IMPLICIT NEGATION MET IN DIALOGUE DISCOURSE

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Abstract

The article considers the implicit language structures met in dialogue discourse. Dialogue speech is a special type of discourse which has a high degree of implicitness. It is due to the fact that the communicants share the same situation, the context and the background knowledge. The paper considers different aspects of expressing implicit negation in the dialogue discourse. Examples are provided in the English and Russian languages.

The main results of the study consist in the description of the mechanism for recognizing the implicit meaning and describing some typical cases of implicit negation in dialogue discourse characterized by the asymmetry of interrogative and response replicas. The materials of the paper may be of some interest for linguists, psycho-linguists, experts in logics and philosophy.

Keywords: implicitness, implicit negation, implicit meaning, implicature, dialogue discourse

1. INTRODUCTION

The problem of negation, which attracts many researchers around the world, is a very complex, diverse and multifaceted area. It is studied not only by linguistics, but also by philosophy, logic, psychology and linguistic pragmatics.

Researchers distinguish two types of negation – 1) *explicit*, i.e. expressed explicitly through formal features, and 2) *implicit*, when the negative meaning is not expressed formally, but is contained in the very semantics of words or statements.

One of the first works on implicit negation is considered to be Otto Jespersen's monograph "Negation in English and Other Languages" (Jespersen,1917, p.25) in which the researcher devoted a separate chapter to indirect and incomplete negation. The author believed that such structures make it possible to express negative ideas not directly, but allegorically. Jespersen's book gave impetus to the study of implicit negation and the appearance of many works on this topic.

Research in pragmatics and related disciplines, however, has incorporated negation as an element that determines the creation of specified discourse pragmatic functions. A negative utterance can be part of any functional or pragmatic classification just in the same way as affirmative utterances are, as long as their different properties are accounted for (Yun Ding, 2011).

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Many researchers of negation have noticed that implicit negation, not having its own explicit means of expression, can manifest itself in language indirectly, using various linguistic means.

According to E.V.Paducheva and many researchers who study implicit negation, the negative meaning of these constructions does not have a direct grammatical expression, but is conveyed by various linguistic means of the communicative context (Paducheva, 2007).

We fully share this opinion and believe that the palette of language means for expressing implicit negation is very diverse and includes lexical, syntactic, morphological, intonation and pragmatic means.

We have also studied various aspects of implicit negation in the articles based on the Russian and Tatar languages material (Sitdikova, 2017, 2019).

This paper aims to provide an overview of various means of expressing implicit negation (lexical, phraseological, intonation, pragmatic and etiquette), using examples from Russian and English prose related to dialogic discourse.

2. METHODS

We made an attempt to consider implicit negation in the dialogue discourse and tried to identify several typical cases often met in dialogues.

In accordance with the objectives of the study, our work used descriptive, comparative and analytical methods, as well as methods of semantic and comparative analysis when comparing ways of expressing negation in English and Russian. When studying negation in a text, the analytical method of the theory of speech acts was used.

We also used concepts such as **implicit meaning of a statement** and **implicature.** By implicit meaning in general we understand a complicated multi-level structure (that includes presuppositions, specific contextual meaning and implicature) which have been interpreted by different authors in different ways. According to the relevance of the theory of D. Sperber and D. Wilson (Sperber, Wilson,1986), every utterance has its explicit and implicit components. By implicit meaning of an utterance we understand the meaning that is created from the interaction of language units with the cognitive sphere of the utterance recipient. And we can consider the utterance as a stimulus that draws knowledge from the cognitive sphere to form the meaning (Kashichkin, 2003).

We have used such term as 'implicature' which is the implicit meaning that can be drawn from the utterance as a result of implication using the elements of the cognitive sphere (background knowledge). In this paper we have made an attempt to consider and describe some types of implicit negation which are common for dialogue discourse. We have also made use of component analyses and description methods.

To illustrate some linguistic phenomena, we used linguistic examples from fiction in Russian and English.

As the material for our research we used excerpts from literary works in English and Russian containing dialogue speech.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implicit negation is often found in dialogue discourse when speakers are united by the same situation and context. In this case, according to most researchers, a negative message or an idea does not necessarily require formal negative grammar markers. At the semantic level it is often materialized quite indirectly, implicitly. It is particularly the case if there is a necessity to make a hint, to reflect the author's emotional and evaluative attitude towards an events or statements. Remarkable is that in the case of implicit negation it's not one linguistic level that it operates upon, it is the complex interaction of all means of the meaning expression (lexical, morphological, syntactical, semantic and so on) (Lunkova, 2016).

