VERBAL NEGATION IN THE CONTEXT OF POWER: THE THEME OF THE CONFLICT OF CULTURES IN A COLONIAL SOCIETY

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The article dwells into how negation in postcolonial novels is a powerful tool for critiquing and challenging power dynamics. It highlights how negation is used to reject the legitimacy of colonial powers, asserting independence and self-determination, and how it helps characters resist oppression and assert their agency. By challenging colonial definitions, authors claim indigenous identity and question the legitimacy of power structures, paving the way for new narratives. Recent research underscores the multifaceted nature of negation in linguistics, spanning philosophical, logical, structural, cognitive, and pragmatic approaches. Despite numerous studies, a comprehensive framework for negation remains elusive. In postcolonial novels, verbal negation reveals identity conflicts, illustrating opposition to colonial culture and the desire to preserve heritage. Common forms include don't, didn't, couldn't and stop. N. Farrah's Crossbones exemplifies cultural conflicts in colonial societies, highlighting power, control, resistance, and societal impacts. These conflicts create unstable environments marked as fear and repression. In V. S. Naipul's Magic Seeds, cultural conflicts are depicted through self-awareness and literature. The narrator's reflection emphasizes cultural self-perception and resistance to change, showing tension between tradition and modernity. The influence of external viewpoints highlights the impact of colonialism on local identities. In Imaginary Homelands, the deployment of negative structures symbolizes cultural displacement and emotional alienation in a postcolonial context. In Doris Lessing's Mara and Dann, cultural conflicts are highlighted though crisis interactions. Disconnection and miscommunication illustrate cultural disconnects, and diverse priorities reflect social differences. Environmental devastation underscores colonial exploitation, while indifference to suffering reflects prolonged conflict's emotional toll. Power dynamics show control and hierarchy characteristics of colonial societies. Theses excerpts collectively highlight the complexities of cultural identity negotiation in colonial and postcolonial contexts, emphasizing themes of self-perception, resistance, external influence, and power dynamics.

Key words: *verbal negation, postcolonial literature, colonial society, self-perception, resistance.*

Statement of the problem in general and justification of its relevance. Negation in postcolonial novels is a powerful tool used to explore and critique power dynamics. Negation is often used to deny the legitimacy and authority of colonial powers. This rejection is a fundamental aspect of asserting independence and self-determination. Negation serves as a form of resistance and disobedience to colonial oppression (Smith, 2003). This is a way for the characters to assert their agency and refuse to comply with colonial demands. Negation is used to highlight injustice and inequality perpetuated by colonial powers. It draws attention to what is denied or taken from the colonized. By challenging colonial definitions and labels, postcolonial authors assert their own identity and cultural values. This process of negation is crucial to the recovery and affirmation of indigenous identity. Negation is used to challenge and question the legitimacy of colonial and post-colonial power structures. This disrupts the *status quo* and calls for change. Negation helps make room for new narratives and possibilities. By rejecting the old, postcolonial authors can imagine and articulate a new future. Negation empowers the characters by allowing them to clearly articulate their disagreement and resistance. This is a way for them to regain their voice and freedom of will.

Negation in postcolonial novels is thus a multifaceted tool that authors use to explore and critique power dynamics. This allows them to reject colonial rule, highlight injustice, assert identity, challenge power structures, and create space for new narratives. Through this use of negation, postcolonial literature becomes a powerful vehicle for articulating the complexities of power and resistance in a postcolonial context.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The multifaceted nature of the concept of negation in linguistics led to the formation of a number of linguistic trends, each of which offered its own interpretation of its categorical essence (Kim, 2000;

Rowlett, 1986; Keizer, 2015). Among the available linguistic concepts of negation, reflected in specific, historically formed, research approaches, such as: philosophical and logical, structural and conceptual, subjective and evaluative, cognitive, pragmatic, we trace the chronology of scientific works on the topic voiced by linguists of the XX and early XXI century, which reflects the widespread primarily logical and psychological sections of discussions about negation, which gradually shifted to the communicative, and later to the cognitive side (Vernay, 2024; Bignall, 2010, pp. 29–59). Each of the existing linguistic concepts of negation brought its own observations, additions, clarifications, but there is still no comprehensive generalization that would enable such a definition of negation, which would not dismember this concept, but integrate it into a conceptual framework (Grabarczyk, 2009; Martin, 2007).

