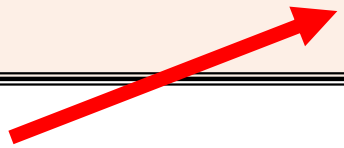
Introducing the Negative Existential Indefinite Cycles

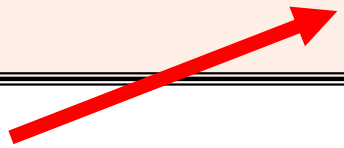
Johan van der Auwera
University of Antwerp

Introducing the Negative Existential Indefinite Cycles



***Nobody** saw me.*

Introducing the Negative Existential Indefinite Cycles



***Nobody** saw me.* ≈ **there is** no x such that x saw me

Introducing the Negative Existential Indefinite Cycles

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Thai

***Maj*2**	***mii*0**	***khraj*0**	***hen*4**	***chan*4.**
not	**exist**	**IGN**	**see**	**me**

‘Nobody saw me.’

Introducing the Negative Existential Indefinite Cycles

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‘Nobody saw me.’

SOME ASPECTS OF THE TYPOLOGY

van der Auwera, Johan, Quen Nguyen Hai, Vipas Pothipath & Stefanie Siebenhütter (Under revision) Existential indefinite constructions, in the world and in Mainland Southeast Asia

van der Auwera, Daniel van Olmen & Frens Vossen (Forthc.) Negation. In *The Oxford Guide to the Malayo-Polynesian Languages of Asia and Madagascar*. Ed. by Alexander Adelaar & Antoinette Schapper. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

***Maj*2 *mii*0 *khraj*0 *hen*4 *chan*4.**
not exist IGN see me
‘Nobody saw me.’

preverbal negative

Thai	**necessary**		

***Maj*2 *mii*0 *khraj*0 *hen*4 *chan*4.**
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	preverbal negative	preverbal specific	
Thai	necessary	necessary	

***Maj*2 *mii*0 *khraj*0 *hen*4 *chan*4.**
not exist IGN see me
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***Mii*0 *khraj*0 baaŋ0 khon0 *hen*4 *chan*4.**
exist IGN some person see me
‘Somebody saw me.’

	preverbal		postverbal
	negative	specific	
Thai	necessary	necessary	impossible

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*Chan4 maj*2 *hen*4 *khon0*.
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'I saw nobody.'

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I see person
'I saw somebody.'

	preverbal		postverbal
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Vietnamese	necessary	necessary	impossible
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Given before New

Halliday (1967: 205–211), Givón (1979: 299) ...

Givón (1979: 27), Van Alsenoy (2014: 241)

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12 judgments	Nobody called you.	Somebody called you.
Standard Malay (4 speakers) Regional peninsular Malay (3 speakers) Standard Indonesian (1 speaker) Sundanese (1 speaker) Balinese (1 speaker) Banjar (1 speaker) Kulisusu (1 speaker)		

van der Auwera *et al.* (Forthc.)

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van der Auwera *et al.* (Forthc.)

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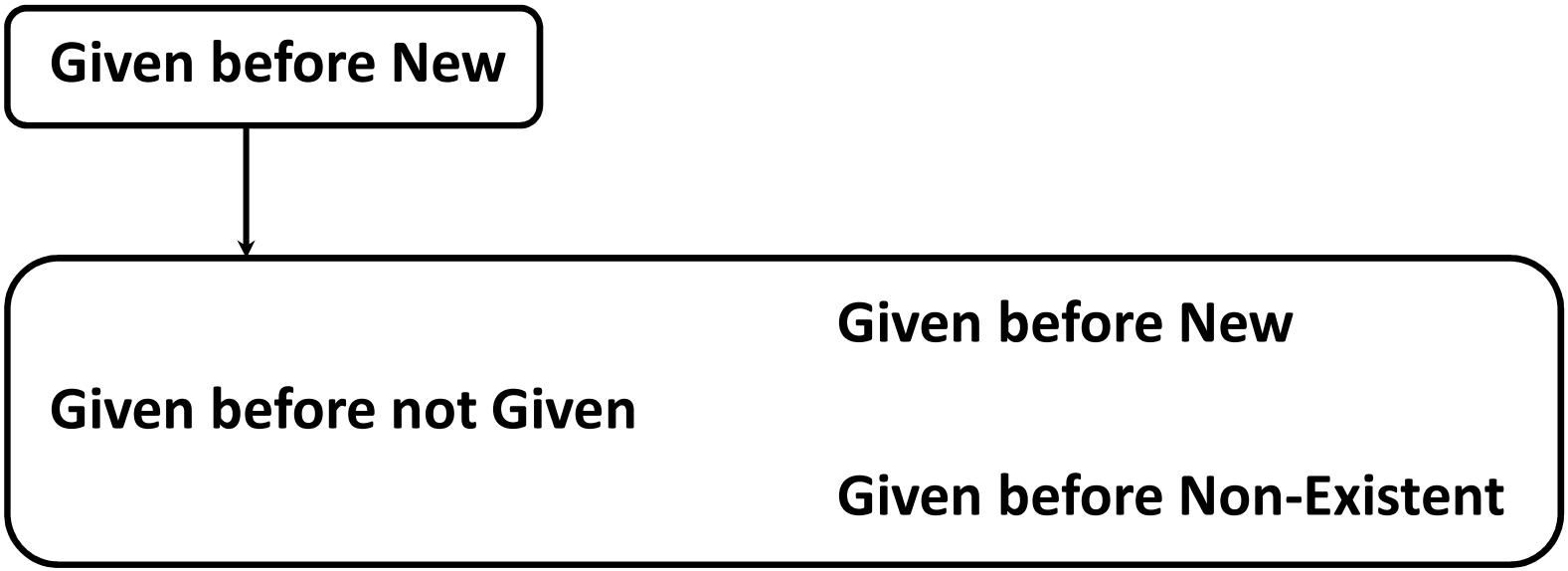

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CYCLICITY

Can a language ‘make’ indefinite pronouns out of existential phrases?

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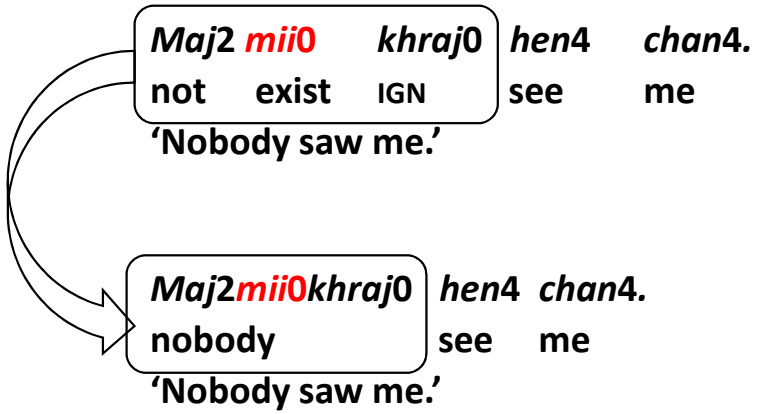

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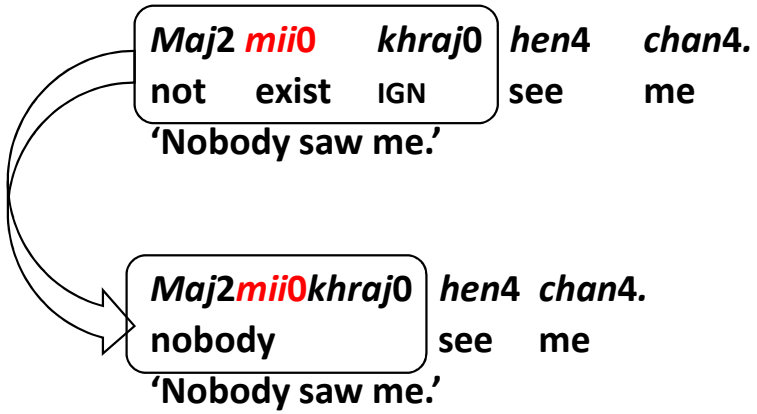

