

## Nonveridicality and Negative Polarity Variation

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**Abstract.** This paper investigates the constraints that underlie the licensing of negative polarity items in Classical/Standard Arabic, aspiring to be the first study that provides a comprehensive account that defines the condition under which those items are licensed in that language. I demonstrate that negative polarity items are licensed only in non-veridical contexts in Classical/Standard Arabic. It is contended that downward entailment, Strawson-downward entailment, polarity lattices, binding, or anti-upward entailment do not predict the right distribution of negative polarity items in Classical/Standard Arabic. Furthermore, it is argued that the strength of negative expressions dictates a variation in the licensing of the negative polarity items under consideration. Specifically, it is shown that a weak (or broad) negative polarity item is sanctioned with questions, imperatives, adversative predicates, protasis of conditionals, modal verbs, the future, restrictor of *every*, the habitual, and volitional verbs, whereas strong (or strict) ones are only licensed by regular negation. That negative polarity items are licensed in veridical non-monotonic contexts in a language such as English, while they are not allowed in these contexts in Classical/Standard Arabic corroborates recent proposals that call for a variation approach to the licensing of negative polarity items cross-linguistically. The analysis entertained in this paper not only highlights the condition responsible for the sanctioning of negative polarity items in Classical/Standard Arabic, but also provides evidence for a hierarchy of negative expressions strength.

### 1. Introduction

Licensing of NPIs has been a central theme in the linguistic literature (cf. Giannakidou, 2011; de Swart, 2009; Horn, 1989, 2005; Szabolcsi, 2004; Pereltsvaig, 2000; Haegeman, 1995; Progovac, 1994; Kadmon and Landman, 1993; Zanuttini, 1991; Ouhalla, 1990, 2002; Laka, 1990; Linebarger, 1980, 1987; Ladusaw, 1979, 1980, 1992; Lasnik, 1972; Baker, 1970; Jackendoff, 1969; Klima, 1964; among many others). The central task in the theories of polarity in the past three decades has been to answer the questions of what the environments that license the use of NPIs are, and what is common to all these environments.

This study takes its point of departure the null hypothesis that NPIs do not differ cross-linguistically in terms of the environments in which they are licensed. This hypothesis will be tested against data from Classical/Standard Arabic. The goal of this

study is to propose a comprehensive account of the licensing of NPIs in Classical/Standard Arabic.

### 2. Licensing of NPIs

The subsections below provide a brief discussion of the analyses of NPIs that have been advanced in the literature, focusing mainly on what I consider turning points in the investigation of the licensing of NPIs.

#### 2.1. Early analyses

One of the earliest studies in generative grammar that have attempted to explain the phenomenon of NPI licensing is Klima's (1964) seminal work on English negation. Klima (1964) has brought attention to an important characteristic of NPIs, viz., that they are licensed in various environments. For although some of them are

licensed by a negative element, some occur in sentences that are not syntactically negative. In order to give a unified account of the licensing of NPIs, Klima (1964) proposes a feature “affective” that all the environments that license the use of NPIs share.

The same problem is encountered in Baker (1970) who coined the term Negative Polarity Items. Baker (1970) notes that although there are a set of words and expressions that may occur only in negative sentences, some NPIs can occur in non-negative environments. To solve this problem, Baker (1970) contends that in the presence of an overt negation marker, NPIs are licensed under the notion of *c-command*, while in the absence of an overt negation marker, NPIs are licensed by implicature.

Building upon and extending Baker (1970), Linebarger (1980) employs a dichotomous approach to the licensing of NPIs. On the one hand, she contends that NPIs are licensed if at LF an NPI is in the immediate scope of negation and no elements capable of entering into scope ambiguities, such as the universal quantifier *every*, intervene between the NPI and negation. On the other hand, she maintains that for the cases that cannot be accounted for by the syntactic constraint, NPIs are licensed by a context dependent negative implicature. Thus, she argues that the acceptability of the NPI *any* in a sentence such as *I was surprised that John had any llamas in his apartment* is due to the assumption that the sentence has the negative implicature *I had expected that John would not have any llamas in his apartment* (cf. Linebarger, 1987: p. 362ff).

The hypothesis that takes negation to be the key factor in the licensing of NPIs has found a number of counterexamples. NPIs, for instance, can occur in sentences with downward entailment quantifiers, such as *few*, in the restriction of universal quantifiers, such as *every*, in questions, and in *if*-clauses. These counterexamples have shown that the distribution of NPIs exceeds negation, necessitating the introduction of a new analysis to account for all the contexts in which NPIs appear.

## 2.2. Fauconnier-Ladusaw hypothesis

In a seminal work that is considered a turning point in the study of NPIs, Ladusaw (1979) attempts to provide a unified account for the environments that license the use of NPIs. He proposes that the class of licensors for NPIs be defined in semantic terms. Ladusaw’s (1979) semantic approach is inspired by Fauconnier’s (1975) analysis of inferences on pragmatic scales. According to Fauconnier (1975), proposition schemas are associated with pragmatic scales. In the case of regular (i.e., non-negative and

non-quantified) sentences, the less likely the proposition in the schema is, the lower it is located on the scale. Given that the direction of inference in regular scales is upward, the truth of a proposition entails the truth of all the propositions above it. Consequently, the least likely proposition entails the truth of all the propositions on the scale. Consider (1).

- (1) a. The students can answer question X.
- b. The students can answer the most difficult question.
- c. The students can answer the easiest question.

Sentence (1b) is the least likely proposition in the schema (1a). Hence, it is located lower on the scale and it entails all the other propositions. Sentence (1c), on the other hand, is the most likely proposition in the schema, and, hence, is located higher on the scale, and it does not entail the other propositions.

Fauconnier (1975) contends that while in regular scales the direction of inferences is upward, it becomes downward in negative ones. What negation does is to reverse the direction of the inferences on the scale. The less likely the proposition in the schema is, the higher it is located on the scale. So the highest proposition is the least likely, and it is the one that entails all the others. Consider (2).

