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# The Morphosyntax of Negation in Rural Palestinian Arabic

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**Abstract**

*This paper explores the morphosyntactic properties of the sentential negation in Rural Palestinian Arabic (RPA) and how it is related to Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) morphosyntax. The study shows that the negative markers ma: and – iš are used to negate perfective and imperfective verbs, while muš is a head element where the negative precedes non-verbal predicates such as adjectives, prepositional phrases (PP) and participles. The main predicate in negative phrase does not need the noun phrase (NP) to raise to T if there is no need to merge with the negative element. The study also investigates the differences between RPA and Urban Palestinian Arabic (UPA). The main difference is that the use of –iš as a post verbal clitic in both perfective and imperfective tense is more common in the Rural dialect.*

**Keywords:** Modern Standard Arabic, Rural Palestinian, Urban Palestinian, Arabic negation

## 1.1 Introduction

Negation is one of the basic concepts of any language. Every language has its own negative system that involves negative particles and negated elements. Many studies have been conducted on negation in MSA and other Arabic dialects from a morphosyntactic perspective. The distribution of negative particles in verbal and nonverbal sentences have been explored by many linguists, such as Al-Tamari (2001), Aoun et al. (2010), Bahloul (1996), Benmamoun (1992, 2000), Eid (1993), van Gelderen (2008), Fassi Fehri (1993), Shlonsky (1997), and Ouahalla (1991, 1993), among many others. Brustad (2000) studies negation in four Arabic dialects; Egyptian Arabic (EA), Moroccan Arabic (MA), Syrian Arabic (SA), and Kuwaiti Arabic (KA) from a dialectological perspective. She explains that these dialects have three different categories of negation: verbal negation, predicate negation, and categorical negation. The history of negation in these dialects is also discussed by other linguists, such as Lucas (2007, 2010) and Wilmsen (2013).

The goal of this chapter is to present a description of negation in MSA and RPA. Examples from UPA are introduced for comparison. The variety of negation particles, their functions, and morphosyntactic distributions of negative particles and negated predicates in MSA and RPA are discussed in this chapter.

This chapter is divided into five sections. In the second section, I discuss the literature on the properties of negative particles in verbal and non-verbal clauses in MSA and examples of each negation particle and its function. In the third section, I discuss the distribution of the negative elements in the RPA and introduce examples from UPA. In the fourth section, I discuss the data and their implications from a syntactic point of view for negation in RPA and UPA. In the final section, I conclude.

## 1.2 Negation in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA)

The morphosyntactic system of negation in MSA is different from those in Arabic dialects (Fassi Fehri 1989). Table 1 shows the available verbal and non-verbal negative particles in MSA. Some of these particles, like ma: and la:, are also used in many Arabic dialects, while others, like lam, lan, and laysa, are replaced by different particles, like *–iš* and muš, which are presented in section 3.

| IPA | Arabic | Function |
|---|---|---|
| la: | لا | Imperfect tense, imperative/prohibitive, nominal |
| ma: | ما | Perfective aspect, nominal |
| lam | لم | Perfective aspect |
| lan | لن | Future aspect |
| laysa | ليس | Imperfective, nominal, adjectival, participle and prepositional predicates |

**Table 1: *Negative Particles in MSA***

Walker (1896) argues that la: and other Arabic negation particles that have l as an essential part are originally from the Semitic negative stem l. It also occurs as a negative particle in other Semitic languages such as Hebrew. According to van Gelderen (2008), negative particles in Arabic dialects originate from interrogative pronouns and ma: is one of them. She adds that *ma*: is used in positive rhetorical questions in MSA, is not used as an interrogative in modern dialects, and is the most common used negative particle. She explains that:

> in Classical Arabic, the negative pre-verbal elements are the heads *laysa, laa, lam*, *lan* (where lam and lan are marked for past and future respectively, *laysa*- bears agreement, and la is not marked), or the pre-verbal *maa*. The latter has become the general form in modern varieties of Arabic (Fischer 1982: 85), with a post-verbal -sh, as in Moroccan Arabic. (van Gelderen, 2008, p. 230)

The negative markers occur with different mood of the imperfective form: la: occurs with indicative verbs, lam occurs with jussive verbs, and lan occurs with subjunctive verbs. (See chapter 3 for more details on mood in MSA).

### 1.2.1 The Negative la:

***la:*** is the default non-tensed negative particle and one of the main preverbal negation particles categorized for the imperfect tense, as illustrated in (1):

(1) لا يدرس الولدُ MSA

**la:** ya-drus-u el-walad-u
NEG 3SG.M-study-IND the-boy-NOM
'The boy doesn't study.'

It may also function as a negative imperative or a prohibitive particle and thus called the la: of prohibition, which is not tensed (2).

(2) لا تلعب بالكرة MSA

**la:** ta-lʕab bi-l-kurat-i
NEG 2SG.M -play with-the-ball-GEN
'Don't play with the ball.'

Aoun et al. (2010) claimed that la: is used for 'constituent negation', as in (3), taken from Moutaouakil (1993).

(3) **la:** rajulun fi: d-da:ri MSA
NEG man in the-house
'No man in the house' (p. 86)

Benmamoun et al. (2013) describes different uses of la: in Arabic: to answer questions ('no') (4a), as a negative quantifier (4c), and in negative discourse expressions (4d, e).

(4) a. hal nabaha l-kalb-u? MSA
Q barked.3MS the-dog-nom
'Did the dog bark?'
b. **la:**
'No.'
c. **la:** ʔahad
NEG one
'No one'
d. **la:** bʔas
NEG harm
'No harm!'
e. **la:** ʕalay-k
NEG on-you
'Don't worry!' (p. 88)

### 2.2.2. The Negative lam and lan

lam and lan are used to negate past tense and future tense, respectively. They are both marked for tense; therefore, the verb is in the imperfective form rather than the perfective or future form. The following examples illustrate the use of each particle:

(5) لم يأكل أحمدُ MSA
**lam** yaʔkul Ahmad-un
NEG 3SG.M eats.JUS Ahmad-NOM
'Ahmad didn't eat'.

(6) لن يأكل أحمد MSA
**lan** ya-ʔkul-a Ahmad-un
NEG.FUT 3SG.M-eats-SUB Ahmad-NOM
Ahmad will not eat.'

