,755 females. According to 2001 census report, the total population of Zeliang in Nagaland was 36012 (2315 Liangmai). This language is linguistically closer to Maram, Poumai, Thangal, Ruangmei and Zeme which are spoken in the same region.

1.5. Negation in Liangmai:

Negation is a grammatical term for the contradiction of some or all of the meaning of an affirmative (positive) sentence. In English, a sentence is commonly negated by inserting a single negative word (not, don't, won't, etc.) into the appropriate place in the sentence

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The concept of Negation and its expression in natural language have concerned philosophers, linguists and psychologists. The Negation itself occupies a central position in any system of communication and in systems of logical representation. Through Negation, very ironical expressions in natural languages can be performed very easily and very naturally.

In a descriptive grammar, the study of Negation deals with how we express the contradiction of some or all meaning of a Negation. The Negation also affects the logical structure as well as the semantic analysis of a sentence used in a particular language. In view of the above facts, the present study aims to find out some of the grammatical uses for Negation in Liangmai language under the topic Negation in Liangmai.

1.6. Negative Markers

Liangmai has some different kinds of negative markers. The following are the negative markers found in Liangmai:

- 1) **/-mək/** negative marker is used in realized aspect and it is non-future.
- 2) Negative marker **/-lək/** is used in unrealized aspect and it is associated with future marker.
- 3) **/-takhe/** ~ **/-tukhe/** are used as 'let' negative.
- 4) **/-mane/** ~ **/-du/** are used in prohibitive sentence.
- 5) **/mək/** ~ **/hai/** are used as lexical negation.

1. /mək/

This negative morpheme is used in equational constructions to negate a positive verb of a statement. Therefore, when an equative sentence in Liangmai has “be” as the main verb, it becomes /məkge/ -Neg. + V in the negation.

pa əgu kətipao məkge. ‘He is not my teacher.’

he my gen. teachere Neg. Asp

pa čəlui thiubo mai məkge. ‘He is not a singer.’

he song sing man Neg. Asp

ester aliwi məkge. ‘Esther is not beautiful girl.’

Esther beautiful Neg.

I daktər məkge. ‘I am not (a) doctor.’

i doctor Neg.

haise əriak wibo məkge. ‘This is not (a) good book.’

this is book good Neg.

2. /lək/

When the sentence is in future or unrealized aspect /lək/ is used and it is prefixed to the main verb. This negative marker carries the meaning of futurity and is used generally in the unrealized aspect. Some of the examples are given below:

piter skul təd-ləkge. ‘Peter will not go to school.’

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peter school go-Neg.Fut

i tək tiu ləkge.

‘I will not eat rice.’

i rice eat Neg.Fut

i sinema phui ləkge.

‘I will not watch cinema.’

i cinema watch Neg Fut

pa məthen gə ɲəm ləkge.

‘He will not win the match.’

He match loc win Neg Fut

I sonnai wəŋ ləkge.

‘I will not come tomorrow.’

i tomorrow com Neg. Fut

pa nəki gə wəŋ lək ge.

‘She will not come to your house.’

She your house Loc come Neg.Fut

In the above examples, it is shown that /-lək/ is negative markers use only in futurity and is used generally in the unrealized aspect.

3. /-takhe/ ~ /-tukhe/

In Liangmai if /-**takhe**/ and /-**tukhe**/ are added to a negative sentence, it gives ‘Let’ sense. Both are used for making a request or suggestion. But the former is more polite and formal than /-**tukhe**/. Some of the examples of ‘Let’ negative marker in Liangmai are shown below:

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(A)

əliu skul təd- mək takhe.

we school go Neg.sug.

‘Let us not go to school.’

əliu tek tiu mək takhe.

we rice eat Neg.sug.

‘Let us not eat rice.’

əliu ča sak mək takhe.

we tea drink Neg.sug.

‘Let us not drink.’

əliu piŋ mək takhe.

we fear Neg.sug.

‘Let us not fear.’

(B)

əliu skul təd tukhe.

we school go Neg.sug.

‘Let us not go to school.’

əliu tek tiu-tukhe.

we rice eat Neg.sug.

‘Let us not eat rice.’

əliu ca sak-tukhe.

we tea drink Neg.sug.

‘Let us not drink.’

əliu piŋ tukhe.

we fear Neg.sug.

‘Let us not fear.’

In the above examples, (A) group is more formal and polite form of making a request or suggestion than (B) in Liangmai.

4. /-mane/ ~ /-du/

Command or prohibitive negative sentence is formed by adding a command negative marker to the main verb. While /-**mane**/ is used in more polite manner, /-**du**/ is used to make a command where there is not much need for politeness.

uibo əriak se ken mane. 'Do not read that book.'

that book asp.mk. read Neg Com.

kəp mane. 'Do not cry.'

cry Neg Com.

uiga təd mane. 'Do not go to that place.'

place asp.mk. go Neg Com.

uibo nəmsi kəm mane. 'Do not do that work.'

that work do Neg Com.

čəlui thiū dulo. 'Do not sing a song.'

song sing Neg Com.

tek tiu du lo. 'Do not eat rice.'

rice eat Neg Com

5. Lexicalized negator /mək/ ~ /hai/

As in various languages of the world, Liangmai also has negative verb functioning as a higher verb. The lexicalized negator occurs in the final position of the sentence. Some of the examples are given below:

pa daniel məkge. 'He is not Daniel.'

he daniel not past

pa pəpiu məkge. 'He is not a father.'

he father not past

adin kətipau məkge. 'Adin is not a teacher.'

adin teacher not past

/hai/ is used only in informal conversation and not permit to use in written form. Consider the following interrogative sentence and its answer:

Int. sentence:-

nəŋ niu məsenbo intiaŋ uisi ma.

you Nom like shirt that Int.