- (2) a. The students can’t answer question X.
- b. The students can’t answer the most difficult question.
- c. The students can’t answer the easiest question.

The direction of inference on the negative scale in (2) is downward. The highest proposition, viz. (2c), entails all the other propositions in the schema (2a), including (2b).

Ladusaw (1979) employs Fauconnier’s notion of downward entailment. He argues that NPIs are only licensed if they are in the scope of a downward entailing (polarity reversing) operator (cf. also von Stechow, 1999: p. 98). Ladusaw’s (1979) approach assumes that negation is a member of the subclass of downward entailing expressions. In this system, an expression is downward entailing if it licenses inferences in its scope from superset to subset. Put differently, a downward entailing operator is an operator that reverses the direction of entailment. Consider the pair of sentences in (3) and (4).

- (3) a. The teacher bought a Honda.
- b. The teacher bought a car.
- (4) a. The lady didn’t see a beaver.
- b. The lady didn’t see an animal.

Regular sentences such as those in (3) allow inferences from properties to super-properties. The object position in (3) is upward monotone. Thus sentence (3a) entails sentence (3b). The sentences in (4), on the other hand, are negative. The negative marker not reverses inferences, creating entailments from properties to sub-properties. The object position in (4) is downward monotone. Thus sentence (4a) does not entail that the lady didn't see an animal. Along with the notion of downward entailment, Ladusaw proposes that the licenser must precede the licensee that appears in the same clause as the licenser. In other words, a licenser must c-command the licensee at surface structure.

Many researchers have called attention to essential problems with the downward entailment approach to NPIs proposed by Ladusaw (1979). Some of these researchers claim that downward entailment is not the right licensing condition, and that there are a number of NPIs that are licensed by environments that are not downward monotone (cf. Linebarger, 1987, 1991). Giannakidou (1998), for instance, observes that the downward entailment approach fails to capture the contrast between two environments with regard to the licensing of the English NPI *any*. For although *any* is allowed in the restriction of every, a phenomenon that can be accounted for by the downward entailment analysis, it is not allowed in the restriction of each and both, despite the fact that downward entailment predicts uniform licensing in universal restrictions. Moreover, Giannakidou (1998, 1999, 2006) notes that the downward entailment approach cannot explain the occurrence of NPIs in questions (5a), imperatives (5b), with modal verbs (5c), propositional attitudes (5d), habitual (5e), and disjunctions (5f). Consider the structures in (5).

- (5) a. Did you eat anything?  
 b. Take any road.  
 c. Ahmed can fix any engine.  
 d. Fatima believes that anybody is kind.  
 e. Zainab used to read any book.  
 f. Either anybody came or we left the door open.

That NPIs can occur in environments that are not downward monotone, as can be evidenced by the behavior of *any* in the structures in (5), has made it obvious that the correct set of licensing environments either in a particular language or cross-linguistically cannot be predicted by downward entailment. Furthermore, Linebarger (1980) also points out that the Downward Entailment analysis doesn't explain why NPIs are licensed by such non-monotone licensors as only.

I will consider in the following subsection what is considered to be an extension of the downward entailment approach.

### 2.3. Strawson downward entailingness

The inability of the downward entailment approach to explain the occurrence of NPIs in non-downward monotone contexts has led to the attempt to propose alternatives to that approach. Von Fintel (1999) contends that what he calls Strawson Downward Entailingness accounts for the unexpected cases of NPIs occurring in non-downward entailing environments, i.e. in sentences with only, conditionals, superlatives, and adversative predicates. Von Fintel (1999) takes his point of departure Strawson's (1952) proposal that "natural language quantifiers carry an existence presupposition with respect to their domain; if the presupposition is not satisfied, the sentence will be neither true nor false" (von Fintel, 1999: p. 105). Strawson Downward Entailingness is given in (6).

- (6) Strawson Downward Entailingness (von Fintel, 1999: p. 104)  
 A function  $f$  of type  $\langle \sigma, \tau \rangle$  is Strawson-DE  
 iff for all  $x, y$  of type  $\sigma$  such that  $x \rightarrow y$  and  $f(x)$   
 is defined:  $f(y) \rightarrow f(x)$

According to von Fintel (1999) a function is Strawson-DE iff for any two arguments such that the first entails the second and the result of applying the function to the first argument is defined, the result of applying the function to the second argument entails the result of applying the function to the first argument.

To explicate Strawson Downward Entailingness consider (7).

- (7) a. Only Sara ever saw an animal at the train station.  
 b. Sara saw a leopard at the train station.  
 c. Only Sara ever saw a leopard at the train station.

In (7a) the NPI *ever* is licensed by the generalized quantifier *Only Sara*. Nevertheless, downward entailment cannot explain this phenomenon, for sentence (7c) cannot be entailed from sentence (7a). However, according to von Fintel (1999) sentence (7a) Strawson-entails sentence (7c). He argues that this type of entailment is done under the assumption that the presupposition of sentence (7c), namely, *Sara saw a leopard at the train station*, is satisfied. Building on Strawson (1952), von Fintel (1999)

contends that the quantifier in (7a) carries an existence presupposition, and that that presupposition must be satisfied in order for the sentence to be true or false. The premise (7b) states that the presuppositions of all the statements involved are satisfied.

Although Strawson-Downward Entailingness provides a solution for a number of problematic NPI licensing cases, there are other cases of NPI licensing which cannot be explained by Strawson-DE. For instance, if we replace the construction *Only Sara ever* with *Exactly four girls* in (7), the conclusion, *Exactly four girls saw a leopard at the train station*, is not inferred.

As argued by Giannakidou (2002) Strawson-DE doesn't explain the licensing of NPIs in modal, intensional, future, habitual, generic and other nonmonotone contexts. Moreover, Giannakidou (2002) claims that Strawson-DE wrongly predicts NPIs to be sanctioned by focus and presuppositional determiners (cf. Giannakidou, 2002, Section 3 for a detailed account).

