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Negation in Mising

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ABSTRACT

This research paper investigates the negative particles in the Pagro variety of Mising, a synthetic and agglutinative language with a subject-object-verb (SOV) word order. Similar to other Tani languages within the Tibeto-Burman (Trans-Himalayan) language family, Mising utilizes post-verbal negative particles. The study specifically examines the negative markers /-ma/ and /-jo/ across various sentence structures to provide a detailed understanding of Negation in Mising. The analysis includes a range of sentence types, highlighting the distinct functions of the standard Negation marker /-ma/ and the prohibitive Negation marker /-jo/. While previous research by Prasad (1991) and KC Talukdar (1992) focused on the negative particles /-ma/ and /-yo/, this paper addresses existing research gaps by exploring Negation in different sentence constructions, including declarative, interrogative, and imperative forms. Additionally, the paper discusses the presence of negative Polarity Items (NPIs) in Mising, a topic that has not been previously studied in this language.

KEYWORDS

Mising; Negation; Tani; Trans-Himalayan languages

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Negation in Mising[†]

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1 Introduction

The Mising language, belonging to the eastern Tani branch of the Tibeto-Burman language family, is spoken by the Mising population residing in the states of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. This paper aims to comprehensively explore the negative morphemes present in the Pagro variety of Mising, adopting a descriptive approach. Mising is a language that has received limited scholarly attention, particularly regarding Negation, making this study a pioneering endeavor. The paper is structured into three main sections to facilitate a systematic exploration. The introductory section provides a background on the Mising language and its speakers, offering insights into the linguistic and cultural context. While previous studies have provided descriptions of Negation in Mising, they have primarily focused on its role in declarative, interrogative, and imperative constructions, leaving several gaps in understanding the full range of its functions. This paper seeks to address these gaps by conducting a comprehensive analysis of Negation in Mising, with particular attention to the distribution and usage of different negative particles. Moving to the second section, the focus shifts to an in-depth examination of the various types of negative morphemes employed in different linguistic constructions within Mising and related languages. This section serves as the core of the paper, unraveling the intricacies of Negation in the language. The study examines the occurrence of negative markers across various constructions and argues that, except in imperative constructions, a standard negative particle is consistently used in most cases.

The paper's third section involves a discussion on the negative polarity item (NPI), followed by *double Negation*, which has not been studied before. The data for this research has been collected from native speakers of Mising and Galo, aged between 20-50, residing in Dhemaji district of Assam, India. In essence, this paper aspires to fill a critical gap in the existing scholarship on Mising, contributing valuable insights to the field of linguistics and serving as a foundation for future endeavors in this underexplored linguistic landscape. The data is analyzed in such a way that the first lines in the interlinear glossing are Mising orthography, which follows the Roman script, with diacritics.

2 The Misings

The term “Mising” derives from the combination of “ami” (man) and “asi” (water), reflecting the close connection between the Mising people and riverine habitats. Predominantly residing alongside rivers, the Mising tribe, indigenous to Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, employs the Mising language for communication. In the Indian constitution, the Mising community is officially recognized as “Miri.” Geographically, the Mising population is concentrated in the

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upper Brahmaputra valley, spanning districts such as Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Sibsagar, Jorhat, Majuli, Golaghat, and Sonitpur in Assam, with scattered communities in parts of Arunachal Pradesh.

As of the 2011 census, the Mising community comprises 629,954 individuals, though estimates by Bradley (1997) suggest a potential population of up to 500,000, noting that not all members necessarily speak the Mising language. The language employs the Roman script for writing. The data analysis follows the orthographic conventions of the Mising language (Roman script), where the diacritics é and í represent the vowels /ə/ and /i/, respectively, and the symbol /:/ indicates vowel length. And the Government of Assam in the Department of School Education has introduced Mising as a Medium of Instruction (MoI) in the foundational stage.

Mising, classified under the Eastern Tani branch of the Tibeto-Burman language family with the ISO code 639-3 and language code mrg, has been identified by Doley & Post (2009) as an under-described language. Mising language varieties include Pagro, Sa:yang, Delu, Mo:ying, Oyan, Dambuk, Tamargoja, Bebejia, Bihiya, and Samuguria. Additionally, Mising exhibits linguistic affinities with Adi, and the two languages demonstrate mutual intelligibility to some extent. This linguistic and cultural richness underscores the significance of studying and preserving the Mising language within the broader tapestry of the Tibeto-Burman linguistic landscape.

3 Relevant Literature

Four previous works have explored Negation in Mising- Grierson's *Linguistic Survey of India*, KC Talukdar's *The Mishing People and their Spoken Language: A Critical Study* (1992), Tabu Taid's *An Introduction to Mising Phonology and Grammar* (2016), and Ram Prasad's *Mising Grammar* (1991).

(Grierson, 1903, p. 602) briefly overviews the negative morpheme /ma/. KC Talukdar notes the presence of two negative morphemes, /ma/ and /maŋ/, in Mising. (Taid, 2016, p. 251) explains that /ma/ is a reduced form of /maŋ/, occurring when the negative marker is in a word-medial position following a vowel or velar consonant.

And I will elaborate on the standard negative particle /ma/, detailing its variations, such as /ma:/ and /maŋ/, depending on different phonetic contexts.

