

Irena M. Pantić¹

Kosovo and Metohija Academy of Applied Studies, Leposavić

Department in Peć – Leposavić

<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-4410-7189>

ON TRANSLATION EQUIVALENCE OF SOME ENGLISH NEGATIVE PREFIXES IN SERBIAN²

This research paper identifies and studies the primary English negative prefixes (*a-*, *dis-*, *in-*, *non-* and *un-*) and detects their Serbian translation equivalents. It traces the development of the negative prefixation through the periods. It also provides a literature review on the subject, from the late 19th century to modern times, and outlines intercultural and interlingual language relations. Each prefix is described etymologically, morphologically, semantically and translationally. The research indicates that the prefix *a-* remains the same as in English or takes the Serbian prefix *bez-*; the prefix *dis-* may take various Serbian forms; the prefixes *in-*, *non-* and *un-* take the Serbian corresponding prefix *ne-*.

Keywords: negative prefixes, *a-*, *dis-*, *in-*, *non-*, *un-*, equivalence, correspondence, source language, target language

Introduction

This paper examines fundamental English negative prefixes and detects their Serbian translation equivalents. It studies five most frequent English negative prefixes *a-* (*an-*), *dis-*, *in-* (*im-*, *il-*, *ir-*) *non-* and *un-*.

This paper aims to analyse prefixes used in English that modify the meaning of the root they are added to in the sense of negation. But the negation appears not to be so straightforward. Besides being negative (not X), the prefixes may produce meanings of opposition (contrary to X), pejorative (to X wrongly, badly), reversal (reverse action of verbing), removal (remove X from) and privative (without X). The paper also aims to identify various forms in which these prefixes are rendered in Serbian. This will provide insight into the formal and semantic description of negative prefixation systems in English and Serbian, thereby contributing to the study of linguistic universals. Such a contrastive study may raise awareness of this linguistic phenomenon, and the findings can prove useful both for the source and the target language theory. It could contribute to translation theory and pedagogy in English as a foreign language.

For practical reasons, the prefixes will be examined, covering their etymology, structure, meanings and the closest Serbian equivalents in each type. The corpus for the research consists of two original 20th-century novels – “Lady Chatterley’s Lover” (1928) by

¹ irena.pantic@akademijakm.edu.rs

² This paper was originally presented at the English Language & Literature Studies: Modern Perspectives and Beyond conference, which took place on October 20–21, 2023, at the Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade.

D. H. Lawrence and “The French Lieutenant’s Woman” (1969) by J. Fowles, and their Serbian translations – “Ljubavnik Lejdi Četerli” (2022) translated by S. Ignjačević and “Žena francuskog poručnika” (2021), translated by Lj. Radović. Both novels explore themes of conflict, tension and social critique, and the characters’ interactions often involve judgment, disapproval or negation. That made the corpus likely to contain negatively-prefixed words to express contrast, opposition or negativity. Their recent translations reflect the modern language and the spirit of contemporary Serbian. Given that the novels treat common life topics and are written in an everyday conversational style, we can thus perceive how frequent the prefixes are in speech and what the relationship between them is. The authors used all the prefixes examined in this study, although not with equal frequency, reflecting their distribution in the language. As not all prefixes were sufficiently represented in the primary corpus, additional data were drawn from Hlebec’s *Standard English-Serbian Dictionary* (2012). The material from the primary corpus, supplemented by the secondary corpus, provided diverse and illustrative data for the analysis. Etymological, semantical, and historical information on the prefixes was sourced from the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED). The corpus findings were compared with Klajn’s study (2002) on prefixation in Serbian in order to verify the meanings and functions of the identified forms.

This paper also presents grammar book data on prefixation covering the period from the end of the 18th century to modern times, outlining the development of English negative prefixation. It acknowledges intercultural and interlinguistic influences on English from other European languages, which, in different historical periods, also shaped the system of negative prefixation.

Methodology

The study combines several methodological approaches, although it is primarily descriptive, and the orientation of the paper is synchronic. As it aims to relate the same or similar lexical elements of English and Serbian, the contrastive linguistic method³¹ is used to find forms in Serbian that could translate the English forms. Descriptive and contrastive approaches to language are highly interdependent. Without descriptive linguistics, there is no contrastive linguistics, and without diachronic descriptions of individual languages, there is no comparison of those languages (ĐORĐEVIĆ 2004: 6). Translation equivalents in Serbian⁴² need to match the content of the English prefixes. In this respect, it is essential to note that contrastive analysis distinguishes between translation equivalents (elements of matching meaning) and formal correspondents (elements of matching both meaning and form). English negative prefixes are expected to be translated into Serbian primarily as prefixes, making most equivalents also correspondents.

