

PERFECT AND NEGATION IN LITHUANIAN VS. STANDARD AVERAGE EUROPEAN

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1. Perfect and negation: general remarks¹

The interaction of perfect and negation has not so far received any comprehensive treatment in the literature.

McCawley (1999: 179):

present perfect negated

- (1) a. *John hasn't received any encouragement.*
'there is no event of John receiving some encouragement'
perfect applied to a negated verb phrase
- b. *John has [not returned my calls] many times.*
'there are many past events of John not returning my calls'

Cf. similar observations in Zanuttini (1996: 189–190), De Swart & Molendijk (1999: 19) and Katz 2003, see below.

☞ Two interpretations of the combination of perfect and negation are possible depending on their relative scope:

- the “**higher interpretation**” (NEG > PERF): ‘it is not true that situation V has current relevance’, cf. (1a).
- the “**lower interpretation**” (PERF > NEG): ‘situation not-V has current relevance’, cf. (1b).

In Western European languages with a distinct perfect gram (e.g. English, Spanish, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Greek), its combination with negation can in principle have both interpretations depending on the context.

English (except some rare contexts, see below)

- (2) a. *I **have not worked** for State Security.* NEG > PERF
b. *I **have not slept** for 4 days.* PERF > NEG

Bulgarian (the same translations)

- (3) a. ***Ne** **săm** **raboti-l** za **Dăržavna** **sigurnost.** (Google)*
NEG AUX.PRS.1SG work(IPF)-PST.PRT for state security
- b. ***Ne** **săm** **spa-l** ot 4 **dn-i.** (Google)*
NEG AUX.PRS.1SG sleep(IPF)-PST.PRT from 4 day-PL

Peninsular Spanish

- (4) a. ***No he visto gente más fea que en las manifestaciones.** NEG > PERF (Google)*
'I haven't seen more unpleasant people than during mass demonstrations.'
- b. ***Tengo una costilla rota y no he comido en dos días.** PERF > NEG (Google)*
'I've got a broken rib and have not eaten for two days.'

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The “lower” interpretation of negation most easily arises in contexts where not-V and especially its direct or indirect results or consequences have pragmatic salience, e.g. ‘not eat’, ‘not drink’, ‘not sleep’ etc.

Cf. the notion of “negative facts/events” (Stockwell et al. 1973: 250–251; Horn 1989: 51–55): “There are certain cases where a negation of an event may ... itself be an event... Semantically, the ‘event’ seems to be the breaking of a habitual or expected pattern of activity”.

2. General remarks on Lithuanian perfect

(See Sližienė 1964, 1967, 1969, 1995; Geniušienė, Nedjalkov 1988; Geniušienė 1989, 1990).

Auxiliary *būti* ‘be’ + active past participle (for the time being, I exclude from consideration constructions with passive participles), cf. (5):

- (5) *Tai turbūt geriausi-as anekdot-as, kok-į es-u girdej-ęs.*
that perhaps best-NOM.SG.M joke-NOM.SG what-ACC.SG.M AUX.PRS-1SG hear-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M
'This is perhaps the best joke I've (ever) heard.' (LKT)

The auxiliary can occur in virtually any grammatical form, and is very often left out in the Present Tense, cf. (6). Specialized meanings triggered by particular forms of the auxiliary, e.g. annulled result with the Past Perfect or epistemic modality with the Future Perfect, won't be considered.

The main meanings of the Perfect:

➤ subjective (subject-oriented) resultative (only with telic verbs denoting change of state of the subject): ‘the result of V holds at reference time’, cf. (6), (7).

- (6) *J-i at-si-sėd-us-i patogiai.*
3-NOM.SG.F PRV-RFL-sit.down-PST.PA-NOM.SG.F comfortably
'She is sitting (lit. «has sat») comfortably.' (Servaitė 1988: 84)

- (7) *T-q vasar-q Ū-la buv-o ap-si-vilk-us-i nauj-a suknel-e.*
DEM-ACC.SG summer-ACC.SG Ūla-NOM.SG AUX-PST.3 PRV-RFL-dress-PST.PA-NOM.SG.F
new-INS.SG.F dress-INS.SG
'That summer Ūla was dressed (lit. “had put on”) in a new dress.' (ibid.)

➤ experiential or existential (in principle possible with all verbs but especially favoured by atelic verbs, which do not admit the resultative meaning): ‘the situation V occurred at least once up to the reference time’, cf. (5), (8).

