Negation in Erzya*

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The negation system of the Mordvin (Erzya and Moksha) languages is known to be complex. There are several negative markers displaying a range of semantic and morphosyntactic characteristics conditioned by factors including clause type, predicate type or the tense and the mood of the predicate, as well as the pragmatics of a phrase or clause. This article introduces the inventory of negative markers used in Erzya and Moksha and provides a detailed description of negation in Erzya.

1. Introduction

The Erzya language and its closest relative Moksha belong to the Mordvin branch of the Uralic language family; Erzya (E.) and Moksha (M.) are represented by groups of core and mixed dialects. The Mordvin population is dispersed with an overwhelming majority living in the Russian Federation; according to the 2010 Russian Census,¹ the number of ethnic Mordvins in Russia was altogether 744,237. In the Republic of Mordovia situated in the Middle-Volga region of Russia, the Erzya and Moksha population (333,112) constitutes a minority (39.9%). No reliable data are found on either the proportion of the Erzyas and Mokshas or the size of the Mordvin population outside Russia.

The varieties of Erzya and Moksha have been distinguished with regard to the dialects spoken in the Republic of Mordovia, where the Erzya and Moksha communities are settled in the Eastern and Western areas, respectively. The taxonomy of dialects (Cygankin 1979; Feoktistov 1990: LXXI-LXXXVI; Feoktistov & Saarinen 2005: 9–59; Ivanova 2006) differentiates between several areal groups of Erzya and Moksha sharing common morphophonological features. Literary standards for the Erzya and

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Moksha languages were developed by the 1930s. Dialects spoken in the present-day Republic of Mordovia, the Erzya dialect of Kozlovka (a locality in the Atjaševo region) and the central dialects of Moksha located in the Krasnoslobodsk, Temnikov, Atjur’ëvo and several other regions were used as prototypes. Though there was some debate, an unmodified version of the Russian alphabet in the Cyrillic script was adopted for both Erzya and Moksha.

Erzya and Moksha are in many ways typical Uralic languages – suffixation and the use of postpositions being one of the salient characteristics of their structure. There is an elaborate system of case-marking of nouns and conjugation of verbs. In a phrase, the modifier precedes the head. Word order is fairly flexible (e.g. Vilkuna 1998: 178). Among features not very common in other Uralic languages are the definite (or object) conjugation of verbs alongside the indefinite (or subject) conjugation (see Keresztes 1999 for details), as well as the conjugation of non-verbal predicates; for recent treatments of the subject, see Turunen (2011), Hamari (2007) and Rueter (2010). Written Erzya and Moksha are similar in orthography and are mutually intelligible to a fairly high degree. In speech, communication between Erzyas and Mokshas is hindered owing to differences in the phonetics of the languages, e.g. in prosody and in the quality and distribution of vowels and consonants. Alongside differences in phonetics (and phonology), Erzya and Moksha have diverging lexical and morphological features.

The negation system of the Mordvin languages is known to be complex. There are several different negative markers displaying a range of semantic and morphosyntactic characteristics conditioned by factors including clause type, predicate type or the tense and the mood of the predicate (see Hamari 2007 for a detailed description), as well as the pragmatics of a phrase or clause.

Among the negative markers are: auxiliary verbs (E. eź-, M. iź-; E. ilä-, M. tä-), particles (E. a, M. af; E., M. apak) and markers that display characteristics of both verbal and non-verbal categories (E. avol; E. araś, M. aš). Some of the markers have more than one function and form, but are conventionally referred to as either negative particles or negative auxiliaries (Erina 1997: 98–101). Duality in the functions performed by some markers has not yet been clearly defined. For instance, E. araś, M. aš have been defined as negative verbs (see Ščemerova 1972: 178; also Evsev’ev 1963: 299, concerning E. araś) or nominal elements (Bartens 1996: 77; Hamari 2007: 267–268), while in some sources authors seem to avoid ascribing them to a certain category (e.g. Nad’kin 1980: 316; Imjarekova 1980: 411–418; Cypkajkina 2000: 187–201; Erina 2000: 260–267).

It can be assumed that many of the negatives are of common origin in Erzya and Moksha, although the exact relationship of some of the forms is unclear (E. a, M. af). On the other hand, some of the negative markers have clearly developed separately in the two languages (e.g. M. -ftuľa/-ftuľa/-; -ftuľaľ/-/ftuľaľa-). In the case of E. araś and M. aš, the etymology is obscure (e.g. Ščemerova 1972: 177–179; 1975: 260–273; Hamari 2007: 107–113).
Divergence of some of the forms, for example, E. _avoľ_, M. _afəľ_; E. _iľa_, M. _ťa_- can be ascribed to the effect of speech prosody manifested differently in the two languages. As negative markers are generally auxiliary components of a phrase or a clause, they tend to occur in weak positions in relation to sentence stress and are susceptible to modification. The assignment of stress and the effects of stress on the quality of vowel (and consonant) segments of a word are not uniform (this has been recently treated in Aasmäe 2012). The use of vowels in Erzya is primarily influenced by vowel harmony and the quality of vowels in unstressed syllables does not crucially change. In Moksha, on the other hand, the vowels of unstressed syllables tend to be reduced (compare the vowel segments in E. _ked-teme_, M. _käť-ftomä_ ‘without a hand; handless’). Thus, in the core dialects of Erzya which have movable word stress, one finds _a∙voľ_/avo∙ľ_ (also awoľ, awuľ, auľ -ems) ‘not be’; sg. _i∙ľa_/iľa_, pl. _i∙ľado_/iľa∙do_ ‘don’t’ (the dot symbol in the examples marks stress). In Moksha, with more or less constant stress either on the initial syllable or a non-initial syllable with _a_, a schwa vowel (or vowel deletion) appears in unstressed syllables: _a∙fəľ_; (deleted _i_-) _ťa_- or _ďa_-.

In some dialects of Erzya influenced by Moksha (mainly those of the South-Eastern part of Mordovia and some dialects in the diaspora), negatives have been partially taken over from Moksha.

A complete inventory of the negative markers used in Erzya and Moksha is featured in Table 1. The table indicates the word categories of the negative markers and the combinability of the markers with other categories.

In view of the issues presented above we admit that an up-to-date specification of the characteristics and functions of the negative constructions in the two languages would be required to gain insight into the complexity of this domain in Mordvin. In the following sections a fairly detailed description of the negative markers in Erzya is provided, but Moksha is excluded from the treatment in the present article. An account of verbal negation in Moksha has recently been given by Fournet (2012). The analysis carried out in this article is based on information found in grammars and other sources, a corpus compiled by Arja Hamari, as well as primary fieldwork and the personal knowledge of Niina Aasmäe, who is a native Erzya. The treatment of dialect variability and historical changes is beyond the scope of this description, although some relevant commentaries are added; for a discussion of the origin of the forms see Hamari (2013).