In the previous examples, the past tense or the future tense are not realized on the verb but on the negative particles lam and lan; thus, the infinitive form of the verb is used instead. These different tense interpretations of these negatives result from the fact that "tensed verbs are in complementary distribution with tensed negatives. When the negative particle inflects for tense the verb cannot do so" (Benmamoun 2000: 96).

### 2.2.3. The Negative ma:

Unlike la: and lan, ma: is used for past tense negation (7). However, ma: is not inflected for tense; instead, the verb has perfect tense.

(7) ما أكل أحمدٌ MSA
**ma:** ʔakala Ahmad-un
NEG ate.3SG.M Ahmad-NOM
'Ahmad didn't eat.'

In Classical Arabic (CA), ma: is used to negate imperfective verbs, as in the following example from the Quraan (2:9):

(8) **ma:** yaḫdaʿūna ʾillā ʾanfusa-hum CA
NEG deceive.IMPF.3PL.M except self.PL.ACC-3PL.M
'They only deceive themselves.' (Lucas, 2015, p. 3)

Aoun et al. (2010) claimed that ma: is used also to negate the subject in nominal sentences (9).

(9) ma: Muhammad-un ka:tib-un MSA
NEG Muhammad-NOM writer-NOM
'Muhammad is not a writer.' (p. 116)

### 2.2.4. The Negative laysa

In addition to the pre-verbal negative particles mentioned above, *laysa* 'not' is a negative existential particle that is used to negate nominal, adjectival, participle, and prepositional predicates. Macelaru (2003) claims that *laysa* is derived from the combination of the negative particle la: and the existential particle -ys 'there', which is inherited from an Afroasiatic language. The two particles la: and -ys were grammaticalized to *laysa* in Proto-Semitic.

According to Aoun et al. (2010), traditional grammarians analyze *laysa* as a verb. This is because the subject agreement features that *laysa* has are similar to those that verbs in the past tense have. Benmamoun (2000) argues that *laysa* is not a verb but is formed by the combination of the negative particle *laysa* with a pronominal subject through the process of encliticization. He adds that laysa does not carry verbal features but is a negative particle that combined with a subject pronoun that historically began to take a subject agreement marker that cliticized to laysa. Ouali (2014) claims that laysa is used in CA to negate imperfective verbs, as in (10):

(10) لست أدري CA
las-**tu** ʔadri:
NEG.1SG 1SG-know
'I don't know.' (p. 135)

Example (10) supports the fact that *laysa* is a negative existential particle and not a verb, as some traditional Arabic grammarians have claimed. This negative particle agrees with the subject in person, number, and gender and bears accusative case to the predicate when it is nominal.

There is also evidence from some Arabic dialects that use negative particles, such as *mu:/miš/muš*, equivalent to *laysa*, to negate perfective and imperfective verbs. Brustad (2000) and Aoun et al. (2010) provide examples from EA and SA dialects, which are discussed in the next section. Table 2 below shows the agreement features that *laysa* carries with different subjects.

| | singular | dual | plural |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1st person | لَسْتُ (*last-u*) | —— | لَسْنَا (*las-na:*) |
| 2nd person (m) | لَسْتَ (*last-a*) | لَسْتُمَا (*las-tuma:*) | لَسْتُمْ (*last-um*) |
| 2nd person (f) | لَسْتِ (*last-i*) | لَسْتُمَا (*las-tuma:*) | لَسْتُنَّ (*last-unna*) |
| 3rd person (m) | لَيْسَ (*lays-a*) | لَيْسَا (*lays-a:*) | لَيْسُوا (*lays-u:*) |
| 3rd person (f) | لَيْسَتْ (*lays-at*) | لَيْسَتَا (*lays-ata:*) | لَسْنَ (*las-na*) |

**Table 2: *Laysa with affixed Subject Pronouns***

The following example shows that *laysa* is used with an affixed subject pronoun -at that agrees in person, gender and number as a feminine singular with its complement *muʕallimatan*. It is worth mentioning here that *laysa* assigns the nominative case to its subject and accusative case to its predicate.

(11) ليست معلمة MSA
lays-**at** muʕallim-at-an
NEG.3SG.F teacher-F-ACC
'She is not a teacher.' (Aoun et al., 2010, p. 111)

In the following example, we notice that laysa has a different suffix that has to agree with the masculine plural noun al-ʔawla:d-u.

(12) الأولاد ليسوا في البيت MSA
al-ʔawla:d-u lays-u: fi el-bayt-i
the-boys-NOM NEG-3PL.Min the-house-GEN
'The boys are not home.'

From example (12), it is noticeable that laysa shows a full agreement features in person, number and gender with the subject if it follows the subject. Whereas, laysa shows a partial agreement with the subject in person and gender and not number if it precedes the subject as it can be seen below:

(13) ليس الأولاد في البيت MSA

laysa ʔl-ʔawla:d-u fi el-bayt-i
NEG.3SG.M the-boys-NOM in the-house-GEN
'The boys are not home.'

laysa is used also to negate pseudo-verbs such as ʕind 'at/have'. The following sentence shows that the third person masculine singular form of laysa is used that does not need a cliticized pronoun at the end.

(14) ليس عندي سيارة MSA

laysa ʕindi sayyar-at-un
NEG at.POSS.1SG car-F-NOM
'I don't have a car.'

*Laysa* cannot be treated as a copula for two reasons: it is inherently [+present], while the copula can be used in past, present, and future tenses, and it is inherently negative, unlike the copula. In MSA, there is no copula in present tense sentences; it only appears in past tense form. The MSA copula ka:na 'was' can be negated in different ways based on the aspect and tense using different negative particles. Three different patterns can be used with *ma, lam and lan*. The following examples illustrate these patterns.

(15) ما كان الجو جميلا MSA

**ma** ka:na l-jaww-u jami:l-an
NEG was the-weather-NOM beautiful-ACC
'The weather wasn't beautiful.'

(16) لم يكن الجو جميلا MSA

**lam** yakun l-jaww-u jami:l-an
NEG be.3MSG the-weather-NOM beautiful-ACC
'The weather wasn't beautiful.'

(17) لن يكون الجو جميلا MSA

**lan** yakuna l-jaww-u jami:l-an
NEG be.3SG.M the-weather-NOM beautiful-ACC
'The weather wasn't beautiful.'

Similar to laysa, the copula kana must agree with the subject in person, gender, and number if it follows the subject, whereas, it agrees with the subject only in gender and person, not number, when it occurs before the subject, as in (18) and (19). The copula ka:na also assigns nominative case to its subject and accusative case to its complement.

