International University of Nature, Society and Man “Dubna”

**Course paper**

**«Classification and comparative analysis of English negative affixes»**

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**The introduction**

The aim of our work is to single out, describe, compare and find the possible ways of classification of English negative affixes.

The scientific interest of this work can be the following: we will familiarize ourselves with English negative affixes, learn how they differ semantically from each other, which affixes are used with stems of different parts of speech and what parts of speech they form (there we can also see if these affixes are able to transform words of one part of speech into another), what their functions and peculiarities of usage are, and which affixes are more productive and widely used nowadays. It is very important to know as more affixes, as possible, because many English words are formed by combining prefixes and suffixes to base words. The more prefixes and suffixes we know, the easier it will be for us to figure out the meanings of these words [1, 287].

According to this the tasks of the work will be the following:

1. to find out which affixes may be considered as negative;
2. to look for their meanings in different dictionaries and add them with examples;
3. to find out how affixes can be divided into classes and the place of negative affixes in these classifications;
4. to see how these affixes are realized in different contexts, what functions they perform;
5. to find out which affixes are used with stems of different parts of speech and what parts of speech they form together.

**1. Word-formation. Affixation**

The system of English language is an open system. That means that it is constantly added by new words. According to the Oxford Dictionary, only 7,5% words in the vocabulary of English are borrowings [7]. The vast majority of words appear through changings in the lexical units preserved in the language system, trough the word-formation. Word-formation is the process of building up new words from words of the same root, and as a result of this there is a formal-semantic correspondence between derivative and derived words [4, 56].

It should be mentioned, that there are certain patterns of word-formation in English. It is the circuit, sample, analogue, model, all that fix a rule of construction of derivative words, rule, which takes into account a type of derivative bases and word-building means and general semantics, formed as a result of their interaction, of the same words. One model can also correspond to different changes of meaning and be a source of confusion and misunderstanding for foreign learners. These patterns may be productive or not in different languages. It was noticed by many scholars long ago, that one derivative pattern can give almost infinite or, at least, significant number of derivatives, others are characterized by inability to free word-building.

There are several kinds of word-formation and different kinds of them are productive in different languages. The major ways of word-formation are compounding, affixation and conversion (also called zero-affixation). Affixation remains a very productive type of word-formation in English language. Affixation is the derivation of new words by adding affixes to them, which are suffixes and prefixes.

We can study a particular word from the point of **morphological** and **derivational analyses**. Dealing with morphological analysis we simply divide the word into constitute parts. When the word is divided into its ultimate constituencies the morphological analysis is completed. While doing derivational analysis we find how the word was constructed, which is its derivative and what means have been used to build up the word [4, 59]. So, the process of affixation should be explored within derivational analysis, not morphological. But speaking of affixes in general we are interested in both morphological and derivational analyses.

There is a certain division of morphemes within the morphemic analysis. English grammarians usually point out two criteria, which are the bases of the morphemic structure. They are **the positional criterion** - the location of the morphemes with regard to each other, and **the semantic (or functional) criterion *-*** the contribution of the morphemes to the general meaning of the word. So according to the first there are root-morphemes and affixal morphemes, roots and affixes. The semantic difference between them is obvious: root morphemes have the concrete, “material” meaning, while affixes just specify the main meaning, or transform the meaning of the root [4, 59].

Finally, we can see that there are several types of word-building in English pointed out by many scholars and affixation is one of the most productive. There are certain patterns of word-formation and several types of morphemes. The latter can be studied from the point of view of two complementary analyses.

**2. The semantics of the affixes and their comparative analysis**

affix negative morpheme semantic

The first step in our studying English negative affixes is to give a definition of the affix itself. Here is a definition given in Oxford Advanced Lerner’s Dictionary of Current English. **Affix** is a letter or group of letters added to the beginning or end of a word to change its meaning [8]. This definition takes into account only prefixes and suffixes. But it does not cover all the kinds of affixes. It is important to keep in mind that there are also different types of affixes present in the English language as well:

**-circumfix** (one portion appears at the front of a stem, and the other at the rear, like in ascattered),

**-simulfix** (changes a segment of a stem, like in mouse-mice),

**-suprafix** (changes a suprasegmental phoneme of a stem, for example, the change of an like in produce (noun)-produce (verb));

**-duflifix** (incorporates a reduplicated portion of a stem (may occur in front, at the rear, or within the stem), like in teeny-weeny) [9].

