

Araştırma Makalesi / Research Article

Locative Existential Sentences in Kyrgyz and Turkish Languages*

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Abstract

This study compares locative existential sentences in Kyrgyz and Turkish languages focusing on the definiteness effect (DE) and their information structure (IS). The DE is tested looking at the eligibility of various types of Noun Phrases (NPs), including proper nouns, pronouns and NPs with demonstrative pronouns, as pivots in these sentences. The IS roles are analysed through the scrambling of the pivot NPs. The findings indicate that neither Kyrgyz nor Turkish language is subject to the DE. It is also observed that the pivot NPs function as the focus, whereas the locative phrases are the topic of the sentences in both languages. The study concludes that Kyrgyz and Turkish existential sentences are nearly similar in terms of the DE and IS. The findings hint that the DE is uncommon among those languages which employ no definite articles.

Keywords

Locative existential sentences, definiteness effect, information structure, Kyrgyz language, Turkish language.

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Kırgız Türkçesi ve Türkiye Türkçesinde Yer Gösteren İsim Soylu Cümleler*

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Öz

Çalışmada Kırgız Türkçesi ve Türkiye Türkçesinde yer gösteren isim soylu cümleler belirlilik etkisi ve bilgi yapısı bakımından karşılaştırılmaktadır. Belirlilik etkisi özel isimler, kişi ve diğer zamirler ile gösterme zamiriyle kullanılan isim öbeklerinin söz konusu cümlelerde kullanılıp kullanılmadığına bakılarak incelenmiştir. Bilgi yapısı ise cümlelerde yer alan isim öbeklerinin yer değiştirip değiştiremediği temel alınarak betimlenmektedir. Kırgız Türkçesi ve Türkiye Türkçesinin belirlilik etkisi içermediği görülmektedir. İncelenen cümlelerde isim öbekleri odak, yer gösteren öbekler ise konu rolü üstlenmektedir. Çalışmada Kırgız Türkçesi ve Türkiye Türkçesinin belirlilik etkisi ve bilgi yapısı açısından son derece benzer oldukları sonucuna varılmıştır. Bulgular belirlilik etkisinin belirlilik edatı kullanılmayan dillerde yaygın olmadığını göstermektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler

Yer gösteren isim soylu cümleler, belirlilik etkisi, bilgi yapısı, Kırgız Türkçesi, Türkiye Türkçesi.

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Introduction

This study describes and compares locative existential sentences in Kyrgyz and Turkish. Existential sentences are used to indicate the presence of somebody or something and have been described in relation to the definiteness effect (DE) and information structure (IS) in many languages. However, analysis of these properties is not very common in languages with no definite articles such as Kyrgyz and Turkish. Therefore, the present study analyses these sentences in Kyrgyz and Turkish which are illustrated in (1):

- (1) a. *Bakça-da mışık bar.* (Kyrgyz)
Garden-LOC cat.NOM exist
'There is a cat in the garden.'

- b. *Bahçe-de kedi var.* (Turkish)
Garden-LOC cat.NOM exist
'There is a cat in the garden.'

Given that locative existential sentences have not been examined in a contrastive perspective in Kyrgyz and in Turkish, the aim of the study is to describe and compare these sentences in terms of the DE and IS.

The remaining sections of the study are structured as follows: Next section includes a brief typological overview of Kyrgyz and Turkish. Then, existential sentences in these languages are presented with a special reference to the DE and IS. It follows the contrastive analysis of locative existential constructions in both languages in terms of the DE and IS. The study concludes with the results of the contrastive analysis.

Typological Overview of Kyrgyz and Turkish

Kyrgyz and Turkish are both Turkic languages. The former is a member of the Kipchak group of Turkic (Kasapoğlu Çengel 485; Kirchner 344). However, it should be added that there is an ongoing discussion on the classification of the Kipchak languages (i.e., Normanskaja 1). Turkish, on the other hand, is part of the Oghuz group of Turkic (Csató and Johanson 203). The default word order of Kyrgyz and Turkish is Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) in verbal sentences. The word order of Kyrgyz and Turkish nominal sentences, including locative existential sentences, is different. Both languages have a relatively free word order which allows for scrambling. These languages are

head-final and nominative-accusative languages having a rich case system. In both languages, the definite article is not used.

