A Contrastive Study of the negation morphemes (English, Kurdish and Arabic)

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ABSTRACT

This paper is studying the problems facing languages (English, Kurdish, and Arabic) due to the lack of symmetry between the negation morphemes in these languages, which differ in their numbers, the specifics of their uses, and the multiplicity of their meanings, at the two levels: general language and science terms. The negation morphemes in the Arabic and Kurdish languages are located at the beginning of the word as prefixes. That is, neither of them has infixes or suffixes that indicate the negative (morphologically), that is, at the level of the word or the lexical unit, and are grammatically at the level of the sentence. These negation morphemes may enter the middle of the sentence in Kurdish, but in Arabic, the negation morphemes are located at the forefront of the sentence. Most of the negation affixes in English are also prefixes, and a few are the suffixes denoting negation, the most prominent of which is (-less); English is also devoid of negation infixes. The lack of equivalence between the negation morphemes between quantitative and qualitative languages leads to chaos and disorder when transferred between languages. This necessitates the need to establish rules regulating the work of these multiple morphemes for the function of negation, at morphological structure, syntactic, semantic features, and the nature of their uses, at the level of the language itself, and at the level of contrastive between the sending and receiving languages.

KEYWORDS

Multiplicity, symmetry, equivalence, regulating, features*, terms. quantitatively & qualitatively*.

1. INTRODUCTION

Despite the keenness of most languages to keep pace with the acceleration of global developments in the various scientific, intellectual and civilizational fields, this may sometimes collide with obstacles related to the features of languages, which linguists are keen to preserve when transferring new terms into their languages.

The phenomenon of multiple morphemes performing one function is negation, like the phenomenon of tandem at the semantic level, where there are many vocabulary that have the same meaning, as well as the case at the morphological level, there are several morphemes that have the same meanings and functions. While homonyms have distinct lexical entries, polysemes are mapped to a single lexical entry with a single meaning that enables access to multiple distinct senses. (Dunn: 2020: 164)

Some synonymous morphemes may go back to the same roots, but they develop historically, phonetically and semantically by taking different paths in their meanings and construction. It may share in the general function of negation, but it differs in the details about the multiplicity of meanings and the nature of its uses.

In this paper, the phenomenon of negation will be discussed, but not at the level of the sentence, but at the morphological level of the various morphemes from prefixes and suffixes that perform the function of negation and their role in the process of made- word.

Among these linguistic phenomena that we will study in this paper are the problems facing languages (English, Kurdish and Arabic) due to the lack of symmetry between the negation morphemes in these languages, which differ in their numbers, the specifics of their uses and the multiplicity of their meanings, at the two levels: the general language and the scientific terms.

2. FEATURES OF NEGATION AFFIXES

The morphemes in each language vary according to the nature of each language. A language may be rich in its morphemes in a field, but another language may be poor in the same field, or vice versa. It is not necessary that languages are symmetric and equivalent in their derivations in every field. In the English language, there are several negation affixes, but may not correspond to them in the Arabic and Kurdish languages.

It is mentioned here that the Kurdish language belongs to the Indo-European group of languages, and Arabic belongs to the Semitic language family.

2.1. Features of the Negative Affixes in English

There are many negative affixes in English, from prefixes and suffixes. From these negation prefixes : a-, ab-, under-, anti-, de- dis-, dys-, ex-, il-, im-, in-, ir-, mal-, mis-, non-, and un- .

From negation suffixes, such as –less and –ish. But there are no negative infixes (interfixes) in English. Those negation prefixes have different functions.

How does English deal with this number of negation affixes?

syntactically and semantically, in order to control and organize these morphological synonyms, which all perform the function of negation?

All prefixes of Greek origin behave according to the linguistic laws of ancient Greek.

 (a-) It is found most conclusively in words formed from Greek roots. Some linguists believe that it came into English from the Old French prefix des, which in turn came from the Latin dis-. (Dzuganuva : 2006. 232-233)

The negative prefix (in-) is typically used with adjectives of French or Latin origin before consonants other than : l , m , p , or r . The prefix (in-) is not used with long or learned words beginning with ' in ' or ' im ' for reasons of euphony . According to the rules of Latin phonology, the prefix (in-) can have five basic forms (called allomorphs) according to the beginning consonant of the word to which it is added. Before the consonants b, m, and p , in- become im- . Before words start with the letter l , in- changes into il- . Thus, the allomorphic (ir-) can be added to some words beginning with the consonant ' r' . (Merriam-Webster:2022).