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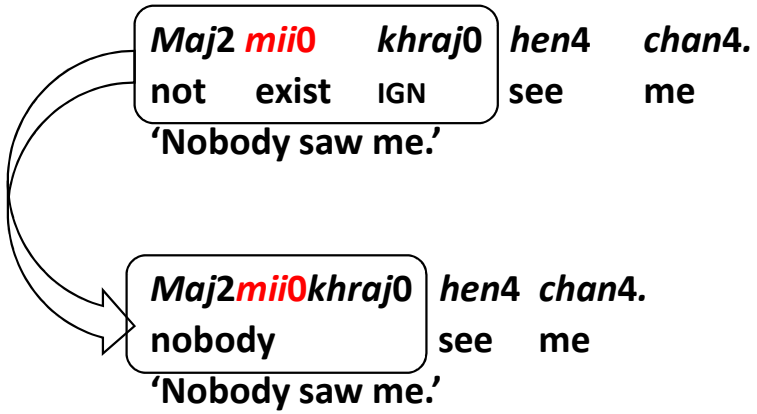

Yes

But only for the negative ones

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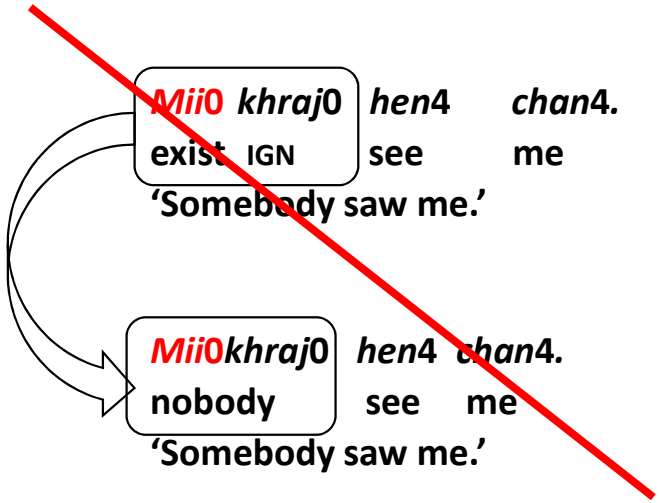

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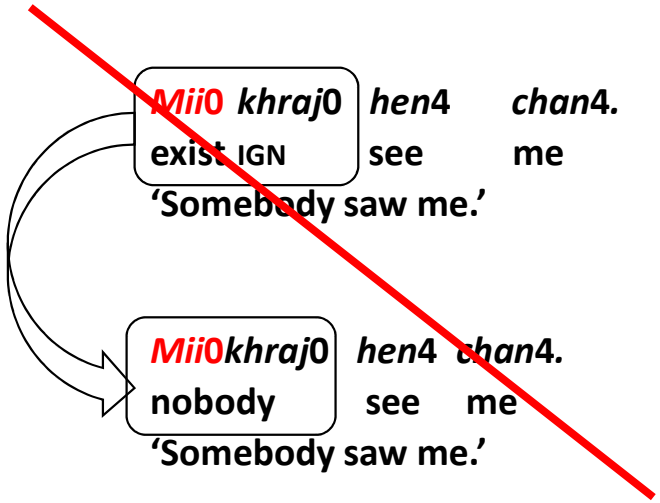

Yes

Another indication for a special link between negative indefiniteness and the existential strategy

Can a language ‘make’ negative indefinite pronouns out of existential phrases?

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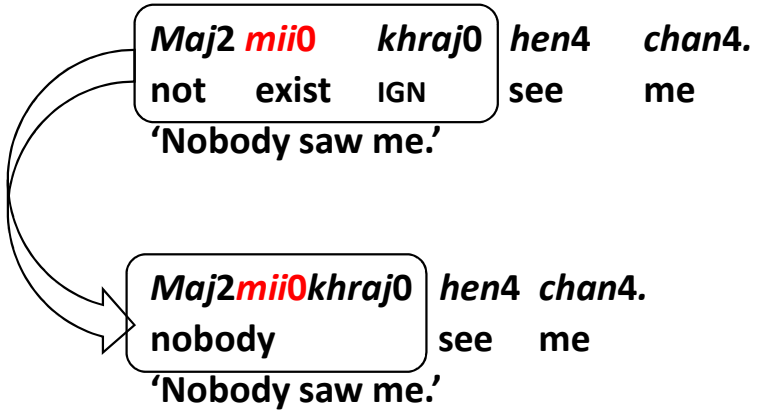

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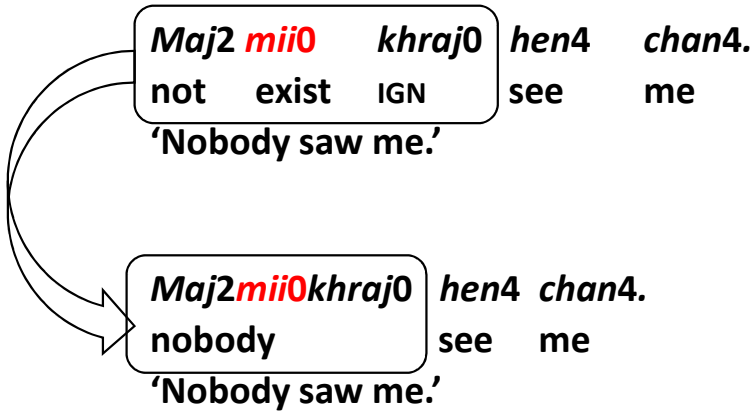

Yes

Various language-specific studies
&
One typological study, viz.
Van Alsenoy (2014: 141-145)

‘Negation absorption via negative existential construction’

Can a language ‘make’ negative indefinite pronouns out of existential phrases?

But it is rare!

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But it is rare! Van Alsenoy (2014: 141-145): 3 out of 179 languages

⟷ 20/179 for Thai like Neg Ind

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Chocho (E. Oto-Manguean)

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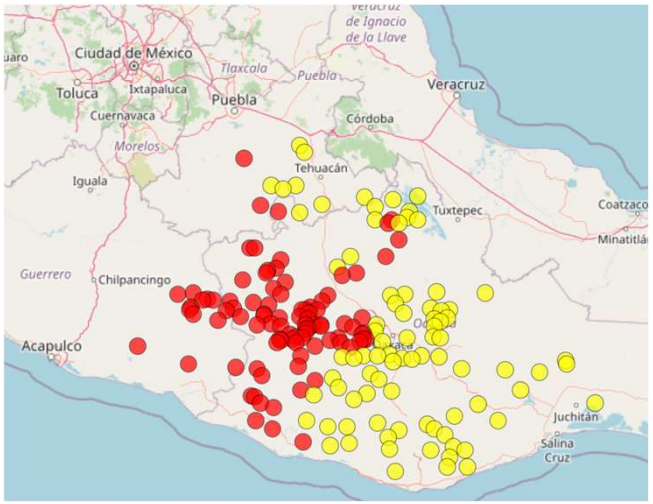

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Chocho
Mixtec
Lachixío Zapotec

Mixtec

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Chocho
Mixtec
Lachixío Zapotec
Russian
Mixtec

CHOCHO

Chocho de Santa Catarina Ocotlán

kʔuāṣèngù diáxī̄
nobody enters
‘Nobody enters.’
(Veerman-Leichsenring 2000: 72-73)

Chocho de Santa Catarina Ocotlán

kʔuāṣèngù diáxī̱	*éṣā kʔuā ňù dà*
nobody enters	why NEG.EX tortilla Q
‘Nobody enters.’	‘Why are there no tortillas?’

(Veerman-Leichsenring 2000: 72-73)

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Different from standard negators
Suffixes *-ʔa, -ʔya, -ʔna ...*

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Chocho de Santa Catarina Ocotlán

‘with’

