

‘While’ and ‘Until’ Clauses and Expletive Negation in a Corpus of Bulgarian and Ukrainian Parallel Texts

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Introduction

The phenomenon: a co-occurrence of

- the meanings 'while' and 'until' combined in a single lexeme;
- **expletive** (alias **pleonastic** or **paratactic**, as opposed to **semantic**) **negation** used with the latter meaning.

Commonly found, but manifesting

- (restricted) optionality,
- diachronic variation,
- cross-linguistic variation.

For example (Gn 3:19)

Ukrainian: *U poti svojoho lycja ty jistymeš xlib, až poky **ne** vernešsja v zemlju, bo z neji ty vzatyj.*

Slovene: *V potu svojega obraza boš jedel kruh, dokler se **ne** povrneš v zemljo, kajti iz nje si bil vzet.*

Hindi: *Tū **tab tak** apne pasīne kī roṭī khāegā, jab tak us miṭṭī meⁿ **na** mil jāe jisse tū banāyā gayā thā.*

Italian: *Mangerai il pane col sudore del tuo volto, finché tu ritorni nella terra donde fosti tratto.*

Hungarian: *Orczád verítékével egyed a te kenyeredet, míglen visszatérsz a földre, mert abból vétettél.*

Bulgarian: *S pot na liceto si šte jadeš hljaba si, dokle se vārneš v zemjata, ot kojato si vzet.*

Introduction

The method: comparison of parallel sentences (or sentence fragments) in a bilingual corpus of Bulgarian and Ukrainian texts.

The questions:

- how does the frequency of expletive negation in the two languages differ,
- what difference does the use of *až* 'all the way, even' with 'until' items in Ukrainian make,
- what (if any) is the impact of the original language in translated texts.

The working Bulgarian-Ukrainian parallel corpus

- Is composed entirely of fiction (mainly novels, but also some shorter works).
- Includes
 - original **Bulgarian** and **Ukrainian** texts,
 - parallel translations into Bulgarian and Ukrainian from **English (2 sectors), French, German, Italian, Polish and Russian (2 sectors)**.
- The overall word count is currently **15 million** (8 million in Bulgarian and 7 million in Ukrainian).
- All texts have been aligned at sentence level with Hun-align, with subsequent manual correction of alignment errors.

The Experiment

Bulgarian 'while/until' items:

dokato, dokle, dokogato, do(r)de(to).

Ukrainian 'while/until' items:

- *doky, dopoky, zaky, pokil', poky;*
- *až doky, až poky* 'all the way until'.

All instances of these were sought out in the corpus.

In addition, Ukrainian *až* 'even, all the way' when corresponding to a Bulgarian 'until' item was also counted as an 'until' item.

The Counts

8809 pairs of sentences and sentence fragments containing a 'while/until' item on one or both sides:

- 3446 pairs of *bona fide* matches,
- 3873 occurrences of unmatched Bulgarian items,
- 1406 occurrences of unmatched Ukrainian items,
- 84 fake pairs.

Semantics, Polarity and Aspectuality

		affirmative subordinate clause (Q)	
		atelic	telic
main clause (P)	atelic	P is happening <i>while</i> Q is happening	P is happening <i>until</i> Q happens
	telic	P happens <i>while</i> Q is happening	P happens <i>by the time</i> (<i>before</i>) Q happens

(1) Bg: [...] *i otnovo vārvim, **dodeto** si davam smetka, če tova ne e nikakva ulica, a njakakāv pust mežduselski pāt.*

Uk: [...] *i os' my znovu jdemo, **poky** ja usvidomljuju, ščo ce zovsim ne vulycja, a jakyjs' bezljudnyj sil's'kyj putivec'.*

'[...] and we're on our way again, till I realise that this is not a street at all, but some deserted country road.'

(Bogomil Rainov, *The Day Doesn't Look Like the Morning*)

(2) Bg: *Ami toj šte izleze navān, **dokato** se sābličaš...*

Uk: *Ta vin vyjde, **poky** ty rozdjahatymešsja...*

'Well, he'll go out [and stay outside] while you're undressing ...'