Finally, the statistical method is used to present numerical data and show the frequency of each prefix in English, the typicality of forms and their tendency towards

³¹ Contrastive linguistics deals with the synchronic comparison of unrelated languages. In contrast, comparative linguistics is concerned with historically related languages.

⁴² Being a highly inflectional language, Serbian tends to have various case, gender, tense, aspect and other endings. For greater clarity, Serbian nominal translations are shown in nominative masculine and verbal translations in infinitive.

certain word classes. Numerical indicators are given in percentage numbers,⁵³ as they are concise and intuitive, allowing easier comparison between different values and thus providing a clearer sense of the context.

The productivity of a particular prefix in the derivational process is taken from the OED evidence of the time a word was first used. The number of new forms occurring in a specific period (BAUER 2004: 25), i.e. the number of neologisms in the several last decades can roughly indicate if a particular morpheme (a prefix) is still productive in word formation. Such a way of assessing productivity is not a scientific method. It only implies whether there have been recent derivatives or not, which corresponds to the research undertaken here.

Prefixal negation in English grammar books

Lexical negation is a universal linguistic concept, but it works differently in different languages. In English, many everyday words are formed through negative prefixation. Most English negative prefixes originate from Latin and Greek.

The oldest grammar books were printed in the 16th century (Haert, Bullokar, Greaves), although scholars have followed the development of English since around the 5th century. Old Norse loans with the negative prefix *ú-* had the prefix *un-* in Old English, as in *untime*, *unbain*, *unrad*, *unræd*. Old English also had negative prefix *'mis-*, as in *mislician* and *misdæd* (ModE displease and misdeed); reversative *on-* and *ond-*, as in *onbind* and *onlūcan* (ModE unbind and unlock); privative *be-* and *or-* as in *behēafðian* and *orsong* (ModE behead and unconcerned) and *for-* to modify in a bad or negative sense, as in *fordōn* and *forweorþan* (ModE destroy and perish) (SWEET 1905: 37). This testifies to the existence of the system of negative prefixation in the early English period.

The number of prefixes used for negation and the scope of their semantics are topics linguists have often disputed. Some grammarians (Sweet 1892, Kruipsinga 1932, Koziol 1937, Zandvoort 1975 and Štekauer 2000) only list the prefixes alphabetically, providing semantic notes. Some (Jespersen 1942, Marchand 1960, Adams 1973, Quirk et al. 1985, Greenbaum 1996, Carstairs-McCarthy 2002, Huddleston & Pullum 2002, Plag 2003, Hamawand 2009, Frătilă 2011 and Bauer et al. 2013) make semantic groups, but they note that the meanings of prefixes often overlap. Academic articles (Zimmer 1964, Kwon 1997, Radić 2002, March et al. 2003, Džuganová 2006 and Vaneva 2013) pay more attention to this topic. They find identifying negative prefixes often tricky due to many homophones and the fact that many can have several meanings in derivatives. The largest number of prefixes was given by March et al (2003), as many as 12 (*anti-*, *de-*, *dis-*, *dys-*, *in-*, *il-*, *im-*, *ir-*, *mal-*, *mis-*, *non-* and *un-*), and 11 by Vaneva (2013) (*a-*, *anti-*, *counter-*, *de-*, *dis-*, *un-*, *in-*, *im-*, *il-*, *ir-* and *non-*). Both March et al. and Vaneva include the prefixes *il-*, *im-*, and *ir-* on the list individually. But further on in the paper, they call them allomorphs of the prefix *in-*. This gives a final list of 9 prefixes for March et al. and 8 for Vaneva. Bauer et al. (2013) also provide 8 negative prefixes (*in-*, *un-*, *non-*, *a-*, *dis-*, *de-*, *mis-*, *mal-*). Jespersen (1942) had only 3 negative prefixes (*un-*, *in-*, *a-*) but also many “related prefixes” (*n-*, *non-*, *mis-*, *dis-*, *gain-* and *with-* (related to negative), *un-* and *de-* (privative), *mal-* (pejorative) and *anti-*, *contra-*, *counter-* (opposite)). Adams (1973) has

5 The percentage value is rounded to the nearest whole number or tenth. Due to that, the percentage total ranges from 99 to 101%.

7 in the “negative, privative and reversative group” (a-, de-, dis-, ex-, in-, non-, un-), as well as Frăţilă (2011) (de-, dis-, in-, non-, mis-, un-, mal-). Plag (2003) and Hamawand (2009) list 6 (a-, de-, dis-, in-, non-, un-), but the latter supplements the list with 9 secondary negative prefixes (anti-, contra-, counter-, mal-, mis-, pseudo-, quasi-, sub-, under-). Quirk et al. (1985), Zimmer (1964), Marchand (1960), Greenbaum (1996), Huddleston & Pullum (2002), Carstairs-McCarthy (2002) and Džuganová (2006) list the same 5 negatives (a-, dis-, in-, non-, un-). They all note that there is no exhaustive list, as there are many polysemantic prefixes, and negativity is one of their meanings.