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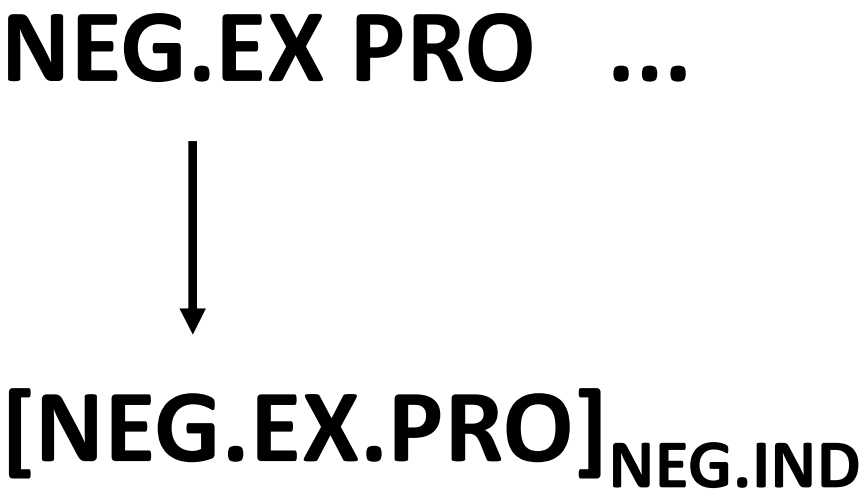
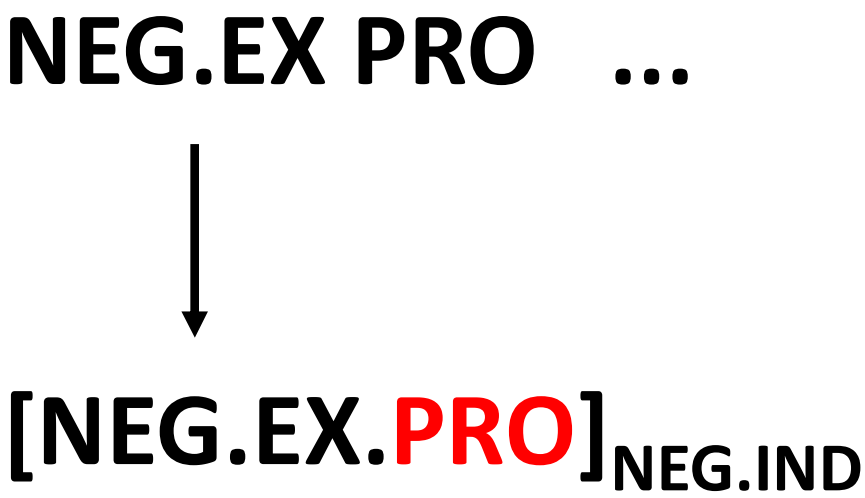
kʔuā-ṣèngù ‘nobody’
NEG.EX-one
kʔuāʔ-eré ‘nothing’
NEG.EX-IGN.N.SG
kʔuā-séňì ‘nowhere’
NEG.EX-?
ṛūná ‘never’


NEG.EX PRO ...
[NEG.EX.PRO]NEG.IND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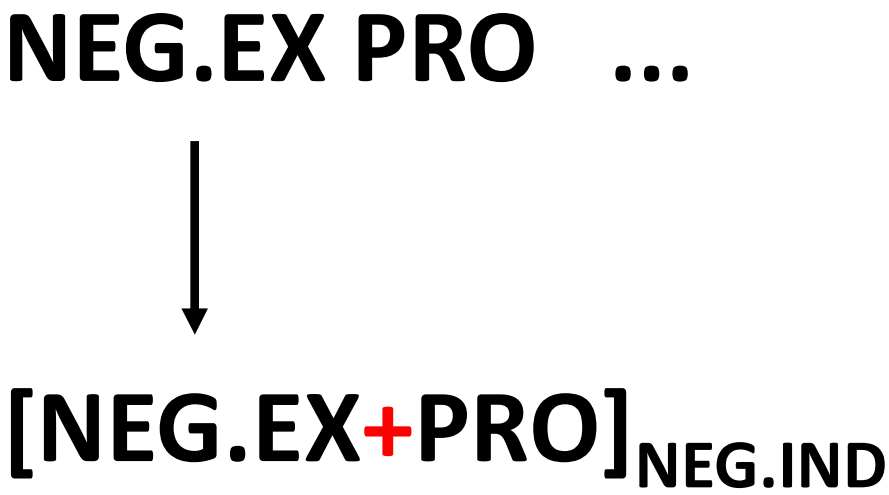
NEG.EX PRO ...
[NEG.EX+PRO]NEG.IND

MIXTEC (1)

Lowland *KOO*

Negative form of *KOO* ‘exist’ < ‘sit’

	‘not exist’	‘not’
Coatzoquitengo, ...	✓	–
Silacoyaopan, ...	✓	✓
San Martín Peras	–	✓

Negative Existential Cycle

Lowland *KOO*

Negative form of *KOO* ‘exist’ < ‘sit’

	‘not exist’	‘not’	‘not exist’
Coatzoquitengo, ...	✓	–	–
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Negative Existential Cycle

San Martín Peras
(Ostrove 2018, Eischens Forthc)

Ní-ña’ăn	**kò=kísha**	**Maria.**
NEG-thing	**NEG=do.IPFV**	**Maria**

‘Maria isn’t doing anything.’

San Martín Peras
(Ostrove 2018, Eischens Forthc)

Kǒ=na ní-shashi nzihkă.

NEG=3PLN PFV-eat banana

‘Nobody ate a banana’.

Ní-ña’ăn kò=kísha Maria.

NEG-thing NEG=do.IPFV Maria

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KOO
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KOO
NEG

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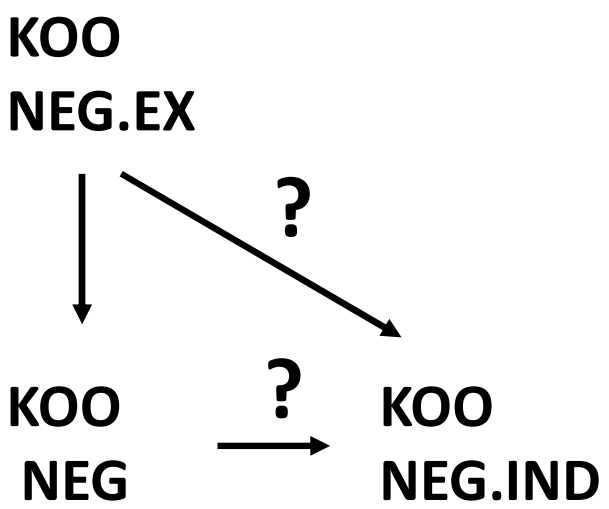

Highland *NATUU*
Negative form of *TUU* ‘exist’ < ‘sit’

	‘not exist’	‘not’
San Juan Coatzopan, ...	✓	–
San Juan Diuxi, ...	✓	✓
San Juan Teita, ...	–	✓

Negative Existential Cycle

Highland *NATUU*
Negative form of *TUU* ‘exist’ < ‘sit’

Highland *KOO*
Positive IRR form + ’not’

	‘not exist’	‘not’	‘not’ + ‘exist’
San Juan Coatzopan, ...	✓	–	–
San Juan Diuxi, ...	✓	✓	
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Negative Existential Cycle

Highland *NATUU*
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Negative Existential Cycle

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San Juan Diuxi, ...	✓	✓	✓
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Negative Existential Cycle

‘not’	‘not exist’	‘nobody’
	ña tuū	

Negators in San Juan Diuxi

Kuiper & Oram (1991)

‘not’	‘not exist’	‘nobody’
ña / ñatū	*ña tuū*	

Negators in San Juan Diuxi

Kuiper & Oram (1991)

‘not’	‘not exist’	‘nobody’
ña / ñatū	*ña yoō* *ña tuū*	

Negators in San Juan Diuxi

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	‘not’	‘not exist’	‘nobody’
animate inanimate	*ña / ñatū*	*ña yoō* *ña tuū*	

Negators in San Juan Diuxi

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	‘not’	‘not exist’	‘nobody’
animate	*ña / ñatū*	*ña yoō*	*ña yó’o / ñayō* PRO
inanimate		*ña tuū*	*ña túú / ñatú* PRO

Negators in San Juan Diuxi

Kuiper & Oram (1991)

San Juan Diuxi (Kuiper & Oram 1991: 284)

Ñayō te sháshi.
none 3.WS eat.IPFV
‘None of them is eating.’

NEG.EX PRO …

↓

[NEG.EX PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ …

San Juan Diuxi (Kuiper & Oram 1991: 284)

Ñayō te sháshi.
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NEG.EX PRO ...

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Ñayō te sháshi.
none 3.WS eat.IPFV
‘None of them is eating.’

NEG.EX PRO ...

[NEG.EX PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ EX

Ñayō te túū.
none 3.WS EX
‘None of them is here.’

NEG.EX PRO …

[NEG.EX+PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ …

NEG.EX PRO …

[NEG.EX+PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ EX

NEG.EX PRO …

[NEG.EX+PRO]$_{\text{NEG.IND}}$ EX

ZAPOTEC

Lachixío Zapotec (Persons *et al*. 2009)

***la* NEG**	**Pero la chiliarqui'lu.**
	but NEG PST.right.heart.2SG
	'But you didn't believe me.'
	(Persons *et al.* 2009: 56)
***leca* NEG.EX**	**[...] nu leca beeí.**
	and NEG.EX PL.2AN
	'[...] and there are no animals.'
	(Persons *et al.* 2009: 84)

‘indefinite pronouns’ ***leca ti / xi***
NEGEX INT.HUM.SG / INT.NHUM.SG

[...] nu leca xi tsua lu mexa.
and EX INT.NHUM.SG put.POT on table
‘... and I had put nothing on the table.’
(Persons *et al.* 2009: 22)

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‘... and I had put nothing on the table.’
(Persons *et al.* 2009: 22)

Leca-ti la ri’I beya’.
nobody NEG do.POT know
‘Nobody knows.’
(Persons *et al.* 2009: 71)

‘indefinite pronouns’ ***leca ti / xi***
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Why NC?

