

Negative Stripping and Pseudo-stripping in Persian (Syntax, Persian, Indo-European)

1. Overview: In this work, we provide an analysis of the Persian stripping constructions in (1) and (2), which we refer to as Negative Stripping (NegS) and Pseudo-stripping (PseS), respectively. These two constructions look similar on the surface and the differences between them are i) the order of the negation and the DP ‘Ayda’ and ii) the element that carries a heavy stress (represented in capital letters). The questions that we address in this work are: What is the nature of the negation in these structures? Do both constructions involve ellipsis? We argue that the negative marker in NegS is clausal negation; however, the negation in PseS involves constituent negation. In addition, we argue that NegS is bi-clausal and involves ellipsis while PseS is mono-clausal and does not involve ellipsis.

- (1) ARAZ ketāb kharid, **AYDA na** (2) ARAZ ketāb kharid, **NA Ayda**
 Araz book bought.3SG Ayda NEG Araz book bought.3SG NEG Ayda
 ‘Araz bought books, Ayda didn’t.’ ‘Araz bought books, not Ayda.’

In section 2, we discuss properties of NegS and PseS. In section 3, we argue that the nature of negation in these constructions is different. In section 4, we provide an analysis for NegS and PseS. In section 5, we discuss one of the major previous studies (Kolokonte 2008) and its issues.

2. Characteristics of NegS and PseS: A property that both constructions share is that they have an obligatory corrective interpretation. For instance, as shown in (3B), NegS can be uttered to correct the speaker’s statement (3A). In this context, we have two alternatives: i) Ayda bought books and ii) Araz bought books, and the hearer corrects the speaker by saying which alternative is true and which one is false (i.e. *Araz bought books* is true while *Ayda bought books* is false).

- (3) A: Araz va Ayda ketāb kharid-an. B: (na), ARAZ ketāb kharid, **AYDA na** (NegS)
 Araz and Ayda book bought-3PL No Araz book bought.3SG Ayda NEG
 ‘Araz and Ayda bought books.’ ‘(No, you are wrong), ARAZ bought books, AYDA did not.’

In the same context, the conversation can continue as shown in (4). The speaker in (4A) states that *Ayda bought books*. However, the hearer corrects the speaker by saying that *it was Araz who bought books, not Ayda*. In PseS (4B), one alternative replaces the other (i.e. *Araz* replaces *Ayda*).

- (4) A: āhān, pas, Ayda ketāb kharid. B: (na), ARAZ ketāb kharid, **NA Ayda** (PseS)
 okay then Ayda book bought.3SG No Araz book bought.3SG NEG Ayda
 ‘Okay, then, Ayda bought books.’ ‘(No, you are wrong), Araz bought books, not Ayda.’

A piece of evidence for the claim that these constructions have an obligatory corrective interpretation comes from *wh*-questions, as shown in (5). NegS (5A1) and PseS (5A2) cannot be used as a response to *wh*-questions because the speaker in (5Q) does not make a statement but rather asks a question.

- (5) Q: ki ketāb kharid? A1: #ARAZ ketāb kharid, AYDA na (NegS)
 who book bought.3SG A2: #ARAZ ketāb kharid, NA Ayda (PseS)
 ‘Who bought books?’

Despite their similarities regarding their interpretation and context of occurrence, a difference between these structures is that the sentence in NegS can be continued (6) while the sentence in PseS cannot (7).

- (6) ARAZ ketāb kharid, AYDA na (**ketāb na-kharid**)
 Araz book bought.3SG Ayda NEG book NEG-bought.3SG
 ‘Araz bought books, Ayda did not (buy books).’

- (7) ARAZ ketāb kharid, NA Ayda (***ketāb na-kharid**)
 Araz book bought.3SG NEG Ayda book NEG-bought.3SG
 ‘Araz bought books, not Ayda.’

3. The role of negation: We argue that the negation in NegS involves clausal negation while the negation in PseS is constituent negation. A piece of evidence for this claim comes from examples such as (8) and (9). In NegS, an adverb can intervene between *Ayda* and the negative marker (8). However, this is not

possible in PseS (9).