Evidently, negative prefixes have often been the subject of research and scholarly description. However, the available literature suggests that their Serbian equivalents have not been extensively studied by either local⁶ or foreign authors, which makes this analysis worthwhile.

English negative prefixes and their Serbian translation equivalents

This chapter focuses on answering some fundamental questions about the prefixal negation in English and Serbian lexicons: How frequent are the five basic negative prefixes used in English? How are they translated into Serbian? Are the corresponding forms identified based on morphological structure or semantic meaning?

The corpus data revealed 557 examples, displaying mainly negative meaning. The table below provides the number of occurrences of each prefix in the corpus. As stated in the introduction, the corpus data for some prefixes remained insufficient for reliable analysis. That is why they are supplemented with items from the bilingual dictionary.

Table 1. *Distribution of prefixes*

prefix	primary corpus	% (prim. corpus)	dictionary	total
a-	7	1.6	65	72
dis-	59	14		59
in- (with allomorphs)	162	37		162
non-	9	2	58	67
un-	197	45		197
total	434	99.6		557

Prefix a-

Prefix a- has a prevocalic alternation an-, appearing with bases with an initial vowel or silent *h* (anaerobic, anhydrous). It may assimilate to ar- if the base begins in *r* (arrhythmia). The prefix is etymologically Greek. According to the OED, most *a-* coinages in English date back to the 19th century.

Derivatives with a- are not common in everyday language, as suggested by the small number of forms in the primary corpus (only 1.6%). They are typical for scientific lexis, predominantly medical.

The corpus shows that in modern English the prefix dominates on Greek adjecti-

⁶ Although Serbian authors Kovačević (2002), Radović-Tešić (2002), Ristić (2012), and Petković (2023) did not focus exclusively on negative prefixes, they discussed this topic in the chapters of their studies.

val bases and deadjectival nouns, as indicated by the distribution occurrence: 49% with nouns and 49% with adjectives. There were only 2 verbs (2,7%) – anaesthetize (Greek: without consciousness) and atrophy (Greek: without nutrition).

The a- derivatives denote negation (ahistorical = not historical, atypical = not typical, arrhythmic = not rhythmic); absence of something (amoral = lacking sense of morality, achromatic = without colour, apathetic = without enthusiasm); deprivation (anaesthetize = deprive of feeling or awareness and atrophy = reduce in strength).

Sometimes the line between negation and lacking is somewhat blurred, especially when talking about adjectives – a *rhythmic* or *harmonic* are ungradable properties, but binary. The *lack of rhythm/harmony* makes the operation *not rhythmic/not harmonic* and the action becomes arrhythmic/anharmonic.

The productivity of the prefix in modern English is marginal. As the OED displays, there are not many coinages newer than the 19th century. The only 20th-century words are *atonal* and *anoxia* and their paradigm. The survival of the prefix a- in modern English appears to largely depend on its use in the specialized terminology of scientific disciplines such as medicine, biology, physics etc.

The analysis shows that the a- words usually do not translate into Serbian but remain as such (55%), like in apathetic – apatičan, atheism – ateizam, asymmetric – asimetričan. These internationalisms belong to formal or professional vocabularies in languages and reflect a shared understanding of a particular concept or idea. They are typically of Latin or Greek origin.

Other equivalents are: privative bez- (29%), like in acephalous – bezglav, agamic – bespolan, amorphous – bezobličan; negative ne- (9%), like in alphabetic – nepismen, atypical – netipičan, agenesis – nerazvijenost; various words or phrases denoting missing or insufficient possession of a particular characteristic (7%), like in atonic – mlitav, aphasia – gubitak govora, arid – suv (fig. nezanimljiv).

Many units (amorphous, alphabetic, agenesis, anarchism, anonymity, aphonia, atheist) can be grouped both as internationalisms (amorfan, analfabeta, agenezija, anarhizam, anonimnost, afonija, ateista) and bez-/ne- words (bezobličan, nepismen, nerazvijenost, bezvlašće, bezimenost, bezglasnost, bezbožnik), depending on whether they are used as special purpose lexis or not.

