

Negation and questions

Handout

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1. Explain and give an example of the following:

- *Words negative in form and meaning*
- *Words negative in meaning but not in form*
- *Non-assertive items*

2. Explain the notion “scope of negation”. Comment on the difference between the scope of negation in the following pairs of sentences:

She definitely didn't speak to him.

She didn't definitely speak to him.

I wasn't listening all the time.

I wasn't listening all the time (the same sentence, two different interpretations of the scope of negation).

I didn't listen to some of the speakers

I didn't listen to any of the speakers.

3. Explain the notion of “focus of negation” and give examples

4. Explain the notion of “local negation” and give examples

5. What are the three major types of questions?

6. Explain and give an example of negative and positive yes / no questions.

7. Explain the importance of intonation in question tags. Does using different intonation influence the meaning / the purpose of the tag?

8. Explain and give an example of a declarative question. Comment on the importance of intonation.

9. Name the 11 functions in which wh-element operates.

10. Explain the term alternative questions and give examples.

11. Give an example of an exclamatory question.

12. Explain and give examples of rhetorical questions.

13. In what clausal functions does the wh-element operate? (What clause element are we asking about?)

- What is the silliest thing you are passionate about?
- What do you hate most about your phone?
- What happens in real life but rarely get portrayed in movies?

Answers to all the questions can be found in GREENBAUM, S., QUIRK, R.: A Student's grammar of the English language, Pearson Longman 1990