

# CLASSIFYING NEGATED NOMINALS ACROSS MIXTEC<sup>1</sup>

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Descriptions of negated nominal constructions vary drastically across Mixtec languages, even between closely related varieties. This paper argues that the apparent inter-varietal differences in the syntactic and morphological characteristics of negated nominals arise because three distinct constructions, all of which are superficially similar, may coexist within a single variety. A description of negation and the syntactic and morphological features of the three types of negated nominals is given for San Martín Peras Mixtec. A review of published data on eleven other Mixtec varieties shows that their negated nominals all fit relatively neatly into one of the three categories seen in San Martín Peras Mixtec but that many varieties only include description of one of the constructions. These findings emphasize the need for more thorough descriptive and comparative work on negated nominals in Mixtec, and they provide researchers with a set of syntactic features to consider in investigations of other Mixtec languages.

[KEYWORDS: Mixtec, negation, negative quantifiers]

**1. Introduction.** The negation of declarative verbal main clauses, known as standard negation (Miestamo 2005:42), is notoriously complex in Mixtec languages, usually involving a combination of segmental and tonal morphemes that may vary depending on the aspect of the verb (i.a. Macaulay 1990:219; Hollenbach 2015:9–10; Palancar et al. 2016:318–22; Mantenido 2020:90–92). These intricacies have inspired a number of theoretical and descriptive works that aim to understand the nature of negation across Mixtec (i.a. Macaulay 1990; Hollenbach 2015). However, the complexities of negation in Mixtec are not restricted to the verbal domain. The negation of non-verbal predicates, which often involves non-standard negation cross-linguistically (Eriksen 2011:275), displays a similarly rich degree of variation in Mixtec (Macaulay 2005:121–25; Mantenido 2020). This paper focuses on a subset of non-standard negation strategies in Mixtec, namely nominal constructions that contain some form of negation. These include negative indefinite pronouns in the sense of Haspelmath (1997:199), such as negative indefinites like English *nobody*, which do not co-occur with other markers of negation

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(cf. Penka 2011:1). They also include what I term NEG-words in the sense of Laka (1990:107–27), such as Spanish *nadie*. These NEG-words do co-occur with other markers of negation, and they participate in negative concord (cf. Laka 1990; Zeijlstra 2004). Another negated nominal construction discussed here involves the negation of nominal predicates, an environment in which non-standard negation is often used (Miestamo 2005:42). Throughout this paper, I refer to all these construction types jointly as “negated nominals.”

In describing negated nominals in Mixtec languages, researchers often give drastically different accounts across varieties. To illustrate these differences, consider the following items that have been labeled in the descriptive literature as “negated noun phrases” in three different Mixtec languages, all of which belong to the Western Alta dialect group (Josserand 1983). First, as described by Alexander (1980), negated nominals in Atatláhuca Mixtec (ISO: mis) are made up of the usual marker of standard negation and a fronted nominal. In this variety, standard negation is marked pre-verbally by the negative morpheme *tú*, which surfaces as *tù* in (1) due to tone sandhi.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Abbreviations in the glosses are as follows: 1, 2, 3 = first, second, third person; AFF = affirmative; CAUS = causative; COMPL = completive; CONT = continuative; COP = copula; DEM = demonstrative; EMPH = emphasis; EXCL = exclusive; FAM = familiar; FOC = focus; GA = *ga* morpheme; HUM = human; IND = independent pronoun; INT = interrogative; IRR = irrealis; LIM = limiter; M = human male noun class; N = neutral noun class; NEG = negation; PL = plural; POT = potential; PAST = past; PRES = present; REAL = realis; RESP = respect; SG = singular; UN = unspecified third person; WS = woman speaking. Abbreviations in the text are as follows: H = high tone; IPA = International Phonetic Alphabet; L = low tone; LH = low-to-high contour tone; NE = negative emphatic construction; NPI = negative polarity item; RNI = restricted negative indefinite; SMPM = San Martín Peras Mixtec.

All SMPM examples include an initial, morphologically unsegmented line in a working orthography, a second, morphologically segmented line in the IPA, a gloss, and translations in English and Spanish. The following graphemes in the working orthography are listed with their International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) counterparts: *ch* = [tʃ], *j* = [h], *ñ* = [ɲ], *sh* = [ʃ], *v* = [β], *y* = [j], ' = [ʔ]. A consonant followed by *i* and then another vowel is post-palatalized (e.g., *tsia* = [tʃja]). A consonant preceded by *n* is pre-nasalized, and post-vocalic *n* signifies vowel nasalization. High tone is marked with an acute (´) accent, low tone with a grave accent (`), low-to-high rising tone with a hacek (ˇ), falling tone with a circumflex (ˆ), and mid tone is not marked. All other writing conventions closely mirror their IPA counterparts.

There are significant transcription discrepancies across the Mixtec varieties cited throughout this paper, and most of the authors provide no IPA or APA transcriptions. To make their examples more readable in the context of this manuscript, their tonal and segmental transcriptions have been adapted into the working orthography given above. This is possible for tonal transcription because all varieties surveyed in this paper have three tone levels, though it does gloss over some inter-varietal segmental differences, such as the use of *v* for [v] or [b] in some Mixtec varieties.

The SMPM data for this project were gathered from 2017 to 2023 in Watsonville, CA, and during the summer of 2019 in Ahuejutla, Oaxaca. Partial financial support came from the Jacobs Research Funds. Unless otherwise marked, all data in this paper come from the author’s fieldwork with SMPM-speaking language consultants.

- (1) Atatláhuca Mixtec

**Tù** ní kixì se'è dè  
 NEG COMPL come son his

'His son did not come.'

(Alexander 1980:29)

This same morpheme heads negated nominals in the language (2).

- (2) Atatláhuca Mixtec

**Tù** se'è dè ní kixì.  
 NEG son his COMPL come

'His son did not come.'

(Alexander 1980:29)

Second, Farris (1992) describes a different type of negated nominal in Yosondúa Mixtec (ISO: mpm), shown in (3).

- (3) Yosondúa Mixtec

**nsùú sùchí vá'a** (n-sà'á yá'á)  
 NEG child good (COMPL-do this)

'(It was) not a good child (who did this).'

(Farris 1992:91)

Unlike in Atatláhuca Mixtec, the morpheme heading negated nominal constructions in this variety is completely distinct from the usual marker of standard negation, which is *tù* (4).

- (4) Yosondúa Mixtec

**tù** ka sndí'i (da)  
 NEG PL CONT:finish (he)

'(They) are not finishing (it).'

(Farris 1992:56)

In both Atatláhuca and Yosondúa Mixtec, the negated nominals described do not co-occur with standard negation on the verb. However, a third type of negated nominal does occur with standard negation. This type of construction is found in Magdalena Peñasco Mixtec (ISO: xtm; Hollenbach 2013), as shown in (5).

- (5) Magdalena Peñasco Mixtec

[**ni a in** ñayii] **ñatuu** ni xa'an  
 not ?? one person no COMPL go

'Not one person went.'

(Hollenbach 2013:121)

All three of these negated nominal constructions share some morphosyntactic characteristics: the negated nominal occurs pre-verbally and contains some sort of negation marker. However, they are also significantly different from each other: those in Atatláhuca Mixtec appear to be headed by the usual marker of standard negation, while those in Yosondúa Mixtec appear to be headed by a distinct negative nominal marker. Finally, those in Magdalena Peñasco

Mixtec appear both to contain a negative nominal marker *and* to co-occur with standard negation. This variation could, in principle, arise from two sources: the first possibility is that each of these three Mixtec varieties makes use of a unique negated nominal construction that is unattested in the other varieties. In this view, the negated nominal shown in (2) for Atatláhuca Mixtec has no parallel construction in Yosondúa Mixtec, and the construction shown in (3) for Yosondúa Mixtec has no parallel in Atatláhuca Mixtec. The second possibility is that each Mixtec variety can make use of multiple negated nominal constructions and that the differences between (2), (3), and (5) might reflect the diversity of negated nominal constructions that may occur within a single variety. Under this view, there might be a type of negated nominal in Yosondúa Mixtec that has the characteristics of the Atatláhuca Mixtec construction in (2), and there might be a type of negated nominal in Atatláhuca Mixtec that has the characteristics of the Yosondúa Mixtec construction in (3).

In this paper, I show that the three distinct types of negated nominals in (2), (3), and (5) may coexist within a single Mixtec variety, supporting the view that at least some of the differences between these constructions might arise from the fact that distinct negated nominal constructions are available within any given variety. The main source of empirical support for this hypothesis comes from San Martín Peras Mixtec (Southern Baja; ISO: jmx). In this variety, there are three separate negated nominal constructions, each with their own defining characteristics. These three types are shown below, with the negated nominal construction bolded. The first type, to which I give the term Restricted Negative Indefinite (RNI), is shown in (6).

- (6) San Martín Peras Mixtec  
 Restricted Negative Indefinite (RNI)  
 kǒ nà nishini Pedro  
**kǒ**=nǎ ní=ǰinĩ péðrò  
 NEG=3PL:N COMPL=see Pedro  
 ‘No one saw Pedro.’  
 ‘Nadie vió a Pedro.’

The negated nominal in (6) is sentence-initial and headed by the usual marker of standard negation, as in Atatláhuca Mixtec (2). The second type, which I label as a Negative Emphatic (NE) construction, is shown in (7).

- (7) San Martín Peras Mixtec  
 Negative Emphatic (NE)  
 sivi rà jàán rà nishini  
**sìβí** rà=**hǎǎ** rà ní=ǰinĩ  
 NEG:EMPH 3M=DEM 3M COMPL=see=1SG  
 ‘He’s not the one that I saw.’  
 ‘No es él al que vi.’

This negated nominal is sentence-initial and headed by a negative nominal marker distinct from the usual marker of standard negation, as in Yosondúa Mixtec (3). An example of the third type of negative nominal—a NEG-word—is shown in (8).

- (8) San Martín Peras Mixtec  
 NEG-word  
 ni iin nà kònishini Pedro  
**nī ī=nā** kò-nī-ŷinī péðrò  
 not one=3PL:N NEG-NEG:COMPL-see Pedro  
 ‘No one saw Pedro’  
 ‘Nadie vió a Pedro.’