So we see that the definition should be wider. So, if we also take into account that the morphemes are generally divided into root- and affixal morphemes, the definition will be the following: **affifx** is a morpheme that is attached to the stem to form a new word with another meaning.

It was written much about semantics of an affix. There are heated debates in the linguistic literature, whether the affix has meaning in general, and if yes, what type of meaning. There are different points of view, frequently opposite, which, however, can be reduced to several basic directions:

1) The affix has no independent meaning; it only forms the external side of a word;

2) The affix carries out basically only transporting function, translating a basis from one lexical and grammatical class in another, and lexically "is empty";

3) The affix can be characterized by presence of a various sort of meanings: one affixes express a wide and various circle of lexical meanings, others - only grammatic meanings [3, 138].

It is also important to notice that “affixes specify, or transform the meaning of the root. Affixal specification may be of two kinds: of lexical or grammatical character. So, according to the semantic criterion affixes are further subdivided into *lexical*, or*word-building (derivational) affixes*, which together with the root constitute *the stem* of the word, and *grammatical*, or *word-changing affixes*, expressing different morphological categories, such as number, case, tense and others. With the help of lexical affixes new words are derived, or built; with the help of grammatical affixes the form of the word is changed” [2, 57]. One of our further aims will be to study whether English negative affixes are lexical or grammatical or they can be of both types.

On this stage of the analyses rises the question of the criterion for referring affixes to negative and what affixes can be called negative. For the answer it is better to look up the word ”negative” in the dictionary first. So, the Longman dictionary gives the following definition:

negative: 1) a refusing, doubting, or disapproving; saying or meaning ‘no’,

b containing one of the words ‘no’, ‘not’, ‘nothing, ‘never’ etc.

2) without any active, useful or helping qualities; not constructive

3) showing the lack of what was hoped for or expected [6].

From the present definition we see that the first meaning of these words is better applicable to affixes, and this meaning should be the criteria for figuring out negative affixes.

Our next task is to see, which affixes are considered to be negative. According to the previous statement they are the following: a-, ant(i)-, dis-, dys-, in-, mal-, mis-, nega-, non-, un- [9]. From this list we can see, that they are all prefixes. So arises the question, is the negative function in English world-building performed only by prefixes. If we consult other sources we see that there is one suffix changing the meaning of the word to the opposite: -less (*motion-motionless*) [3, 137]. And we also add it to this list. As for the prefixes, de- can also carry the idea of oppositeness, and il-, im- and ir- must be added too, as they are the allomorphs of in-. So let us see what their meanings are.

So if we consult Longman Dictionary of English Language and culture, the result will be the following.

**a-:** (showing an opposite or absence of something) not; without: amoral (=not moral)

**anti-:** 1 apposed to; against: antinuclear (apposing the use of atomic weapons and power) 2 opposite of: an anticlimax (=an unexciting ending of the expected climax)

**contra-:** opposite (plants is contradiction to animals)

**de-:** (in verbs and nouns) (showing an opposite): a depopulated area (which all or most of the population has left)

**dis-:** (showing an opposite or negative): I disapprove (=do not approve)

**il-:** illogical (=not logical)

**im-:** immobilize

**in-:** (especially in adjectives and nouns) (showing a negative, an apposite, or a lack) not: insensible

**ir-:** not: irregular (=not regular)

**mal-**: bad or badly: a malformed (=wrongly shaped) limb

**mis-**: 1 bad or badly: misfortune;

2 wrong or wrongly: a miscalculation

3 (showing an opposite or the lack of something): I mistrust (=do not trust) him

**non-**: (especially in adjectives and nouns) (showing a negative) not: a non-smoker (=someone who does not smokes)

**un-:** 1 (especially in adjectives and adverbs) showing a negative, a lack, or an opposite) not: unfair; 2 (especially in verbs) (showing an opposite): undress (take one’s clothes off)

**less** (in adjectives): 1 without a ---: a childless couple (= who have no children); 2 that never ---s or can not be ---ed: helpless (= can not be helped) [6]

For the prefixes il-, im-, ir- there are no definitions in the dictionary, as they all refer to the suffix in-. The aspect of their difference is explained by allo-morphemic theory.

