The Structure of Persian negative sentences*

Kwak, Saera**

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이에 더하여, 본고에서는 비현실적 문맥에서의 부정문이 가지는 특이 현상과 구조를 분석해 본다.

주제어: 페르시아어, 부정문, 부정극어, 부정일치어, 이중부정, 통사구조, 해석성/비해석성 자질
I. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to analyze the structure of various negative sentences in Persian.

In natural languages, negation is expressed in various ways. We can make a negative sentence with a single negative marker (simple negative sentence), or use other negative elements like Negative Polarity Items (NPI) or Negative Concord Items (NCI) with the negative marker. Cross-linguistically, languages tend to have either NPIs or NCIs. Moreover, Double negative languages tend to have NPIs, while Negative concord languages have NCIs. Languages like English and Korean belong to the former group, and Romance languages like Italian and West Flemish are classified as the latter. In some cases, we can witness a language like Greek which has both NPIs and NCIs.

In this paper, I suggest that based on the tests of Giannakidou(2000) and Watanabe(2004) Persian is also one of the kind and classify Persian NPIs and NCIs. Moreover, this paper analyzes the structures of various Persian negative sentences.

In Persian linguistics, the studies on negation have not been done much. Thus, this work which tries to cover all kinds of negative structures in Persian would be valuable.

II. Simple Negative Sentences

Simple negative sentences in Persian are expressed with negative markers $n{\alpha}-/ne-/ni-$, which are prefixed to main verbs, auxiliaries or light verbs in complex predicates. The negative marker $ne-$ goes only with the durative marker $mi-$, which carries present tense or progressive, $ni-$ only with the $3^{rd}$ person singular form of verb $budan$.
(to be) and *na-* with the other cases (1~6).

(1) ali kétāb-o ne-mi-xun-e
   Ali book-rā² neg²-DUR-read(Pres)-3SG/Pres
   ‘Ali does not read the book.’

(2) ali kétāb-o ne-mi-xund-∅
   Ali book-rā neg-DUR-read(Past)-3SG/Past
   ‘Ali was not reading the book.’

(3) in ketāb-e ali ni-st
   This book-EZ⁴ Ali neg-be(3SG/Pres)
   ‘This is not an Ali’s book.’

(4) ali kétāb-o na-xund-∅
   Ali book-rā neg-read(Past)-3SG/Past
   ‘Ali did not read the book.’

(5) ali kétāb-o na-xunde-ast.
   Ali book-rā neg-read(PP)-be(3SG/Pres)
   ‘Ali has not read the book.’

(6) ali kétāb-o na-xunde-bud.
   Ali book-rā neg-read(PP)-be(3SG/Past)
   ‘Ali had not read a book.’

In the sentences with auxiliaries, the negative marker can be attached to either auxiliaries or main verbs. Depending on the position of the negative marker, the scope of negation is also decided.

(7) ali na-bāyad xune be-r-e.

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² Rā is a specific objective marker in Persian and /ro/ and /o/ are its allomorphs.
³ The abbreviations which are used in this paper are as follows:
   Negative(neg)/DUR(durative)/Pres(present)/SG(singular)/PP(past participle)/SUBJ(subjunctive)/AUX(auxiliary)/IND(indefinite)
⁴ Ezafe(EZ) is a linker which links modifier to the modified constituent.
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Ali neg-must house SUBJ-go-3SG/Pres
‘Ali should not go home.’ (NEG > AUX)

(8) ali bāyad xune na-r-e.
Ali must house neg-go-3SG/Pres
‘Ali should not go home.’ (AUX > NEG) (Kwak 1387)

As (7) and (8) show, the position of negative marker decides the scope or meaning of sentences (Taleghani 2006). When a negative marker precedes an auxiliary, the marker scopes over the auxiliary (7), and when a negative marker follows an auxiliary, the auxiliary scopes over the negative marker (8).