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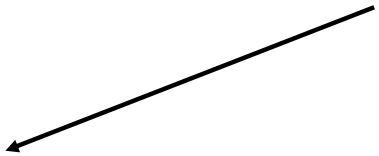
[...] nu leca xi tsua lu mexa.
and EX INT.NHUM.SG put.POT on table
‘... and I had put nothing on the table.’
(Persons *et al*. 2009: 22)

Leca-ti la ri’I beya’.
nobody NEG do.POT know
‘Nobody knows.’
(Persons *et al*. 2009: 71)

Why NC?
Haspelmath 1997: 203
Heidolph 1970: 99
van der Auwera ...

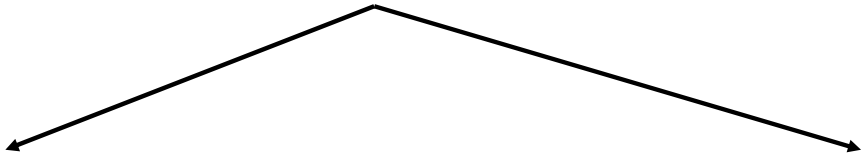
NEG EX PRO ...



[NEG.EX+PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ EX

Mixtec

NEG EX PRO ...



[NEG.EX+PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ EX

[NEG.EX+PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ (NEG)

Mixtec

Laxíchio Zapotec

RUSSIAN

Russian

NEG

Ja	ničego	ne	videl.
1NOM.SG	nothing.ACC	NEG	see.IPFV.PST.3SGM

‘I saw nothing.’

Russian

NEG

Ja	ničego	ne	videl.
1NOM.SG	nothing.ACC	NEG	see.IPFV.PST.3SGM

‘I saw nothing.’

NEG IND

Russian

NEG

Ja ničego ne videl.
1NOM.SG nothing.ACC NEG see.IPFV.PST.3SGM
‘I saw nothing.’

NEG IND

NEG.EX

Net edinorov.
NEG.EX unicorns.GEN.PL
‘There are no unicorns.’

Not existential indefinites
But modal existential indefinites

Not *There was somebody at the door*.
But *There was somebody to talk to*.

And here we don't find the *ni-* pronouns, but one type of *ne-* pronouns!

Nam nečego delat'.
us nothing do
'There is nothing for us to do.'

Nam nečego delat'.
us nothing do
'There is nothing for us to do.'

Nam est' čto delat'.
us is what do
'There is something for us to do.'

Nam nečego delat'.
us nothing do
'There is nothing for us to do.'

Nam nečego bylo delat'.
us nothing was do
'There was nothing for us to do.'

Nam nečego budet delat'.
us nothing will.be do
'There will be nothing for us to do.'

Nam est' čto delat'.
us is what do
'There is something for us to do.'

Nam bylo čto delat'.
us was what do
'There was something for us to do.'

Nam budet čto delat'.
us will.be what do
'There will be something for us to do.'

Nam nečego delat'.
us nothing do
'There is nothing for us to do.'

Nam nečego bylo delat'.
us nothing was do
'There was nothing for us to do.'

Nam nečego budet delat'.
us nothing will.be do
'There will be nothing for us to do.'

Negative existential indefinite pronoun
i.e., a special negative indefinite pronoun

Nam est' čto delat'.
us is what do
'There is something for us to do.'

Nam bylo čto delat'.
us was what do
'There was something for us to do.'

Nam budet čto delat'.
us will.be what do
'There will be something for us to do.'

Švedova (1970), Holvoet (1999), Willis (2013), Fortuin (2014), Mazzitelli (2018)

Nam nečego delat'.
us nothing do
'There is nothing for us to do.'

Nam nečego bylo delat'.
us nothing was do
'There was nothing for us to do.'

Nam nečego budet delat'.
us nothing will.be do
'There will be nothing for us to do.'

Negative existential indefinite pronoun
i.e., a special negative indefinite pronoun
Special negative predicative word

Nam est' čto delat'.
us is what do
'There is something for us to do.'

Nam bylo čto delat'.
us was what do
'There was something for us to do.'

Nam budet čto delat'.
us will.be what do
'There will be something for us to do.'

Švedova (1970), Holvoet (1999), Willis (2013),
Fortuin (2014), Mazzitelli (2018)
Tesnière (1934), Holthusen (1953), Garde (1976),
Rappaport (1986)

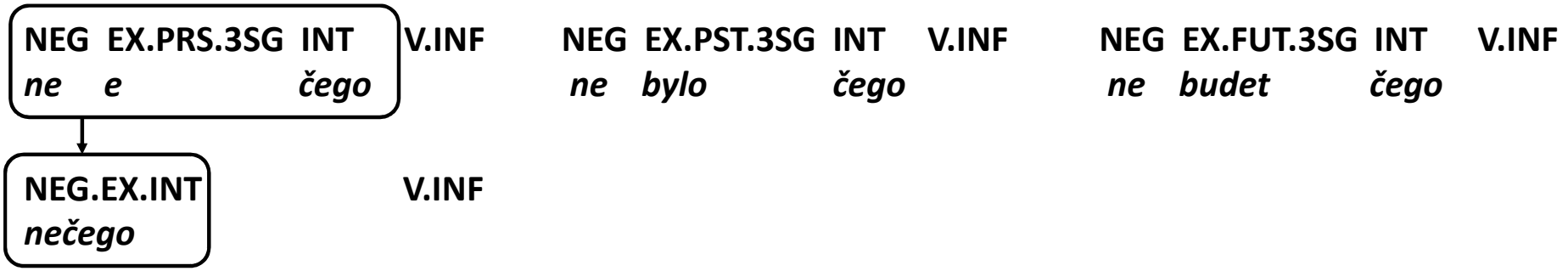
Diachrony (Lomtev 1956: 78-81; Peškovskij 1927: 361)

NEG	EX.PRS.3SG	INT	V.INF	NEG	EX.PST.3SG	INT	V.INF	NEG	EX.FUT.3SG	INT	V.INF
ne	*e*	*čego*		*ne*	*bylo*	*čego*		*ne*	*budet*	*čego*	

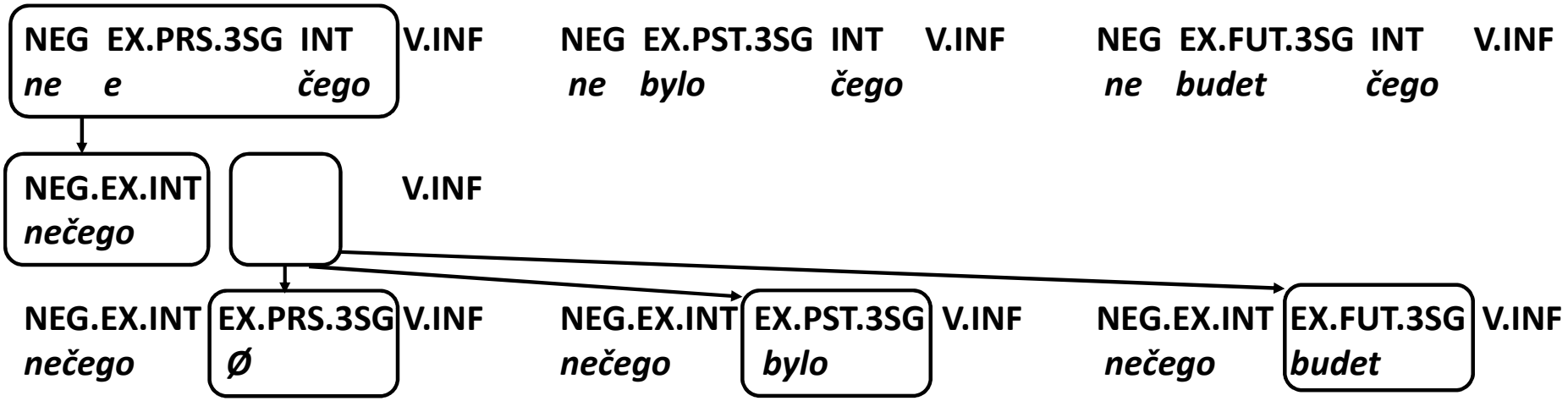
Diachrony (Lomtev 1956: 78-81; Peškovskij 1927: 361)