(18) الأولاد ما كانوا في البيت MSA

al-ʔawla:d-u ma: kan-u: fi el-bayt-i
the-boys-NOM NEG were-3PL.M in the-house-GEN
'The boys are not home.'

(19) ما كان الأولاد في البيت MSA

ma: **kana** al-ʔawla:d-u fi el-bayt-i
NEG was.3SG.M the-boys-NOM in the-house-GEN
'The boys are not home.'

To conclude, the particle la: does not carry tense and is used for imperfective tense imperative/prohibitive and nominal negation, whereas the tensed particles lam and *lan* are used to negate past tense and future tense, respectively. The verb in the imperfective form is used rather than the perfective aspect or future tense. The particle ma: is not marked for tense; therefore, a perfective verb is used. On the other hand, laysa is used to negate nominal, adjectival, participle, and prepositional predicates and pseudo-verbs. Copular sentences using ka:na 'was' in MSA are negated

in different ways based on the aspect and tense: *ma:, lam, and lan* for perfective verbs, past imperfective verbs, and future tense, respectively. Both laysa and ka:na assign accusative case to their predicates. In the next section, I discuss the different forms of negation in RPA and explain how it is related to negation patterns in MSA.

## 2.3. Negation in Rural Palestinian Arabic (RPA)

Negation in RPA is not straightforward similar to other Arabic dialects. Benmamoun (2013) explains that many Arabic dialects express negation by means of combinations of the morphemes ma: and -*iš*. He added that MA and EA use the enclitic -*iš* accompanied by the proclitic *ma:*, while -*iš* is not used in other dialects, such as the Gulf varieties. He argued that the use of -*iš* in Levantine dialects varies: some use it, while others use ma: only.

According to van Gelderen (2008), ma: is mainly used in MSA in the past tense. She adds that it was originally an interrogative pronoun, but not used in Arabic dialects for questions; it became the most common negative particle combined with the verbal suffix -*iš*. According to Lucas (2007), van Gelderen (2008), and Aoun et al. (2010), -*iš* developed from the noun *šay***ʔ** "thing". Lucas (2007) claims that -*iš* was recorded for the first time in the eighth century and was introduced as a negative element attached to the verb in Egypt, Palestine, or Tunisia. He explains that *šay***ʔ** has various forms in different dialects: -še, - ši - š, or -*iš*. He adds that in most dialects, the enclitic -ši has been reduced to -š.

Shlonsky (1997), Lucas (2007), and Gelderen (2008) use the term Jespersen Cycle (JC), which describes the diachronic changes of negation as having three different stages, as explained by Jespersen (1917):

> The history of negative expressions in various languages makes us witness the following curious fluctuation: the original negative adverb is first weakened, then found insufficient and therefore strengthened, generally through some additional word, and this in turn may be felt as the negative proper and may then in the course of time be subject to the same development as the original word. (p. 4)

Lucas (2007) explains that other languages, such as French, have undergone three stages of negation. Example )20) shows that, at stage one, one negation preverbal particle ne is used:

(20) Jeo ne dis
I NEG say
'I do not say.'

In the second stage, the discontinuous particle pas is used to support the first particle ne, as is shown in (21):

(21) Je ne dis pas
I NEG say NEG
'I do not say'

At stage three, the original particle ne is optional:

(22) Je dis pas I
say NEG
'I do not say' (Lucas, 2007, p. 399)

Benmamoun (2000) claims that these negation patterns also occur in dialects like MA, EA, Yemini, and Palestinian Arabic (PA). According to him, the negative particle in these dialects is the head of its own syntactic projection, and sentential negation occupies the position between TP and VP.

According to Awwad (1987), in PA, either ma:- or -š can be elided in certain categories, and either morpheme can be used to express negation. He adds that the only context in which ma- is obligatory is with perfective verbs. There does not appear to be any contexts in which -š is obligatory. In RPA, I show that this pattern is not applied to verbal negation only, but it is also applied to other contexts, such as the negation of certain pseudo-verbs and nominals.

Negation in RPA is not limited to a single form but has different variations; different strategies can be employed to express imperfect and perfect verb negation. The particle ma: precedes

the verb to negate both perfective and imperfective verbs; with ma-…-*iš*, ma- procliticizes and -*iš* encliticizes to the verb. The enclitic -*iš* on its own is used only for imperfective and pseudo-verbs. From now on, I use ma: when it is used as an independent negation particle and ma- when it is used with -*iš* as a verbal proclitic, since the vowel is short. The negative particle la: is used to negate imperative/prohibitive verbs and nominals. The particle muš is used to negate nominal, adjectival, participle, and prepositional predicates. It is also used to negate imperative/prohibitive verbs. Table 3 below illustrates the negative particles available in RPA.

| IPA | Arabic IPA | Functions |
|---|---|---|
| ma: | ما | perfective and imperfective aspect/prohibitive, copulas |
| ma-…-iš | ما...ش | perfective and imperfective aspect, imperative/ prohibitive, pseudo-verbs, copulas, nominals |
| -iš | ...ش | imperfective aspect, imperative/ prohibitive, some pseudo-verbs, copulas |
| muš | مش | nominal, adjectival, participle and prepositional predicates, imperative/ prohibitive |
| la: | لا | imperative/prohibitive, nominal |

**Table 3: *Negative Particles in RPA***

Next, I discuss the negative particles ma:, ma-…-*iš*, and -*iš* which are used to negate different categories such as perfective and imperfective aspect, imperative/prohibitive, pseudo-verbs, nominals and copulas.

### 2.3.1. The Negative Particles ma:, ma-…-*iš*, and -*iš*

According to Onizan (2005), the discontinuous negative morpheme ma-…-*iš* is used for both perfective and imperfective verbs equally, as can be seen in (23)-(25). The negation of an imperfect verb is expressed by using ma: (23), ma:-…-*iš* (24), or -*iš* (25). Note that ma: is pronounced with a short vowel (ma-) when it is used as a proclitic; it is pronounced with a longer vowel (ma:) when it is used as an independent particle because it is stressed. Note also that imperfective verbs start with b- , indicating imperfective aspect.

(23) ما بعرف UPA
**ma**-ba-ʕrif
NEG-ASP-know.1SG
'I don't know.'

(24) مَبعرفش RPA
**ma**-ba-ʕrif-*iš*
NEG-ASP-know.1SG-NEG
'I don't know.'