Furthermore, this negative marker attaches to light verbs, not to non-verbal elements in complex predicates.

(9) ali geriye kard-ø.
Ali cry did-3SG/Past
‘Ali cried.’

(10) ali geriye na-kard-ø.
Ali cry neg-did-3SG/Past
‘Ali did not cry.’

Following Pollock(1989), Haegeman(1995) and others, I will accept the NegP assumption to show the structure of those negative sentences. Since the negative marker negates the whole proposition, it may be logical to put the functional category, NegP, above lexical projections, and the negative marker heads NegP. (11) represents the structure of the sentence in (3).

(11)
As is pointed out, assuming the Neg head above the other constituents, we can correctly predict that the negative marker leads the sentential negation in negative sentences. The operation to derive a grammatical sentence is as follows: the subject, *Ali* and the object, *ketāb-o* respectively move up to satisfy the EPP feature of TP and #P\(^5\). Then, the head V adjoins to the head of Neg as the latter is assumed to be a clitic requiring a host.

Then, how about the negative sentences with the negative elements like NPIs and NCIs? Where is the position they are posited and how they interact with the negative marker? These are the issues in the next section.

### III. Negative Sentences with NPIs and NCIs

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\(^5\) I will assume the #P projection for the position of objects in overt syntax, since I have not found the proper name for this projection.
Before I examine the structures of the sentences with these two types of items, it is noteworthy to consider how we can distinguish between them and to see whether Persian has both items.

1. NPIs vs. NCIs

Kwak and Darzi (2006) proves that \( hič \)-phrases in Persian are NCIs, not NPIs. We followed the tests in Vallduví (1994) and Giannakidou (2000) to distinguish NCIs from NPIs as follows:

(12) a. Inability to appear in nonnegative contexts
    b. Ability to appear in preverbal position
    c. Ability to be modified by expressions like almost
    d. Ability to be used as an elliptical answer
    e. Clause-boundedness where finite indicative clauses

These tests are all positive for NCIs. In other words, NCIs generally cannot appear in nonnegative contexts, can appear in the preverbal subject position above negation, can be modified by expressions like almost, can be used as an elliptical answer, and cannot be licensed across an indicative clause boundary. However, NPIs shows the opposite behavior (Watanabe 2004). Kwak & Darzi (2006) assumes that Persian \( hič \)-NP is a NCI, not a NPI as suggested by the evidence obtained from the above diagnostics. The sentences in (13a,b) show that \( hič \)-phrase appears in negative context. The examples in (13a,c,d) match with the tests in (12b,c,d), respectively. Unlike (13e), (13f) is ungrammatical, since clausemate condition between negative marker and \( hič \)-phrase is not preserved. However, the sentence in (13g) is grammatical even though it seems to violate the clausemate condition. It is because that the condition given in (12e) is only applies to indicative clauses. That is, since the embedded clause in (13e) is in
a subjunctive context, the clausemate condition is not activated. In sum, Persian strictly follows all the tests in (12).

(13) a. hičkas bā u sohabat na-kard-Ø
    nobody with him talk neg-did-3sg
    ‘Nobody talked with him.’

b. *hičkas bā u sohabat kard-Ø
    nobody with him talk did-3sg
    ‘Nobody talked with him.’ (intended interpretation)

c. taqriban hiččiz-i na-khord-am
    almost nothing-IND neg-ate-1sg
    ‘I didn’t eat almost anything.’

d. Q: či khord-i? A: hičči
    what ate-2sg nothing

e. shenid-am ke hičkas ne-mi-å-d
    heard-1sg that nobody neg-DUR-come-3sg
    ‘I heard that nobody would come.’

f. *na-shenid-am ke hičkas mi-å-d
    neg-heard-1sg that nobody DUR-come-3sg
    ‘I didn’t hear that anybody would come.’

g. na-shenid-am ke hičkas bi-å-d
    neg-heard-1sg that nobody SUB-come-3sg
    ‘I heard that nobody would come.’