2. A slightly modified version of the table with etymological information is presented in Hamari (2013).
3. The Uralic Phonetic Alphabet (or the Finno-Ugric transcription system) is used in the examples provided in this article (see Sovijärvi & Peltola 1977).
The conjugation of a verbal predicate is versatile in Erzya. Diversity is also observed in the negative forms, where the choice of the negative marker and of the form of the lexical verb depends on the tense and mood of the verbal predicate. In the indicative

2. Clausal negation

2.1 Standard negation

The conjugation of a verbal predicate is versatile in Erzya. Diversity is also observed in the negative forms, where the choice of the negative marker and of the form of the lexical verb depends on the tense and mood of the verbal predicate. In the indicative
mood, the negative particle \textit{a} (dialectally \textit{at}) and the negative auxiliary \textit{ež-} are employed. The particle occurs in the present and 2nd past tense and the auxiliary only in the unmarked 1st past tense. Therefore, both the auxiliary verb and the particle can be regarded as means of expressing standard negation in Erzya. The negative particle \textit{a} is also used with a range of non-indicative and non-verbal categories.

In Erzya, the present tense forms are used when referring to either present or future events.\footnote{In addition, Mordvin grammars usually mention an analytic future tense construction built on the auxiliary \textit{karmams} 'begin' accompanied by the so-called 2nd infinitive form of the lexical verb; under negation, the particle \textit{a} is used. However, this construction is not fully grammaticalized as a tense form but still carries an inchoative meaning. Nonetheless, there is a special future tense construction used exclusively in non-verbal clauses (see Section 2.3).} The negative constructions based on the particle \textit{a} are symmetric, as the only difference between the affirmative and negative constructions is the presence of the negative marker under negation (see Miestamo 2005: 39–45, 51–60 for the definition of standard negation and classification of symmetric and asymmetric negation). In the present tense of the indicative the lexical verb acquires either the indefinite (1) or the definite conjugation (2), while the negative particle is invariant (see Table 2 in Section 2.3 for the indefinite affirmative forms).\footnote{A complementary negative construction formed with the verb \textit{sodams} 'know' and the particle \textit{a} has been produced in Erzya under the influence of sentence stress; when stressed the negative marker is attached to the lexical verb and an alternative negation has thus been formed, e.g. \textit{azdan} 'I don't know' < \textit{a-sodan} 'I don't know' (where intervocalic \textit{-s-} becomes voiced).} Note that as the verb form refers to the subject and, in the definite conjugation, to the object person, personal pronouns can be omitted; the same applies to other tense and mood forms of Erzya as well.

\begin{itemize}
  \item[(1)] \begin{itemize}
    \item[a.] \textit{uč-an}
    wait-PRS.1SG
    ‘I wait/am waiting’
    \item[b.] \textit{a} \textit{uč-an}
    NEG wait-PRS.1SG
    ‘I do not wait/am not waiting’
  \end{itemize}
  \item[(2)] \begin{itemize}
    \item[a.] \textit{uč-o-tan}
    wait-PRS.1SG>2SG
    ‘I wait/am waiting for you’
    \item[b.] \textit{a} \textit{uč-o-tan}
    NEG wait-PRS.1SG>2SG
    ‘I do not wait/am not waiting for you’
  \end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

The 2nd past tense is a marked past tense form in that it has only habitual or progressive interpretations (Bartens 1999: 131); it is only used to express recurrent or
continuous past tense events. The tense marker is -iľ- (developed from the auxiliary ulems 'be' preceded by the participial marker -i of the lexical verb), and it is followed by a personal ending of either the indefinite (3) or the definite conjugation (4). The negative pattern, in which the negative particle a is placed before the affirmative form of the verb, is also symmetric.

(3) a. uč-iľiń
   wait-pst2.1sg
   'I was waiting/usually waited'

   b. a uč-iľiń
      NEG wait-pst2.1sg
      'I was not waiting/did not usually wait'

(4) a. uč-iľiń
   wait-pst2.1sg>2sg
   'I was waiting/usually waited for you'

   b. a uč-iľiń
      NEG wait-pst2.1sg>2sg
      'I was not waiting/did not usually wait for you'

The 1st past tense is the unmarked past tense of Erzya and there are no restrictions as to its use. With its asymmetric negative construction, this tense differs quite radically from the present and the 2nd past tense. The negative marker is the auxiliary eź-, which receives the finite categories that in the affirmative are expressed in the predicate verb: the personal endings of the indefinite (5) and definite conjugation (6). The lexical verb is in the so-called connegative form; this is the bare stem of the verb, although some dialects have preserved the original ending -k that was attached to the stem (e.g. Paasonen 1953:011: eźiń palak 'I did not kiss'; see also Bartens 1999:140). The suffix makes the dialectal form of the connegative identical to the 2nd person singular of the affirmative imperative (see Section 2.2).

(5) a. uč-iń
    wait-pst1.1sg
    'I waited'

    b. eź-iń učo
       NEG-pst1.1sg wait.cng
       'I didn't wait'

(6) a. uč-iťiń
    wait-pst1.1sg>2sg
    'I waited for you'

    b. eź-iťiń učo
       NEG-pst1.1sg>2sg wait.cng
       'I didn't wait for you'
2.2 Negation in non-declaratives

There are several mood categories in Erzya in addition to the indicative mood. These are the imperative, the optative, the conjunctive, the conditional-conjunctive, the desiderative and the conditional. The pattern of negation in some of these moods is the same as in the present tense of the indicative, while in others it is different.

In both the imperative and the optative moods, the negative auxiliary *ila-* is employed and the constructions are asymmetric: in the affirmative, the lexical verb carries all the markers of finiteness, but in the negative it is the auxiliary that is the finite element, while the lexical verb is in the same connegative form that appears in the negation of the 1st past tense.

The negative imperative (or prohibitive) is only possible when the subject is the 2nd person singular or plural (Bartens 1999: 138); both the indefinite (7, 8) and definite conjugations (9, 10) can be used.

(7) a. *učo-k!*
   \[ \text{wait-IMP.2SG} \]
   ‘wait!’

b. *ila* \[ učo! \]
   \[ \text{NEG.IMP.2SG wait.CNG} \]
   ‘do not wait!’

(8) a. *učo-do!*
   \[ \text{wait-IMP.2PL} \]
   ‘wait!’

b. *ila-do* \[ učo! \]
   \[ \text{NEG.IMP-2PL wait.CNG} \]
   ‘do not wait!’

(9) a. *učo-mak!*
   \[ \text{wait-IMP.2SG>1SG} \]
   ‘wait for me!’

b. *ila-mak* \[ učo! \]
   \[ \text{NEG.IMP-2SG>1SG wait.CNG} \]
   ‘do not wait for me!’

(10) a. *učo-miź!*
   \[ \text{wait-IMP.2PL>1SG} \]
   ‘wait for me!’

b. *ila-miź* \[ učo! \]
   \[ \text{NEG.IMP-2PL>1SG wait.CNG} \]
   ‘do not wait for me!’
Considering the relation between the affirmative and the negative imperative, Erzya can be regarded as a representative of the fourth type of prohibitive construction as categorized by van der Auwera and Lejeune (2005:1, 4) in their cross-linguistic study of prohibitives – although with certain reservations. In this type, the verbal construction is different in the affirmative and the negative and, in addition, the negative strategy of the prohibitive differs from the sentential negation of the indicative declarative. In Erzya, the second qualifying condition for type four is met because the negative marker in the prohibitive is different from the negative marker in standard negation.

The first condition, however, is not met in all dialects; the imperative ending -k of the 2nd person singular can dialectally be attached to the negative auxiliary. Moreover, the lexical verb may carry the original ending -k of the connegatives (e.g. ila(k) pala(k) ‘don’t kiss’, see Paasonen 1953:013). This means that in these dialects, the lexical verb can have the same form in both the affirmative and the negative, although the original function of -k is different in these forms.