Some examples discussed by Grierson in *Linguistic Survey of India* (1903) are provided below. The orthography follows Grierson's system:

1(a) *bui ngō-m pā-gē-mā*
 3SG 1PS-ACC know-surpass-NEG
 "He will not strike me."

1(b) *gī-gē-to-kā*
 go-surpass-IMP-PERF
 "Go."

1(c) *dā-gē-lā ā-ser-lā-yē*
 "Let us enjoy and make merry."

2(a) *bí ngom pag-gé-ma:-yé*
 3SG 1PS-ACC know-surpass-NEG-FUT
 “He will not surpass me.”

2(b) *gí-gé-to-ka*
 go-surpass-IMP-PERF
 “Go ahead.”

(Grierson, 1903, p. 602) noted that in Miri, the suffix “ge” is substituted for “ye” before the negative particle in the future tense. However, the examples he provided, as seen in examples 1(a) to 1(c), have room for improvement in transcription accuracy and clarity in marking morpheme boundaries. In response, I have presented alternative and more accurate glossing in examples 2(a) and 2(b). Additionally, the example provided by Grierson in 3(c) is intelligible as it may be incorrect or it may belong to a variety which is no longer spoken. By comparing examples 1(a) and 2(a), it is evident that “gé” does not replace “yé” in the future tense when the sentence is negative. Both “gé” and “yé” can co-occur and they are two separate morphemes. The “gé” marker is also found in perfective sentences as seen in example 1(b) where “gé” is occurring with “ka”. Ram Prasad’s (1991) work on *Mising grammar*, published by CIIL, Mysuru, requires an in-depth revision. He suggested that the tense marker is optionally deleted and replaced with a negative marker in present declarative sentences, while in embedded sentences, as given by him in 5(d), the tense marker remains. Examples presented in 3(a) to 3(d) are Prasad’s, the updated are mine in 4(a) to 4(d).

3(a) *ηɔ kin-ma*
 1SG see-NEG
 “I do not see”

3(b) *bī gí-tɔ-ma*
 3SG go-T-NEG
 “He does not go”

3(c) *agergernədə ger-t(ɔ)-ma*
 Labourer do-T-NEG
 “The labourer does not work”

3(d) *bulu ηηɔ sógap kapë gí-ma-dɔ*
 They fish catch PP go-NEG-t
 “They do not go to catch fish”

4(a) *ηɔ kin-ma*
 1SG know-NEG
 “I do not know”

4(b) *bī gi-tɔ-ma*
 3SG go-past-NEG
 “He did not go”

- 4(c) *ager gernə-də ger-tə-ma*
 work worker-def work-past-NEG
 “The laborer did not do his work”
- 4(d) *bulu ɔŋɔ sɔgap-kapə gi-ma:-da*
 3PPL fish catch-PP go-NEG-past
 “They have not gone to catch fish”

Examples 3(a), 3(b), and 3(c) were inaccurately glossed and presented as present declarative sentences. In fact, examples 3(b) and 3(c) are past tense sentences that have been incorrectly labeled as present declarative. Additionally, the example provided by Prasad in 3(d) for embedded sentences show an imbalance. In the sentence, /ŋɔ apin də-ma/ “1SG rice eat-NEG”, which means “I do not eat rice at all”, and it can also represent present and future tense like “I do not eat rice” and “I will not eat rice”, here, we do not see any aspectual markers. The past tense marker, which is obligatory in both negated and affirmative sentences, is misrepresented by Prasad (1991), who contradicts the rule of a past tense marker being present in negative sentences.

- 5(a) *bī islm gér-(ka)-ma*
 3sg this do-T-NEG
 “He did not do this”

- 5(b) *bulu yub-(ka)-ma*
 “They did not sleep”

- 6(a) *bī səm ger-ma:-da*
 3sg this do-PAST-NEG
 “He did not do this”

- 6(b) *bulu jub-ma:-da*
 3pl sleep-NEG-PAST
 “They did not sleep”

However, the marker /-ka-/ typically denotes past tense in affirmative constructions. In Negation, instead of /-ka-/, the past tense should be marked by /-da/ following the negative morpheme /-ma/, as demonstrated in 6(a) and 6(b). These examples highlight that while Prasad (1991) identifies /-ka-/ in negative constructions, a more precise analysis suggests that /-da/, rather than /-ka-/, functions as the appropriate past tense marker in negated clauses.

according to Grierson (1903), as illustrated in example 1(a), ”gé” replaces ”yé” in future negative sentences. However, Prasad (1991) offers a more precise explanation, indicating that a specific aspect must be present in future negative sentences.

- 7(i) PNG + NEG + yé
 7(ii) * PNG + yé + NEG
 (Here, P=person, N=number, G= gender)

In future sentences, “yé” is used in both the first-person singular and plural and third-person singular and plural, but it is not possible in the second-person. The “yé” future marker is used after the negative morpheme /-ma-/. Example 7(ii) is not applicable in Mising. KC Talukdar (1992) noted in his thesis that verb roots in negative sentences inflect for only three tenses, without distinguishing different aspects. He indicated that these roots take the negative markers ‘ma:’ or ‘maŋ’ in the present tense, /ai/ in the past tense, and /je/ in the future tense. However, while tense is an obligatory feature, the variations of /ma/ into /ma:/ and /maŋ/ are not influenced by any tense or aspect markers. This paper will fill in some of these gaps. In the previous research, providing a more accurate and detailed examination of Negation in Mising.