The prefix (non-) comes from Latin (non-). Most of them end in –al, able-, ic-, ing-, ous.

Prefix (un-) goes back to the same Indo-European root as Old Greek a-, an- . Latin in- , German un- . The negative prefix un- has its homonymic twin in the reversative prefix un- , which is added to verbs and nouns forming verbs denote several meanings .

The negative suffix –less comes from the Old English word (leas) meaning without. (Dzuganuva : 2006. 234-235)

All negation markers (except im-, ir- and il-) don't have rules. They are called lexical and used in certain word categories, whether nouns, verb, adjective or adverb. (Wahyuni : 2014)

We have tried to summarize the most negation affixes through the definitions of Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2022) in the following table:

Table 1. Negative affixes in English

English	The meanings	Used with
a-	Either "without","lacking in something", or "not" .	Adjectives, & very rarely is combines with verbs
ab-	Opposite	Word originally
anti-	Destroy something harmful or to prevent something from happening	
de-	'Opposite', reverse of, 'remove', or 'reduce'	Noun & verb
dis-	Opposites, deprive of (a specified quality, rank, or object), exclude or expel, absence, not, & disfunction.	Verb, adjective & noun
dys-	Bad, difficult, abnormal, & impaired	Nouns & adjectives
ex-	Not, former, out of, away, & off.	Nouns
il-	Opposites.	
im-	Opposites.	
in-	Opposites, not , lacking, & without.	Nouns, adjectives, & rare in verbs.
ir-	Opposites	Verbs , nouns & or adjectives
mal-	Describe things that are bad, & unpleasant, unsuccessful, imperfect, abnormal, inadequate, & inadequately.	
mis-	Bad, unfavorably, opposite, lack, not, & wrong.	Verb
non-	Not, other than, reverse, absence, little or no consequence, unimportant, & worthless. Lacking the usual especially positive characteristics of the thing specified.	Nouns, adjectives & Adverbs
un-	Not, deprive, release from, free from, remove, cause to cease to be —in verbs formed from nouns.	Adjectives, nouns, and rarely in verbs formed from verbs
under-	Not enough	
-less	Destitute, not having, unable to be acted.	Nouns
-sh	That someone or something is like a particular kind of person or thing or to show something has a quality to a small extent.	Nouns & adjective

2.2. Features of the Negation Affixes in Arabic

The Arabic language is a derivational and not a synthetic language. That is, it does not prefer combining like two or more words. This language prefers to develop by derivation, by adding prefixes, suffixes, and infixes to the root of the word. This language tends to use short and light vocabulary on the tongue, rather than long, multi-word words.

Arabic prefers shorthand, which is formed from the root of the word plus affixes of letters which usually do not have independent meanings. The role of these affixes is limited, as they are added to verbs or nouns to give them different meanings. Thus, Arabic did not like the combination of the two units, because they are long structures. So, Arabic often uses one word (antonym) as an equivalent to two-unit structures to denote the negation.

Some researchers believe that the structures of the negation are due to foreign structures that the Arabic borrowed from the Greek, and that these structures led the Arabic language to generate the forms of a mixture composed of several Arabic components. Perhaps one of the oldest and most common of these phrases since the era of Islamic civilization. (la "=no" + noun), such as (la kewn " =no universe" , la thubot "=no proof" , la wujud "=no existence") . This structure became common in Modern Standard Arabic to express philosophical, social and political terms such as (La mubalah "=indifference", la merkeziyeh "=decentralization" , la silky "= wireless" , allaHerb " =no war", allasilm " =no peace"). Other formulas have the first (gheyr "=non") element, such as: (gheyr insany "=inhumane", gheyr mubasher "=indirect", gheyr distury "=unconstitutional", gheyr resmy " =informal"). Other compounds were also formed, the first element of which was the word (edem= "non-") such as: (edem inHiyaz "=non-alignment", edem -irtiyaH "=discomfort").