In the optative, all six personal categories are possible. The constructions are asymmetric in this case as well. In the affirmative the optative marker -z(a)- is added to the lexical verb followed by the personal endings (11a, 12a). In the negative, the optative and personal endings are shifted to the negative auxiliary, while the lexical verb is in the invariant connegative form (11b, 12b).

(11)  
\begin{enumerate}  
\item a. učo-za-t \\
wait-opt-2sg  \\
‘you should wait’ \\
\item b. ila-za-t učo \\
NEG-opt-2sg wait.cng  \\
‘you should not wait’ 
\end{enumerate}

(12)  
\begin{enumerate}  
\item a. učo-za-mak \\
wait-opt-2sg>1sg  \\
‘you should wait for me’ \\
\item b. ila-za-mak učo \\
NEG-opt-2sg>1sg wait.cng  \\
‘you should not wait for me’ 
\end{enumerate}

The optative mood can be regarded as permissive; when using this mood, the speaker expresses a permission or (in the negative) the obstruction of an action or event, but not as categorically as when using the imperative. This difference is illustrated with an imperative form (13a) and an optative form (13b) of the same clause.

(13)  
\begin{enumerate}  
\item a. ili-ik stavto lela-t! \\
eg.imp-2sg>3sg wake.cng elder.brother-poss.2sg  \\
‘don’t wake your elder brother!’ 
\end{enumerate}
b.  

\[ \text{il\-za-k stavto lela-\text{f}} \]

\[ \text{NEG-OPT-2SG}>3SG \quad \text{wake.CNG elder.brother-POS.2SG} \]

\[ \text{‘you should not wake your elder brother’} \]

The conjunctive, the conditional and the conditional-conjunctive moods all developed when original auxiliaries grammaticalized into mood suffixes (Bartens 1999: 132–137). In the case of the conjunctive and the desiderative this auxiliary was *ule- ‘be’ (> conjunctive -vli-/vol; desiderative -eli-/el), in the conditional *te\-ra- ‘try’ (> -d\-e\-ra-), while in the conditional-conjunctive both auxiliaries were present (*te\-ra- + *ule- > -d\-e\-ravl\-i-). The conjunctive suffix is attached to the verb stem, while the desiderative has an additional element -iks- between the verb stem and the original mood suffix; this element consists of the present tense participial ending -i and the translative case suffix -ks. In the case of the conditional and conditional-conjunctive, an element -iń precedes the mood marker; -i represents the present tense participial ending, but the etymology of -iń is unclear. In the glosses of (14)–(17), -i and -iń are considered part of the verb stem (see e.g. Cypkajkina 2000: 189–190 for the complete conjugational paradigms of these moods in contemporary Erzya).

The conditional mood (14) expresses a future action, event or state the realization of which is a condition to the realization of another action, event or state. It is only employed in subordinate clauses, while the main clause has an indicative verb form in the present tense. The negative construction (14b) is always symmetric: it is formed by using the negative particle *a.*

(14)  

a.  \[ \text{moľiń-děra-n Sarano-v, baľet nej-an} \]

\[ \text{go-COND-1SG Saransk-LAT ballet see-PRS.1SG} \]

\[ ‘\text{if I go to Saransk, I will see a ballet’} \]

b.  \[ \text{a moľiń-děra-n Sarano-v, baľet a nej-an} \]

\[ \text{NEG go-COND-1SG Saransk-LAT ballet NEG see-PRS.1SG} \]

\[ ‘\text{if I don’t go to Saransk, I will not see a ballet’} \]

The conjunctive mood is used to express an action, event or state the realization of which is presumed, possible or wished for; it can refer to either the future (15) or the past (16b, 16c). The mood can be employed in both main and subordinate clauses. Under negation both a symmetric and an asymmetric construction are available; symmetric negation is based on the particle *a* (15b) and asymmetric negation on the negative auxiliary *avoľ* accompanied by the connegative form of the lexical verb (15c). The auxiliary *avoľ* is essentially of same origin as the particle *avoľ* of non-verbal clauses (see Section 2.3), but the exact relationship of the two markers is yet to be defined, especially from a functional perspective (see Hamari 2007: 101–107, 2013).
b. *a moľe-vľi-ń Sarano-v, baľet a neje-vľi-ń*
   neg go-condconj-1sg Saransk-lat ballet neg see-condconj-1sg
   ‘if I would not go to Saransk, I would not see a ballet’

c. *avol-iń moľe Sarano-v, baľet avol-iń neje*
   neg-1sg go.cng Saransk-lat ballet neg-1sg see.cng
   ‘if I would not go to Saransk, I would not see a ballet’

The conditional-conjunctive is a conditional, counterfactual mood and usually refers to the past; it expresses an action, event or state that was not realized (16a). The mood is only used in subordinate clauses and the predicate verb of the main clause is often in the conjunctive mood. The negation of the conditional-conjunctive mood is similar to the conjunctive in that symmetric (16b) and asymmetric (16c) negation are both available. The asymmetric negation is based on the negative auxiliary *avol*-, but as can be seen in (16c), there are certain differences in the construction compared to the use of the same auxiliary in the conjunctive. Although the conjugation of the negative auxiliary is identical in the two moods, a difference can be seen in the form of the lexical verb: in the conjunctive (15c), the connegative form is the same as in other negative auxiliary constructions, but in the conditional-conjunctive (16c) the verb form carries the mood marker -*ďeŕa*-. However, the marker of the conditional-conjunctive mood can also be attached to the negative auxiliary in its full form, as in (16d).

\[(16)\]

\(a.\) *moľiń-ďeŕavľi-ń Sarano-v, baľet neje-vľi-ń*
   go-condconj-1sg Saransk-lat ballet see-condconj-1sg
   ‘if I had gone to Saransk, I would have seen a ballet’

\(b.\) *a moľiń-ďeŕavľi-ń Sarano-v, baľet a neje-vľi-ń*
   neg go-condconj-1sg Saransk-lat ballet neg see-condconj-1sg
   ‘if I had not gone to Saransk, I would not have seen a ballet’

\(c.\) *avol-iń moľiń-deňa Sarano-v, baľet*
   neg-1sg go-condconj.cng Saransk-lat ballet
   a neje-vľi-ń
   neg see-condconj-1sg
   ‘if I had not gone to Saransk, I would not have seen a ballet’

\(d.\) *avoliń-ďeňavľi-ń moľe Sarano-v, baľet*
   neg-condconj-1sg go.cng Saransk-lat ballet
   a neje-vľi-ń
   neg see-condconj-1sg
   ‘if I had not gone to Saransk, I would not have seen a ballet’

The desiderative mood is also counterfactual and refers to the past; it expresses an unrealized action, event or state the realization of which was intended or wished for (17a). The mood can be employed in both main and subordinate clauses. The negative
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In the present tense, an intention or wish must be expressed by using the conjunctive mood (e.g. puto-vľi-ń ‘I would plant’, a puto-vľi-ń ‘I would not plant’).

