Negation in language(s): Typological and descriptive perspectives
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Cross-linguistic typological work on negation has paid most attention to standard negation, i.e. the negation of declarative verbal main clauses (Dahl 1979; Payne 1985; Dryer 2013a,b,c; Miestamo 2005, 2013). Other aspects of negation that have received at least some attention in large-scale typological studies include the negation of imperatives (van der Auwera & Lejeune 2013), the negation of static (nonverbal, existential, etc.) predications (Croft 1991; Eriksen 2011; Veselinova 2013), the negation of indefinite pronouns (Haspelmath 1997, 2013; Van Alsenoy 2014), abessives (Stolz et al. 2007), the effects of negation on the marking of NPs (Miestamo 2014), and negative replies to questions (Holmberg 2015) – for an up-to-date overview of typological work on negation, see Miestamo 2017. Currently, typological work is underway on various aspects of the typology of negation: e.g., Veselinova’s work on negative lexicalizations and the relationship between negation and TAM, Miestamo & Koptjevskaja Tamm’s work on antonyms, Van Olmen’s work on negative imperatives, and Mauri & Sansò’s work on anticircumstantial clauses as well as Miestamo, Shagal & Silvennoinen’s work on negation in dependent clauses. In this talk, I will give an overview of current typological knowledge of negation, focusing especially on interesting issues arising from my own work on the domain. I will also show how typological knowledge on negation can be made use of in language description, presenting a typologically and functionally oriented questionnaire for describing the domain of negation (Miestamo 2016) and giving an update on how the questionnaire is being used in an ongoing project describing negation in a number of languages from around the world.

References