

Selected puzzles in Shughni negation

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1 Introduction

Overview of the topics:

1. clitic *aθ* on indefinite pronouns under the scope of negation
2. Interaction between negation and modals
3. Non-finite negative marker *no-* and its contexts

Honorary mentions: constituent negation *nay-*, the negative copula *nist*

2 Clitic *aθ*

There is a clitic *-aθ*, which (almost) obligatorily appears on indefinite pronouns in the scope of SN:

- (1) *Yičāy-aθ* /?yičāy *na-yat*.
someone-EMPH someone NEG-come.PST
'Nobody came'

These contexts are the main focus of my first investigation

2.1 Other contexts of *aθ*

Apart from appearing on indefinite pronouns, this clitic surfaces in different contexts:

1. On NPs in emphatic contexts
2. On adverbs
3. On the universal quantifier *fuk* in substantive contexts

In the first two contexts *aθ* has (almost) no connection to negation, and it can be easily omitted

- (2) *Daže Nazaršo-yaθ na-yat.*
 even N.-EMPH NEG-come.PST
 ‘Even Nazarsho did not come’

This *aθ* may surface in non-negative contexts, when appearing on NPs:

- (3) *Taram yi čorik-aθ dūnd vud.*
 there one man-EMPH only be.PST
 ‘There was only one man’

Still, there are some negative nominal contexts where *aθ* is obligatory, is NPI proverbs. For example, the construction ‘there’s no news about him’:

- (4) *Wi-nd wi darak-aθ/ *darak nist.*
 DEM3M.OBL-LOC DEM3M.OBL news-EMPH news NEG.EXST
 ‘There is no news about him’

As studied by Daniel (2019), *aθ* also appears on adverbs. In this context, it gives rise to subtle semantic contrasts.

- (5) *Ku aznaw takror ki.*
 please again repeat do.IMP
 ‘Repeat it (a word), please ’
- (6) *Ku aznaw-aθ takror ki.*
 please again-EMPH repeat do.IMP
 ‘Repeat it (the whole sentence), please ’

As seen from the previous contrast, the presence of the clitic adds a certain emphasis to the adverbial constituent.

On the basis of these contexts (nominal *aθ* and adverbial *aθ*), it may be argued that this clitic is a focus marker. However, more research remains to be done.

2.2 Aθ on indefinite pronouns: NC

There is a strong informal intuition:

aθ on the pronouns of yi-series is somehow linked to negation But what is the exact nature of this connection? Is it more similar to English *anything* or to Russian *nikto* (‘no one’)?

In order to test this, I have used tests from Watanabe (2004), distinguishing between negative concord and negative polarity.

1. Appearance in elliptical answers
2. Not being found in ‘non-negative contexts’
3. Appearance with ‘almost’
4. Appearance in the subject position

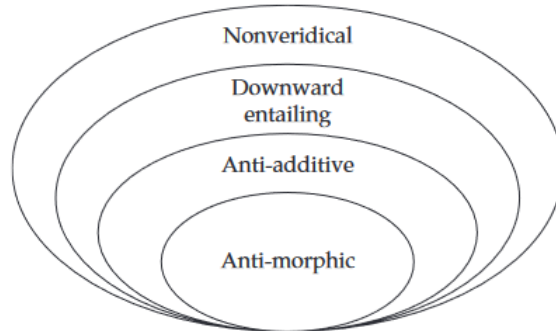


Figure 1: The negative hierarchy of polarity items

5. Being strictly bounded by a clause

The first criterion shows that it is an NCI:

- (7) *-Tu = t čiz vūd? Yičiz-aθ*
 you = 2SG what bring.PST.M something-EMPH

‘- What did you bring? - Nothing’

As this test suggests, in the elliptical answer the only option is to use the *aθ* form.

The same feature is reported in (Karamshoev 1963), where it is claimed that when *aθ* ‘replaces a negative marker’, it is obligatory:

- (8) *-Čāy pi wi luvd? Yičāy-aθ*
 who at DEM.M say.PST someone-EMPH

‘- Who criticized him? No one.’

For the ‘question’ diagnostic, the option with *aθ* is unavailable:

- (9) **Tarūd yičāy-aθ yaθč = o?*
 here someone-EMPH come.PRF = Q

intended: ‘Did anyone come here?’