The corpus findings are quite aligned with Klajn's (2002: 197) – prefix a- predominates with foreign bases and is common in adjectives and nouns. Bez- (KLAJN 2002: 183) has a usual privative meaning and occurs with adjectives and deadjectival nouns (anarchism – bezvlašće, anonymity – bezimenost, agamic – bespolan, atheist – bezbožnik). The prefix ne- (KLAJN 2002:185) means pure negation (arid – nezanimljiv, atypical – netipičan) and opposition (alphabetic – nepismen, atonic – nenaglašen).

Prefix dis-

Prefix dis- is Latin. According to the OED the prefix came into English through Old French loanwords and became productive in Middle English, meaning negation, opposition, lacking, and depriving.

Today, the use of dis- is related to its origin. As the prefix originates from the Romance languages, most coinages have Latin roots. Some rare dis- coinages with native

English roots are respectively frequent (distrust, dislike, disbelief and their derivatives). The corpus analysis attests to the dominance of *dis-* with nouns, mostly deverbals (46%) and adjectives (25%), followed by verbs (19%) and adverbs (10%).

Dis- coinages mostly displayed negativity (discontent = not content, disobediently = not obediently, disagree = not to agree), absence of something (disorderly = lacking order, disrespect = lack of respect, disproportion = lack of proportion) and opposition (disreputable = not at all reputable, not respected, displeased = annoyed, even angry, disagreement = have different opinions). The lack of quality is often so strong that it indicates an opposing quality (dislike = a strong feeling of not liking, distasteful = very unpleasant or morally offensive, disadvantageous = causing problems).

Dis- is now rarely used to produce new words (BAUER et al. 2013: 361), so its productivity is low.

The list of Serbian equivalents is quite diverse, but they can be grouped as follows:

- zero prefix including various word classes of negative qualification, of derogatory and/or disqualifying tone (58%). Such a high portion of equivalents was unable to be grouped morphologically, but only semantically, like in *dislike* – *mržnja*, *distasteful* – *odvratan*, *disreputable* – *pokvaren*;
- negative prefix *ne-* (30.5%) and verbal negative particle *ne* (12%), wherein the prefix *ne-* is used for non-verbals, like in *discontent* – *nezadovoljstvo* and *disfavour* – *nenaklonost* and the particle *ne* for verbals, like in *disapprove* – *ne slagati se*, *displease* – *ne dopadati se*.

It should be noted that the Serbian verbal negative particle *ne* applies to verbs. In Serbian conjugation verbs do not join the particle or a negative auxiliary verb (*nije*, *nisam*, *neću*, etc.) together with the main verb in complex forms (*nisu dopadali*, *neće voleti*, *ne sviđa*, *ne slaže*, *nije odobravao*, etc.). Unlike Serbian, English can make verbal negation with auxiliary verbs and with prefixes (*I don't agree with you* vs. *I disagree with you*). As Serbian nouns and adjectives are negated prefixally and Serbian verbs are negated with the particle, it implies that it is the same morphosemantic operation, conditioned by the word class. Therefore, the prefix *ne-* and the particle *ne* merged into one group.

Prefix *in-*

Prefix *in-* is Latin in origin, so it applies Latin phonological rules to English derivatives. It has several allomorphic forms. *In-* assimilates to *im-* if a root begins in *m*, *b* or *p* (immature, imbalance, imperfect), to *il-* if a root begins in *l* (illegal) and to *ir-* if a root begins in *r* (irregular). The prefix sometimes varies to *ig-* before words in *n* (ignoble). For euphonic reasons *in-* is not used with long words beginning with *in* or *im*, but either *un-* or *dis-* is preferred, like in *uninhabitable*, *uninterrupted*, *disinfection*, *disintegration* (DŽUGANOVA 2006: 334).

Being Latin, the prefix is used with Latin root adjectives, deadjectival nouns and deadjectival adverbs, like in *incredible*, *irregularity*, *illegally*. The corpus analysis revealed as many as 59% of adjectival use, 21% with nouns and 20% with adverbs.

In the corpus, the prefix produces several meanings: negation (not), being basic and dominant (*impatient* = not patient, *irresponsible* = not responsible), opposition (*insane* = completely stupid or crazy, *insolent* = rude) and privacy or lacking (without), being the rarest (*indifference* = lack of interest or concern, *indiscipline* = lack of control).

The productivity of *in-* is limited. New formations are rare, although not as rare as with *a-* and *dis-* (MARCHAND 1960: 120).

Regarding Serbian translation equivalency, the negative prefix *ne-* appears in more than half of the examples (53%), like in *inaccessible* – *nepristupačan* and *irresponsible* – *neodgovoran*. Other equivalents are: privative *bez-* (19%), like in *infinite* – *beskrajan* and *impudent* – *bestidan*; various words and phrases of negative qualification (17%), words of neutral qualification (9%) and prefix *in-* retained in several international loanwords (2%), like in *indiscrete* – *indiskretan* and *inertia* – *inercija*.