NEG	EX.PRS.3SG	INT	V.INF	NEG	EX.PST.3SG	INT	V.INF	NEG	EX.FUT.3SG	INT	V.INF
ne	*e*	*čego*		*ne*	*bylo*	*čego*		*ne*	*budet*	*čego*	

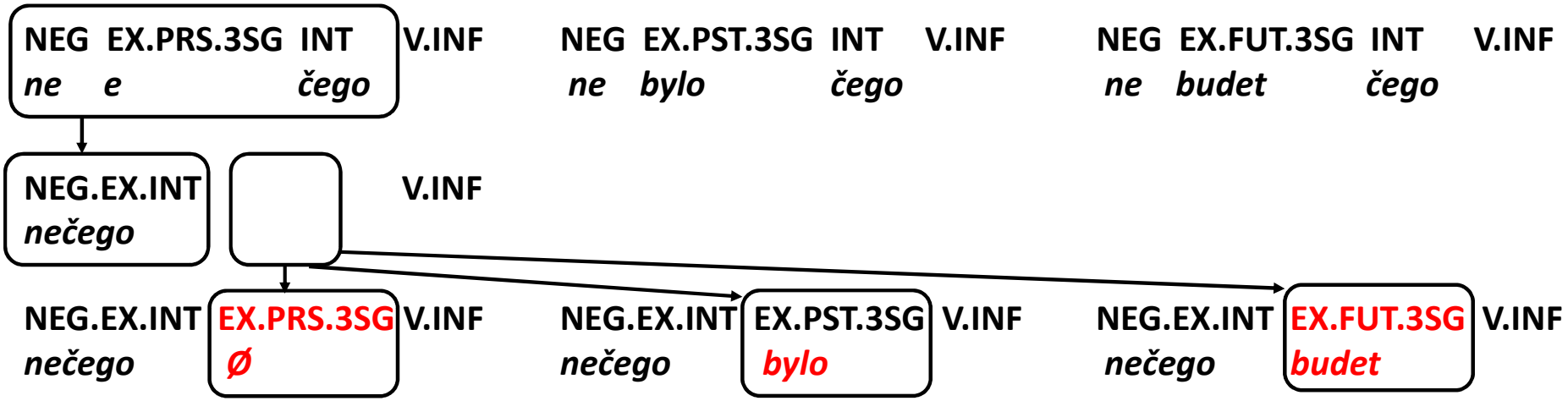
Diachrony (Lomtev 1956: 78-81; Peškovskij 1927: 361)



Diachrony (Lomtev 1956: 78-81; Peškovskij 1927: 361)



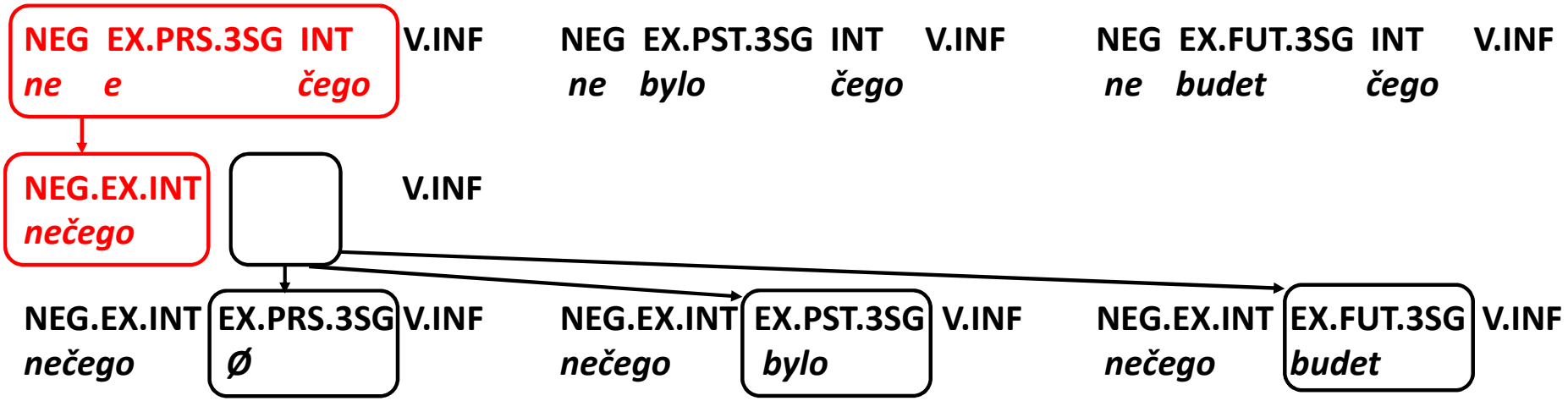
Diachrony (Lomtev 1956: 78-81; Peškovskij 1927: 361)



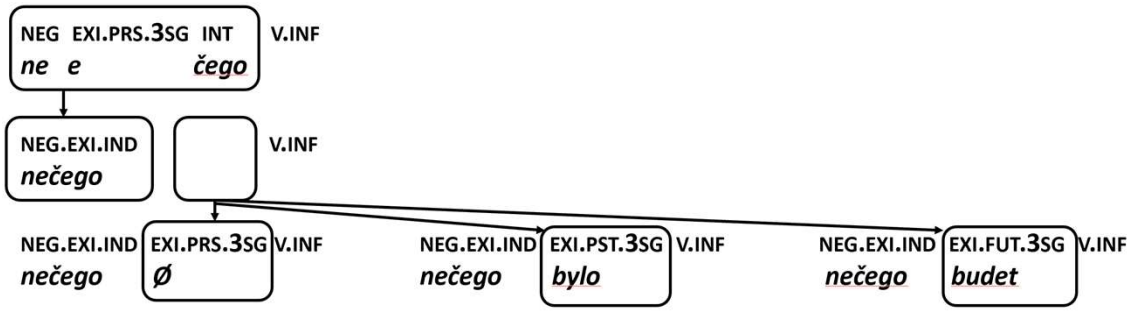
Ø for PRS – *bylo/budet* for PST/FUT ?? **Also**

On bolen	**'He is sick'**
On byl bolen.	**'He was sick'**
On budet bolen.	**'He will be sick.'**

Diachrony (Lomtev 1956: 78-81; Peškovskij 1927: 361)

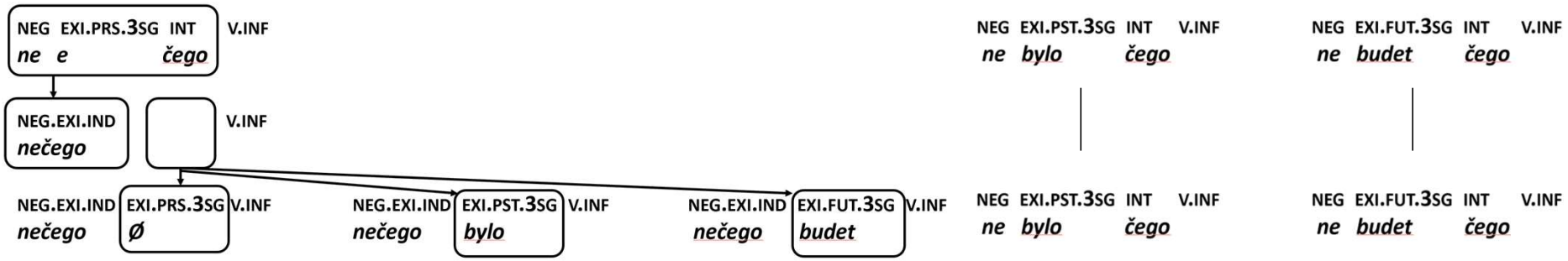


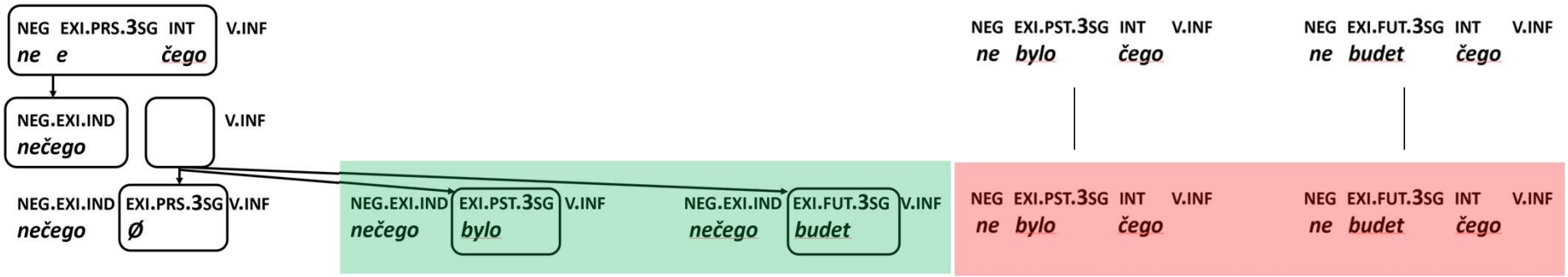
3 to 1?? Also for *net* 'NEG.EX' *net* < *ne* *e*(st') tu
NEG EX there