(Kwak&Darzi 2006)

Therefore, from those data, I suggest that hič-phrase is an example of NCIs. On the other hand, there are several items which are used in negative contexts like hič-phrases, but show different behavior from them when they are used as an elliptical answer. Unlike hič-phrase, the phrases like ye qerun (a penny) and dast be siyāḥ o sefid zadan (to
lift a finger) can not deliver negative meaning without a negative marker (16). And this shows that NPIs do not have inherently negative meaning.

(14) a. un harf-hā ye qerun ham na-arzid-ø.
    That talk-Pl one penny also neg-was worth-3sg
    ‘That talk was not worth at all.’
    b. *un harf-hā ye qerun ham arzid-ø.

(15) a. udast be siyāh o sefid na-zad-ø.
    (s)he hand to black and white neg-hit-3SG
    ‘He didn’t lift a finger.’
    b. * udast be siyāh o sefid zad-ø.

(16) Q: harf-e-u cheqadr mi-arzid-ø?
    Talk-Ez-(s)he how much DUR-was worth-3sg
    How much was his talk worth?
A: * ye qerun
    One penny
    (Kwak 1387)

In this regard, I suggest that Persian has both NPIs and NCIs. ye qerun and dast be siyāh o sefid zadan belong to NPIs, and hič-phrase belongs to NCI.

The structure of the sentences with NPIs and NCIs are shown in next sections.

2. Negative Structures with NPIs and NCIs

It is well-known fact that either NPIs or NCIs should be licensed by negation. Following Haegeman(1995), I assume NEG-criterion(17) for well-formedness condition of negative elements. The configuration involves the specifier and head of NegP, and in this configuration,
[neg] features of both NPIs and NCIs in Spec of NegP and the negative marker in Neg head are checked against each other.

(17) NEG-Criterion
   a. A NEG-operator must be in a Spec-head configuration with an X'[NEG]
   b. An X'[NEG] must be in a Spec-head configuration with a NEG-operator.

(18) below shows the structure of (14). Here, irrelevant projections are omitted. The [neg] feature in both Spec of NegP and the head checks each other, and the uninterpretable feature in the NPI is deleted to make the sentence convergent in LF. Assuming this checking operation, we can correctly derive the meaning of negation in LF.

\[
(18) \begin{array}{c}
[\text{NegP} \ ye \ qerun] & [\text{Neg'} \ na] & [vP \ [\text{VP} \ arzid] \\
[u \ neg] & [i \ neg]
\end{array}
\]

As was mentioned, since NPIs are not supposed to be inherently

\[6\] This is in line with Zanuttini(1997), who considers negative constituents like niente, or nessuno in Italian as negative operators, which occupy the specifier position of NegP.

(a) Gianni non legge niente.
   Gianni non reads nothing
   ‘Gianni does not read anything.’

(b) Gianni non telefona a nessuno.
   Gianni non telephones to no one
   ‘Gianni does not call anyone.’
negative, we can have a negative reading for the sentence in (18).

Let’s see what the case with NCIs is.

Following Watanabe (2004), opposed to Laka (1990), Giannakidou (2000), Kwak & Darzi (2006) shows that the Persian NCI, *hič*-phrases are inherently negative. This observation comes from the fact that this NCI can be used as a fragment answer.

Consider the Greek example in (19) below from Giannakidou (2000).

(19) Q : Ti idhes?
    What saw.2g
    ‘What did you see?’
A : TIPOTA
    n-thing
    ‘nothing.’

The sentence in (19A) provides evidence that NCI is negative. However, Giannakidou (2000) analyzes (19A) as in (19A’) claiming that even though NCI as an elliptical answer seems to be interpreted negatively, the negative interpretation comes from the elided negative marker.