In conditionals, the indefinite pronouns with *aθ* show some variation, but they are generally not used:

- (10) *?Aga yičāy-aθ tar māš pūnd ca yoδd, lap zur*
 if someone-EMPH to we road COMP come.NPST.3SG very cool
sūd.
 become.NPST.3SG

intended: ‘If someone met us, it would be very nice’

The *aθ*-pronouns may be licensed by caritive negation, like 'without':

- (11) *Be yiči-yaθ=i yu čīd mīzd.*
 without someone-EMPH=3SG he house build.PST
 'He built a house without anyone'

They can also be licensed by 'participial / infinitival' negation *no-*:

- (12) *Māš kašt no-yīd-aθ red.*
 we grain NEG.NOM-grind.PTCP-EMPH remain.PST
 'Our grain remains unthreshed.'

The test for 'subject position' is a clear indication for *aθ*-pronouns being NPIs:

- (13) *As stol-ti yičīz-aθ na-wešt.*
 from table-SUP something-EMPH NEG-fall.PST
 'Nothing fell from the table'

The test for clause-boundedness predicts that an NCI cannot be licensed by negation in another clause. A preliminary finding is that it is indeed the case for Shughni when the embedded sentence is finite:

- (14) *Uz fikri na-kinum, yu=yi yabor uquq werūn cuyŷ.*
 I thought NEG-do.NPST.1SG he=3SG anytime law break do.PRF
 'I do not think he ever broke the law'

In this example, the series with *aθ* was not used.

However, in some contexts the presence of *aθ* is permitted (and even obligatory). The following example show a modal with negation in main clause and an embedded clause with an infinitive:

- (15) *Murd darkor nist [yičīz-aθ xīgow]*
 to.me need NEG.COP [something-EMPH to.eat]
 'I did not need to eat anything'

It can also be licensed by 'almost' (*qarīb*):

- (16) *Qarīb yičay-aθ na-yat*
 almost someone-EMPH NEG-GO.PST
 'Almost no one came'

To sum up, here is the table with a recap of the NCI/NPI diagnostics: One further argument for the NCI status is focus morphology. Similar to Japanese particle *mo-*, the Shughni *aθ* is a focus marker

	Elliptical answers	Non-negative contexts	Almost	Subject position	Clause-boundedness
NCI	✓	✓	✓	✓	
NPI					

in non-negative contexts. The proposals by Watanabe (2004) and Isaac (2002) specifically associate NC with focus position.

An important note: a strong preference for the occurrence of *aθ* in negative contexts is an emergent feature. Earlier texts and grammars sometimes show the absence of the clitic in prototypical negative contexts:

- (17) *Yi-čāy na-yat*
 one-who NEG-come.PST
 ‘No one came’ (Alamshoev 1994)

A related question is whether *yi*-pronouns without *aθ* are NPIs themselves.

They appear in the typical contexts for NPIs: in the questions, in conditionals,

- (18) *Tarūd yičāy yat-o?*
 here someone go.PST-Q
 ‘Did anyone come here?’

- (19) *Yičay ca joδd xu, lū uz=um nist pi čīd.*
 someone COMP come.NPST.3SG and tell I=1SG is.not in house
 ‘If anyone comes, tell them I am not at home’

They can also be used in the absence of clear downward-entailing operators, such as in the next example:

- (20) *Ku yičiz dāk murd xām.*
 please something give to.me eat.NPST.1SG
 ‘Give me something to eat’

So, a preliminary conclusion is that the pronouns of *yi*-series are negative concord items used in DE contexts, meanwhile with the addition of *aθ* they are restricted to NCI contexts.

2.3 Morphology of *aθ*

The marker under discussion is a clitic. It surfaces further from the root than the affixes *-and* and *-ard*, but it is lower than the phrasal clitics:

- (21) *Karamšo = yand = aθ yulā čid*
 K. = POSS = EMPH big house
 ‘Karamsho has a big house’ (Padalka 2023)
- (22) *Mu nān = i Safina = yard = aθ řarvo pēřt*
 my mother = 3SG S. = DAT = EMPH soup cook.PST
 ‘My mom has cook a soup for Safina only’ (Padalka 2023)
- (23) *Xu poθ = aθ = at mis na-vūd*
 REFL arrow = EMPH = 2SG also NEG-find.PST
 ‘He did not find even his arrow’ (Karamshoev 1988)

Note that these contexts are with NPs and not with indefinite pronouns. The question of whether there is the same pattern in these contexts as well remains to be studied.