#### 2.4. Polarity lattices

Krifka (1990) provides a pragmatic explanation that accounts for the distribution of polarity items. Building on Rooth's (1985) analysis of focused constituents, the analysis which Krifka introduces associates with a complex expression a set of alternatives generated by the alternatives of the basic polarity item that it contains. Based on the scalar notions central to the analyses of Horn (1972) and Fauconnier (1975), Krifka (1990) claims that the set of alternatives is ordered by a relation of strength. He contends that the minimum and maximum items in these lattices of alternatives are polarity items. In the case of a complex expression containing a NPI, the NPI itself is the weakest element in the lattice. Using a NPI in a sentence which is associated with a propositional lattice means that the speaker is unwilling to assert any alternative proposition in the lattice. Consider the expressions in (8a) and (8b).

- (8) a. \* He bought anything.  
b. He didn't see anything.

According to Krifka, the complex expression in (8a) is weaker than all its alternatives. The ill-formedness of (8a) is a result of the hypothesis that using the NPI *anything* in this complex expression means denying the assertability of all the alternatives. According to Krifka (1990), using as an independent assertion an expression that is weaker

than its alternatives is ruled out. He attributes the reason to a violation of Grice's maxim of Quantity suggesting that a complex expression such as that in (8a) fails to be informative because in any natural context where sentence (8a) is true, some stronger alternatives are true as well. The complex expression in (8b), on the other hand, is stronger than all the alternatives generated by the alternatives of the NPI that it contains. Thus, it is informative, and, hence, acceptable. Furthermore, Krifka (1990) claims that the violation of Quantity that is involved in sentence (8a) is not accidental, but an inherent one. The sentence deliberately introduces stronger alternatives while claiming the weakest one.

A number of studies have shown problems with Krifka's analysis. Kadmon and Landmn (1993), for instance, criticize Krifka's proposal. They point out that violation of Gricean maxims, whether accidental or inherent, does not lead to ill-formedness (cf. Kadmon and Landmn, 1993: p. 372 seqq. for details of their criticism).

#### 2.5. Binding

Progovac (1994) claims that NPIs are subject to locality conditions as anaphors are. In particular, she argues that NPIs are subject to Principle A of the Binding Theory. She contends that NPIs are bound to their governing category. That governing category can be a negation, an empty polarity operator, or a conditional.

Many objections have been raised against Progovac's (1994) binding approach. One of these objections concerns what she calls non-negative polarity environments. Progovac (1994: p. 66) suggests that such environments involve a null polarity operator that licenses NPIs. Nevertheless, it can be argued that the NPIs themselves signal these null polarity operators. A detailed critical evaluation of Progovac's (1994) analysis is to be found in Horn and Lee (1995).

Therefore, a more restricted licensing condition has to be propounded to provide the basis for unification of NPIs and NPI-licensors. Such a unifying condition is advanced in Giannakidou (1994 et seq.) and Zwarts (1995).

#### 2.6. Nonveridicality

Realization of the shortcomings of the entailment approach has given the impetus to the attempt to introduce a more flexible condition which is capable of capturing all the environments which license NPIs. Giannakidou (1994 et seq.) and Zwarts (1995) propose the notion of nonveridicality, a notion weaker than downward entailment, to describe the

environments in which NPIs occur<sup>(1)</sup>. The extension to nonveridicality accounts for NPIs in non-negative and non-downward entailing contexts, such as questions, disjunctions, modalities, and propositional attitudes (cf. 5 above).

The notion of veridicality is adopted from philosophy. Montague (1969) distinguishes between verbs whose meanings ensure truth, and verbs whose meanings do not ensure truth. According to Montague (1969), as discussed in Giannakidou (2011), the verb *see* is veridical, while the verb *look for* is non-veridical. Consider (9).

- (9) a. I see a mermaid.  
 b. I am looking for a mermaid.

The verb *see* in (9a) ensures the existence of a mermaid. Put differently, it entails or presupposes the existence of a mermaid because if I see a mermaid is true, then it must be true that a mermaid exists. Therefore, the verb *see* is called veridical. The verb *look for* in (9b), on the other hand, does not ensure the existence of a mermaid because if I am looking for a mermaid is true, it is not necessarily true that a mermaid exists. Therefore, the verb *look for* is called nonveridical.

Giannakidou (2006) proposes the definition in (10) for (non)veridicality.

- (10) (Non)veridicality for propositional operators (Giannakidou, 2006).
- i. A propositional operator *F* is veridical iff *Fp* entails or presupposes that *p* is true in some individual's epistemic model *ME(x)*; otherwise *F* is nonveridical.
  - ii. A nonveridical operator *F* is antiveridical iff *Fp* entails that not *p* in some individual's epistemic model:  $Fp \rightarrow \neg p$  in some *ME(x)*.

Giannakidou (1994, et seq.) and Zwarts (1995) propose that NPIs are excluded from veridical contexts, and that they appear only in nonveridical sentences.

### 2.7. NPIs in veridical contexts

Giannakidou (1998) discusses cases where NPIs occur in veridical, non-downward entailing contexts. Consider (11) (the examples are adopted from Giannakidou 2011).

- (11) a. Only the instructor gives a damn.

- b. She regrets that she said anything.
- c. The students hardly know any mathematics.
- d. Lila barely knows anybody.
- e. Most children with any sense steal candy.

The sentences in (11) show examples of NPIs that are shown by Giannakidou (2011) to occur in veridical contexts. The NPI *a damn* occurs in a sentence with only (11a), anything in a sentence with an emotive factive verb (11b), any in a sentence with hardly (11c), anybody in a sentence with barely (11d), and any in a sentence with most (11e).