### 2.3 Negation in non-verbal clauses

The affirmative non-verbal clauses (see e.g. Payne 1997:111ff for the classification of these clauses) in Erzya fall into two categories depending on their predicational type: in one category are clauses of equation, proper inclusion, attribution and location, while the other category consists of existential and possessive clauses. In the following, the formation of the two predicational categories in both the affirmative and negative are treated. Some remarks are made concerning the use of the copula uľems ‘be’. A detailed description of negation in non-verbal clauses is provided in Hamari (2007).

In clauses of equation, proper inclusion, attribution and locative predication the non-verbal predicates receive a personal ending of the present and 2nd past tenses of the indicative. Table 2 shows the paradigm of verbal conjugation and non-verbal predicate forms in the present tense of the indicative (see also Turunen 2009 and 2011 for a detailed account).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal conjugation</th>
<th>Non-verbal predicate forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG uč-an</td>
<td>‘I wait’ mazij-an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG uč-at</td>
<td>‘you wait’ mazij-at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG uč-i</td>
<td>‘(s)he waits’ mazij</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL učo-tano</td>
<td>‘we wait’ mazij-tano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL učo-tado</td>
<td>‘you wait’ mazij-tado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL uč-ıť</td>
<td>‘they wait’ mazij-ıť</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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In negative clauses of equation, proper inclusion, attribution and locative predication the particles *a* ‘not’ and *avoľ* ‘not (this, but that)’ are possible in the present tense. As was mentioned in Section 2.2, *avoľ* is of the same origin as the auxiliary *avoľ*-used in the negation of conjunctive and conditional-conjunctive moods; however, in non-verbal clauses *avoľ* is invariant. Therefore, irrespective of the negative marker, the negative constructions of the non-verbal clauses in question are symmetric. In (18), affirmative and negative counterparts of a clause of proper inclusion are illustrated; the predicate of the clauses is a noun with an adjoining verbal ending.

(18) a. \(\text{student-at} \)  
\(\text{student-prs.2sg} \)  
‘you are a student’  
b. \(a / \text{avoľ} \text{student-at} \)  
\(\text{NEG \ NEG student-prs.2sg} \)  
‘you are not a student’

In past tense non-verbal clauses, the 2nd past tense forms are used. In this tense, too, both particles *a* and *avoľ* can occur and the constructions are symmetric, as (19) and (20).

(19) a. \(\text{mazij-ili-t} \)  
\(\text{beautiful-pst2-2sg} \)  
‘you were beautiful’  
b. \(a / \text{avoľ} \text{mazij-ili-t} \)  
\(\text{NEG \ NEG beautiful-pst2-2sg} \)  
‘you were not beautiful’

(20) a. \(\text{ćifra-ś kolmo-l} \)  
\(\text{number-sg.def three-pst2.3sg} \)  
‘the number was three’  
b. \(\text{ćifra-ś a / \text{avoľ} kolmo-l} \)  
\(\text{number-sg.def NEG NEG three-pst2.3sg} \)  
‘the number was not three’

In existential and possessive clauses the predicate in the affirmative is the 3rd person singular or plural of the verb *ulems* ‘be’: (sg.) *uľi*, (pl.) *uľiť* in the present tense, (sg.) *uľňes*, (pl.) *uľňešť* in the past tense. The past tense forms are always built on the derivative *ule-* (‘be.frq’) stem of the verb, as the past tense forms of the underived stem *ule-* are ungrammatical. The negative constructions are asymmetric, as the negative counterparts of the existential forms are (sg.) *araš*, (pl.) *arašť* in the present tense and (sg.) *arašel*, (pl.) *arašelť* in the past tense. It should be noted that the past tense forms of the affirmative and negative existentials differ from each other in that the affirmative existentials employ the 1st past tense, whereas the 2nd past tense is the only option for
negative existentials. Examples (21) and (22) illustrate affirmative and negative existential clauses.

(21) a. *mastor lank-so ul-i ištamo źveř*
    world top-INE be-3SG such animal
    ‘there is such an animal in the world’ (Bartens 1999:162)

     b. *mastor lank-so araś ištamo źveř*
    world top-INE NEG.3SG such animal
    ‘there is not such an animal in the world’ (Bartens 1999:162)

     c. *mastor lank-so ul-it ištamo źveř-t*
    world top-INE be-3PL such animal-PL
    ‘there are such animals in the world’ (Bartens 1999:162)

     d. *mastor lank-so araś-t ištamo źveř-t*
    world top-INE NEG-3PL such animal-PL
    ‘there are not such animals in the world’ (Bartens 1999:162)

(22) a. *mastor lank-so ul-ńe-s ištamo źveř*
    world top-INE be-FRQ-PST1.3SG such animal
    ‘there was such an animal in the world’

     b. *mastor lank-so araś-eľ ištamo źveř*
    world top-INE NEG-PST2.3SG such animal
    ‘there was not such an animal in the world’

An example of a possessive clause is given in (23). There is no verb meaning ‘have’ in Erzya but, instead, the existential *ulëms ‘be’* is used.

(23) a. *moń ul-i kudo-m*
    1SG.GEN be-3SG house-poss.1SG
    ‘I have a house’

     b. *moń araś kudo-m*
    1SG.GEN NEG.3SG house-poss.1SG
    ‘I don’t have a house’

The word-class of the negative marker *araś* is not easy to determine. On the one hand, it can be considered a negative verb (e.g. Evsev’ev 1963:299; Erina 1997:101) as it is employed as a negative counterpart to an affirmative verb. On the other hand, it has been regarded as a nominal element due to its conjugational properties (e.g. Bartens 1996:77; Hamari 2007:267–268).

Affirmative locative clauses, as in (24), are also built as adnominal phrases with adjoining verbal endings seen in non-verbal clauses of equation, proper inclusion, and attribution.

(24) *kudo-s-at*
    house-INE-PRS.2SG
    ‘you are at home’
The negative locative clauses can be formed by using either the negative particles *a*, *avoľ* (25a), as in the non-verbal clauses of equation, proper inclusion, and attribution, or the negative marker *araš* (25b), which is also employed in existential and possessive clauses (see Hamari 2007:163–177 for details). Thus, negation in locative constructions is relatively complex.

(25)  
   a. *a / avol* kudo-s-at  
        NEG  NEG  house-INE-PRS.2SG  
        ‘you are not at home’  
   b. *araš-at* kudo-so  
        NEG-PRS.2SG  house-INE  
        ‘you are not at home’