The Academy of the Arabic Language in Cairo approved the acceptance of the two prefixes (ma- "=no-"), as well as the morpheme (la- "=no-") with a noun, such as: (la akhlaqy "= immoral", la meequl "=unreasonable", la shuury "=unconscious). (Khetib, 1986, 300)

In Arabic, there are negation affixes that enter on the phrasal verbs, and other affixes that enter on the nominal sentences, and there are negation affixes common to the phrasal and nominal sentences. (Beshir: 2005).

These affixes can be summarized with their most prominent features and uses in the Arabic language in the following table, in which no details and exceptions will be made.

Table 2 . Negative morphemes in Arabic

Arabic	Used with	Some of its features
lem	Verbs	It is used with the present tense verb, it negates it and changes its tense from the present to the past.
lemma	Verbs	It is used with the present tense verb. It negates it and changes its tense from the present to the past connected to the present, with the expectation that the action will occur in the future.
Len	Verbs	It is used with the present and future tense.
la an-nafiyeh	Verb & noun	It is used with the past or present tense. It denies the occurrence of a verb.
la an-nahiyeh	Verb &noun	It forbids doing a certain action.
leyse	Verb &	It negates the present verbs only, as it negates the nouns.

	noun	
ma an-nafiyeh liljis	Verb & noun	It negates the nouns and various verbs.
In	Verb & noun	It negates different nouns and verbs according to certain conditions that give different meanings.
La	Verbs	It negates different nouns and verbs according to certain conditions that give different meanings.
gheyr	Noun	It negates the noun provided it is added to the adjective.
late	Noun	

2.3. Features of the Negation Affixes in Kurdish Language

Kurdish is a language that has not been unified yet. There are several main dialects, most notably the northern (Kurmanji) and southern (Sorani) dialects, which we will rely on in the applied study. The Kurdish language is considered a rich language, especially at the morphological and lexical levels, and this has led to the problem of controlling and organizing this richness when generating new terms and vocabulary.

Agglutination refers to a linguistic process in which various word forms are created by stringing morphemes together. (Ahmadi, & Hossein :2020,3)

The Kurdish language has known the use of phrases containing negation morphemes, as it was noted that they were used in the poetry of its most prominent classical poet, Mulla al-Jeziri, who is likely to have lived in the fifteenth century. He used several negation morphemes in his poetry, such as: bê, ne, na, me. Examples of what he mentioned in his poetry:

bê deng, bê sûc, bê hiş, bê kes, bê çare…..
ne hişt, ne hêlin, ne bê …..
na puxte, na pak, na bin ...
me bîn, me ke … (Zivingi , 2021, 239)

And has been added to it in the modern era (dijî). These morphemes are used as prefixes where they precede vocabulary from nouns (including adjectives and adverbs) and verbs; no negation suffixes were found, like Arabic. Examples of negation prefixes used on nouns in contemporary Kurdish are:

(bê-): bêguman, bêkes, bêaram, bêtêl, bêpîvanî, bênanûxwê …
(ne-): nerastî, nerind, nexweş, nesax netiştî, neşor…
(dij-): dijhev , dijmin ....

Table 3. Negative morphemes in Kurdish

Kurdish	**Used with**	**Some of its features**
me-	Verbs	Negation of imperative.
na-	Verbs & nouns	Negation of nouns,& the present verb.
ne-	Verbs & nouns	Negative
Bê-	Nouns	

3. DIFFICULTIES IN TRANSFERRING NEGATIVE MORPHEMES BETWEEN LANGUAGES

3.1. The problems of symmetry at the level of the general language

The English language, which has become the language of science and technology in this era, where most languages quote all new terms and concepts, we have noticed a diversity of negation morphemes in it compared to the Arabic and Kurdish languages.

The lack of quantitative and qualitative equivalence in the negation affixes between these languages causes the problem of not organizing their transfer among them. This makes it difficult to establish symmetry between them sometimes, as one affix in these two languages may be replaced by several negative affixes in English.

We have noticed that the variety of negation affixes prompted English to establish rules to regulate the richness and development of its language. The beginning was that the English resorted to tying these affixes according to the Greek and Latin rules for affixes that trace their origins back to these ancient languages. Then they began to try to employ these affixes according to the peculiarity of the English language from the phonetic and morphological aspects, or taking into account their meanings and the specificity of their uses.

