THE PROBLEM OF NEGATION IN MODERN LINGUISTICS
The category of negation exists in all languages of the world: according to Plungyan 2011: 94-100, negation is a "universal grammar set". Negation is tightly integrated into the system of grammatical categories and into the lexical structure of a language. It interacts with grammatical and lexical values - modal, aspectual, quantifier and other in a nontrivial way.

From a logical point of view the negation is an operator that builds a sentence out of another sentence, which is true if the given sentence is false, and vice versa, is false, if the given sentence is true. For example, the sentence “Cranberries do not grow on a tree” is denying the sentence “Cranberries grow on trees”.

For linguistics, this definition is not enough - at least because the negation is used not only in affirmative sentences, but also in the interrogative or causative that cannot be true or false. In linguistics, the definition of a meaning is usually considered an interpretation: R. Jacobson writes, "the meaning of any linguistic sign is its translation into some further, alternative sign, especially the sign in which it is more fully developed" [R. Jakobson, 2].

A.M. Peshkovsky defines negation as an element of the meaning, which “shows that the relations established between the components of the sentence do not exist in reality, from the speaker’s point of view” [A.M. Peshkovsky, 3]. However, this definition is tautological, as it contains the very negation. By Ch. Bally, negation in a sentence indicates that “the corresponding affirmative sentence is negated by the speaker as false”. This formulation is based on the fact that the negation is a speech act. Meanwhile, the negation may be a part of the conditions, presumptions and other component parts of a statement that have no independent illocutionary force. So, this definition is not complete either. For example: “If he does not come, all is lost.”

Negation, despite the popular conception, is not analogous to the statement: a statement is a speech act, but the negation builds a sentence that can be used in the speech act, and may be a part of a more complex sentence.

It should be recognized that negation in a language refers to original concept that cannot be interpreted. It is on the list of semantic primitives from Wierzbicka, 1996. We shall see later that the primitives corresponding to negation are needed more than one.

Negation has a special place in modern linguistics and is largely unexplored. Most often, the negative statements are made in such a situation when the corresponding affirmative sentence has been done before or is a general presumption of speakers. Negation is one of the meaningful categories common to all languages of the world that is semantically indivisible, and cannot be defined through simpler semantic elements.

Negation can be expressed with negative words, negative prefixes (compare Russian "неполный", German “unbekannt”, English “incomplete”), negative form of the verb, or may not have a direct expression, that is, be a component part of the word meaning ("to refuse - not to agree") or a whole sentence (cf. "Много ты знаешь!" – Please, do your homework. – I’ll do it another time.").

In the objective world there is nothing negative. The negation can be seen as a way of objection, prohibition or unwillingness. One of the functions of negation may be rejection of the opinion of a participant of conversation, its correction or prohibition of an action.

Negation is absence of not only objective relations, but also of the objects and their attributes, which include the objective relations themselves. Many scholars distinguish logical and grammatical negation. Semantics of affirmation and negation is a logical property of a sentence-judgment (in classical bilingual logic a statement that is true in affirmation becomes false if negated, and vice versa: if it is true when negated, it becomes false in the affirmative form). But it is both a grammatical property of a sentence, since these differences are represented through specific forms in a sentence.

Formal logic views negation regardless of the means of its expression. It considers the expressions like "He does not write" and "It is wrong (false) that he writes" as equal. For the grammar (syntax) these two sentences have completely different structures.

The linguistic literature points out that the main content of the grammatical category of negation is logical negation. The logical negation, according to V.N. Bondarenko, is a language universal, as it is reflected in all languages, though in very different ways [Bondarenko V.N., 1].

One of the common means of expressing negation in many Indo-European languages are the negative affixes such as Russian не-, ни-, без- (бес), German un-, miss-, los-, leer, English un-, in-, dis-, mis-, -less, and other. The vast majority of the negative affixes are prefixes. This method is characteristic for both nouns and verbs. And affixes have different compatibility with the word stems, not only in different languages, but also in one language. In some European languages affixes (prefixes and more seldom suffixes) are attached mainly to nominal stems and less to verbal, in others, there is no such restriction.

The most common means of grammatical expression of negation in languages of different types are negative particles. Some of them are only used with verbs, others – only with nouns, and others – with both. The particles used with verbs, in turn, can differentiate in moods and tenses.
The Indo-European particle *ne, one of the most ancient and widespread particles, was originally autonomous: it could be used with any autosemantic word in an Indo-European sentence. Later it weakened, and for getting strength either joined other words, with which it could be combined (in Slavic, Baltic languages), or the words meaning a small amount of something were attached to it (in Latin, Sanskrit and some other languages.)

In the common Indo-European language two main types of verbal negative particles are clearly reconstructed: *me in forbidding (Sanskrit мā, Tocharian mā, Armenian mi, Greek μή) and *ne – in all other cases (Sanskrit na, Hittite na, Gothic ni, Latin nē, Slavic ne).

The basic means of expressing grammatical negation in Slavic languages, including Russian, is the particle не, used with any autosemantic part of the sentence. Also the particle ни is used that is considered to be negative. However, the particle ни itself is not negative, but intensifying: it accelerates either negative or affirmative sentence and its meaning is close to the particle даже, for example: 1) Ни разу не был; 2) В кармане нет ни копейки; 3) Кто ни придёт, всем будем рады. In the first two sentences the negation of an action and negation of presence expressed with the particles не and нет are intensified by the particle ни, which is used together with the negation, both in the presence and absence of the predicate, and only performs the function of intensification. The third sentence is affirmative both in form and content. In combination with the relative pronouns and adverbs the particle ни forms a "positive" clause, for example: кто (бы) ни, что (бы) ни.

Besides the above mentioned means of expressing negation in different languages this group also includes negative pronouns and adverbs, expressing a lack of something that is indicated by the root morpheme of a corresponding interrogative and relative pronoun or adverb. So, in English the pronoun nobody means absence or nonexistence of any person, nobody’s - "belonging to nobody", nothing - absence or nonexistence of anything, and so on.

Thus, the negative pronouns and adverbs express negation of an object (that is, its absence or nonexistence) at all, or negate its quantitative (for instance, Russian некого) or qualitative (for instance, Russian никак) definiteness.

References:

Peshkovsky, A.M. Russkii sintaxis v nauchnom osveshenii. – Moscow, 1956