(19) A’ : TIPOTA [dhen idha].
    n-thing neg saw.1sg

Watanabe (2004) opposes Giannakidou’s analysis by providing a definition of ellipsis. In his definition, ellipsis must have a proper antecedent. He argues that if we follow Giannakidou’s analysis, we will have a result as in (20).

(20) Q : What did you see?
A: [*I didn’t see] a snake.

In other words, if we accept Giannakidou’s analysis, the answer, ‘a snake’, can be interpreted as ‘I didn’t see a snake’, which is incorrect. The ungrammaticality of the answer comes from the fact that the elided part ‘I didn’t see’ does not have a proper antecedent. The antecedent is supposed to be affirmative. In Watanabe’s (2004) term, a negative open proposition cannot take an affirmative open proposition as its antecedent for the purpose of ellipsis. And this means that the elided part does not affect the negativity of the elliptical answer in (18A’). Therefore, we can conclude that NCI has negative meaning by itself. This can be applied to Persian data in (21).

(21) Q: či khord-i? A: hiči [na-khord-am]
what ate-2sg nothing neg-ate-1sg
A’: *áb [na-khord-am]
water neg-ate-1sg
(Kwak&Darzi 2006)

From the data in (21), we can conclude that the elided part does not contribute its meaning to the remaining answer in Persian. Thus, the fragment answer hič-i in (21A), itself, includes negative meaning, which makes the answer negative. Another piece of evidence in support of the negativity of Persian NCI that Kwak&Darzi(2006) suggests comes from the distribution of hič. hič in (22) co-occurs with the negative marker, whereas hič in (23) does not. These two sentences have almost the same meaning for consultants indicating that Persian NCI hič, by itself, has negative meaning.

(22) Elm-e u nesbat be elm-e shoma knowledge-Ez he relation to knowledge-Ez you
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hič  
ni-st
nothing  
neg-is
(23) Elm-e u nesbat be elm-e shoma
   knowledge-Ez he relation to knowledge-Ez you
hič -e
nothing-is
His knowledge is nothing compared with your knowledge

Since it is supposed that NCIs have [neg] feature, which makes itself inherently negative, we may face the problem of interpretation. The problem comes from the fact that interpretable features remain at LF level for Full Interpretation. In logical term, to negate another negation derives positive meaning (24).

(24) \( \neg (\neg p) = p \)

In this regard, we may induce the meaning of sentence with NCIs to be affirmative. In other words, the interpretable [neg] feature in NCI, which posited in Spec-NegP and another interpretable [neg] feature in negative marker in Neg-head can cancel each other and lead the sentence to be affirmative.

To prevent this reading, I will adopt the notion of negative absorption of Haegeman & Zanuttini(1991) (25).

(25) \( [\forall x \neg] \neg = [\forall x] \neg \)

Given this process of absorption, the sentence (26) can be interpreted as (27).

(26) Nessuno ha telefonato a nessuno.
   Nobody has called to nobody
'Nobody called anybody.'

(27) \( \forall xy \ [\neg \text{call}(x,y)] \)

(Haegeman & Zanuttini 1991)

I assume that Persian negative concord follows the absorption. Thus, the sentence in (28) has the structure in (29).

(28) hičkas na- ámad-ø.

     Noone NEG-came-3SG/Past
     Noone came.

(29)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Neg}^P \\
| \\
\text{DP} \\
| \\
\text{hičkas} \\
| \\
\text{Neg}^P \\
| \\
\text{vP} \\
| \\
\text{ra} \\
| \\
\text{DP} \\
| \\
\text{hičjå} \\
| \\
\text{vP} \\
| \\
\text{ágmad} \\
\end{array}
\]

hičkas is merged in Spec-vP position as a subject and then moves to Spec of NegP to get its [neg] feature checked against the Neg feature of the Neg-head. Afterwards, these two elements undergo the absorption process. Note that this process can be done only under the Neg-criterion.

Multiple NCI constructions can be also explained adopting Neg absorption.