3 Negation and modality

- (24) *Na tu = yat darkor mu-rd, na wuz tu-rd darkor = um.*
 not you = 2SG need me-DAT not I you-DAT need = 1SG
 ‘Neither I need you, nor you need me.’ (Lidush Habib)

The next puzzle: interaction of negation and modality. In Shughni there are modal verbs and particles. The modal verb is *vārδedow*, denoting deontic necessity. The particles are *darkor* and *boyad*, which are both ambiguous between epistemic and deontic necessity; there is also a particle *mumkin* (epistemic possibility). Here is a table showing the interaction of these particles with negation:

Epistemic	possible	mumkin
	not-possible	mumkin nist
	possible-not	mumkin na
	necessary	darkor + INF
	not-necessary	darkor nist + INF
	necessary-not	boyad mā + SUBJ
Deontic	possible	vārδ-
	not-possible	na-vārδ
	possible-not	vārδ- no-INF
	necessary	boyad
	not-necessary	darkor nist + INF
	necessary-not	boyad mā + SUBJ

Particles *mumkin* and *darkor* show nominal/adjectival properties, so they are negated by the copular negation *nist* (see *it is not possible, it is not needed*). On the contrary, the particle *boyad* cannot combine neither with the copular negation *nist* nor with verbal negation *na-*. Therefore, when the ‘not-necessary’ interpretation is needed, the construction *darkor nist* is used:

- (25) *Murd uže tar maktab sitow darkor nist.*
 I.DAT already to school to.go need NEG.EXST

‘I don’t have to go to school already (because I am an adult)’

The previous example shows an epistemic necessity modal in the scope of negation. The Tajik version *naboyad* could not be used in that context, as well as in deontic necessity modal in the scope of negation.

- (26) **Wuz na-boyad pi ku-yen sām.*
 I.NOM NEG-must up mountain-PL go.NPST.1SG

Intended - ‘I don’t have to go to the mountains’

The necessity modals and possibility modals differ in the selection of negative allomorph when the modal outscopes the negation. The possibility modals require either *no-* or *na-*, meanwhile the necessity modals require *mā*.

- (27) *Fuk soz, vārđi-yi no-yatow.*
 All good, can-2SG NEG.NOM-come.INF

‘It’s alright, you may not come’

As seen here, the root modal verbs *vārđedow* selects for a combination of infinitive + nominal negation *no-*, meanwhile the epistemic modal particle *mumkin* combines with verbal negation *na-* and a finite form of the verb

- (28) *Roma mumkin yal na-jaθč.*
 R. possible still NEG-come.PRF

‘Roma, most likely, has not come’

- (29) *Az boyad tar maktab mā-sām.*
 I must to school NEG2-go.NPST.1SG

‘I mustn’t go to school’

This example shows deontic *boyad* with the narrow scope of negation

- (30) *Yam boyad mā-ved dūnd qīn.*
 it must NEG2-be.CONJ so hard
 ‘It must’nt be very hard’

This example shows epistemic *boyad* with the narrow scope of negation.

Another interesting feature is that the negative allomorph *mā* only appears in the embedded clauses of necessity modals, meanwhile the possibility modals choose either *na-* of *mā*. Here is a table with a classification of modals in Shughni:

	mumkin	darkor	boyad	vārδedow
modality type	epist. poss.	epist. + deont. necess.	epist. + deont. necess.	deont. poss.
syntactic category	nominal	nominal	?	verb
neg. scopes over mod.	nist	nist	-	na-
mod. scopes over neg.	na-	mā	mā	no-

4 Nominal negation

- (31) *Yīw mu bašānd lūvd, yīw no-darkor, Ay mardum, woy*
 one I.ACC good say.NPST.3SG one NEG-need oh people oh
mardum!
 people

‘One says that I am good, one - that I’m bad, oh people, ah people!’
 (Lidush Habib)

This section is dedicated to the use of ‘nominal negator’ *no-*.