4 Types of Negation in Mising

Mising features two types of Negation: standard and prohibitive. In non-past negative sentences, the aspect marker is absent for the present and non-obligatory for future. Languages differ in whether standard Negation and prohibitive or non-standard Negation markers are identical; Mising falls in the second category, where standard and prohibitive markers are different. This paper focuses exclusively on the Pagro variety of Mising, which is spoken by majority of the Mising population. The negative particle is appended to the verb in this variety, resulting in *post-verbal Negation*. The following discussion will present examples of standard Negation.

4.1. Standard Negation

The Mising language, which adheres to a Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) word order, employs the bound negative marker /ma/ to express standard Negation. according to Sun (1993), the Proto-Tibeto-Burman nasal codas are well-preserved in Proto-Tani(PT) and the clearest example is *ma + /ŋ/. The Proto-Sino-Tibetan (PST) form for unmarked clausal Negation is *ma-j (Matisoff, 2003, p. 488). This PST form has changed into *maŋ in Proto-Tani (PT). Post & Sun (2017) The negative particle /ma/, a reduced form of /maŋ/, is affixed to verbs. While /ma/ cannot function independently, it serves as a free morpheme in close-ended questions, where it appears at the start of the sentence.

- 8(i) *ma... ŋɔ apin dɔ-ma*
 NEG... 1SG cooked.rice eat-NEG
 “No... I do/will not eat rice.”

Here, /ma/ appears as a free morpheme in a wider range of interrogative clauses than just yes-no questions. For example- if Speaker 1 does not agree with Speaker 2 on something, he/she may start with this free morpheme /ma/ to denote disagreement. This /ma/ can also be reduplicated to emphasize the disagreement.

- 8(ii) *ma ma ŋɔ-m lagi-ma*
 NEG NEG 1SG-ACC need-NEG
 “No..no.. I do not want.”

Within a word, the short vowel in /ma/ is elongated to /ma:/, and if followed by a vowel or velar consonant, the form /maŋ/ is used instead. Example- /simaŋko/ “a dead body” /gimaŋəi/ “not go.” Similar negative particles are found in other Tani languages of the Tibeto-Burman family, including *maK*, *moK*, and *mãã* (Post, 2015). In this section, we will examine Negation in declarative, interrogative, habitual, future, realis-irrealis moods, and nominalized clauses.

4.1.1. Phonologically induced variations of /ma/ in Declarative Constructions

In this section, /ma/ and /ma:/ will be discussed. The vowel sound /a/ is lengthened if the negative morpheme occurs word-medially as seen in 10(b) and 11(b). There is no lengthening in the word-final position as noticed in 9(b).

9(a) *ngo apin do-do*
 ᱤᱠ ᱠᱤᱨ ᱢᱟ-ᱢᱟ
 1SG rice eat-1S.DECL
 “I eat rice.”

9(b) *ngo apin do-ma*
 ᱤᱠ ᱠᱤᱨ ᱢᱟ-ma
 1SG rice eat-NEG
 “I do not eat rice.”

10(a) *ngo apin do-tə-bə*
 ᱤᱠ ᱠᱤᱨ ᱢᱟ-tə-bə
 1SG rice eat-PAST-PAST
 “I have eaten rice.”

10(b) *ngo apin do-ma:-da*
 ᱤᱠ ᱠᱤᱨ ᱢᱟ-ma:-da
 1SG rice eat-NEG-PAST
 “I have not eaten rice.”

11(a) *ngo apin do-ye*
 ᱤᱠ ᱠᱤᱨ ᱢᱟ-je
 1SG rice eat-FUT
 “I will eat rice.”

11(b) *ngo apin do-ma:-bo*
 ᱤᱠ ᱠᱤᱨ ᱢᱟ-ma:-bə
 1SG rice eat-NEG-FUT
 “I will not eat rice.”

In example 9(b), the sentence features the standard Negation marker /ma/ in the post-verbal position. Examples 10(b) and 11(b) use the standard Negation marker /ma:/ in the perfective aspect and future to indicate that the action did not and will not take place, with the lengthened /a/ resulting from its position within the word, *i.e.* *word-medial position*.

4.1.2. negative particle /ma/ + /ŋ/ and Embedded Constructions

In this section, the negative particle /ma/+ /ŋ/ is discussed, which is a variation of the negative morpheme /ma/. In examples 12 (a), 12(b) and 12(c), the negative particle /maŋ/ is employed, preceded by vowels and velar consonants. The Mising language demonstrates constructional

symmetry, with negative clauses mirroring non-negative ones except for the addition of negative markers. These examples illustrate that /ma/ functions as a bound morpheme and do not occur independently. Next, we will examine an instance where this bound morpheme functions as a free morpheme.

12(a) *ngo apin domangéi*
 ŋɔ apin dɔ-maŋ-əi
 1sg rice eat-NEG-irrl
 “I do not eat rice.”

12(b) *bí apin domanggom gípa:ye*
 bi apin dɔ-maŋ-gɔm gi-pa:ye
 3sg rice eat-NEG-if go-fut
 “He has to go even if he does not eat rice.”

