Identification negated:
Semantic properties of the double particle constructions
and their functional spreading in the history of Egyptian

Barbara Egedi
Research Institute for Linguistics
Hungarian Academy of Sciences

1 Introduction

Double particle constructions (DPC)
→ standard negative particle + an additional particle, forming a pair of linked negatives (Payne 1985: 224)
→ 119 languages out of 1157 make use of some kind of double negation, i.e. negative constructions that involve two simultaneous morphemes (Dryer 2013 = WALS Ch112:)
→ usually described in term of the so called Jespersen’s cycle (so named first by Dahl 1979; for a good presentation of the cycle, see van der Auwera 2010)

This talk aims to fulfill three interrelated tasks:
(i) to provide a descriptive and diachronic overview of negative patterns that involve a double particle strategy in Egyptian;
(ii) to explain why some apparently different constructions use the same form of negation;
(iii) to account for the spreading of the construction into syntactic environments in which it was not used earlier.

Typologically, the Egyptian DPC is:
- a non-standard negation (Payne 1985),
- a symmetric one (in terms of Miestamo 2005)

2 The classical nj...js construction

2.1 Description and use

→ combines the particle nj which is a standard negator, and the subordinating particle js
→ the two forms a discontinuous morpheme, since the enclitic particle cannot be eliminated (Satzinger 1970:30 n92), or replaced by other particles (contra Satzinger 1970, Gunn 1924);
the particle js is an integral part of the construction (Gilula 1972: 58)

Gilula (1970: 208): a specific negation of non-verbal sentences without iw
Gilula (1972: 56-57): the negation of the non-verbal predicative nexus

➢ overgeneralization

- "the negative counterpart to all patterns involving focality"
- "focal negation indicating contrariety".

➢ overspecification
Table 1. Syntactic contexts in which nj...js systematically appears:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The negation of nominal sentences</th>
<th>The negation of focus constructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- nominal sentence proper</td>
<td>- cleft-sentence / participial statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- adjectival sentence* <em>note the negation of AdjPred by nn</em></td>
<td>- pseudo-cleft? (= A pw B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- predication of possession</td>
<td>- sentences with emphatic verb forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- subject in focus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The negation of nominal sentences**

- AB, A pw, A pw B
- Adj sw > A pw
- identification, specification, classification, qualification, attribution

**The negation of focus constructions**

- - subject in focus
- - object in focus
- - adverbial arg/adjunct in focus

For a uniform treatment of these constructions, see also Ritter (1994) and the cited works of Loprieno. For A pw B pattern functioning as pseudo-clefs, cf. Ritter (1994: 246-248); Loprieno (1995: 106)

**The nn...js construction**

nj...js > nn...js  

Allen (2000: 125): only occasionally, in later Middle Egyptian texts, after Dynasty 12
Gilula (1972: 208 n2): it is only an alternative writing of negative n.

**2.2 Examples**

1. m-k nj rnpt js nį n.t b̄b̄ḡ jn zj hr nb=f  
   ‘Look, this is not a year for a man to be lax about his master’  

2. n ntk js zj  
   ‘You are not a man’  

3. nj z̄=j js nj msj.t(w)=f js n=j  
   ‘It is not my son, he was not born to me’  
   + EmphS  

4. nj wsh js pw  
   ‘It was not a broad one’  

5. n jnk js q3 s3  
   ‘I am not one high of back (arrogant)’  
   [Sin B 230]

6. n nj wj js sp3t  
   ‘I am not of the district’  
   [CT III 390e]

7. njnk ls dd n=k nw jn Gb dd n=k nw hn* Wsjr  
   ‘It is not I who says this to you, it is Geb who says this to you and Osiris’  
   [CT I. 302c-f, T9C, Sq3C]

8. n NN ln ls dbh.t ms=s tn m kd=t pw wn=t im=f  
   ‘It is not NN who is asking to see you in your present shape’  
Negation in Ancient Egyptian

2.3 The semantics of the constructions

emphatic forms / second tenses → two types of negative morphemes

- DPC negates the nexus between the second tense form and the adverbial predicate in focus (e.g. Groll 1978: §27.2, Johnson 1976: 83)
- Loprieno (1995: 213): the scope of negation is limited to the adverbial focus
- Allen (2000: §25.14): two different forms of negation in emphatic sentences, "depending on whether the predicate or the rheme is being negated"


nj...js : "represents focal negation indicating contrariety".  
→ The scope of the nj...js negation is the focus, while the presupposition remains unaffected by the negation. The scope of the negation is not the nexus between the subject and the predicate, but it is only the predicate (or rather a part of the predicate) that constitutes the internal scope of the negative operator nj...js.

