

Negation of Disagreement in Hindi-Urdu

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Hindi-Urdu has a negative marker *thori:*, which, compared to the ‘default’ *nahi:*, (i) has a limited distribution and (ii) is subject to discourse felicity constraints. First, it is ruled out in questions, if-clauses, when-clauses, because-clauses, relative clauses and infinitival complements, and it needs a constituent to its left, on which it puts focus. It is not a constituent negation since it takes sentential scope (i.e., it can license subject NPIs); in fact it takes obligatory wide scope over most scope-taking elements. It takes wide scope regardless of its surface position, which suggests that it is associated with a covert negation, which sits high in the clause (the position of this high negation is not available in all clauses). Second, it cannot be used felicitously unless the proposition that is being negated has been entertained—not necessarily expressed or articulated—in the preceding discourse (like Italian *mica*, Cinque 1976, Frana & Rawlins 2015, 2019):

Like Italian *mica*, *thori:* is elsewhere in the language a nominal modifier that denotes a small quantity with meaning ‘a few/little’. We compare *thori:* with *mica* and another minimizer used as a ‘common ground management operator’, namely English *at all* (Mayer 2021). Like *at all* and possibly *mica*—which is a neg-word—*thori:* is not in itself negative. *Thori:* requires a covert negation which is only merged when *thor.i:* is present. Unlike *mica*, *thori:* cannot be used in questions. Unlike *at all*, *thori:* is never used as a degree quantifier. Unlike both *mica* and *at all*, *thori:* is focus-sensitive.

We will show that focus alone is not enough to derive the ‘disagreement’ requirement of *thorii*. Then we will compare two current models for disagreement (Repp’s FALSUM and Goodhue’s Polarity Focus) and see how they apply to *thorii*.