(30) hičkas hičjå na-raft-Ø

     nobody nowhere neg-went-3sg
‘Nobody went anywhere.’

As noted in Kwak&Darzi(2006), if we think of the sentences with multiple wh-fronting in Bulgarian, or Serbo-Croatian, it is not surprising that we allow multiple specifiers in NegP. ħičkas and ħičjā, being multiple specifiers, check their [neg] features against the Neg head, and then, they undergo absorption process to make the sentence negative. However, superiority condition should be observed in multiple NCI constructions in Persian. The sentence in (31) is ungrammatical since the appropriate hierarchical order between the NCIs is not satisfied(Kwak&Darzi 2006).

(31) * ħičjā ħičkas na-raft

NCIs and the negative marker in complex sentences should also follow the Neg-criterion and Neg absorption for feature checking and correct interpretation, respectively. However, it seems that some of the sentences below violate the condition. Sentences in (32) are all grammatical regardless of the clausemate condition in overt syntax. That is, they do not observe Neg-criterion for feature checking. This is in contrast to (33) which is not grammatical due to the clausemate condition violation.

(32) a. momken-e (ke) ħičkas na-r-e
    possible-be(3sg) C nobody neg-go-3sg/Pres

    b. ħičkas momken ni-st (ke) be-r-e
    nobody possible neg-be-3SG/Pres C SUBJ-go-3sg

    c. ħičkas momken-e (ke) na-r-e
    SUBJ-go-3sg

    d. momken nist (ke) ħičkas be-r-e
'Nobody can go.'

(33) * hičkas fekr mi-kon-e ke na-r-am.

Nobody thought DUR-do-3sg/Pres C neg-go-1sg

'Nobody thinks that I would go.'

(Kwak&Darzi 2006)

Kwak&Darzi (2006) notes that the matrix predicate in (32c), as opposed to (33), is a raising predicate (Hajati 1977, Soheili 1976, Darzi 1993, 1996, Karimi 1989, 1997, 2005, Hashemipour 1990, Ghomeshi 2001). While hičkas has originated in the embedded clause in (32c,d), it has merged in the matrix clause in (33). As such, it is assumed that the Neg-Criterion and absorption process are respected either at the time of merge as in (32c,d) or after the movement of the NCI operator as in (32b) in Persian. Under this account, (33) is ruled out as the clausemate condition is not met at any level of the derivation of the sentence.

The relevant part of the derivation of the sentences in (32) is shown in (34). In (34a,b), as hičkas moves up to Spec-NegP, its [neg] feature agrees with the same feature in NEG head. In (34c), the NCI and negative marker check their [neg] features at the NEG in the embedded sentence before the former moves into the matrix Spec-NEGP. As to (34d), the NCI covertly moves to the spec of the matrix NegP to check its [neg] feature to respect procrastination (Kwak&Darzi 2006).

(34) a. momken-e [{CP ke [hičkas_i [NEGP na [vp ti [v' [vp -r-e

b. [ hičkas_i [NEGP momken ni [vp st [{CP ke [vp ti [v' [vp be-r-e]

7 The movement of hičkas is attracted by the EPP feature of the spec of each projection. That is, hičkas is cyclically moves up to Spec-NEGP through the edges of each phase. Watanabe (2004) claims that an uninterpretable focus feature derives the movement of NCIs. However, it is not yet examined for Persian whether the focus feature is a movement-deriving element or not.
c. hičkas momken-e (ke) na-re
  d. momken nist (ke) hičkas be-re

In the next section, I will scrutinize Double Negation in Persian. This construction seems to have the same problem of interpretation with Negative concord, since it contains two [neg] features in each Neg-head in higher phrase as well as lower phrases.

IV. Double Negation

The sentence in (35) is an example of Persian double negation. This sentence has an affirmative meaning and corresponds to ‘mitunam beram’ (I can go).