Using ma: is optional with imperfect verbs, as shown in (25):

(25) بعرفش أحمد RPA
Ahmad ba-ʕrif-*iš*
Ahmad ASP-know.1SG-NEG
'Ahmad doesn't know.' Patterns (24) and (25) are used more in RPA, while example (23) is more common in UPA. The deletion of -*iš* occurs when the stress falls on the negation.

The negative particle ma-…-*iš* is affected by aspect. When the verb is perfective, there are two different forms available in RPA. Negation can be formed by the first part alone or by the discontinuous morpheme. ma: can be used as an independent negation particle (26); ma- can also be used as a proclitic, with -*iš* as an enclitic (27). In the imperfective, -*iš* is used as an enclitic; it does not

occur with perfect aspect where it is considered ungrammatical in both RPA and UPA, as shown in (28).

(26) ما أكل احمد UPA
**ma:** ʔakal Ahmad
NEG ate.3SG.M Ahmad
'Ahmad didn't eat.'

(27) مأكلش احمد RPA ma-
ʔakal-*iš* Ahmad
NEG-ate.3SG.M -NEG Ahmad
'Ahmad did not eat.'

(28) *اكلش أحمد RPA
*ʔakal-*iš* Ahmad
ate.3SG.M-NEG Ahmad
'Ahmad didn't eat.'

In MSA, *ma*: is only used with perfect aspect; it is used in perfect, imperfect, and the imperative in RPA. There is no example from the data shows that la: is used in RPA to negate imperfect aspect like in MSA or other dialects. There are many examples in RPA that show that ma:, ma-*iš*, or -*iš* are used for negative imperatives and prohibitives, as in (29)-(30):

(29) معهم ما تروح RPA
ma-tru:ħ maʕ-hum
NEG-go.2SG.M with-them
'Don't go with them.'

(30) ما تروحش هناك RPA
ma-truħ-*iš* hinak
NEG-go.2SG.M-NEG there
'Don't go there.'

The negative suffix -*iš* carries the meaning of leniency in addition to negation. The difference between examples (29) and (30) is the presence/absence of the suffix -*iš*, which implies a difference in the strength of the prohibition. Example (30), with the suffix -*iš*, is considered a lenient form of prohibition. Example (29) is a stronger way of prohibition because the negative suffix -*iš* is dropped. The same form is also available by dropping ma- and using -*iš* on its own.

(31) تروحش هناك RPA
truħ-*iš* hinak
go.2SG.M-NEG there
'Don't go there.'

Palva (1984) claims that prohibitive verbs are not the same as imperfective verbs, which have an imperfective prefix b-. Prohibitives start with t-, marking second person masculine in imperfective verbs.

Other examples from RPA show that the particles -*iš* can be is attached to the object clitic in verbs as it is shown in (32). The particle -š is attached to the object pronoun -ha.

(32) ما حبيتهاش هالمرة RPA
**ma**-ħabit-**ha**-š ha-l-mara
NEG-liked.1SG-her-NEG this-the-woman
'I didn't like this woman.'

These instances of negation in RPA are a result of the fact that the dialect underwent the historical stages introduced as the JC (Jespersen, 1917) in negation. The first stage is represented by only one element to express negation for imperfect and perfect verbs (ma:). The second stage occurs when the first marker is weakened and a new element is added to support the first one, in this case the verbal enclitic -*iš*. During the third stage, the first element is dropped and the new one expresses

negation by itself. In this case, the third stage is only relevant to imperfect verbs and not perfect verbs, as illustrated in (25) and (28).

Other examples of non-verbal negation include pseudo-verbs, which are prepositional phrases and adverbials that act like verbs. Psuedo-verbs have three negative patterns: ma: can be used as an independent particle (33), both ma- as a proclitic and *-iš* as an enclitic (34) and *-iš* can be used on its own (35).

(33) ما معي مصاري UPA
**ma** maʕ-i: masˁa:ri
NEG with-me money
'I don't have money.'

(34) ممعيش مصاري RPA
**ma**-maʕ-i:-š masˁari
NEG-with-me-NEG money
'I don't have money.'

(35) معيش مصاري RPA
ma-ʕi:-š masˁari
with-me-NEG money
'I don't have money.'

There is an exception in the negation of the pseudo-verb ʕind 'at/have': using *-iš* by itself as an enclitic is considered ungrammatical (36), while stages one and two are possible.

(36) * عنديش مصاري
ʕind-i:-š masˁari
at-me-NEG money

Wilmsen (2013) explains that the pseudo-verb *ʕind* and perfect verbs can be negated with the enclitic *-iš* by itself in Upper Egyptian varieties.

In MSA and other Arabic dialects, there is no copula in the present tense, but there is one in the past tense. The copula baka is used in the past tense in RPA. Note that the copula baka originated from the verb baqiya 'stayed' in MSA, grammaticalizing to an auxiliary in the Arabic dialects. Past tense copular sentences are negated via the use of the negative morphemes ma:, ma-…-*iš*, or *-iš*. The copula must agree with the subject in person, number, and gender, as shown in examples (37) and (38).

(37) مبكاش محمد يشتغل امبيرح في المحل RPA
**ma**-baka-š Mohammad mberiħ fi-el-maħal
NEG-was.3SG.M-NEG Mohammad yesterday in-the-store
'Mohammed wasn't in the store yesterday.'

(38) بكتش فاطمة بالحفلة RPA
baka-t-*iš* Fatmi bi-l-ħafli
was-3SG.F-NEG Fatmi in-the-party
'Fatmi wasn't in the party.' Similar to MSA, the copula ka:na is used in UPA, as shown in (39) and (40):

(39) وعمر العيد ما كان سعيد UPA
ʕumr el-ʕi:d ma ka:n saʕi:d
and-never the-holiday neg was.3SG.M happy
'The holiday never was happy.'

(40) ما كانو يشتغلوا مزبوط الشباب UPA
el-šabab ma kan-u: ye-štiɣl-u azbootˁ
the-young.guys NEG was-3PL.M IMP.work-3PL.M right
'The young guys didn't work right.'

In (39) and (40), note that person, gender, and number agreement on the copula and main verb is obligatory. In (40), both the verb ye-štiɣl-u and the copula ka:nu agree with the subject el-šabab; both

are in the third person masculine plural form. Agreement also occurs when the sentence starts with the auxiliary ka:na. Unlike MSA, Arabic dialects have full agreement in both VS and SV word orders; see (41).

