The concept of negation and the study of its expression in natural languages has concerned philosophers, linguists and psychologists and it occupies a central position in systems of communication, logical representation, and natural languages. Many scholars have already worked on different aspects of negation and specific treatments of the function of negation and the syntax of its realization in natural languages.

Jespersen's classic 'Negation in English and Other Languages' (1917), a revised and abridged form of which appears as Chapter XXIV of Jespersen (1924), remains unsurpassable for its insight and comprehensiveness. Other recent works on the topic include Klima (1964), a presentation and analysis of some of the central characteristics of ENGLISH negation, particularly in its syntactic aspects, within the framework of early transformational grammar. Zimmer's (1964) is an exploration of the logical and linguistic diversity of types of affixal negation. Smith's (1969) is an "investigation of the consequences of adopting [generative semantics] for the analysis of
certain aspects of negation" including polarity, 'until' and adverbials, negative transportation, and the interaction of negation and quantifiers. An approach based on interpretive semantics is explored by Jackendoff (1969) and Lasnik (1972).

While these works concentrate on ENGLISH negation (cf. Gaatone 1971 for a comprehensive account of negation in French within a traditional descriptive framework), a broader and more pragmatically founded treatment of a wide range of data bearing on 'negative speech acts' is presented in Givon's paper in the WPLU series (1975). Givon emphasized that negation cannot be understood as a coherent process without bearing in mind the presuppositionally marked status of negatives vis-a-vis corresponding affirmatives. He points out that negative typically occur 'where the corresponding affirmative has been mentioned, contemplated, or when the speaker believes that the hearer tends toward the affirmative' (cf. Jespersen 1917, pp.4-5: 'The chief use of a negative sentence [is] to contradict and to point a contrast'), and correlates this presuppositional markedness of negation with a number of typological regularities, among them the greater conservatism, both morphological and syntactic, the more restricted distribution, and the greater psychological complex of negation constructions.
Horn (1978) in his paper 'Some aspects of Negation' deals with several manifestations of the functionally marked status of negative sentences, and semantics of negation including its interaction with other scope-inducing operators, lexically incorporated negation, the phenomena of negative polarity and negative transportation, multiple negation (mutually destructive and mutually reinforcing), and the constraints on negation within embedded clauses.

4.1 Construction of Negation:

Different languages use different devices to convert affirmative construction to negative construction. Some languages employ separate negative lexeme before or after the verb; in some languages it is done by addition of affixes (prefixes or infixes or suffixes) to the verb. In Meiteilon negation is expressed by infixing negative marker /-tə-/-/ -da-/, as well as by suffixing negative marker /-roi/-/-loï/ to the verb. Sentences are given below:

1. a. Af. /tomba lairik pa -y/  
   Tomba book  read-Sim.asp.  
   'Tomba reads book'

   Neg. /tomba lairik pa-de/  
   'Tomba does not read book'
b. Af. /məhak isəi sək -li/  
he song sing-prog.asp.  
'He is singing'

Neg. /məhak isəi sək-tri/  
'He is not singing song'

c. Af. /məkhoi ca thək -khre/-le/  
they tea drink-perf.asp.  
'They had tea'

Neg. /məkhoi ca thək-tre/  
'They did not have tea'

d. Af. /əikhoi ca thək -ka-ni/  
we tea drink-un.asp.-aux.  
'We will drink tea'

Neg. /əikhoi ca th k-loi/  
'We will not drink tea'

e. Neg. Command /nəŋ ca thək-nu/  
you tea drink-neg.imp.mk.  
'Don't drink tea'

4.2 Nature of affixation of neg. markers:

It is to be noted that the negative markers used in these sentences 1 (a-e) are /-tə/-~/-də~/, /-loi~/~/-roi/ and /-nu/ (/-tə~də/ is infixed while /-loi/ /-roi/ and /-nu/ are suffixes). There are two conditions for affixing the negative markers /-tə/-~/-də-/ to the verb.
4.2.1 **Infixation of negator /-tə-/~/-də-/:**

Condition A: Verb with aspects only [Root + Aspt]

If the verb has root and aspect marks only, the neg. marker /tə~/~/də~/ must be infixed between the verb root and aspect marker. In other words, the neg. marker /tə~/~/də~/ would be added to the root.

Positive VP = Root + Aspects

Root $\xrightarrow{ Aspect }$ Neg VP

Simple aspect /-y/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive VP</th>
<th>Negative VP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/thək-ə/ 'drink'</td>
<td>/thək-tə/ 'drink-not'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ca-ə/ 'eat'</td>
<td>/ca-de/ 'drink not'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/fu-ə/ 'beat'</td>
<td>/fu-de/ 'beat-not'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/θon-ə/ 'cook'</td>
<td>/θon-de/ 'cook not'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. When the neg. marker /tə~/~/də~/ is infixed between root and aspects markers the ~/ vowel sound is lost. Consequently, the remaining consonant /t/ /d/ mingles with the aspect marker.

/da~/~/ + Simple aspect /-y/ > /te~/~/de/
/da~/~/t / + Prog. aspect /ri~/~/li/ > /dri~/~/tri/
/da~/~/t / + Perfect aspect /re~/~/le/ > /dre~/~/tre/
Progressive aspect /-ri/-/li/  
\[\text{Negative VP}\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{/thək-li/ 'drink-'} & \quad /\text{thək-tri/ 'drink-not'} \\
\text{/ca-ri/ 'eat-'} & \quad /\text{ca-dri/ 'eat-not'} \\
\text{/fu-ri/ 'beat-'} & \quad /\text{fu-dri/ 'beat not'} \\
\text{/thonŋ-li/ 'cook-'} & \quad /\text{thonŋ-dri/ 'cook-not'}
\end{align*}
\]

Perfect aspect /-le/ /-re/  
\[\text{Negative VP}\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{/thək - [le khre] / 'drink-'} & \quad /\text{thək-tre/ 'drink-not'} \\
\text{/ca-[re khre] / 'eat-'} & \quad /\text{ca-dre/ 'eat-not'} \\
\text{/fu-[re khre] / 'beat-'} & \quad /\text{fu-dre/ 'beat-not'} \\
\text{/thonŋ-[le khre] / 'cook-'} & \quad /\text{thonŋ-dre/ 'cook-not'}
\end{align*}
\]

Unrealized aspect /-gə/ /-kə/ (Unr)  
\[\text{Negative VP}\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{/thək-gə-ni/ 'drink-'} & \quad /\text{thək-loi/ 'drink-not' + Unr.asp.} \\
\text{/ca-gə-ni/ 'eat-'} & \quad /\text{ca-roi/ 'eat-not' + Unr.asp.} \\
\text{/fu-gə-ni/ 'beat-'} & \quad /\text{fu-roi/ 'beat-not' + Unr.asp.} \\
\text{/thonŋ-gə-ni/ 'cook-'} & \quad /\text{thonŋ-loi/ 'cook-not' + Unr.asp.}
\end{align*}
\]
Condition B. Verb with other elements and aspect markers

\[ \text{Root} + X + \text{Asp} \]

In case the main verb in the affirmative construction has other markers than aspect markers, i.e. definite markers, past time markers, derivative markers, etc. the negator /tâ-/ would be added after these markers, not directly to the root.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root</th>
<th>Other markers</th>
<th>Neg mk + aspects</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>def.mk. /-khi/, /-lâm/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>deriv. mk. /hau/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- \( \text{thâk} + \)
  - khi + lâm + hau + râm +
  - de/dri/dre 'drink...'

- \( \text{ca} + \)
  - khi + lâm + hau + râm +
  - de/dri/dre 'eat...'

- \( \text{fu} + \)
  - khi / râm +
  - roi 'beat...'

- \( \text{sâk} + \)
  - lâm + khi +
  - roi 'sing...'