Existential Sentences

Existential sentences are non-canonical constructions indicating the existence of somebody or something. All existential sentences have a subject or pivot NP of which existence or non-existence is stated. The word order of these sentences appears to be different from the unmarked word order of declarative sentences. Specific predicates and locative proforms are used in locative existentials.

The positions of the constituents in existential sentences are subject to a crosslinguistic variation, (Bentley et. al. 2). Locative existential sentences also vary cross-linguistically. For instance, in some languages like Brazilian Portuguese, codas or locative phrases occur in sentence initial position, but in other languages like English, codas appear in sentence final position. Pivots are generally hosted by the position where focus and direct objects appear in a language (Bentley et. al. 2).

Definiteness Effect in Existential Sentences

Not all NPs are qualified to function as the pivots of existential sentences in some languages. This restriction is commonly termed as the Definiteness Effect (DE) referring to the unnaturalness, anomaly or ungrammaticality of definite NPs (and, certain quantificational NPs) as pivots of existential sentences. Definite NPs that create the definiteness restriction include proper nouns, pronouns, NPs marked with a definite article or a demonstrative pronoun. In addition, some quantified NPs cannot function as the pivots in existential sentences. Examples of the ungrammatical existential sentences due to the DE are given from English in (2) (Abbott 95-96):

- (2) a. * *There was Fred in the garden.*
b. * *There is the book on the table.*
c. * *There are these students.*
d. * *There were all the children at the library.*

Some languages are subject to the DE, including Mandarin Chinese (Huang 226), English, French and Spanish (Leonetti, “Definiteness Effect and the Role” 132). However, in some languages such as Catalan (Gràcia Solé 124),

European Portuguese (Leonetti, “Definiteness effects” 68), Italian (Leonetti, “Definiteness Effect and the Role” 133) and Sardinian (Bentley 58), the definiteness restrictions are not observed. In short, languages vary whether they are subject to this restriction in existential sentences. The analysis of the existential sentences in terms of the definiteness restrictions is uncommon in the Altaic languages, including Turkish and Kyrgyz.

Information Structure in Existential Sentences

Existential sentences have a unique Information Structure (IS). Concerning existential sentences in Turkish, it is reported that such sentences have a theme-rhyme structure (Sansa Tura 175). More specifically, the locative phrases are regarded as the topic, and the pivot NPs are considered to be the focus of existential sentences. As Bentley et. al. (2) state, if a language has a free word order, the variation in the word order of existential sentences is closely related to its information structure.

Existential Sentences in Turkish and Kyrgyz

This section presents the characteristics of Kyrgyz and Turkish existential sentences. These sentences in Turkish are divided into two major categories (Göksel and Kerslake 111): locative or presentational existential sentences as shown in (3a) and possessive existential sentences which are exemplified in (3b):

- (3) a. *Bahçe-de* *ked-i* *var.*
 garden-LOC cat.NOM exist
 ‘There is a cat in the garden.’
- b. *O-nun* *araba-sı* *var.*
 S/he-GEN car-POSS exist
 ‘S/he has a car.’

As can be seen in (3a), Turkish locative existential sentences are made up of a locative phrase, a pivot and an existential predicate *var* ‘exist’. Locative phrases are NPs marked with the locative case ending *-DA* in these sentences. In addition, no expletive is used in Turkish locative existential sentences.

The subject NP of the possessive existential sentences is marked with genitive ending *-nIn*, and the object NP agrees with the subject. Existential predicate *var* ‘exist’ is also used in Turkish possessive existential sentences,

and no expletive is used in such existential sentences.

Locative and possessive existential sentences in Kyrgyz have similar patterns as illustrated in (4):

- (4) a. *Bakça-da* *mışık* *bar.*
 Garden-LOC cat.NOM exist
 ‘There is a cat in the garden.’
- b. *An-ın* *maşına-sı* *bar.*
 He-GEN car-POSS exist
 ‘He has a car.’