(35) ne-mi-tun-am na-r-am
     neg-DUR-can-1sg neg-go-1sg
     ‘I can't help going.’

This construction also has two interpretable [neg] features like the sentences with NCIs. However, the difference between two constructions is that while in Negative Concord constructions, the negative marker and NCI have spec-head relation as Neg-criterion noted, Double Negation does not. This structure has two independent neg-heads. Thus, these features cannot undergo feature checking or negative absorption, and remain till LF interpretation. Logically speaking, as I noted in (24), these two features are cancelled at LF,

Thus, in this paper, I will just assume that certain uninterpretable feature of each phase derives the movement of the Persian NCI.
and yield affirmative reading.

In the next section, the interaction of negative and subjunctive is examined.

V. Negation in Subjunctive Context

1. Syntactic Distribution of Subjunctive Marker

Persian subjunctive sentences show an interesting phenomenon. When we negate sentences, the subjunctive marker be- seems to be deleted as in (37). Even though this issue has not been studied thoroughly in Persian, many scholars mention that subjunctive marker is deleted since this marker and the negative marker have complementary distribution in overt syntax.

(36) man bāyad u rā be-bin-am.
    I must he RĀ SUBJ-see-1SG/Pres
    'I must see him.'

(37) man bāyad u rā na-bin-am.
    I must he RĀ Neg-see-1SG/Pres
    'I must not see him.'

However, this does not mean that the form and meaning of subjunctive are totally erased. Auxiliaries like bāyad(must) and shāyad(may) and modal verbs like ehtiāj dāshtan(need) and momken budan(necessary) etc. only license subjunctive forms of the verbs. While (38, 40), which take subjunctive forms of main verbs, are grammatical, (39, 41) are out since main verbs are in indicative forms.

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8 This classification is from Taleghani(2006).
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(38) (man) bāyad u rā be-bin-am.  
I must he RĀ SUBJ-see-1sg/Pres  
'I must see him.'

(39) *(man) bāyad u rā mi-bin-am.  
I must he RĀ DUR-see-1sg/Pres  
'I must see him.'

(40) ali ehtiāj-dār-ad in ketāb-o be-xun-e.  
Ali need-have-3SG/Pres this book-RĀ SUBJ-read-3sg/Pres  
'Ali needs to read this book.'

(41) *ali ehtiāj-dār-ad in ketāb-o mi-xun-e.  
Ali need-have-3SG/Pres this book-RĀ DUR-read-3sg/Pres  
'Ali needs to read this book.'

Another piece of evidence that the subjunctive form remains in negative sentences comes from verb budan(to be). We have three different forms of the verb budan in Persian, which are present, past and subjunctive forms (42).

(42)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense /Mood</th>
<th>1st Person</th>
<th>2nd Person</th>
<th>3rd Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sg</td>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>Sg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>am</td>
<td>im</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>budam</td>
<td>budim</td>
<td>budi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjunctive</td>
<td>bāsham</td>
<td>bāshim</td>
<td>bāshi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When the verb *budan* in subjunctive context is negated, negative marker is prefixed to the subjunctive forms of the verb (43).

\[(43)\] age māmān xune na-bāshad,  
If mother house NEG-be(SUBJ)  
pish-etun mi-ām.  
to-you(clitic) DUR-come(1sg/Pres)  
‘If mother is not at home, I will come to you.’

We have seen that the subjunctive marker, which seems to be deleted in negative sentences in overt syntax, still affects the meaning of sentences as well as it still keeps its form. In other words, the subjunctive form is compatible with negatives.

In the next section, I will propose that the present stem, which hosts either present tense or subjunctive, is inserted in the lexicon with a [pres] feature in simple present tenses, and with a [subj] feature in subjunctive sentences and this [subj] feature checks against the feature in the subjunctive marker.