Focus construction = identificational/specificational predication (É. Kiss 2006, forthcoming)

focus = predicate  background = its argument

The focussed constituent represents the only member of a relevant set of alternatives for which the rest of the sentence, the lower embedded predicate, is true.

The specificational nominal sentence type, introduced by Higgins (1973)
→ the subject of the predication determines a set, which the predicate identifies referentially by listing its members. The subject describes a variable, and the predicate identifies its value.

The background of the focus is always associated with an existential presupposition.

Excursus about js

- Gilula (1972: 59): js in affirmative sentences has a syntactic function, it is the predecessor of ntt ('that') and appears in non-verbal embedded noun-clauses, if they are nominal, possessive or emphatic sentences
- Allen (2000: §12.13.1): originally a noun clause marker, but used in other non-verbal clauses as well in Middle Egyptian. Only with nominal and adjectival predicate.
- Loprieno (1995: §6.3.1): it transforms a categorial statement into a thetic one (⇒ the S presents an all-new information!); it signals "pragmatic prominence rather than foregrounding", it is rather "a contrastive focus"
- Loprieno (1995:154-155): a marker of dependency in nominal, adverbial, pseudo-verbal, and verbal sentences (i.e. not only in noun-clauses)
Excursus about nj-js

Gilula (1972: 56): "to dissociate emphatically the words that follow it from what precedes this by interposing a purely adverbial negation"

→ serves to negate an adverb; often translated as "except, and not, but not"

Loprieno (1995: 170): The scope of the negation is limited to a phrase

\[(12)\] \(jw=k\ sb'(j)\ jw=k\ hmw.t(j)\ jw=k\ t(w)(t.j)\ nj-js\ n\ \s w\)

‘You are educated, you are skilled, you are accomplished, but not for the purpose of robbing’ [Peas B1,291-292] after Loprieno (1995: 170 Ex. 112)

\[(13)\] \(nj-js\ n\ rmt.w\)

Then His Majesty said: ‘Is the rumor true that you can join a severed head?’ And Djedi answered: ‘Yes, I can, O sovereign my lord.’ Then His Majesty said: ‘Have a prisoner brought to me from the prison, that he may be executed!’ And Djedi answered: ‘Not to people, O sovereign my lord.’ [Westcar 8,12-17] after Loprieno (1995: 170 Ex. 113)

Proposal: elliptical sentences

\[(12')\] \(jw=k\ sb'(j)\ jw=k\ hmw.t(j)\ jw=k\ t(w)(t.j)\ n\ (*wwn=k\ sb'(j)\ wnn=k\ hmw.t(j)\ wnn=k\ t(w)(t.j))\ js\ n\ \s w\)

\[(13')\] \(n\ (*jjr=j\ st)\ js\ n\ rmt.w\)

NB. Loprieno (1991a: 219) the presupposition is "canceled in the surface structure, mostly due to immediate anaphoric reference"

3 The Late Egyptian bn...jwn3 construction

3.1 Description and use

See also Polotsky (1944 88-89); Loprieno (1995: §5.11); Winand (1997) with a list of contexts and a considerable amount of examples!

♦ The negation of the nominal sentence (Groll 1967: 94-102; Junge 1996: 180; Černý–Groll 1978: §58)
♦ The negation of Present I / AdvS; occasionally by bn...jwn3 (cf. Neveu (1996: 72), but without explanation; it seems to occur when the predicate part is really adverbial, or PP (Černý–Groll 1978: §20.6; Junge 1996: 119, §3.1.1(4))

bn...jwn3 is commonly assumed to be the functional successor of the ME pattern.

BUT: jwn3 can be absent in all types, even in NomS (cf. Černý–Groll 1978: §58); Winand (1997) counterexamples for each context + uses prospective and FutIII
Negation in Ancient Egyptian

Where does this jwn3 come from?