The infixation of negator /-tâ-/ can be represented in the following manner too:

\[ \text{Neg}.\text{VP} \rightarrow \text{Root} + (X +) \text{Neg}.\text{mk} + \text{Asp}.\text{mk}. \]
4.2.2. Nature of suffixation of negator /-roi/-/loi/

The negator /-roi/-/loi/ is suffixed direct
to the verb root. It [roi/-loi] is used in unrealized
aspect only (has the sense of futurity).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root</th>
<th>Neg. mk + Unrealized asp.</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>thɔk +</td>
<td>loi</td>
<td>'will shall not drink'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'drink'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca +</td>
<td>roi</td>
<td>'will shall not eat'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'eat'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fu +</td>
<td>roi</td>
<td>'will shall not beat'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'beat'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sɔk +</td>
<td>loi</td>
<td>'will shall not sing'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The negator /-loi/-/roi/ can also suffix to the verb
root non-contiguously.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root</th>
<th>Other mks. def.mk /-khi/, /ɔlɔm</th>
<th>Neg. mk + Unrealized asp.</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>thɔk +</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'drink'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca +</td>
<td>kali</td>
<td>kali</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'eat'</td>
<td>kali + kali + rɔm + roi</td>
<td></td>
<td>will shall not...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fu +</td>
<td>kali + lɔm + kali + rɔm + roi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'beat'</td>
<td>kali + lɔm + khi + loi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sɔk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'sing'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The suffixation of negator /-roi/-/-loi/ can be represented in the following manner too:

\[ \text{Neg. VP} \rightarrow \text{Root} + (X + ) \text{Neg.mk.} \]

4.2.3 Suffixation of imperative negator /-nu/:

Like the negator /-loi/-/-roi/-/-nu/ can be suffixed direct to the verb root as well as it can be suffixed non-contiguously.

a. \[ \text{thək} \]
   \[ \text{\'drink\'} \]
   \[ \text{ca} \]
   \[ \text{\'eat\'} \]
   + nu / \text{\'drink\'} + \text{Imp.neg.} \]

b. \[ \text{thək} \]
   \[ \text{ca} \]
   + \[ \text{\{khi \]
   \[ \text{ləm} \]
   + nhi + nu/ \text{\'drink\'} + \text{Imp.mk.} \]

The suffixation of imperative negator /-nu/ can be represented in the following manner too:

\[ \text{Imp.neg. VP} \rightarrow \text{Root} + (X + ) \text{Imp.neg.mk.} \]

4.3 Negative markers:

Meiteilon has syntactically two sets of negative markers. First, Non-imperative negative markers which includes the infix negative marker /-tɔ/-/-dɔ/ and /-roi/-/-loi/ which is used in unrealised aspect only (future tense). The second set consists of Imperative negative markers which includes /-nu/ and /-kum/-/-gum/-.
The infixed negative marker /-tə-/-də/ occurs with simple aspect, with progressive aspect as well as with perfect aspect but it cannot occur in unrealized aspect (having sense of futurity). In other words, it can occur as a negator in past and present tenses but can not occur in future tense. It can occur with adverbial elements of time of past viz., /ŋəran/ 'yesterday', /nəhan/ 'day before yesterday', etc. as well as with the adverbial time elements of present viz., /nəuzik/ 'now' or 'at present'. Consider:

2. a. /əi [ŋəran nəhan] school cət-te /
I go-neg+asp.

Yesterday Day before yesterday I did not go to school'

b. /əi [ŋəran nəhan] school cət-tre /

Yesterday Day before yesterday I had not gone to school'

c. /əi nəuzik thəbak ədu təu-dri /
I at present work that do-neg+asp.

'At present I am not doing the work'

It is to be noted that generally the adverbial time element of present /nəuzik/ of sentence 2 (c) is deleted. Hence 2 (d) is a preferred construction and not 2 (c)
d. */ai thɔbɛk ɛdu tɛu-dri/*
'I am not doing the work'

*e/ */ai hɔyen school ɛt-te/*
I tomorrow go-neg-asp.

Sentence 2 (e) is ungrammatical because */-tɔ/-*/-dɔ-/*
can not occur with the adverbial element of time denoting
future */hɔyen/* 'tomorrow'. Negative marker */-tɔ-/*
*/-dɔ-/* is used for lexical negation also, especially
for negating the adjectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root</th>
<th>Neg mk</th>
<th>Adj mk</th>
<th>Noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. fɔ + 'good'</td>
<td>tɔ +</td>
<td>bɔ²</td>
<td>nupɔ 'bad man'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. cawkhɔt+ 'develop'</td>
<td>tɔ +</td>
<td>bɔ</td>
<td>ɔhipak 'country'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. pɔt + 'rotten'</td>
<td>tɔ +</td>
<td>bɔ</td>
<td>uhɔi 'fruit'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. pen + 'satisfy'</td>
<td>dɔ +</td>
<td>bɔ</td>
<td>thɔbɛk 'work'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. cen + 'run'</td>
<td>dɔ +</td>
<td>bɔ</td>
<td>isin 'water'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. sat + 'blossom'</td>
<td>tri +</td>
<td>bɔ</td>
<td>ɔiran 'flower'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. pok + 'born'</td>
<td>tri +</td>
<td>bɔ</td>
<td>ɔnan 'child'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. sem + 'repair'</td>
<td>drɔ +</td>
<td>bɔ</td>
<td>ɔmbi 'road'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Suffix */-bɔ/* is a homophonous form:
*/-bɔ/* can be an adjective marker;
*/-bɔ/* / can be an infinitive marker.
3. a. /caokhɔt -tɔ -bɔ ləibak-ki
   civilize -neg country-gent

   wathok -ti- cinjak-ni/
   problem -food-to be

   'The problem of underdeveloped country
   is the problem of food'

b. /cen-daɓa isin -da kaŋ
   run-neg water in mosquitoes

   mərum kok-y/
   egg lay

   'Mosquitoes lay eggs in the stagnant
   water'

   [cen-daɓa -isin = water which is not
   running]

All the constituents which have the infix negative
marker /-da-/~/-tɔ-/ in the above sentences are functioning
as adjective, modifying the immediate following constituents,
noun, as in sentence 3 (a),/l ibak-/ 'country' by /caokhɔt-
tɔ-bɔ/ 'develop-not' (underdeveloped), and /isin-/ water by
/cen-daɓ-ɓa/ 'run-not' (water which is not running - stagnant
water) in sentence 3 (b).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root</th>
<th>Neg mk</th>
<th>Inf mk</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. nok</td>
<td>tɔ</td>
<td>bɔ</td>
<td>'not to laugh'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. sanɔ</td>
<td>dɔ</td>
<td>bɔ</td>
<td>'not to play'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. thɔk</td>
<td>tɔ</td>
<td>bɔ</td>
<td>'not to drink'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root</td>
<td>Neg mk</td>
<td>Inf mk</td>
<td>Gloss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>də +</td>
<td>bə</td>
<td>'not to eat'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>də +</td>
<td>bə</td>
<td>'not to write'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>də +</td>
<td>bə</td>
<td>'not to look'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g.</td>
<td>də +</td>
<td>bə</td>
<td>'not to listen'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h.</td>
<td>də +</td>
<td>bə</td>
<td>'not to sleep'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. a. /nɔmgəgi naɪhak sanə -də -ba ʃət -te/ in a day for a while play-neg. bad
   'It is bad not to play for a while during day time'

   b. /məhak-na fagi təubə -də ai nok -tə -ba he-nom joke in cutting joke I laugh neg.
      ɳam-ɖe/
      can-neg.
   'I can't help to laugh when he cuts a joke'

   c. /rə thək - tə -bəfəi/ liquor drink-neg. good
   'It is good not to drink liquor'

The constituents having the infix negative marker
/-də -/)~/-tə/) / sanə - də -ba / 'play - not - to' in sentence 4 (a), /nok - tə - ba / 'laugh-not-to' in sentence
4 (b) and /θək - tə - bə / 'drink-not-to' in sentence
4 (c) are grammatically functioning as nouns.

4.3.2 /roi/~/loi/:

The occurrences of /roi/~/loi/ are conditioned by the phonological environments: /-roi/ occurs after vowels and voiced consonants while /-loi/ occurs after voiceless consonants. The neg. marker /-roi/~/loi/ occurs in unrealized aspect (future time).