Giannakidou (2011) considers these occurrences of NPIs in veridical, non-down entailing contexts a marginal problem. She argues that not only NPI licensing in these contexts is limited, but also that the same NPIs are not acceptable in the same types of sentences as those in (11) in Greek. However, she proceeds to propose the solution in (12) to the problem (cf. Giannakidou, 2006: p. 596).

- (12) Rescuing by nonveridicality

A PI  $\alpha$  can be rescued in the scope of a veridical expression  $\beta$  in a sentence *S*, if (a) the global context *C* of *S* makes a proposition *S'* available which contains a nonveridical expression  $\beta$ ; and (b)  $\alpha$  can be associated with  $\beta$  in *S'*.

The global context of sentence (11a) makes the proposition in (13).

- (13) No *x* other than the instructor gives a damn.

The proposition in (13) contains the nonveridical expression *no*. The NPI *a damn* is associated with, i.e. is in the scope of, the nonveridical expression *no*. Hence, the NPI *a damn* is rescued by the nonveridical expression *no*.

However, many researchers have pointed out a number of counterexamples to the non-veridicality approach. For instance, Nishiguchi (2003: p. 207) notes that NPI licensing by *glad* and *happy* poses a problem for Giannakidou's proposal. *Glad* and *happy* are neither nonveridical nor accommodating negative implicature.

### 2.8. Anti-upward entailingness

Nishiguchi (2003) argues that the most optimal solution to the problem of licensing NPIs is by adopting an Anti-Upward Entailingness approach as well as an Exclusivity Condition. The impetus behind her claim is that there are NPI licensers that are neither downward nor upward entailing. Consequently, the only excluded category in NPI

<sup>(1)</sup> The notion of nonveridicality is proposed to account for the contexts that license not only NPIs, but also polarity items, in general.

licensing is upward entailment. Hence, assuming Anti-Upward Entailingness has the advantage of accommodating non-monotone NPI licensers.

Nishiguchi (2003) assumes the hierarchy of negative expressions à la Zwarts (1998) and van der Wouden (1997). Zwarts (1998) proposes a hierarchy of negative expressions, which is developed by van der Wouden (1997), that classifies them into three types: weak, strong, and superstrong. What differentiates these classes from each other is the type of licensers they require. Weak negative expressions require a monotone decreasing licenser. Strong negative expressions require their licensers to be anti-additive, in addition to being monotone decreasing. Superstrong negative expressions require their licenser to be antimorphic, in addition to being monotone decreasing and anti-additive<sup>(2)</sup> (cf. Błaszczak, 2001: p. 341ff for a detailed discussion). The strength classification is based on how many de Morgan's rules the negative expressions satisfy. The more de Morgan's rules a negative expression satisfies, the stronger it is<sup>(3)</sup>. According to the aforementioned hierarchy, monotone decreasing licensers license weak NPIs. Nishiguchi (2003) maintains that although non-monotonic NPI licensers (determiners and non-determiners) do not fit the weakest category of NPI licensers, i.e., monotone decreasing, they license weak NPIs.

As a solution to this problem, Nishiguchi (2003) suggests extending the range of NPI licensers to include non-monotonic licensers. Since both downward entailing and non-monotone licensers are non-upward entailing, she concludes that the

<sup>(2)</sup> Cf. Błaszczak (2001: p. 342) for definitions of a monotone decreasing function, an anti-additive function, an anti-multiplicative function, and an anti-morphic function.

<sup>(3)</sup> The table below shows the relation between the strength of negative expressions and de Morgans' rules (adopted from Błaszczak, 2001: p. 346):

De Morgan's relations	anti-morphic	anti-additive	anti-multiplicative	monotone decreasing
$f(X \cup Y) \rightarrow f(X) \cap f(Y)$	yes	yes	yes	yes
$f(X) \cap f(Y) \rightarrow f(X \cup Y)$	yes	yes	no	no
$f(X \cap Y) \rightarrow f(X) \cup f(Y)$	yes	no	yes	no
$f(X) \cup f(Y) \rightarrow f(X \cap Y)$	yes	yes	yes	yes

condition that predicts the right distribution of NPIs is Anti-Upward Entailingness. In addition to that condition, she proposes an exclusivity condition that must be met by non-monotonic NPI licensers. She contends that pragmatic strengthening is the force behind this exclusive feature.

She distinguishes two types of non-monotonic licensers: determiners and non-determiners. Non-monotonic determiners include exactly n(umber) (14a), the n(umber) (14b), (precisely) n(umber) (14c), nearly all (14d), few (in its propositional interpretation) (14e), ordinal numerals (14f), the (14g), generic NPs (14h), only (14i), and superlatives (14j). Non-monotonic expressions include the protasis of conditionals (15a), the if and only if clause (15b), happy (15c), glad (15d), and hope (15e). She claims that these licensers trigger weak NPIs in their scope. Examples of non-monotonic determiners triggering weak NPIs are given in (14) and of non-monotonic expressions triggering weak NPIs in (15) (the examples are adopted from Nishiguchi, 2003).

- (14) a. Exactly five people who had ever learned anything about logic attended the lectures.  
 b. The four people who dared to have a bite were poisoned.  
 c. Five people who dared to have a bite were poisoned.  
 d. Nearly all men who have ever learned anything about logic were admitted to the lectures.  
 e. Few men who dared to have a bite were poisoned.  
 f. Fred was the first to ever swim across the Adriatic.  
 g. The man who has ever learned a Romance language was admitted to the lectures.  
 h. Students who have ever read anything about logic attended the lecture.  
 i. Only Bill had ever read anything about logic.  
 j. John is the greatest man who ever lived.
- (15) a. If you ever come to Japan you will have fun.  
 b. The ER series will end if and only if John Carter is ever assassinated.  
 c. I am happy that there is any food left.  
 d. I'm glad anybody likes me.  
 e. I hope there's any left.