It is sentence-initial and headed by a distinct negative nominal marker but also co-occurs with the standard negation marker, as in Magdalena Peñasco Mixtec (5).<sup>3</sup>

If three distinct types of negated nominals may coexist within SMPM, and if they bear similarities to the different constructions described across other varieties, then it stands to reason that other varieties might also make use of a number of negated nominal constructions with similar properties. It follows that the apparently large differences between the characteristics of negated nominals across Mixtec varieties might not be indicative of inter-varietal differences but might at least in part be a consequence of the relatively under-studied nature of negated nominals in Mixtec languages (see, however, Macaulay [1996] on Chalcatongo Mixtec and Mantenido [2020] on San Sebastián del Monte Mixtec for thorough descriptions of negation and negated nominals in these varieties). In other words, it is possible that each variety can, in principle, make use of a range of negated nominal constructions and that a lack of description of these constructions in some varieties leads to larger apparent differences between negated nominal constructions across varieties. I argue that this is the case, showing that many of the negated nominal constructions described across Mixtec varieties fall into one of the three classes shown in (6)–(8). In order to do so, I provide a description of verbal aspect and standard negation in SMPM (3), followed by a discussion of the characteristics of each type of negated nominal construction in the language (4). Then I provide a cross-varietal comparison of negated nominals across Mixtec, using the characteristics of the different constructions in SMPM to classify them (5). This comparison fills a gap in the Mixtec literature on negated nominals, and it provides some morphosyntactic tools that researchers can use to classify and describe the distinct classes of negated nominals in any Mixtec language. Ultimately, this paper

<sup>3</sup> Note that the examples in (6) and (8) are given the same translation. This is because both of these Mixtec sentences are translated into Spanish as the same sentence.

serves as a starting point in the cross-varietal analysis of negated nominals in Mixtec languages, and more description, analysis, and analytical tools (e.g., semantic differences) are necessary to understand the full range of variation.

**2. San Martín Peras Mixtec.** SMPM is in the Mixtecan subgroup of Otomanguean languages and is part of the Southern Baja group identified by Josserand (1983). It is spoken by about 12,000 people in and around the municipality of San Martín Peras in western Oaxaca, Mexico (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía 2010), as well as by diaspora communities in Mexico and the US. In California speakers of the San Martín Peras variety of Mixtec are concentrated principally in the towns of Salinas, Oxnard, Santa María, and Watsonville (Mendoza 2020:2).

SMPM has default VSO word order, though arguments regularly front to a pre-verbal position through various processes related to information structure (Ostrove 2018:121; Mendoza 2020:23–24), as is the case in other Mixtec languages (e.g., León Vázquez [2017:21] on Yucuquimi de Ocampo Mixtec; Macaulay [1996:102] for Chalcatongo Mixtec). For example, if a constituent bears information focus, as in (10), it obligatorily occurs pre-verbally. This focus-fronting applies to arguments and adjuncts alike and is illustrated in (10a) for the object of a transitive verb (Hedding 2019:32).

- (9) Question  
 nàán shìshi tsìnà?  
 nàá fì<sup>h</sup>fì tsìnà?  
 what COMPL:eat dog  
 ‘What did the dog eat?’  
 ‘Qué comió el perro?’
- (10) Answer  
 a. koñu shìshi rí  
**koṽ** fì<sup>h</sup>fì=rí  
 meat COMPL:eat=3ANML  
 ‘It ate *meat*.’  
 ‘Comió *carne*.’  
 b. \*shìshi rí koñu  
 \*fì<sup>h</sup>fì=rí **koṽ**  
 COMPL:eat=3ANML meat  
 Intended: ‘It ate *meat*.’  
 Esperado: ‘Comió *carne*.’

SMPM has five phonemic tones: three level tones ( $\acute{v}$  = High,  $v$  = Mid,  $\grave{v}$  = Low) and two contour tones ( $\check{v}$  = low-to-high rise,  $\hat{v}$  = fall). The tone-bearing unit is the mora, and a single mora may host any of the five phonemic tones (Peters 2018:2). As noted in Peters (2018:44), there are relatively few tone sandhi

processes in the language, and none are directly relevant to the constructions analyzed in this paper. Additionally, vowel nasalization (vn) and laryngealization (v') are contrastive. As will be shown in 3, tone carries a large functional load and is involved in expressing aspect and negation.

The fieldwork this paper is based on was conducted with a total of six SMPM-speaking language consultants in Watsonville, California, and Ahuejutla, Mexico. Ahuejutla is a town of about 1,000–1,500 people within the municipality of San Martín Peras in Oaxaca. All the data come from one-on-one or small-group elicitation sessions conducted primarily in Spanish, and most data points come from work with two consultants in Watsonville. Methods for data collection included translations of single words or full phrases from Spanish to SMPM and from SMPM to Spanish, as well as eliciting contextualized well-formedness judgments. These judgments depended on speakers' intuitions of whether a particular SMPM utterance was possible in a supporting context. Semantic felicity of an utterance was determined via speakers' intuitions of the naturalness of an otherwise grammatical utterance in a particular context. Scope relations were determined by eliciting the truth value of an otherwise grammatical sentence in a context that required a particular scope configuration. All examples throughout this paper that do not include a supporting context were elicited either through direct translation from Spanish to Mixtec or Mixtec to Spanish, or by asking whether the given Mixtec sentence was acceptable given the corresponding Spanish translation, or by a combination of the two methods. Methods for determining the phonemic category of tones in relevant words included eliciting target words in tone frame sentences (Pike 1948:50–52), analyzing pitch tracks in Praat, and using tone sandhi processes that are sensitive to specific tonal categories.

**3. Negative morphology.** Before diving into analysis of the distinct classes of negated nominals in SMPM, it is first necessary to understand the morphology of standard negation in the language. Devoting this space to standard negation is important for the main topic of the article because the syntax and morphology of negated nominals is intimately tied to the syntax and morphology of standard negation, especially in the case of restricted negative indefinites (RNIs) and negative empathics (NEs). So, properly understanding the differences between negated nominal types hinges on knowledge of the realization of standard negation in the language.

This section also has a secondary goal, which is to provide a description of the negative morphology of SMPM and situate it within Macaulay's (1990) discussion of negation and mood in Chalcatongo Mixtec, as well as across Mixtec in general. I will show that, when one considers negation hosted on a class of pre-verbal adverbs in SMPM, it becomes clear that the SMPM negation pattern is incompatible with the analysis of Chalcatongo Mixtec negation laid out in Macaulay (1990).

To these two ends, this section first describes verbal aspect in SMPM, followed by a discussion of verbal negation in the language, which is dependent on aspect. Finally, a brief overview of adverbial negation, which serves the same function as standard negation in the language, shows that the distinct instantiations of negation in the language are conditioned not solely by verbal aspect but also by the lexical category of their host, suggesting that they are essentially allomorphs of the same morpheme instead of completely distinct lexical items.

**3.1. Aspect.** In SMPM, as in other Mixtec languages, verbs occur in one of three different forms, commonly referred to as Continuative, Completive, and Potential aspect, which roughly correspond to present, past, and future tense, respectively (Bickford and Marlett 1988; Hollenbach 2015).<sup>4</sup> This tripartite distinction can be seen in the following examples. The verb in (11) is in the Continuative aspect, and it has a default present tense reading.

- (11) Continuative  
 ndáchí saà  
 n̄tá<sup>h</sup>tʃí saà  
 CONT:fly bird  
 ‘The bird is flying.’  
 ‘El pájaro está volando.’

The verb in (12) is in the Completive aspect, and it has a default past reading.

- (12) Completive  
 ndàchí saà  
 n̄tá<sup>h</sup>tʃí saà  
 COMPL:fly bird  
 ‘The bird flew.’  
 ‘El pájaro voló.’

Finally, the verb in (13) is in the Potential aspect, and it has a default future reading.

- (13) Potential  
 ndachí saà  
 n̄tá<sup>h</sup>tʃí saà  
 POT:fly bird  
 ‘The bird will fly.’  
 ‘El pájaro volará.’

As can be seen above and in the following table, tone is often the only marker of verbal aspect in SMPM, though it is sometimes accompanied by segmental

<sup>4</sup> I am unsure whether these forms correspond to tense or aspect in SMPM, but I proceed with the traditional aspectual labels of Continuative, Completive, and Potential.

TABLE 1  
ASPECT MORPHOLOGY IN SMPM

Verb	CONT	COMPL	POT
'to paint'	náka'yí	náka'yí	naka'yí
'pintar'	náka'jí	náka'jí	naka'jí
'to rot'	tsiá'yí	nitsiá'yí	tsiá'yí
'podrir'	tsíá'jí	ní-tsíá'jí	tsíá'jí
'to laugh'	shákù	nishákù	kuákù
'reírse'	já <sup>h</sup> kù	ní-já <sup>h</sup> kù	k <sup>w</sup> a <sup>h</sup> kù

morphology as well. The specific verbs in table 1 are given because they (and their negative counterparts in table 2) showcase the variety of methods of aspect and negation marking in SMPM and not because the verbs themselves belong to particular lexical classes.

Continuative aspect is usually marked solely by a high tone on the first vowel of the verbal stem, and Completive aspect is marked by a low tone on the first vowel of the verbal stem. On some verbs, such as 'to rot' and 'to laugh' in table 1, Completive aspect is also marked by a low-toned prefix *ní-*. This marking of the Completive aspect with *ní-* is lexically specific, applying for some verbs but not others. Finally, Potential aspect does not involve any kind of tonal marking but instead retains the lexical tone of the first vowel of the verbal stem. This can be seen in the variability between, for example, the initial mid tone on the Potential form of 'to paint' and the initial low tone on the Potential form of 'to rot' in table 1. Additionally, some verbs have different stem allomorphs between the Potential aspect, on the one hand, and Continuative and Completive aspects, on the other hand. This is evident in that the stem of 'to laugh' has a different form in the Potential aspect than it does in the Continuative and Completive aspects, as is also the case for the stem of 'to run' in (33).

**3.2. Standard negation.** As in most Mixtec languages, as well as in many non-Mixtec languages (Horn 1989:447–52), the morphology of standard negation in SMPM varies greatly depending on verbal aspect. This can be seen in the following examples, which show the negated forms of the verbs in (11)–(13).

In the Continuative aspect, negation is expounded by a low-toned prefix *kò-* (14).

- (14) Continuative  
 kòndáchi saà  
 kò-tá<sup>h</sup>tí saà  
 NEG-CONT:fly bird  
 'The bird is not flying.'  
 'El pájaro no está volando.'

In the Completive aspect, negation is marked by the same prefix *kò-*, as well as an obligatory, high-toned Completive prefix *ní-* (15).

- (15) Completive (with *kò-*)  
 kòndáchí saà  
**kò-ní**-<sup>n</sup>tá<sup>h</sup>tĩ saà  
 NEG-COMPL-fly bird  
 ‘The bird did not fly.’  
 ‘El pájaro no voló.’

Importantly, negative Completive verbs can also appear without the prefix *kò-*, but in these cases the Completive prefix bears a rising tone (16).