‘Words and phrases of negative qualification’ denote negative quality, which is not indicated morphologically but semantically (*impudent* – *drzak*, *insane* – *poludeo*, *ignominious* – *posramljen*, *immorality* – *razvrat*, *inadequately* – *greškom*, *indignant* – *ogorčen* etc). ‘Words of neutral qualification’ are not semantically nor morphologically negative, but make the requested meaning in the context (*indifference* – *ravnodušnost*, *indolence* – *lagodnost*, *interminable* – *preopširan*, *immemorial* – *vajkadašnji*, *immutable* – *postojan*, etc.). Many of these forms are Latinisms and exist also in Serbian (*indifferent* – *indiferentan*, *indolence* – *indolentnost*), so they might come to the group of untranslated words, as well. Equivalents for *interminable* (*preopširan*), *immemorial* (*vajkadašnji*), *immutable* (*postojan*) have Serbian synonyms *beskonačan*, *nezapamćen*, *nepromenjen*, which morphologically better match the source forms, but were omitted for stylistic reasons. This means that some other translation or the type of the text could make the correspondents *ne-*, *bez-* and *in-* more prominent.

The prefix *ne-* dominates among the *in-* equivalents (53%). It has several related meanings which are not always easy to distinguish. Klajn (2002: 185) lists many, and four of them match the meanings of *in-*. They are pure negation in both humans and abstract concepts (*neborac*, *nejunak*, *nepušač*, *nesloga*, *neistina*), opposite (*neprijatelj*, *nered*, *neradnik*), “bad, evil” (*nečovek*, *nevreme*, *nedelo*) and “inconvenient, unsuitable” (*nedoba*, *nezgoda*, *nesreća*).

Prefix *non-*

Prefix *non-* has a Latin etymology. The first legal loanwords came to Middle English only in the 13th century, and it later expanded to administrative, scientific, commercial, religious, technological and other jargon (DŽUGANOVA 2006: 334).

In the corpus it coined words from almost any root class and origin, but basically with complex adjectives, abstract (*non-violence*, *nonsense*) and agentive (*non-believer*, *nonresident*) nouns and lately deverbal adjectives (*non-stop train*, *non-slip soles*). Today the prefix *non-* is highly productive, largely due to the complementary antonymy⁷⁵ it denotes, and it is not subject to almost any restrictions.

It showed two meanings: negation (*nonacademic* = not academic, *nonsense* = ideas that are not true, *non-liturgical* = not liturgical) and absence or lack of (*nonchalance* = absence of worry or care, *nondescript* = without any interesting quality)

The list of Serbian equivalents is rather diverse. There is a variety of Serbian forms with matching meanings. The negative prefix *ne-* (58%) tops the list (*non-smoker* – *nepušač*, *non-finite* – *nesvršen*). Negative adjectival phrases with a verb or an adjective

⁷⁵ Complementary antonymy refers to two mutually exclusive features, which can neither be compared (graded) nor intensified with *very*, e.g. *smoker* – *non-smoker*

as a headword (17.5%) come next (non-addictive – koji ne stvara zavisnost, non-viable – nesposoban za život). Non- remained in 13% of loanwords (non-stop – nonstop, non-chalant – nonšalantan). The following four equivalents are respectively rare: prefix bez- (4.5%), (nonsense – besmislica, non-alcoholic – bezalkoholan); antonym of the root (3%) (nonrigid – mek, non-white – Crnac); prefix van- (1.5%), (nonscheduled – vanredan); preposition protiv (1.5%) (non-skid – protiv klizanja).

Unsurprisingly, the prefix *ne-* comes with a high share. In Serbian it is a highly productive prefix with many related meanings – pure negation for human beings (nepušač – non-smoker, neplivač – non-swimmer, nealbanac – non-Albanian) and scientific classification (nevalentan – non-valent, nesvrstan – non-aligned, nesvršen – non-finite). Opposite meaning can come out of negative, and these two meanings are often difficult to distinguish (KLAJN 2002: 186).

Prefix *un-*

The prefix *un* is of a native, Germanic origin. It has been extensively employed since Old English and is highly productive across all word classes of native and non-native origin, even phrases. The corpus showed the dominance of adjectives (46%) and adverbs (40%) over nouns, verbs, and adverbs.

The meaning of purely negative force (uncertain = not sure, uneatable = not suitable to eat) prevails among its meanings. The prefix also denotes the absence of and lack of something (uninspiring = lacking in inspiration, untoothed = having no teeth) and opposite of/contrary to (unwell = ill, untruth = a lie).