In this section we have tried to look at some ways of expressing implicit negation found in dialogue. Let us begin by considering the role of dialogic discourse in the semantization of implicit negation.

3.1. The Role of Dialogue Discourse for the Semantization of Implicit Negation

There are quite a lot of researchers who have studied the phenomenon of implicitness and implicit negation in dialogues (Otto Espersen, G.N.Leech, Ch.Bally, V.D. Devkin, A.V. Bondarko, M.Yu.Fedosyuk, L.V. Lisochenko, V.Kh.Bagdasaryan, K.A.Dolinin, etc.).

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Back in 1983, researchers came to the conclusion that discourse, although it does not have formal negative characteristics, can nevertheless perform the communicative function of negation (Leech G.N., 1983).

According to V.D. Devkin, in dialogues "the necessary content consists of the meaning inherent in speech segments with explicit verbal expression, and from the implied. Thought is formed based on the general experience of the speakers..., on elements of the conversational setting, taking into account gestures and facial expressions, as well as focusing on the linguistic context. This allows a lot not to be named due to its sufficient clarity for speakers" (Devkin, 1981).

Following J. Searle, we adhere to the hypothesis that in dialogue speech the speaker conveys to the listener more content than what he actually communicates, and he does this by relying on general background knowledge, both linguistic and non-linguistic, and also on the general powers of rational reasoning which it implies in the hearer.

Emotionality, characteristic of dialogical speech, serves to achieve the pragmatic tasks of communication from the point of view of the communication process. "It is emotional communication that comes first in dialogical discourse, in which there are statements with implicit negation" (Lyulcheva, 2013).

Many researchers have paid attention to the fact that in dialogues there is often an asymmetry of question and response remarks, which indicates the presence of a hidden meaning, while quite often the response may contain an implicit negation. Negative semantics can be combined with various additional shades of meaning (doubt, surprise, irony, ridicule, etc.)

Implicit negation can exist at all levels of the language, beginning with the word. In this article we are going to limit ourselves to the level of the utterance of the dialogue. The simplest case of dialogue is the question-answer structure, while the communicants leave much "between the lines" due to the context, situation and common background knowledge.

Language examples for the article are collected from fiction literature. Considering these examples, we have identified several cases with implicit negation.

3.2. Pragmatic negation

Pragmatic factors include a wide variety of information. This information makes it possible to establish the meaning of linguistic expressions and utterances in the immediate situational (pragmatic) context.

Many researchers while studying the negation category noted that the semantic of negative sentences often does not correspond to their structure. A sentence can be positive or question in form, but semantically might contain implicit negation. In other words, implicit negation is manifested in the non-expressed meaning of formal grammatical indicators.

According to the pragmatics point of view, negation is not a purely grammatical category, but a complex communicative operation with the help of which the speaker communicates to the addressee his attitude towards a certain fact. In this case, the statement may not have formally expressed signs of negation, but have a negative meaning, which is revealed during logical analysis.

The authors of the theory of relevance, D. Sperber and D. Wilson (Sperber, Wilson, 1986) were of the opinion that inferring the meaning of a statement is a complex process of comprehension, including several stages (semantization, inference, implication), which is carried out by participants in communication. It should be noted that at each of these three stages there is an interaction of linguistic meanings with the cognitive environment of the communicants.

Thus, in each statement two semantic levels can be distinguished - expressed and implied. Researchers consider the utterance itself as a stimulus that attracts background knowledge in order to derive meaning (Kashichkin, 2003, p.9).

As for the **implicit meaning of a statement**, according to the theory of relevance, this is a rather complex structure, which includes presuppositions, specific contextual meaning and implicature (additional information obtained in the process of logical inference).

Consider an excerpt from the English text: *I thought the two ugly ones, Marty and Laverne, were sisters, but they got very insulted when I asked them. (*Salinger, 1951).

From the second part of the sentence every reader can make a logical conclusion that Marty and Laverne

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are NOT sisters, because the reader can draw an implicature from the phrase "they got very insulted".

Consider the following example:

"Did he tell you about the elections?" I asked her. "The class elections?" She shook her head. *(*Salinger, 1951). According to common knowledge, shaking one's head means negation or refusal to do something, so the highlighted sentence contains an implicit negation.

In such cases of implicit negation, it is context, intonation, and background knowledge that help the recipient draw the correct meaning from what has been said.