- (16) Completive (without *kò-*)  
 nĩndáchí saà  
**nĩ**-<sup>n</sup>tá<sup>h</sup>tĩ saà  
 NEG:COMPL-fly bird  
 ‘The bird did not fly.’  
 ‘El pájaro no voló.’

Finally, in the Potential aspect, negation is marked solely by a rising tone on the first vowel of the verb stem (17).

- (17) Potential  
 ndáchí saà  
<sup>n</sup>tá<sup>h</sup>tĩ saà  
 NEG:POT:fly bird  
 ‘The bird will not fly.’  
 ‘El pájaro no volará.’

This negation paradigm applies across all semantic classes of verbs (e.g., telic and atelic verbs, verbs of different Aktionsart), with some lexically specific irregularities. This pattern can be seen replicated in table 2, which shows the negated forms of the verbs in table 1.

Of note is the fact that the prefix *ní-/nĩ-* is obligatorily present on all negated Completive verbs, while its segmentally identical but tonally distinct counterpart *nì-* only surfaces on a subset of non-negated Completive verbs, as seen in table 1. I analyze these tonally distinct realizations of *ni-* as constituting the same morpheme, with their tone being determined by aspect and negation: in affirmative Completive contexts, the low tone that marks Completive aspect overwrites the lexical high tone of *ní-*. When preceded by *kò-* in negative Completive contexts, the lexical high tone of *ní-* does not change. However, when not preceded by *kò-* in negative Completive contexts, the negative rising tone that is seen on verbs in the Potential aspect overwrites the lexical high tone of *ní-*.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> It is also possible that, when *kò-* is not present, its low tone remains and docks onto the left edge of high-toned *ní-*, creating a rising contour. However, considering the negative adverbial

TABLE 2  
NEGATIVE MORPHOLOGY IN SMPM

Verb	CONT	COMPL	POT
'to paint'	kónaka'yí	kónínaka'yí	náka'yí
'pintar'	kò-náka'jí	kò-ní-náka'jí nínaka'yí ní-náka'jí	náka'jí
'to rot'	kòtsiá'yí	kónítsiá'yí	tsiá'yí
'podrir'	kò-tsá'jí	kò-ní-tsá'jí nitsiá'yí ní-tsá'jí	tsá'jí
'to laugh'	kòshákù	kónishákù	kuákù
'reirse'	kò-ǰá <sup>h</sup> kù	kò-ní-ǰá <sup>h</sup> kù nìshákù ní-ǰá <sup>h</sup> kù	k <sup>w</sup> á <sup>h</sup> kù

As seen in table 2, then, negation in SMPM is expressed in one of two ways: either with the prefix *kò-* (Continuative and Complete), or via a LH rising tone (Complete and Potential).

The prefix *kò-* appears obligatorily on negative Continuative verbs and optionally on negative Complete verbs. The grammatical LH rising tone appears obligatorily on negative Potential verbs and when *kò-* is absent on negative Complete verbs. The use of distinct negative morphemes depending on verbal aspect is quite common across Mixtec languages. Specifically, negative morphology tends to come in the form of two morphemes, one that is used on Potential verbs and one that is used on Continuative and Complete verbs (Macaulay 1990; Hollenbach 2015). This common distinction has led to a proposal that in at least some Mixtec languages, the two sets of morphemes—the correlates of *kò-* and the LH rising tone in SMPM—are fundamentally different. Specifically, the proposal, motivated by the syntax and semantics of negation in Chalcatongo Mixtec, is that the morpheme found on Continuative and Complete verbs is a marker of standard negation, while the one found on Potential verbs is the negative version of a deontic mood marker (Macaulay 1990).

While this proposal is well-motivated in Chalcatongo Mixtec and likely holds in other Mixtec languages as well, it does not appear to hold in SMPM. There are two principal reasons for this: first, a crucial part of Macaulay's (1990) analysis of the negative morpheme on Potential verbs as a negative

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facts to be presented later in this section, I adopt the analysis in which a rising tone overwrites the lexical high tone of *ní-*.

deontic mood marker is that it only appears on Potential verbs. However, as seen above, the LH rising tone that negates Potential verbs may also appear on negative Completive verbs when the prefix *kò-* is absent. This fact complicates an analysis of the negative LH rising tone as a distinct lexical item from the prefix *kò-*. The second reason is that an LH rising tone is the exponent of standard negation in a distinct configuration regardless of verbal aspect, which is impossible under an analysis of it as a negative deontic mood marker. The empirical evidence for this claim comes from negative adverbials, which are the focus of the following section.

**3.3. Negated adverbials.** In this section, I show that there are constructions in which standard negation always takes the form of a LH rising tone regardless of verbal aspect, which suggests that which negative morpheme is used is not determined solely by verbal aspect but also by the lexical item onto which the negative morpheme attaches. I argue that these facts are not consistent with an analysis of the LH rising tone as a negative deontic mood marker in the sense of Macaulay (1990) but rather that *kò-* and the LH rising tone are both morphological instantiations of standard negation. This argument has two consequences: first, it is important for understanding the different negated nominal constructions outlined in 4, specifically restricted negative indefinites and negative emphatics, both of which include a LH rising tone. Second, it follows up on Macaulay's (1990:224–25) call for more in-depth investigations of negative morphology across Mixtec languages and shows a novel pattern of negative morphology in a Mixtec language.

The empirical facts in question here involve a class of pre-verbal adverbs. In SMPM this class of adverbs includes manner adverbs, which express the way in which an action was performed, such as *ndákũ* ('strong') in (18) and *nì'i* ('fast') in (19).<sup>6</sup>

- (18) *ndákũ shínu Pedro*  
*ˀtáˀkṹ ʃínũ péðrò*  
 strong CONT:run Pedro  
 'Pedro runs quickly.'  
 'Pedro corre rápido.'

- (19) *nì'i shínu Pedro*  
*nĩ'í ʃínũ péðrò*  
 fast CONT:run Pedro  
 'Pedro runs fast.'  
 'Pedro corre recio.'

<sup>6</sup> These are two distinct adverbs in SMPM, but their meaning in these contexts is very similar. In what follows, *ndákũ* is translated as 'quickly/rápido', and *nì'i* is translated as 'fast/recio'.

In the upcoming examples, both *ndákũ* ('strong') and *nì'i* ('fast') are included and separated by a slash. This is meant to indicate that either adverb can occur in the indicated position, not that they can co-occur.

As noted in research on other Mixtec languages, this class of adverbs may intervene between the verb and standard negation (Hills 1990:71–72; Macaulay 2005:16). This is also the case in SMPM, as there are two ways to negate sentences containing these adverbs. In the first, negation appears on the verb, and the usually pre-verbal adverb appears post-verbally (20).

- (20) *kòshínu ndákũ/nì'i Pedro*  
**kò**-*ʃínũ*                    **ʔtá<sup>h</sup>kũ/nĩ<sup>ʔ</sup>**                    *péðrò*  
 NEG-CONT:run    strong/fast    Pedro  
 'Pedro does not run quickly/fast.'  
 'Pedro no corre rápido/recio.'

In the second, negation appears on the adverb in the form of a LH rising tone, and the adverb precedes the verb (21).

- (21) *ndákũ/nĩ'i shínu Pedro*  
**ʔtá<sup>h</sup>kũ/nĩ<sup>ʔ</sup>**                    *ʃínũ*                    *péðrò*  
 NEG:strong/NEG:fast    CONT:run    Pedro  
 'Pedro does not run quickly/fast.'  
 'Pedro no corre rápido/recio.'

Under no circumstances may both the adverb and the verb be negated (22a–b).

- (22) a. *\*ndákũ/nĩ'i kòshínu Pedro*  
**\*ʔtá<sup>h</sup>kũ/nĩ<sup>ʔ</sup>**                    **kò**-*ʃínũ*                    *péðrò*  
 NEG:strong/NEG:fast    NEG-CONT:run    Pedro  
 Intended: 'Pedro doesn't run quickly/fast.'  
 Esperado: 'Pedro no corre rápido/recio.'
- b. *\*kòshínu ndákũ/nĩ'i Pedro*  
**\*kò**-*ʃínũ*                    **ʔtá<sup>h</sup>kũ/nĩ<sup>ʔ</sup>**                    *péðrò*  
 NEG-CONT:run    NEG:strong/NEG:fast    Pedro  
 Intended: 'Pedro runs quickly/fast.'  
 Esperado: 'Pedro no corre rápido/recio.'

This process of negating a pre-verbal adverb is productive in SMPM, since any pre-verbal manner adverb may host negation. Importantly, this class of adverbs is syntactically close to the verb, suggesting that it is contained within the vP (Eischens 2019). Aside from their ability to intervene between negation and the verb, this can also be seen in that, when they occur post-verbally, they host enclitics usually hosted on the verb. For example, (23) shows the adverbs *ndákũ* ('strong') and *nì'i* ('fast') occurring preverbally and the 1SG enclitic =*i* cliticizing to the right edge of the verb.

- (23) ndákũ/nì'ì shínì  
 ʰtáʰkũ/nĩʰ jĩn=ĩ  
 strong/fast CONT:run=1SG  
 'I run quickly/fast.'  
 'Corro rápido/recio.'

The example in (24) shows the adverb occurring post-verbally. In this case, the 1SG pronoun cliticizes to the right edge of the adverb.

- (24) kũ konu ndákĩ/nì'ì  
 kũ konũ ʰtáʰk=ĩ/nĩʰ=ĩ  
 NEG:be.able POT:run strong=1SG/fast=1SG  
 'I can't run quickly/fast.'  
 'No puedo correr rápido/recio.'

Finally, the negated adverbial does indeed contribute sentential negation to its clause, and it is not a case of constituent negation. In other words, the exponent of negation in the adverbial scopes over the matrix verb, not under it. The evidence for this comes from polarity-sensitive responses, much like those discussed for English in Klima (1964). In general, it is felicitous in Mixtec to respond to a non-negative statement with the equivalent of the phrase 'Me, too' but not the equivalent of 'Me, neither.'

- (25) Statement  
 táshá'á Pedro  
 táfá'á péðrò  
 CONT:dance Pedro  
 'Pedro is dancing.'  
 'Pedro está bailando.'
- (26) Response  
 a. ✓sá tí'ì  
 ✓sá tíʰ=ì  
 so also=1SG  
 'Me, too.'  
 'Yo también.'
- b. ??ni yù'ù  
 ??nĩ jù'ù  
 not 1SG:IND  
 'Me, neither.'  
 'Yo tampoco.'

Sentences where negation scopes over the verb may be felicitously responded to with 'Me, neither' but not 'Me, too'.