When studying morphemes, we should distinguish morphemes as generalized lingual units from their concrete manifestations, or variants in specific textual environments; variants of morphemes are called “allo-morphs”. The allo-morphemic theory distinguishes morphemes according to their concrete realization. In the study of morphemes it was developed in Descriptive Linguistic by means of distributional analysis. There are three types of distribution then: contrastive distribution, non-contrastive distribution and complementary distribution. Contrastive distribution means that morphs express different meanings in identical environments, e.g.: He started laughing – He starts laughing. The morphs are said to be in non-contrastive distribution if they express identical meaning in identical environments; such morphs constitute ‘free variants’ of the same morpheme, e.g.: learned – learnt. The morphs are in complementary distribution when they express identical meanings in different environments, e.g.: He started laughing – He stopped laughing; such morphs constitute variants, or allo-morphs of the same morpheme [4, 60-61].

Allo-morphemic theory plays an important role in the descriptive analysis of negative affixes. One of the most active negative affixes is in-. Its allomorphs are il-, im-, ir-. That means that they carry on the same meaning, but they are attached to different stems. It can be a great problem for English learners, therefore it is important to clarify the rules of allo-morphemic affixes. The in- changes or is assimilated to **il-** if the stem begins with l, as in *illuminate*; to **im-** before b, as in *imbibe*, before m, as in *immediate*, before p, as with *implant*; and to **ir-** before r, as in *irrigate.* So the distribution of the allo-morphs concerned is complementary.

It is quite reasonable to give the examples to these affixes and the definitions of these words given in the dictionary.

**atypical**: not typical; different from what is usual: Her reaction to the drug was atypical.

**antiaircraft**: directed against enemy aircraft: antiaircraft missiles

**contraindication**: a physical sign or condition that makes it inadvisable to take or continue taking a medicine: High blood pressure is a contraindication for this drug.

**destabilize**: to make less firm or steady, especially politically: a deliberate attempt to destabilize the economy of a rival country

**disclaim**: to state that one does not have or accept; to deny: He disclaimed all responsibility for the accident.

**illiterate**: who has nor learnt to read or write: (fig.) an illiterate note.

**immodest**: showing or tending to express a high opinion of oneself and oneself’s abilities, perhaps higher than is really deserved; not modest: immodest behaviour.

**inaction**: lack of action or activity; quality or state of doing nothing

**irrational**: not using reason; against reasonable behaviour: After taking the drug she became quite irrational.

**miscount**: to count wrongly: The teacher miscounted the number of boys.

**nonresident**: a person not living in a certain place: Are nonresidents entitled to vote?

**unannounced**: having given no sign of being present; appear unexpectedly: He burst into doctor’s room quite unannounced and started shouting at her.

**countless**: very many; too many to be counted: countless reasons against it. [6]

Since we have even more examples of words with the negative affixes, it is more possible to apply the definitions of the affixes to the definitions of the words with these affixes. It is becoming clear then that the meanings of the affixes given in the dictionary are quite general. It was stated above, that affix has no independent meaning, so only when attached to words, affixes acquire a more specific meaning in each case. The reason for it is that affix is not an independent unit; therefore its meaning taken separately can be stated only generally.

To make the analysis more complete we should consult at least one other dictionary. So if it is Oxford Advanced Lerner’s Dictionary of Current English, the result will be the following.