12(c) *Appunbi imangko ipa:suto*
 Appun-bi i-maŋ-kɔ i-pa:-suto
 Appun-3sg do-NEG-ind do-do-(unintentionally)-past
 “Appun did something which she should not have done. (unintentionally)”

4.1.3. negative particle in close-ended questions

In examples 13(a) and 13(b), we see /ma/ occurring as a free morpheme at the beginning of an utterance in close-ended interrogative sentences. The negative particle comes as a part of the response utterance, which is a declarative sentence. So, the particle can be used as a negative response to a close-ended question. We also see a case of double Negation, which will be discussed in § 4.4, §4.5, and §4.6 in this paper.

13(a) *No apin do-to-bo-n?*
 1SG rice eat-PAST-PAST-Q
 “Did you eat rice?”

Ma, do-ma:-da
 NEG eat-NEG-PAST
 “No, I have not.”

13(b) *No apin do-ma:-da-ne?*
 1SG rice eat-NEG-PAST-Q
 “Did you not eat rice?”

Ma, do-ma:-da
 NEG eat-NEG-PAST
 “No, I have not.”

4.1.4. Present tense and future tense

Mising shows no aspect markers for the simple present tense. The aspect marker is present only for past sentences. However, the aspect marker for the future can be omitted or added, and it

would still mean the same as in (18b) and (27c). In Burmese, as mentioned by Miestamo (2017), the negative marker is not simply added to a corresponding positive but rather replaces the TAM markers. This feature of aspect marker getting omitted for the present and future tense is similar to Burmese in Mising. That is why, in habitual sentences, the present and future tense distinction is neutralized in the negative as in (14c) and (15b). Whereas, if the construction is affirmative, the aspectual markers are present for past 14(b), future 15(a), and habitual 14(a) sentences.

14(a) *bí apin do-dag*
bì apin dɔ-dag
 3SG rice eat-3P
 “She/He eats rice.”

14(b) *bí apin do-ka*
bì apin dɔ-ka
 3SG rice eat-PAST
 “She/He ate rice.”

14(c) *bí apin do-ma*
bì apin dɔ-ma
 3SG rice eat-NEG
 “She/He does not eat rice
 or
 She/He will not eat rice.”

15(a) *ngo apin do-yé*
ŋɔ apin dɔ-yə
 1SG rice eat-FUT
 “I will eat rice.”

15(b) *ngo apin do-ma*
ŋɔ apin dɔ-ma
 1SG rice eat-NEG
 “I do not eat rice
 or
 I will not eat rice.”

4.1.5. Realis-irrealis mood

Other Tani languages like Nyishi and Galo¹ exhibit different negative suffixes for realis-irrealis moods with the different negative suffixes of ‘-ma’ and ‘-rem’. (Post, 2015, p.274), (Dey, 2017)

16(a) *Raman siti he-rəm*(Nyishi)
 raman letter write-NEG.IRRL
 “Raman will not write letter.” (Dey, 2017)

¹(17a) and (17b) are elicited from a native speaker of Galo, Rikngam Dabi.

16(b) *Raman siti he-ma-dən*
 raman letter write-NEG.RLS-HAB.RLS
 “Raman does not write letter.” (Dey, 2017)

17(a) *Takar-bé letter et-ma-ré(Galo)*
 Takar-3SG letter write-NEG.IRRL
 “Takar will not write letter.”

17(b) *Takar-bé letter et-ma-du*
 takar-3SG letter write-NEG-HAB
 “Takar does not write letter.”

In the above examples (16) and (17), we see that Nyishi exhibits different negative markers for the realis-irrealis mood. Similarly, Galo has irrealis marker, most often present (Post, 2007). However, in Mising, the negative marker ”-ma” is used for both realis and irrealis moods, with /jə/, /jai/, /ai/, /nəka/(cursing), as irrealis mood marker. Examples for *declarative* 18(a), 18(b), *conditional* 18(c), 18(d) and *optative* 18(e) are discussed:

18(a) *Karmug-bi do:jig-ém ad-ma*
 karmug-bi dɔ:jig-əm ad-**ma**
 Karmug-3SG letter-ACC write-NEG
 “Karmug does not write letter.”

18(b) *Karmug-bi do:jig-ém ad-ma:-yé*
 karmug-bi dɔ:jig-əm ad-**ma:-jə**
 Karmug-3SG letter-ACC write-NEG-FUT
 “Karmug will not write letter.”

18(c) *Bi so du:yamilo, apin doma:yai*
 bi sɔ du:ja-milɔ apin dɔ-**ma:-jai**
 3SG here stay-if rice eat-NEG-COND
 “If she was here, she would not have eaten rice.”

18(d) *Bi luposu-ma:-bo éмна lu-dag-ai*
 Bi lupɔsu-**ma:-bɔ** əmnə lu-dag-**ai**
 3SG talk-NEG-past that say-3-COND
 “She said that she would not talk.”

18(e) *Donyi-Po:lobi ka:tup-supé lagi-ma:-néka*
 dɔɲi-pɔ:lɔbi ka:tup-supə lagi-**ma:-nəka**
 Donyi.Polo-3SG watch-FUT need-NEG-OPT
 “May Donyi Po:lo not see this!”

In the examples, in realis mood 18(a), the /ma/ marker is placed post-verbally. 18(a) and 18(b) are declarative sentences. 18(c) denotes conditional where the situation depends on a

condition, i.e. if “she(not speaker)” was present there, “she(not speaker)” would not have eaten rice. 18(d) is another conditional statement where it begins with a factual statement, “she said” then the condition follows, “she would not talk.” 18(e) is an optative statement where /nəka/ is used. /nəka/ is only used for optative statements.