Verbal negation reveals the theme of identity in a post-colonial society by reflecting the conflicts, uncertainties and search for self-identity among people who survived colonial domination and the consequences of colonization. By refusing or feeling alienated from accepting certain norms, values or cultural traditions, individuals in post-colonial societies feel oppressed and influenced by the colonizers (Partington, 2013). The pragmatics of verbal negation reflects the search for a new sense of identity, opposition or rejection of the dominant colonial culture, as well as the desire to preserve or restore one's own cultural and historical heritage (Fig. 1):

The most frequent verbal negations are the verb forms *do not*, *did not*, the modal verb *could not*, the verb *stop*. Therefore, the **purpose** of this article is to trace the correlations of the verb negation particles *don't, didn't, could not, stop*. The main

Fig. 1. Lexical correlations in a postcolonial text

objective of the present research is to investigate lexical actualization, structural representation, and functional modulation of negation as a pragmatic universal in English-language postcolonial artistic discourse in computer-processual processing of facts.

Presentation of the main research material. Thus, in the following section we are going to examine the most frequently used verbal negative forms together with their collocations and the representations in post-colonial literature.

"Malik says, "There are unconfirmed reports blaming shady fifth columnists who are believed to target anyone who writes anything the top men of the Courts don't like. They use remote-controlled roadside bombs or shoot their victims at point-blank range. Nobody knows much about them or their alliances. Except everyone points at Shabaab, which has an imprecise, albeit mutually beneficial rapport with the Courts." (Farrah, 2012, p. 82–83)

An excerpt from N. Farrah's *Crossbones* highlights the intense and often violent conflicts

Term	Collocate	Count (context)
don'*	know	250
don'*	said	138
don'*	think	99
don'*	like	98
don'*	want	94
don'*	just	49
don'*	people	47
don'*	say	43
don'*	time	41

Fig. 2. The use of *don't* and its collocations in context

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between cultures in a colonial or post-colonial society. Here are some thoughts on the subject:

1. Power and control: The reference to "superior judges" and the use of violence to suppress dissent reflects the struggle for power inherent in colonial societies. Colonial rulers and their local allies often used force to maintain control and silence opposition, leading to a culture of fear and repression.

2. Cultural Clashes: References to "shadowy fifth colonists" and the ambivalent relationship with Shabaab highlight the cultural and ideological clashes that can arise in such societies. Different groups with different agendas and cultural backgrounds often find themselves in conflict, exacerbating tensions and instability.

3. Resistance and Insurgency: The use of remote-controlled bombs and target shooting points to methods of resistance used by those who oppose dominant power structures. It highlights the lengths to which marginalized groups can go to fight for their rights and assert their identities in the face of oppression.

4. Ambiguity and Alliances: The "unclear, albeit mutually beneficial relationship" between Shabaab and the courts illustrates the complex and often murky alliances that can form in a colonial context. These alliances are often based on convenience rather than shared values, further complicating the cultural landscape.

5. Impact on Society: The general atmosphere of suspicion and insecurity described in the passage reflects the wider impact of cultural conflicts on society. Such conflicts can lead to widespread fear, mistrust and the destruction of social cohesion, making it difficult for communities to thrive.

This passage vividly captures the multifaceted nature of cultural conflicts in colonial societies, where power, resistance, and shifting alliances create an unstable and often dangerous environment.