(A) Unrealized aspect:

5. a. /nɪnteɪm-tha- da turen əsi i:siŋ: winter-month-in river this water
   1əi -roi/
   have-
   'In winter season this river will not have water'

   b. /məhak məfəm ədu-da cat-loi/
   he place that-to go-
   'He will not go there'

(B) In determinate action:

   a. /əi doctor oi-roi/
      I be-
      'I will not be a doctor'

   b. /əi thəbək ədu tə u -roi/
      I work that do-
      'I will not do the work'
c. /mēhak kani ca-roi/
   he  opium  eat-
   'He will not eat opium'

(C) In reply to the question of unrealized aspect:

7. Q./nēn kēithel ca-t-kə-dra/
   you  bazar  go-Asp-Q.marker
   'Will you go to bazar'

   Neg. reply:
   a. /eI kēithel ca-t-loi/
      I  bazar  go-
      'I will not go to bazar'
   b. /eI ca-t-loi/
      I  go-
      'I won't go'
   c. /ca-t-loi/
      go-not
      'I won't'

8. Q./nēkhōi inakkhunb-gi mətəŋ  paŋ-dra/
   you(pl)  rich-man  help  give-Q.marker
   'Will you give help to the richman'

   Neg. reply:
   a. /eikhōi inakkhunb-gi mətəŋ  paŋ-loi/
      we  richman  help  give-
      'We will not give help to the rich'
   b. /eikhōi mətəŋ  paŋ-loi/
      we  help  give-
      'We won't help'
c. /mətəŋ paŋ-loi/
   help give-

'Ve won't'

This neg. particle /roi/~loï/ can go with some adverbial time elements of future in sentences 9 (a-c).

9. a. /əi horen foot-ball yen-loi/
    I after some time see-

'I will not see the foot-ball match (anymore/ henceafter)' (/horen/ 'unrealized moment')

b. /əi horen numithaŋ cak ca-roi/
    I after some time night meal eat-

'I will not eat my dinner today'

c. /əikhoi høyen labuk-ta thəbək su-roi/
we tomorrow field-in work do-

'Tomorrow we will not do any work in the field'

*d. /imo [nəran][nəhan] sinema yen-loi/
   Imo yesterday see-

Sentence 9 (d) is ungrammatical: the adverbial elements of past time, say, 'yesterday', 'day before yesterday', etc. can not occur with the neg. particle /roi/~loï/ in a sentence because /-roi/~loï/ has to be used in a negative sentence of unrealized aspect or any action that will occur in future, be it the next moment, hours, days, etc.
However, these two adverbial time elements /ŋəran/ 'yesterday' and /nəhan/ 'day before yesterday' can go with the neg. marker /-roi/-/lo/ in compound sentences as in 10 (a) and (b).

10. a. /məhak/ [ŋəran] sinema yen-loi
   he [yesterday] cinema see-neg
   hai-khi adug məhak sinema adu yen-khi/
   say but he cinema that see-

   'He said that he would not see the picture
   but he saw the picture'

   b. /jamindar-nə [ŋəran] ahənebo
   land lord [yesterday] excess
   sendoi ləu-roi hai khi adugə
   interest take-neg say but
   nəsidi ləumi-da theu-ri/
   today peasant-to demand

   'Yesterday
   Day before yesterday
   the land lord said
   that he would not take the excess interest
   but today he was demanding it from the
   peasant'

4.3.2.1 /khi/ + /-roi/-/lo/ (Temporal negation):

When the affix /-khi/ occurs with unrealized negative marker /-roi/-/lo/ the meaning is that of non-performance of the action 'for the time being' or 'for a temporary span of time' or postponing an action for some
time', it does not mean that the action is negated 'completely'. The action will be performed any time after 'the point of speech'. Consider:

14. a. /məhak laibrari cat-khi-roi/
   he library go-
   'He is not going to library (now)'

b. /məhak sinema ædu yen -khi-roi/
   he cinema that see-
   'He is not going to see the movie (now)'

c. /əi caklen ca-khi-roi/
   I lunch eat-
   'I am not going to have my lunch (now)'
   (I shall have my meal after some time)

d. /əikhoi fut-bol sanæ -khi-roi/
   we foot-ball play
   'We are not going to play football (now)'
   (We will play football after some time)

e. /əikhoi lairik pa-khi-roi/
   'We are not going to study (now)'
   (We will start our studies after some time
   or after a few days)

f. /əi tum-khi-roi/
   'I am not going to sleep (now)'
   (I shall sleep after some time)

We would like to call it temporal negation. Duration of temporal negation is indefinite; it may be of minutes, hours, or days, etc. However, it can be indicated by situational context or by the agentive nouns, for instance
sentence 14 (f) /əi tum-khi-roi/. In this sentence the postponement of the action of 'sleeping' is short: it may be half an hour or two/three hours; he will sleep after one hour or two hours. The sentence does not mean that he will not sleep the whole night. So sentence 14 (e) differs from sentence 15.

15. a. /əi tum-loi/

'I shall not sleep'
(I shall not sleep the whole night)

The underlying meaning of 14 (f) may be /əi tum-nip-dri āduna tum-khi-roi/ 'I am not feeling sleepy so I shall not sleep for some time'. Another interpretation may be /əi tḥak kʰaɾa laɾi āduna əi tum-khi-roi/ 'I have some work at hand so I shall not sleep for some time'. Other sentences are:

b. /məhak laibrari cət-loi/

'He will not go to library'

c. /məhak sinema ādu yan-loi/

'He will not see the movie'

d. /əi cak-len ca-roi/

'I shall not have my lunch'

e. /əikhoi fut-bol sanə-roi/

'We will not play foot-ball'

Here the negation is not a temporal one. This will be clear from the following two sentences.
16. a. /oï cak-len ca-khi-roi/
    'I am not going to have my dinner (now)'
    (I shall eat my lunch after some time)

b. /oï cak-len ca-roi/
    'I shall not eat my lunch'

The meaning of 16 (a) is postponement of the action (of having lunch) for some time, in other words, 'he' is not refusing the 'lunch' for the day but sentence 16 (b) tells us that 'he' does not want to have lunch at all.

4.4 Free negative form /nàtte/:

The negative form of verb 'to be' /-ni/ in Meiteilon is /nàtte/ which has predicative function and which is a free negative form.

17. a. /mèhak oja nàtte/
    he teacher is not
    'He is not a teacher'

b. /oï doctor nàtte/
    I doctor not
    'I am not a doctor'

c. /mèhak tom nàtte/
    he Tom not
    'He is not Tom'

d. /oï mèfəm adu -da cət -pe nàtte/
    I place that -to go-inf.
    'I am not going to that place'
e. /əikhoi thəbək teubə lak-pə nətte we work do-inf.come-inf.
   ca-bə lak-pə-ni/
   eat-ing.coming-aux.

'We are not coming to do the work but coming to eat'

In these sentences /nətte/ occurs finally. However, it can also occur initially. Examples are instances of replying to a question so that we can understand easily.

18. Q./nəŋ-na pambə lairik ədu si-ra/ you-nom want-ing book that this+Q.mk
   'Is this the book that you want'

Reply:
   a. /nətte, mədu nətte/
      'No, that is not'
   b. /nətte/
      'No' (Short reply)

   'Is it the money that you are taking'

Reply:
   a. /nətte, paisa nətte/
      'No, it is not money'
   b. /nətte/
      'No' (Short reply)
   c. /nətte kəisə/ no nothing
      'No nothing'
Sentence 19 (c) is never used by adults; it is the exclusive characteristic reply given by children. Another example of initial occurrence of /nætte/ is sentence 20 below:

20. /nætte, ma-na ǝdum-na tǝu-de/ no he-nom that like do-neg.mk.

'No, he did not do like that'

4.4.1 Repetition of /nætte/ in initial position:

Repetition of /nætte/ in initial position in a sentence expresses very strong denial. Consider:

21. a. /nætte, nætte, ǝi-na mǝdu hai-khi-de/
   is+no is+no I-nom that say-neg.mk.