3.3. Pseudo-questions

Many researchers have noted the presence of pseudo-questions in dialogues whose purpose is the emotional expression of various ways of negation: objection, indignation, disagreement, refusal, protest, etc.

According to many authors, a pseudo-question is asked not in order to elicit an answer but in order to state or deny something. A positive rhetorical yes-no question is like a strong negative assertion:

(1) *Is that a reason for desPAIR?* (Surely that is not a reason...)

(2) *Can anyone doubt the WISdom of this action?* (Surely no one can doubt...) (Yun Ding, 2011).

The author above mentions that unlike exclamatory questions these rhetorical questions have the normal rising intonation of a yes-no question, and are distinguished chiefly by the range of pitch movement (Yun Ding, 2011).

With the help of special questions, one can make it clear that they have no desire to communicate:

'*Don't you want to talk first*?'

'*What is there to talk about?*' he asks. (Salinger, 1951).

Some authors mention that there are also, rhetorical wh-questions with negative meaning. The positive question is equivalent to the meaning of a negative statement: **Who knows/cares?** (Nobody knows/cares or I don't know/care.) **What should I say?** (There is nothing that I should say.) (Quirk, 1985).

It is worth mentioning that rhetorical questions together with negation can express a lot of various reactions like irony, surprise, disdain, indignation, irritation, etc., for example, the question below expresses irony:

"He finishes today. I thought we might take him back with us and give him a spot of lunch. "He's quite a gentleman."

"Is that a sufficient reason to ask him to lunch?" (Maugham, 2015).

Following J. Searle, we stick to the opinion that in indirect speech acts the speaker conveys to the listener more content than what he actually communicates, and he does this by relying on general background knowledge, both linguistic and non-linguistic, and also on the general powers of rational reasoning which it implies in the hearer (Searle, 1969).

3.4. Phraseological Units Implicitly Expressing Negation

Implicit negative meaning can be contained in phraseological units (hereinafter: PhUs). Language, reflecting and absorbing the differences in the phenomena and properties of the objective world, has fixed various ways of expressing implicit negation by means of phraseological units.

In each language there are quite a lot of phraseological expressions containing negative meaning, for example, in English: *care a bean* = **not** *to care; turn a blind eye* = *to close one's eyes to something,* **not** *to notice; hold cheap* = **not** *to value,* **not** *to put at a penny*, etc.

Another type of PhUs are negative comparisons with alogisms, which are obviously present in all languages, for example: *to need smb/ smth like a hole in the head*, that is NOT needed. Background knowledge, as well as individual and collective experience of native speakers help to derive the correct implicit meaning.

According to our observation, implicit negation can 1) be a component of the meaning of a word or 2) of an entire sentence. The background knowledge, which is present in native speakers, helps to derive the correct meaning.

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Researchers also distinguish a group of PhUs, one of the components of which designates an indefinite or unreal person performing some action, for example: *God knows, God only knows, Hell if I know,* etc.

According to Y.A. Bosak (Bosak, 2015), PhUs are divided into 2 groups: 1) with motivated negation and 2) unmotivated negation. Among PEs of the first group, recognizing negation is not difficult, for example: *to look for a needle in a haystack, to go down in flame*. To the second group Y.A. Bosak refers PhUs with unmotivated negation, in which the negative meaning cannot be deduced from the meaning of the words included in the phrase combination, for example: *My foot! My leg! Like hell! Take it with a pinch of salt.*

We have also considered implicit negation in phraseological phrases on the material of the Tatar language, and we also identified a large number of PhUs in the Tatar language containing implicit negation (Sitdikova, Khisamova, Mutigullina, 2019).

Analyzing implicit negations in PhUs, we can conclude that the negative meaning in some PEs is hidden, but it is quite possible to deduce it with the help of component analysis and analysis of dictionary definitions.

3.5. The Role of Intonation in Extracting the Meaning of an Utterance and Intonational Idioms

Studying the phenomenon of implicit negation, many researchers have paid attention to the special role of intonation, which can turn affirmative sentences into negative ones.

Charles Bally in his book "French Stylistics" (1909) came to the conclusion that intonation can change the meaning of the phrase, as well as convey the attitude of the speaker to certain things (Bally, 1909).

As Bally correctly pointed out, intonation can give an affirmative phrase a negative meaning. In addition to intonation, in dialogic speech also play a role of logical emphasis, the purpose of which is to ensure a more accurate understanding of the statement.