Note that when the particles *a* and *avoľ* are employed, the subject agreement is shown in the locative phrase (25a), but with *araš*, the personal endings are attached to the negative marker (25b). As pointed out in Hamari (2007:175–177), there is a difference in meaning between the constructions with *a/avoľ* on the one hand and *araš* on the other. In the case of *a/avoľ*, the speaker implies that the subject referent is in another location (with especially *avoľ* expressing an opposition such as ‘not here, but somewhere else’), whereas a negation with *araš* makes no reference to the presence of the referent somewhere else. The present and past forms of the negative existential *araš* are given in Table 3 (as already mentioned, the past tense forms correspond in form to the 2nd past tense).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Present tense</th>
<th>Past tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td><em>araš-an</em></td>
<td><em>araš-eliń</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td><em>araš-at</em></td>
<td><em>araš-eliť</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG</td>
<td><em>araš</em></td>
<td><em>araš-el</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td><em>araš-tano</em></td>
<td><em>araš-elińek</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td><em>araš-tado</em></td>
<td><em>araš-eliđe</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td><em>araš-t</em></td>
<td><em>araš-elť</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The semantic or pragmatic features of the negative markers have not been studied in detail, but it seems that especially in locative expressions even further differences could be detected, as illustrated in (26). Note that in addition to the 2nd past tense forms, the negative auxiliary and a connegative form of the verb *ulems* ‘be’ can also be used in these expressions, as in (26d); this past tense construction is available for other non-verbal clauses as well.
(26) a. *son a toso-l’*
   3SG NEG there-PST.2-3SG
   ‘(s)he was not there (at the moment)’

b. *son avol’ toso-l’*
   3SG NEG there-PST.2-3SG
   ‘(s)he was not there (but in another place)’

c. *son araś-el’ toso*
   3SG NEG-PST.2-3SG there
   ‘(s)he (1) has not been there; (2) was missing (not present) there’

d. *son eź ul-ńe toso*
   3SG NEG-PST.1-3SG be-FRQ.CNG there
   ‘(s)he has not been (never went) there’

It was already stated that the 3rd person forms of the verb *ulems* ‘be’ are used in the affirmative existential and possessive clauses. A few notes must also be added concerning the use of the verb *ulems* ‘be’ as a copula in other non-verbal clauses. The present tense forms of *ulems*, in addition to the uses discussed, appear in clauses of equation, proper inclusion, attribution and locative predication, in which the copula expresses a future state. Negative constructions formed by adding the particle *a* in such clauses are symmetric and they conform to the structure of standard negation, as in (27) and (28).

(27) a. *ul-at mazij*
   be-PRS.2SG beautiful
   ‘you will be beautiful’

b. *a ul-at mazij*
   NEG be-PRS.2SG beautiful
   ‘you will not be beautiful’

(28) a. *ul-at kudo-so*
   be-PRS.2SG house-INE
   ‘you will be at home’

b. *a ul-at kudo-so*
   NEG be-PRS.2SG house-INE
   ‘you will not be at home’

Furthermore, in non-verbal clauses expressed in moods other than the indicative the use of the verb *ulems* ‘be’ is obligatory. In these cases, the constructions are verbal clauses that conform to the patterns of verbal predicates seen in Section 2.2.

2.4 Negation in dependent/subordinate clauses

In Erzya there are both finite subordinate clauses, with or without a clause-initial conjunction, and non-finite subordinate verb forms. In finite subordinate clauses, the conditions for the choice of the negative pattern are the same as those of main clauses.
Non-finite subordinate verb forms of Erzya include infinitives, participles and gerunds. When used independently, the infinitives usually occur with the negative particle a (e.g. a morams ‘to not sing’). If a finite verb form appears along with the infinitive, the form of the negative construction is determined by the form of the finite verb (e.g. a karma-n mora-mo [NEG start-prs.1sg sing-inf2] ‘I will not start to sing/am not going to sing’; a lotk-i mora-modo [NEG stop-prs.3sg sing-inf3] ‘(s)he does not stop singing’).

Participles are generally used in an adnominal function. The present tense participle or the 1st participle can only be employed as an attribute (e.g. Bartens 1999: 152). This participle can be negated either by a or avol (Alëškina 2000: 220) and the construction is symmetric, as in (30b).

(30) a. lovn-ića tefńě
   read-PTCP.PRS girl
   ‘a reading girl; a girl who reads’

b. a / avol lovn-ića tefńě
   NEG NEG read-PTCP.PRS girl
   ‘a girl who does not read’

The 2nd and the 3rd participle are both past tense participles; the 2nd participle is marked with the suffix -vt and the 3rd participle with -ź. The 2nd participle is only used as an attribute and only in cases where the participle has its own modifier in an oblique case; the modifier can express the agent or the time or place of the event (Alëškina 2000: 222). The 3rd participle, on the other hand, can be employed either as an attribute or a predicate and it doesn’t require a modifier. Both past tense participles are negated by using an asymmetric negative construction formed by the negative particle apak. In one respect this particle behaves like a negative auxiliary: the lexical verb acquires the connegative form when preceded by it. In (31b) the negative participle appears in an attributive position, while in (32) the participle is used as a noun.

(31) a. prado-ź fev
   finish-PTCP.PRS work
   ‘work that has been finished’

b. apak prado fev
   NEG finish.CNG work
   ‘work that hasn’t been finished, unfinished work’
As was already mentioned, participles can also be used in a predicate position; these negative constructions are also asymmetric, as shown in (33).

(33) a. pakśa-ś soka-ź
    field-sg.def plough-ptcp.prs
    ‘The field is ploughed.’

b. pakśa-ś apak soka
    field-sg.def neg plough.cng
    ‘The field is not ploughed.’

It should also be mentioned that in the negative constructions in predicate position both the negative marker and the participle can acquire personal endings (for a closer inspection see Hamari 2007: 153–159): e.g. apak-an orša, apak orša-k-an ‘I am not dressed’. As can be seen in (34), the negative gerund does not differ formally from a negative participle.

(34) apak kaźne a ilľa-sak
    neg give.present.cng neg see.off-prs.1sg>3sg
    ‘you won’t see her/him off without giving presents’ (Rec1977)

In fact, the formation of the gerund in both the affirmative and the negative is identical to that of the 3rd participle (35). In other words, there is no morphological difference between the 3rd participle and the gerund, but the same form can be used in both an adnominal and adverbial function.

(35) a. ćori-ńe-ś čije-ź tu-ś krandazo-ńť melga
    boy-dim-sg.def run-ger go-pst1.3sg cart-sg.def.gen after
    ‘the boy went after the cart running’

b. ćori-ńe-ś apak čije tu-ś
    boy-dim-sg.def neg run.cng go-pst1.3sg
    krandazo-ńť melga cart-sg.def.gen after
    ‘the boy went after the cart without running’

The special negative marker for negative gerunds and participles makes Erzya (and Moksha) exceptional among the Uralic languages; it is more common in this language family that an abessive case ending and/or a negative derivative suffix of the nominal categories (e.g. nouns and adjectives) are employed in forming negative non-finite verb forms. As illustrated in Section 3.3, there is a negative abessive ending also in Erzya, but it is only used in the nominal and not verbal categories.
Finally, as was already mentioned in Section 2.2, certain moods only appear in subordinate clauses: these are the conditional and the conditional-conjunctive mood. The verb forms of these moods are finite.

3. Non-clausal negation

3.1 Negative replies

All the negative markers, with the exception of the particle $a$, can occur in one-word utterances (short replies). There is accordance in form and semantics between a negative marker in a short reply and the related constituent of a preceding statement, negation or question. In (36), for example, because of the 1st past tense of the question the negative auxiliary $eź$- is used in the reply.


2sg go-pst1.2sg Saransk-lat neg-pst1.1sg

‘– Did you go to Saransk? – No.’

Especially in non-verbal clauses, the markers are interchangeable to some extent in casual speech, as shown in alternative negative replies in (37).


be-frq-pst1.2sg there neg-pst1.1sg neg-pst2.1sg neg

‘– Did you go (have you been) there? – I didn’t/I haven’t been/No.’

b. – Tol $student-at$? – $Araś$ / $Avol$.

2sg student-prs.2sg neg neg

‘– Are you a student? – No, I am not/No, I am not (a student, but…).’