NEG EXI.PST.3SG INT V.INF
ne bylo čego

NEG EXI.FUT.3SG INT V.INF
ne budet čego


NEG EXI.PRS.3SG INT V.INF
ne e čego
NEG.EXI.IND V.INF
nečego
NEG.EXI.IND EXI.PRS.3SG V.INF
nečego Ø
NEG.EXI.IND EXI.PST.3SG V.INF
nečego bylo
NEG.EXI.IND EXI.FUT.3SG V.INF
nečego budet
NEG EXI.PST.3SG INT V.INF
ne bylo čego
NEG EXI.FUT.3SG INT V.INF
ne budet čego
NEG EXI.PST.3SG INT V.INF
ne bylo čego
NEG EXI.FUT.3SG INT V.INF
ne budet čego

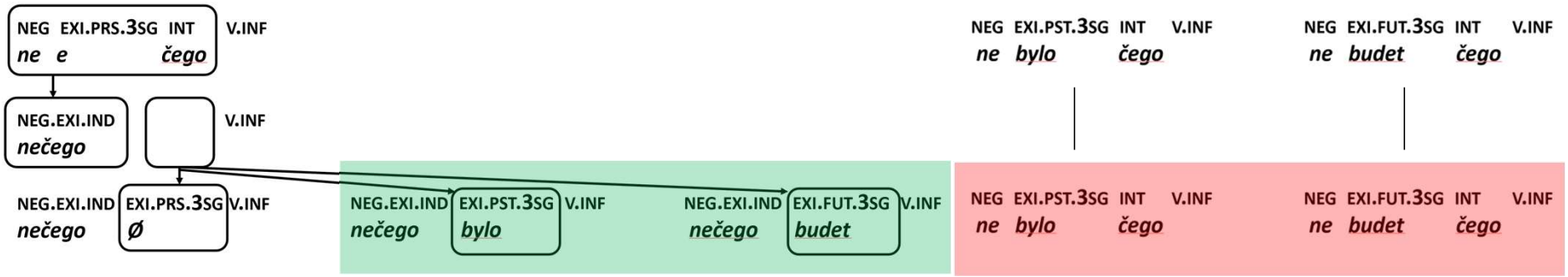


Standard

Colloquial

(Peškovskij 1927, Rappaport 1986)

(Fortuin 2014)



Standard

Colloquial

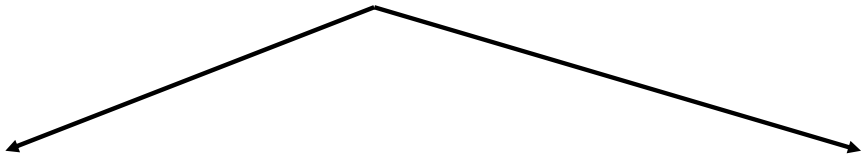
(Peškovskij 1927, Rappaport 1986)

(Fortuin 2014)

Ukrainian

Belarusian

NEG EX PRO ...



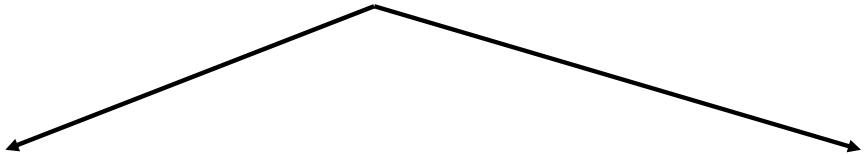
[NEG.EX+PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ EX

[NEG.EX+PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ (NEG)

Mixtec

Laxíchio Zapotec

NEG EX PRO ...



[NEG.EX+PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ EX

[NEG.EX+PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ (NEG)

Mixtec

Russian

Ukrainian

Laxíchio Zapotec

MIXTEC (2)

Mixtec languages have modal existential indefinite constructions, too

2 Lowland varieties
Melchor Ocampo & Nieves
Caponigro *et al.* 2013

Jwán kōñáʔā ndya=ña kusiáʔa=ra.
Juan NEG.EX.IPFV what=3IN eat.IRR=3SGM
‘Juan doesn’t have anything to eat.’
(Caponigro *et al.* 2013: 84)

Jwán kōñáʔā ndya=ña kusiáʔa=ra.
Juan NEG.EX.IPFV what=3IN eat.IRR=3SGM
‘Juan doesn’t have anything to eat.’
(Caponigro *et al.* 2013: 84)

Coatzoquitengo	*ko̲ó*	Alacatlatzala	*ko̲ó*
Metlatonoc	*ko̲o*	San Martín Peras	*kŏ*
Yayacatlán de Bravo	*koo*	Tezoatlán	*ko̲ó*
Silacayoapan	*ko̲*	Xochapa	*kŏó*

Jwán kō-ñáʔā ndya=ña kusiáʔa=ra.
Juan NEG.EX-? what=3IN eat.IRR=3SGM
‘Juan doesn’t have anything to eat.’
(Caponigro *et al.* 2013: 84)

Jwán kō-ñáʔā ndya=ña kusiáʔa=ra.
Juan NEG.EX-? what=3IN eat.IRR=3SGM
‘Juan doesn’t have anything to eat.’
(Caponigro *et al.* 2013: 84)

Melchor Ocampo	***ñáʔá* ‘thing, what’**	***ndá* ‘what’**
Xochapa	***ñáʔa* ‘thing’**	***ndá* ‘which’**
Alacatlatzala	***ñaha* ‘thing’**	***ndá* ‘which’**

….

Jwán kō-ñáʔā ndya=ña kusiáʔa=ra.
Juan NEG.EX-PRO what=3IN eat.IRR=3SGM
‘Juan doesn’t have anything to eat.’
(Caponigro *et al.* 2013: 84)

Jwán kō-ñáʔā ndya=ña kusiáʔa=ra.
Juan NEG.EX-PRO what=3IN eat.IRR=3SGM
‘Juan doesn’t have anything to eat.’
(Caponigro *et al.* 2013: 84)

Nam ne-čego bylo delat’.
us NEG.EX-PRO was do
‘There was nothing for us to do.’

Jwán kō-ñáʔā ndya=ña kusiáʔa=ra.
Juan NEG.EX-PRO what=3IN eat.IRR=3SGM
‘Juan doesn’t have anything to eat.’
(Caponigro *et al.* 2013: 84)

Nam ne-čego bylo delat’.
us [NEG.EX-PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ was do
‘There was nothing for us to do.’

Jwán kō-ñáʔā ndya=ña kusiáʔa=ra.
Juan NEG.EX-PRO what=3IN eat.IRR=3SGM
‘Juan doesn’t have anything to eat.’
(Caponigro *et al.* 2013: 84)

Nam ne-čego bylo delat’.
us [NEG.EX-PRO]$_{\text{NEG.IND}}$ was do
‘There was nothing for us to do.’

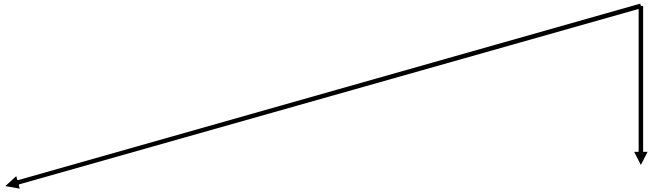
Jwán kō-ñáʔā ndya=ña kusiáʔa=ra.
Juan [NEG.EX-PRO]$_{NEG.EX}$ what=3IN eat.IRR=3SGM
‘Juan doesn’t have anything to eat.’
(Caponigro *et al.* 2013: 84)

Nam ne-čego bylo delat’.
us [NEG.EX-PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ was do
‘There was nothing for us to do.’