4.1.6. Nominalised clauses

The negative particle /ma/ occurs within a nominalized clause. The nominalization process is productive, allowing speakers to generate new nominalized forms as needed.

- 19(a) *Adin do-ma:-né*
 adin dɔ-**ma:-nə**
 meat eat-NEG-N
 “Vegetarian” (Lit: One who does not eat meat)
- 19(b) *Apong tí:-ma-né*
 apɔŋ ti:-**ma:-nə**
 rice.beer drink-NEG-N
 “Teetotaler” (Lit: One who does not drink alcohol)
- 19(c) *Song-kin-ma:-ne*
 Sɔŋ-kin-**ma:-nə**
 dance-know-NEG-N
 “Non-dancer” (Lit: One who does not know how to dance)
- 19(d) *Pori-ma:-né*
 pɔri-**ma:-nə**
 read-NEG-N
 “Illiterate” (Lit: One who does not know how to read)

From examples (9) to (19), we see that the standard negative marker /ma/ is used in declarative and interrogative sentences. From 19(a) to 19(d), the alternate for these clauses without the negative can be formed by removing /ma:/, such as /adin dɔ-nə/ “meat eat-N”, /sɔ:-nə/ “dance-N”, and so on.

- 20(a) *no sa:ng-ém aipé mé:-dang?*
 nɔ sa:ŋ-əm aipə mə:-da-ŋ
 2SG tea-ACC like feel-do-Q
 “Do you like tea?”
- 20(b) *no sa:ng-ém aipé mé:-ma:-ne?*
 nɔ sa:ŋ-əm aipə mə:-ma:-ne
 2SG tea-ACC like feel-NEG-Q
 “Don’t you like tea?”

In the given interrogative sentences, examples 20(a) and 20(b), the question marker is added at the end of the sentences. So, if the sentence is in Negation, the question marker follows the negative marker.

4.2. prohibitive Negation

Mising uses /jɔ/ in negative imperative sentences or non-standard Negation sentences. Mising has no honorific markers.

21(a) *ansi:-so ru:y-olo:pé gi-len-yo*
 ansi-sə ru:j-ɔlə:pə gi-len-jɔ
 cold-LOC out-LOC go-appear-PROH
 “Do not go out in the cold.”

22(a) *tí:-to*
 ti-tə
 drink-IMP.AFF
 “Drink!”

22(b) *tí:-yo*
 ti:-jɔ
 drink-PROH
 “Do not drink !”

23(a) *gi-ka:-bo*
 gi-ka:-bə
 go-??-already
 “Go already!”

23(b) *gi-yo*
 gi-jɔ
 go-PROH
 “Do not go !”

In examples 21 to 23, we can see that the prohibitive marker ”yo” /jɔ/ is used for negative imperative sentences, and these are also added post-verbally.

4.3. negative Polarity Item (NPI)

negative polarity items (NPIs) are typologically widespread and appear in nearly every language studied. Despite this, researchers have not previously explored the presence and use of NPIs in Mising. A defining characteristic of NPIs is their exclusion from affirmative statements that describe a single past event, known as episodic sentences, as mentioned by Giannakidou (2011). In Mising, ”ko-sin” functions as an NPI and can be used alongside ”sé” (for animate subjects) and ”ok” (for inanimate subjects). In English, we have- *any, ever*.

24 (English)
 (a) *John did not give me any flowers.*
 * *John gave any flower.*

25 (Mising)

- (a) * *Zɔn-bi* *ŋɔ-m* *appun* *ɔk-kɔ-sin* *bi-ka*
 John-3SG 1SG-ACC flower what-IND-also give-PAST
 “John give me any flower.”

ŋɔ-kkə *ɔk-kɔ-sin* *ka-ma*
 1P-GEN what-IND-also have-NEG
 “I don’t have anything.”

- (b) * *Zɔn-bi* *ədilɔ-sin* *pɔtin* *pɔri-ki-tag*
 John-3P when-also book read-did-PAST
 “*John has ever read a book.”

Zɔn-bi *ədilɔ-sin* *pɔtin* *pɔri-ki-ma*
 John-3P when-also book
 “John has never read a book.”

- (c) * *Zɔn-bi* *ɔk-kɔ-m-sin* *ka:-tɔ*
 John-3P what-IND-ACC-also see-PAST
 “John has seen anything.”

Zɔn-bi *ɔk-kɔ-m-sin* *ka:-tɔ-ma*
 John-3P what-IND-ACC-also see-PAST-NEG
 “John has not seen anything.”

- (d) * *sə:-kɔ-sin* *ɔk-kɔ-m-sin* *ka:-tɔ*
 who-IND-also what-IND-ACC-also see-PAST
 “Anybody saw anything.”

sə:-kɔ-sin *ɔk-kɔ-m-sin* *ka:-tɔ-ma*
 who-IND-also what-IND-ACC-also see-PAST-NEG
 “Nobody saw anything.”