- (27) Statement  
 kònitashá'á Pedro  
 kò-nĩ-tajá'á péðrò  
 NEG-COMPL-dance Pedro  
 'Pedro did not dance.'  
 'Pedro no bailó.'
- (28) Response
- a. ??sá ti'ì  
 ??sá tí'=ì  
 so also=1SG  
 'Me, too.'  
 'Yo también.'
- b. ✓ni yù'ù  
 ✓nĩ jù'ù  
 not 1SG:IND  
 'Me, neither.'  
 'Yo tampoco.'

This test is sensitive to the polarity of the preceding sentence, not just whether it contains a negative expression. When the preceding sentence has positive polarity but contains a negative expression that does not scope over the matrix verb, the 'Me, too' response is the only one that is felicitous:

- (29) Statement  
 shini tátě ndăkũ  
 ſin=ì tá<sup>h</sup>tě <sup>h</sup>tă<sup>h</sup>kũ  
 COMPL:see=1SG man NEG:strong  
 'I saw the not-strong man.'  
 'Vi al hombre que no es fuerte.'
- (30) Response
- a. ✓sá ti'ì  
 ✓sá tí'=ì  
 so also=1SG  
 'Me, too.'  
 'Yo también.'
- b. ??ni yù'ù  
 ??nĩ jù'ù  
 not 1SG:IND  
 'Me, neither.'  
 'Yo tampoco.'

It has been established, then, that the 'Me, neither' response is only acceptable when negation scopes over the main verb. When an adverb preceding the main

verb is negated, the ‘Me, neither’ response is the only one that is acceptable, showing that negated adverbs contribute sentential negation.

## (31) Statement

ndākũ/nĩ’i níshinu Pedro  
 \*tǎ<sup>h</sup>kũ/nĩ’ĩ ní-ǰínũ péðrò  
 NEG:strong/NEG:fast COMPL-run Pedro  
 ‘Pedro did not run quickly/fast.’  
 ‘Pedro no corrió rápido/recio.’

## (32) Response

- a. ??sá ti’i  
 ??sá tí’=i  
 so also=1SG  
 ‘Me, too.’  
 ‘Yo también.’
- b. √ni yù’ù  
 √nĩ jù’ù  
 not 1SG:IND  
 ‘Me, neither.’  
 ‘Yo tampoco.’

Considering that adverbial negation has sentential scope, that the adverb is structurally close to the verb, and that adverbial and verbal negation are in complementary distribution, I analyze adverbial negation as standard negation in which the adverb intervenes between the negative morpheme and the verb. This argument is important because, no matter what aspect the verb takes, negation on the adverb is always exponed as a rising tone.

- (33) a. ndākũ/nĩ’i shínu Pedro  
 \*tǎ<sup>h</sup>kũ/nĩ’ĩ ǰínũ péðrò  
 NEG:strong/NEG:fast CONT:run Pedro  
 ‘Pedro doesn’t run quickly/fast.’  
 ‘Pedro no corre rápido/recio.’
- b. ndākũ/nĩ’i níshinu Pedro  
 \*tǎ<sup>h</sup>kũ/nĩ’ĩ ní-ǰínũ péðrò  
 NEG:strong/NEG:fast COMPL-run Pedro  
 ‘Pedro didn’t run quickly/fast.’  
 ‘Pedro no corrió rápido/recio.’
- c. ndākũ/nĩ’i konu Pedro  
 \*tǎ<sup>h</sup>kũ/nĩ’ĩ konũ péðrò  
 NEG:strong/NEG:fast POT:run Pedro  
 ‘Pedro won’t run quickly/fast.’  
 ‘Pedro no va a correr rápido/recio.’

The fact that adverbial negation always takes the form of a LH rise regardless of the aspect of the verb leads to the conclusion that, in SMPM, the negative morpheme used in standard negation is determined both by verbal aspect *and* by the lexical category of its host. If negation is hosted on the verb, then the aspect of the verb determines which negative morpheme is used. However, if negation is hosted on a pre-verbal manner adverb, it always appears as an LH rise regardless of verbal aspect. This is important because it suggests that, for SMPM, an analysis of the LH rise as being a negative deontic mood marker in the sense of Macaulay (1990) is incorrect. Instead, it appears that both *kò-* and the LH rise convey standard negation, and which of the two is used is determined by the lexical category of the negative morpheme's host and, when it attaches to a verb, the aspect of the verb in question.

Interestingly, though, the Completive allomorph in (33b) is still necessary when the adverb hosts negation, as it is when the verb itself hosts negation (table 2). Given that it bears a high tone in (33b), I analyze the underlying tone of the Completive allomorph as high. This high tone can be overwritten by Completive low tone (see, for example, the Completive forms of 'to rot' and 'to laugh' in table 1) and negative LH tone (16).

**4. Negated nominals in SMPM.** As discussed earlier, there are three distinct negated nominal constructions that coexist synchronically in SMPM, each with their own defining characteristics. In this section, I outline these characteristics in greater detail. For each construction, I describe its characteristics in the following order: (1) the syntactic position(s) of the construction, (2) what morpheme heads it, (3) whether the construction itself contributes sentential negation, (4) whether it co-occurs with another morpheme that contributes sentential negation, and (5) whether it involves a mono-clausal or bi-clausal structure. When all these criteria are considered, the three types of negated nominal constructions can be clearly understood to be distinct from each other.

**4.1. NEG-words.** The first class of negated nominals in SMPM is a type of negative indefinite pronoun (Haspelmath 1997) that I term NEG-words in the sense of Laka (1990). Because they may occur in a fronted position or in situ, they are structurally ambiguous, as is also the case with restricted negative indefinites. This means that a fronted NEG-word may be either the subject or the object of the clause. Throughout the paper, I give only one of the two possible readings for such sentences, but both are available. Examples of NEG-words in a fronted position and in situ are given in (34a–b).

- (34) a. ni iin nà kòshini Pedro  
 nī ī=nā kò-fīnī péðrò  
 not one=3PL:N NEG-CONT:see Pedro  
 'Pedro doesn't see anybody.'  
 'Pedro no ve a nadie.'

- b. kòshìni Pedro ni iin nà  
 kò-ʃinĩ péðrò nĩ ã=nà  
 NEG-CONT:see Pedro not one=3PL:N  
 ‘Pedro doesn’t see anybody.’  
 ‘Pedro no ve a nadie.’

In either position, the NEG-words must obligatorily co-occur with standard negation: the examples in (35a–b) are identical to those in (34a–b) except for the exclusion of standard negation, and they are ungrammatical.

- (35) a. \*ni iin nà shìni Pedro  
 \*nĩ ã=nà ʃinĩ péðrò  
 not one=3PL:N CONT:see Pedro  
 Intended: ‘Pedro doesn’t see anybody.’  
 Esperado: ‘Pedro no vió a nadie.’
- b. \*shìni Pedro ni iin nà  
 \*ʃinĩ péðrò nĩ ã=nà  
 CONT:see Pedro not one=3PL:N  
 Intended: ‘Pedro doesn’t see anybody’  
 Esperado: ‘Pedro no ve a nadie.’

NEG-words are always headed by *ni* and usually headed by the larger string *ni iin*. Of these two words, only the meaning of the second is certain: *iin* is the numeral ‘one’ in SMPM. It is often used with indefinite nouns (36), though indefinite nouns may also surface without it (37):

- (36) shìni iin saà  
 ʃin=ì ã saà  
 COMPL:see=1SG one bird  
 ‘I saw a bird.’  
 ‘Vi un pájaro.’
- (37) shìni tsiò’o koni  
 ʃin=ì tsiò’o konĩ  
 COMPL:see=1SG root yesterday  
 ‘I saw a root yesterday.’  
 ‘Ayer vi una raíz.’

I only know of two constructions that are headed by *ni* and do not include *iin*. These are the construction meaning ‘nothing/anything’ in (38) and the construction meaning ‘me, neither’ in (39).

- (38) ni ñà’an kòkísha Pedro  
 nĩ ñà’ã kò-kíʃa péðrò  
 not thing NEG-CONT:do Pedro  
 ‘Pedro isn’t doing anything.’  
 ‘Pedro no está haciendo nada.’

- (39) ni yù'ù  
 nĩ jù'ù  
 not 1SG:IND  
 'Me, neither.'  
 'Yo, tampoco.'

The exact identity of the word *ni* ('not') is not entirely clear. However, Holtenbach (2015:11) notes that many Mixtec varieties use a morpheme *ni* with a mid or high tone as a counterfactual marker, raising the possibility that the *ni* in NEG-words (and potentially the *ni* in negative past tense verbs) is a counterfactual marker.<sup>7</sup>

NEG-words do not contribute sentential negation of their own: only one sentential negation arises when they co-occur with standard negation, which is the hallmark of negative concord. In fact, more than one NEG-word can co-occur in the same sentence and still yield just one instance of negation.

- (40) ni ñà'an kòkisha ni iin nà  
 nĩ jǎ'ǎ kò-kí'fǎ nĩ ñ=ñǎ  
 not thing NEG-CONT:do not one=3PL:N  
 'Nobody is doing anything' (lit. 'Nobody is doing nothing').  
 'Nadie está haciendo nada.'

However, they do appear to contribute some negative force of their own, as shown by the fact that they can be used as fragment answers (42). This makes them unlikely to be negative polarity items (NPIs) like English *anyone* or *anything*, since NPIs cannot be used as fragment answers (Klima 1964; Laka 1990; Zanuttini 1991; Merchant 2005).<sup>8</sup> For example, the English NPI *anything* cannot be used to felicitously answer a question like 'What have you eaten?', but (42) shows that SMPM NEG-words can be used in this way.

- (41) Question  
 yóó kàni Pedro?  
 jóó kǎnĩ pédrò  
 who COMPL:hit Pedro  
 'Who hit Pedro?'  
 'Quién le pegó a Pedro?'

<sup>7</sup> Another analysis proposed in Farris (1992:108) is that *ni* is a borrowing from Spanish, since *ni* in Spanish means 'not even'. However, this analysis is not widespread in the Mixtecanist literature.

<sup>8</sup> The English free choice items *anyone/anything* can be used as fragment answers, but they are not NPIs (see, for example, Menéndez-Benito 2005).

- (42) Answer  
 ni iin nà  
 nĩ ãĩ=nà̃  
 not one=3PL:N  
 ‘No one.’  
 ‘Nadie.’

Because they contribute some negative force of their own but do not introduce sentential negation, these negative quantifiers fit squarely into Laka’s (1990) characterization of NEG-words. They are items with a negative meaning of their own, but they combine with other negative items to yield just one sentential negation, a classic characteristic of negative concord. It is because of these characteristics that I label these negated nominals as NEG-words.