Gardiner (1904: 130): the earliest meaning might be ‘indeed’, ‘certainly’ and this suggestion has See Winand (1997: 233-234) for an exhaustive list of references about its etymologies

Asymmetry in clefts:

- Observed by many: Groll (1967: 102-104); Davis (1971); Neveu (1994: 193 and 197), Junge (1996: 190 and 193); the most clearly described in Ritter 1994)
- Satzinger (1981: 491) the difference is in the placement of jwn3
- Winand (1997: 231): weakened emphasis/contrast in the cases of true cleft sentences

The DPC not yet grammaticalized?


- reinforcing function: "un indicateur focal, non obligatoire" (p. 229)
- but: DPC is the (almost) exclusive strategy by which nominal sentences are negated.

Besides nominal sentences, it is primarily attested in emphatic sentences. (Winand 1992: §765)

Table 2. The proportional growing of jwn3 (Davis 1973: 129)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Colloquial examples</th>
<th>Formal examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dyn 19</td>
<td>5 with jwn3</td>
<td>7 with jwn3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>38 without jwn3</td>
<td>118 without jwn3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyn 20</td>
<td>29 with jwn3</td>
<td>5 with jwn3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>105 without jwn3</td>
<td>45 without jwn3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 Examples

(14) hr bn t3y.i hmt jwn3 [O, DM 439,1 5,16] A(pw)

‘It is not my wife’ cited after after Neveu (1996: 225)

(15) jr t3j wpwt j.jr.tn m p3 hrw bn wpwt jwn3 [Abbott 5,16] A(pw)

‘With regard to this demonstration that you have made today, it is not a demonstration’

(16) bn ntk rmT jwn3 [O,Berlin 10627,6 = KRI VI 155,12-14;] AB


(17) bn m35 jwn3 n3 AdjPred

‘This is not true’ [P.BM 10052 11,21]

(18) bn ink iwty h3ty jwn3 [O. Gardiner 273, 6 = KRI VII 355, 6-7] AdjPred

‘I am not heartless’ cited after Neveu (1996: 212)

(19) iw bn ink sw jwn3 PossPred

‘although it is not mine’ [C654 of Davis = HO 52, 2, 8-10]

(20) iw bn ink l.h3b [se] [O. Gardiner 90, 7 (=KRI V, 571,1)] Cleft I

‘while it is not I who sent it’ after Neveu (1994: 198) $jwn3$
(21) bn ms² swg3 jwn3 n³ ntj tw=j jm=w  [Wen 2,23]  
‘It is not foolish journeys that I am involved’  
Cleft II

(22) hr bn i.ir.i t²l.w dy jwn3  [P. DM VII vs6]  
‘I did not brought them here’  
after Neveu (1994: 116)  
2ndTense

(23) bn i.ir.f in p³y ḫd lw.f m p³y.i pr jwn3  [TR 34, 15,6-7]  
‘He did not bring this silver when he was in my house’  
after Winand (1992: 286)  
2ndTense

(24) i.ir.k tm dl.t wḏ².tw.tn ḫr jh  
‘Why did you prevent judging you?’  
[HorSeth 15,12 (=LES 59,6)]  
2ndTense

(25) bn tw=j m p³y=j shr jwn3  [P.Leiden I 369 vs.4 (=LRL2,8-9)]  
‘I am not in my (normal) condition’  
AdvS

(26) bn sw m ssh lwn3 p³-pš i.ir.i.k n=i  [pMayer B 1]  
‘The share you have left me is not fair’  
AdvS  
after Černý–Groll 1978: §20.6.1

Absence of jwn3 in positions where it is expected to appear:

(27) bn ntk ssh n dḥwtpj p³y=f gṣtpj p³ ntj m ḫrt=k  [Turin A vs. 4,1]  
‘Are you not a scribe of Thoth? For it is his palette that is in your hand.’  
NomS

(28) nn bn jmw n kmt ḫr jst n kmt n³ nty ḫn ḫr nj-sw-b³-nb-dd [Wen 1,x+22-23]  
‘Is it not an Egyptian ship? Behold, it is an Egyptian crew that sail under N.’  
‘Is it not an Egyptian ship and an Egyptian crew that sail under N.?’  
Cleft  
2ndTense

(29) in bn i.ir.i.n b³k n.k m ib ḫ3ty.n [LRL 46,16]  
‘Don't we work for you with all our heart?’  
2ndTense  
 cited after Černý–Groll 1978: 389, §27.2

bn questions the truth-value of the sentence rather than the identificational predication.  
Cf. the observation by Groll (1967: 101): usual in negative interrogative sentences