- (8) *Mažid-as buv-o žaid-ęs dešimt-is žaidim-ų.*
M.-NOM.SG AUX-PST.3 play-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M ten-ACC.PL game-GEN.PL
Dar niekuomet ne-buv-o pa-jut-ęs toki-os aistr-os grum-ti-s.
yet never NEG-AUX-PST.3 PRV-feel-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M such-GEN.SG.F passion-GEN.SG fight-INF-RFL
'M. had [by that time] played dozens of games. But he had never felt such a passion for fight.' (LKT)

☞ Notably, the Lithuanian perfect, unlike English or Bulgarian (Iatridou et al. 2001), does not have the “universal” or “inclusive” meaning and cannot denote a durative situation lasting up to the reference time. Thus, only (10a) with a Present tense form can serve as a felicitous translation for English (9).

- (9) *I have been working at the University for 2 years already.*

- (10) a. *Universitet-e dirb-u jau dvejus met-us.*
university-LOC.SG work-PRS.1SG already two-ACC.PL.M year-ACC.PL

- b. #Universitet-e **es-u** **dūrb-ęs** *dvej-us* *met-us*.
 university-LOC.SG AUX.PRS-1SG work-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M two-ACC.PL.M year-ACC.PL
 ‘I have worked at the university for two years [and now I don’t work there].’

3. Perfect and negation in Lithuanian

The Lithuanian Perfect, as has been noted already by Sližienė (1967: 70), has two morphological positions for negation, which turn out to correspond to two different scopes of negation:

- the “higher” position on the auxiliary, (11a);
- the “lower” position on the participle, (11b).

- (11) a. *Niekada* **ne-s-u** **miegoj-ęs** *lauke*.
 never NEG-AUX.PRS-1SG sleep-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M outdoors
 ‘I have never slept outdoors.’ (NEG > PERF)
- b. *Jau* *dvi* *dien-as* **es-u** **ne-miegoj-ęs**.
 already to:ACC.F day-ACC.PL AUX.PRS-1SG NEG-sleep-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M
 ‘I have not slept for two days already.’ (PERF > NEG)

Some corpus examples:

- (12) a. *J-is* *dar* *niekad* **ne-buv-o** *mat-ęs*
 3-NOM.SG.M yet never NEG-AUX-PST.3 see-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M
toki-os *didel-ės* *egl-ės...*
 such-GEN.SG.F large-GEN.SG.F fir.tree-GEN.SG
 ‘He had never seen such a huge fir-tree before...’ (LKT)
- b. *Labai* *seniai* **buv-o** **ne-mat-ęs** *vaik-ų*.
 very long.ago AUX-PST.3 NEG-see-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M hild-GEN.PL
 ‘[By that time] he had not seen the children for a very long time.’ (LKT)
- (13) a. *Aš* *niekada* *taip* *anksti* **ne-s-u** **valg-ęs** *vakarien-ės*.
 I:NOM never so early NEG-AUX.PRS-1SG eat-PST.PA.NOM.SG.F breakfast-GEN.SG
 ‘I have never eaten dinner so early.’ (LKT)
- b. *Pa-meči-au* *penk-is* *lit-us*, *todėl* *nuo* *ryt-o*
 PRV-throw-PST.1SG five-ACC.PL.M litas-ACC.PL therefore from morning-GEN.SG
es-u *niek-o* **ne-valg-ęs**.
 AUX.PRS-1SG nothing-GEN NEG-eat-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M
 ‘I lost five litas, so I have not eaten anything since morning.’ (LKT)
- (14) a. *Gyvenim-e* **ne-s-u** **grąžin-us-i** *rūb-o*,
 life-LOC.SG NEG-AUX.PRS-1SG return-PST.PA.NOM.SG.F clothes-GEN.SG
kai *j-į* *nu-pirk-au*.
 when 3-ACC.SG.M PRV-buy-PST.1SG
 ‘I have never in my life returned clothes once I had already bought them.’ [existence of any single fact of this kind is denied] (Google)
- b. *...tvirtin-dam-as*, *jog* *j-o* *sūn-us* *j-am* *yra*
 claim-CNV-SG.M that 3-GEN.SG.M son-NOM.SG 3-DAT.SG.M AUX.PRS.3
ne-grąžin-ęs *skol-ų*.
 NEG-return-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M loan-GEN.PL
 ‘...claiming that his son has not returned him some debts’ [the fact that some particular debts have not been returned is asserted] (LKT)