"Very simple, very fast, very honest. A book without boasting. A book so true that every young Indian or old Indian can see himself in its pages. There's no other book like it in India. It would be a modern Indian epic if people read it. But people don't. They feel they don't need to. They feel they know it all. They don't have to find out. It's the Indian way. I didn't even know about the autobiography. It was Wolf who first asked me whether I had read it. This was when he'd just come to the ashram at home. He was shocked when he found I didn't know about it. I have read it two or three times now. It's so easy to read, such a good story, that you read on and on, and then you find you haven't been paying proper attention to all the profound things he's been saying." (Naipul, 2004, p. 29)

In an excerpt from *Magic Seeds by V.S.* Naipaul touches on the topic of cultural conflicts in colonial society through the prism of literature and self-awareness. Here are some thoughts on the subject:

1. Cultural Self-Perception: The narrator's reflection on the autobiography emphasizes a sense of cultural self-perception and introspection. The idea that the book is "so true that every Indian, young or old, can see himself in its pages" shows a deep connection to Indian cultural identity and experience. This reflects the internal conflicts that people face in understanding and accepting their cultural heritage in a post-colonial context.

2. Resistance to Change: This passage mentions that people feel they "know it all" and don't need to read a book. This resistance to engaging with new perspectives or revisiting one's own history can be seen as a cultural conflict. It highlights the tension between tradition and modernity, as well as the reluctance to face the uncomfortable truth about one's past.

Term	Collocate	Count (context)
didn't*	know	99
didn't*	like	85
didn't*	said	76
didn't*	want	70
didn't*	look	45
didn't*	bobby	43
didn't*	people	39
didn't*	time	36
didn't*	say	33

Fig. 3. The application of *didn't* and its collocations within context

3. The influence of external points of view: the presentation of the narrator's autobiography by the hero Wolfe means the influence of external points of view on self-awareness. This can be seen as a metaphor for the impact of colonialism, where external forces often shape and challenge local identities and narratives. The shock expressed by Wolff at the narrator's ignorance of the book highlights the gap between local and external understandings of cultural meaning.

4. Literature as a Mirror: The passage emphasizes the power of literature to reflect and shape cultural identity. The autobiography has been described as a "modern Indian epic", suggesting its potential to redefine and assert Indian cultural identity in a postcolonial society. However, the lack of a readership indicates a cultural conflict where valuable narratives are overlooked or undervalued.

5. Deep Understanding: The narrator's realization that he hasn't paid enough attention to deep things in the book speaks to deeper layers of cultural understanding that are often overlooked. This emphasizes the need for a more active and thoughtful approach to one's cultural heritage and history.

Overall, the excerpt from *Magic Seeds* explores the conflicts of cultures in a colonial society through the themes of self-perception, resistance to change, external influence, and the power of literature. This highlights the difficulty of navigating cultural identity in the post-colonial world.

"Most problematic of all, however, are the Captain's lessons in love. He takes him to see the movie King Kong, and the boy is puzzled. "Why doesn't he drop her?" I asked. I suppose I sounded very heartless to the Captain, for he replied harshly, "He loves her, boy. Can't you understand that—he loves her?" But of course I couldn't understand.' Of course, because it is Jim's tragedy to be unable to love any human being. (Even more bewildering to him is the Captain's assertion that the woman's kicking out at Kong does not mean she doesn't like him. 'It's a woman's way.')" (Rushdie, 1991, p. 211).

This excerpt delves into the complexity of identity in a postcolonial context through the lens of personal relationships and cultural misunderstandings. Here are some thoughts on the subject:

1. Cultural Displacement: The boy's confusion about the movie King Kong and the Captain's abrupt response highlight the cultural displacement that people in post-colonial societies experience. The boy's inability to understand the concept of love depicted in the film reflects the disconnect between his own cultural background and the values imposed by colonial influences.

2. Emotional Alienation: Jim's tragedy of not being able to love anyone can be seen as a metaphor for the emotional alienation that often accompanies the post-colonial experience. The disruption of traditional social structures and the imposition of other people's values can lead to feelings of isolation and difficulties in forming meaningful connections.