Jwán kō-ñáʔā ndya=ña kusiáʔa=ra.
Juan [NEG.EX-PRO]$_{NEG.EX}$ what=3IN eat.IRR=3SGM
‘Juan doesn’t have anything to eat.’
(Caponigro *et al.* 2013: 84)

Nam ne-čego bylo delat’.
us [NEG.EX-PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ was do
‘There was nothing for us to do.’

NEG EX PRO ...



[NEG.EX+PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ EX

[NEG.EX+PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ (NEG)

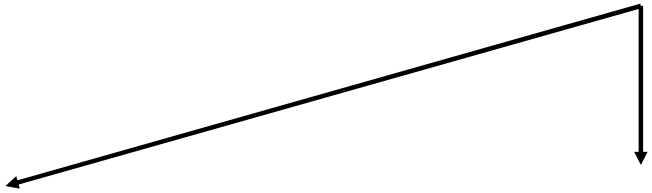
Mixtec

Russian

Ukrainian

Laxíchio Zapotec

NEG EX PRO ...



[NEG.EX+PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ EX

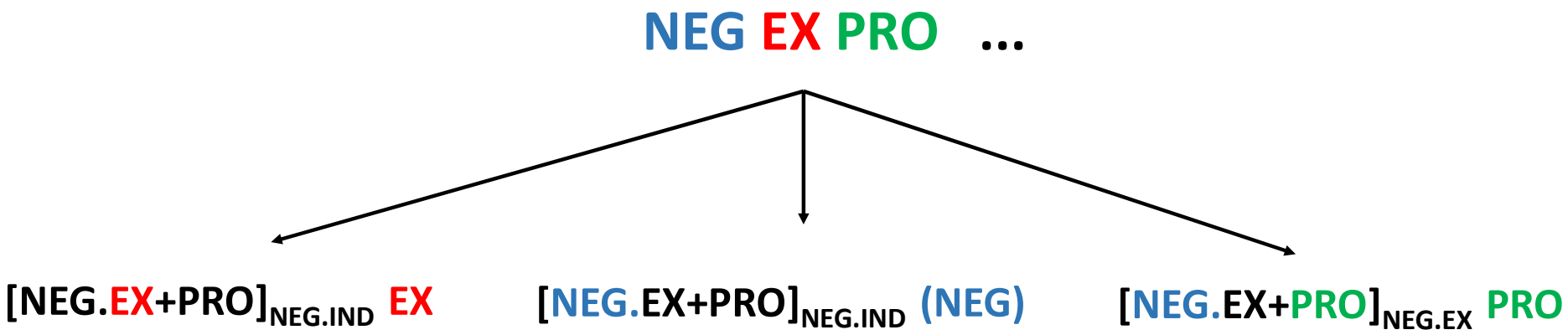
[NEG.EX+PRO]$_{NEG.IND}$ (NEG)

Mixtec

Russian

Ukrainian

Laxíchio Zapotec



Mixtec

Russian

Ukrainian

Laxíchio Zapotec

Nieves Mixtec

MIXTEC (3)

Mixtec languages were/are all going through a Negative Existential Cycle

Chalcatongo de Hidalgo (Macaulay 1996:121-122)

Túu banco ñũ̃ũ̃ndéža.
NEG.EX bank Chalcatongo
‘There isn’t a bank in Chalcatongo.’

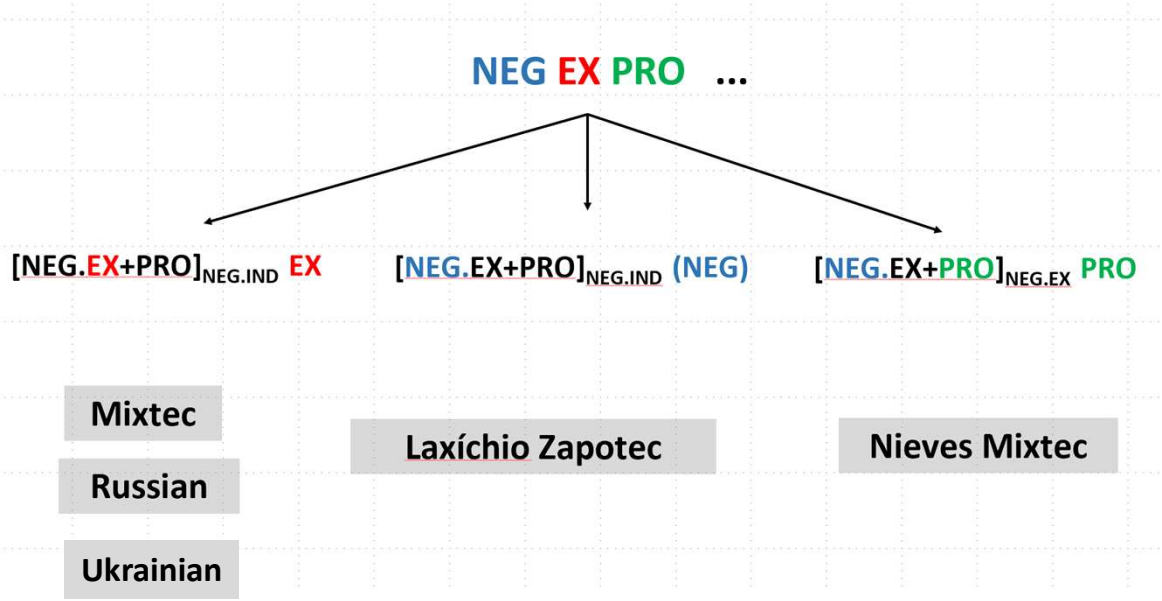
Čàà tú=žóó seʔe.
man NEG=EX child
‘The man has no children.’ (lit. ‘As for that man, children do not exist.’)