'Is that the shirt you like?'

Answer to this interrogative sentence is given by the lexical negators i.e. **/hai/**.

1.7. Negative Copula

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This negative copula /haye/ is used to express negation in existential constructions, locative predicates and possessive sentences. Consider the following examples:

siŋgiu gə čəkha haye. 'There is no fish in the river'.

river Loc. fish Neg. Cop

pa gu rəŋkəŋ haye 'He had no money'

he Ge. Rupee Neg. Cop

impui gə čəkui haye. 'There is no tiger in the road'.

road Loc tiger Neg. Cop

/hai/ is the free negator which is used only in informal conversation.

1.5. Negative Strengthening and Negative Polarity

According to Jespersen (1914), negative is strengthened through some additional words. In Liangmai, negation is strengthened by the addition of a prefix **/wədaodi/** or **/pəŋ/** to the main verb. The negative strengthener **/wədaodi/** is restricted to occur only in the negative environment therefore it is known as Negative Polarity Item (NPI). But **/pəŋ/** can occur even in positive environment. Some of the examples are given below:

i zau **wədaodi** sak ləkge. 'I will never drink liquor.'

i liquor Neg.streng drink Neg.mk

i **wədaodi** təd ləkge. 'I will never go.'

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i Neg.streng go Neg.mk.

pa čələt pəŋ din din məkge. 'He does not speak always.'

he word streng.speak speak Neg.mk.

pa čələt pəŋ din dinne. 'He always speaks.'

he word streng.speak speak-asp.mk.

/pəŋ təd tət mane. 'Do not go always.'

streng.go go Neg.mk.

From the above examples, it is clear that /wədaodi/ can occur only in the negative environment. Therefore it is a Negative Polarity Item (NPI). There is no reduplication of verb when /wədaodi/ occurs. /pəŋ/ is used to indicate the meaning of 'always' and whenever /pəŋ/ occurs the reduplication of the verb takes place, it is also clear that /pəŋ/ can occur both in negative as well as in positive environment.

1.6. Double Negation

In mathematics, there is a formula that two negatives become a positive. But language is not like mathematics which holds the formula that two negatives become a positive. Whenever two negatives really refer to the same idea or word the result is invariably positive. Double negative is preferably used in literary expression. However, the negatives do not exactly cancel each other. Double negation is also found in this language. An example is given below:

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i ačunwi məkbo məkge.

i happy Neg.mk.-Neg.asp

‘I am not unhappy.’

abel tek tiu məkziu skul tət məkge.

abel food eat Neg school go Neg asp

‘Abel does not go to school without having meal.’

I čəlui thiu lək de čiudi I mənɪŋludao ləkge.

i sing song Neg past but i thought Neg asp

‘I decided not to sing anymore but I cannot do so’

1.7. Morphological Negation

Morphological negation occurs whenever the negative morpheme must be considered to form a part of the derivational morphology of the verb. In Liangmai, morphological negation occurs in verb, noun, adjective, and adverb. Some of the examples are given below:

Root + NZR

tiubo ‘to eat’

tədbo ‘to go’

sakbo ‘to drink’

Root + Neg.mk.+NZR

tiu məkbo ‘not eat’

təd məkbo ‘not go’

sak məkbo ‘not drink’

pa uigə haye . 'She is not there.'
she there Neg. Cop.

baribou gu khunḡup haye. 'Baribou has no shoes.'
baribou Gen shoes Neg. Cop.

pa sinima phiurəbo wən haye. 'She has no time to watch cinema.'
she cinema see dt time Neg. Cop

puiki gə čəkui haye. 'There is no tiger in the road.'
road Loc tiger Neg. Cop

On the basis of the above illustrative examples, we can state that Liangmai has five negative markers /mək/, /lək/, /tukhe/, /mane/ and /hai/ which occur in mutually exclusive environments.

Suffix / - lak – ge / indicates Future negative.

A few examples are given below:

a). i məkidi ləm təd lak ge.
I Imphal loc go not fut.neg. mk
'I will not go to Imphal.'

b). Pa kodə ləmtəd lak ge.
he dimapur loc go not. fut. neg. mk
'He will not go to Dimapur'

c). i əkhəm le lak ge.
I door open not fut. neg. mk

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‘I will not open the door.’

- d). I nəŋtu məri dinkhəi lək ge.
I you story tell not fut. neg. mk
‘I will not tell you a story’

- e). paliu wəŋ lək ge.
they come not fut. neg. mk
‘They will not come’

- f). i məgjaŋbo gə təd lək ge.
I marriage loc go not fut. neg. mk
‘I will not go to the marriage party.’

- g). əpui nəi əpiu thəinai cəki ləm wəŋ lək ge.
My mother and my father today house loc come not fut.neg.mk
‘My parents will not come today’

1.8. Conclusion

Negation plays a very important role in the communication system of language. This study presents the occurrence of negation in sentences in Liangmai. This study is expected to be a guide post and it would be very helpful to those who want to study Liangmai as first or second language. In Liangmai, negation is done mostly by suffixation. The politeness of the negative sentences depends on the different uses of different negative markers. There is negative strengthening in Liangmai. The negative strengthener /wədaodi/ is a Negative Polarity Item (NPI) in Liangmai. There is no reduplication of verb when /wədaodi/ occurs. Whereas when /pəŋ/ occurs there is always reduplication of the verb. /pəŋ/ can occur both in negative as well as

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in positive environment. Even if double negation in Liangmai is very rare, the construction of double negated sentence is not impossible.

Though the present study is not extensive in scope, it would still be a very great help to both the linguists as well to those who learn Liangmai as first language or second language.

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