Finally, when they appear pre-verbally, NEG-words are simply fronted arguments, not predicates whose subject introduces a relative clause. This possibility is important to control for, since SMPM is verb-initial, and one might question whether the head of a sentence-initial constructions is a predicate or simply a nominal marker. Evidence for the claim that NEG-words are fronted arguments and not predicative constructions comes from wh-extraction. It is well-known that wh-words may be extracted from some syntactic configurations and not from others (an example of so-called “island effects”; Ross 1967; Richards 2014). In SMPM interrogative wh-words occur in left periphery and leave a gap in situ, as seen in (9). Importantly, wh-words in SMPM cannot be extracted from a relative clause. For example, consider the word *shità̃* ‘tortilla’ in (43), which occurs in object position inside a relative clause.

- (43) shĩnũn iin yà yivĩ shĩshi shità̃  
 ʃĩɲ=ũ                       $\begin{matrix} \text{rc} \\ \text{rc} \end{matrix} \left[ \begin{matrix} \tilde{\text{ĩ}}=j\grave{\text{a}} & j\text{ĩ}\beta\text{ĩ} & ʃ\text{ĩ}^h\text{ĩ} & ʃ\text{ĩ}^h\text{t}\grave{\text{a}} \end{matrix} \right]$   
 CONT:know=2SG                      one=3SG:N    person    CONT:eat    tortilla ]  
 ‘You know someone who is eating tortillas.’  
 ‘Conoces a alguien que esté comiendo tortillas.’

One might wish to form a wh-question in which the wh-word corresponds to the object position occupied by *shità̃* in (43). For example, one might hear the sentence in (43) but not clearly hear what it was that was being eaten. In this case, one might wish to ask what it was that the person whom you know was eating. In this scenario, a sentence like the one in (44) should be appropriate. However, in SMPM (as in English), this type of wh-question is ungrammatical because the wh-word leaves a gap within a relative clause, resulting in an wh-island violation.

- (44) Context: I heard the sentence in (43), but I didn’t clearly hear what it was that was being eaten. I want to know what it was that was being eaten by the person that you know, so I ask the following:

- \*nàán shîññiin iin yà yivĩ shíshi?  
 \*nǎǎ<sub>1</sub> ʃiŋ=ũ      RC [ ñ=jà      jibi      ʃiʃi      -<sub>1</sub> ]?  
 what    CONT:know=2SG    RC [ one=3SG:N    person    CONT:eat    -<sub>1</sub> ]  
 \*‘What do you know someone who is eating?’  
 \*‘Qué conoces a alguien que está comiendo?’

However, wh-words can be extracted out of clauses containing both fronted (45a) and in situ (45b) NEG-words. Because wh-extraction out of a relative clause is ungrammatical in SMPM, this suggests that the material following NEG-words is not a relative clause:

- (45) a. yóó ni iin nà kòkání?  
 jóó<sub>1</sub>    nĩ    ñ=nǎ      kò-kání      -<sub>1</sub>  
 who    not    one=3PL:N    NEG-CONT:hit    -<sub>1</sub>  
 ‘Who is hitting nobody?’  
 ‘Quién le está pegando a nadie?’
- b. yóó kòkání ni iin nà?  
 jóó<sub>1</sub>    kò-kání      nĩ    ñ=nǎ      -<sub>1</sub>  
 who    NEG-CONT:hit    not    one=3PL:N    -<sub>1</sub>  
 ‘Who is hitting nobody?’  
 ‘Quién le está pegando a nadie?’

In summary, NEG-words are negated nominal constructions headed by the morpheme *ni*, the exact morpho-syntactic identity of which is not entirely certain, though it may be related to a counterfactual marker (Hollenbach 2015). NEG-words optionally move to a position between wh-words and negation, and they must co-occur with a marker of sentential negation. There may be more than one in a clause, they may be used as fragment answers, and they participate in negative concord.

**4.2. Restricted negative indefinites (RNIs).** The second type of negated nominal in SMPM, also a negative indefinite pronoun, is what I label as a restricted negative indefinite (RNIs). Though I will walk briefly through the relevant defining characteristics here, readers are referred to Eischens (2020) for a more in-depth discussion of the characteristics of these constructions. Unlike NEG-words, RNIs must occur pre-verbally (46), and they are ungrammatical in situ (47).

- (46) kǒ nà kôni  
 kǒ=nǎ      kôn=ĩ  
 NEG=3PL:N    like:CONT=1SG  
 ‘I like no one.’  
 ‘No me gusta nadie.’

- (47) \*kòni kǒ nà  
 \*kôn=<sup>ì</sup>                    **kǒ=nǎ**  
 CONT:like=1SG    NEG=3PL:N  
 Intended: ‘I like no one.’  
 Esperado: ‘No me gusta nadie.’

RNIs contribute sentential negation, meaning that negation scopes over the main clause predicate when they are present. This can be seen in polarity-sensitive responses to the sentence in (48), which contains an RNI. The responses are given in (49).

- (48) Statement  
 kǒ nà níshashi ntsíkǎ  
**kǒ=nǎ**      ní=<sup>í</sup>fa<sup>h</sup>fi      <sup>h</sup>tsí<sup>h</sup>kǎ  
 NEG=3PL:N    COMPL-eat    banana  
 ‘Nobody ate a banana.’  
 ‘Nadie comió plátano.’

- (49) Response  
 a. ??sá tí<sup>í</sup>  
    ??sá   tí<sup>í</sup>=<sup>ì</sup>  
    so      also=1SG  
    ‘Me, too.’  
    ‘Yo también.’  
 b. √ni yù<sup>ù</sup>  
    √ní    jù<sup>ù</sup>  
    not    1SG:IND  
    ‘Me, neither.’  
    ‘Yo tampoco.’

Additional evidence that they contribute sentential negation comes from the fact that they license NEG-words (50a–b), which were shown above to only be allowed in the context of standard negation.

- (50) a. kòñǎ<sup>á</sup> a kísha ní iin nà  
**kò-<sup>á</sup>ǎ<sup>á</sup>**      kí<sup>h</sup>fa      ní      ñ=<sup>á</sup>nǎ  
 NEG-thing    CONT:do    not    one=3PL:N  
 ‘Nobody is doing anything.’  
 ‘Nadie está haciendo nada.’  
 b. ní iin nà kòñǎ<sup>á</sup> a kísha  
**ní    ñ=<sup>á</sup>nǎ      kò-<sup>á</sup>ǎ<sup>á</sup>**      kí<sup>h</sup>fa  
 not    one=3PL:N    NEG-thing    CONT:do  
 ‘Nobody is doing anything.’  
 ‘Nadie está haciendo nada.’

RNIs generally cannot co-occur with standard negation (51a–b), though in some cases a highly marked double negation reading is available.

- (51) a. \*kǒ nà kòkání Pedrõ  
 \*kǒ=nǎ kò-kání péðrò  
 NEG-3PL:N NEG-CONT.hit Pedro  
 Intended: ‘Pedro isn’t hitting anybody.’  
 Esperado: ‘Pedro no le está pegando a nadie.’
- b. \*kǒ nà ndǎkǔ shínu  
 \*kǒ=nǎ tǎ<sup>h</sup>kǔ jínũ  
 NEG=3PL:N NEG:strong CONT:run  
 Intended: ‘Nobody runs quickly.’  
 Esperado: ‘Nadie corre rápido.’

Additionally, they may not co-occur with other RNIs (52), a pattern seen in many other languages with similar negative indefinite pronouns (Haspelmath 1997:219).

- (52) \*kǒ nà kòñǎ’a kisha  
 \*kǒ=nǎ kò-pǎ<sup>h</sup>ǎ kí<sup>h</sup>fa  
 NEG-3PL:N NEG-thing CONT:do  
 Intended: ‘Nobody is doing anything.’  
 Esperado: ‘Nadie está haciendo nada.’

Like NEG-words, RNIs do not introduce a relative clause, even though *kǒ* is often used in SMPM as a negative locative verb (53) and a negative existential verb (54) in SMPM.

- (53) kǒ rà  
 kǒ=rà  
 NEG=3M  
 ‘He is not here.’  
 ‘Él no está.’
- (54) kǒ chiñu kasi  
 kǒ tʃiñũ ka<sup>h</sup>s=i  
 NEG work POT:do=1SG  
 ‘There is no work for me to do.’  
 ‘No hay trabajo que pueda hacer.’

The use of a negative existential as a negative indefinite pronoun is reasonably well-attested cross-linguistically, being attested in thirteen out of ninety-five languages surveyed in Veselinova (2013:12).

The main evidence that RNIs are not headed by a negative existential verb comes from wh-extraction. First, positive existentials introduce a relative

clause. That is, the sentence in (55) is best translated as ‘There is someone who hit Pedro.’

- (55) *íyo ná kàni Pedro*  
*íjo*                     $\begin{matrix} \text{rc} \\ \text{rc} \end{matrix} \left[ \begin{matrix} =n\grave{a} & k\grave{a}n\tilde{i} & p\acute{e}\check{d}r\grave{o} \\ =3\text{PL:N} & \text{COMPL:hit} & \text{Pedro} \end{matrix} \right]$   
 ‘Someone hit Pedro.’ (lit. ‘There is someone who hit Pedro.’)  
 ‘Alguien le pegó a Pedro.’ (lit. ‘Hay alguien que le pegó a Pedro.’)

Because the material that comes after *íjo* (‘there is’) is a relative clause, a wh-word cannot correspond to a gap inside that relative clause; such a construction is ungrammatical (56).

- (56) \**yóo íyo ná kàni?*  
 \**jóó*<sub>1</sub> *íjo*                     $\begin{matrix} \text{rc} \\ \text{rc} \end{matrix} \left[ \begin{matrix} =n\grave{a} & k\grave{a}n\tilde{i} & -_1 \\ =3\text{SG:N} & \text{COMPL:hit} & -_1 \end{matrix} \right]$   
 Intended: ‘Who did someone hit?’  
 Esperado: ‘A quién le pegó alguien?’

However, wh-words can be extracted from the equivalent position in a clause containing a RNI (57).

- (57) a. *kǒ ná káni Pedro*  
*kǒ=n\grave{a}*                    *kán\tilde{i}*                    *pé\check{d}r\grave{o}*  
 NEG=3PL:N    CONT:hit    Pedro  
 ‘Nobody is hitting Pedro.’  
 ‘Nadie está pegando a Pedro.’
- b.  $\checkmark$ *yóo kǒ ná káni?*  
 $\checkmark$ *jóó*<sub>1</sub> *kǒ=n\grave{a}*                    *kán\tilde{i}*                     $-_1$   
 who<sub>1</sub>    NEG=3PL:N    CONT:hit     $-_1$   
 ‘Who is no one hitting?’  
 ‘A quién no está pegando nadie?’