**a-:** (in nouns, adjectives and adverbs) not; without: amoral (=not moral): atheists

**anti-:** 1 apposed to; against: anti-tank weapons 2 the opposite of: an anti-hero

**contra-:** (in nouns, verbs and adjectives) against; opposite : contraflow

**de-:** (in verbs and related nouns, adjectives and adverbs): the opposite of: decentralization

**dis-:** (in adjectives, adverbs, nouns and verbs): not; the opposite of: dishonest

**il-**suffix=in

**im-**=in

**in-:** (also il- im- ir-)(in adjectives, adverbs and nouns): not; the opposite of: infinite

**ir-**=in

**mal-:** (in nouns, verbs and adjectives): bad or badly; not correct or correctly: malpractice

**mis-:** (in verbs and nouns) bad or wrong; badly or wrongly

**non-:** (in nouns, adjectives and adverbs): not: nonsense

**un-:** 1(in adjectives, adverbs and nouns): not; the opposite of: unable 2 (in verbs that describe the opposite of a process): unlock

**less-:** (in adjectives): 1without: treeless 2 not doing; not affected by: tireless [7]

Such affixes like mys- and nega-, which are present in the list of negative affixes, are not present in both Longman and Oxford dictionaries, as well as words with them, so we can make a suggestion that they are not productive nowadays, that is no words are built with it. But there are found some words beginning with dys-, like dysfunctional (=not working in a satisfactory or successful way), or dyslexia (=a slight disorder of the brain that causes difficulty in reading and spelling, for example, but does not affect intelligence). Therefore, it should be included in the list of negative affixes to make it more complete. It is obvious, that the prefix dys- really exists and has approximately the same meaning as the prefix dis-.

Analyzing the meanings given by both dictionaries we can make a conclusion that they just slightly differ in meanings in different dictionaries (for example, contra- in Longman Dictionary means “opposite”, while Oxford Dictionary gives a wider definition – “against; opposite”, and like), and according to the examples the meanings given there reflect the additional meaning, which they bring to the derivative word. All the negative affixes posses the meaning of either opposition or lack of something that also carries the idea of negation. The Oxford dictionary marks the word class of the word the affix belongs to, what is not always done in Longman dictionary. It is very useful for our further classificatrional analysis.

But it is known that some words can acquire several negative affixes and new words can seem semantically similar to language learners. It is a rude mistake to misuse the affixes. So on this stage of analysis appears a question, why some words are attached with a certain negative affix and others are attached with others. And it is also very important to find out how not to mix up some affixes with very similar meanings. The Longman dictionary contains an article comparing prefixes un-, in- and non-, which look very much alike at the first sight. “The difference between them is the degree to which they suggest the idea of the opposite rather than negative. Non- is usually just negative (for example, nonalcoholic drinks contain no alcohol), but un- is often used to suggest an opposite quality. Compare: He is applied for a nonscientific job (=not connected with science) in the Civil Service. | It was very unscientific (=showing too little attention to scientific principles) not to measure your results. Of the three prefixes (un-, in-, non-), in- tends most often to suggest opposite qualities. Compare: their inhuman (=very cruel) treatment of political prisoners | The archeologists discovered both human and non-human bones”. This explanation is a great help for language learners and also for the practical purposes of our work. [6]

**3. The place of affixes in classifications of morphemes. The classifications of negative affixes**

It has already been said that English grammarians usually point out two main criteria for the general classification of morphemes: the positional criterion and the semantic (or functional) criterion. And according to them there are **root-morphemes** and **affixal morphemes**, roots and affixes [4, 58]. For example, in the word *miscast* “cast” is a root and “mis-” is an affix. The semantic difference between them is obvious: root morphemes have the concrete, “material” meaning, while affixes just specify the main meaning, or transform the meaning of the root. In the given example “cast” means “to to choose actors to plat the different parts in the film/movie, play etc.”, while “mis-” means “badly or wrongly” [7]. So the complete meaning of the word is compound from these two meaning, but the first is the main, as it is independent, and the second is additive.

There is also another division of morphemes in Descriptive Linguistics. Morphemes can be **free** or **bound**. Free morphemes can build up words by themselves, for example, *home*. Bound morphemes are used only as parts of words, like dis- in *disregard* [4, 58]. So, as all the affixes are attached to some root (as affixes do), they are all can be referred to the class of bound morphemes.

Morphemes also can be divided into **overt** and **covert**. The latter shows the meaningful absence of a morpheme distinguished in the opposition of grammatical forms in paradigms [4, 59]. For example in the paradigm of noun in the word *hand* –s is a covert morpheme. As suffixes can be either present or absent in the word structure they can be of both kinds in different contexts.