   'No, no, I did not say that'

   b. /nætte, nætte, ibunno-na mǝdu lan-na
   is+no is+no endearing term that wrongly
   lǝu-bi-re/ taken

   'No, no, you have taken the matter wrongly'

   c. /nætte, nætte, kaka! mǝdu magi mǝran nætte/
   addressing term that fault is+no

   'No, no, kaka, that is not his fault'

   d. /nætte, nætte, pammu-bǝ! wakhǝl ǝdu onǝ-re,
   dear thought that wrong
   nuja ǝgi-ǝi pakhǝn nǝn-na thawai-ni/
   girl my boy you-nom life-to be

   'No, no, my dear! that idea is wrong, for me(feminine)
   you are my life'
4.5 **Negation of Imperatives**

Negation of imperatives is little complex. The neg. markers discussed above, /-tɔ-//-dɔ/-, /-roi/-/-loi/ etc. are not used to negativize imperatives at all. Neg. imperative markers (command) are /-nu/ and /gum/-/kum/ which are used according to grammatical category of Person. They are discussed below:

4.5.1 **Negative command marker /-nu/:**

The negator /-nu/ occurs with the second person only, and it occurs in all phonological environments.

- /ca-nu/ eat-neg com. 'don't eat'
- /pi-nu/ give-neg com. 'don't give'
- /tɔu-nu/ do-neg com. 'don't do'
- /lac-nu/ shout-neg com. 'don't shout'
- /thɔk-nu/ drink-neg com. 'don't drink'
- /cɔt-nu/ go-neg com. 'don't go'
- /sin-nu/ copy-neg com. 'don't copy'
- /thon- nu/ cook-neg com. 'don't cook'
- /kɔp-nu/ cry-neg com. 'don't cry'

Consider the following sentences:

22. a. /nəŋ novel ŋdu pa -nu/ you(sg) novel that read-neg.com.

'Don't read that novel'
b. /nəkhoi fəklaŋ-da ʔum-na ʔi:ɡə-nu/
you wall -on like-that write-neg.com.
'Don't write on the wall like that'

*c. /məkhoi ʔeikhoi/ ka ʔedu-da ɕəŋ -nu/
[they] room the-to enter-neg.com.

This neg. marker /-nu/ can also be an infix, as in sentences 23 (a) and (b).

23. a. /nəŋ-bu yu tək -nu- ɡəba/  
you liquor drink-neg.com.  
'Don't drink liquor'
(ɡəba/'pleonastic marker' and  
'asking affectionately')

b. /nəŋ yu tək-nu-dəna/  
you liquor drink-n.com.  
'Don't drink liquor'
(/dəna/ 'pleonastic marker and  
'asking affectionately')

As other neg. markers, the neg. imperative marker /-nu/ can  
also go with some adverbial time elements, namely /nəsi/  
'today', /horen/ 'after some time', /nəyen/ 'tomorrow' and  
/h nəcit/ 'day after tomorrow', as in sentence 24.

24. nəkhoi [nəsi] lairik pərk-kə-nu/  
you(pl) [nəyen] book bring-asp.  
'Today
Tomorrow
Day after tomorrow don't bring the book'

[Today
Tomorrow
Day after tomorrow don't bring the book]
An imperative sentence can be transformed into negative command by the suffixation of the neg imperative marker /-nu/ to the verb without any deletion of the imperative marker /-ru/-/lu/. Consider:

you(pl) place that-to go-com.

'You(all) go to that place'

Neg.com. /nəkhoi məfəm ədu-da cət-lu-nu/
you(pl) place that-to go-com.-neg.com.

'You (all) don't go to that place'

It is also possible and grammatical to suffix the neg. imperative marker /-nu/ to the verb after the deletion of imperative marker /-ru/-/lu/, as sentence 26.

26. /nəkhoi məfəm ədu -da cət-nu/
you(pl) place that- to go-neg.com.

'You (all) don't go to that place'

Both the sentences 25 and 26 have similar meaning.

The negative imperative marker /-nu/ can also be used with third person in complex sentence as in 27 (b), never in simple sentence as in 27 (a) shows. Consider:

27. *a. / [məhak məkhəi] ka -da cəŋ -nu/
he room-in enter-neg.imp.mk.
b. /mēkholi mēhak/ ka-de caŋ-nu hai-yu/
[they he] room-in enter-neg.Imp. tell-Imp.
'Tell [them] that [he] does not enter the room.

(Tell them that he is not supposed to enter the room under any circumstances).

The negative imperative marker /-nu/ with the combination of causative marker /-hān-/ can form negative imperative sentence with third person in simple as well as complex sentence, as is shown by sentence 27 (a) and (b).

27. a. /mēhak mēkholi/ ka-da caŋ-hān-nu/
[he them] 'Don't let [him] enter the room'

b. /mēhak mēkholi/ ka-da caŋ-hān-nu hai-yu/
[he them] 'Tell [him] that [they] should not enter the room'

/-nu/ can also go with 'suggestive imperative marker /-si/., then the implied meaning is suggest-negative imperative. Consider:

28. a. /ikholi lēmbel aṣi-da ca-t-nu-si/
[we way this-to go-neg.Imp.-sug.mk.

'Let us not go this way'

b. /ikholi fūt-tēbə mi-gi ma-teŋ paŋ-nu-si/
[we bad man-gen.help give-neg.Imp-sug.mk.

'Let us not help the bad man'

(See chapter VI, 6.3.7)
4.5.2 Neg. command marker /-gum-/~/-/kum-/:

The second negative imperative markers /-gum-/~/-/kum-/ have grammatical agreement with the first person (plural), /aikhoi/ 'we' only. /-gum-/ occurs after vowels and voiced consonants while /kumsi/ after voiceless consonants only. /-gumsi-/~/-/kum-/ is added to the verb root. This is an infixed neg. marker. By infixing this neg. marker the affirmative sentence 29 and 30 can be transformed into negated counterparts.

29. /aikhoi ləmbel əsi-da cat-si/
we way that-to go-sug.mk.

'Let us go this way'

Neg. /aikhoi ləmbel əsi-da cat-kum-si/
we way that-to go-neg-sug.mk.

'Let us not go this way'

30. /aikhoi lairəbə-gi metəŋ pan-qi/
we poor- help give-sug.mk

'Let us help the poor'

Neg. a. /aikhoi lair bə-gi metəŋ pan-gum-si/
we poor help give-neg-sug.mk.

'Let us not help the poor'

This infix neg. marker /-kum-/~/-/gum-/ can grammatically go with adverbial time elements of present and future /ŋəsi/ 'today'; /horen/ 'after some time'; /nəyen/ 'tomorrow'; /nəŋcit/ 'day after tomorrow', etc.
Consider:

31. /əikhoi /nəsai nəcyen nənçit nəauzik skul cət-kum-si/
     we school go-neg-sug.mk.

    'Let us not go to school
     [today
today
tomorrow
tomorrow
day after tomorrow
now]

This neg marker can never occur with adverbial elements of
time denoting past, say /nəsai/ 'that time'; /nəran/
yesterday'; /nəhan/ 'day before yesterday', etc. as
sentence 32 clearly shows. However, there is no such restric-
tion when the sentence in question happens to be a complex
one as in the case with sentences 33 (a) and (b).

* 32. /əikhoi nəran nəsai nəhan skul cət-si/
     we school go-sug.mk.

    'Let us go to school
     [yesterday
yesterday
that time
that time
day before yesterday
day before yesterday]

33. /əikhoi nəran nəsai nəhan klas yao-gum-si yanə-khi/
     we class attend-neg-f.v.s. agree

    ' [Yesterday
Yesterday
That time
That time
Day before yesterday
Day before yesterday] we all agreed that we must

not attend the class'

In Meiteilon, it is very clearly found that even
in the case of negative imperative mood the neg. imperative
markers are all added to the verb root without any exception.
In Burmese, in negative imperative mood a new neg particle /ne/ comes in the place of the neg particle /bu/ which is used in indicative mood and which comes after the verb; the neg particle /ma/, which precedes the verb, remains the same as sentence 34 shows below:

34. /yet ma thwak ne/
    water neg drink neg

'Don't drink water'

Unlike Burmese, in Tangkhul, in imperative mood the neg particle /ma/ is only prefixed to the verb making it different from the negative construction of indicative mood in which the neg particle /ma/ is repeated before and after the verb (sentence 24). Consider:

35. /ma -man lu/
    neg-drink liquor

'Don't drink liquor'

The neg markers in all these languages (Thadou, Gangte, Vaiphai, Hmar, Sema, and Lushai) have developed a new form for negative imperative marker. The meaning of the sentence in each of these languages is 'Don't drink liquor'.