The same applies to the Arabic and Kurdish languages, which sometimes may not tend to keep pace with English on a steady basis with its expansive methods of language, because of their keenness to preserve the characteristics of their languages.

It is noteworthy here that we distinguished between these languages, which we had to write all in Latin letters only, that Kurdish is written in italics, and Arabic was distinguished by underlining. Also, there are letters in Arabic that do not exist in English, so we draw them in capital letters according to the closest of these letters to them in pronunciation, but they are characterized by amplifying their pronunciation, so we draw them in capital letters:

Despite the many and varied negation morphemes in these languages, there is no harmonized correspondence between these morphemes. For example, Arabic uses several ways to denote such structures composed of negation affixes, such as:

The prefix (-dis) in English has been translated into Arabic with different equivalents, such as, (disobey: yu'ariD= protest), (disconnected : gheyr- muterabiT= sporadic or choppy)

The prefix (-un) in such as: unskilled: gheyr-mahir, unstable: gheyr-musteqir (or muteqlib= fickle) , unavailable: gheyr- muteysir .

It is noted that the Arabic negation morphemes (gheyr= not) is used in front of several negation affixes in English, and sometimes it is placed replaced one word (nouncompound) as the equivalent of the negation morphemes, which is the opposite word for it, means by use of lexical elements, not morphemes equivalent to the negative affixes in English, and the same in Kurdish. The same applies to the following precedents, which mean negative: il-, im-, in-, ir- ….

There is no system and coordination in the transfer of these stickers. Each time it is transmitted in different ways and forms.

An example of the use of one word (the antonym) in the Arabic and Kurdish languages as an equivalent to the English negation structures of the prefixes (dis-), that is, consisting of two units of a word and preceded by the negation morpheme.

discount: *kêmkirin* . tekhfiD.
disambiguation : *zelalkirin* . tewDiH   .
disjunction: *veqetandin* . *jiyabûnewe* . infiSal .

At other times, these two languages set various prefixes that do not necessarily correspond to their English counterpart on a regular basis. This will be shown in the examples of scientific terms**.**

3.2. At the level of terminography

Making words at the level of the general language may be marred by spontaneity and chaos, so we will study this issue at the level of linguistics terms, to see how it addresses the issue of linguistic contrasts in the negation morphemes. (Ziving: 2022)

 (dis-)
discontinuous : *bê-rawestan* . *bê-dewamî* . *na-berdewam* . muteqetie.
displaced : *bê-cihûwar* . *na- warebuun* . naziH.
displacement : *bê-cihûwarî* . izaheh.
dissimilation : *ne -wekhev(ne-kokî).* mukhalefeh.
discontinuous : *bê rawestan* . *na berdewam* . munqeTi .
In the previous example, Kurdish used different affixes. In Northern Kurdish, it chose the prefix (bê-) or (ne-) as equivalent to the English prefix (dis-), while Southern Kurdish chose the prefix
(anti-)
antiformant: *dijî - şêwe* . Dide - ashskkil
antimentalism: *dijî-berê mêjî* . muDad-eleqlieh. Or: muedat+eleqlieh
antithesis: *dijii-beri* . neqiyD
antipassive : dijî- nejîr . dije nezindî . muDad- el mejhul .

Here, Kurdish has implemented a regular rule by setting the prefix (dijî-) as equivalent to the prefix(anti-). But in Arabic, its equivalents varied between negation morphemes, such as: la-, gheyr-....and sometimes it uses lexical elements through antonyms such as: edem, muedat, muDad, neqiyD ….

Thus, it is noted that in front of this English morphological prefixe, the use of lexical elements(antonyms) prevailed in both Arabic and Kurdish.