4 The Demotic bn…jn construction

4.1 Description and use

♦ The negation of the nominal sentence (cf. Johnson 1981: 416)
♦ The negation of adjectival predicates: i) nominal pattern, ii) adjectival verbs (after Johnson 1976: 86)
♦ The negation of cleft sentences (cf. Johnson 1981: 420)
♦ The negation of the second tenses [= the nexus of the focalizing conversion]
♦ The negation of Present I (and AdvS)  
NB. only with definite noun phrase subjects! With indefinites → negative existential negation

4 The Demotic bn…jn construction
Negation in Ancient Egyptian

“The negative of the second tense was formed the same way as the negative of the present tense, of which it was syntactically a subset”; “The construction bn...in negated the nexus between the second tense clause serving as subject and the adverbial predicate, just as (it) always negated the nexus in present tense sentences.” (Johnson 1976: 81)

4.2 Examples

(30) \(bn\) \(i₃\) \(b₃\) \(l₃\) \(n₃\) \(p₃\) \(p₃\) \(r₃\) \(m₃\) \(b₃\) \(r₃\) \(y₃\) \(p₃\) \(p₃\) \(r₃\) \(m₃\) \(b₃\) \(r₃\) \(y₃\)


(31) \(p₃\) \(h₃\) \(l₃\) \(r₃\) \(n₃\) \(f₃\) \(b₃\) \(i₃\) \(w₃\) \(p₃\) \(y₃\) \(s₃\) \(r₃\) \(n₃\) \(y₃\) \(p₃\) \(y₃\)


(32) \(i₃\) \(w₃\) \(b₃\) \(n₃\) \(s₃-b₃q\) \(k₃\) \(n₃\) \(m₃\) \(s₃y\) \(l₃\)

‘you no longer being young’ [P.Rylands IX. 6,9] after Johnson 1976: 86

(33) \(b₃\) \(i₃\) \(w₃\) \(i₃₃\) \(p₃\) \(n₃\) \(t₃y\) \(s₃ₘ₃\) \(n₃\) \(i₃m\) \(w₃\) \(l₃\)

‘I am not the one who insults them’ [Petubastis 11/18] after Johnson 1981: 420

(34) \(b₃\) \(i₃\) \(r₃(y)\) \(i₃ₘ₃\) \(w₃\) \(n₃\) \(i₃₃\) \(y₃\) \(t₃\) \(n₃\) \(w₃\) \(i₃₃\) \(r₃(y)\) \(i₃ₘ₃\) \(w₃\) \(i₃₃\) \(n₃\) \(i₃m\)

‘It was not for you fathers that I did them; it was for Amun I did them’ [P.Rylands IX. 13,11-12] after Johnson 1976: 82

(35) \(b₃\) \(i₃\) \(r₃(y)\) \(i₃ₘ₃\) \(w₃\) \(n₃\) \(i₃₃\) \(y₃\) \(r₃\) \(b₃\) \(w₃\) \(n₃\) \(i₃₃\) \(y₃\) \(t₃\) \(d₃\) \(n₃\) \(t₃\) \(h₃\) \(m₃\) \(n₃\) \(t₃\) \(n₃\) \(i₃m\) \(n₃\) \(i₃m\)

‘It is not on account of the share of the prophet of Amun that they come here’ [P. Spieg. (=Petubastis) 8:9] after Williams 1948: 226

(36) \(b₃\) \(t₃\) \(w₃\) \(y₃\) \(s₃y\) \(n₃\) \(i₃m\) \(k₃\) \(l₃\)

‘I am not laughing at you’ after Johnson 1976:55

5. The Coptic (\(N\))...\(N\) construction

5.1 Description and use

The obligatory element is the enclitic \(N\) and the sentence-initial \(N\) can be omitted. Polotsky 1960: §31; Layton 2000: §250f; Reintges 2004: 344-346; Till 1986: §§403-405