The form /*ɔk-kɔ-sin*/ is used only in the first person form and cannot be used in the second and third person, while /*ədilɔ-sin*/ 25(b) indicates a temporal reference, and /*ɔk-kɔ-m-sin*/ 25(c), 25(d) appears in the object form. As demonstrated in example 25, these forms are ungrammatical in positive episodic sentences. In scalar NPIs, you're considering a wider range of possibilities or quantities, often suggesting even the smallest or least likely options. In contrast, non-scalar NPIs are limited in scope and have low referentiality, meaning they do not strongly refer to specific entities. The animate and inanimate NPIs in Mising are denoted by:

Mising

sə:-kɔsin Animate-somebody/anybody/nobody
ɔk-kɔsin Inanimate-something/anything/nothing

Glossary

26(a) *Ngo sé:-ko-m-sin okolo-sin ka:-to-ma*
 ŋɔ sə:-kɔ-m-sin ɔkɔlɔ-sin ka:-tɔ-ma
 1SG who-IND-ACC--also where-also see-PAST-NEG
 “I did not see anyone anywhere.”

26(b) *Ngo édilo-sin sé-m-pin-n-ém kang-kí-ma*
 ŋɔ ədilo-sin sə-m-pin-n-əm kaŋ-kí-ma
 1SG when-also this-ACC-like.this-ACC see-PAST-NEG
 “I have never seen anything like this.”

26(c) *Ngo sé:-ko-m-sin ka:-to-ma*
 ŋɔ sə:-kɔ-m-sin ka:-tɔ-ma
 1P who-who-ACC-also see-PAST-NEG
 “I did not see anyone.”

27(a) *Sé:-ko-sin so:-pé gí-to-ma*
 sə:-kɔ-sin sɔ:-pe gi-tɔ-ma
 who-who-also here-LOC come-PAST-NEG
 “Nobody came here.”

27(b) *Bi ok-ko-m-sin do-to-ma*
 Bi ɔk-kɔ-m-sin dɔ-tɔ-ma
 3SG what-what-ACC-also eat-PAST-NEG
 “He ate nothing.”

27(c) *No sé-m édilo-sin pa:-ma:-ye*
 Nɔ sə-m ədilo-sin pa:-ma:-je
 2SG this-ACC when-also get-NEG-FUT
 “You will never get this.”

NPIs in Mising are mostly scalar. They emphasize the totality or comprehensiveness of the Negation. They suggest that the Negation applies broadly, covering all possibilities or instances, making the statement stronger and more emphatic. See examples (26) and (27). According to Giannakidou (2011), as cited from Ladusaw (1980), NPIs are licensed through Negation. For NPIs to be licensed, they must typically be within the scope of Negation, which often correlates with overt c-command.

Example 1: *Zɔn-bi pɔtin akɔ-sin rə-ma*
 John-3SG book any buy-NEG
 “John did not buy any book.”

Example 2: * *akɔsin pɔtin zɔn-bi rə-ma rə-ma*
 any book John-3SG buy-NEG buy-NEG
 “Any book John did not buy.”

Any book can only be interpreted inside the scope of Negation, as in Example 25(b), the scoping is impossible. Furthermore, appearance to the left of Negation, in a position where any

is not c-commanded by Negation, is PROHIBITED, though logically, any books may still be in the scope of Negation.

NPIs belong to various syntactic categories: there are nominal NPIs, as the ones above in 25 (a, b and d), but also NPI adverbs 25(2), and a class known as *minimizers* because they contain expressions of minimal amount cited by Giannakidou (2011). Some examples of *minimizers* in Mising are given in example 26.

26(a) *Bi ngom léko-sin riksu-to-ma*
 Bi ŋɔ-m ləkɔ-sin risu-tɔ-ma
 3SG 1sg-ACC once meet-PAST-NEG
 “He did not meet me even once.”

26(b) *Among-ém no-m insér-kosin bi-ma*
 amɔŋ-əm nɔ-m insər-kɔsin bi-ma
 Land-ACC 2sg-ACC slice-also give-NEG
 “Not even a slice of land will be given to you.”

26(c) *No-m attar-ém a-bor-kosin bi-ma*
 Nɔ-m attar-əm a-bɔr-kɔsin bi-ma
 2SG-ACC things-ACC one-CLF-also give-NEG
 “Not even a single piece of cloth will be given to you.”

4.3.1. NPI based on different negative particles

In this section, NPI in imperative construction as in 27(a) and (b), and NPI in declarative construction as in 27(c) and (d), /ma/ is discussed. NPIs in reflexives or reciprocals are also discussed which can be seen in (e), (f), (g), (h).

27(a) *Sé:ko-m-sin bi-yo*
 sə:kɔ-m-sin bi-jɔ
 who-acc-also give-proh
 “Give it to no one.”

27(b) *Okko-m-sin i-yo*
 ɔkkɔ-m-sin i-jɔ
 what-acc-also do-proh
 “Do nothing.”

27(c) *Sé:ko-m-sin bi-ma*
 sə:kɔ-m-sin bi-ma
 who-acc-also give-neg
 “I will give it to no one.”

27(d) *Okko-m-sin i-ma*
 ɔkkɔ-m-sin i-ma
 what-acc-also do-neg
 “I am doing nothing.”

- 27(e) *Sé:ko-sin ka-ma*
 sə:kə-sin ka-ma
 who-also stay-neg
 “No one is here.”
- 27(f) *Okko-sin ka-ma*
 ɔkkə-sin ka-ma
 what-also stay-neg
 “Nothing is here.”
- 27(g) *Sé:ko-sin ka:-yo*
 sə:kə-sin ka:-jə
 who-also see-proh
 “No one must see it (animate).”
- 27(h) * *Okko-sin ka:-yo*
 ɔkkə-sin ka:-jə
 what-also see-proh
 “Do not see (inanimate).”