(in-)
indefinite: *ne-belî(ne-binavkirî)* . *ne-şunas* . *na-diyar* . nekireh . gheyr- muere.
indeterminacy: *ne-diyarî* . edem-teHdid
indirect: *ne- rasterast* . *ne-yekser* . *na-rasteuxo* . gheyr-mubesher
invariable: *ne-guherbar* . *ne-bzêw* . *ne-goraw* . thabit or (gheyr-muteghiyr)
inchoative: *ne- bijartî* . gheyr-intiqaaiy

In front of this negation prefix , the use of the negation prefix (ne-) or (na-) in Kurdish, as an equivalent to (in), perhaps because they share the letter (n), Kurdish belongs to the group of Indo-European languages. Sometimes it may put another equivalent is (bê-), such as:

inalienable: bêyî xwedîbûn .

But in Arabic, sometimes it puts an equivalent to it (gheyr). Sometimes it puts a lexical equivalent (edem):

incompatibility: cudayî . lihevnekirin . edem-itifaq . edem-tekafue

The Kurdish and Arabic languages may also use one word instead of a phrases in the negation affix.

incorporating : *tevlîhev* . <u>mudmej</u>
inversion: *berevajîkirin* . <u>eks</u>
(na-)

Sometimes a single word(antonym) is used to denote negation, not a phrases containing negation affixes. It is used in most examples in Arabic and sometimes in Kurdish, such as, instead of the English compound (unambiguous), one word (obvious) has been put in place to express the same meaning, but through one word instead of a phrases containing negation affix. Like her (unconnected), the two languages released a lexical element, which is the word (separate), and so on.

disambiguation : *zelalkirin* . <u>tewDiH</u>.
discreteness : *veqetandî .jiybuunewe* . <u>munfeSil</u>.
distinctive: *taybetî* . *cîyawazî* . <u>mumiyez.</u>
 (non-)

In front of the negation prefix (non-), we find an orderly trend in assigning equivalents to it in linguistic terms in the Arabic and Kurdish languages. Where the use of (gheyr) predominates in Arabic as its counterpart, and in Northern Kurdish the use of (ne-) is dominant, and in Southern Kurdish (na-), because its pronunciation is close to (non-).

nonce: *ne-naskirî* . <u>gheyr-meruf.</u>
non-configurational: *ne-ve avakirin* . *na-rekhraw* . <u>gheyr- tekuiynieh.</u>
non-discrete : *ne- cude* . *ne-veqetandî* . *na- jiyawaz* . <u>gheyr- munfeSil.</u>
non-lexicalized: *ne -ferhengî* . <u>gheyr- muujemiy</u>.
non-native: *ne- resenî* . *ne- welatî* . *ne-xwemalî* . <u>gheyr- aSliyeh</u>.
non-verbal : *ne-devkî* . *na-zareky* . <u>gheyr- lefZiy</u>.

But sometimes it may be equate it in Kurdish with another negation prefix, which is (bê -), and in Arabic with another equivalent, it is (la -):

non-linear: *bê –rêzik , ne-xêzikî* . *na-hêlî* <u>. la-kheTiy</u>.
nonsense : *bê wate* . <u>bila- mena</u>.
(un-)

In front of the prefix (un-), there is a regularity in placing Arabic and Kurdish equivalents for this prefix, despite repetition of these morphemes in front of other English negation prefixes . In contrast to its diversity and multiplicity in English, which resorted to English, Greek, Latin and Old French affixes, i.e. from the same linguistic family, in order to enrich its language. In front of this prefix, the two prefix morphemes are repeated in front of the prefix (non-), in Kurdish its counterpart (ne-), and in Arabic (gheyr-).

unbounded : *ne-girêdayî* . gheyr- muqiyydeh.
unmarked: *ne-diyarkirî* . *bê- nişane* . gheyr- mumeyyz.
unrounding: *ne-girrover* . gheyr-mustediyr.
(less-)

In front of this English suffix indicating the negation, the Arabic and Kurdish equivalents varied, in Arabic, sometimes it is equivalent to (-bidun), sometimes with (edem), and in Kurdish its equivalent (bê) and sometimes with (ne).

verbless: *bê- lêker* . *bê- kirdar* . biduun- fieil.
frictionless: *ne-lêkdan* . *na-hevketin* . edem- eHtikak.

It is noted that in front of this negation suffix in English, Arabic has tended to use lexical elements which indicate negation (biduun=without, gheyr=not...) instead of using one of the negation morphemes in it.