2. Structure of Negative Sentences with Subjunctive Marker

Since I opposed the idea that the negative marker and the subjunctive marker are in complementary distribution, I will propose another projection, which is a Mood Projection (MoodP) in Persian negative sentences with subjunctive meanings, and place the projection below the Neg Projection for linear ordering and feature checking (44).
(44) NEG > MoodP

I suggest that the subjunctive marker *be*- heads MoodP, and its [subj] feature should be checked against another [subj] feature to make sentence convergent. Then, what is the possible constituent the [subj] feature of which can be checked against the corresponding feature in the head of moodP?

We saw in the previous section that the subjunctive marker *be*- is prefixed to the present stem of verbs as in (45).

(45) age ali ketāb be-xun-e, …
If Ali book SUBJ-read(Pres stem)-3sg/Pres
If Ali reads/read a book,…

I suggest that the present stem can bare either a [present] tense feature or a [subjunctive] mood feature. When the stem is inserted in the subjunctive sentences, it carries [subj] feature. Then, this feature is checked against the [subj] feature in *be*-, the head of MoodP.

(46) shows the syntactic structure of (45). The present stem with appropriate person ending goes up to the MoodP to check its [subj] feature against the same feature in the Mood head.

(46)
The irrelevant projections and movements are deleted, but note that the object ketāb goes up to the #P, which was posited in (1), before the movement and feature checking of the [subj] feature.

Then, how can we explain the case where the subjunctive marker is deleted in negative sentences?

I suggest that in Persian, there are two kinds of subjunctive markers: be-\textsuperscript{-}, which is overtly represented, and a null subjunctive marker(ø), which is covertly represented in the syntax. The null subjunctive marker does not have overt form, but it has a [subj] feature to be checked. Like (46), the present stem with [subj] goes up to the Mood head to check the same feature in the head. Then, this unit merges with the negative marker. (48) shows the structure of (47).

\begin{equation}
\text{(47) age ali ketāb na-ø-xun-e,}…
\end{equation}

If Ali book neg-SUBJ-read-3sg/Pres
If Ali read a book,…

\begin{equation}
\text{(48)}
\end{equation}
VI. Conclusion

In this paper, I classified Negative elements in Persian and analyzed various structures of Persian negative sentences. Typologically, even though languages tend to have either NPIs or NCIs, I suggested that Persian has both items. The items share the same property, which is sensitive to negation, but only NCIs can be used as a negative elliptical answer. And, this shows that NCIs are inherently negative.

To show the licensing condition of negative elements in the syntax, I accepted Haegeman(1995)'s Neg-criterion, which allowed both NPIs and NCIs to be licensed in the configuration of specifier and head in
the NegP. Under this criterion, the [neg] features of negative elements are checked against each other and the sentence will converge. Moreover, Neg-absorption process was added for the appropriate reading of Negative Concord structures. Since NCIs, like negative marker, are inherently negative, we may conclude that it may have affirmative reading, like Double negative. However, Negative Concord structure can undergo Neg-absorption under Neg-criterion, while Double negative structure, which has two neg head, cannot. Therefore, the negative elements in Double negative cannot be affected by both Neg-criterion and Neg-absorption, and their interpretable [neg] features remain till LF. This leads Double negative to be affirmative. Moreover, I pointed out that the Neg-Criterion and absorption process should be respected either at the time of merge or after the movement of the NCI.

Furthermore, we witnessed that there existed two types of subjunctive makers in Persian, and one of them, null subjunctive marker, was inserted in negative sentences. Even though the marker is not overtly realized, it has [subj] feature to be checked like the overt realization of the subjunctive marker be-. Thus, the feature is checked against the same feature that the present stem contains.

The reason why the negative marker and the overt subjunctive marker be- are not compatible in overt syntax seems to be phonological. I will leave the discussion open for the future study.

Key Words: Persian, Negation, Negative Polarity Item, Negative Concord Item, Double Negation, Syntactic structure, (un)interpretable feature
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References


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