3. Gender Dynamics: The Captain's claim that a woman kicks Kong out doesn't mean she doesn't like him, but that it's "feminine," introduces a layer of gender dynamics in a postcolonial context. This reflects the complexity of interpreting behavior and emotions across cultural frameworks, as well as the potential for misunderstandings and miscommunication.

4. Identity and Understanding: The boy's struggle to understand the Captain's love lessons highlights the larger theme of identity and understanding in a post-colonial society. The imposition of colonial narratives and values can

Term	Collocate	Count (context
☐ "could not"	help	28
☐ "could not"	time	13
☐ "could not"	knew	13
☐ "could not"	thought	11
☐ "could not"	understand	10
☐ "could not"	said	10
☐ "could not"	remember	10
☐ "could not"	possibly	9
☐ "could not"	know	9

Fig. 4. The usage of *couldn't* and its contextual collocations

create a sense of confusion and conflict as people navigate their own identities in relation to these external influences.

5. Power and Interpretation: The Captain's authoritative stance on what love means and how it should be interpreted reflects power dynamics in colonial societies. The views of the colonizers are often presented as the ultimate truth, leaving little room for alternative interpretations or understandings rooted in the colonized culture.

Overall, the passage explores the complex and often painful process of identity negotiation in a postcolonial society, where cultural displacement, emotional alienation, gender dynamics, and power imbalances play an important role in the formation of individual and collective identities.

"Dan," shouted Mara. The child took no notice. He was stroking a big, fat, gray snake that lay beside him in the water, and making sounds of pleasure. "Stop it, that's dangerous," said Mara, looking up at the woman so she could stop Dann; but she did not hear. She was staring off in the direction Mara knew was north, and yet another wall of water was coming down. It was not as high as the others, but enough to push in front of it boulders and dead animals, the big ones with trunks and big ears and tusks. "We can't afford to lose any more animals," said the man. And the woman said, "I suppose a few more dead don't make any difference." (Lessing, 1999, p. 23)

An excerpt from Doris Lessing's *Mara and Dann* highlights the theme of cultural conflicts in colonial society through the characters' interactions and reactions in a crisis. Here are some thoughts on the subject:

1. Disconnection and Miscommunication: The scene depicts significant disconnection and lack of communication between the characters. Mara's concern for Dunne's safety and her attempts to gain the woman's attention are ignored, reflecting the wider cultural and social disconnects that can occur in colonial societies. This lack of understanding and sensitivity can lead to dangerous situations and exacerbate conflicts.

2. Different Priorities and Values: The different reactions to the approaching wall of water illustrate conflicting priorities and values among the characters. Mara is focused on Dann's immediate danger, while the man is preoccupied with the loss of the animals and the woman seems indifferent to the deaths. These varied responses highlight the cultural and social differences that may exist in a colonial context, where different groups may have conflicting interests and values.

3. Environmental and Human Impact: The depiction of a wall of water pushing boulders and dead animals, including large ones with trunks and tusks, emphasizes environmental devastation and its impact on nature and human society. In a colonial environment, such environmental crises can be exacerbated by the exploitation and mismanagement of natural resources, leading to further conflict and suffering.

4. Indifference and Desensitization: A woman's comment, "I guess a few more dead doesn't matter," reflects feelings of indifference and desensitization to loss and suffering. This attitude can be seen as the result of prolonged exposure to the violence and hardships that often result from colonial rule and its aftermath. It highlights the emotional and psychological impact of living in a conflict-ridden society.

5. Power Dynamics: Power dynamics are subtly present in interactions. Mara's attempt to attract the woman's attention and the man's authoritative statement about the animals suggest an underlying hierarchy and control. Such dynamics are characteristic of colonial societies, where power

	Term	Collocate	Count (context)
☐	stop*	said	56
☐	stop*	like	42
☐	stop*	stop	33
☐	stop*	time	32
☐	stop*	car	29
☐	stop*	just	24
☐	stop*	people	23
☐	stop*	luka	23
☐	stop*	stopped	22

Fig. 5. The deployment of *stop* and its collocations in context

is often unequally distributed, leading to further cultural and social conflicts.