Let's consider an example of a statement with implicit negation, when formally the statement is an affirmative sentence (in bold in the example), but the context and intonation suggest that its meaning is negative.

- He's one sonuvabitch I really can't stand.

- He's crazy about you. He told me he thinks you're a goddam prince. (Salinger, 1951).

Often such intonation-marked sentences form stable constructions with a characteristic intonation carrying the meaning of negation, indignation or refusal. Such constructions are called "intonation phraseological units" or "intonationally marked phraseological units'' in Russian, which more or less corresponds to the terms "intonation idioms" in English. For example, the informal phrase: *Keep your hair on*, which has no formal signs of negation, in English means: *Don't worry* or *Don't get upset*.

All languages have idiomatic stable word combinations, pronounced with a certain intonation, which have no formal signs of negation but express negative meaning. Due to the fact that intonation plays the main role in the functioning of such units of speech, in the following we can call these structures "intonational phraseological units with implicit negation" (abbreviated as IPUIN).

Here is another example of IPUIN:

– That's a deer shooting hat.

*– **Like hell it is!*** (Salinger, 1951).

The word 'hell' in slang is used to express disagreement in an angry way, that is, expresses implicit negation. The meaning of the highlighted sentence is negative, in spite of the fact that it does not contain any formal signs of negation. Also, such phrases have a stable intonation contour with a sharp drop in voice tone.

All researchers of this linguistic phenomenon note:

1) A clearly expressed intonational contour, which differs from similar statements;

2) Emotionality, they can express a wide range of emotions, from surprise to irony and mockery;

3) Typically, IPIUNs are single statements, often exclamatory, e.g.: *My leg! At my wit's end*!

4) The considered linguistic units in most cases have stability and steadiness

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5) We should also pay attention to the multivalence and multifunctionality of IPUINs, which can change depending on the context, e.g. *Keep your hair on*! It can mean: 1) *Don't worry*. 2) *Don't tear your hair out.*

3.6. Some Regular Structures in English and Russian Containing Implicit Negation

3.6.1. Irreal Conditions

O. Jespersen wrote about conditional sentences like *If I were rich...,* seeing in them an unexpressed explicitly negative meaning. He believed that such sentences would be better called "clauses of rejecting condition" – sentences with a negating condition (Jespersen, 2017).

This conditional type of statements, in fact, also refers to pragmatic negation requiring a logical conclusion, but in English grammar it is common to call them conditional sentences with an unreal condition. To begin with, let's look at an example: *For instance, if **I'd found out at Pencey who'd stolen my gloves**, I probably would've gone down to the crook's room and said, "Okay. How 'bout handing over those gloves?"* (Salinger, 1951). In this passage, the part of the statement with implicit negation is highlighted in bold. The reader can conclude from the highlighted part that the speaker had not found out who had stolen his gloves.

The structure called Conditional III speaks about some events that could have happened in the past, but in fact they had not happened, so the sentence contains implicit negation.

3.6.2. Construction 'used to + Infinitive' in English

Our attention was also attracted by the construction **used to + infinitive** in English, which is normally used to express actions that often took place in the past, while implying that these actions do **not** take place in the present. For example, consider the sentence *They **used to have dinner** at this restaurant every Friday.* Given the meaning of the construction, the implicature that **the action does not take place in the present** can be deduced from the sentence, i.e. we are dealing with a regular construction in English containing an implicit negation.

3.6.3. Rhetorical Questions

One way to express a negative judgment is the rhetorical question; it is roughly equivalent to the affirmation of the sentence that would result if the interrogative pronoun were replaced by a negative pronoun. Many researchers paid attention to the fact that a number of conventional ways of expressing emphatic rejection of the interlocutor's statement are based on the model of the interrogative sentence.

Let us give some examples:

*Да кому он нужен? = He is **not** wanted by anyone.*

*Ну что ему сделается? = He is **not** going to get hurt*

*Да кто его презирает! = **Nobody** despises him.*

3.6.4. Imperative and Exclamation Sentences with Disapproval and Negative Meaning

Some researchers mention about imperative sentences that have negative meaning on the pragmatic level:

"Please be more careful. (You are not very careful.)

Leave the tap alone. (Don't touch the tap.)

Keep off the grass. (Don't step on the grass)". (Yun Ding, 2011).