When an object is present with an NPI in imperative construction as in (27a) and (b), the negative particle /jə/ is used in this construction. If the construction is declarative, as in (c) and (d), /ma/ is used. When no object receives the action, /ma/ is used- (e) and (f). Therefore, /jə/ is used only in imperative constructions. In (e) and (f), the speaker might be speaking to himself/herself or to someone, but the action has not been received or denied by anyone. In this type of construction, /ma/ is used. In imperative constructions, when the object is absent (g) and (h), /jə/ is not possible for inanimate constructions. Inanimate negative constructions are possible only for the declarative and tag questions.

4.4. Double Negation: Declarative constructions

In Mising, declarative sentences can show double negation, where two instances of negation occur in the same sentence. Negative particle 1 will be described as NEG.1 and Negative particle 2 will be described as NEG. 2. These two negations effectively cancel each other out, resulting in a positive meaning. In section 4.1.3, we see /ma/ has been used as both free and bound morpheme. In (28), examples of negative particles used as bound morphemes are given.

- 28(a) *Ngo apong tí:ma:-bi-ma* < (*tí:ma:pé=+ima*)
 ŋə aɔŋ tì:-**ma**:-bi-**ma**
 1P rice.beer drink-NEG.1-do-NEG.2
 “It is not like I do not drink apong (rice beer)”
- 28(b) *Bí buluk doyi:dém kin-ma:-bi-ma* < (*kinma:pé=+ima*)
 bi bulu-k dɔji:-də-m kin-**ma**:-bi-**ma**
 3P 3PPL-GEN story-DEF-ACC know-NEG.1-do-NEG.2
 “It is not like he/she do not know their story”

Statement 28(a) is used in a context where the speaker usually consumes *apong*², but on that particular occasion, he/she might not be consuming it due to some reason like *ui* (domestic ceremony) or health concerns. Statement 27(b) is used when the speaker knows the story but he/she is not willing to share it with others.

4.5. Double Negation: Negative Coordinator

Example 29 shows double negation in coordinated sentences. NEG.1 /maŋ/ occurs in word-medial position and PROH /jɔ/ occurs in coda position. In this context, neither of the two participants are involved in executing the action.

29(a) *Olum-kémpé i-mang-gom Ni:tom-kémpé i-yo*
 ɔlum-kəmpə i-**maŋ**-gəm ni:təm-kəmpə i-**jɔ**
 Olum-like do-NEG.1 Nitom-like do-PROH
 “Neither do it like Olum nor like Ni:tom.”

29(b) *Olum-kémpé do-mang-gom Ni:tom-kémpé tí:yo*
 ɔlum-kəmpə dɔ-**maŋ**-gəm ni:təm-kəmpə tí:-**jɔ**
 Olum-like eat-NEG.1 Ni:tom-like drink-PROH
 “Neither eat like Olum nor drink like Ni:tom.”

4.6. Double Negation in Imperative Constructions

In Statement 30, double negation appears in imperative sentences. The first negation, /ma:/, is used in the middle of a word and is not preceded by a vowel or velar consonant. The second negation, /jɔ/, occurs at the end of a word. In these examples, the negative particles are particularly employed to scold or warn someone who is saying, doing, or appearing in an inappropriate way.

30(a) *Adin do-ma:né-dém bi-yo*
 adin dɔ-**ma**:nə-də-m bi-**jɔ**
 meat eat-N-DEF-ACC give-PROH
 “Do not serve meat to the one who will not eat.”

30(b) *Bí-m adin-dém bi-ma:-pé i-ma:-pé-ka*
 bi-m adin-dəm bi-**ma**:-pə i-**ma**:-pə-ka
 3P-ACC meat-DEF give-NEG.1-do do-NEG.2-do-PAST
 “Do not forget to give the meat to him/her.”

30(c) *Yub-ma:-pé du:-yo*
 jub-**ma**:-pə du:-**jɔ**
 sleep-NEG.1-do stay-PROH
 “Do not stay without sleeping.”

²Apong is a traditional rice beer of the Mising community. There is no special occasion for this; it is served to guests who are respected, and the hosts might consume it daily. Apong is essential in ceremonial functions of the Mising community, be it *birth, marriage, or death*.

30(d) Bǐ-m agom-dém lu-ma:-pé i-yo-k
 bǐ-m agom-dəm lu-**ma**:-pə i-jə-k
 3P-ACC word-ACC say-NEG.1-do do-PROH-PAST
 “Do tell him/her about it.”

30(e) Apin do-lǐ:-ma:-mǐlo do-yo
 apin də-lǐ:-**ma**:-mǐlo də-jə
 rice eat-want-NEG.1-if eat-PROH
 “Do not eat if you don’t want to eat.”

Statement 30(a) is utilized in contexts where someone is being instructed not to serve meat to guests, who may be vegetarian or on a diet. Statement 30(b) applies to situations where the meat is reserved for someone special, with /ma:/ repeated twice to stress the significance of the meat being served to that individual. Statement 30(c) is used when addressing a listener who is sleep-deprived. Statement 30(d) is appropriate when a revelation or secret needs to be disclosed. Example 30(e) is appropriate to use in constructions if the willingness of the person in question has to be checked.