If RNIs were, in fact, negative existential verbs, then the same extraction restrictions that are placed on positive existentials should hold of them. In fact, if there were any difference in extraction restrictions between positive and negative existentials, then one might expect extraction from negative existentials to be even less likely than extraction from positive existentials. This is the opposite of the actual pattern.

Instead of being headed by a negative existential verb, RNIs are headed by the usual marker of standard negation, though its form is slightly distinct from verbal cases. Section 3 showed that standard negation in SMPM is expressed via a combination of *kò* and a LH contour tone, depending on the item that hosts negation. RNIs are headed by *kǒ*, which contains both of these exponents of standard negation. The difference is that in RNIs the LH contour tone is hosted on *ko*, while in

verbal and adverbial negation it is not.<sup>9</sup> Additional evidence that RNIs are headed by the usual marker of standard negation comes from several sources: syntactically, RNIs may only surface in the linear position of standard negation—after *wh*-words (57) and NEG-words (50) but before the verb—and they may not co-occur with standard negation (51). Additionally, they contribute sentential negation (49) and license polarity-sensitive material (50), as would be expected if they contain the usual marker of standard negation. Because of these facts, I analyze RNIs as negated nominal constructions that are headed by the in situ marker of standard negation.

**4.3. Negative emphatics (NEs).** The final class of negated nominals also obligatorily occurs pre-verbally. Like RNIs and unlike NEG-words, these constructions may not occur after a verb. Like a similar construction in San Sebastián del Monte Mixtec (Mantenuto 2021; Mantenuto et al. 2021), they involve a focus negator that is used in contrastive contexts and in contexts where the negated constituent is in focus (58).

(58) Context: I see that Pedro is eating tortillas, but someone incorrectly tells me that it's Juan that is eating tortillas.

a. sivi rà káa rà shishi shitã

**siβi**      **rà=káa**      rà      ʃiʰʃi      ʃiʰtã  
NEG.EMPH    3M=DEM    3M    CONT:eat    tortilla

‘It’s not *him* that’s eating tortillas.’

‘No es *él* quien está comiendo tortillas.’

b. \*shishi sivi rà káa (rà) shitã

\*ʃiʰʃi      **siβi**      **rà=káa**      (rà)      ʃiʰtã  
CONT:eat    NEG.EMPH    3M=DEM    3M    tortilla

Intended: ‘It’s not *him* that’s eating tortillas.’

Esperado: ‘No es *él* quien está comiendo tortillas.’

The negator that heads NEs is a negated form of an affirmative marker used to express emphasis when a constituent is in focus. Below in (59) and (60) is the non-negated form of this marker, which heads a noun phrase that corresponds to a gap after the verb.

(59) Context: I see that Pedro is eating tortillas, but someone incorrectly tells me that it's not tortillas that he's eating.

sivi shitã yá shishi rà

**siβi**    ʃiʰtã    já      ʃiʰʃi      rà  
EMPH    tortilla    3SG:N    CONT:eat    3M

‘Yes, it’s *tortillas* that he’s eating.’

‘Sí son *tortillas* lo que está comiendo.’

<sup>9</sup> In the RNI meaning ‘nothing’, some speakers produce the rise on *ko-*, as in *kò-ñà’an*, and some speakers produce the rise on the word for ‘thing’, as in *kò-ñá’an*.

- (60) Context: I see that Pedro is eating tortillas, but someone incorrectly tells me that it's not him that's eating the tortillas.

siví rà káa rà shíshi shitã  
**siβi**    **rà=káa**    rà    ʃiʰʃi    ʃiʰtã  
 EMPH   3M=DEM   3M   CONT:eat   tortilla

'Yes, it's *him* that's eating tortillas.'  
 'Sí es *él* quien está comiendo tortillas.'

The negative form of this emphatic marker is segmentally identical to the positive form, but it has a low-high melody instead of a mid-mid melody (61)–(62).

- (61) Context: I see that Pedro is eating beans, but someone incorrectly tells me that he's eating tortillas.

siví shitã yá shíshi rà  
**siβi**            **ʃiʰtã**    já    ʃiʰʃi    rà  
 NEG.EMPH   tortilla   3SG:N   CONT:eat   3M

'It's not *tortillas* that he's eating.'  
 'No son *tortillas* lo que está comiendo.'

- (62) Context: I see that Pedro is eating tortillas, but someone incorrectly tells me that it's Juan that is eating tortillas.

siví rà káa rà shíshi shitã  
**siβi**            **rà=káa**    rà    ʃiʰʃi    ʃiʰtã  
 NEG.EMPH   3M=DEM   3M   CONT:eat   tortilla

'It's not *him* that's eating tortillas.'  
 'No es *él* que está comiendo tortillas.'

The low-high melody on the emphatic marker is strikingly similar to the LH contour tone of negation in SMPM but distinct in that it is spread over two syllables instead of being restricted to one, as it usually is. Interestingly, the negated emphatic marker in (61) and (62) co-varies relatively freely with the form in (63).

- (63) sǐ shitã yá shíshi rà  
**sǐ**            **ʃiʰtã**    já    ʃiʰʃi    rà  
 NEG.EMPH   tortilla   3SG:N   CONT:eat   3M

'It's not *tortillas* that he's eating.'  
 'No son *tortillas* lo que está comiendo.'

In this case, described initially in Ostrove (2018), the LH contour of tonal negation in SMPM is realized on a single vowel. The two forms are largely interchangeable, though the form in (63) is noted by one consultant to convey weaker emphasis than that in (61)–(62). They do appear to differ, however, in that the form in (63) does not have a non-negative counterpart.

Unlike NEG-words but like RNIs, negative emphatic constructions (NEs) contribute sentential negation, as evidenced by polarity-sensitive responses.

- (64) Statement  
 sivi rà káa rà shíshi shită  
**siβí**      **rà=káa**    rà    ʃiʰʃi      ʃiʰtă  
 NEG.EMPH   3M=DEM   3M   CONT:eat   tortilla  
 ‘It’s not *him* that’s eating tortillas.’  
 ‘No es *él* que está comiendo tortillas.’
- (65) Response  
 a. ??sá tiʼi  
    ??sá   tiʼ=ì  
    so      also=1SG  
    ‘Me, too.’  
    ‘Yo también.’
- b. ✓ni yùʼù  
    ✓nĩ    jùʼù  
    not    1SG:IND  
    ‘Me, neither.’  
    ‘Yo tampoco.’

Also unlike NEG-words but like RNIs, NEs generally do not co-occur with a separate instantiation of sentential negation. When they do, the only available reading is one of double negation, which is often judged as highly marked (66).

- (66) Context: I see that Pedro is not eating his tortillas, but someone incorrectly tells me that it’s Juan that is not eating his tortillas.  
 sivi Juan rà kòshíshi shită, Pedro rà  
**siβí**      **hʷáá**      rà    kò-ʃiʰʃi      ʃiʰtă,    péðrò    rà  
 NEG.EMPH   Juan   3M   NEG-CONT:eat   tortilla,   Pedro   3M  
 ‘It’s not *Juan* that’s not eating tortillas, it’s *Pedro* [that’s not eating tortillas].’  
 ‘No es *Juan* quien no está comiendo tortillas, es *Pedro* [quien no está comiendo tortillas].’

Finally, despite appearing to be fronted negated nominals, these NEs actually involve nominal predication. This can be seen by examining the use of the copula, as done in Macaulay (1996, 2003). As noted in Ostrove (2018), nominal predicates in SMPM in the Continuative aspect use a null copula (67).

- (67) dotôr Pedro  
 dotôr    péðrò  
 doctor   Pedro  
 ‘Pedro is a doctor.’  
 ‘Pedro es doctor.’

In the Completive and Potential aspects, the copula is overt (68)–(69).

- (68) dotôr shikùù Pedro  
 dotôr ʃíkùù péðrò  
 doctor COMPL:be Pedro  
 ‘Pedro was a doctor.’  
 ‘Pedro era doctor.’

- (69) dotôr kuu Pedro  
 dotôr kuu péðrò  
 doctor POT:be Pedro  
 ‘Pedro will be a doctor.’  
 ‘Pedro será doctor.’

Because the copula in Continuative contexts is null, it is initially difficult to tell if (70) is a nominal predicate, with the second argument being a relative clause headed by a pronoun, or if it is a clause with a fronted argument.

- (70) sǐ shítǎ yá shíshǐ rà  
 [sǐ ʃíʰtǎ] [já ʃíʰʃǐ rà]  
 NEG.EMPH tortilla 3SG:N CONT:eat 3M  
 ‘It’s not *tortillas* that he’s eating.’  
 ‘No son *tortillas* lo que está comiendo.’

However, when in Completive or Potential aspect, there are two ways to negate a nominal predicate. In the first, the copula itself bears negative morphology, and both arguments follow it (71).<sup>10</sup>

- (71) a. kònishikùù Pedro dotôr  
**kò-ní-ʃíkùù** péðrò dotôr  
 NEG-COMPL-COMPL:be Pedro doctor  
 ‘Pedro was not a doctor.’  
 ‘Pedro no era doctor.’
- b. kũu Pedro dotôr  
**kũu** péðrò dotôr  
 NEG:POT:be Pedro doctor  
 ‘Pedro will not be a doctor.’  
 ‘Pedro no será doctor.’

In the other negation strategy, the NE is followed by a non-negative, overt copula (72).

<sup>10</sup> Interestingly, in this case, the order of arguments is reversed.

- (72) a. *sĩ dotôr nishikùu Pedro*  
**sĩ dotôr nĩ-fìkùu** péðrò  
 NEG.EMPH doctor COMPL-COMPL:be Pedro  
 ‘Pedro was not a doctor.’  
 ‘Pedro no era doctor.’
- b. *sĩ dotôr kuu Pedro*  
**sĩ dotôr kuu** péðrò  
 NEG.EMPH doctor POT:be Pedro  
 ‘Pedro will not be a doctor.’  
 ‘Pedro no será doctor.’

The fact that the pattern in (72) is available shows that NEs do, indeed, involve nominal predication, with the copula being null in Continuative contexts.

Another piece of evidence that NEs involve nominal predication comes from *wh*-extraction. Like in English, *wh*-words in SMPM cannot be extracted from a relative clause modifying an argument in a nominal predicate, as shown in (73).