The “lower” position of negation can also occur in the experiential perfect:

- (15) *O* *armij-oje* **es-u** **ne-miegoj-ęs** *tr-is* *par-as*.
 and army-LOC.SG AUX.PRS-1SG NEG-sleep-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M three-ACC.PL day-ACC.PL
 ‘When I was in the army I once did not sleep for three days.’ (Google)

In many cases the opposition of the “higher” and the “lower” negations is pragmatic rather than purely semantic, cf. the following naturally occurring examples:

- (16) a. *Nei vien-o* *blog-o* *komentar-o* *apie* *j-uos*
 nor one-GEN.SG.M bad-GEN.SG.M comment-GEN.SG about 3-ACC.PL.M
ne-s-u **skaiči-us-i**.
 NEG-AUX.PRS-1SG read-PST.PA.NOM.SG.F
 ‘I have not read a single bad comment about them.’ (Google)
- b. *Galbūt* **es-i** **ne-skaiči-us-i** *klub-o* *taisykli-ų*
 perhaps AUX.PRS-2SG NEG-read-PST.PA.NOM.SG.F club-GEN.SG rules-GEN.PL
ir nežinaį, jog tokios temos netoleruojamos?
 ‘Perhaps you have not read the club’s rules and don’t know that such topics are not tolerated?’ [‘you are such that did not read the rules’] (Google)
- (17) a. *Vyr-as* **ne-buv-o** **prarad-ęs** *sąmon-ės*,
 man-NOM.SG NEG-AUX-PST.3 loose-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M conscience-GEN.SG
tačiau pat-s *pa-ei-ti* *jau* **ne-galėj-o**.
 however oneself-NOM.SG.M PRV-go-INF already NEG-can-PST.3
 ‘The man did not lose conscience, but could no longer walk by himself.’ [looks like a neutral statement] (Google)
- b. *Pasak* *medik-ų* ... *j-is* *dar* **buv-o** **ne-prarad-ęs**
 according.to doctor-GEN.PL 3-NOM.SG.M yet AUX-PST.3 NEG-loose-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M
sąmon-ės *ir* *galėj-o* *kalbė-ti*.
 conscience-GEN.SG and can-PST.3 talk-INF
 ‘According to the doctors ... he had not yet lost conscience and could talk.’ [the state of ‘not having lost conscience’ is asserted as salient] (LKT)

Besides that, the “lower” negation becomes the only option when the Perfect combines with some other “external” prefix such as the continuative *tebe-* ‘still’ (18) or the restrictive *te-* ‘only’ (19).

- (18) *...humor-o* *jausm-o* **tebėra** **ne-prarad-us-i** *iki šiolei*.
 humour-GEN.SG sense-GEN.SG CNT + AUX.PRS.3 NEG-loose-PST.PA.NOM.SG.F till up.to.now
 ‘She still has not lost her sense of humour.’ (LKT)
- (19) *Iš Beethoven-o* *simfonij-ų* **te-s-u** **ne-girdėj-us-i** *treči-osios*.
 from Beethoven-GEN.SG symphony-GEN.PL RSTR-AUX.PRS-1SG NEG-hear-PST.PA.NOM.SG.F third-GEN.SG.F.DEF
 ‘Of Beethoven’s symphonies I have not heard only the Third.’ (elicited)

⊗ Since LKT does not have morphological annotation, determining which verbs particularly favour the “lower” negation in the Perfect requires a huge amount of manual work yet to be done.

4. Perfect and negation in the East Baltic area (preliminary observations)

Latvian

Looks similar to the “standard average European” type: the negation on the auxiliary freely admits the “lower” interpretation, cf. (20), (21).

- (20) *Vis-u* *nakt-i* **ne-esmu** *gulēj-is*.
 all-ACC.SG night-ACC.SG NEG-AUX.PRS.1SG sleep-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M
 ‘I have not slept whole night.’ (Google)
- (21) *Es* **ne-esmu** **ēd-us-i** *div-as* *dien-as*.
 I:NOM NEG-AUX.PRS.1SG eat-PST.PA.NOM.SG.F two-ACC.PL.F day-ACC.PL
 ‘I have not eaten for two days.’ (Google)

Negation on the participle seems to be possible in Latvian just in a small number of lexicalized cases like (22).