**Thadou**

36. a. /(nanin) yu don hi -in/ (singular)
    you(sg) liquor drink neg-com.

    b. /(nanun) yu don hi- uvin/ (plural)
    you(pl) neg com.
Gangte
37. a. /yu don kih/ (singular)
liquor drink neg com.
   b. /yu don kiu/ (plural)
liquor drink neg.com.

Vaiphei
38. a. /yu don kih/ (singular)
liquor drink neg com.
   b. /yu don kiu/ (plural)
liquor drink neg.com.

Hmar
39. /yu don noro / (singular & plural)
liquor drink neg.com.

Sema
40. /ji sho kevito/ (singular & plural)
liquor drink neg com.

Lushai
41. a. /yu in su^h/ (singular)
liquor drink neg com.
   b. /yu in su^h-u^h/ (plural)

It is found that the neg imperative markers in all these languages except Burmese and Tangkhul follow the verb.

4.6 Negative Strengthening:

Jespersen mentioned that generally negative is strengthened through some additional words. In French the normal form for negation has been strengthened by

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3. Jespersen, Negation in English and other languages, p.4.
the accrual of postverbal elements like /mie/ 'a crump',
/pas/ 'a step'.

The word selected for this strengthening effect
may be an adverbial element, either intrinsically negative
(ENGLISH not nought 'nothing', GERMAN nioht) or originally
positive forms (like DANISH ikke 'not' eitt 'one' +
positive -ge) which "acquired a negative signification
through constant employment in negative sentences", the
colouring effect typical of Breal's "contagion"4.

4.6.1 Negative strengthening element /suk-/:

In Meiteillon, there is a prefix /suk-/ which can
be a 'negative strengthening element'. The negative streng­
thening element /suk-/ is prefixed to the verbs. With the
addition of this element /suk-/ the negative meaning is
very much strong, as sentence 42 exemplifies:

42. a. /əi kani suk-ca ca-roi/ (Strong)
   I opium neg-eat eat-not
   'I won't eat opium at all'

b. /əi kani ca-roi/ (Ordinary)
   I opium eat-not
   'I won't eat opium'

4. Jespersen, Negation in English and other languages.
p.8.
Sentence 42 (a) gives stronger negative meaning than sentence 42 (b). It is used when the speaker has a strong feeling against an action or he has strong dislike for it. The negative strengthening element /suk-/ can occur with any one of the negative markers /-tə/ /-də/; /-tri/-/dri/; /-tre/-/dre/; /-roi/-/loi/; and /-nu/ in a negative sentence. Consider:

43. a. /əi kani suk-ca ca-de/
   'I do not eat opium at all'

b. /əi kani suk-ca ca-dri/
   'I am not taking opium at all'

c. /əi kani suk-ca ca-dre/
   'I have not taken opium at all'

d. /əi kani suk-ca ca-roi/
   'I will not eat opium at all'

e. / nəŋ kani suk-ca ca-nu/
   'Do not take opium at all'

Here it is found that there is a new grammatical construction in these negative sentences, it is the reduplication of the verb root; the negative strengthening element /suk-/ prefixed to the first verb root at the same time a neg. marker is suffixed to the second repeated verb, as in sentence 43 (a-e). The addition of the negative strengthening element /suk-/ affects the syntactic environment.
Prefixation of the negative strengthening element (NSE) /suk-/ to the verb root:

NSE + Verb-root     Reduplication of Verb-root

(NSE + Verb-root) + (Verb-root + neg marker)

\[ (1 + 2) + (2 + 3) \]

/suk + ca/ + /ca + de/  

Reduplication of verb-root

Every verb is reduplicated in case /suk-/ is to be prefixed to it for making strong negative sentence.

/suk-\text{\textbar}k\text{\textbar}\text{\textbar}h\text{\textbar}\text{\textbar}n\text{\textbar} k\text{\textbar}h\text{\textbar}n-de/

-know know-not

'do not know at all'

/suk-\text{\textbar}p\text{\textbar}m\text{\textbar} p\text{\textbar}m -de/

-like like-not

'do not like at all'

/suk-\text{\textbar}c\text{\textbar}\text{\textbar}t\text{\textbar} c\text{\textbar}t-loi/

-go go-not

'will not go at all'

/suk-\text{\textbar}y\text{\textbar}\text{\textbar}n\text{\textbar} y\text{\textbar}\text{\textbar}n-dri/

-see see-not

'is not seeing at all'
The negative strengthening element /suk-/, as a grammatical rule, can not be used in any affirmative sentence. It is a rigid rule. There is another preverbal neg element.

4.6.2 **Negative strengthening element /pəŋ-/:**

Like the preverbal negative strengthening element /suk-/, there is also another preverbal negative element /pəŋ-/ 'hardly' which is prefixed to the verbs. As the prefixation of negative strengthening element /suk-/ to the verbs bring out a new construction, the reduplication of verbal root, the prefixation of /pəŋ-/ to the verb also results the reduplication of the verb-root as shown by sentence 44.(a-d).

44. a. /məhak skul pəŋ- ka ka-de/
    he school hardly-go go-not
    'He hardly goes to school'

b. /thoibi sinema pəŋ -yen yen-de/
   Thoibi picture hardly-see see-not
   'Thoibi hardly goes to picture'
c. /məhək əthumbə pən-ca ca-de/
   he sweet hardly-eat eat-not
   'He hardly takes sweet'

d. /dɛlhi-da noŋ pən -ta ta-de/
   Delhi-in rainfall hardly-fall fall-not
   'There is sparse rainfall in Delhi'

This preverbal element /pəŋ-/ differs semantically and syntactically from that of /suk-. The preverbal element /pəŋ-/ can be used in two ways: first, as a negative polarity item and secondly, as a positive polarity item.

Consider:

**Positive Polarity:**

45. a. /pəŋ-ca ca -o, pəŋ-thək thək -u
   nunŋai-yu/
   happy-com.
   'Eat and drink as much as you want (and) be happy'

b. /məkhoi-di pəŋ-ca -də ca-y/
   they-pleon. -eat -pleon eat
   'They eat anything'

**Negative Polarity:**

46. a. /yu pəŋ-thək thək -kənu/
   liquor -drink drink -neg com.
   'Don't drink liquor a lot'
b. /məkhoi wa pəŋ -ŋəŋ ŋəŋ -de/
   they speech hardly -speak speak -not
   'They hardly talk to each other'

Consideration of /suk-/ as a positive polarity item and as a negative polarity items depend on its occurrence in the particular construction, i.e. if /suk-/ occurs in a declarative sentence it becomes, automatically, a positive polarity item while in case /suk-/ occurs in a negative sentence it becomes a negative polarity item.

**Negative strengthening element /i-/:**

The third negative strengthening element is /i-/ which is also a prefix like /suk-/ and /pəŋ-/. It has the same syntactic property as that of /suk-/ and of /pəŋ-/, i.e. reduplication of the root (verb). It can be used in both polarities, i.e. as a negative polarity item and as a positive polarity item. /i-/ will be a negative polarity item when it occurs in negative constructions and it will be a positive polarity item when it occurs in affirmative constructions.

I. /i-/ as a negative polarity item.

47. a/məhak skul i-cət/-te/
   'He hardly goes to school'

b. /Thoibi sinema i-yəŋ yəŋ-de/
   Thoibi hardly sees pictures'
'He hardly eats sweet'.