First, this negator appears on adjectives, giving way to adjectival ‘low’ negation (see English *un-*):

- (32) *Yid no-darkor, soz-lūvd = ird nist*
 DEM3 NEG.NOM-skilful song-sing = DAT NEG.EXST
 ‘He is untalented, singing songs is not for him’

It can be stacked with the sentential negation, giving rise to double negation:

- (33) *Yid čorik mu-rd no-balad nist*
 DEM3 man me-DAT NEG.NOM-known NEG.EXST
 ‘That man is not unknown to me’

However, these contexts are limited (several lexemes), and it is not very productive. They appear almost exclusively with Tajik loan-words. The main context under discussion is *no-* with infinitives and participles.

- (34) *Di dow dim kitob no-ġeyt*
 his wish that book NEG.NOM-
 'His wish is not to read that book' (Karamshoev 1963)

An interesting feature of this negative particle is described by Karamshoev (1963):

'The participial form under negation by particle *no-* undergoes a change: more specifically, a suffix *-in* is deleted, and in some cases the perfect flexion [is deleted] as well. In the last case the form is identical to the short infinitive form.'

Karamshoev lists the following examples:

- (35)
- | affirmative | negative |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>niviš-č-in daftar</i> | <i>no-nivišt daftar</i> |
| write-prf-ptcp notebook | neg-write.inf notebook |
| 'scribbled notebook' | 'unwritten notebook' |

- (36)
- | affirmative | negative |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>virix-c-in dek</i> | <i>no-virišt dek</i> |
| break-prf-ptcp pot | neg-break.inf pot |
| 'broken pot' | 'non-broken pot' |

It can be illustrated with a verb *ġeytow* ('to read'): there are possible forms *no-ġeyt* (bare past stem), *no-ġeyč* (bare perfect stem) and *no-ġeyč-in* (perfect participle). In the affirmatives, only the third option is available (*ġeyč-in*).

The author notes that the "abridged" participial form and infinitival form are mainly used in predicative contexts, meanwhile the 'full participial' form is used in attributive contexts.

In attributive contexts, the abridged participial form can be used as well:

- (37) *No-wiñč odam = ird čiz tu lıv-i?*
 NEG.NOM-see.PERF.PTCP person = DAT what you say.NPST-2SG
 ‘What would you say to a person who saw nothing?’ (Karamshoev 1963)

The preliminary result of my investigation is that the ‘abridged participial forms’ are no longer used.

- (38) **Wam no-ǰêyt kitob mu = rd dāk.*
 DEM.FEM.OBL NEG.NOM-read.PERF.PTCP book me = DAT give.IMP
 ‘Give me that unread book’ (My data)

Another feature of *no-* is reported in Rajabbekov (2015). Apparently, negative infinitives cannot combine with ‘aspectual’ adpositions like *tar* (‘to’), *as* (‘from’), *pi* (‘on’), etc.

- (39) *Māš-ta bād as du meθ xu zamīn dar čêrt*
 we-FUT after two day REFL earth start plow.INF do.NPST-1PL
kīn-ām

‘In two days we will start plowing our earth’

Still, *no-* infinitives can combine with a prospective adposition *či*:

- (40) *Jamšêd tar sūr či-no-sid*
 J. to marriage PROSP-NEG.NOM-become.INF
 ‘Jamshed was going to not go to the marriage’

One may also choose a different negative item in this context, *nist*:

- (41) *Jamšêd tar sūr či-sid nist*
 J. to marriage PROSP-become.INF NEG.COP
 ‘Jamshed was not going to go to the marriage’

Though Rajabbekov (2015) treats these examples as ‘synonymic’, he still notes the difference between them: *no-*, apparently ‘signifies the absence of an action expressed by the infinitive’, meanwhile *nist* ‘negates the intention of the subject to do the action expressed by the infinitive’.

The ‘low’ nominal negation can apparently stack with ‘higher’ negation, yielding double negation:

- (42) *Wuz = um no-lıvdow wam-ard na-vārδod*
 I = 1SG NEG-say.INF DEM.3.F-DAT NEG-can.PST
 ‘I could not not tell her’

- (43) *Tu-nd aq nist mu tared no-lāk-čīdow*
you-POSS right NEG.EXST me there NEG.NOM-let-do.INF
'You have no right to not let me there'

5 Conclusion

1. *aθ* is a negative concord item, also being a focus marker
2. Shughni modals select for different negative markers
3. nominal negation *no-* is added to participles (with some morphological changes) and to the infinitives