Moreover, the negative marker $araś$ can be used as a negative one-word reply to polar questions, irrespective of the type of the predication (for a more detailed survey of $araś$ in this function see Hamari 2007:260–264). In (38) it is used in a context where the predicate is verbal.

(38) – Ejkakš-tne $jak-it$ pang-s? – $Araś$, a $jak-it$

child-pl.def go-prs.3pl mushroom-ill neg neg go-prs.3pl

‘– Do the children go to pick mushrooms? – No, they don’t (go).’

3.2 Negative indefinites and quantifiers

There are no negative pronouns and adverbs in Erzya; instead, indefinite pronouns and adverbs acquire a negative reading in a negative clause. These indefinites are formed on the basis of interrogative pronouns and adverbs by using the suffix -Cak regarded as an enclitic particle (Bartens 1999:167): the initial consonant (= C) of the
The suffix in -Cak is also used as a scalar or additive particle, expressing such meanings as ‘even, also, too’ (in affirmative clauses) or ‘not even’ (in negative clauses). It can also express coordination (Bartens 1999:167). Moreover, the use of the suffix -Cak is not restricted to pronouns and adverbs; it can be attached to any word category (see Sections 4.2 and 4.4).

3.3 Abessive/caritive/privative negation

The abessive case ending -(v)TOmO,6 which is used to express the lack or absence of something, can also be regarded as a negative marker in Erzya; it can be attached to words representing one of the nominal categories (nouns, adjectives, pronouns, numerals). It is illustrated in (40) and (41), where the words with this negative marker occur in the functions of an attribute and a modifier, respectively.

(40) **teta-vtomo** ćori-ńe
   father-ABE  boy-DIM
   ‘a fatherless little boy’

(41) ćori-ńe-ś **teta-vtomo** kas-i
   boy-DIM-SG.DEF  father-ABE  grow.up-PRS.3SG
   ‘the little boy is growing up without a father’

The adnominal and adverbial functions of the abessive forms are a consequence of the etymology of the suffix: in the light of the Finnic, Saami, Permic and Mari languages it

6. The suffix has several allomorphs depending on the phonetic features of the noun: the vowel O is either o (in a word-form with back vowels) or e (in a word-form with front vowels); T can appear either as palatalized -ť (if the noun ends in a palatalized consonant or a front vowel) or non-palatalized -t (if the noun ends in a non-palatalized consonant or a back vowel); the suffix-initial -v- only appears if the noun ends in a vowel.
is likely that in the Mordvin languages an original derivative ending of adjectives has taken over the functions of the original abessive case ending, which has disappeared without trace (Itkonen 1992: 225).

In the formation of non-verbal categories expressing a negative meaning (antonyms) the negative particle \textit{a} is widely used in Erzya as a prefix. It is mostly nouns, adjectives and adverbs that receive the negation: \textit{amaštoviks} ‘useless’ (\textit{maštoviks} ‘adequate’), \textit{aparo} ‘something bad’ (\textit{paro} ‘good’), \textit{alamo} ‘little’ (\textit{lamo} ‘much’). On the other hand, both \textit{a} and \textit{avoľ} can be used as negative particles in forming antonyms: \textit{a/avoľ paro} ‘not good’, \textit{a/avoľ maštoviks} ‘not useful’, \textit{a/avoľ lamo} ‘not many, much’.

The negative marker \textit{araś} serves to form the noun \textit{araśči} ‘poverty’, where -či is the derivational ending of nouns. Moreover, \textit{araś} could be etymologically connected to \textit{araź} ‘lack, absence’ (Bartens 1996: 79).

4. Other aspects of negation

4.1 The scope of negation

As was mentioned in the introduction, word order is fairly free in Erzya. The effects of changes in word order have not yet been properly studied, but we can state that one of the functions of these changes in negative clauses is to bring focus to certain constituents. The clause-initial position is especially prone to being focused. Sentence (42a) is an example of a neutral negative clause, while in (42b) the object of the clause is focused. In (42c), on the other hand, the negative marker in clause-initial position brings the negation itself into focus and reinforces it (see also Section 4.4).

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(42)]
\begin{enumerate}
\item a. \textit{Mikoľ eź-iźe mańa moro-ńŧ}
\textit{Mikoľ} \textit{NEG-PST1.3SG>3SG hear.CNG song-SG.DEF.GEN}
‘Mikoľ didn’t hear the song’
\item b. \textit{moro-ńŧ Mikoľ eź-iźe mańa}
\textit{song-SG.DEF.GEN Mikoľ NEG-PST1.3SG>3SG hear.CNG}
‘(as to) the song, Mikoľ didn’t hear (it)’
\item c. \textit{eź-iźe Mikoľ mańa moro-ńŧ}
\textit{NEG-PST1.3SG>3SG Mikoľ hear.CNG song-SG.DEF.GEN}
‘Mikoľ didn’t (really) hear the song’
\end{enumerate}
\end{enumerate}

The negative particles \textit{a} and \textit{avoľ} are often used to narrow the scope of negation and focus it on a certain constituent. The particle \textit{a} occurring in a position before the verbal predicate in a clause allows inserting other constituents, mostly adverbials, between the particle and the predicate verb. Sentence (43a) is an example of a clause with a neutral word order, while in (43b) the negation of the adverbial \textit{pek parosto} ‘very well’ is focused.
Negation in Erzya

(43) a. a *soda-sa* pek *parosto*  
   NEG know-PRS.1SG>3SG very well  
   ‘I do not know it very well’

    b. a *pek* *parosto* *soda-sa*  
    NEG very well know-PRS.1SG>3SG  
    ‘I do not know it very well’

The particle *avoľ*, on the other hand, is regularly employed to form a special construction with the meaning ‘not A (but B)’. In this construction, *avoľ* precedes the negated constituent, while the rest of the clause remains outside negation (Hamari 2007:256–259). For instance, in (44) the negated constituent is the subject; the identity of the subject supposed by the hearer is negated and another identity is presented instead.

(44) [*–*] *mińek* id-imiź *avoľ* te *ćora-ś,*  
   1PL.GEN save-PST.1SG>1PL NEG this man-SG.DEF  
   *mińek* id-imiź tataro-ś.  
   1PL.GEN save-PST.3SG>1PL Tatar-SG.DEF  
   ‘[*–*] it is not this man (who) saved us, the Tatar saved us.’  
   (Maskaev, Evseev & Kavtas’kin 1967:233)

In this type of construction, the negated constituent can be practically any element in the clause. In (45) the verbal predicate is negated, while in (46) the particle *avoľ* is used as a negative marker of a non-verbal clause, in which the past tense copula *uľńeś* ‘was’ is used as well. In the case of clausal negation, both of these clauses would require the negative auxiliary *eź-* and the connegative form of the lexical verb.

(45) *Jarmak-tńeń* ton [*–*] *avoľ* *śim-iť*…  
   money-PL.DEF.GEN 2SG NEG drink-PST1.2SG  
   ‘It’s not that you [*–*] drank the money…’ (i.e. ‘you didn’t drink the money (but kept it safe)’)  
   (Śatko 1998:8)

(46) *Te* *avoľ* *kum* *uľ-ńe-ś* [*–*]  
   that NEG godfather be-FREQ-PST1.3SG  
   ‘That was not godfather (but someone else) [*–*]’  
   (Maskaev, Evseev &  
   Kavtas’kin 1967:321)

Example (47) illustrates the use of *avoľ* referring to a predicate group expressing an idiom (*kšnams pŕa* ‘boast’). In this case, the negative marker and the verb are not adjacent to each other.