- (22) *Un var-u aizmirs-t, ka esmu ne-ēd-us-i,*
and can.PRS-1SG forget-INF that AUX.PRS.1SG NEG-eat-PST.PA-NOM.SG.F
ne-iz-gulēj-us-ie-s un sa-slim-us-i.
NEG-PRV-sleep-PST.PA-NOM.SG.F-RFL and PRV-become.sick-PST.PA-NOM.SG.F
'And I can forget that I haven't eaten, haven't slept enough and feel sick.' (Google)

Slavic dialects: note that due to the consistent non-occurrence of the auxiliary in the present tense, only “pluperfect” constructions with the past tense auxiliary are really indicative.

➤ North-West Russian dialects

- (23) *My v kolhoz-e ne by-l-i vo-šot-ši.* (NEG > PERF)
we:NOM in kolkhoz-LOC.SG NEG AUX-PST-PL PRV-go:PST(PFV)-PST.CNV
'We did not enter the kolkhoz.' (Novgorod oblast', Kuz'mina, Nemčenko 1971: 183)
- (24) *Tr-i noč-i ne l'ok-ši by-l-a.* (PERF > NEG)
three-ACC night-ACC.PL NEG lie.down(PFV)-PST.CNV AUX-PST-SG.F
'I did not sleep for three nights (then).' (Novgorod oblast', ibid.: 188)
- Belorussian dialects bordering on Baltic
- (25) *Ja n'e by-l-a gl'adz'e-ušy.*
I:NOM NEG AUX-PST-SG.F see(IPF)-PST.CNV
'I had not looked.' (Belorussia, Astravecki district, Mackevič, Grinaveckienė 1993: 106)
- (26) *Ja by-l-a jašče n'e-je-ušy.*
I:NOM AUX-PST-SG.F yet NEG-eat(IPF)-PST.CNV
'I hadn't eaten yet.' (Belorussia, Braslaŭski district, ibid.)

- (27) *Vy šče z malin by-l-i n'a pry-šo-ušy.*
you.PL.NOM yet from raspberry(GEN.PL) AUX-PST-PL NEG PRV-go(PFV)-PST.CNV
'You hadn't yet come from picking raspberries' (Belorussia, Polacki district, Mackevič 1957: 46)

- (28) *tut ni adzin čalav'ek n'a by-u asta-ušy-si.*
here nor one(NOM.SG.M) man(NOM.SG) NEG AUX-PST(SG.M) remain(PFV)-PST.CNV-RFL
'Not a single person had remained here.' (ibid.)

Cf. the following structural parallelism between Lithuanian and dialectal Belorussian observed by Mackevič, Grinaveckienė (1993: 107):

- (29) Lith. *Jis buvo tris dienas ne-valg-ęs.*
Bel. *Jon byu try dni n'a-je-ušy.*

➤ Polish dialects in Lithuania (*polszczyzna wileńska*)

- (30) *Do armi-i on vutk-i n'e by-l koštova-fšy.*
before army-GEN.SG 3(NOM.SG.M) vodka-GEN.SG NEG AUX-PST(SG.M) try(IPF)-PST.CNV
'Before the army he had not tried vodka.' (Adomavičiūtė, Čekmonas 1991: 100)
- (31) *Ja ot sam-ego ran-a by-l-a n'e jat-šy, n'e pi-fšy.*
I:NOM from very-GEN.SG.M morning-GEN.SG AUX-PST-SG.F NEG eat(IPF)-PST.CNV NEG drink(IPF)-PST.CNV
'I have not eaten and drunk since morning.' (elicited)

5. Some parallels in other linguistic areas

Standard English (Zanuttini 1996: 189–190, ex. originally from Stockwell et al. 1973)

- (32) a. *Mary hasn't always paid taxes.* (NEG > PERF > always)
b. *Mary has always not paid taxes.* (PERF > always > NOT)

vs. Italian (ibid.)

- (33) a. *Maria non ha sempre pagato le tasse.* (= 32a, 32b)
b. **Maria ha sempre non pagato le tasse.*

Cf. also some naturally occurring English examples with “split” negated Perfect:

- (34) a. *They really love nursery and have sometimes not wanted to come home!* (Google)
b. *I have often not slept or eaten for 2 days at a time.* (Google)

However, such examples of “split Perfect” are quite rare: according to BNC (100 mil. words), *have/has* sometimes/often/always not occurs 10 times, while *has/have not* occurs about 11 000 times. Note also that examples like (32) and (34) are not even mentioned in a 800-page long study of the English verb phrase by Declerck (2006).