## 2.9. Recapitulation

The previous subsections have shown that there are various approaches to the phenomenon of NPI licensing. Among these approaches, an approach based on non-veridicality (Giannakidou, 1994 et seq.,

and Zwarts, 1995), and another based on anti-upward entailingness and an exclusivity condition (Nishiguchi, 2003) have proved to be the most optimal ones in that they accommodate more counterexamples than the other approaches.

I will investigate below the licensing of NPIs in Classical/Standard Arabic. In particular, I will explore the contexts in which NPIs are permitted. The purpose of section 3 is to propose a comprehensive account of the licensing of NPIs in Classical/Standard Arabic.

### 3. NPIs in Classical/Standard Arabic<sup>(4)</sup>

NPIs in Classical/Standard Arabic are permitted in a limited number of environments. The weak NPI *ʔajj* ‘any’, for instance, is acceptable in negative contexts, but not in an affirmative sentence. Consider the contrast in (16)<sup>(5)</sup>.

- (16) a. lam taḏhab ʔajj-u fataat-in ilaa l-haflat-i  
NEG go-3SF any-NOM girl-GEN to the-party-GEN  
‘Any girl didn’t go to the party.’  
b. \* ḏahabat ʔajj-u fataat-in ilaa l-haflat-i  
went-3SF any-NOM girl-GEN to the-party-GEN  
‘Anyone has gone.’

Given the assumption that sentential negation licenses strong NPIs, it licenses the weak NPI *ʔajj* ‘any’ in (16a). To provide a comprehensive account of the licensing of NPIs in Classical/Standard Arabic, a thorough investigation of the contexts in which those NPIs can occur is a must. Based on the well-established assumption that unstressed any is a weak NPI, it follows that a context that doesn’t license it will not license stronger NPIs. Hence, the NPI that will be used to test NPI licensing environments in Classical/Standard Arabic will be *ʔajj* ‘any’. The structures below show the (un)acceptability of the NPI *ʔajj* ‘any’ in various contexts. The (b) sentences in (17)-(26) provide a comparison with the (a) sentences.

(17) Questions:

<sup>(4)</sup> The transcription system of the Classical/Standard Arabic data that is adopted in this paper is based on the phonemic transcription system of Classical/Standard Arabic that is adopted in *the Handbook of the International Phonetic Association* (1999: pp. 51-54).

<sup>(5)</sup> The following conventions are used in this paper: NOM: nominative; ACC: accusative; GEN: genitive; 1: first person; 2: second person; 3: third person; S: singular; P: plural; PASS: passive; F: feminine; M: masculine. The order of those items in the examples is as follows: person-number-gender.

- a. hal qaabalta ajj-a wuzijr-in fij l-mahkamat-i?  
Q met-2SM any-ACC minister-GEN at the-courthouse-GEN  
‘Have you met any minister at the courthouse?’  
b. \* qaabaltu ajj-a wuzijr-in fij l-mahkamat-i  
met-1S any-ACC minister-GEN at the-courthouse-GEN  
‘I have met any minister at the courthouse.’

(18) Imperatives:

- a. ʔusluk ʔajj-a tʕarij-q-in  
take-2S any-ACC road-GEN  
‘Take any road.’  
b. \* salaktu ʔajj-a tʕarij-q-in  
take-1S any-ACC road-GEN  
‘I took any road.’

(19) Adversative predicates:

- a. rafadʕtu ʔan jaqra? ʔajj-u tʕaalib-in tilka l-dʕarijdat-a  
refused-1S that read-3SM any-NOM student-GEN that the-newspaper-ACC  
‘I refused to let any student read that newspaper.’  
b. \* nasijtu ʔan jaqra? ʔajj-u tʕaalib-in tilka l-dʕarijdat-a  
forgot-1S that read-3SM any-NOM student-GEN that the-newspaper-ACC  
‘I forgot that any student read that newspaper.’

(20) Protasis of conditionals:

- a. ʔiḏaa ʕaada ʔajj-u dʕundijj-in sa-nulʕij l-munaawarat-a  
if returned-3SM any-NOM soldier-GEN will-cancel-1P the-maneuver-ACC  
‘If any soldier returned, we would cancel the maneuver.’  
b. \* ʕaada ʔajj-u dʕund-in  
returned-3SM any-NOM soldier-GEN  
‘Any soldier returned.’

(21) Modal verbs:

- a. yumkinu ʔan jusʕliha ʔahmad-u ʔajj-a muharrik-in  
may that fix-3S Ahmed-nom any-ACC engine-GEN  
‘Ahmed can fix any engine.’  
b. \* jusʕliha ʔahmad-u ʔajj-a muharrik-in  
fix-3S Ahmed-nom any-ACC engine-GEN  
‘Ahmed fixes any engine.’

(22) The future:

- a. saʔaqrū ʔajj-a kitaab-in ʔadzidu-hu  
will-read-1S any-ACC book-GEN find-1S-it  
'I will read any book I find.'
- b. \* qaraʔtu ʔajj-a kitaab-in wadzatu-hu  
read-1S any-ACC book-GEN found-1S-it  
'I read any book I found.'
- (23) Restrictor of every:  
a. kul-u man jaʔrifu ʔajj-a ʔaj-in  
every-NOM who know-3SM any-ACC  
thing-GEN  
ʔan l-haadiθ-i dʒaaʔa  
about the-accident-GEN came-3SM  
'Everyone who knew anything about the  
accident came.'
- b. \* jaʔrifu ʔajj-a ʔaj-in ʔan l-haadiθ-i  
know-3SM any-ACC thing-GEN about the-  
accident-GEN  
'He knows anything about the accident.'
- (24) The habitual:  
a. iʔtaadat zajnab-u ʔan taqraʔa ʔajj-a kitaab-in  
used to-3SF Zainab-NOM that read-3SF  
any-ACC book-GEN  
tadzidu-hu fij l-maktabat-i  
find-3SF-it at the-library-GEN  
'Zainab used to read any book that she found  
at the library.'
- b. \* qaraʔat zajnab-u ʔajj-a kitaab-in fij l-  
maktabat-i  
read-3SF Zainab-NOM any-ACC book-GEN  
at the-library-GEN  
'Zainab read any book at the library.'
- (25) Volitional verbs:  
a. aamulu ʔan nadʒida ʔajj-a ʔaθar-in la-haa  
hope-1S that find-1P any-ACC trace-GEN  
for-her  
'I hope that we find any trace of her.'
- b. \* wadzada ʔajj-a ʔaθar-in la-haa  
found-3SM any-ACC trace-GEN for-her  
'He found any trace of her.'
- (26) before-clauses:  
a. xaradʒa-t qabla ʔajj-i ʔaxsʔ-in aaxar-in  
left-3SF before any-GEN person-GEN else-  
GEN  
'She left before anybody else.'
- b. \* xaradʒa-t baʔda ʔajj-i ʔaxsʔ-in aaxar-in  
left-3SF after any-GEN person-GEN else-  
GEN  
'She left after anybody else.'
- (27) Only:  
\* ʔal-ʔustaað-u faħasb ʔaahada ʔajj-a  
barnaamadʒ-in  
the-teacher-NOM only watched-3SM any-ACC  
program-GEN  
'Only the teacher watched any program.'
- (28) Glad:  
\* ʔanaa masruwr-un ʔann-haa wadzadata ʔajj-a  
galam-in  
I glad-NOM that-she found-3SF any-ACC pen-  
GEN  
'I am glad that she found any pen.'
- (29) Hardly:  
\* bilkaad-i jaʔrifu tʔ-tʔulaab-u ʔajj-a qasʔaaʔid-  
in  
hardly-GEN know-3PM the-students-NOM any-  
ACC poems-GEN  
'The students hardly know any poems.'
- (30) Exactly n:  
\* θalaaθat-u ʔatʔfaal-in tamaam-an qarauw ʔajj-  
a qisʔsʔat-in  
three-NOM children-GEN exactly-ACC read-  
3PM any-ACC story-GEN  
'Exactly three children read a story.'
- (31) Superlatives:  
\* ʔahmad-u ʔaynaa radʒul-in fij ʔajj-i balad-in  
Ahmed-NOM richest man-GEN in any-GEN  
country-GEN  
'Ahmed is the richest man in any country.'
- (32) Wh-questions:  
\* man ʔaxaða ʔajj-a tuffaaħat-in ?  
who took-3SM any-ACC apple-GEN  
'Who took any apple?'
- (33) The:  
\* ʔal-fataat-u llatij ʔaahad-at ʔajj-a barnaamadʒ-  
in dʒaaʔat  
the-girl-NOM who watched-3SF any-ACC  
program-GEN came-3SF  
'The girl who watched any program came.'
- (34) The n:  
\* ʔar-ridʒaal-u l-ʔarbaʔat-u llaðijn ʔahdʔaruw  
ʔajj-a  
the-men-NOM the-four-NOM who brought-  
3PM any-ACC  
kitaab-in xaradʒuw  
book-GEN left-3PM  
'The four men who brought any book left.'
- (35) Few:

\* galiġl-uwn raʔuw ʔajj-a tʔaaʔirat-in  
 Few-3PM saw any-ACC plane-GEN  
 ‘Few have seen any plane.’

As can be seen from the sentences above, the weak NPI ʔajj ‘any’ is permitted in certain contexts, but not in others. Specifically, ʔajj ‘any’ is licensed by questions (17), imperatives (18), adversative predicates (19), protasis of conditionals (20), modal verbs (21), the future (22), restrictor of every (23), the habitual (24), and volitional verbs (25). On the other hand, it is not sanctioned with only (27), glad (28), hardly (29), exactly n (30), superlatives (31), wh-questions (32), the (33), the n (34) and few (35).

The question that should be posed is what the contexts that sanction the weak NPI ʔajj ‘any’ do have in common? Moreover, we should ask what the contexts that are unable to license that NPI do lack?

I contend that the weak NPI ʔajj ‘any’ is licensed solely in non-veridical contexts. Thus, the (a) sentences in (17)-(25) are non-veridical. To explain what that means, consider (18), reproduced here as (36).

- (36) a. ʔusluk ʔajj-a tʔariġq-in  
 take-2S any-ACC road-GEN  
 ‘Take any road.’  
 b. \* salaktu ʔajj-a tʔariġq-in  
 take-1S any-ACC road-GEN  
 ‘I took any road.’

The sentence in (36a) is non-veridical. What this means is that from the truth of ʔusluk ʔajj-a tʔariġq-in ‘Take any road’, we cannot infer that the addressee (or anybody else) actually took a road. (36b), on the other hand, is veridical because from the truth of salaktu ʔajj-a tʔariġq-in ‘I took any road’, we can infer that the speaker (or anybody else) actually took a road. The same can be said about the other pairs of sentences in (17) and (19)-(25). Specifically, the (a) sentences in these pairs of statements are non-veridical, and, hence, can license the NPI ʔajj ‘any’; the (b) sentences are veridical, and, thus, are not able to sanction that NPI.

The sentences in (27)-(35) are examples of contexts that are predicted by Nishiguchi (2003) to be able to sanction weak NPIs. Specifically, she predicts that weak NPIs are licensed by non-monotonic licensers such as exactly n, the n, the, only, few, happy, glad, superlatives and comparatives. Her prediction is not borne out, as the Classical/Standard Arabic data sentences in (27)-(35) show. The only non-monotonic expressions that can license the weak NPI ʔajj ‘any’

are non-veridical. These include conditionals (20), questions (17) and adversatives (19).