As can be observed in (4a), Kyrgyz locative existential sentences have a locative phrase at the sentence initial position which is followed by the pivot. Therefore, the pivots in both Turkish and Kyrgyz appear in preverbal position which also hosts focus (Sansa Tura 178). As stated by Clark (88), Turkish is one of thirteen languages in which locative phrases precede the pivot NPs. Similarly, locative phrases in Kyrgyz also precede the pivot NPs. These phrases are locative case marked NPs. The existential predicate, *bar* ‘exist’, appear in the sentence final position. Therefore, in both languages locative existential sentences consist of coda, pivot and existential predicates.

The subject of the possessive existential sentences in Kyrgyz illustrated in (4b) is marked with genitive ending *-ın*. The object NPs of these sentences agree with the subject. Kyrgyz existential possessive sentences contain the predicate *bar* ‘exist’. It is seen that Kyrgyz does not employ any expletive in both types of existential sentences like Turkish.

Existential predicates in Kyrgyz and Turkish are *bar* and *var* ‘exist’, respectively. These predicates express both possession and presence. The negated form of existential predicate is *jog* ‘non-existent’ in Kyrgyz while it is *yok* ‘non-existent’ in Turkish. It is possible to attach tense and person markers to these existential predicates in both languages.

Since this study compares locative existential sentences in Kyrgyz and Turkish, it also examines locative copular sentences, as these two sentence types are closely interrelated. Locative copular sentences in Kyrgyz and Turkish include a subject NP and a locative case marked copula. Such sentences express a location which may be either temporal or spatial in

relation to an object or a person. The major distinction between locative existential sentences and locative copular sentences is that the latter do not contain any existential predicate such as *bar* and *var* 'exist'. The other difference is concerned with the relative order of subjects and locative expressions. Locative phrases or codas in locative existential sentences function as the nominal predicates of locative copular sentences. Examples of locative existential sentences and locative copular sentences in Kyrgyz and Turkish are given in (5):

- (5) a. *Bal-dar kinoteatr-da.* (Kyrgyz locative sentence)
child-PL.NOM cinema-LOC
'Children are at the cinema.'
- b. *Kinoteatr-da bal-dar bar.* (Kyrgyz locative existential sentence)
cinema-LOC child-PL.NOM exist
'There are children at the cinema.'
- c. *Çocuk-lar sinema-da.* (Turkish locative sentence)
child-PL.NOM cinema-LOC
'Children are at the cinema.'
- d. *Sinema-da çocuk-lar var.* (Turkish locative existential sentence)
cinema-LOC child-PL.NOM exist
'There are children at the cinema.'

As illustrated in (5), the NPs in two types of sentences have the same case marking, namely invisible nominative case. It indicates that these NPs are the grammatical subjects in both types of sentences. The only difference between locative existential sentences and locative copular sentences is their information structure (Sansa Tura 182). The pivot or subject NPs in locative existential constructions are the focus, but the subject NPs in locative copular sentences assume the role of topics. Non-verbal predicate of locative copular sentences is the comment part which provides new information.

Contrastive Analysis of Kyrgyz and Turkish Locative Existential Sentences

As stated above, this study compares Kyrgyz and Turkish in terms of locative existential sentences focusing on the DE and IS. The contrastive analysis tests the availability of the definite NP types as the pivots of locative

existential sentences in two languages to uncover the definiteness effects. Then, it examines the IS through scrambling options of the pivots.

Definiteness Effect in Kyrgyz and Turkish Locative Existential Sentences

Turkish locative existential sentences employ the following NP types as their pivots: singular bare NPs and plural bare NPs. Of them, the singular bare NPs also appear as the pivots in Kyrgyz locative existential sentences. Related examples from both languages are given in (6):

- (6) a. *Üstöl-dö kitep bar.* (Kyrgyz)
table-LOC book.NOM exist
'There is a book on the table.'
- b. *Masa-da kitap var.* (Turkish)
table-LOC book.NOM exist
'There is a book on the table.'