Irish English (Harris 1984: 312)

- (35) a. *I haven't even it made yet.* (NEG > PERF)
b. *I've a loaf not touched.* (PERF > NEG)

Swedish (Larsson 2009: 175–176) — resultative constructions only

- (36) a. *Artikel-n är inte skriv-en.* (NEG > PERF)
paper-DEF AUX.PRS NEG write-PST.PRT
'The paper has not been written (yet).'
- b. *Artikel-n är fortfarande o-skriv-en.* (PERF > NEG)
paper-DEF AUX.PRS still NEG-write-PST.PRT
'The paper has still not been written.' (lit. “is still un-written”)

Welsh (Borsley, Jones 2005: 131)

- (37) a. *Dydy Sioned ddim wedi cyrredd.*
NEG.AUX.PRS.3SG Sioned NEG PRF arrive
b. *Ma' Sioned heb gyrredd.*
AUX.PRS.3SG Sioned without arrive
'a = b Sioned has not arrived.'

Khwarshi (Nakh-Daghestanian > Tsezic, Khalilova 2009: 203ff)

- (38) a. *obu-n išu-n b-ot'q'-un gobi.*
father-& mother-& HPL-come-PFV.CNV AUX.PRS.NEG
b. *obu-n išu-n b-ot'uq'-bič goli.*
father-& mother-& HPL-come-NEG.CNV AUX.PRS
'The parents have not come.'

The position of negation correlates with scope (ibid.: 206–207):

- (39) a. *žu e"xu-ł usan-un y-eč-un-ay.* (NEG > PERF)
3:ABS river-INTER bathe-PFV.CNV F-AUX-PST-NEG
'She did not bathe in the river.' [She never bathed in the river before]
- b. *žu e"xu-ł usan-bič y-eč-un.* (PERF > NEG)
3:ABS river-INTER bathe-NEG.CNV II-AUX-PST
'She did not bathe in the river [on some particular occasion].' (ibid.: 207)

Burmese (Sino-Tibetan > Tibeto-Burman, Mathias Jenny, p.c.)

- (40) a. *θu ba-hmá pyð mə-thà phù.*
3 what-ever say NEG-AUX:deposit NEG
b. *ba-hmá mə-pyð thà phù.*
what-ever NEG-speak AUX:deposit NEG
'He didn't say anything.' “There seems to be no difference in meaning between the two forms, the choice being rather an individual preference, with dialectal differences in some cases.”

Japanese (Alpatov et al. 2008: 285)

- (41) a. *Ore wa daremo korosh-ite i-na-i yo.* (NEG > PERF)
 I TOP nobody kill-CNV AUX-NEG-PRS PTCL
 'I have not killed anybody.' [the state of being a murderer is denied]
- b. *Sore o wasure-nai-de i-te kure.* (PERF > NEG)
 this ACC forget-NEG-CNV AUX-CNV AUX.IMP
 'Do not forget it!' [the state of not forgetting is required]

6. Conclusions

The “lower” interpretation of negation in perfect constructions is relatively well-attested in the languages of the Eurasia; from a purely logical stand, nothing prevents it from being universal.

The possibility of formally distinguishing between the “higher” and the “lower” interpretations of negation in perfect constructions is less trivial and deserves a detailed cross-linguistic study.

From an areal perspective, the lack of a formal distinction between the “higher” and the “lower” interpretations of negation seems to be an areal feature of the SAE languages, probably correlating with a higher degree of grammaticalization of the perfect and its eventual development into perfective or past.

The languages which can formally distinguish between the “higher” and the “lower” interpretations occur on the fringes of SAE; it seems fairly plausible that the availability of “lower” negation in some linguistic varieties of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania is an areal phenomenon.

Abbreviations

ABS – absolute, ACC – accusative, AUX – auxiliary, CNT – continuative, CNV – converb, DAT – dative, DEF – definite, DEM – demonstrative, F – feminine, FUT – future tense, GEN – genitive, HPL – human plural, IMP – imperative, INF – infinitive, INS – instrumental, INTER – intercessive case, IPF – imperfective, LOC – locative, M – masculine, NEG – negation, NOM – nominative, PA – active participle, PL – plural, PFV – perfective, PRS – present tense, PRT – participle, PRV – preverb, PST – past tense, PTCL – particle, RFL – reflexive, RSTR – restrictive, SG – singular, TOP – topic, & – coordination.

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