II. /i-/ as a positive polarity item.

It is to be noted that when /i-/ becomes a positive polarity item in affirmative constructions a derivative suffix /-da/-/ta/ must be added to the first verb root before it is reduplicated, otherwise the construction is ungrammatical. Naturally, meaning is also changed: now the meaning is 'any variety' or 'any kind' or 'any'. Consider a few sentences given below:

48. a. /Thoibi sinema i-yeŋ-da yeŋ-y/
   'Thoibi sees any picture'

   b. /məhak athumba i-ca-da ca-y/
   'He eats any kind of sweets'

   c. /əi uhai i-ca-da ca-y/
   'I eat any kind of fruit'

4.7 Polarity Items:

Meiteilon has some polarity items, such as, /yamna/ 'very' or 'a lot', /haifet/ 'a bit' or 'pretty', /kəra/ 'some' and /sathina/ 'very', 'a huge'. These polarity items can be used in both the polarities, i.e. as a negative polarity items and as positive polarity
items: they are negative items if they occur in negative constructions and they are positive items in case they occur in affirmative constructions. These polarity items are different syntactically from negative strengthening elements viz. /suk-/, /pən-/ and /i-/: these polarity items are lexical items, not the bound morpheme like /suk-/, /pən/, etc. Secondly, the polarity items do not result in the reduplication of verb-root in the construction.

4.7.1 **Negative polarity items**:

1. /yamna/ 'very much' or 'very' or 'a lot'

49. a. /məhak yamna fa-te/  
   he very good-neg

   'He is very bad'

   b. /məhak yamna ca-de/  
   he very eat-neg

   'He does not eat much'

2. /haifet/ 'much' or 'a lot' or 'a good quantity'

50. a. /məhak haifet məon ta-de/  
   he somewhat decent is-neg.

   'He is somewhat indecent'

   b. /məhak haifet lairik pa -de/  
   he much book read-neg.

   'He does not read much'
3. /khara/ 'some' or 'a little'

51. a. /məhak khara caokhat -te/
    he some civilize -neg
    'He is somewhat uncivilized'

    b. /əi-nə ka-da yeŋba-da lairik khara əi-te/
       I-nom room-in check-inf book some have-neg
    'When I checked the room I found that some books were missing'

4. /sathina/ 'very' or 'a lot'

52. a. /əi məhak-pu sathina pam-de/
    I he-accus. very like-neg
    'I hate him very much'
    or
    'I don't like him at all'

    b. /ən thək-ti moŋ sathina ta-de/
       this year rain very fall-neg
    'This year there is a very scanty rainfall'

5. /kəya/ 'hardly'

53. a. /Tombi library-da kəya cət-te/
    -to hardly go-neg.mk+asp.
    'Tombi hardly goes to library'

    b. /əi caŋ-bə kəya pok -te/
       I appetite hardly feel-neg.mk+asp.
    'I hardly have the appetite'
    or
    'I do not feel like eating anything'

    c. /əi maikhu thək-pə kəya pam-de/
       I smoking drink hardly like-neg.mk+asp(simple)
    'I hardly smoke'
/kəya/ can have the meaning of 'indefinite number' when it is used in the affirmative constructions, as given below:

54. a. /mi kəya cat-khre, mi kəya lak-khini/ man many go-as phenomena/ man many come-def-aux.

'Many people have gone, many people will come'

b. /sana kəya lai-rəm-y, aəubu loina loi-khre/ gold many have but all finish-as phenomena.

'I had plenty of gold, but nothing of it is left (now)'

Other negative polarity items in Meiteilon are /kərəmətə/ 'nothing', /kənasu/ or /kərmətə/ 'no one' or 'none'; /kəidəsə/ 'no where'; /kədəunsədəsə/ 'never' which are all characteristic of the negative constructions, not of affirmative construction.

1. /kərəmətə/ 'nothing' (a negative indefinite quantifier)

55. a. /məhak kərəmətə ca -de/

he nothing eat-neg

'He eats nothing'

b. /məhak kərəmətə ca -y/ (affirmative)

he nothing eat-

c. /məhak məca-məsu kərəmətə yen -de/

he sons-kids nothing look after-neg

'He did/does not look after his sons and daughters at all'

Here /kərəmətə/ in sentence 55 (c) has a pleonastic function as well as a negative strengthening meaning 'at all'. Its
meaning is slightly changed here according to the context and situation. It can occur with any adverbial time elements, as in sentence 55 (d) and (e).

\[d. \text{mehak} \text{nancit} \text{h\textasciicircum} \text{h\textasciicircum} \text{oren} \text{k\textasciicircum} \text{im\textasciicircum} \text{ca-roi}/ \text{nothing eat-neg}\]

'He will not eat anything \text{after tomorrow}\]

\[e. \text{mehak} \text{n\textasciicircum} \text{aran} \text{h\textasciicircum} \text{jesai} \text{k\textasciicircum} \text{im\textasciicircum} \text{ca-de}/ \text{nothing eat-neg}\]

'He did not eat anything \text{day before yesterday}\]

2. /k\textasciitilde{a}nsu/ or /k\textasciitilde{a}nam\textasciitilde{e}ta/ 'no one' or 'none'

56. a. /k\textasciitilde{a}nsu\textasciitilde{a} l\textasciitilde{a}ubuk-t ca\textasciitilde{e} te/ \text{field -to go-neg}

'No one goes to the field'

*b. /k\textasciitilde{a}nsu\textasciitilde{a} l\textasciitilde{a}ubuk-t ca\textasciitilde{e}-y/ (affirmative)\text{none field-to go-}

3. /k\textasciitilde{a}da\textasciitilde{a}d\textasciitilde{e}su/ 'no where'

57. a. /k\textasciitilde{a}da\textasciitilde{a}d\textasciitilde{e}su mehak-kumba mi \text{fan-loi}/ \text{no where he -like man get-neg}

'No where you can get a man like him'

The word order can be changed in the following way, as in sentence 57 (b) but it does not affect the meaning.
b. /mahak-kumbə mi kədai dəsu feŋ-loi/
   he -like man nowhere get-neg
   'No where you can get a man like him'

4. /kəidəʊŋəidəsu/ 'never'

58. a. /mahak kəidəʊŋəidəsu imfal- də lak -loi/
   he never Imphal-to come-neg
   'He will never come to Imphal'

* b. /mahak kəidəʊŋəidəsu imfal -də lak-hi/
   he never Imphal -to come-be

This negative polarity item /kəidəʊŋəidəsu/ 'never' can occur in all aspects. Consider:

Simple aspect:

59. /mahak kəidəʊŋəidəsu imfal -də lak -te/
   he never Imphal -to come-neg
   'He never comes to Imphal'

Continuous aspect:

60. /mahak kəidəʊŋəidəsu imfal -də lak -tri/
   he never Imphal -to come-neg
   'He is never coming to Imphal'

Perfect aspect:

61. /mahak kəidəʊŋəidəsu imfal -də lak -tre/
   he never Imphal -to come-neg.
   'He has never come to Imphal'

Unrealized aspects: Already mentioned as sentence 58 (a).

The occurrence of this negative polarity item /kəidəʊŋəidəsu/ 'never' with any of the adverbial time
elements of future time viz., /ŋəsi/ 'today', /nəyen/ 'tomorrow', /nəŋcit/ 'day after tomorrow' and other adverbial time elements of past viz., /n sai/ 'that time', /ŋəran/ 'yesterday', /nəhan/ 'day before yesterday', etc. is unacceptable in Meiteilon. It is very natural for this negative polarity item /kəidəənidəsu/ 'never' to occur without any of these adverbial time elements.

Positive Polarity Items (PPI):

Many scholars of English grammar have noted that there are some words and idioms which can occur only in affirmative sentences and negative sentences; they are termed as 'polarity sensitive'. In Meiteilon also, there are some other polarity items besides the above two /pəŋ-/ and /kəya/ which are used in negative polarity as well as in positive polarity.

1. /yamna/ 'very'

62. a. /məhak yamna fəi/
   he very good
   'He is very good'

   b. /məhak yamna cai, yamna thək- y/
   he much eat much drink
   'He eats and drinks very much'

2. /haifet/ 'much' or 'a lot' or 'a good quantity'

63. a. /məhak yu haifet thək- y/
   he liquor much drink
   'He drinks a lot of liquor'

b. /sabi haifet nǐnθirej/  
Sabi very beautiful  
'Sabi is very beautiful'

3. /khrad/ 'some' or 'a little'

64. a. /mahek yu khrad thak -y/  
he liquor some drink  
'He drinks a little liquor'

b. /mi khrad lubuk -ta cat-khre/  
man some field -to go-perf.  
'Some men have gone to field'

4. /sathinaj/ 'very much'

65. a. /mahek sathinaj fazej/  
she very beautiful  
'She is very beautiful'

b. /mahek yu sathinaj thak- y/  
he liquor a lot drink  
'He drinks too much of liquor'

Nowadays, this item /sathinaj/ is used as positive polarity item. It has the positive meaning; it is mostly used by the youngsters irrespective of sex in a very natural way. But the old people use /yamna/ instead of /sathinaj/ to them the word /sathinaj/ has a negative connotation and used only in negative sense. The insertion of this item /sathinaj/ in the context of good, nice, mild, etc. is of late 70s phenomena.