As observed in (6), bare singular NPs appear as the pivot of locative existential sentences in Kyrgyz and Turkish. The following example presents the use of plural NPs as the pivots in the locative existential sentences in both languages:

- (7) a. *Bakça-da bal-dar bar.* (Kyrgyz)
garden-LOC child-PL.NOM exist
'There are children in the garden.'
- b. *Bahçe-de çocuk-lar var.* (Turkish)
garden-LOC child-PL.NOM exist
'There are children in the garden.'

Examples in (7) demonstrate that plural bare NPs also serve as pivots in Kyrgyz and Turkish locative existential sentences, preceding the existential predicates *bar* and *var* 'exist', respectively. In short, locative existential constructions in both languages have the same ability to host both bare singular and plural NPs as their pivots.

As stated above definite NPs, including proper nouns, pronouns, NPs marked with a definite article or a demonstrative pronoun, do not generally appear in existential constructions of some languages leading to the definiteness restrictions (McNally 357). The analysis of the following data

from Kyrgyz and Turkish shows whether these definite NPs can function as the pivots in locative existential sentences. Given that neither Kyrgyz nor Turkish employs definite articles, only proper nouns, personal pronouns and NPs marked with a demonstrative pronoun are included in the analysis.

Concerning the definiteness restriction in Turkish existential sentences, there are limited number of studies. One such study is carried out by White et. al. (58). It is reported in the study that Turkish existential sentences display definiteness restrictions as shown in (8):

- (8) **Dükkan-da* *hala* *Ali* *var.*
 Store-LOC still Ali.NOM exist
 *‘There is still Ali at the store.’

In (8), there is a proper name *Ali*, but there is also an adverbial phrase *hala* ‘still’ which may lead to the ungrammaticality of the sentence. White et. al. (58) add that the use of the negated existential predicate *yok* ‘not-existent’ recovers the sentence eliminating this restriction. Related example is presented in (9):

- (9) *Dükkan-da* *Ali* *yok.*
 Store-LOC Ali. NOM not-exist
 ‘There is no Ali at the store.’

However, Sansa Tura (171) provides examples of Turkish locative constructions in which proper nouns are utilized as pivots without any ungrammaticality. In the present analysis, it is observed that both Kyrgyz and Turkish allow the use of proper names as pivot NPs in the locative existential sentences as suggested by Sansa Tura (171). Such sentences are exemplified in (10):

- (10) a. *Bölmö-dö* *Mehmet* *bar.* (Kyrgyz)
 room-LOC Mehmet.NOM exist
 ‘There is Mehmet in the room.’

 b. *Oda-da* *Mehmet* *var.* (Turkish)
 room-LOC Mehmet.NOM exist
 ‘There is Mehmet in the room.’

The data in (10) clearly indicate that proper nouns are allowed to function as the pivots in both languages. These sentences can be answers to a question

like *Who is in the room?* It is also possible that these sentences may be uttered to inform the hearer that Mehmet is in the room if the hearer is about to enter the room. Therefore, the use of proper nouns as pivots in Kyrgyz and Turkish locative sentences is grammatical and may or may not be pragmatically conditioned.

Pronouns are another category that is reported to produce definiteness restrictions or ungrammaticality in existential sentences. In the following examples the personal pronoun *biz* ‘we’ appear as the pivot of Kyrgyz and Turkish locative existential sentences:

- (11) a. *Kinoteatr-da biz bar-bız.* (Kyrgyz)
cinema-LOC we.NOM exist-1PL
‘There is us at the cinema.’
- b. *Sinema-da biz var-ız.* (Turkish)
Cinema-LOC we. NOM exist – 1PL
‘There is us at the cinema.’

