

Negation in Malto

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Abstract

This study illustrates differences in the process of negation marking process between the variations of Sauriya Pahariya and Mal Pahariya. It also illustrates the commonalities they exhibit in marking negation. This paper shows that Malto has dedicated a negative imperative. This study examines two distinct forms of copula negation that signify various types of copula predicates. This study explains how negative constructions with an indefinite pronoun and WH words provide a negative reading, and how double negatives provide a negative reading.

Keywords: Malto, negation, double negative, copula negation, suffixation, infixation.

1. Introduction

Malto is one of the North-Dravidian languages spoken by tribal groups like Mal Pahariya and Sauriya Pahariya in Pakur, Godda, and Sahibganj districts of Jharkhand. According to Eberhard and Fennig (2022), Malto is also an endangered language on the verge of extinction. Furthermore, in terms of linguistic works on Malto, apart from a handful of descriptive grammars, including Droese (1884), Mahapatra (1979), Kobayashi (2000, 2012) and Puttaswamy (2009), Malto remains largely understudied. There are two types of varieties in Malto: Mal Paharia and Sauriya Paharia.

Zanuttini (2001) mentions three different types of negation. They are the following:

Morphological Negation: The dependent negation morpheme that can be attached to the

verb (Iatridou & Zeijlstra 2013). In (1), *-me-* is a dependent morpheme and it has been attached to the verb by infixation.

- (1) john elmalari sermedi (Turkish)
 John apples like.NEG.PST.3SG
 ‘John doesn’t like apples.’

Morphosyntactic Negation: Negative auxiliary expresses tense, aspect, mood, person, number, and gender. In (2), *nəv* is an auxiliary negation verb, and it hosts tense, person and gender marking.

- (2) mi ghar dza-t nəv-to (Marathi)
 I.NOM home go-IPFV not-PST.1SGM
 ‘I was not going home.’

Lexical Negation: Independent and overt lexeme mark negation in a sentence. In (3), *nahi* is auxiliary verb. It does not inflect for person, number, gender, and tense.

- (3) akash pad^həta nahi hai (Hindi)
 Akash study NEG be.PRS
 ‘Akash doesn’t study.’

(4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), (14) and (15) are examples of Sauriya Pahariya variation. All the following examples show that Malto has dependent morphemes that mark negation, thus Malto has morphological negation.

Sauriya Pahariya Variation

Present tense

In (5), *-ol-* is dependent morpheme. It marks the negation. The process of forming negation is infixation. So, it gets infixed between the root verb and the person, number marking. Infixation is possible in the present tense for marking negation in the Sauriya Pahariya variation.

- (4) mo:q-i-n
 eat-PRES-1SG
 ‘I eat’ (Kobayashi 2012: 46)
- (5) mo:q-ol-(a)-ke-n
 eat-NEG.SFX-(E)-PST.SFX.1SG
 ‘I do not eat’ (Kobayashi 2012: 46)

Future Tense

In (7), *-ala* is a dependent morpheme. It marks negation in the future tense. The process of attaching the dependent morpheme to the verb is suffixation. In the Sauriya Pahariya variation, negation in the future tense is marked through the suffixation.

- (6) mo:q-e-n
eat-FUT-1SG
'I will eat' (Kobayashi 2012: 47)
- (7) mo:q-e-n-ala
eat-FUT-1SG-NEG.SUF
'I will not eat' (Kobayashi 2012: 47)

Past Tense

In (9), *-la-* is dependent marking. It marks negation in the past tense. It gets infix in the root verb and person, number marking. The process of attaching the dependent morpheme to the verb is infixation. In the Sauriya Pahariya variation, negation in the past tense is marked through infixation.

- (8) moq-qe-n
eat-PST-1SG
'I ate ' (Kobayashi 2012: 47)
- (9) mo:q-la-ke-n
eat-NEG.SFX-PST-1SG
'I didn't eat ' (Kobayashi 2012: 47)

Subjunctive

In (11), negation in subjunctive is marked by *-la-* dependent morpheme through infixation in Sauriya Pahariya variation.

- (10) mo:q-l-eh
eat-SBJV-3SG.M
'He would eat' (Kobayashi 2012: 48)
- (11) mo:q-la-le-h
eat-NEG.SFX-SBJV-3SG.M
'He would not eat' (Kobayashi 2012: 48)

Optative

In (13), negation in optative is marked by *-om-* dependent morpheme through infixation in Sauriya Pahariya variation.

- (12) mo:q-a:nd-ed
eat-OPT-3SG.NM

‘She may eat’

(Kobayashi 2012: 48)

- (13) mo:q-om-and-ed
eat-NEG.SFX-OPT-3SG.NM
‘She may not eat’

(Kobayashi 2012: 48)

Imperative

In (15), negation in the imperative is marked by *-om-* dependent morpheme through infixation in Sauriya Pahariya variation.