(8) ARAZ hamishe ketāb mikhar-e, **AYDA** hamishe **na** (NegS)
 Araz always book buy-3SG Ayda always NEG
 ‘Araz always buys books, Ayda does not always (buy books).’

(9) *ARAZ hamishe ketāb mikhar-e, **NA** hamishe **Ayda** (PseS)
 Araz always book buy-3SG NEG always Ayda

In line with Kolokonte (2008), we propose that the negative marker in NegS functions as a focusing adverb, which originates in the Spec of PolP in the CP domain. The claim that the negation is a focusing adverb comes from the fact that it can be replaced by a focusing adverb such as *hichvaqt* ‘never’ (10a). On the other hand, it should be noted that in PseS, *na* cannot be replaced by *never* (10b). These examples support our claim that the nature of negation in NegS and PseS is different.

(10) a. ARAZ hamishe ketāb mikhare, AYDA **hichvaqt** (NegS)
 Araz always book buy.3SG Ayda never

b.*ARAZ hamishe ketāb mikhare, **HICHVAQT** Ayda (PseS)

4. Analysis: Adopting Rizzi’s (1997) split-CP hypothesis, we argue that the remnant in NegS, which carries a contrastive focus feature, moves out of TP to the Spec of FocP in the left periphery. Moreover, we argue that it is the [E] feature (Merchant, 2001) on the Pol head that licenses the deletion of its complement (TP) at the PF level, as illustrated in (11).

(11) ARAZ ketāb kharid, [CP [FocP AYDA_i [PolP na [Pol[E] [~~TP t_i ketāb na kharid~~]]]]]
 Araz book bought.3SG Ayda NEG book NEG-bought.3SG

On the other hand, we argue that PseS does not involve ellipsis, despite what has been claimed for English (Kolokonte 2008), but rather it is derived via movement. We propose that in the underlying structure, the *na Ayda* constituent adjoins to *Ayda*’s corresponding element *Araz* (12a). However, since this is ungrammatical, the *na Ayda* constituent, which carries a contrastive focus interpretation, obligatorily undergoes rightward focus movement to the Spec of FocP, which is above *v*P in the TP domain (Kahnemuyipour 2001), as illustrated in (12b).

(12) a.*[TP [_vP [DP ARAZ, **NA Ayda**], ketāb kharid]] b. [TP ARAZ, t_i, ketāb kharid, [FocP **NA Ayda**]_i]

5. Kolokonte (2008): Our proposal that in NegS and PseS, the DP is a focalized element is in line with Kolokonte’s (2008) analysis for English, as shown in (13). However, based on her approach, the DP in NegS carries an information focus feature and moves to Foc₂P directly above TP (13a), while the DP in PseS carries a contrastive focus feature and moves to Foc₁P, which is higher than Foc₂P (13b).

(13) a. Lisa likes mathematics but [PolP not [Foc₁P **physics**_i [TP ~~Lisa likes t_i~~]]]
 b. Lisa likes mathematics, [PolP not [Foc₂P **physics**_i [Foc₁P ∅ [TP ~~Lisa likes t_i~~]]]]

There are three problems with Kolokonte’s analysis. First, her proposal of two focus positions in the CP domain is not motivated. Second, we know that information focus is not subject to overt movement (Kiss 1998). Third, she analyzes the negative marker in PseS as clausal negation rather than constituent negation. If this were the case, we would be able to have an adverb between the negation and DP; however, as shown in (14), this is not possible.

(14) *Lisa likes mathematics, not **necessarily** physics.

6. Conclusion: This study suggests that the structures with XP NEG word order (i.e. NegS) are bi-clausal and involve ellipsis while the structures with the NEG XP order (i.e. PseS) are mono-clausal and don’t involve ellipsis.

Selected References: Kahnemuyipour (2001). On wh-questions in Persian. *Canadian Journal of Linguistics* 46. Kolokonte (2008). Bare argument ellipsis and information structure. PhD Dissertation, Newcastle University, UK. Merchant (2001). The syntax of silence: Sluicing, islands, and the theory of ellipsis. OUP. Rizzi (1997). On the interpretation of the left periphery. In *Handbook of Generative Syntax*. Kluwer, Dordrecht, 281-337.