When a personal pronoun is used as the pivot of the locative existential sentences as in (11), the resulting sentences are grammatical. It is clearly seen that neither Kyrgyz nor Turkish disallows personal pronouns in the pivot position due to the definiteness restrictions. However, it should be added that such sentences should be produced under certain conditions. For instance, these sentences can be answers to the questions like *Who are at the cinema?*

Another type of NPs that is reported to create definiteness restrictions in existential sentences is the NPs modified by a demonstrative pronoun. Demonstrative pronoun is *bul* ‘this’ in Kyrgyz, and *bu* ‘this’ in Turkish. The following example illustrates the use of such NPs as the pivots in Kyrgyz and Turkish locative existential sentences:

- (12) a. *Kitepkana-da bul kitep bar.* (Kyrgyz)
Library-LOC this book.NOM exist
‘There is this book in the library.’

- b. *Kütüphane-de bu kitap var.* (Turkish)
Library-LOC this book.NOM exist
'There is this book in the library.'

Example (12) above shows that the NPs marked with the demonstrative pronouns, *bu* and *bu* 'this', function as the pivots of Kyrgyz and Turkish locative existential sentences. These sentences may be uttered when the speaker sees a book and wants to inform the hearer about the existence of the related entity in a certain place. In short, there are necessary pragmatic conditions which allow such NPs to serve as the pivots of these constructions in Kyrgyz and Turkish.

Sansa Tura (169) provides further examples of the pivots which are definite NPs. A related example is given in (13):

- (13) *Yarın üniversite-nin açılış tören-i var.*
tomorrow university-GEN opening ceremony-POSS exist
'There is the opening ceremony of the university tomorrow.'

Sansa Tura (169) argues that the pivot NP *üniversitenin açılış töreni* 'the opening ceremony of the university' in (13) has a definite-referential status. Because it refers to a unique event, and there is one such event every year. Example (14) indicates that the same sentence is also grammatical in Kyrgyz:

- (14) *Erten universitet-tin açılış azem-i bar.*
tomorrow university-GEN opening ceremony-POSS exist
'There is the opening ceremony of the university tomorrow.'

Given that examples (13) and (14) are the possessive type of existential sentences, the following example is presented to demonstrate whether the same pivot NP, *üniversitenin açılış töreni* 'the opening ceremony of the university', is also allowed as a pivot in a locative existential construction in Turkish:

- (15) *Üniversite-de yarın açılış tören-i var.*
University-LOC yesterday opening ceremony-POSS.NOM exist
'There is the opening ceremony at the university tomorrow.'

Example (15) shows that an NP having a definite-referential status can function as a pivot in the locative existential sentences in Turkish. Its Kyrgyz counterpart is given in (16):

- (16) *Universitet-te erten açılış azem-i bar.*
University-LOC yesterday opening ceremony-POSS.NOM exist
'There is the opening ceremony at the university tomorrow.'

Kyrgyz example in (16) is also grammatical like that in Turkish. The data presented above suggest that both languages are not subject to the definiteness restrictions even when a definite-referential NP is used as the pivot of the locative existential sentences. Based on the analysis above, it can be stated that neither Kyrgyz nor Turkish is subject to the definiteness restriction. Here, it should be added that the temporal adverbial phrases *dün* and *erten* 'yesterday' may also appear in the sentence-initial position with slightly distinct meanings. However, it is beyond the scope of this paper to provide a detailed discussion on the position of temporal adverb phrases in existential sentences.

The lack of expletives in Kyrgyz and Turkish existential locative sentences can be cited as one of the reasons for the lack of the definiteness restrictions in Kyrgyz and Turkish. Another reason seems to be related to the coda or locative phrase in the sentences examined. Although codas are not one of the universal elements in existential sentences, these constructions are an obligatory component of Kyrgyz and Turkish locative existential constructions. Omission of the codas from these sentences produces ungrammaticality in both languages as can be observed in (17):

- (17) a. **Kitep/baldar/Mehmet/biz/bul kitep bar.*
Book.NOM/children.NOM/Mehmet.NOM/we.NOM/this book.NOM exist
'There is a book/children/ Mehmet/ we/ this book.'
- b. **Kitap/ çocuklar/Mehmet/ biz/ bu kitap var.*
Book.NOM/children.NOM/Mehmet.NOM/we.NOM/this book.NOM exist
'There is a book/children/ Mehmet/ we/ this book.'