In addition to expressing negation, the prefix *un-* may also convey a reversative meaning when attached to verbs and deverbal nouns. In such cases, it denotes the reversal of a previous action (unfold, undo), a change of state (unsettle), or the removal of something (unburden). However, since the focus of this study is on primary negation, the reversative meaning of the prefix will not be analysed separately.

The analysis revealed the most recurrent Serbian equivalent is the correspondent *ne-* (76%), which complies with the negative potency of the English negative *un-* (unspeakable – neizreciv, unravished – neoskrnavljen). Klajn supports the diversity of unmeanings which are not always easy to delimit. The meaning of pure negation is the main one, followed by the meaning of opposite, the meaning of “bad, evil”, and the meaning of “inconvenient, unsuitable”. Words and phrases of neutral qualification (10%) (unlike – za razliku od, unmistakably – jedva primetno, undivided – potpun) are neutral only at the individual level. In the sentence, they are part of its general, negative meaning. Negative verbal phrases (8%), (unbeknown – ne znajući za to, unmentionable – ko se ne sme ni pomenuti) translate English adjectives, being either participles (in -ing and -ed) or compound adjectives in -able, where Serbian generally does not have a corresponding independent word. Words and phrases of negative qualification (7%), (unwell – loše, unchastity – razbludnost, unfortunate – zlosrećan) are the rarest. Words of neutral and negative qualification may be used even if *ne-* words do exist, but are not stylistically preferred.

The findings presented above are consistent with the consulted sources, which indicate that different prefixes attached to the same base may yield different meanings. Non-human means simply not human, inhuman is cruel, brutal; *a-* denotes the absence of a quality (amoral), *in-* means wrong (immoral) (HUDDLESTON & PULLUM 2002: 1688);

negative power of *dis-* is stronger than *un-* or *in-* (disabled – not having a physical/developmental precondition vs. unable – not having the skill, time); *in-* and *un-* are semantically very close, but *un-* has a slightly weaker negative power than *un-* (MARCHAND 1960: 152); *non-* forms are emotively neutral and non-gradable while *un-* may convey criticism and gradability; *un-* can take modifiers very, extremely, etc. (HUDDLESTON & PULLUM 2002: 1688); *dis-*, *in-* and *un-* have a much stronger categorising effect than *non-*. (QUIRK 1985: 1540).

On the other hand, the Serbian prefix *ne-* exhibits an elastic scope of meanings and its productivity is almost unlimited. It can thus match the meanings that several English prefixes produce. Klajn, referring to Stijović and Stevanović (2002: 197), gives pure negation, opposition to the quality of the base, mitigation of a contrasting quality, terminological antonymy, etc. Due to the vagueness of meaning and polysemy, these categories cannot always be precisely demarcated.

Conclusion

This paper attempted to review prefixal negation in English and detect Serbian counterparts, to reveal the relationship between English and Serbian and thus provide a better understanding of the systems. The analysis covered five prefixes (*a-*, *dis-*, *in-*, *non-*, *un-*). Four have a foreign, Latin origin and *un-* has a native, Germanic origin. The origin of a prefix usually requires the root to be of the same origin. This especially works for *a-*, *dis-* and *in-*. On the other hand, prefixes *non-* and *un-*, especially in new coinages, can take roots of any origin. The prefixes combine mostly with nominals (nouns and adjectives), but also with verbs and adverbs. The meaning they primarily make is negation – not X, where X is an adjective (impatient, untypical), noun (discontent) or verb (disagree). Secondly it denotes opposition – contrary to X, where X is an adjective (disreputable, insane) or noun (disrespect); absence – without/lacking X, where X is an adjective (amoral) or noun (disrespect, nonchalance); deprivation – deprive of X, where X is a verb (anaesthetize) or noun (disability).

The productivity grade varies. It goes from highly productive (*un-* and *non-*) to almost unproductive (*a-*). Prefixes *dis-* and *in-* are in between.

Regarding translation equivalence, the prefix *ne-* took primacy over the corpus examples. Every English prefix examined here had *ne-* as one of the corresponding forms. It goes from over 30% for *dis-* to even 76% for *un-*. Only *a-* remained outside this range, and *a-* is not particularly typical in everyday lexis. The second most recurrent correspondent is the privative prefix *bez-*. It is particularly frequent with the prefix *a-*, which is expected, as *a-* carries a strong privative meaning. Keeping words in their original form is rare in Serbian, except for *a-* and *non-*. They are international loanwords that occur translingually and transculturally and usually belong to formal and professional vocabularies. In this field, Serbian is open to other languages, and the loans are phonetically and grammatically adapted to it. The research also revealed certain limitations in establishing equivalence between English and Serbian. Matching the source text with the target text often required the consideration of multiple morphological alternatives. They are functional-communicative equivalents (PRČIĆ 2011: 171), and they semantically rather than formally correspond to the source items. Various phrases are used even if a one-word equivalent could be coined, but would be less appropriate for stylistic reasons. In these

cases, a non-morphological strategy is used, and it includes paraphrasing, synonymy, substitution, etc.