- (73) Context: I hear the sentence in (73a) but don’t quite hear what instrument it is that the man who is a doctor is playing. So, I ask the question in (73b).
- a. *dotôr rà tsiàja sáká’an gitàrà*  
 dotôr <sub>RC</sub>[ rà tsià<sup>h</sup>a sá-ká’ã yitàrà ]  
 doctor <sub>RC</sub>[ 3M man CONT:CAUS-talk guitar ]  
 ‘The man who is playing the guitar is a doctor.’  
 ‘El hombre que está tocando la guitarra es doctor.’
- b. \**náán dotôr rà tsiàja sáká’an?*  
 \*náá<sub>1</sub> dotôr <sub>RC</sub>[ rà tsià<sup>h</sup>a sá-ká’ã <sub>-1</sub> ]  
 what<sub>1</sub> doctor <sub>RC</sub>[ 3M man CONT:CAUS-talk <sub>-1</sub> ]  
 \*‘What is the man who is playing \_ a doctor?’  
 \*‘Qué es el hombre que está tocando \_ un doctor?’

In the same way, *wh*-words cannot be extracted around NEs (74), suggesting that NEs also introduce a relative clause.

- (74) Context: I hear the sentence in (74a) but don’t quite hear what it is that the man is not eating. So, I ask the question in (74b).
- a. *sìvì rà káa rà shíshi shìtã*  
**sìbí rà=káa** <sub>RC</sub>[ rà fì<sup>h</sup>fì fì<sup>h</sup>tã ]  
 NEG.EMPH 3M=DEM <sub>RC</sub>[ 3M CONT:eat tortilla ]  
 ‘It’s not *him* that’s eating tortillas.’  
 ‘No es *él* quien está comiendo tortillas.’





TABLE 4  
MIXTEC VARIETIES, SUBGROUPS, ABBREVIATIONS IN FIG. 1, AND REFERENCES

Variety	Subgroup	Abbreviation	Reference
Alacatlalzala (ISO: mim)	Guerrero	Alac	Zylstra (1991, 2012)
Atatláhuca (ISO: mis)	Western Alta	Atat	Alexander (1980)
Ayutla (ISO: miy)	Southern Baja	Ayut	Hills (1990)
Chalcatongo (ISO: mie)	Western Alta	Chal	Macaulay (1996)
Diuxi Tilantongo (ISO: xtd)	Eastern Alta	Diux	Kuiper and Oram (1991)
Jamiltepec (ISO: mxt)	East Coast	Jam	Johnson (1988)
Magdalena Peñasco (ISO: xtm)	Western Alta	Peña	Hollenbach (2013)
Ocotepec (ISO: mie)	Western Alta	Oco	Alexander (1988)
San Martín Peras (ISO: jmx)	Southern Baja	Pera	This article
San Sebastián del Monte (ISO: mks)	Central Baja	Mont	Mantenuto (2020)
Silacayoapan (ISO: mks)	Southern Baja	SilP	Shields (1988)
Yosondúa (ISO: mpm)	Western Alta	Yoso	Farris (1992)

#### Magdalena Peñasco:

Hollenbach (2013) writes that a way to say *nobody* in this variety is to put *ni a in*, which is translated as ‘not even one’, in front of a noun. The example given places the negated nominal pre-verbally and also contains standard negation, which in this variety is marked by pre-verbal *ñatuu* (76).

#### (76) Magdalena Peñasco Mixtec

**ni a in** ñayii **ñatuu** ni xa'an  
not ?? one person NEG COMPL go

‘Not one person went.’

(Hollenbach 2013:121)

#### San Sebastián del Monte:

In a discussion of nominal quantifiers, Mantenuto (2020) gives the following example. The phrase is headed by *ni* and co-occurs with standard negation (77).

#### (77) San Sebastián del Monte Mixtec

**ni iin** tikuálí **kòó** síxikí vè'e  
NEG:PHRASAL one child NEG:REAL play:CONT house

sikuela  
school

‘Not one child is playing in the school.’

(Mantenuto 2020:106)

#### Yosondúa:

Farris (1992) discusses quantifier phrases headed by *ni* and a numeral or another quantifier (78).

## (78) Yosondúa Mixtec

a. **tù**    **nì**            **ki'in**    **ña**    **ni**    **iin**    **ndika**  
 NEG    COMPL    take    she    nor    one    banana

‘She didn’t buy even one banana’

b. **ni**    **k’lì**            **ni**    **nunì**    **nì**            **kèndò**  
 nor    little.bit    LIM    corn    COMPL    COMPL:stay

‘Not even a little bit of corn was left.’ (Farris 1992:108)

These constructions may occur fronted or in situ. When they occur post-verbally, the verb must bear negation (78a), but when they occur pre-verbally, the verb does not bear negation (78b).<sup>11</sup>

In each of the varieties above, an analysis of the relevant constructions as NEG-words follows from their co-occurrence with standard negation and the yielding of just one sentential negation. Additionally, they are all headed by *ni*, like in SMPM, and their syntactic position is variable: in Ayutla, Magdalena Peñasco, and San Sebastián del Monte Mixtec, the example shows the NEG-word preceding negation (75)–(77), while in Yosondúa Mixtec, the NEG-word may occur either fronted or in situ (78).

**5.2. Restricted negative indefinites.** The varieties of Mixtec that are described as making use of RNIs—negated nominals that are headed by and restricted to the linear position of standard negation—are Atatláhuca (Western Alta; ISO: mis), Chalcatongo (Western Alta; ISO: mie), Diuxi Tilantongo (Eastern Alta; ISO: xtd), Magdalena Peñasco (Western Alta; ISO: xtm), San Martín Peras (Southern Baja; ISO: jmx), and San Sebastián del Monte (Central Baja; ISO: mks). What follows is a summary of the relationship between standard negation and RNIs in these varieties, excluding San Martín Peras Mixtec, which has already been discussed. As with the other two constructions, classification of a negated nominal as a RNI is determined based on the characteristics of RNIs in SMPM.

Atatláhuca:

Alexander (1980:29–31) notes that the negative marker *tùú/tú* is used with Continuative and Completive verbs. When followed by a high tone, the high tone of *tú* becomes mid (*tu*) (79).

## (79) Atatláhuca Mixtec

a. **tu**    **ndúkú**  
 NEG    CONT:search

‘[He] is not searching.’

<sup>11</sup> Note that the appearance or lack thereof of negation depending on the location of the negated nominal is consistent with an analysis of these phrases as NEG-words, since the appearance of standard negation in non-strict negative concord languages depends on the structural position of the NEG-word (Zeijlstra 2004).

- b. **tu** ní ndúkú  
 NEG COMPL search  
 ‘[He] did not search.’ (Alexander 1980:28)

The regular NEG-verb-subject order in (80a) can turn into the NEG-subject-verb order in (80b) in emphatic contexts.

- (80) Ataláhuca Mixtec  
 a. **tu** ní kixi **se’è dè**  
 NEG COMPL come son his  
 ‘His son did not come.’  
 b. **tú se’è dè** ní kixi  
 NEG son his COMPL come  
 ‘His son did not come.’ (Alexander 1980:29)

Because the construction is pre-verbal, is headed by the usual exponent of standard negation, and does not co-occur with another marker of sentential negation, I classify this negated nominal as a RNI.

Chalcatongo:

Negation in Chalcatongo Mixtec is expressed on verbs and adverbs via the clitic *tu=* (81), which is transcribed both as *tu=* and *tú=* (Macaulay 1996).<sup>12</sup>

- (81) Chalcatongo Mixtec  
 a. tʃãà **tú=**ʒóó seʔe  
 man NEG=exist child  
 ‘That man has no children.’  
 b. **tu=sãã** sáʔa=∅ bixĩ  
 NEG=much make=3 cold  
 ‘It’s less cold/it’s not so cold.’ (Macaulay 1996:120,122)

This same clitic is also used in the negation of fronted NPs (82).

- (82) Chalcatongo Mixtec  
 a. **tú=kʷiti** xisiki=∅  
 NEG=just(?) play=3  
 ‘He doesn’t play (at) anything.’  
 b. **tú=fũʔũ** nábaʔa=rí  
 NEG=money have=1  
 ‘I didn’t have any money.’ (Macaulay 1996:124)

<sup>12</sup> Examples from Chalcatongo Mixtec are given in the IPA because the author provides examples in the APA, which allows for easy IPA transcription.

Because the construction is pre-verbal, is headed by the usual exponent of standard negation, does not co-occur with another negation, and is distinct from the NE described later for this variety, I classify it as a RNI.

Diuxi Tilantongo:

Kuiper and Oram (1991) write that the negative morpheme used with Continuative and Completive verbs is *ñàtu* (83a) or *ña* (83b).

- (83) Diuxi Tilantongo Mixtec
- a. **ñàtu** xàndíshà (dà tnú'û-ń)  
 NEG CONT:believe I.RESP word-your.RESP  
 '(I) don't believe (what you say).'
- b. **ña** xàndíshà (dà tnú'û-ń)  
 NEG CONT:believe I.RESP word-your.RESP  
 '(I) don't believe (what you say).' (Kuiper and Oram 1991:239)

The negator used with Potential aspect is *ma* (84).

- (84) Diuxi Tilantongo Mixtec
- ma** kàdàbá'â (tè ve'è 'tè)  
 NEG POT:make (he:WS house his)  
 '(He) won't build (his house).' (Kuiper and Oram 1991:239)

The marker *ñàtu* occurs with positionally restricted negated nominals with realis verbs (85a), and the marker *màyo* occurs with Potential aspect (85b).

- (85) Diuxi Tilantongo Mixtec
- a. **ñàtu** livrù té (né'è té / vàshi á?)  
 NEG book his (CONT:hold he / CONT:come INT)  
 '(Did he) not (bring) his books?'
- b. **màyo** tè (káshi)  
 NEG he:ws (POT:eat)  
 'None of them (will eat)', or 'No man who exists (will eat).'
- (Kuiper and Oram 1996:284)

Both of these are said to derive from the negative markers *ñà* and *mà* plus forms of the verb 'to exist', *tìu* and *io*. However, given that standard negation with realis verbs and the marker in (85a) are identical, I tentatively classify these constructions as RNIs.

Magdalena Peñasco:

Hollenbach (2013) writes that the negative marker used with Continuative and Completive verbs is *ñatuu* (86a), and the marker used with Potential verbs in *ma* (86b).

(86) Magdalena Peñasco Mixtec

a. **ñatuu** ndóo de  
NEG CONT:stay he

‘He is not staying.’

b. **ma** ndoo de  
NEG POT:stay he

‘He will not stay.’

(Hollenbach 2013:127)

This negative morpheme *ñatuu* can combine pre-verbally with a pronoun (87a) or noun (87b).

(87) Magdalena Peñasco Mixtec

a. [**ñatuu** de] ni kii  
NEG 3M PAST come

‘He didn’t come.’

b. [**ñatuu** na ñayii] ka iyo  
[NEG what people] PRES:PL be

‘There isn’t anybody.’