**Full** or meaningful morphemes are opposed to **empty** morphemes. The later ones have no meaning like the full ones, for example, in the word ‘*children*’ child- is the root of the word, bearing the core of the meaning, -en is the suffix of the plural, while -r- is an empty morpheme. In this case it is clear that suffixes can also be of both kinds, but usually, as it was already mentioned, they have a certain meaning [4, 59].

**Segmental** morphemes consist of phonemes, while **supra-segmental** leave the phonemic content of the word unchanged, but the meaning of the word is specified with the help of various supra-segmental lingual units, like in`convert (a noun) - con`vert (a verb). As suffixes refer to the segmental level, they are all segmental morphemes [4, 60].

**Additive** morphemes, which are freely combined in a word, e.g.: look+ed, small+er, are opposed to **replacive** morphemes, or root morphemes, which replace each other in paradigms, e.g.: sing -sang – sung [4, 60]. Within this classification affixes are sure to refer to additive morphemes.

And one more division is to **continuous** and **discontinuous** morphemes. Continuous ones are combined with each other in the same word, like in worked, while discontinuous consist of two components, used to form analytical forms, for example, is running [4, 60]. As affixes can not consist of several parts, so they are continuous.

The specification of affixes themselves can be of two kinds: lexical and grammatical. And according to this criterion there are **lexical**, or word-building, or derivational affixes and **grammatical**, or word changing affixes. The latest group expresses different morphological categories, such as number, case, tense and others. Grammar study is primarily concerned with grammatical affixes, because they change the word according to its grammatical categories and serve to insert the word into an utterance. Lexical affixes serve to build new words, grammatical – to change the form of the word, for example, go – goes [4, 56]. Regarding this classification we can come to a conclusion that negative affixes, which we are interested in, refer to the group of lexical affixes, as they change the lexical meaning of the word, not its form. For example, *smoker* – a person who smokes; *non-smoker* – a person who does not smokes. Prefixes in English are only lexical, they do not transform a word into another part of speech (understand-misunderstand). Suffixes can be both lexical and grammatical. For example, home-homeless, but go-goes. Grammatical suffixes are also called inflexions (inflections, inflectional endings) [4, 56].

Grammatical suffixes form word-changing, or morphological paradigms of words, which is typical for inflexional languages, but they can be observed in English too (boy-boys). Lexical affixes are the subject of lexicology, because they change the meaning of the word. In grammar they are regarded as formal indicators of belonging of the word to one or another part of speech. They form lexical (word-building, or derivational) paradigms of words united by a common root, for example, to decide - decision - decisive – decisively [4, 56].

Affixes can also be divided according to their **position**. They are divided into **prefixes** (before the root) and **suffixes** (after the root) [5, 136]. There are other types of affixes in different languages, but prefixes and suffixes are the most typical for English. As we have seen, the negative affixes tend to come mostly from prefixes.

One more meaningful parameter in classification of affixes is their semantic impact, due to which they are united in semantic groups of a type:

-**affixes with meaning of similarity** (-al, -ial, -ed, -esque, -ful, -ic, -ical, -ish, -like, -ly, -ous, -some, -y, crypto-, neo- etc.);

-**affixes with meaning of denying** (a-, dis-, in-, non-, un-, -less), and it is the group of our particular interest, as they also can de called **negative**;

-**diminutive affixes** (-ette, -ie/-y, -ikin, -let, -ling);

-**affixes with meaningof the person** (-an, -ian, -arian, -ant, -ard, -by, her(it), -een, -eer, -er, -ess, -ette, -ician, -ie, -ing, -ist, -ister, -kin, -ing, -ster, -ton);

-**affixes with meaning of number** (bi-, demi-, di-, mono-, multi-, pan-, poly-, semi-, tri-, twi-, uni-);

and many others. It is impossible to speak about one complete classification of this type, because many affixes are polysemantic and different lexicologist refer them to different groups [5, 148].