The productivity of the prefixes proves that word formation is a never-ending process. Coining new words and meanings is a flexible category, subject to constant adjustments. Therefore, the descriptions and rules given here are also not final. This provides a field always open for new research in linking forms and meanings.

Works cited

- ADAMS 1973: ADAMS, Valerie. *An Introduction to Modern English Word-Formation*. London: Longman Group Ltd, 1973.
- BAUER 2004: BAUER, Laurie. *Morphological Productivity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- BAUER et al. 2013: BAUER Laurie, Rochelle Lieber, Ingo Plag. *The Oxford Reference Guide to English Morphology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- CARSTAIRS-McCARTHY 2002: CARSTAIRS-McCARTHY, Andrew. *An Introduction to English Morphology, Words and Their Structure*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002.
- ĐORĐEVIĆ 2004: ĐORĐEVIĆ, Radmila. *Uvod u kontrastiranje jzika*. 6. dop. izdanje. Beograd: Filološki fakultet, 2004.
- DŽUGANOVA 2006: DŽUGANOVA, Božena. „Negative Affixes in Medical English“. *Bratislavské Lekárske Listy*. 107 (8). 332–335, 2006.
- FRĂȚILĂ 2011: FRĂȚILĂ, Loredana P. *Words about Words. An Introduction to English Lexicology*. Timișoara: Editura Universitatii de Vest, 2011.
- GREENBAUM 1996: GREENBAUM, Sidney. *The Oxford English Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- HAMAWAND 2009: HAMAWAND, Zeki. *The Semantics of English Negative Prefixes*. London: Equinox Publishing Ltd, 2009.
- HLEBEC 2012: HLEBEC, Boris. *Standard English-Serbian Dictionary*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike, 2012.
- HUDDLESTON & PULLUM 2002: HUDDLESTON, Rodney and PULLUM, Geoffrey K. *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- JESPERSEN 1942: JESPERSEN, Otto. *A Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles: Morphology (Part 6)*, London: George Allen & Unwin and Ejnar Munksgaard, 1942.
- KLAJN 2002: KLAJN, Ivan. *Tvorba reči u savremenom srpskom jeziku, prvi deo, slaganje i prefiksacija*, Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike, Matica srpska, Institut za srpski jezik SANU, 2002.
- KOVAČEVIĆ 2002: KOVAČEVIĆ, Miloš. *Sintaksička negacija u srpskom jeziku*, Niš: Univerzitet u Nišu, 2002. [orig.] КОВАЧЕВИЋ, Милош. *Синтаксичка негација у српском језику*, Ниш: Универзитет у Нишу, 2002.
- KOZIOL 1937: KOZIOL, Henry. *Handbuch der englischen Wortbildungslehre*. Heidelberg: Winter, 1937.
- KRUIPSINGA 1932: KRUIPSINGA, Etsko. *A Handbook of Present-Day English, Part II, English Accidence and Syntax, Section 3*, Groningen: P. Noordhoff, 1932.
- KWON 1997: KWON, Heok S. “Negative Prefixation from 1300 to 1899: A case study in un-/in-variation“, *ICAME Journal*, 21–42, 1997.
- MARCH et al. 2003: MARCH, Jeff, Marti S Childs. “Negative Prefixes Can Be Positively Con-