(Pavel Vezhinov, *Libra*)

		negative subordinate clause (Q)		
		atelic	telic	perfect
main clause (P)	atelic	P is happening <i>while</i> Q is not happening	P is happening <i>until</i> Q happens (expletive negation)	P is happening <i>while</i> Q has not happened
	telic	P happens <i>while</i> Q is not happening		P happens <i>while</i> Q has not happened

(3) Bg: *Iskam da ti obadja nešto, Džo, dokato ogānjat **ne** e ugasnal.*

Uk: *Ja xotiv by ščos' tobi skazaty, Džo, poky šče vohon' **ne** zhas.*

“Before the fire goes out [*in the translations: while the fire hasn't gone out (yet)*], Joe, I should like to tell you something.”

(Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*)

(4) Bg: *Taka životāt prodālžavaše da si teče, dokato edin den kām sredata na januari srebristoto konče i ezdačkata mu **ne** se javiha na ugovorenata srešta.*

Uk: *Tak vono use tryvalo doty, doky odnoho dnja v seredyni sičnja sribljasto-čala kobyłka ta jiji veršnycja v domovlenyj čas **ne** z"javylsja.*

“So matters went on, till one day in the middle of January the silver-roan palfrey and its rider were missing [*in the translations: did not show up*] at the tryst.”

(John Galsworthy, *The Forsyte Saga*)

Possible Implications

- P terminates no sooner than Q:
 - Bulgarian *pone* ‘at least’, *čak* ‘all the way’;
 - Ukrainian *prynajmni*, *xoč(a)* ‘at least’, *až* ‘all the way’;
 - (less strongly) expletive negation.
Ti kaza, če edin loš šof’or e v bezopasnost samo dokato ne srešt-ne drug loš šof’or, nali? “You said a bad driver was only safe until she met another bad driver?” (F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*)
- P terminates no later than Q:
 - Bulgarian *samo* ‘only’;
 - Ukrainian *lyše, til’ky* ‘only’.

The Comparison of Numbers

	$\partial \rightarrow$	∂ ☀	$a\check{z} \partial$ ☀	$a\check{z}$ ☀	$a\check{z} \partial ne$ ☀	∂ne ☀	∂ne →	$\partial \dots$	Σ
$\partial \rightarrow$	1285	18	4			1			1308
$\partial \text{☀}$	47	588	228	35	83	318			1299
$\partial ne \text{☀}$	1	36	76	9	133	449	1		705
∂ne $\text{☀} \rightarrow$		1				76	4		81
$\partial ne \rightarrow$						4	40		44
$\partial \dots$								9	9
Σ	1333	643	308	44	216	848	45	9	3446

Sentences with no expletive negation

(5) Bg: *A dokato se vārnete, šte si pogovorim za nešto seriozno s mis Džejn.*

Uk: *Poky vy povernetes', ja dam mis Džejn dejaki nastanovy.*

“I'll give Miss Jane a lecture till you come back.”

(Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*)

(6) Bg: *Imame petnajset minuti, dokato Doktorāt prebroi negovite krāvni telca.*

Uk: *U nas je xvylyn p"jatnadcjat' času, poky Likar poličyt' joho erytrocyty.*

“We have fifteen minutes while [*in the translations*: until] the Doctor counts corpuscles.”

(Stanisław Lem, *Eden*; English by Marc E. Heine)

Sentences with no expletive negation

(7) Bg: *Bi li se sāglasil da vzemeš čantata mi, **dodeto** minem prez mitnicata?*

Uk: *Čy ne pohodyšsja ty vzjaty moju sumku, **poky** my projdemo mytnycju?*

‘Would you agree to take my bag until we go through customs?’

(Bogomil Rainov, *There Is Nothing Better than Bad Weather*)

(8) Bg: *Toj tičal cjala nošt, **dokato** stignal do pešterata.*

Uk: *I vin bih usju nič, **poky** distavsja do pečery.*

‘So he ran all the night till he came to the cave;’

(Rudyard Kipling, *The Jungle Book*)

Expletive negation with verbs of waiting?