Overall, the passage from *Mara and Dann* vividly reflects the complexity and conflicts of cultures in colonial society, emphasizing themes of disconnection, differences in values, environmental impact, indifference, and power dynamics.

Conclusions and prospects for further research lie in further revealing the functional mechanisms of the lexical-semantic, structural-syntactic, contextual description of the prose text of the literary and artistic work of the Postcolonialism era in the historical perspective of literary currents and from the standpoint of the latest paradigms of modern linguistic research. The essence of the scientific problem lies in the methodological disclosure of the object of analysis – negation as a pragmatic universal – localized in the English-language post-colonial literary prose text through a system of lexical-semantic, structural-syntactic and contextual operations for the actualization and systematization of negation as a pragmatic universal in the historical perspective of literary currents their cognition (the level of postcolonial poetics and discourse narratology), manifested by lexical-semantic, structural-syntactic, contextual means of language, which stylistically express and translate the aesthetic-emotional component of the lexical, syntactic, contextual unit of this type of text (level of discourse stylistics) into the orbit of post-colonial realism of the artistic potential of the work in the mode of discourse pragmatics.

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ДІЄСЛІВНЕ ЗАПЕРЕЧЕННЯ В КОНТЕКСТІ ВЛАДИ: ТЕМА КОНФЛІКТУ КУЛЬТУР У КОЛОНІАЛЬНОМУ СУСПІЛЬСТВІ

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У статті досліджено і проілюстровано як заперечення в постколоніальних романах є потужним інструментом для критики та оскарження динаміки влади. У дослідженні висвітлено, як заперечення використовується, щоб заперечити легітимність колоніальних держав, стверджуючи незалежність і самовизначення, і як воно допомагає персонажам протистояти гнобленню та відстоювати свою свободу та волю. Кидаючи виклик колоніальним визначенням, автори заявляють про корінну ідентичність і ставлять під сумнів легітимність владних структур, прокладаючи шлях до нових наративів. Останні дослідження підкреслюють багатогранність заперечення в лінгвістиці, що охоплює філософські, логічні, структурні, когнітивні та прагматичні підходи. Незважаючи на численні дослідження, всеосяжна структура заперечення залишається не до кінця вивченою. У постколоніальних романах дієслівне заперечення розкриває конфлікти ідентичності, ілюструючи опозицію колоніальній культурі та бажання зберегти спадщину. Поширені форми включають don't, didn't, couldn't і stop. N. Farrah's Crossbones демонструє культурні конфлікти в колоніальних суспільствах, висвітлюючи владу, контроль, опір і вплив на суспільство. Ці конфлікти створюють нестабільне середовище, яке позначається страхом і репресіями. У V. S. Naipul's Magic Seeds культурні конфлікти зображені через самосвідомість і літературу. Рефлексія оповідача підкреслює культурне самосприйняття та опір змінам, показуючи напругу між традицією та сучасністю. Вплив зовнішніх точок зору підкреслює тиск колоніалізму на місцеву ідентичність. У Imaginary Homelands розгортання заперечних структур символізує культурне витіснення та емоційне відчуження в постколоніальному контексті. У Doris Lessing's Mara and Dann культурні конфлікти висвітлюються через кризові взаємодії. Розрив зв'язку та відсутність комунікації ілюструють культурний розпад, а різні пріоритети відображають соціальні відмінності. Екологічне спустошення підкреслює колоніальну експлуатацію, тоді як байдужість до страждань відображає емоційний вплив тривалого конфлікту. Динаміка влади показує особливості контролю та ієрархії колоніальних суспільств. Усі ці уривки висвітлюють складність діалогу щодо культурної ідентичності в колоніальному та постколоніальному контекстах, наголошуючи на темах самосприйняття, опору, зовнішнього впливу та динаміки влади.

Ключові слова: *дієслівне заперечення, постколоніальна література, колоніальне суспільство, самосприйняття, опір.*