As can be seen in (17), the codas are one of the requirements of these sentences to get a locative existential meaning in both languages.

The lack of the definiteness restrictions in Kyrgyz and Turkish suggests that these languages admit both NPs carrying new information and NPs carrying either discourse-new or hearer-new information as pivots.

Information Structure of Kyrgyz and Turkish Locative Existential Sentences

After establishing that Kyrgyz and Turkish have no definiteness restrictions in locative existential sentences, now their information structure can be examined. Sansa Tura (171) argues that the status of the pivot NPs in locative existential constructions is identified depending on various factors such as word order and stress. She adds that pivot NPs carries new information, functioning as the focus of these sentences, whereas locative phrases are the topics of these sentences. Based on her views, the information structure of the locative existential sentences in Turkish is illustrated in (18):

- (18) [*Seminer* *oda-sı-n-da*_{TOPIC}] [*misafir-ler*_{FOCUS}] *var.*
Seminar room-AGR-POSS-LOC guest-PL.NOM exist
'There are (some) guests in the seminar room.'

The pivot NP in (18), *misafirler* 'guests', is either definite or indefinite based on the shared knowledge of the discourse participants regarding the identifiability of it (Sansa Tura 171). However, this pivot NP carries new information regardless of its semantic status. Therefore, the focus position in Turkish locative existential sentences is immediately preverbal position like in their verbal counterparts. The IS status of the pivots in Turkish locative existential sentences is consistent with the assumption of Bentley et. al. (2) who argued that pivots commonly occur where focus and direct objects appear in sentences. Because focused NPs in Turkish appear in preverbal position.

Sansa Tura (188) states that locative phrases or codas are the topics of the sentences. Codas occur in sentence-initial position in Turkish locative existentials.

Given that information structure of Kyrgyz has not been studied and that both languages share some significant syntactic features, the description of Turkish IS concerning the locative existential sentences can be extended to the IS analysis of these sentences in Kyrgyz. In short, the pivot NPs are the focus of Kyrgyz locative existential sentences which appear in the immediately preverbal position while the codas function as the topic of these sentences which occur in sentence initial position.

The following discussion presents default word order of the locative existential sentences and their scrambled versions in Kyrgyz and Turkish to

see whether scrambling is possible in these sentences. Because it is reported that the variation in the word order of existential sentences is closely related to IS of scrambling languages (Bentley et. al. 2).

First, IS is examined in which the pivots are bare singular NPs. Related example is given in (19):

- (19) a. *Üstöl-dö* *kitep* *bar.* (Kyrgyz)
table-LOC book.NOM exist
'There is a book on the table.'
- b. *Masa-da* *kitap* *var.* (Turkish)
table-LOC book. NOM exist
'There is a book on the table.'

In (19), both sentences have a pivot which is a caseless NP indicating its indefinite status. These pivot NPs are the focus of the sentences which receive sentence stress. In both languages, there is a clear match between the indefinite status of bare singular NPs and their IS role. Because indefinites are the most eligible candidates to function as the focus of sentences. The codas in the sentences function as the topic as stated above. Scrambled locative existential sentences are exemplified as follows:

- (20) a. **Kitep* *üstöl-dö* *bar.* (Kyrgyz)
book table-LOC exist
'There is a book on the table.'
- b. **Kitap* *masa-da* *var.* (Turkish)
book table-LOC exist
'There is a book on the table.'

Sentences in (20) which contain pivots in the sentence initial position are ungrammatical in Kyrgyz and Turkish. The pivot NPs which are caseless and therefore, indefinite and non-specific cannot appear in the sentence initial position before the codas. Erguvanlı Taylan (224) claims that indefinites are not eligible to appear in the sentence initial position in locative existentials being restricted to preverbal positions. This unavailability obviously indicates that bare singular NPs in locative existential sentences cannot scramble to sentence initial position where they should receive a contrastive focus reading. The ungrammaticality in (20) is consistent with the view of

Keleşir (187) who states that pivot NPs in Turkish should occur inside the verb phrases since when they appear in the sentence-initial position, they leave the existential closure.

