

- b. *law Ahmad gih lissah ...
 if Ahmad come.PERF.3SGM yet
 ‘*If Ahmad arrived yet, ...’
- c. *law šuft-i-š Ahmad ?il-nahaar-dah ...
 if see.PERF.2sgm-EV-NEG Ahmad the-day-this
 Intended reading: ‘If you saw Ahmad today, ...’

Diachronically, *šumr* is derived from the noun *šumr* (=life/age), which is still productive in the language. *Lissah*, by contrast, is arguably derived from *laysa*, a negative morpheme from Classical Arabic. Similar to *lissah*, *-š* is generally assumed to be a phonological reduction of the noun *šayʔ* (=a thing) in Classical Arabic, which came to function as an accusative adverbial NPI in certain grammatical contexts (Lucas, 2010).

Finally, recall that while *maa* can express negation by itself in certain contexts in CEA (as in 3a), *-š* cannot (cf. 9), thereby suggesting that *-š* is only formally negative, and that *maa* is the locus of semantic negation. We can thus summarize the “negativity” of these four elements as in Table (12).

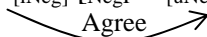
12.	<i>-š</i>	<i>lissah</i>	<i>šumr</i>	<i>maa</i>
<i>Diachronic origin</i>	Noun used as an NPI: <i>šayʔ-an</i>	Negative morpheme: <i>laysa</i>	Noun: <i>šumr</i>	Negative morpheme: <i>maa</i>
<i>Compatible with nonnegative contexts</i>	No	No	Yes	
<i>Negativity</i>	Formal	Formal	Nonnegative	Semantic

Returning now to the puzzle under discussion while taking formal negativity into account, it becomes clear that *-š*, a formally negative element, disappears in the presence of a nonnegative NPI such as *šumr*, but is retained in the presence of a negative NPI such as *lissah*. The phenomenon, however, is sensitive to locality: *-š* only disappears when *šumr* is “close by” (i.e., in pre-negative position) but not when it is relatively distant (i.e., in postverbal position), as shown earlier by the contrast between (3) and (4). We may thus restate the puzzle of *-š* disappearance as in (13).

13. Within a local domain, *-š* is not spelled-out in the presence of an NPI that is formally nonnegative; otherwise it is phonologically realized.

To derive the generalization in (13) in a principled manner, and adapting an approach to negation and negative concord in Zeijlstra (2004, 2008), I propose a *Split Neg* analysis for CEA sentential negation, whereby *maa* is a (Pol)arity head, the locus of interpretable negation (marked as an [iNeg] feature), and *-š* is a Neg head specified for an uninterpretable negative feature (marked as [uNeg]). Licensing of Neg takes place under *Agree* with Pol, in the sense of Chomsky (2000, 2001), as illustrated in (14), ignoring irrelevant details.

14. [_{PolP} *maa*_[iNeg] [_{NegP} *-š*_[uNeg] [_{TP} ...]]]

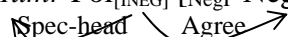


In addition, based on Table (12), I assume that some NPIs (e.g., *lissah*) are formally negative, while others (e.g., *šumr*) are not. In technical terms, the former are endowed with a [uNeg] feature, whereas the latter are not. Those that have a [uNeg] feature are licensed by Pol, either via *Agree*, or in a Spec-head configuration (the latter argued for in Benmamoun 1997 for Moroccan Arabic NPIs). In addition, Pol also licenses NPIs semantically (under downward entailment (Ladusaw 1979), or nonveridicality (Giannkidou 1998)). I will further assume that “local domain” in (13) corresponds to a *phase* (i.e., CP and vP; Chomsky 2001). Finally, I restate the generalization in (13) as an interface condition on Spell-out of formal features licensed in the syntax, as in (15).

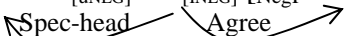
15. *Minimize formal feature mismatch* (MFFM): At Spell-out, minimize formal feature mismatch on licensees of the same licenser within a local domain.

Given these background assumptions, we can now see why *-š* disappears with *šumr*, but not with *lissah*, given the representations in (16) and (17).

16. [_{CP} [_{PolP} *šumr* Pol_[iNEG] [_{NegP} Neg_[uNEG] [_{TP} T [_{vP} ...]]]]]



17. [_{CP} [_{PolP} *lissah*_[uNEG] Pol_[iNEG] [_{NegP} Neg_[uNEG] [_{TP} T [_{vP} ...]]]]]



While semantic licensing in both cases is unproblematic, syntactic licensing of the [uNeg] feature on Neg leads to mismatch in (16), but not in (17), hence forcing *-š* to delete in the former, but not in the latter, as required by (15).

Similarly, the fact that postverbal *šumr* does not induce -š suppression follows from MFFM being sensitive to locality: Since NPIs in postverbal position are within the *vP* phase, whereas -š is always in the *CP* phase, feature mismatch is rendered irrelevant at Spell-out and -š is retained (probably due to an input-output faithfulness constraint).

A problem arises, however, with the fact noted earlier that -š has to surface when *šumr* itself is the host of circumfixal negation (cf. 5), contrary to what we expect under the present analysis, since both elements are in the same phase in that case. Two questions arise here: First, why is *šumr* able to host negation in the first place? Second, why does -š surface in that case? For the first question, I suggest that, given its monosyllabicity, *šumr* has been reanalyzed as a preposition in the language. PPs in CEA can host negation, provided that their complement is a pronominal (18b); cf. Eid (1993).

- 18a. ʔand-ii ʔarabiyyah b. maa-ʔand-ii-š ʔarabiyyah
 at-me car NEG-at-me-NEG car
 ‘I have a car.’ ‘I don’t have a car.’

As to why -š does not disappear when *šumr* hosts negation, there are multiple possibilities to pursue. One is that the MFFM morphological principle in (15) does not apply at the single prosodic word level; rather, it applies only when the mismatched features occur on different prosodic words. A second possibility is to assume that in such contexts it is Neg, after being licensed by Pol, that licenses *šumr* as an NPI. Under that scenario, Neg and *šumr* are not multiple licensees of the same licenser, and MFFM is inoperative. A third possibility is to assume that TP is a phase, or to re-define locality in non-phasal terms. Whatever the correct analysis turns out to be, the fact that -š is phonologically realized when *šumr* hosts negation is still reconcilable with the analysis presented here.

To sum up, a Split-Neg analysis of sentential negation in CEA allows us to formulate a principle to target the -š segment for deletion at Spell-out. This principle is crucially tied to the formal features of -š, the formal features (or lack thereof) of different NPIs, the mechanisms involved in licensing such features, as well as how local the -š and the NPI are with respect to one another. If correct, the analysis not only explains away a morphosyntactic puzzle from negation contexts in CEA, but it also provides evidence that NPI phenomena, in addition to being a semantic dependency, may also involve formal feature licensing in a minimalist sense, with effects at the syntax-morphology interface.

Abbreviations used in the glosses of CEA data: 1, 2, 3 for first, second, and third person, respectively; SG = singular; PL = plural; M = masculine; F = feminine; NEG = negation marker; FUT = future; PERF = perfective; IPFV = imperfective; PTCP = participial; EV = epenthetic vowel.

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