In this section what is very clear is that polarity items viz. /yamna/ 'very much', /haifet/ 'much' or 'a lot',
/kharã/ 'some' or 'a little', /sathinã/ 'very much' or 'a lot', can be the positive polarity items in affirmative constructions as well as the negative polarity items in negative constructions. But the polarity items like /kãrimãtã/ 'nothing', /kãasu/ or /kãimãtã/ 'no one' or 'none', /kãdaïåsu/ 'no where' and /kãdaïådãsu/ 'never' are purely negative polarity items, in the sense that they occur only in negative constructions.

4.8 Multiple Negation:

4.8.1 Negative cancellation and double negative:

As negative cancellation is a natural phenomenon in language, Meiteilon also does not lack it. In Mathematics and Algebra, there is a principle or formula that two negatives becomes a positive. But Language is not a Mathematics; what can be applied to Mathematics can not be applied to Language. Jespersen gives here his opinion, "...Whenever two negatives really refer to the same idea or word (as specially negatives) the result is invariably positive; this is true in all languages... The negatives, however, do not exactly cancel one another so that the result (of not uncommon, not infrequent) is identical with the simple common, frequent, the longer expression is always weaker." 6

Meiteilon too has double negatives and a construction having double negatives is considered as a kind of literary flourish.

66. a. /cat- tə-bə ńəm-loi/ 
go-neg-inf.pt. can-neg 
'I can not but go' 
or 
'I can not not go'

b. /cat-kə-ni/ 
go-as.p.-aux. 
'I will go'

67. a. /məhak cak ca-də-nə skul cət-te/ 
he meal eat-neg-ptcti school go-neg 
'He does not go to school without having his meal'

b. /məhak cak ca-rə-gə skul cət-y/ 
'He goes to school after having his meal'

68. a. /kalan thagi nunṣa sa-də-bə nətte/ 
June month sunlight hot-neg-inf. free 
'The sunrays of the month of June is nothing but hot'

b. /kalan thagi nunṣa sa-y/ 
June month sun rays hot-as.p. 
'The sun rays of the month of June is hot'

Sentences 66 (a), 67 (a) and 68 (a) are syntactically different from 66 (b), 67 (b) and 68 (b) respectively, though there is no difference between them from the point
of view of meaning. However, it is to be noted that in the above examples (a) sentences are felt to be as weak and slightly hortative whereas (b) sentences are considered as strong (form of statement). For instance, sentence 68 (a). Yes, the sun is very hot in the month of June: it does not imply only this, it implies more. The speaker has the practical experience of it. It is hot but it is bearable weather. The speaker did not make the statement bluntly. He used a figure of speech.

The above sentences 66(a), 67(a) and 68(a) are examples of double negation. Each sentence has two neg. markers: the first neg. marker is a infix while the second one is a suffix. In these sentences two negatives refer to one idea or to the same meaning. There is another category in which the two negatives do not refer to the same idea or to the same meaning but an affirmative is nevertheless conveyed as shown by sentences 69 (a-c).

69. a. /əi məgon-da cət-nu hai-de/  
   I him -to go-neg say-neg
   'I did not ask him not to go'

   b. /ənaba si -roi haibe nam-de/  
   patient die -neg to say can-neg
   'It can not be said that the patient will not die'

   c. /madhəbi-nə dhiren-bu nuşsi-de haibe si  
   Madhabi Dhiren love-neg that
   əpaba-nə yaniq-de/  
   reader allow-neg
'The reader does not allow that Madhabi does not love Dhiren'.

Double negative can also occur with negative polarity items. Consider:

70. a. /kəndsə ləubuk-te cat-te ḥainə -əŋona (1st neg) no one field-to go-neg. that to me tak -te/ (2nd neg) mention -neg

'It was mentioned to me that no one went to the field'

b. /kədəidəsu məhak-kumbə mi faŋ -əloi (1st neg) no where he -like man get-neg ḥainə khan -nu/ (2nd neg) that think -neg

'Don't think that no where you can get a man like him'

c. /məhak kədaunəidəsu imfal -də lək-əloi (1st neg) he never Imphal-to come-neg khan -nu/ (2nd neg) think -neg

'Don't think that he will never come to Imphal'

Generally, one correlation can be drawn between affirmatives and double negatives. It is well known that just as interrogatives share many traits with negatives, negative questions are often communicatively equivalent to
a positive assertion. (Didn't he leave? = He left, didn't he?). For example:

71. /ŋasi -si fezɔ -dra/
    today -class beautiful Q.mk.

'Isn't it a beautiful day' (= It is a beautiful day)

It is also to be noted that ironical or sarcastic interpretations of positive declaratives vanish under negation; interrogatives, too, tend to be interpretable only literally. Negative questions, on the other hand, like affirmatives, can be read ironically. In Meiteilon also, the affirmative and interrogative may have negative connotation when it is used in ironic or sarcastic expression.

72. a. /boiyai pukcel-senbąŋąŋ-ni/
    Boiyai honest boy-aux

'Boiyai is an honest boy' (Sarcastically)

b. /boiyai pukcel-senb ąŋąŋ -la/

'Is Boiyai an honest boy' (literal meaning only)

4.9 Pleonasm:

4.9.1 Negative Parenthetical:

In Meiteilon also, negative parenthetical expressions are significant sentential negative construction. Generally, parenthetical expressions, as observed by Wittgenstein, Urmson, Searle, and other philosophers of
their traditions, are structural devices for qualifying and modifying the force of utterance or other act of expression (Ross, 1973, Cattell 1973, and Hooper 1975). Parenthetical clauses, like sentence adverbials to which they are related both semantically and distributionally, may weaken or otherwise modify the force of the main clause but not contradict or reverse it. Some sentences are given here:

73. a. /əi kʰəŋ-y, məhak yu thək-te haibə/
   I know he liquor drink-neg that
   'I know that he does not take liquor'

   b. /məhak yu thək-te haibə əi kʰəŋ-y/
   he liquor drink-neg that I know-asp.
   'He does not take liquor that I know'

   c. /məhak, əi kʰəŋ-y, yu thək-te
   he I know-i.v.s.liquor drink-neg
   haibə/
   that
   'He, I know, does not drink liquor'

Thus in 73 (a) we can take the main clause parenthetically, as a modification of the real assertion contained within the complement rather than as an assertion of its own. The main clause subject and object are then syntactically parentheticalized, in both the different structure of sentences, in 73 (c) insertion of main clause between constituent of the complement and in 73 (b) postposition of the main clause. When the main clause is put into a
negative construction then it becomes a double negation. Then the main clause does not perform the function of negative parenthetical, that is, the clause does not stand as a modification of the real assertion contained within the complement. It stands as an assertion of its own. The following sentence exemplifies it.