(47) *avoľ*, *ejđakaj*, *pŕa-m* *kšna-n*  
    NEG my.baby self-POS.1SG boast-PRS.1SG  
    ‘I am not, my baby, boasting about myself (but something else)’  
    (Rec1977)
Finally, as shown in (48), *avoľ* can be used to narrow the scope of negation even to a negative construction.

\[
\text{avoľ} \text{ a } \text{saj-tan, vejke vaks źńardojak}
\]
\[
\text{neg} \text{ neg take-PRS.1SG>2SG one span ever}
\]
\[
ejstel \text{ a kadow-an. ELA.2SG neg stay-PRS.1SG}
\]

‘I will not only *take* you (as my wife), but I will never leave your side.’ (Lit. ‘It is not that I don't take you (as my wife), I will never be one span away from you.’) (Maskaev, Evseev & Kavtas’kin 1967: 55)

Especially (48) can be regarded as a case of metalinguistic negation; in this type of clause what is negated is not actually the content of the proposition but the way of expression. More examples of metalinguistic negation are given in Section 4.6.

### 4.2 Negative polarity

The issue of negative polarity concerning the Mordvin languages has not been hitherto investigated. However, it does not appear feasible to find many words or expressions that would be used in exclusively negative contexts in Erzya. One of the reasons for this is the availability of the enclitic particle *-Cak*, which can be used to produce, for example, adverbs that can be employed in both affirmative (49a) and negative clauses (49b); the particle is attached to an appropriate interrogative pronoun.

\[
\text{(49)} \text{ a. mon źardo=jak kiśť-an}
\]
\[
\text{1SG when=CLT dance-PRS.1SG ‘I will dance one day’}
\]
\[
\text{b. mon źardo=jak a kiśť-an}
\]
\[
\text{1SG when=CLT neg dance-PRS.1SG ‘I never dance/will never dance’}
\]

Moreover, the polarity of certain adverbs depends on the context. For example, the meaning of adverbs such as *tuń* and *ovše* is ‘totally, completely’ (*ovše* < Russian *sovsem* ‘totally, completely’) in an affirmative context (50a) but ‘at all’ under negation (50b).

\[
\text{(50)} \text{ a. mon tuń / ovše šiź-iń}
\]
\[
\text{1SG completely completely get.tired-PST.1SG ‘I got completely tired’}
\]
\[
\text{b. mon tuń / ovše eź-iń šiźe}
\]
\[
\text{1SG completely completely NEG-PST.1SG get.tired.CNG ‘I didn’t get tired at all’}
\]
4.3 Case marking under negation

Negation does not affect case marking in Erzya.

4.4 Reinforcing negation

Two or more negatives can be found in clauses, where they very often reinforce each other. In a clause, the same negation can be repeatedly used with different constituents (51a); likewise, several negatives can co-occur (51b).

(51) a. šeže-ms a šežev-i, targa-ms a targav-i
tear-INF1 NEG be.torn-PRS.3SG pull-INF1 NEG be.pulled-PRS.3SG
‘it cannot be torn nor pulled out’ (Lit. ‘to tear – it won’t be torn, to pull out – it won’t be pulled out’) (Rec1977)
b. [–] a ušto-ms, a veď kant-ńe-ms
NEG heat-INF1 NEG water bring-FREQ-INF1
a eřav-i
NEG be.required-PRS.3SG
‘[–] it is not required to heat nor to bring water’ (Lit. ‘neither to heat, nor to bring water is (not) required’) (Rec1977)

Negative markers can also be reinforced with the help of the enclitic particle -Cak added directly to the negative, for example, to express surprise (e.g. siņ araštikak tese ‘they aren’t here’, avolgačak mėré ‘if (s)he would not have said’). In the imperative and optative, -Cak can be added either to the auxiliary or the lexical verb (e.g. ilazojačak moli ~ ilazo molijak ‘let her/him, then, not go’), while in the case of a, apak and ež- only the lexical verb can carry -Cak (e.g. a nejangak ‘I don’t even see’, ež avařdėjak ‘(s)he even did not cry’, apak sodakak ‘without even knowing’). As was mentioned in Section 3.2, -Cak is also used as a scalar or additive particle meaning ‘even, also, too’ in an affirmative context (52a) and ‘not even, neither’ in a negative context (52b).

(52) a. mon=gak kišt-an
1SG=CLT dance-PRS.1SG
‘I, too, am dancing/will dance’
b. mon=gak a kišt-an
1SG=CLT NEG dance-PRS.1SG
‘I am not dancing/will not dance either’

Especially in the case of the negative auxiliaries ež- (53), ila- (54) and avol- (55) as well as the negative particle apak (56), the negative marker can be detached from the verbal constituent to reinforce negation (reinforcement is marked with boldface). Note, however, that unlike in the constructions with the negative particles a and avol treated in Section 4.1, these negative markers do not narrow the scope of negation so as to focus it exclusively on the constituents following them.
(53) **eź** son moñeń meże=jak jovta,
NEG.PST.1.3SG 3SG 1SG.DAT what=CLT say.CNG
eź meże=Jak kevkste
NEG.1PST.3SG what=CLT ask.CNG
‘neither did he say anything to me, nor did he ask anything’

(54) **išt-zo** soniënže meže-ń=gak beřań val jovta
NEG-OPT.3SG 3SG.DAT what=GEN=CLT bad word say.CNG
‘let him/her not say any bad word to him’

(55) **avol-iń** apak soda-ź kija-vant kapša-ź tuje
NEG-1SG NEG know-PTCP.PST road-SG.DEF.PROL hurry-GER go.CNG’
‘I would not have gone hastily by an unknown road’

(56) **apak** kenkše-ńť udalo ašte
NEG door-SG.DEF.GEN behind stand.CNG
‘without standing behind the door’

4.5 Negation in complex clauses

There are no negative coordinators in Erzya. Instead, negation must be expressed separately in each clause, as in (57) with two coordinated main clauses (see also Example 53).

(57) **son** meže=Jak eź jovta, tuń
3SG what=CLT NEG.PST.1.3SG say.CNG completely
eź sirga
NEG.PST.1.3SG move.CNG
‘(s)he didn’t say anything, nor did (s)he move at all’

Moreover, there is no divergence in the use of negative markers in main clauses as opposed to subordinate clauses (see discussion in Section 2.4), with the exception of the mood forms discussed in Section 2.2. It should be mentioned that subordinate clauses do not have to require any conjunction. Examples (58)–(59) demonstrate two types of connection in complex clauses: in (58) no conjunction appears, while in (59) a conjunction koda ‘how’ is used.

(58) **a** kemev-i, ki=Jak meže=Jak eź mařa
NEG be.believed-PRS.3SG who=CLT what=CLT NEG.PST.1.3SG hear.CNG
‘it’s unbelievable that no one would have heard a thing’ (The clause has the force of a positive statement: ‘someone could have heard something’.)