(41) ما كانو الشباب يشتغلوا مزبوط UPA

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ma** | kan-u: | el-šabab | ye-štiɣl-u | mazbootˤ |
| NEG | was-3PL.M | the-young guys | IMP.3M.work-3PL.M | right |

'The young guys didn't work right.'

Mohammad (1989) argues that the nominal element *ħada* 'one' as a subject exceptionally hosts the negative particle ma-…-*iš*. There are no examples in RPA of ma-had-*iš* 'no one', even though it is common in Mohammad's (1998) study of PA. It is worth mentioning here that Mohammed (1989) does not clarify the region or whether the variety of PA is rural or urban. Few examples are found in WhatsApp messages of urban speakers using ma:-…-*iš* with ħada, even though that it is reported that this stage of negation is more common in rural varieties, especially in verbal negation.

(42) بس بحكي محدش بسمع UPA

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| bas | ba-ħki: | **ma**-ħadd-*iš* | bi-smaʕ | when |
| ASP-talk.1S | NEG-one-NEG | | ASP-listen.3SG.M | |

'when I talk, no one listens.'

Example (43) from RPA shows that ma on its own can be used to negate the noun ħada. Exceptionally, the short version ma- attaches to ħada even though -*iš* is not used.

(43) محدا أجا مبيرح RPA

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **ma**-ħada | ʔaja | mbairiħ |
| NEG-one | came.3S.M | yesterday |

'No one came yesterday'

The following examples illustrate the fact that the existential preposition fi: 'in' allows the three different patterns of negation. The first stage is mostly used in UPA.

(44) ما في حدا رايح عالحفلة UPA

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ma:** | fi: | ħada | ra:yiħ | ʕa-el-ħafli |
| NEG | in | one | going.PART | to-the-party |

'No one is going to the party.

The second stage is represented by -*iš* supporting ma- and is used mostly by RPA speakers:

(45) مفش ولا حدا رايح RPA

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ma**-f-*iš* | wala | ħada | ra:yiħ | |
| NEG-in-NEG | NEG | one | going.PART | |

'No one is going.'

In the following example, the third stage is used when the enclitic -*iš* is used and ma- is dropped:

(46) فش إشي فالبيت RPA

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| fi-š | ʔiši | fi-el-bait |
| in-NEG | thing | in-the-house |

'There is nothing in the house.'

The topic of copula pronouns has been discussed by some Arab linguists, such as Eid (1992), Shlonsky (2002), and Aoun et al. (2010). They claim that the copula pronouns occur between the subject and predicate in present tense equative sentences. On the other hand, Abdel-Razaq (2012) argues that these subject pronouns should not be treated as copulas since the language allows verbless sentences without a copula.

Shlonsky (1997) and Ouhalla (1997b) explain that there is another mode of expressing negation in which ma-…-*iš* is cliticized to copular pronouns. The negation cliticizes to the subject pronouns just as it cliticizes to regular verbs and prepositions. Shlonsky claims that the negative pronouns are available in dialects, such as EA and Southern Palestinian. This pattern is also found in KA and MA (Brustad, 2000). These negative pronouns are used with non-verbal predicates, such as participles, adjectives, prepositional phrases, and nouns. In this construction, the pronoun must agree with the subject in person, gender, and number. This pattern does not exist in RPA but is available

in UPA, as shown in (47) and (48): the negative morpheme ma-…-*iš* cliticized to the pronoun, which agrees with the subject:

(47) أحمد مهوش معلم
Ahmad **ma**-hu-š mʔallem UPA
Ahmad NEG-he-NEG teacher
'Ahmad is not a teacher.'

(48) مانتاش رايح عالشغل اليوم؟ UPA
**ma**-nta:-š ra:yiħ ʕa-šuɣul el-yoam
NEG-you.SG.M-NEG going.PART.2SG.M to-work the-day
'Aren't you going to work today?

Aoun et al. (2010) claim that dependent subject pronoun incorporated into the negation carries the subject agreement features, as illustrated in (47), in which the pronominal -*hu* agrees with the subject *Ahmad*. The subject can also be null, as in (48), where the number and gender of the subject is implied by the context. The negative pronoun in Arabic dialects is similar to *laysa*, which carries subject agreement features in MSA. The negative particle *ma-*…-š occupies the head of its syntactic projection and can host subject clitics, which is a property of heads.
Instead of using ma-…-š, RPA uses muš to negate independent subject pronouns (49).

(49) مش هو اللي جابلنا لغراظ أحمد RPA
Ahmed muš huwwi illi jab-il-na li-ɣraðˤ
Ahmed NEG he who brought-to-us the-stuff
'Ahmed is not the one who brought us the stuff.'

There is another context where ma- and/or -*iš* are cliticized to the adverbial ʕumr 'ever'. According to Hoyt (2005), ʕumr originated from the noun 'age' or 'life'. If the particle ma: is used to express negation, it comes either before or after ʕumr. In RPA, ma: more commonly follows ʕumr, as in (50):

(50) عمري ما شفت هالإشي بحياتي RPA
ʕumri ma: šuf-it ha-l-*iš* b-ħayat-i
ever NEG seen.1SG this-the-thing in-life-my
'I never seen such a thing in my life'

Different ways to express negation using ʕumr in UPA are illustrated in the following examples. ma: can occur on its own (51), ma-…-š can be used (52), or -š by itself can be used (52).

(51) ما عمري رحت عندهم UPA
ma: ʕumr-i ruħit ʕindhum
NEG ever-my went.1SG at-them
'I never went to them.'

(52) ما عمريش سمعت هالأخبار UPA
ma-ʕumr-i-š smiʕ-it ha-l-xabar
NEG-ever-my-NEG heard-1SG his-the-news
I never heard this news.'

(53) عمريش شفت ناس هيك UPA
ʕumr-i-š šufit na:s haik.
ever-my-NEG saw people like.this
'I never seen people like this.'

One of the main differences between RPA and UPA is the use of -*iš* for perfect, imperfect, or pseudo-verbs. Based on my limited data, it is clear that UPA is less likely to use -*iš* as a postverbal clitic; RPA is more likely. Instead, UPA is more likely to use -*iš* in nominal negation. It appears that the younger generations of RPA speakers tend to use stage one in verbal negation as a prestigious choice, switching to urban dialects. It was reported that stage three is very common in rural dialects, such as

the sˤaʕīdī dialect in Egypt (Khalafallah, 1969), the dialect of esˤsˤalṭ in Jordan (Palva, 1984), and in Southern Lebanese dialect (Abu Haidar, 1979).