♦ The negation of the nominal sentence
♦ The negation of adjectival predicates: i) nominal pattern, ii) the \(N\)\(N\)\(y\)\(N\)=type [= the suffixally conjugated verboids formed in initial \(N\)\(a\).], iii) plus \(N\)\(N\)\(e\)- (‘it is pleasing to’) and similar some impersonal predicates, cf. Layton 2000: §§379, 487, see also Polotsky 1960: §37)
♦ The negation of cleft sentences
♦ The negation of the second tenses [= the nexus of the focalizing conversion]
♦ The negation of the Bipartite Conjugation (AdvS, Present I, Futurum I), [= durative sentence patterns] NB. only with definite subjects!
Polotsky (1960: §31): (n)…an negates the nexus between subject and a non-verbal predicate (n)…an negates a non-verbal part of the sentence having predicate force

5.2 Examples

(37) Ἰανοκ ἄν τε πεξέ
‘I am not the Christ’ [John 3:28]

(38) Ἱησούς πετψοῦς ἄν
‘Your boasting is not good’ [1Cor 5:6] after Layton (2000: §373)

(39) ἐκαρέ ἄν ἐγνω ἔντασσεμας σακ
‘It's not flesh and blood that has revealed this to you’

(40) Πετψετεγε ἔρωι Νεφψετεγε ἔρωι ἂν ἂλλα ἐπενταχταογε
‘He who believes in me, believe not in me, but in him who sent me’

(41) Πετπεις ὡς ἄν ἔλει προπαρ
‘This matter didn't happen secretly’

(42) Νὴποιειαι ἄν

(43) Πῦντε Ντργοτε ζῆν ἄν

(44) Νὴναμογ ἄν
‘He will not die’ [Luke 17:21]

Note the difference:

Negation + circumstantial Present  ἐνδ…ἀν
Negation + Present II  ἐνδ…ἀν
(Polotsky 1960. 406, §28 obs; Till 1986: §303.).

6 The functional spreading of DPC

Allen (2013: 91): "The development of non-verbal negations from Late Egyptian through Coptic shows an increase in the range of the particle Ἰων, from the negation of nominal and adjectival predicates in Late Egyptian to adverbial predicates in Demotic and Coptic. This suggests an initial reanalysis of adjectival predicates as nominal and a subsequent appreciation of ἐνδ...Ἰων as the norm for nonverbal sentences."

Proposal: The crucial role of focus constructions in this process!
Table 3. Syntactic contexts in which DPC systematically appears

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ME</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>Demotic</th>
<th>Coptic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NomS</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleft</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2ndTense</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AdvS</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>+/−</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pseudo-verbal &gt; PresI</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pseudo-verbal &gt; FutIII</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note the restricted use of old CleftS with a definable set of lexical items (Junge 1996: §4.3.2)

**DPC in first present in Late Egyptian:**
The Late Egyptian *bn...jwn* was much more common with true adverbial predicates, whereas simple *bn* was more frequent with infinitival and qualitative predicates (Groll 1970: Ch3, cited after Johnson 1976: 62).

Table 4. A syntactic analogy?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>j.jr.f sdm</th>
<th>AdvP / PP / adverbial clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2ndTense</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PresentI</td>
<td><em>sw</em></td>
<td>AdvP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PresentI</td>
<td><em>sw</em></td>
<td>(<em>η</em>) infinitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proposal:
- *jwn* emerged as a reinforcing element, in accordance with what Winand (1997) proposed
- *bn...jwn* grammaticalized in the contexts where identification is negated – in a similar way it happened in earlier Egyptian ⇒ spreading in all types of identificational / specificational predication (including all focus constructions).
- While focus structures in which one of the arguments (S/O) is negated have a nominal syntax, emphatic sentences have an adverbial syntax. Thus second tense forms with an adverbial focus could provide a pattern for analogical syntactic change and DPC spread into every sentence type that displayed an adverbial predicate.
- Reanalysis: DPC has become the general negation of non-verbal predication patterns by the time of Demotic and Coptic.
References


Gardiner, Alan 1904. ‘The word iwn3.’ ZÄS 41: 130–135.


Loprieno, Antonio 1991b. ‘Focus, mood, and negative forms: Middle Egyptian syntactic paradigms and diachrony’ LingAeg 1: 201–226.
Spiegelberg, Wilhelm 1925. Demotische Grammatik, Heidelberg: Carl Winters
Williams, Ronald J. 1948 ‘On certain verbal forms in Demotic’ JNES 7: 225-228.
Winand, Jean 1992. Études de néo-égyptien I. La morphologie verbale. Liège