(59) **siń** jovt-ńe-śť seńde, koda eź-ńž
3PL say-FRQ-PST.1.3PL IT.ABL how NEG-PST.1.3PL>3SG
muje kudo-ńť
find.CNG house-SG.DEF.GEN
‘they told about how they did not find the house’
Finally, negation is a regular means of forming interrogative clauses. In these clauses, an affirmative and a negative construction are juxtaposed, as in (60). As can be seen in (60b), araš can be employed in the formation of interrogative clauses even with a verbal predicate.

(60) a. sa-t a sa-t?
    come-prs.2sg neg come-prs.2sg
    ‘are you coming (or not)?’

b. sa-t araš?
    come-prs.2sg neg
    ‘are you coming (or not)’?

The interrogative clauses with juxtaposed affirmative and negative constructions are regularly used as subordinate constructions as well, as in (61).

(61) kiska-ś a-lamos učo-ś, jort-iť
    dog-sg.def neg -much wait-pst1.3sg throw-prs.3pl
    araš tago meže=jak…
    neg again what=clt
    ‘the dog waited for a while whether they would throw something again…’ (Bryžinskij 1991: 39, 43)

4.6 Further aspects of negation

Negative transport (or neg-raising) does not occur in Erzya. A higher-clause negative is not used to negate a lower-clause predicate, which means that an English expression such as *I don't think (s)he will read the letter* can only be produced by placing the negation in the subordinate clause, as in (62).

(62) arś-an son a lovno-si šorma-ńť
    think-prs.1sg 3sg neg read-prs.3sg>3sg letter-sg.def.gen
    ‘I don’t think (s)he will read the letter’

In metalinguistic negation the way of expression is negated rather than the content of the proposition. In Erzya, this must be produced by using the negative particle avol which precedes the negated part of the expression, as in (63) and (64). Therefore, these constructions belong to the same type of expressions that were seen in Section 4.1 as examples illustrating how the scope of negation can be narrowed by using avol.

(63) sonze avol kolmo, sonze ňile ejkakšo-nzo
    3sg.gen neg three 3sg.gen four child-poss.3sg.pl
    ‘(s)he doesn’t have three children, (s)he has four’

(64) son avol porks-iźe čakše-ńť, son
    3sg neg break-pst1.3sg>3sg pot-sg.def.gen 3sg
sonze amaštovikse-ks jang-iže
3SG.GEN useless-TRA destroy-pst1.3SG>3SG
'(s)he didn’t break the pot, (s)he destroyed it completely’

In normal negative clauses, a possessive clause like (63) would require the negative marker araś, while in (64) the negative auxiliary ēź- would be used accompanied by the connegative form of the lexical verb.

5. Conclusions

In this paper, we have dealt with the negation of Erzya from both a morphosyntactic and a semantic point of view. We have shown that several negative markers are involved in the system of negation in this language, some of which (ēź-, apak, ɪlā-) are specific only to verbal constituents, while others (a, avol) form negative constructions with both verbal and non-verbal constituents. In addition to these markers, there is a negative existential marker (araś) that displays both verbal and nominal characteristics, which have not been clearly identified as yet. The analysis carried out on the use of the negative markers in Erzya shows that although the morphosyntactic system of negation is rather well known, some of its facets are still obscure. There is much to be studied – especially when it comes to the semantics and pragmatics of the negative expressions. For example, there is insufficient empirical data on the alternative use of the negative forms with Erzya a/avol- in the conjunctive and conditional-conjunctive moods. The morphosyntactic characteristics of the marker araś also warrant further research. The main aspects of negation in Erzya are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Negative strategies in Erzya

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clausal negation</th>
<th>Affirmative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard negation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present tense</td>
<td>a + V-person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd past tense</td>
<td>a + V-past2-person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st past tense</td>
<td>ēź-person + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negation of non-declaratives</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperative (prohibitive): 2nd persons only</td>
<td>ɪlā-person + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optative</td>
<td>ɪlā-mood-person + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>a + V-mood-person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctive</td>
<td>a) a + V-mood-person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) avol-person + V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued)
### Table 4. (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause type</th>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Negation pattern</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clausal negation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conditional-conjunctive</strong></td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>a) (a + V)-mood-person</td>
<td>V-mood-person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>b) (avol)-person + V-mood</td>
<td>V-mood-person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c) (avol)-mood-person + V</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Desiderative</strong></td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>a + V-mood-person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>a) (avol) + non-verbal predicate-person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) (ež)-person + V ((uľiňe) ('be'))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clauses of equation, proper inclusion and attribution</strong></td>
<td>Future</td>
<td>a + (ul)-person + non-verbal predicate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>a) (avol) + non-verbal predicate-case-person</td>
<td>non-verbal predicate-case-person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>a) (avol) + non-verbal predicate-case-past2-person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) (araš)-person + non-verbal predicate-case</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Future</td>
<td>a + (ul)-person + non-verbal predicate-case</td>
<td>non-verbal predicate-case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>a) (avol) + non-verbal predicate-case-person</td>
<td>non-verbal predicate-case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>a) (avol) + non-verbal predicate-case-past2-person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) (araš)-past2-person + non-verbal predicate-case</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c) (ež)-person + V ((uľiňe) ('be')) + non-verbal predicate-case</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Existential and possessive clauses</strong></td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Sg: (araš)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pl: (arašť)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>a) Sg: (araš)-past2, Pl: (araš)-past2-plural</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) (ež)-person + V ((uľiňe) ('be'))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negation in dependent/subordinate clauses</strong></td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Sg: (uľiňeš)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pl: (uľiňešť)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Infinitives</strong></td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>a + V-infinitive</td>
<td>V-infinitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>a) (avol) + V-infinitive</td>
<td>V-infinitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participles</strong></td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>apak + V</td>
<td>V-participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>a) (avol) + V-participle</td>
<td>V-participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>apak + V (= gerund)</td>
<td>V-participle (= gerund)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gerund</td>
<td>apak + V (=3rd participle)</td>
<td>V-gerund (=3rd participle)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4. (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-clausal negation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative replies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) any negative marker (except a) required by the clause type, tense and mood can be used as a negative one-word reply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) araś can serve as a negative one-word reply in any context, regardless of the clause type, tense and mood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative indefinites and quantifiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interrogative pronoun/adverb-Cak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abessive/caritive/privative negation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>noun/adjective/pronoun/numeral-(v)TOMO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antonyms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) a- as a prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) a or avol as particles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other aspects of negation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope of negation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) word order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) a with certain adverbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) avol in the construction 'not A but B'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative polarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Cak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case marking under negation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negation does not affect case marking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinforcing negation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) repetition of negation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) -Cak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) word order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negation in complex clauses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) negation must be marked separately in each clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) special negative marker for subordinate clauses in conditional and conditional-conjunctive moods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative transport (or neg-raising)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>does not appear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metalinguistic negation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avol + the negated constituent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also, many phenomena found only in the negative system of the Moksha language – largely left aside in this study – also require further research. Another area yet to be studied is the actual correspondence of the Erzya and Moksha negative markers in the contemporary languages. As seen in Table 1, negative markers in Erzya and Moksha largely overlap in form and use; however, some of their features are different. More empirical studies are required to define exactly what the similarities and
differences between these two sister languages are. Furthermore, the dialectal variation of negative constructions within these two languages is yet to be studied.

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