4.7. Negative Emphasis

As stated earlier, simple declarative constructions are negated by the negative particle *ma*. For the sake of emphasis, a post-verbal element /əi/ ‘never’ is used to emphasize after the negative particle *ma*. In 31(a), /lu-ma/ is used to mean “habitual”, in 31(b), by using /lu-maŋ-əi/, it means “definitely,” and in 31(c), adding /ədǐlo-sin/ is giving the highest level of emphasis which means “never, certainly.”

31(a) *Ram-bǐ mitse-m lu-ma*
 ram-bǐ mitse-m lu-**ma**
 Ram-3P lie-ACC say-neg
 “Ram does not tell lies.”

31(b) *Ram-bǐ mitse-m lumang-ei*
 ram-bǐ mitse-m lu-**maŋ-əi**
 Ram-3P lie-ACC say-NEG-EMP
 “Ram never tell lies.”

31(c) *Ram-bǐ mitse-m édǐlo-sin luma*
 ram-bǐ mitse-m ədǐlo-sin lu-ma
 Ram-3P lie-ACC never say-NEG
 “Ram never tell lies. (Certainly)”

4.8. Conditional negative

To indicate a conditional statement, the bound morpheme /gəm/ meaning “if” is used 32(a) and 32(b). To indicate a conditional negative, the bound morpheme /gəm/ meaning “if” is combined with the negative particle /maŋ/ in NEG.1. The use of this conditional negative particle suggests the outcome if a specific action is not carried out.

32(a) *Bí arik-pé gí-dag-gom goro-m raki-pa:-yé*
 bí arik-pə gi-dag-gəm gɔrɔ-m raki-pa:-yə
 3SG field-LOC go-DECL-if cow-ACC care-do-FUT
 “Even if he goes to the field, he has to look after the cow.”

32(b) *No apin-ém do-dag-gom ngo oying ké:-ma*
 nɔ apin-əm dɔ-dag-gəm ŋɔ ɔjiŋ kə:-ma
 2SG rice-ACC eat-DECL-if 1SG curry make-NEG
 “Even if you eat, I won’t make the curry”

32(c) *Bí arik-pé gí-mang-gom bau-bí dém-ma*
 bí arik-pə gi-maŋ-gəm bau-bi dəm-ma
 SG field-LOC go-NEG.1-if father-SG beat-NEG.2
 “Even if he goes to the field, he has to look after the cow.”

32(d) *no apin-ém do-mang-gom ngo okko-m-sin lu-ma*
 nɔ apin-əm dɔ-maŋ-gəm ŋɔ ɔkkɔ-m-sin lu-ma
 2SG rice-ACC eat-NEG.1-if 1SG what-ACC-also say-NEG.2
 “Even if you do not eat rice, I won’t say anything.”

5 Summary and Conclusion

The paper begins with an overview of the Mising language, focusing on relevant literature related to negation in declarative, interrogative, and imperative constructions. It identifies gaps, and an attempt has been made to discuss the negative particles used in the language. The paper aims to address these gaps by comprehensively examining different construction types where each negative particle occurs. It argues that, with the exception of imperative constructions, the standard negative particle is consistently used across almost all other constructions.

Furthermore, the paper explores *Negative Polarity Items (NPIs)* and *double negation* in Mising, an area previously unexamined by researchers. The different types of negative particles are presented in a table, along with the specific contexts in which they appear. By systematically analyzing these aspects, the paper contributes to a more nuanced understanding of negation in Mising, filling in the gaps left by earlier studies. This work not only offers new insights into the use of negative particles but also highlights the importance of studying NPIs in Mising, thus expanding the scope of research on this language. Negative /ma/ is used to negate declarative sentences and occur in word-final (coda) position. /ma/ is followed by PAST aspect marker to denote perfective aspect. In habitual or future, aspect marker is omitted. /ma:/ is used to negative declarative sentences and occur in word-medial position. It occurs in interrogative sentences and occur before the Q marker. It is also used in nominalised clauses followed by N. /maŋ/ is used in negative declarative sentences and used in word-medial position. (Condition: must be preceded by a vowel or velar consonant). It is used in constructions where the first task might not be in favour, but the second task has to be done unwillingly. It is used in constructions where there is irrealis mood. /jɔ/ is used to negative imperative sentences and occur post-verbally. NPI /ɔkkɔsin/ is used when there is only one subject, which is inanimate. It is used only in declarative sentences., /ədilɔsin/ is used for temporal reference. It can be used in both declarative and imperative sentences. /sə:kɔsin is Used in imperative and declarative constructions. It is used to refer animate objects. Double

Negation can occur in declarative sentences, as a negative co-ordinator and in imperative sentences.

Abbreviations

1	First person	INANIM	Inanimate
2	Second person	IND	Indefinite
3	Third person	IRRL	Irrealis
ACC	Accusative	LOC	Locative
AFF	Affirmative	M	Masculine
ANIM	Animate	N	Nominaliser
COND	Conditional	NEG	Negative Particle
F	Feminine	OPT	Optative
FUT	Future	P	Person
GEN	Genitive	PROH	Prohibitive
HAB	Habitual	Q	Question
HON	Honorific	RLS	Realis
IMP	Imperative	S	Singular

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