74. /æi khaŋ -de məhak yu thək- te haibə/  
I know -neg he liquor drink- neg that

'I do not know that he does not drink liquor'

4.9.2 Negative appositive:

In Meiteilon, negative appositive, a very particular element has to be put to make a sentence a negative appositive. It is /faubə/ which can be taken as a polarity item and which can be used as a negative polarity item as well as a positive item. Some negative appositive constructions are:

75. a. /məhak sa -ŋa ca -de, yerum faubə ca-de/  
he meat-fish eat-neg egg even eat-neg  

'He does not take meat and fish, even eggs also'

b. /æi məhak-ki laifəm khaŋ-de, məmən faubə  
I his address know-neg name even

khaŋ-de/  
know-neg  

'I don't know his address, even his name'
Here the negative appositive strengthens the negation. The negative polarity items can also occur in negative appositive construction, as follows:

76. a. /æ1 kani ca -de, suk-ca ca-de/  
   I opium eat-neg NPI-neg eat-neg  
   'I do not eat opium, not at all'

   b. /mækhoi si- da lak-te, kæn-su lak-te/  
      they here-to come-neg no one come-neg  
      'They did not come here, not a single one (of them)'

   c. /mæhak i:sii -su thæk-tre, kærɪmta thæk-tre/  
      he water-too drink-neg nothing drink-neg  
      'He has not drunk water too, nothing at all'

   d. /æikhoi-nq mæhak-pu thibə fænə-roi, mæfam  
      we him seek get-neg place  
      kædaidæsu fæn-loi/  
      no where get-neg  
      'We will not find him anywhere, nowhere at all'

The meaning of these sentences are stronger than the ordinary negative sentences are in meaning.

4.10

Negative Transportation:

Negative transportation? is a common linguistic phenomenon. Meiteilon has also such a linguistic phenomenon.

7. "...is a syntactic rule which originates as a functional device for singalling negative force (like other illocutionary force makers) as early as is possible within a sentence (this possibility being determined by a complex interaction of language-specific and perceptually-based properties, ...contd.
In Meiteilon, the negative particle can be added to the verb of a main clause or the verb of a subordinate clause, as in sentence 77 (a) and (b).

77. a. /əi khəŋ-де məhək skul cət-khre haibə/  
   I know-neg he school go- that  
   'I don't know that he has gone to school'

   b. /əi khəŋ-y məhək skul cət-tre haibə/  
   I know he school go-neg that  
   'I know that he has not gone to school'

At syntactic level, the main difference between the sentences 77 (a) and (b) is that the neg particle is in the main clause in sentence (a) while it is in the subordinate clause in sentence (b). Whatever the syntactic evidence, for a rule of negative transportation, it is dubious whether the semantic evidence, if it is to be based on the putative paraphrase relation between 77 (b) and the non-external reading of 77 (a) can be seriously maintained. R. Lakoff (1969)\(^8\) credits Bolinger with the observation that the

7. contd...

and is thus a grammaticisation of functional principles— not unlike a wide range of linguistic phenomenon including most movement rules and constraints, as recent work by Grosu, Kuno and Firbas, following the earlier Prague school tradition, have attempted to demonstrate".


8. Lakoff, R. 1969. 'A Syntactic argument for negative transportation. CLS 5.140.
negative force in the transported reading of 77 (a) is perceptively weaker than in its untransported congener 77 (b). In fact, Poutsma (1928: 105) had found that "the shifting of not often has the effect of softening down the negativity of a sentence." 9

4.11 Negation in some Tibeto-Burman Languages:

It is obvious that the negative constructions in Meiteilon are formed by affixation of negative particles /-tə-/ and /-də-/ to the verbs. But the construction of negative sentences in Burmese is quite different from that of Meiteilon. In Burmese, negative construction has two separate negative markers /ma/ and /bu/ in indicative mood: the former neg particle /ma/ precedes the verb while the latter neg marker /bu/ follows the verb as in sentence 78 (a-c).

78. a. /c no cawn ma thwa bu/
    I school neg.mk go neg mk
    'I do not go to school'

    b. /khin mawn cawn ma thwa bu/
    Khin Maon school neg.mk. go neg.mk.
    'Khin Maon does not go to school'

c. /cëno-do cawn ma thwa bu/
    we school neg mk go neg mk

'We do not go to school'

The neg markers /ma/ and /bu/ occur in all persons, numbers and tense (the context and the adverbial time elements indicate the tense), as sentences 79 (a) and (b) show below:

79. a. /cëno cawn ma thwa bu/

'I did not go to school yesterday'

b. /tu ma kawn bu/
    he/she neg. good neg.pt.
    pt.

'He/She is not good'

Burmese is similar to Tangkhul: the negative markers precedes and follows the verb. In negative construction in Tangkhul, the negative marker /ma/ is repeated before and after the verbs. The negative particle /ma/ remains unchanged for different numbers, persons and tenses, as in sentence 80.

80. / [i-thum
     i-na ] skul-li ma -va -ma-na/
     [a-thum
     a ] school-to neg.mk-go -neg.mk.

'We I do not go to school'

Tangkhul differs from other languages viz., Gangte, Thadou, Lushei, Hmar, Sema and Ao. Gangte and Thadou have
different negative particles according to different number and tenses; the neg. marker /poi/ is used for singular number, and /puou/ for plural number; in Gangte the neg. marker /hiₚ-e/ is used for singular and /hiₚ-uve/, for plural.

Gangte

81. a. /skul ah ka ciech poi/  
    school to I go neg.mk. (singular)

    'I do not go to school'

b. /skul ah kei-uₚ ciech pou/  
    school to we go neg.mk. (plural)

    'We do not go to school'

Thadou

82. a. /skul a ka ce hiₚ-e/  
    school to I go neg.mk. (singular)

    'I do not go to school'

b. /skul a ithum ce hiₚ-uve/  
    school to we go neg.mk. (plural)

    'We do not go to school'

In Lushei, Hmar and Semu the neg. markers /l u/, /noh/ and /-moi/ do not make any distinction for different numbers and persons.

Lushei

83. a. /skul ka kal lau/  
    school I go neg.mk.

    'I do not go to school'
The negative markers in all these languages do not change their neg. marker-form in present and past tenses. But in each of these languages the neg. markers take a new form in future tense (which then is common for all numbers and persons). Examples are given below:

**Thadou**

86. `/skul a ka ce lau dai hi/ school to I go neg.mk. will

'I will not go to school'
The past and present tenses in these languages are inferred by the context as well as by the adverbial elements of time. The neg. particle /moi/ in Sema and /lou/ in Lushei remain the same in all tenses; the adverbial time elements and context place a sentence in different tenses. Ao is quite complicated in comparison with the above mentioned languages from the point of view of negative construction. Negative sentences are constructed in Ao, by the prefixation of the neg. marker /ta/ or /ma/. The former is added to the verb in imperative as in sentence 33 (a) while the latter is added to the verb in non-imperative construction as in sentence 89 (b).

89. a. /koffee ta -cam/
    coffee neg.com.-drink
    'Don't drink coffee'

    b. /ni kofi ma -cam/
    I coffee neg.com.-drink
    'I do not drink coffee'
The negative marker /ma/ is also used as a negative reply to a question:

90. Q. /na cu: kinelh asu:/
   you water want Q.mk.
   'Do you want water?'

Reply:/ma/
   'No'

There is also another free negative form /non/ which is more polite than /ma/:

91. Q. /na kofi akiner asu/
   'Do you want coffee'

Reply: /non/
   'No please'

The vowel /-a/ of the negative marker /ma/ and of /ta/ is assimilated in the following ways:

1. /a/ → ∅ When followed by verb with /a/ vowel:
   /ma + apu/ /mapu/ 'not to blow'
   /ta + apu/ /tapu/ 'don't blow'

2. /a/ → /i/ when followed by a verb beginning with the vowel /i/ (the glide /y/ is inserted latter between the two vowels:
   /ma + imsa/ /mi -y -imsa/ 'not to walk'
   /ta + imla/ /ti -y -imla/ 'don't expect'
3. /a/ → /u/ when followed by a verb beginning with a vowel /u/ (the glide /w/ is inserted between the two vowels):

/ma + utan/ /mu-w-utan/ 'not to measure'
/ta + utan/ /tu-w-utan/ 'don't measure'

4. /a/ → /e/ when followed by a verb beginning with a consonant:

/ma + mec/ /me-mec/ 'not to bite'
/ta + cipu/ /te-cipu/ 'don't fear'

The negative particles /ta/ and /ma/ remain same for all numbers persons and tenses.

Typologically, the nature of negative construction in these languages can be grouped. Burmese and Tangkhul are in one group where the negative particles are placed before and after the verbs; Thadou, Gangto, Hmar and Lushei are in other group in which the free form negative particles follow the verbs. Ao is another group in which the negative particle is a prefix, and in Sema and Meiteilon, the negative markers are suffixed.