Prefixes and suffixes form various subgroups depending on what from all variety of properties, that they inherit, is selected as classification parameter. That can become, for example their **origin**, on the basis of which there is a division into **native affixes** and **borrowed** [5, 145]. As an example of borrowed affix we can take anti-, as in *anticyclone*, and as native – less, as in *motionless.*

There is also one more very important classification of affixes. It is known that affixes are attached to stems of different parts of speech. And according to this they are called:

-**substantive** (like anti-, non-, dis-, -less);

-**adjectival** (like dis-, un-, in-)

-**verbal** (like dis-, de-, mis-);

-**adverbial** (like un-, anti-, re-, non-) [5, 146].

For example, if we take a noun *ability*, it can be attached with a prefix dis-: *disability*. A verbal stem code can be transformed with the verbal prefix de: decode. An adverbial stem, like easily, can be attached with the adverbial prefix un-: uneasily.

It is also noteworthy to mention, that the basis of the classification can be the part of speech, into which the given affix transforms a word. This classification is referred to suffixes, as their role in definition of the characteristics of derivatives’ parts of speech is more obvious, than that of prefixes. It is interesting that the names of the groups are the same as in the previous classification. So while classification the criteria for it must always be mentioned. The groups are:

**-substantive** (-dom, -ness);

-**verbal** (-en, -ize);

-**adverbial** (-ly);

**-adjectival** (-less) [5, 146]**.**

As it is seen, there is only one negative affix in this classification – suffix -less, so this classification is not of much importance in our analysis. Due to the suffix –less we can transform a noun *colour* to the adjective *colourless*. Prefixes are not included into this classification as they usually do not change the part of speech of the word, but touch only its meaning.

Several more classifications are given in one of the Russian Dictionaries. According to their function affixes are of two kinds:

**-of nominative function (serving to denote some objects, phenomena etc.);**

**-of structural (connecting) function.**

To the first group belong word-building affixes and flexions. The first serve to build new words and the second – to refer a word to this or that grammatical form. Affixes of structural function are called interfixes. They are used for connection of two joined morphemes, like in *пар****о****воз* [2, 153]. They are not typical for English language and all the negative affixes must be referred to the first group.

According to the peculiarities of combinability there is the following opposition:

**-regular (multivalent) affixes;**

**-irregular (univalent) affixes.**

Regular affixes are combined within the word with the different kinds of affixal or root morphemes, for example, un- (*unable, unacceptable*). Irregular affixes posses restricted combinability and are called unifixes (like –ух in *двух*). It is quite obvious that all the negative affixes are included into the first group too, because all they posses a certain word-building pattern and their degree of combinability is very high. [2, 153-154]

Summing up, having consulted some sources, we have found out, that there is a number of classifications of morphemes, and affixes in particular, according to different criteria.

**4. The functions of negative affixes**

As it was said above, negative affixes are lexical, because they are used to build new words. And they also always bring some negative additional meaning to the derivative word, changing its meaning to opposite. From this it can be made a conclusion that one of the functions of English negative affixes is:

1. **To create antonyms of the derivatives**.

This function is performed only if the part if speech is not changed (and only the suffix less does changes it).

And if we look at them more generally, as a part of the discourse one more function appears:

1. **Bringing the negation to the sentence.**

Speaking about the second function it is important to mention that there are 6 ways of negation on the sentence: **negative affixes, negative particles, negative pronouns** **and adverbs**, **negative conjunctions** and **negative prepositions.** Affixation is a morphological way of negation (while others are sintactical). The most popular negative affixes are **un-, dis-, de-**. To the verbs such prefixes like **un-, dis-, de-** give the meaning of opposite action. So, such affixes like dis-, mis-, in-, un-, less- and such bring to the sentence the idea of absence,deprivation and oppositeness. It is important to mention that there are certain rules of combinability of affixes. For example, the prefix **un-,** Germanic in its origin, is not usually combined with the stem of the word. Such words like **unlike** are not typical for English.More oftenthe particle **not** is used instead. The prefix un- should be used with care, as when is attached to the verbs, it tends to bring the meaning of the opposite action, as well as **mis-, dis-, de-** (tie - untie). There are only several verbs in English with these affixes, possessing the meaning “not”. They are to dislike, disbelieve, mistrust. [3, 14-15]

Nouns and adjectives are usually attached with such affixes like **un-, non-, in- (im-, il-, ir-) dis-, mis-**. The closest to each other in meaning are **non-** and **un-** (but it was spoken earlier about their difference). The suffix less- is also usually added to nouns and adjectives. The prefix **un-** is the closest in meaning to this suffix **less-** (endless - unending, profitless - unprofitable) [3, 16].