Thus, the lack of regularity in the Arabic and Kurdish equivalents is noticed in front of the English affixes of negation in linguistics terms, as well as at the level of vocabulary circulating among the general public. Sometimes several morphemes are placed as equivalent to one affix , and sometimes vice versa; one negation affix is placed in these two languages in front of several types of English negation affixes. Sometimes the two languages may use a lexical element, one word, to denote the same meaning, ie the semantic equivalent (antonym), rather than negation-affix structures.

In front of these affixes (anti-, un-, in-, im-, dis-) in Arabic most often use morpheme(la-).

In front of these two negation affixes (anti-, mis-) in Arabic most often use a lexical equivalent (neqiiD=antithesis)

There are lexical words in English that have negative or opposite meanings, such as:

adverse, counter, contra, contrary, converse, counteractive, inverse, reciprocal, inverse, reciprocal, antagonistic, opposite, reverse,. …..

Some of them sometimes play the role of the prefixes in the formation of some terms:

(counter-)

a: contrary : opposite (counterclockwise, countermarch)
b: opposing : retaliatory (counterfor, cecounteroffensive)
(contra-**)**
against **:** contrary **:** contrasting (*contra*distinction**)**

Here, it is noted that one English word denoting the negative or the opposite corresponds to several Arabic words, or vice versa. So, in front of all these English words indicating the opposite, Arabic often uses a few equivalents that are repeated with most of those words: eks, mueakis, muDad…

Likewise, in Kurdish, there is a lack of vocabulary used as equivalent to different English vocabulary : berevajî , dijber, beramber, dijî, dijayety, pêçewane …

Thus, it is noted that, despite the richness of Arabic and Kurdish in the wealth of their lexical vocabulary, they may use few lexical equivalents in view of the diversity of their synonyms in English. This could be explained by the fact that translators of terms may be specialized in the sending language, ie English, and not fully familiar with the many synonyms in the receiving language, Arabic and Kurdish.

This great diversity in languages, in synonyms denoting a specific meaning or function at the morphological or semantic levels, needs to be organized by showing the features of each synonym in terms of syntactic construction or semantic interpretation.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is noted that the English in the negation morphemes is richer than the Arabic and Kurdish languages, due to the fact that some of the affixes go back to ancient Greek, Latin or French origins. This reasoning was influenced by the historical method, which used vocabulary from the ancient mother tongues as one of the sources of language enrichment. On this historical approach, some of them also justify the diversity of affixes as being due to phonetic or semantic developments over time, as in il-, im-, in- .

Although Arabic is richer than Kurdish in negation morphemes, not all of them are used in the construction of terms, because they are entering sentences, not in the construction of one word only, such as: (leyse, lem, len, lemma, late).

In terms of location and distribution, it is noted that negation morphemes in the Arabic and Kurdish languages are located at the beginning of the word as prefixes, and neither of them has infixes or suffixes that indicate the negative (morphologically), that is, at the level of the word or the lexical unit, and are grammatically at the level of the sentence, these negation morphemes may enter the middle of the sentence in Kurdish, but in Arabic the negation morphemes are located at the forefront of the sentence, Most of the negation affixes in English are also prefixes, and a few are the suffixes denoting negation, the most prominent of which is (less-), English is also devoid of negation infixes.

By showing samples of the Arabic and Kurdish equivalents of some English affixes, it was found that these two languages used several morphemes to correspond to one affix of English, or vice versa.

This asymmetry occurs not only when comparing these languages, but also in the language itself, as we do not find clear rules regulating the use of negation morphemes. Sometimes the two languages may use a lexical element, one word, to denote the same meaning, i.e. the semantic equivalent (antonym), rather than negation-affix structures.

This inequality in the number of negation morphemes, their distribution, their specificities, and their different meanings, requires more organization at the level of the language itself, as well as in its coordination at the level of comparison with its counterparts in other languages. It is necessary to find ways to organize the work of morphemes at these two levels, for example, by allocating each morpheme to the negation of certain fields and meanings, in order to create coordination and organization between different languages in the field of the development of new terms, so that languages maintain their privacy and at the same time keep pace with global linguistic developments.

This great diversity in languages, in synonyms denoting a specific meaning or function at the morphological or semantic levels, needs to be organized by showing the features of each synonym in terms of syntactic construction or semantic interpretation.

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