There are some contexts that are veridical, but license the weak NPI ʔajj ‘any’. Consider the before-clause in (26). From the truth of xaradʔat qabla ʔajji ʔaxsʔin aaxarin ‘She left before anybody else’, we can infer that she actually left before anybody else. Hence, this seems prime facie to contradict our conclusion that the weak NPI ʔajj ‘any’ is only licensed in non-veridical contexts. But, as argued by Giannakidou (2006: p. 596) (cf. 12 above), the weak NPI ʔajj ‘any’ in the scope of a veridical context, such as the before-clause, can be rescued if the global context of the sentence makes a proposition which contains a non-veridical expression. Thus, the global context of the sentence in (26) makes the proposition ‘No x left before her’. This global context contains the non-veridical expression no. Thus the NPI is rescued.

The inability of veridical non-monotonic contexts to license the weak NPI ʔajj ‘any’ provides a piece of evidence that the condition that can predict the right distribution of weak NPIs in Classical/Standard Arabic is non-veridicality, rather than anti-upward entailingness.

#### 4. Prediction: Minimizers

The data we have examined in Section 3, and the behavior of the weak NPI ʔajj ‘any’ in the contexts lead us to a prediction that provides further support for the claim being proposed in this study.

If a licensing context is not able to sanction a weak NPI, then we can conclude that it will not be able to license stronger NPIs. Thus, a licensing environment in Classical/Standard Arabic that cannot license the weak NPI ʔajj ‘any’ will not be able to license stronger NPIs in that language. To test this prediction, I will examine the licensing of minimizers in Classical/Standard Arabic, which are considered to be strong NPIs (cf. Heim, 1984). Consider, for instance, the pair of sentences in (37).

- (37) a. ʔal-fataat-u laa tamliku ʔarwaa naġġir-in  
 the-girl-NOM NEG own like poor-GEN  
 ‘The girl doesn’t have a red cent.’  
 b. \* ʔasʔbahat l-fataat-u tamliku ʔarwaa naġġir-in  
 became-3SF the-girl-NOM own like poor-GEN  
 ‘The girl now had a red cent.’

As the contrast between the two sentences in (37) shows, the minimizer ʔarwaa naġġir ‘a red cent’ is sanctioned with sentential negation, but not with an

affirmative sentence. Let's examine other types of statements to see whether the contexts that can or cannot license the weak NPIs *ʔajj* 'any' can or cannot sanction minimizers in Classical/Standard Arabic. Consider the sentences in (38)-(56).

## (38) Questions:

- \* *hal jamliku l-haaris-u farwaa naqijr-in ?*  
Q own-3SM the-guard-NOM like poor-GEN  
'Does the guard have a red cent?'

## (39) Imperatives:

- \* *taharrak qijid-a ʔunmult-in*  
move-2S amount-ACC finger-GEN  
'Move one bit.'

## (40) Adversative predicates:

- \* *rafadʔtu ʔan tanbusa l-fataat-u bi-bint-i ʔafat-in*  
refused-1S that say-3SF the-girl-NOM with-  
word-GEN lip-GEN  
'I refused to let the girl say a word.'

## (41) Protasis of conditionals:

- \* *ʔiðaa taharraka l-radʔul-u qijid-a ʔunmult-in*  
*sa-naðhab*  
if move-3SM the-man-NOM amount-ACC  
finger-GEN will-go-1P  
'If the man moved a bit, we would go.'

## (42) Modal verbs:

- \* *yumkinu ʔan ʔajmudʔu lahu dʔafn-un*  
may that close-3SM for-him eyelid-NOM  
'He can close his eyelids.'

## (43) The future:

- \* *sa-ʔaʔzibu ʔan-hu miðgaal-u ðarrat-in*  
will-be-hidden-1S from-him weight-NOM  
atom-GEN  
'The weight of an atom will be hidden from him.'

## (44) Restrictor of every:

- \* *kul-u man jamliku ʔarwaa naqijr-in ʔalima bi-l-ʔamr-i*  
every-NOM who own-3SM like poor-GEN  
knew-3SM of-the-issue-GEN  
'Everyone who owned a red cent knew about the issue.'

## (45) The habitual:

- \* *iʔtaada l-radʔul-u ʔan janbusa bi-bint-i ʔafat-in*  
used to-3SM the-man-NOM that say-3SM with-  
word-GEN lip-GEN

*ʔaθnaaʔ-a l-muħaadʔarat-i*

during-ACC the-lecture-GEN

'The man used to say a word during the lecture.'

## (46) Volitional verbs:

- \* *aamulu ʔan tataħarraka l-fataat-u qijid-a*  
*ʔunmult-in*  
hope-1S that move-3SF the-girl-NOM amount-  
ACC finger-GEN  
'I hope that the girl moves a bit.'

## (47) before-clauses:

- \* *saafara qabla ʔan jamlika ʔarwaa naqijr-in*  
traveled-3SF before that own-3SM like poor-  
GEN  
'He traveled before he owned a red cent.'

## (48) Only:

- \* *nabasa l-ʔustaað-u faħasb bi-bint-i ʔafat-in*  
said-3SM the-teacher-NOM only with-word-  
GEN lip-GEN  
'Only the teacher said a word.'

## (49) Glad:

- \* *ʔanaa masruwr-un ʔann-hu ʔaʔzibu ʔan-hu*  
*miðgaal-u ðarrat-in*  
I glad-NOM that-it be-hidden-1S from-him  
weight-NOM atom-GEN  
'I am glad that the weight of an atom will be hidden from him.'

## (50) Hardly:

- \* *bilkaad-i ʔajmudʔu lahu dʔafn-un*  
hardly-GEN close-3SM for-him eyelid-NOM  
'He hardly sleeps.'

## (51) Exactly n:

- \* *tazaħzaħa θalaaθat-u ʔatʔfaal-in tamaam-an*  
*qijid-a ʔunmulat-in*  
moved-3SM three-NOM children-GEN exactly-  
ACC amount-ACC finger-GEN  
'Exactly three children moved a bit.'

## (52) Superlatives:

- \* *ʔaħmad-u ʔaynaa radʔul-in jamlika ʔarwaa*  
*naqijr-in*  
Ahmed-NOM richest man-GEN own-3SM like  
poor-GEN  
'Ahmed is the richest man that has a red cent.'