Note that in most of the negation categories, using *-iš* as an enclitic is optional. Two meanings were presented in explaining the deletion of the enclitic *-iš*. The first is emphatic negation, when the stress falls on the first morpheme, as presented by Abulhaija (1989) for JA. The second was introduced by Brustad (2000), who explained that the deletion of *-iš* in MA and EA is categorical negation. I believe that emphatic negation presents the person's point of view while categorical negation is mostly impersonalized. The data shows that the negative particle ma-…*-iš* especially in verbal negation, is the most common type of verbal negation among RPA speakers.

## 2.3.2. The Negative Particle muš

The negative particle ma-…*-iš* is sometimes reanalyzed as the independent negative particle muš, which is used mostly in constituent negation in nonverbal sentences in RPA. muš is a negative auxiliary used to negate nonverbal predicates, such as nouns, adjectives, participles, and prepositional phrases. There are some examples where muš is used also in verbal sentences as a prohibitive particle. Note that urban speakers use that m*iš* instead of muš.

Example (54) shows the use of muš in the negation of the nominal predicate:

(54) مش مشكلة RPA

muš muškili
NEG problem
'No problem.'

The following example illustrates the use of muš in the negation of the adjectival predicate:

(55) انا مش جعانة RPA

ʔana: muš jaʕan-i
I NEG hungry-3SG.F
'I am not hungry.'

Brustad (2000) argues that the negative particle m*iš* in EA is a non-discontinuous particle that cannot be separated; muš cannot be replaced by ma-…*-iš*. Splitting muš into two is ungrammatical, as in (56):

(56) * انا ما جعانش

*ʔana: ma jaʕan-*iš*
I NEG hungry-NEG

The ungrammatical example in (56) shows that the negative ma: cannot be followed by the adjective phrase (AP) jaʕani. The right morpheme to be used is muš, as shown in (55).

(57) *أنا ما جعانة

*ʔana ma: jaʕa:ni
I NEG hungry
'I am not hungry.'

muš also can be used to negate PPs and participles and occupies the head of the NegP as in (58) and (59):

(58) انا مش فالبيت RPA

ʔana: muš fi-l-bait
I NEG in-the-house
'I am not in the house.'

(59) مش رايح عالسوك RPA

muš ra:jiħ ʕa-s-su:k
NEG go.PART.F/M to-the-market
'I am not going to the market.'

In RPA, muš is also used in the future tense. The future tense is represented by the auxiliary ra:jiħ 'going'; it has been grammaticalized as a future tense auxiliary:

(60) انا مش رايح أطبخ اليوم RPA

ʔana muš ra:yiħ ʔatˤbux el-yoam
I NEG go.PART.F/M cook.1SG the-day
'I am not going to cook today.'

Note that examples (59) and (60) are ambiguous, as RPA uses the masculine form for both male and female first person singular. Both examples were produced by females. However, there is a distinction between masculine and feminine in UPA.

One of the main differences between RPA and UPA in future tense negation is that in UPA, a grammaticalized auxiliary raħ is mostly used, rather than ra:yiħ. It is possible to use either ma: or m*iš* to negate future tense, as it is shown below:

(61) ما /مش رح اوكل بالمطعم اليوم UPA

**ma:/m*iš*** raħ ʔaukil bi-l-matˤʕam el-yoam
NEG will eat.1SG in-the-restaurant the-day
'I am not going to eat in the restaurant today.'

The negative particle muš/m*iš* cannot be separated in the negation of the future tense. For example, (62) is ungrammatical when the negative particle ma:-…-*iš* is used with the infinitive mode to express the future tense, whereas ma: can be used, as in (61) from UPA.

(62) *ما رح اوكلش بالمطعم اليوم UPA

*ma: raħ ʔaukil-*iš* bi-l-matˤʕam el-youm
NEG will eat.1SG-NEG in-the-restaurant the-day

Other examples are found in RPA that use muš as a negative particle if the sentence uses the active participle ka:ʕid as a progressive marker and the main verb is in the imperfective form. The word ka:ʕid means 'he is sitting' is grammaticalized from an active participle (63) to a progressive maker (64).

(63) لولاد كاعدين برة RPA

li-wlad kaʕd-:n barra
the-boys sitting-3Pl.M outside
'The boys are sitting outside.' (64) لولاد كاعدين بوكلو
RPA

li-wlad kaʕd-:n bu-:kl-u
the-boys sitting-3Pl.M ASP-eat-3PL.M
'The boys are eating.'

(65) لولاد مش كاعدين بوكلو RPA

li-wlad muš kaʕd-:n bu-:klu
the-boy NEG sitting-3PL.M ASP-eat-3PL.M
'The boys are not eating.'

In example (65), *muš* is used to negate the progressive marker *kaʕd-:n* that agrees with the subject in person, gender and number.

Few examples are found of mu: used as adjectival predicate negation, unlike in other dialects, such as EA, KA, and SA (Brustad, 2000).

(66) انا مو شايف اي مشكلة UPA

ʔana mu: ša:yif ʔay muškili
I NEG see.PART.SG.M any problem
'I don't see any problem.'

This can be analyzed as a type of dialect code switching (Abdel-Jawad, 1986). Abdel-Jawad argues that speakers switch from their own local dialect to a dialect they believe is prestigious. In this case, speakers switch to MSA, believing that it is a prestigious dialect. Benmamoun (2000) shows that m*iš* is used in EA with present tense verbs and the present tense may not combine with negation, as in (67):

(67) مش بيكتب EA
**mɨš** bi-yi-ktib
NEG ASP-IMPF.3SG.M-write
'He isn't writing.' (p. 4)

Aoun (2010) also provides another piece of evidence that mu: is equivalent to mɨš/muš with perfective verbs in SA, as in (68):

(68) مو خلّص SA
**mu**: Xallasˤ?
NEG finished.he
Didn't he finish? (p.100)

Brustad (2000) claims that mu: is also used in KA for verbal negation, as in (66):

(69) خل بالك على محمد – مو بييني KA
xal ba:lak ʕala Muhammad-**mu:** yiyi:ni
let attention-your to Muhammad-NEG he.comes.to.me
'Pay attention to Mohammad—he [had better] not show up!' (p. 281)

From the previous examples, we can assume that using muš/mɨš/mu: in verbal negation is similar to laysa in present tense negation in CA.
There are few examples in RPA where muš is used as a prohibitive particle as in (70):

(70) مش تقطع الكهربا RPA
**muš** tiqtˤaʕ elkahraba
NEG cut.2SG.M the.electricity
Don't cut off the electricity!