As mentioned above, locative constructions are closely related to locative existential sentences. Example (21) shows that when the existential predicates *bar* and *var* ‘exist’ are omitted, locative copular sentences are produced in both languages:

- (21) a. *Kitep* *üstöl-dö.* (Kyrgyz)
Book.NOM table-LOC
‘A book is on the table.’
- b. *Kitap* *masa-da.* (Turkish)
book.NOM table-LOC
‘A book is on the table.’

Example in (21) clearly shows that both copular locative sentences are grammatical, and that copular locative sentences are alternative constructions in Kyrgyz and Turkish to express the location of the referents of bare NPs. In short, Kyrgyz and Turkish do not have to employ scrambled locative existential sentences since there are copular locative sentences available to express the location of a bare singular NP if it would be the topic of the sentence. When it is the focus of the sentences, the location is expressed through locative existential constructions.

Example (22) shows the plural NPs as pivots in Kyrgyz and Turkish locative existential sentences:

- (22) a. *Bakça-da* *bal-dar* *bar.* (Kyrgyz)
garden-LOC child-PL.NOM exist
‘There are children in the garden.’
- b. *Bahçe-de* *çocuk-lar* *var.* (Turkish)
garden-LOC child-PL.NOM exist
‘There are children in the garden.’

Sentences in (22) have plural NPs as pivots appearing in preverbal position. These pivots, *baldar* and *çocuklar* ‘children’, are the focus of the sentences which bears sentence stress. Like their singular counterparts, the IS role of the plural NPs is consistent with their status of being indefinites. It should

also be noted that in these sentences, plural NPs do not have any generic reading, but episodic readings due to the use of the locative phrases or codas.

Plural indefinite NPs cannot scramble to the sentence initial position of the locative existential sentences as can be seen in (23):

- (23) a. **Bal-dar* *bakça-da* *bar.* (Kyrgyz)
child-PL garden-LOC exist
'There are children in the garden.'
- b. **Çocuk-lar* *bahçe-de* *var.* (Turkish)
child-PL garden-LOC exist
'There are children in the garden.'

As demonstrated in (23), the pivot plural NPs are not allowed to move to the sentence initial position making the sentences above ungrammatical. This unavailability is also noticed by Erguvanlı Taylan (224) who argues that such indefinite NPs in locative existential constructions are restricted to pre-verbal position. As stated for their singular counterparts, when they occur in sentence-initial position, they leave existential closure (Keleşir 187). It can be also stated that bare plural NPs as pivots are not eligible to receive contrastive focus stress in Kyrgyz and Turkish.

As it is stated for bare singular NPs, when existential predicates *bar* and *var* 'exist' are omitted, the sentences become grammatical forming locative copular sentences as follows:

- (24) a. *Bal-dar* *bakça-da.* (Kyrgyz)
child-PL.NOM garden-LOC
'Children are in the garden.'
- b. *Çocuk-lar* *bahçe-de.* (Turkish)
child-PL.NOM garden-LOC
'Children are in the garden.'

Whenever plural NPs like *balдар* and *çocuklar* 'children' appear in sentence initial position as exemplified in (24), both languages employ copular locative sentences instead of scrambling the plural NP pivots to the sentence initial position when it is needed to communicate the location of the referents of plural NPs. Therefore, copular locative sentences are costless alternatives to indicate the location if plural NPs function as the topics.

The following examples show the use of the proper nouns as pivots in locative existential sentences in Kyrgyz and Turkish.

- (25) a. *Bölmö-dö* *Mehmet* *bar.* (Kyrgyz)
 room-LOC Mehmet.NOM exist
 ‘There is Mehmet at the room.’
- b. *Oda-da* *Mehmet* *var.* (Turkish)
 room-LOC Mehmet.NOM exist
 ‘There is Mehmet at the room.’