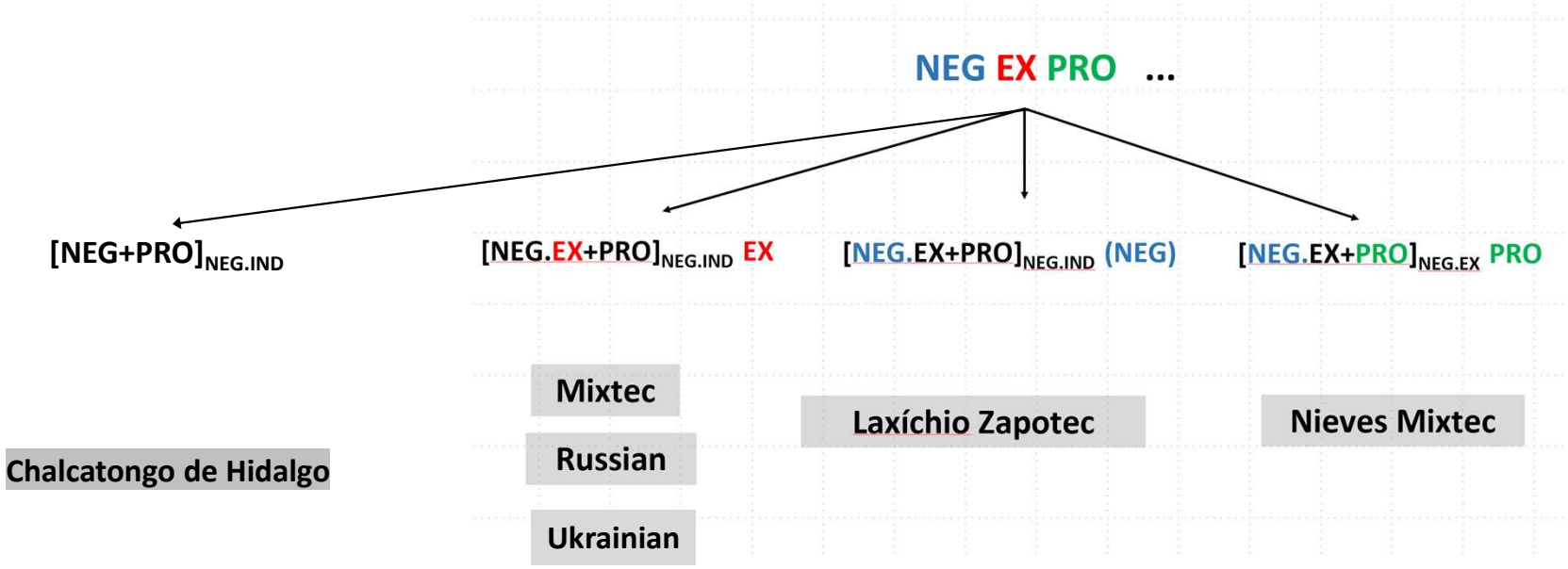
NEG	NEG.EX
	túu
tú=	*tú=žóó*

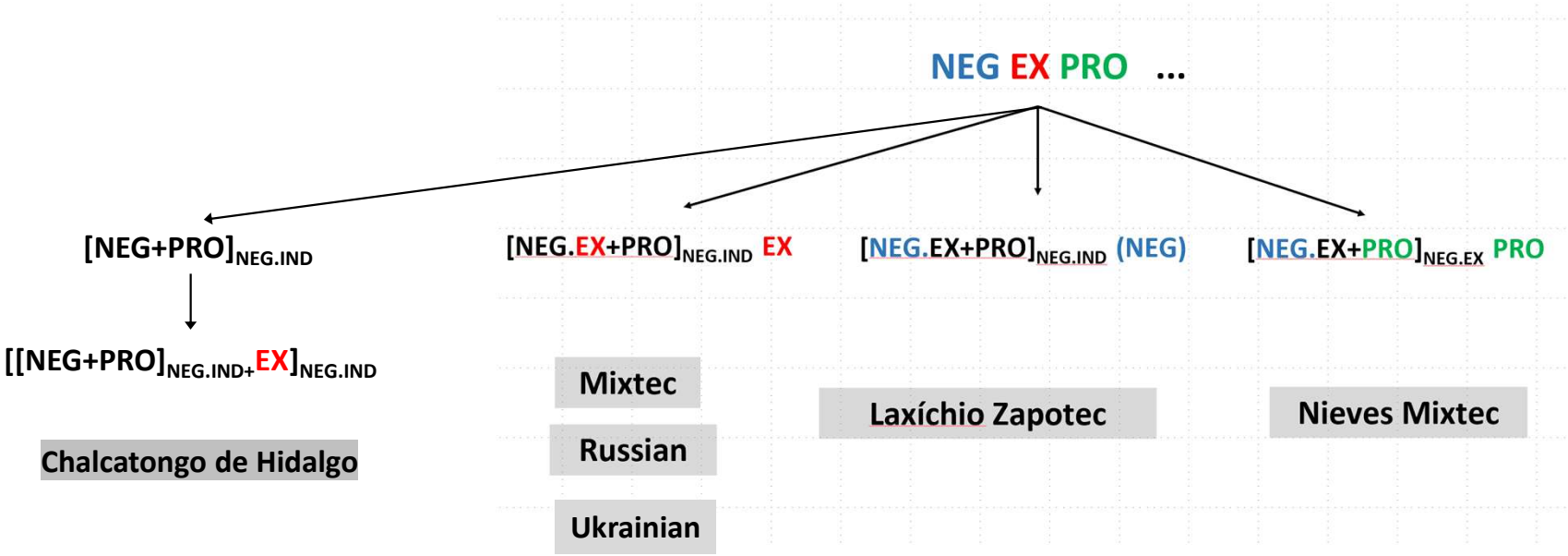
NEG	NEG.EX	NEG.IND
tú=	*túu* *tú=žóó*	*ni-ɬɬ́* **not.even-one**

NEG	NEG.EX	NEG.IND	
	túu		
tú=	*tú=žóó*	*tú-ndéú*	*ni-ɨ́ɨ́*
		NEG-INT.HUM	not.even-one

NEG	NEG.EX	NEG.IND		
	túu			
tú=	*tú=žóó*	*tú=no=žó*	*tú-ndéú*	*ni-ɨ́ɨ́*
		NEG-INT=EX	NEG-INT.HUM	not.even-one


NEG EX PRO ...
[NEG.EX+PRO]NEG.IND EX
[NEG.EX+PRO]NEG.IND (NEG)
[NEG.EX+PRO]NEG.EX PRO
Mixtec
Russian
Ukrainian
Laxíchio Zapotec
Nieves Mixtec


NEG EX PRO ...
[NEG+PRO]NEG.IND
[NEG.EX+PRO]NEG.IND EX
[NEG.EX+PRO]NEG.IND (NEG)
[NEG.EX+PRO]NEG.EX PRO
Mixtec
Russian
Ukrainian
Laxíchio Zapotec
Nieves Mixtec
Chalcatongo de Hidalgo


NEG EX PRO ...
[NEG+PRO]NEG.IND
[[NEG+PRO]NEG.IND+EX]NEG.IND
Chalcatongo de Hidalgo
[NEG.EX+PRO]NEG.IND EX
Mixtec
Russian
Ukrainian
[NEG.EX+PRO]NEG.IND (NEG)
Laxíchio Zapotec
[NEG.EX+PRO]NEG.EX PRO
Nieves Mixtec

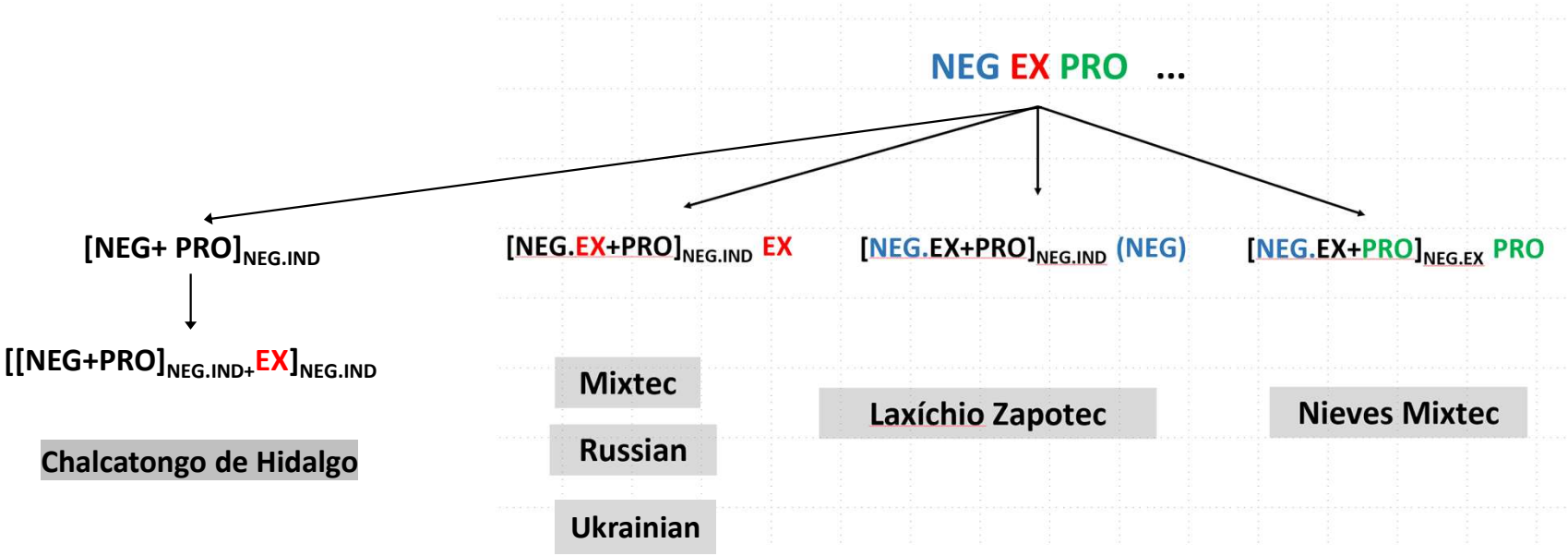
CONCLUSION

‘existential indefinite construction’

‘negative existential indefinite construction’

‘negative existential indefinite construction’

4 cycles


NEG EX PRO ...
[NEG+ PRO]NEG.IND
[[NEG+PRO]NEG.IND+EX]NEG.IND
Chalcatongo de Hidalgo
[NEG.EX+PRO]NEG.IND EX
Mixtec
Russian
Ukrainian
[NEG.EX+PRO]NEG.IND (NEG)
Laxíchio Zapotec
[NEG.EX+PRO]NEG.EX PRO
Nieves Mixtec

There are no such cycles
deriving from specific existential constructions

Takes us back to Khmer & Malayo-Polynesian data

There are no such cycles
deriving from specific existential constructions

Takes us back to Khmer & Malayo-Polynesian data

EXISTENTIAL INDEFINITENESS IS MORE STRONGLY ASSOCIATED WITH NEGATIVE INDEFINITENESS