Example (71) shows that muš can be used also in tag questions:

(71) مش جاية معنا؟ RPA
muš ja:y-i maʕ-na
NEG come- PART.SG.F with-us
'Aren't you coming with us?'

Different uses of muš is presented and discussed, In the next section, the negative particle la: is discussed.

### 2.3.3. The Negative Particle la:

The MSA la: is cognate with the RPA laʕ and the UPA laʔ and are all used as "no" to answer yes/no questions. UPA prefers using it without the support of *-ɨš* as a verbal enclitic for negative imperatives and prohibitives, as in (72):

(72) لا تروح معهم UPA
**la:** tru:ħ maʕ-hum
NEG go.2SG.M with-them
'Don't go with them.'

The negative particle la: can be used to negate nominals, such as the word ʔɨšɨ 'thing', meaning 'nothing':

(73) ولا إشي حظرت للسفر RPA
**wala:** ʔɨšɨ ħaðˤðˤar-it la-s-safar
NEG thing prepared-1SG.F for-the traveling
'I didn't prepare anything for travelling.'

The negative particle la: can also be used with the noun ħada 'one' as a negative quantifier in UPA. No examples are found in RPA, but ma is used instead.

(74) ولا حدة حكى إشي عن الموضوع UPA
wala ħada ħaka ʔɨšɨ ʕan el-mawdˤu:ʕ
NEG one said.3SG.M thing about the-topic
'No one said anything about the topic.'

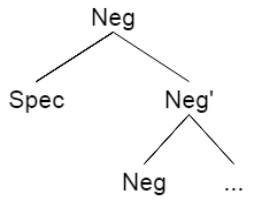
In summary, RPA has different verbal and non-verbal negation patterns. The most common form is ma-…-*iš*, which is used to negate both perfective and imperfective verbs. All three JC stages can be found in the case of imperfective aspect, whereas the third stage is not found with the perfective aspect. The morphemes ma: and -*iš* are also used to negate nominals, such as *ħada* and ʔ*iš*, pseudo-verbs, and pronominals.

To negate non-verbal sentences, muš is used instead. It is used to negate nominal, adjectival, participle, and prepositional predicates. Occasionally, it is used to negate imperative/prohibitive verbs.

In the next section, some of the examples from RPA are discussed from a syntactic point of view.

## 2.4. Data Discussion and Implications

The aim of this section is to present the syntactic analysis of negation and the distribution of the negative morphemes in RPA. Most of the studies on sentential negation in Arabic dialects have adopted the NegP Hypothesis of Chomsky (1995), Benmamoun (1992), Shlonsky (1997), Ouhalla (1991), Pollock (1989), among many others. This hypothesis states that negative morphemes head their own functional projection located between the tense and the verb, as shown in (71). This functional projection blocks the merger of the tense and verb. Benmamoun et al. (2013) explain "grammatical categories such as tense and negation occupy syntactic projections above the lexical categories that contain the thematic head and its associated arguments".



(75)

Arabic linguists are focused on the location of NegP and the relation between VP and NegP. Aoun et al. (2010) claimed that there are two types of sentential negation in Arabic dialects: negation is hosted by the verb or negation is independent and is treated as a head of its own syntactic projection. Two of the most common negative particles used to negate verbal sentences in RPA are the morphemes ma-…-*iš* and ma:. They are both used with both perfective and imperfective verbs. The enclitic -*iš* negates imperfective but not perfective verbs. These negative particles are syntactically generated in the same position and serve the same function. The particle muš is used in nominal, adjectival, participle, and prepositional predicates and in the imperative/prohibitive occupies the head of NegP. Some of these negation examples will be analyzed from a syntactic point of view in the following sections.

### 2.4.1. The Negative Particles ma, ma-š, -*iš*

I start my discussion with analyzing the syntax of verbal negation focusing on ma: by itself in the perfect tense, as in (26), repeated below.

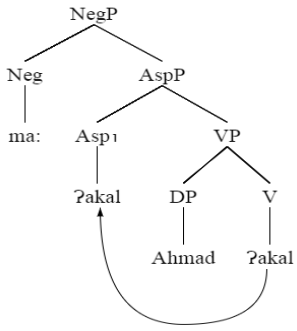
(26) ما أكل احمد UPA

ma: ʔakal Ahmad

NEG ate.3MS Ahmad

'Ahmad didn't eat.'

According to Ouhalla (1993), Benmamoun (1992, 2000), Bahloul (1996), and Aoun et al. (2010), ma:, used for sentential negation in different Arabic dialects in both perfective and imperfective verbs, is the head of NegP. This sentential negation occupies a position between TP and VP. The verb does not need to be clicized to the independent negation particle. Therefore, the verb does not need to move to NegP to pick up the negative particle, instead moving to Asp, as shown in the tree below.

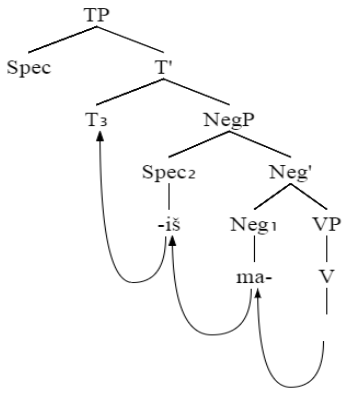



(76)

The negative particle ma:-…-*iš* does not behave the same regarding aspect. When the verb is perfective, either ma:-…-*iš*, as in (27) below, or ma:, as in (26), can be used. The enclitic -*iš* on its own is not available in RPA, as it is in other Arabic dialects. On the other hand, when the verb is in the imperfective mode, all three different choices are available, as discussed earlier.

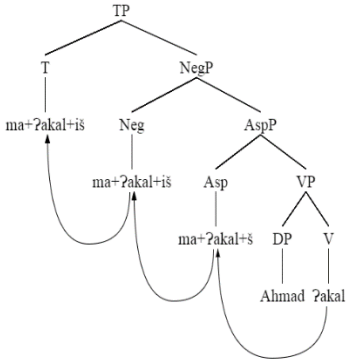
(27) مأكلش أحمد RPA
**ma**-ʔakal-*iš* Ahmad
NEG-ate.3SG.M-NEG Ahmad
'Ahmad did not eat.'