(Hollenbach 2013:118)

Because the construction is pre-verbal, is headed by the usual exponent of standard negation, does not co-occur with another instance of sentential negation, and is distinct from NEG-words in the language, I classify it as a RNI.

San Sebastián del Monte:

A construction akin to a NEG-word has already been described for San Sebastián del Monte Mixtec in the previous section, and a construction akin to a NE will be described in the following section. However, one example of a different negated nominal headed by the usual marker of standard negation is noted in Mantenuto (2020). This construction is shown in (88).

(88) San Sebastián del Monte Mixtec

**kòo**=kâ=nà ni-sèen tikóo  
NEG:REAL=GA=3HUM:PL:M COMPL-buy tamale

‘No other person bought the tamales.’

(Mantenuto 2020:113)

The negated nominal in (88) is headed by the same morpheme used to express standard negation on realis verbs (89).

(89) San Sebastián del Monte Mixtec

**kòo** nì-nàkàtià=i yùù=i  
NEG:REAL NEG:PHRASAL-wash=1SG tooth=1SG

‘I didn’t brush my teeth.’

(Mantenuto 2020:91)

Given that NEG-words and NEs are separately attested in this variety, and that the negated nominal in (88) is headed by the marker of standard negation, I classify this construction as a RNI.

In each of the varieties above, an analysis of the relevant constructions as RNIs follows from their syntactic position, their being headed by standard negation, their lack of co-occurrence with another marker of sentential negation, and, whenever possible, their distinctness from other types of negated nominals attested in a given variety.

**5.3. Negative emphatics.** Varieties of Mixtec that are described as making use of NEs are Alacatlazala (Guerrero; ISO: mim), Chalcatongo (Western Alta; ISO: mie), Jamiltepec (Eastern Coastal; ISO: mxt), Ocotepéc (Western Alta; ISO: mie), San Martín Peras (Southern Baja; ISO: jmx), San Sebastián del Monte (Central Baja; ISO: mks), Silacayoapan (Southern Baja; ISO: mks), and Yosondúa (Western Alta; ISO: mpm). Once again, the data from San Martín Peras Mixtec is excluded because it has already been described. In each case, the classification of the construction as a NE is based on similarity to the characteristics of NEs in SMPM.

Alacatlazala:

Zylstra (1991) writes of emphatic noun phrases headed by the affirmative marker *sivi* (90).

- (90) Alacatlazala Mixtec  
**sivi** yiva ún (kúu ra)  
 AFF father your:SG (be:CONT he)  
 ‘He really is your father.’ (Zylstra 1991:78)

Negative emphatic noun phrases are headed by a tonally modified version of the affirmative marker (91).

- (91) Alacatlazala Mixtec  
**siví** nduchi tòon (kóni i)  
 NEG bean black (want:CONT I)  
 ‘(It’s) *not black beans* (I want).’ (Zylstra 1991:78)

The negative marker in (91) is obviously distinct from the markers used in sentential negation, *vása* and *on*.

Chalcatongo:

There is a type of fronted, negative NP in Chalcatongo Mixtec that is negated by *niàsù*, shown in (92).

- (92) Chalcatongo Mixtec  
**niàsù** tʃùù lli ká-ku tʃi ká-ku kóni lúli  
 NEG:FOC chicken chick PL-COP but PL-COP turkey.hen small  
 ‘They’re *not chicken* chicks, they’re turkey chicks.’  
 (Macaulay 1996:122)

Macaulay (1996) tentatively argues that *niàsù* can be decomposed into *nii* ('nor', possibly from Spanish) and *asù* ('than', complementizer). There is no discussion of a positive form of this marker, but this construction occurs with the copula and does not co-occur with standard negation. It is also distinct from RNIs in the language, which were described in the previous section. Because of these characteristics, I classify these constructions in Chalcatongo Mixtec as NEs.

Jamiltepec:

Johnson (1988) writes of negated noun phrases that occur only in focus position and that are headed by the negative marker *ñimà* (93).

- (93) Jamiltepec Mixtec  
**ñimà** ve'e rà shúvá (chà'àn ndì)  
 NEG house he John (COMPL:go we:EXCL)  
 '(It was) *not John's house* (we went to).' (Johnson 1988:76)

The negative marker *ñimà* is distinct from the morphemes that express standard negation, which are *ma* and *ñà*. However, no discussion of a positive emphatic marker is given, so the classification of Jamiltepec negated noun phrases as negated emphatic nominal constructions is tentative.

Ocotepec:

Alexander (1988) writes of negated noun phrases that occur mainly in focus position. These are headed by the negative nominal marker *nsùú* (94).

- (94) Ocotepec Mixtec  
**nsùú** sùchí vá'a (n-sà'á yá'á)  
 NEG child good (COMPL-do this)  
 '(It was) *not a good child* (who did this).' (Alexander 1988:226)

The negative noun marker is transparently decomposable into the affirmative marker *suu* (95a) and the usual marker of standard negation *n-*, which triggers a low-to-high contour over two moras on the first syllable of the verb (95b).

- (95) Ocotepec Mixtec  
 a. **suu** satíñú dè  
 AFF POT:work he:RESP  
 'Yes, he will work.'  
 b. **n-kíí'**in shin  
 NEG-POT:go he.FAM  
 'He won't go.' (Alexander 1988:199–200)

San Sebastián del Monte:

Mantenuto (2020) writes that focused negated nominals are headed by *òònxivi* (96):

- (96) San Sebastián del Monte Mixtec  
**òònxìvì**      shità      séen      Liya  
 NEG:NOMINAL    tortilla    buy:CONT    Liya  
 ‘It’s not tortillas that Liya buys.’      (Mantenuto 2020:177)

This negative marker contains *òòn*, a marker of negation in irrealis verbs (97).

- (97) San Sebastián del Monte Mixtec  
**òòn**      kueen      kuà’á=i      kui’i  
 NEG:IRR    buy:POT    much=SG    fruit  
 ‘I will not buy a lot of fruit.’      (Mantenuto 2020:92)

It also contains *xìvì*, which is not independently described or analyzed. However, the similarity of *xìvì* to the *sivì* used in NEs in Alacatlazala Mixtec and SMPM support the classification of nominals headed by *òònxìvì* in this variety as NEs.

Silacayoapan:

Shields (1988) describes a variety of negative quantifiers headed by *à xùú* that occur mainly sentence-initially (98).

- (98) Silacayoapan Mixtec  
**à**    **xùú**    xá’mà    (kúú      à      nà      sheen      ñá)  
 NEG ??    cloth    (CONT:be    it:UN    COMPL    COMPL:buy    she)  
 ‘(It’s) *not clothing* (she bought).’      (Shields 1988:369)

*à xùú* is distinct from the usual markers of standard negation, which are *à* and *kò*, and it may be a combination of the negative marker *à* and the word *xùùn*. *xùùn* is translated as a marker of agreement (Shields 1988:415), but the difference in nasality between the two constructions may point against this analysis. However, because it does not co-occur with standard negation and is obviously distinct from the usual marker of standard negation, I classify this construction as a NE.

Yosondúa:

Farris (1992) describes negated noun phrases that always occur in focus position (99).

- (99) Yosondúa Mixtec  
**ànsù**    sa’ma    (nì      kì’in      ña)  
 NEG    cloth    (COMPL    COMPL:take    she)  
 ‘([It was]) *not cloth* (she bought).’      (Farris 1992:91)

The negative marker in (99) appears to be a modified version of the affirmative marker, which can also only appear sentence-initially (100).

## (100) Yosondúa Mixtec

**suu** sá'a da jniñu  
 AFF POT:do he work

'I am quite sure he will work.'

(Farris 1992:46)

However, the negative emphatic marker is not transparently decomposable into the synchronic marker of standard negation and the affirmative morpheme, since the usual marker of standard negation is *tù* (101a–b).

## (101) Yosondúa Mixtec

a. **tù** ka sndí'i (da)  
 NEG PL CONT:finish (he)

'(They) are not finishing (it).'

b. **tù** ñá'nu da  
 NEG mature he

'He is not grown.'

(Farris 1992:56, 65)

Once again, because it does not co-occur with standard negation and is distinct from the usual marker of standard negation, I tentatively classify this construction in Yosondúa Mixtec as a NE.

In each of the varieties above, an analysis of the relevant constructions as NEs follows from their lack of co-occurrence with standard negation, their distinctness from the usual marker of standard negation, their use in nominal predicates, and, whenever possible, their co-variation with a non-negative emphatic nominal construction.

**6. Conclusion.** The syntax of Mixtec languages is highly understudied. This paper highlights an area of syntactic description—the nature of negated nominals—that merits further investigation and cross-varietal comparison within Mixtec. I have shown that there are at least three distinct types of negated nominals that may co-occur in any one Mixtec variety, and that each of them is superficially similar to the others: they may all appear pre-verbally, and they all convey some sort of negative meaning. However, more in-depth syntactic analysis of these constructions in SMPM has revealed that each type of negated nominal has distinct properties. What is more, using these properties to preliminarily classify the constructions labeled as “negated nominals” in other varieties suggests that many other varieties of Mixtec likewise make at least a two- or three-way split in their negated nominal constructions. The distribution of these constructions across Mixtec varieties can be seen in table 5.

It is likely that table 5 vastly underreports the types of negated nominals present across the different varieties. Because of this, more thorough investigations of negated nominals (and their positive counterparts) across Mixtec varieties are merited, and further study of this topic may shed light on the

TABLE 5  
NEGATED NOMINALS DESCRIBED ACROSS MIXTEC VARIETIES

Variety	NEG-word	RNI	NE
San Martín Peras	Yes	Yes	Yes
San Sebastián del Monte	Yes	Yes	Yes
Chalcatongo	—	Yes	Yes
Yosondúa	Yes	—	Yes
Magdalena Peñasco	Yes	Yes	—
Atatláhuca	—	Yes	—
Ayutla	—	Yes	—
Diuxi Tilantongo	—	Yes	—
Alacatlalzala	—	—	Yes
Jamiltepec	—	—	Tentative
Ocoatepec	—	—	Yes
Silacayoapan	—	—	Tentative

historical relationships between Mixtec languages and serve as a useful source of data on inter-varietal differences. My hope is that this paper, by outlining the syntactic and morphological characteristics of negation, NEG-words, RNIs, and NEs in SMPM, will assist researchers in investigating negated nominal constructions in other varieties of Mixtec. Additionally, the semantics of these constructions remains relatively unexplored, and future investigations in this area are necessary to fully understand the differences between the classes of negated nominals.

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