So, we can come to the conclusion that the most widely used are the affixes de-, un-, dis; and negative affixes tend to come with nouns and adjectives. The stems of verbs are not combined with them and the negation is expressed in the sentence by the analytical negative verb-form. So, the function of creating antonyms can hardly find its application in verbs, but typical for nouns and adjectives.

Let us take the novel of Lauren Weisberger “Chasing Harry Winston” for different examples of these two functions. We will take not only sentences containing words with negative affixes, but also sentences where negation is expressed in other ways, for example participle **not**. It will help to prove (or not to prove the statement that the negation of actions are more likely to be expressed by the particle **not**).

*1) When Leigh’s doorbell rang* ***unexpectedly*** *at nine on Monday night, she did not think, Gee, I wonder who that could be. [8, 1]*

Here we see that the function of negation is performed here: it is stressed that Leigh did not expect the doorbell. Unexpectedly is derived from the word **expect** (because there is no such word in English as ”**expectedly**” [7]), so the first function is not performed here.

*2) Where there people who actually welcomed* ***unannounced*** *visitors when they just stopped to “say hello” or “check in”? [8, 1]*

In this example both functions are realized: there is a negation in the sentence (there are few people who welcome visitors who are **not** announced), and the word unannounced comes from the word announced, being its antonym.

*3) The apartment might have been the most perfect she’d seen in a year and a half of looking, but she had* ***not*** *wanted to take any chance. [8, 2]*

Here the negation in the sentence is expressed by the negative particle **not**. It is used to change the meaning of the verb to the opposite, what is very frequent, as it was said above.

*4) Before her, removing a QVC catalog from an* ***unlocked*** *mailbox, stood an overweight woman in a polka-dot housedress. [8, 3]*

In the example above both functions are performed: unlocked is an antonym for **locked** and there is an idea of negation on the sentence (from the mailbox which was not locked).

*5)* ***Not*** *a day younger than eighty, thought Leigh, and she breathed a sigh of relief. [8, 3]*

This sentence is another example of the negation expressed by the negative particle **not.**

*6) How could she possibly have predicted that the seemingly* ***innocuous*** *upstairs neighbor was a dedicated wearer of massive wooden orthopedic clogs? [8, 3]*

In the given example only the second function is performed (the neighbor did **not** seem a person intending to do harm), because there is no such a word as “**nocuous**” [8], so antonymic function is irrelevant here.

*7) Before she had spotted her neighbor wearing the offending shoes, Leigh had created an elaborate explanation for the* ***relentless*** *upstairs racket. [8, 4]*

Here we see the adjective built with the suffix –less. As we remember it is the only negative affix which transports a word from one part of speech to another. So it can not perform the antonymic function, because antonyms must refer to one part of speech (relent is a verb, relentless is an adjective [7]). The conclusion can be made that only the second function is expressed by the affix (the upstairs racket which never stopped moving).

*8) Leigh’s throat constricted and her pulse* ***inexplicably*** *quickened. [8, 5]*

In the sentence above inexplicably is derived from **explicable**, but not “**explicably**”, so it does not perform the antonymic function. But the affix expresses the function of negation in the sentence (it was **not** easy to explain, why her pulse quickened).

*9) Leigh did* ***not*** *think she was a likely candidate for a coronary: It was a panic attack, plain and simple. [8, 5]*

*10) I am* ***not*** *falling for this, she thought as she stealthily dialed her doorman. [8, 5]*

In the last two examples we can observe the expression of the negation in the sentence with the participle **not**.

*11) In an* ***ineffective*** *attempt to dispel the panic, Leigh pressed her fingertips into her temples and stretched her neck from side to side. [8, 5]*

Here ineffective is an antonym of **effective**, and the second function is also expressed by the affix (the attempt is **not** effective).