Using ma-…-*iš* in some dialects, like RPA, is debatable. Some analyze it as an adverb like pas in French (Lucas 2007; Pollock 1989; Shlonsky 1997). Benmamoun (1992), Ouhalla (1990, 1993), and Shlonsky (1997) claim that -*iš* occupies Spec of NegP and ma- occupies the head. Thus, the verb moves to Neg before moving to T; the proclitic ma- cliticizes to the verb and then move to pick up the enclitic – *iš* and then move together to T. This analysis is illustrated in tree below.




(77)

Following Benmamoun (2000) and Al-Tamari (2001), I argue that both ma- and -*iš* occupy the head of the NegP, as in (78) for example (27). The verb cannot cross the Neg head and move to T due to minimality. Therefore, it must merge with the Neg head to check the [+D] feature and then move to T to check the [+V] feature. The subject and verb occupy Spec of VP and V, respectively. Tree (78), representing (27), shows that the perfect tense negation in RPA may also be expressed by using the two negatives, ma- as a verbal proclitic and -*iš* as a verbal enclitic, as discontinuous negation. Al-Tamari (2001) states that in Jordanian Arabic (JA) negation, ma: and ma-…-*iš* are generated in the same position and serve the same function.




(78)

The negative enclitic *-iš* is optional, but the use of both ma:-…*-iš* is more common in RPA. In UPA, ma: is used in most of the examples; if *-iš* is used, it is mostly used because the stress falls on it. As it was mentioned earlier, ma: is pronounced with a short vowel ma- when it is used as a clitic and with a longer vowel when it is used as an independent particle.

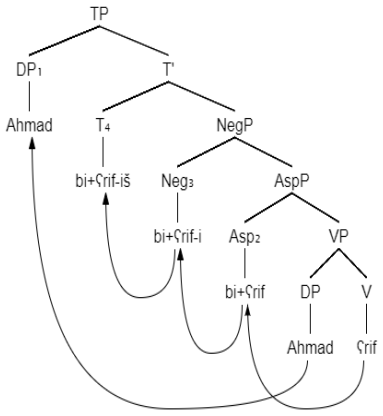
Imperfective verbs can also be encliticized by *-iš* without the proclitic ma-, as in (25), repeated below; this is not allowed in the perfective aspect. This supports the fact that *-iš* must occupy the head of NegP, as in (79).

(25) أحمد بعرفش RPA

Ahmad bi-ʕrif-*iš*

Ahmad ASP-know-NEG

'Ahmad doesn't know




(79)

For the negation of non-verbal predicates, muš is used, which is a combination of the negative particle ma-…*-iš*. Aoun et al. (2010) argue against Ouhalla's (1990, 1993) Spec-head theory and follows Bahloul (1996) and Benmamoun (2000), who argue that ma-…*-iš* is one morpheme that occupies the same Neg head.

In the next section, the syntax of the particle muš that is used with nominal, adjectival, participle, and prepositional predicates and in imperative/prohibitive is discussed.

### 2.4.2. The Negative Particle muš

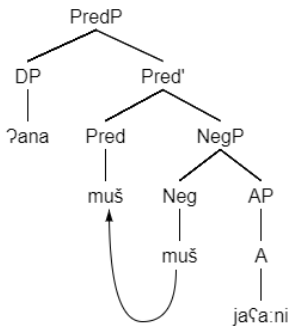
In non-verbal sentences (equational or predicative), neither ma: nor *-iš* is used. Instead, the negative particle muš (a combination of ma-…*-iš*) occupies the head of NegP to negate nonverbal predicates, such as adjectives (80).

(55) أنا مش جعانة RPA

ʔana muš jaʕa:n-i

I NEG hungry-F

I am not hungry.'




(80)

muš also occupies the head of NegP when it is used to negate PP or participles. muš as an independent particle that occurs in the head of the NegP is evidence that ma:-…-*iš* occupies the head of NegP as well.

To conclude, when ma: occupies the head of NegP, the past tense does not need to merge with it. Therefore, the verb doesn't need to move to NegP and pick up the negative particle and move to Asp. On the other hand, ma-…-*iš* occupies the head of NegP. Therefore, the verb must move to NegP head and then move to T. In non-verbal predicates, muš is used as an independent negative particle that occurs as a result of the combination of ma-…-*iš* and occupies the head of NegP.

## 2.5. Conclusion

This chapter explored the morphosyntactic properties of sentential negation in in MSA and RPA. It showed that the distribution of negation differs depending on the position of the negative particle as well as the negated element. Different forms of negation are used in MSA for verbal and non-verbal sentences. The unmarked negative particle la: is in the imperfective aspect. The negative particle ma: is in the past perfective aspect. The particles lam and lan are marked for past imperfective and future tense, respectively. As far as non-verbal present tense sentences are concerned, the negative particle laysa, which carries the agreement features of the subject, is used instead. There was evidence in the literature that laysa is used in CA in the imperfect aspect.

RPA has different negation strategies. The negative particle ma-…-*iš* is used in the perfective and imperfective aspect. The deletion of part of the negative particle ma-…-*iš* is associated with verb type. In perfective aspect, only ma:- or ma-…-*iš* is acceptable. In the imperfective, using either affix or both together is possible and acceptable. To conclude, the optional negative suffix -*iš* can be used on its own with all verbs and pseudo-verbs that are negated with ma- except perfective verbs and the pseudo-verb ʕind.

Abulhaija (1989) and Brustad (2000) propose that the deletion of -*iš* in all categories indicates emphasis or absolute negation. From the collected data, it was found that the use of the enclitic -*iš* with perfect and imperfect verbs and prepositional phrases is more common in RPA than in UPA.

From a syntactic point of view, when ma: is used in the perfect aspect, it occupies the head of NegP. Therefore, the verb doesn't need to move to NegP to pick up the negative particle and move to Asp. On the other hand, when ma-…-*iš* occupies the head of the NegP, the verb merges with NegP head and then they all move to T.

*muš* is used to negate adjectives, participles, and prepositional phrases and developed from the combination of ma: and -*iš*. Some examples are recorded of muš in the imperative/prohibitive. muš also occupies the head of NegP when it is used to negate adjectives, PPs, or participles. The main predicate in negation clauses (adjective, participle, or verb) does not need to raise to T when there is no need to merge with negation.

## Works Citation

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