## (53) Wh-questions:

- \* *man nabasa bi-bint-i ʔafat-in ?*  
who said-3SM with-word-GEN lip-GEN  
'Who said a word?'

- (54) The:  
 \* ?al-fataat-u llatij jaʕzibu ʕan-ha miθgaal-u  
 ḏarrat-in raħalt  
 the-girl-NOM who be-hidden-1S from-her  
 weight-NOM atom-GEN left-3SF  
 ‘The girl who the weight of an atom is hidden  
 from her left.’
- (55) The n:  
 \* ?ar-riḏzaal-u l-?arbaʕat-u llaḏijn jaymudʕu  
 lahum dʒafn-un  
 the-men-NOM the-four-NOM who close-3SM  
 for-them eyelid-NOM  
 xaradʒuw  
 left-3PM  
 ‘The four men who sleep left.’
- (56) Few:  
 \* galijl-awn tazahzahuw qiḏd-a ?unmulat-in ʕan  
 ?amaakini-him  
 Few-3PM moved-3PM amount-ACC finger-  
 GEN from place-their  
 ‘Few moved a bit away from their places.’

The sentences in (38)-(56) provide a conclusive evidence that, unlike the weak NPI ?ajj ‘any’, minimizers, which are considered to be strong NPIs, in Classical/Standard Arabic are sanctioned only with regular negation as evidenced by the structure in (37a).

As argued by Giannakidou (2006), negation is identified as anti-veridical within the class of the nonveridical expressions. Thus, NOT p entails that p is false (cf. 10ii above). Hence in (37a) ?alfataatu laa tamliku ʕarwaa naqijrin ‘The girl doesn’t have a red cent’ entails that ?alfataatu tamliku ʕarwaa naqijrin ‘The girl has a red cent’ is false.

## 5. Conclusion

The Classical/Standard Arabic data examined in this study show that a combination of the notion of nonveridicality and negative expressions strength is the most optimal approach that predicts the right distribution of NPIs in Classical/Standard Arabic. Hence, it is shown that downward entailment, Strawson-downward entailingness, polarity lattices, binding, or anti-upward entailingness fail to explain the right distribution of NPIs in Classical/Standard Arabic. Specifically, I have shown that all of those NPIs are licensed in non-veridical contexts. The variation that is observed with regard to the licensing of those NPIs is attributed to the strength of NPIs. Thus, weak (or broad) NPIs, such as ?ajj ‘any’, are sanctioned with more contexts than strong (or strict)

NPIs, such as minimizers. Hence, the weak NPI ?ajj ‘any’ is sanctioned with questions, imperatives, adversative predicates, protasis of conditionals, modal verbs, the future, restrictor of every, the habitual, and volitional verbs. Minimizers, on the other hand, are only licensed regular negation. Furthermore, a prediction is proposed to the effect that contexts that are unable to license the weak NPI ?ajj ‘any’ will not be able to sanction stronger NPIs, such as minimizers. I have provided evidence to the effect that this prediction is borne out. The difference between a language that allows NPIs in veridical non-monotonic contexts, such as English, and another that doesn’t allow the same NPIs in those contexts supports recent proposals in the literature that assert the need for a variation approach to the licensing of NPIs cross-linguistically.

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## اللافعلية وتنوع استقطاب النفي

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**ملخص البحث.** تتمثل الغاية من هذه الدراسة في تفصي القيود التي يخضع لها تسويغ الألفاظ التي يستقطبها النفي في اللغة العربية الفصحى/الحديثة، وتسعى إلى أن تكون أول دراسة تقدم تحليلاً شاملاً تُحدد من خلاله الشروط التي يُصار من خلالها إلى تسويغ تلك الألفاظ. فأبين أنّ الألفاظ التي يستقطبها النفي لا تُسوِّغ إلا في سياقات لافعلية (غير واقعة) في اللغة العربية الفصحى/الحديثة. وأذهب إلى أنّ الفرضيات المبنية على التلازم المنطقي التنازلي، وتلازم ستراوسون المنطقي التنازلي، وشبكات الاستقطاب، والربط، والتلازم المنطقي اللاتصاعدي لا تكشف عن التوزيع الصائب للألفاظ التي يستقطبها النفي في اللغة العربية الفصحى/الحديثة. وأزعم في هذه الدراسة، فضلاً عن ذلك، بأن القوة التي تتسم بها تعبيرات النفي تفرض تنوعاً في تسويغ الألفاظ التي يستقطبها النفي قيد الدراسة. وعلى وجه الخصوص، أذهب إلى أنّ الألفاظ الضعيفة (أو المطلقة) التي يستقطبها النفي تُسوِّغها الجمل الاستفهامية، والجمل الأمرية، والجمل الاستدراكية، والجمل الشرطية، والأفعال الموجهة، والفعل في صيغة المستقبل، والجمل التي تبدأ ب(كل)، والجمل الدالة على أمر معتاد، والأفعال الإرادية. بينما لا يُسوِّغ الألفاظ القوية (أو المقيدة) إلا أدوات النفي المألوفة. ولئن كانت الألفاظ التي يستقطبها النفي تُسوِّغ في سياقات فعلية (واقعة) لا طرادية في لغة كاللغة الإنجليزية، بينما لا تُسوِّغ في تلك السياقات نفسها في اللغة العربية الفصحى/الحديثة، فإنّ ذلك يؤكّد الفرضية التي تدعو إلى مقارنة إلى تسويغ الألفاظ التي يستقطبها النفي قائمة على التنوع بين لغة وأخرى. وإنّ كان التحليل المطروح في هذه الدراسة يكشف النقاب عن الحالة التي تُجيز الألفاظ التي يستقطبها النفي في اللغة العربية الفصحى/الحديثة، فإنه يطرح فضلاً عن ذلك برهاناً على تراتبية قوة تلك الألفاظ.