

# Abstract

This dissertation is a study of the characteristics of negative clauses that express stative relations in the two Mordvin languages, Erzya and Moksha. Prototypical predications of stative relations include expressions such as proper inclusion, equation, attribution, location, existence and possession. In the Mordvin languages, predication of these clause types differs from the patterns of action predication and the resulting differences also manifest themselves in negative constructions. The approach of this study is twofold: Mordvin stative relation clauses are dealt with from the viewpoint of negation and Mordvin negative markers and their functional development are considered from the viewpoint of stative relation clauses.

The syntactic analysis of this study is mostly based on written material in both Erzya and Moksha. Part of the material comes from an electronic corpus that includes literary texts in both languages as well as folkloristic material collected from the spoken languages at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. In addition to the electronic corpus, material has been gathered from cultural journals as well as three of the Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) in both Erzya and Moksha.

The synchronic uses of the Mordvin negative markers is analysed on the basis of etymological evidence in order to reach conclusions about the functional development of the markers. It is shown that although there are several common traits in the systems of negation in Erzya and Moksha, at least some of these features are common only to a limited extent; many differences do appear in the functions of the negative markers. Certain divergences have to do with differences in the further development of originally common markers, while some are due to the fact that the markers in question derive from different historical sources.

It is concluded that the complexity of the Mordvin system of negation must be one of the consequences of the many innovations in the realm of the conjugational systems that took place in Proto-Mordvin. As for the negative counterparts of the conjugational categories, it seems that the change is still going on. This can be observed, for example, in the variation in the negative structures of stative relation clauses.