- (14) mo:q-a
eat-IMP
‘eat’

(Kobayashi 2012: 49)

- (15) mo:q-om-a
eat-NG.IMP
‘Don’t eat’

(Kobayashi 2012: 49)

In the Sauriya Pahariya variation, Negation in the future tense is marked by suffixation. Negation in the past tense, present tense, subjunctive, optative, and imperative is marked by the process of infixation.

2. Comparing Negation in Sauriya Pahariya variation with Mal Pahariya variation

Mal Pahariya variation

Present Tense

There are two ways to mark negation in the Mal Pahariya variation. In (17), ‘*məla*’ is used for marking the negation. ‘*məla*’ is a negation auxiliary verb in Malto. In (18), ‘*məla*’ is infixed between verb and tense, person, and number marking. So, in Mal Pahariya, the negation in the present tense is marked by ‘*məla*’ as an auxiliary verb or as infixation, whereas, in Sauriya Pahariya variation has ‘*-ol-*’ morpheme that marks negation by infixing it.

- (16) ajay-ek seve ləbani
ajay-DAT apple like
‘Ajay likes an apple.’
- (17) ajay-ek seve ləbani məla
ajay-DAT apple like NEG
‘Ajay does not like an apple.’

- (18) e:n tat^hje moho-məla-tan
I mnago eat-NEG-PST.1SG
'I don't eat a mango.'

Future Tense

In Sauriya Pahariya variation, negation in the future is marked by the suffix '-ala'. But, in Mal Pahariya variation, negation is marked through the process of infixation by affix '-la' as in examples (20) and (21).

- (19) e:n eskul-ek ek-kan
I school-DAT go-FUT
'I will go to school.'
- (20) e:n eskul-ek ek-la-n
I school-DAT go-NEG-FUT.1SG
'I will not go to school.'
- (21) en jagu-n ləp-la-n
I food-ACC eat-NEG-FUT.1SG
'I will not eat.'

Past Tense

The process of marking negation in Sauriya Pahariya and Mal Pahariya is the same. They both mark negation in past through the infixation as in examples (22), (23) and (24).

- (22) ajay-ek oḍ^hik ek-ina
ajay-DAT home.DAT go-PST.3SGM
'Ajay went to school.'
- (23) ajay-ek oḍ^hik ek-la-ina
ajay-DAT home.DAT go-NEG-PST.3SGM
'Ajay did not go to school.'
- (24) en jagu-n ləp-la-in
I food-ACC eat-NEG-PST.1SG
'I did not eat food.'

Optative

Optative sentence in Mal Pahariya is negated with 'məla' as in example (26). Whereas, in Sauriya Paharia '-om-' morpheme is used for marking negation through infixation.

- (25) a:yu ʈat^hye mohot loṭi
she mango eat-INF may

‘She may eat a mango.’

- (26) a:yu ʈaʈʰye mohot loɽo məla
she mango eat.INF may NEG
‘She may not eat a mango.’

Imperative

The process of marking negation in imperative in both variations is the same. It is marked through infixation by ‘-om-’ morpheme as in (13) and (28).

- (27) odʰik eɽk-a
home.DAT go-IMP
‘Go home.’

- (28) odʰik ek-om-a
home.DAT go-NEG-IMP
‘Don’t go home.’

3. Negation in Copula

Payne (1997) says non-verbal clauses can be divided into different types as follows:

Proper inclusion

There are two ways to negate proper inclusion. In (30), ‘məla’ marks negation. In (32), negation is marked with ‘məla’ by infixing it between the verb and the person and number marking. Examples (29) and (31) do not have verbs. The ‘-e’ marking is involved in forming the predication.

- (29) ajay-e doctor-e
ajay-e doctor-e
‘Ajay is doctor.’
- (30) ajay-e doctor-e məla
Ajay-e doctor-e NEG
‘Ajay is not doctor.’
- (31) enu doctor-en
I doctor-1SG
‘I am doctor.’

- (32) e:n doctor-e mələ-tan
I doctor-e NEG-PST
'I am not doctor.'

Attribution

An attributive predicate is negated by *məla* auxiliary verb as in example (34).

- (33) a:hu hus^hia:r-e
he intelligent-E
'He is intelligent.'
- (34) a:hu hus^hia:r-e məla
he intelligent-E NEG
'He is not intelligent.'

Locative Predication

A locative predicate is negated with the help of the negative morpheme '-o' as in example (36). '*bei*' is the present 'be' form of the verb. It is negated by suffixing -o morpheme.

- (35) koləme tabule-no bei
pen table-LOC be.PRS
'Pen table par hai.'
- (36) koləme tabule-no bəyo
pen table-LOC be.PRS.NEG
'Pen is not table.'