- founding”, *Edit Pros*, Vol. 7, No. 7, 2003.
- MARCHAND 1960: MARCHAND, Hans. *The Categories and Types of Present-Day English Word Formation, A Synchronic-Diachronic Approach*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1960.
- Oxford English Dictionary Online. 2023 Oxford University Press. <https://www.oed.com> [December 2024].
- PETKOVIĆ 2023: PETKOVIĆ, Jelena. *Dvostruka negacija u srpskom jeziku*, Andrićgrad: Andrićev institute, 2023. [orig.] ПЕТКОВИЋ, Јелена. *Двострука негација у српском језику*, Андрићград: Андрићев институт, 2023.
- PLAG 2003: PLAG, Ingo. *Word-Formation in English*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- PRĆIĆ 2011: Tvrtko Prčić. *Engleski u srpskom*. Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet, 2011.
- QUIRK et al. 1985: Randolph Quirk, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech, Jan Svartvik. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London and New York: Longman Group Ltd, 1985.
- RADIĆ 2002: Biljana Radić. “Negative Prefixes in English: Productivity and Blocking”. *Godišnjak Filozofskog fakulteta u Novom Sadu*. XXX. Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet. 89–98. 2002.
- RADOVIĆ TEŠIĆ (2002): Milica Radović Tešić. *Imenice sa prefiksima u srpskom jeziku*, Beograd: Institut za srpski jezik SANU, 2002. [orig.] РАДОВИЋ ТЕШИЋ, Милица. *Именице у српском језику*, Београд: Институт за српски језик САНУ, 2002.
- RISTIĆ (2012): Stana Ristić. *O rečima u srpskom jeziku : (tvorbeni i leksikografsko-leksikološki aspekti)*. Beograd: Institut za srpski jezik SANU, 2012 [orig.] РИСТИЋ, Стана. *О речима у српском језику : (творбени и лексикографско-лексиколошки аспекти)*. Београд. Институт за српски језик САНУ, 2012.
- ŠTEKAUER 2000: Pavol Štekauer. *English word-formation: A history of research, 1960-1995*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 2000.
- SWEET 1892: Henry Sweet. *A Short English Grammar*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1892.
- SWEET 1905: Henry Sweet. *An Anglo-Saxon Primer, Eighth Edition, Revised*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1905.
- VANEVA 2013: Marjana Vaneva. “Negative Prefixes in English and Macedonian”. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, SER-CEMAS-Sapienza University of Rome*, Vol 4, No 2, 665–675, 2013.
- ZANDVOORT 1975: Reinard W. Zandvoort. *A Handbook of English Grammar*. London: Longman Group Limited, 1975.
- ZIMMER 1964: Karl Zimmer. “Affixal Negation in English and Other Languages: An Investigation of Restricted Productivity”, *Word, Journal of the Linguistic Circle of New York*, Supplement vol.20/2, New York: Linguistic Circle of New York, 21–45, 1964.

Sources

- Fowels, J (1969). *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*. New York: Back Bay Books
- Lawrence, D. H. (1928). *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. New York: Bantam Classics
- Fauls Dž. (2021). *Žena francuskog poručnika*. Prev. Ljerka Radović. Beograd: Laguna.
- Lorens, D. H. (2005). *Ljubavnik Lejdi Četerli*. Prev. Svetozar Ignjačević. Beograd: Laguna

Ирена М. Пантић

О ПРЕВОДНИМ ЕКВИВАЛЕНТИМА НЕКИХ ЕНГЛЕСКИХ НЕГАТИВНИХ ПРЕФИКСА У СРПСКОМ ЈЕЗИКУ

Резиме

Овај рад проучава главне негативне префиксе у енглеском језику (a-, dis-, in-, non- и un-). и открива њихове преводне еквиваленте у српском. Упоредном анализом паралелног књижевног корпуса издвојено је 557 лексичких јединица различите фреквентности. Однос међу њима одсликава учешће префиксалних деривата у говору. Сваки префикс описан је етимолошки, морфолошки и семантички. Префикси a-, dis-, in- и non- латинског су порекла а un- германског, што често захтева основу истог порекла. То је посебно изражено код a-, dis- и in-, док non- и un- не подлежу таквом ограничењу. Корпус је показао да је негативна префиксација чешћа код именица и придева а ређа код глагола и прилога. Доминантно значење је чиста негација. Остала значења су супротност, одсуство и лишавање. Степен продуктивности префикса је различит. Креће се од високог (un- и non-) до скоро непродуктивног (a-), док се dis- и in- налазе између. У погледу преводних реализација у српском, показало се да префикс не- има примат над осталим облицима. Сваки од пет енглеских префикса имао је не- за кореспондентни облик, што је код dis- износило преко 30% до чак 76% за un-. Ван овог опсега једино је префикс a- који је и иначе редак у свакодневној лексици. Други најчешћи кореспондент је префикс без- (посебно изражен код a-), у складу за другим најчешћим значењем групе. Анализа је показала да интернационализми са поменути префиксима нису тако чести у српском, осим када се ради о префиксима a- and non- у формалном и професионалном дискурсу. За одређен број еквивалената није се могао одредити најмањи заједнички морфолошки облик. Ту се ради о функционално-стилистичким формама које имају за циљ да што верније пренесу садржај текста, док је морфолошки облик у другом плану. Из угла појединачног префикса, a- углавном остаје у истом облику у српском или му је кореспондентни облик без-, dis- користи различите морфолошке облике, а in-, non- и un- имају за кореспондент не-.

Кључне речи: негативни префикси, a-, dis-, in-, non-, un-, еквивалент, кореспондент, језик извора, језик циља