The author mentioned also speaks about exclamatory sentences without no formal negation but expressing negation on the emotional level, e.g.: *The clothes she wears! (I really don't like the clothes she wears.)*

The author also underlines that 'also expressing scornful disapproval are exclamatory phrases consisting of a noun phrase, generally a pronoun, followed by and, and other noun phrase with a matching possessive pronoun': *You and your statistics!* (the meaning: I deplore the way you so frequently resort to statistics; I am **not** satisfied with…) (Yun Ding, 2011).

The same author mentions about **to + Infinitive** clauses in English with hidden negation, e.g.

To think that she could be so ruthless! (She **shouldn'**t be so….) (Yun Ding, 2011).

So, with these examples we can come to the conclusion that in conversational speech negation often does

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not need formal grammatical means to express some negative ideas or attitude to some events.

3.7. Implicit Negation Used For Etiquette Purposes

According to researchers, "etiquette, norms of morality, stereotypes of communication and behavior in society dictate to us their rules of building and conducting a dialog with other representatives of the language community, and the need to transmit certain information in an indirect, mediated way is also one of the laws governing human communication" (Shatskikh, 2010).

Implicit negation can play a sociocultural function, which makes it possible to express one's intentions softly and diplomatically, without offending the interlocutor.

Here is an example when the speaker does not want to refuse the offer directly, i.e. implicit negation is conditioned by considerations of politeness, good tone or diplomacy:

– *We can go in the club car. All right?*

– *Dear, **are you allowed to order drinks?** - she asked me* (Salinger, 1951).

The protagonist of Salinger's novel is a vulnerable teenager, and he is talking to an adult woman, so she tactfully makes it clear to the boy that she cannot accept his proposal.

Here we conclude the consideration of the cases of implicit negation and come to the conclusions.

4. CONCLUSIONS

1. The choice of the topic is explained by its insufficient development, despite the presence of a large number of studies on implicit negation. If we understand negation as a communicative and pragmatic operator existing in the deep sphere of language, it allows us to present all the ways of negation expression in the form of a single system, which unites both explicit and implicit ways of negation.

2. The analysis of linguistic literature shows that explicit means of negation expression in Russian and English languages are the most well studied, unlike ungrammatical (implicit) means, the description of which is not systematic in linguistics.

3. The article attempts to present an overview of different ways of manifestation of implicit negation in language and speech. As we see, implicit negation can be found at all levels of language and speech, using the whole complex of means of expressing negative meaning: lexical, morphological, syntactic, phraseological, intonational. The peculiarity of implicit negation consists in asymmetry, i.e. in the discrepancy between the plan of content and the plan of expression.

4. The implicit way of expressing negation is not as common as the explicit one, at the same time it is more difficult to perceive and may require certain efforts from the recipient to extract the meaning of the utterance. The extraction of the meaning of an utterance takes place in three stages: semantization, inference, implication, and at each stage of meaning extraction there is an interaction of linguistic meanings with the cognitive environment of communicators. The content of an utterance with implicit meaning can be understood only in the context of the speech situation, the circumstances of communication, the relationship between the participants of the speech act, taking into account the situation of communication, their background knowledge, etc. The recipient's personal ability to understand the implicit information is also important.

5. In our article we considered various ways and linguistic means of actualization of implicit negation, starting from the lexical level and ending with diplomatic means. All statements were supported by linguistic examples. The criterion for the selection of examples was the asymmetry between explicitly expressed and unexpressed meaning.

6. Prosodic means of implicit negation, in our opinion, are a very promising area of research. In oral communication, the role of intonational means is important, with the help of which any positive statement can be turned into a negative one. We have studied such a phenomenon as intonational idioms (or intonationally marked phraseological units) with implicit negation, which have a stable structure, intonational marking, have increased emotionality and usually strive to take an independent position in dialogic discourse. In addition, they have a pronounced national specificity and present a difficulty for foreign language learners.

7. Dialogue discourse provides favorable conditions for the use of implicit statements to which various emotional connotations are added. In dialogue discourse, speakers are united by a common context and

conditions of communication, which makes it possible to express an idea extremely briefly, while the recipient easily makes a conclusion of unexpressed content, guided by background knowledge and the communicative situation.

8. In the final part of the article the etiquette (diplomatic) negation was considered. The hidden, i.e. not verbally expressed meaning in the text of the message may not be expressed by the speaker on purpose, for various reasons, for example, out of politeness or considerations of diplomacy. The recipient deduces it on the basis of linguistic competence, knowledge of the situation, context and knowledge of the world.

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