Existential Predication

The existential predicate is formed by '*bei*'. In example (38), a sentence is negated by '-o' morpheme suffixation.

- (37) berəhe dade-no bei
cat jungle-LOC be.PRS
'There exists the wild cat.'
- (38) berəhe dade-no bəyo
cat jungle-LOC be.PRS.NEG
'There doesn't exist the wild cat.'

Possessive predicate

A possessive predicate is negated by '-o' morpheme by suffixation. The suffix is attached to be a verb, as in example (40).

- (39) ajay-e pede-no car-e bei
ajay-E have-LOC car-E be.PRS
'Ajay has a car.'

- (40) ajay-e pede-no car-e bəyo
ajay-E have-LOC car-E be.PRS.NEG
'Ajay does not have a car.'

Equation

Equation predicate is negated by '*məla*' auxiliary verb as in (42).

- (41) a:yu eŋ dudu
that my mother
'That's my mother.'
- (42) a:yu eŋ dudu məla
that my mother NEG
'That's not my mother.'

A copula is negated in three ways. The first way is to use the negative auxiliary. The second way is to infix '*-məla-*' between the root verb and the person, number marking. The third way is to add the suffix '*-o*' to be a verb.

4. The position of negation in Malto

There are two positions of negative marking. One is Pre-verbal, and the other is Post-verbal. Negation marked preverbally is called preverbal negation. Negation marked postverbally is called Post-verbal negation. Examples (43), (44), (45), (46), and (47) show that Malto has Post-Verbal negation.

- (43) mo:q-e-n-ala
eat-FUT-1SG-NEG.SUF
'I will not eat' (Kobayashi 2012: 47)
- (44) a:yu doctor-ni məla
that.girl doctor-F NEG
'That woman is not a doctor.'
- (45) e:n jagu ləpo-toko mələ-tan
I food eat-TOKO NEG-PST
'I don't want to eat food.'
- (46) berəhe dəde-no bəyo
cat jungle-LOC be.PRS.NEG
'There doesn't exist the wild cat.'
- (47) en jagu ləp-la-in
I food eat-NEG-PST.1SG

‘I did not eat food.’

Sauriya Pahariya and Mal Pahariya variations, they both have Post-verbal negation.

5. Marking negation with the help of WH and in-definite pronouns

In Malto, most of the indefinite pronouns are formed by WH words. *ikne* and *indir* are WH words in Malto. The following are examples:

- nowhere → *ikne a: no m̐la*
- never → *ikne kaḍa m̐la*
- nothing → *indir-ne m̐la*
- whoever → *indir-ho p̐di*

In (48), ‘*indrane*’ together with ‘*m̐la*’ gives the reading of ‘nothing’. Malto does not have a separate word for ‘nothing’. The reading is possible when ‘*indrane*’ is licensed by the negative auxiliary verb ‘*m̐la*’.

- (48) e:n indrane a:hu m̐la-tan
I WH that NEG-PST
‘I know nothing.’

In (49), ‘*nekene*’ is indefinite pronoun. There are two negatives, one in the form of an indefinite pronoun and the other in the form of a verb. ‘*nekene*’ is licensed by negative -*la*- morpheme. Thus, a double negative in Malto gives a negative reading.

- (49) e:n nekene tud-la-in
I nobody see-NEG-PRS.1SG
‘maine kisi ko bhi nahi dekha.’

In (50), ‘*indr̐-ne*’ is a WH word that gets licensed by the negative auxiliary verb ‘*m̐la*’ and gives the reading of ‘no-use’.

- (50) a: indr̐-ne kadze m̐la
that indr̐-NE work NEG
‘He is of no use.’

6. Conclusion

Malto has morphological negation. Malto has two variations that are Sauriya Pahariya and Mal Pahariya. The marking of negation in both variations differs. Marking negation

by suffixation in the future tense is possible in the Sauriya Pahariya variation, but it is not possible in the Mal Pahariya. Mal Pahariya strictly sticks to infixation for marking negation. In Sauriya Pahariya, the marking of negation is marked through ‘-ol’ morpheme through infixation, but in Mal Pahariya it is marked by the negative auxiliary ‘māla’. This negative auxiliary verb ‘māla’ also inflects for the person, number, gender, and tense marking. Malto has a dedicated imperative negation. Imperative negation is marked by -om through infixation.

In Malto, negation in copula is marked by ‘māla’ and ‘bāyo’ auxiliary negative verbs. ‘māla’ negates the proper inclusion predicate, the attribution predicate, and the equation predicate. Whereas ‘bāyo’ negates locative predicate, existential predicate, and possessive predicate. The position of Malto is always post-verbal. The reading of nothing is generated by WH word ‘indra’ and negation auxiliary verb ‘māla’. The double negative provides the negative reading in Malto.

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