Rare in Bulgarian, frequent in Ukrainian.

(12) Bg: [...] *i tāj kato po mosta vārojal goljam kervan natovareni muleta i kone, naložilo im se da počakat, **dokato** kervanāt se iztoči.*

Uk: [...] *ale po tomu mostu proxodyv same velykyj karavan nav"jučenyx muliv ta konej, i jim dovelos' počekaty, **poky** vsi vony na toj bik **ne** perexopljat'sja.*

"[...] and a caravan of pack-mules and sumpter-horses being in act to pass, it behoved them tarry till such time as these should be crossed over."

(Boccaccio, *The Decameron*; English by John Payne)

Genuinely optional expletive negation

(13) Bg: *Svăržete me vednaga s Kiril Andreev, zvānete, **dokato** otgovori!*

Uk: *Z"jednajte mene zaraz z Kyrylom Andrejevym, dzvonit', **doky** **ne** vidpovist'.*

'Put me through to Kiril Andreev, ring until he answers!'

(Pavel Vezhinov, *Traces Remain*)

(14) Bg: *I gi izpālnojavaj, **dokato** toj **ne** te naznači za istinski gotvač.*

Uk: *I vykonuj, **poky** vin postavyt' tebe spravžnim axči.*

'And fulfil them [sc. the commissions of the administrator of the Sultan's kitchens] until he appoints you a regular cook.'

(Pavlo Zahrebelnyi, *Roksolana*)

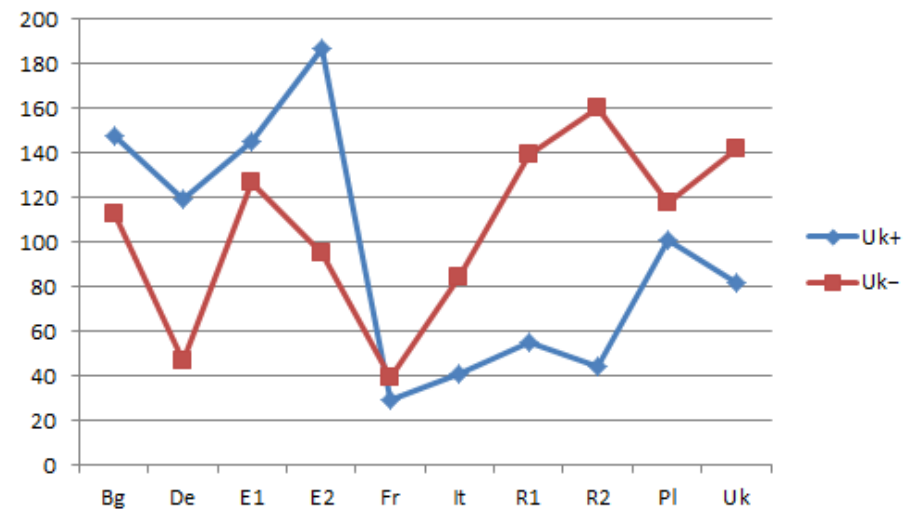
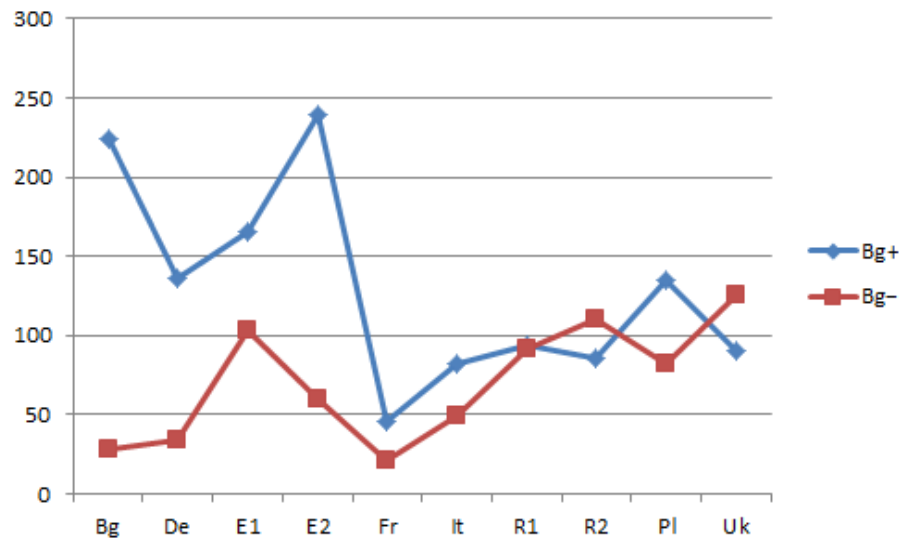
Interrelation between the polarities