*12) Never mind that in eighty years of city living she did* ***not*** *personally known anyone who had been so much as pickpocketed, or that the chances of a psychopathic murderer choosing her apartment from more than two hundred other units in her building was* ***unlikely****… 8, 6]*

In the example given in the first case the negation is expressed by the particle **not**, and in the second case *unlikely*, which affix un- is also one way of expressing the negation in the sentence, is also an antonym for **likely.**

From the examples above it can be seen that the most popular way of negation is particle **not**, as it is used in five examples from twelve. The most active of the negative affixes are **un-**and **in- (**they are used in three examples each). The least active of the present ones is the suffix **less-,** it is used only once.

What is also important for the classificational analysis of the negative affixes is to apply different classification to concrete examples of affixes. Thus, when we deal with certain examples, we can see, how the classifications given work. So let us take the examples 1, 6 and 7: *unexpectedly, innocuous* and *relentless*.

**Unexpectedly**: negative affix un-. Morphemic analysis: un-expect-ed-ly. Derivational analysis: expected – unexpectedly. As all the affixes un- is bound, overt, full, segmental, additive, continuous morpheme (the same will be common for other classified affixes). It is a prefix, since it is in preposition to the root. It is a native affix. As it is an adjectival according to the pert of speech it is attached to. We can not speak of the classification based on the criteria of the part of speech of the built word, because it is not only the affix which transfers the word from one part of speech to another. It is an affix of nominative function, because it is not an interfix, and it is regular, as long as it has certain models of combinability (derivational patterns).

**Innocuous**: negative affix in-. Morphemic analysis: in-nocuous. Derivational analysis: can not be done, the word is non-derived. In- is a prefix. We can not apply to it the classifications, based on the part of speech the affix is attached to and the part of speech if forms, because this word does not have derivatives, it was not built from any other word, it was created as it is. It has a nominative function, and it is regular.

**Relentless**: negative affix –less. Morphemic analysis: relent-less. Derivational analysis: relent – relentless. It is verbal according to the criteria of the word it is attached to, and adjectival according to the part of speech of the derived word. It is also regular and performs a nominative function.

Summing up the written above, we can notice that:

1. All the negative affixes in context bring the negation into a sentence, and viewed independently, some of them perform the antonymic function.
2. Though it was stated that un-, dis- and de- are the most popular negative affixes, according to the present examples the most frequent are un- and in-.
3. Negative affixes are rarely attached to verbs. For the purpose of negation verbs are more often preceded by a particle **not** and the analytical form is used.

**The conclusion**

So, we are done with the comparative and classificational analysis. In this work we, first, managed to study different sources and to make one complete list of negative affixes. We found out that all affixes can be studied from two criteria: morphological and derivational. These two criteria were very useful in the further classificational analyses. We also studied one of the morphemic classifications and stated the place of affixes there.

There are different points of view on the semantics of affixes, but most scholars agree, that they have a kind of general, additional meaning. So, sticking to this opinion, we gave the meanings of the negative affixes from different dictionaries, compared them, and observed how they are expressed in different contexts.

There are numerous ways of classifying affixes. We tried to give as many classifications of both morphemes in general and affixes in particular as possible and also find out, what place is occupied by the negative affixes in any of then.

Different shades of meanings were also studied and the choice for different affixes for one and the same stem was explained. We also found out the main functions of the negative affixes, taken independently and in the context. A popular novel was used for the context, which is an example of contemporary British literature. We also studied which affixes are attached to different parts of speech and which parts of words they then build.

Analyzing the examples from the novel, we made a conclusion, which affixes are the most active nowadays (which affixes are used most frequently). After giving the examples of the negative affixes in context, we singled out several words containing them and gave a complete descriptive analysis of the negative affixes using all the possible ways of classification studied earlier.

Making this course paper, we gave a general overview to affixation as a way of word formation, familiarized ourselves with English negative affixes, learned how they differ in shades of meaning from each other, and learned to differentiate them. We studied which affixes are used with stems of different parts of speech and saw which of them are able to transform words of one part of speech into another, studied the peculiarities of their usage. It is very useful for a linguist and a translator, it can be a great help especially in our future study and work.

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