		subordinate clause			Σ
		$\partial \odot$	$\partial ne \odot$	$\partial ne \odot \rightarrow$	
main clause	affirmative	1267	409	72	1748
	negative	32	296	9	337
Σ		1299	705	81	2085

		subordinate clause					Σ
		$\partial \odot$	$a\check{z} \partial \odot$	$a\check{z} \odot$	$a\check{z} \partial ne \odot$	$\partial ne \odot$	
main clause	affirmative	619	277	41	173	600	1710
	negative	24	30	4	43	248	349
Σ		643	307	45	216	848	2059

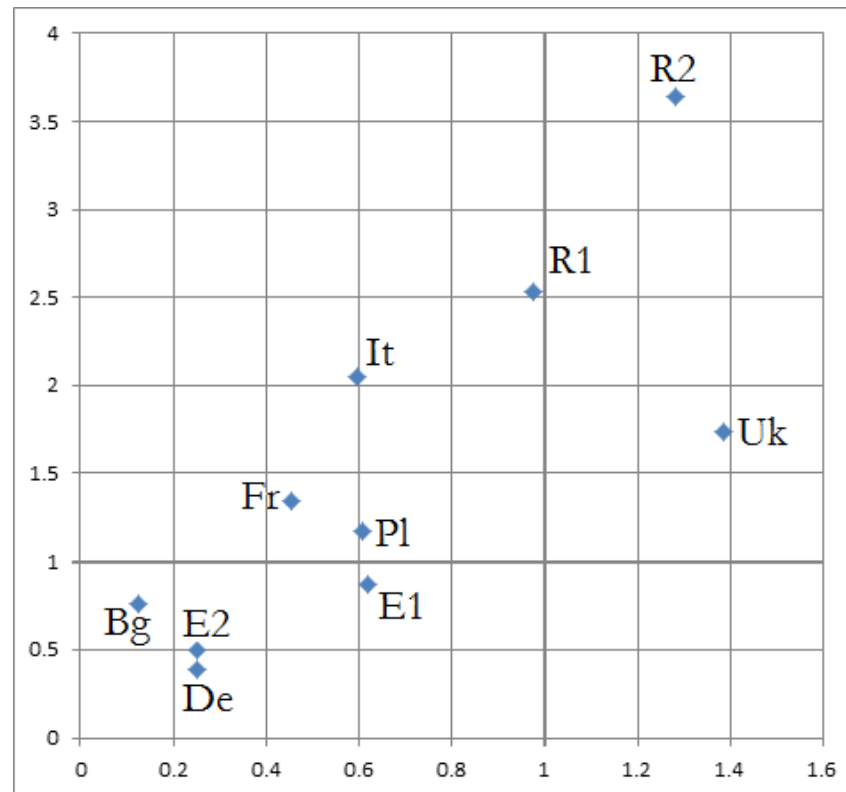
Variation by source (language)

Numbers of **affirmative 'until' clauses** (without expletive negation) and of **negative 'until' clauses** (with expletive negation) in each sector of the corpus in Bulgarian and Ukrainian:



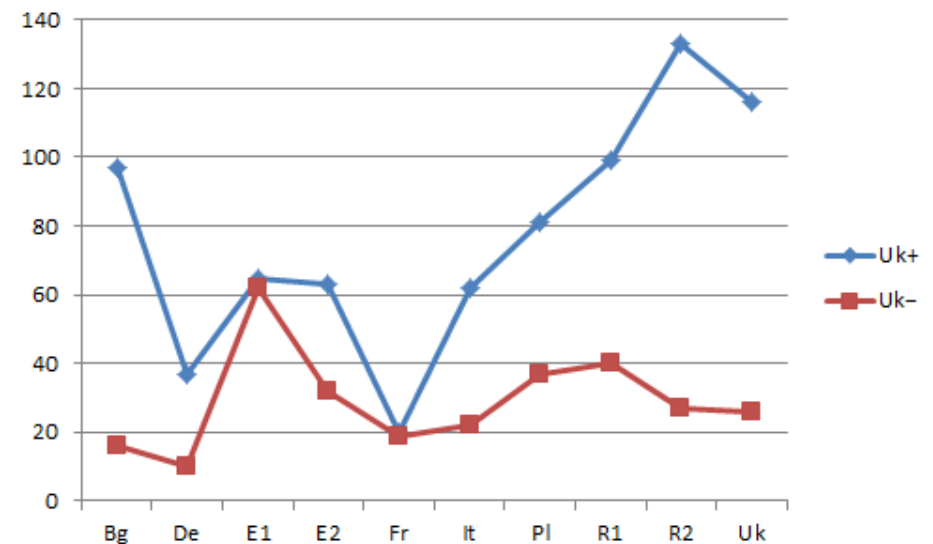
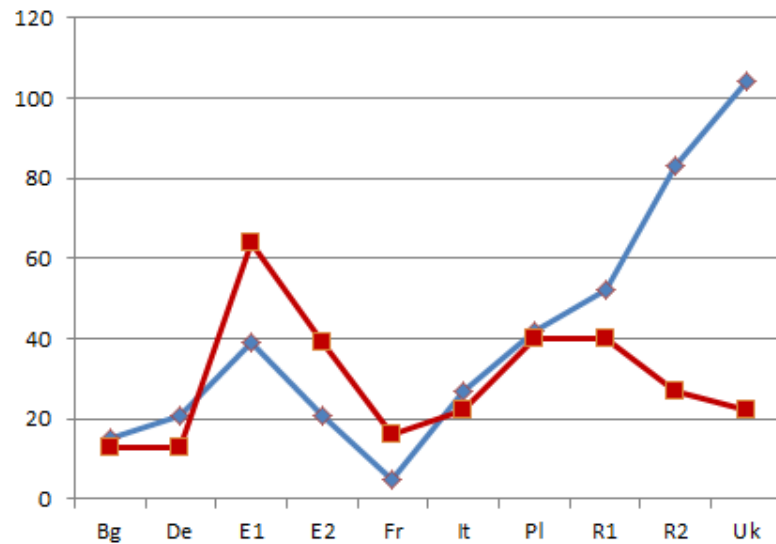
Variation by source (language)

Ratio of 'until' clauses with expletive negation to 'until' clauses without it in each sector of the corpus in Bulgarian (the x axis) and Ukrainian (the y axis):



Variation by source (language)

Numbers of **affirmative matrix clauses** and of **negative matrix clauses** with which negative 'until' clauses are used in each sector of the corpus in Bulgarian and Ukrainian:



Conclusions

- Expletive negation is much more frequent in Ukrainian than in Bulgarian, where it is more used in translations than in original writing and is largely a mark of the author's style.
- In Ukrainian an important part is played by the particle and the conjunction *až*, which have no direct counterpart in Bulgarian (the particle is far more often used than Bulgarian *čak*, and the conjunction is not compatible with negation in the embedded clause).
- In translated text the grammar and usage patterns of the original language can have a significant impact on the translator's choices.
- Diachrony effects?

Благодарим за вниманието!

Дякуємо за увагу!

Thank you for your attention!