Sentences like (25) have proper nouns as their pivots which are the most definite NPs and may appear in preverbal position of the locative existential sentences in which they function as the focus. Note that the IS status of proper nouns is somewhat different from that of bare singular and plural NPs. Although these proper nouns as pivots are known to the discourse participants, they are new referents introduced to the discourse by the speaker. In other words, they may not carry new information but are discourse-new or hearer-new information. The following example displays their scrambling to the sentence initial position:

- (26) a. **Mehmet* *bölmö-dö* *bar.* (Kyrgyz)
 Mehmet.NOM room-LOC exist
 ‘There is Mehmet at the room.’
- b. **Mehmet* *oda-da* *var.* (Turkish)
 Mehmet.NOM room-LOC exist
 ‘There is Mehmet at the room.’

In sentences like (26), proper names cannot scramble to the sentence initial position of the locative existential sentences in both languages. Like indefinite NPs, proper nouns in locative existential constructions can only occur in pre-verbal position. As indicated by Keleşir (187) sentence initial position is not part of the existential closure, and therefore, it cannot host the pivots. Given that proper nouns are definite NPs, they seem to be eligible for being topics of the sentences which are hosted by sentence initial position. However, as given in (26) above, it is not the case. The reason for this unavailability is closely related to the fact that the topic of locative existential sentences is locative phrases, which are restricted to the sentence-initial position. At the same time, the data in (26) illustrate that

Kyrgyz and Turkish proper nouns cannot receive contrastive focus reading in such sentences. In short, whenever a proper noun occurs in the sentence initial position, the existential verbs *bar* and *var* ‘exist’ should be omitted, producing locative sentences as can be seen in (27):

- (27) a. *Mehmet bölmö-dö.* (Kyrgyz)
Mehmet.NOM room-LOC
‘Mehmet is in the room.’
b. *Mehmet oda-da.* (Turkish)
Mehmet.NOM room-LOC
‘Mehmet is in the room.’

As stated for indefinite NPs, copular locative sentences satisfy the need to express the location of people so that Kyrgyz and Turkish do not have to make use of the scrambled locative existential sentences to state their location. Because copular locative sentences are the eligible alternatives if proper nouns are the topicalized elements.

The data in (28) illustrate the use of a personal pronoun as a pivot of Kyrgyz and Turkish locative existential sentences:

- (28) a. *Kinoteatr-da biz bar-biz.* (Kyrgyz)
cinema-LOC we. NOM exist-1PL
‘We are at the cinema.’
b. *Sinema-da biz var-ız.* (Turkish)
Cinema-LOC we.NOM exist-1PL
‘We are at the cinema.’

Example (28) indicates that a personal pronoun like *biz* ‘we’ may function as the pivot of the locative existential sentences in both languages. This pivot pronoun is the focus of the sentences. As mentioned earlier, pronouns are used to express noteworthy discourse referents. Therefore, their IS role in locative existential sentences is somewhat different from that of indefinite NPs. Because pronouns like proper nouns refer to discourse-new or hearer-new information in locative existential sentences of Kyrgyz and Turkish.

The following data exemplify the scrambled locative existential sentences in which a personal pronoun is the pivot:

- (29) a. **Biz kinoteatr-da bar-bız.* (Kyrgyz)
We.NOM cinema-LOC exist-1PL
* 'There are us at the cinema.'
- b. **Biz sinema-da var-ız.* (Turkish)
We.NOM sinema-LOC exist-1PL
* 'There are us at the cinema.'

As can be seen in (29), when the personal pronoun *biz* 'we' appears in the sentence-initial position, the resulting sentences are ungrammatical in both languages. In short, personal pronouns as the pivots of the locative existential sentences are restricted to preverbal position. Like bare singular and plural NPs and proper nouns, the pivot pronouns should be inside the verb phrase which excludes the sentence-initial position. Because in these sentences the sentence-initial position can only host locative phrases. This clearly demonstrates that the word order of existential sentences in both Kyrgyz and Turkish is not flexible.

As stated earlier, personal pronouns carry noteworthy referents to discourse in locative existential sentences. Therefore, it could be argued that sentence initial position of locative existential sentences in both languages does not host such referents which cannot receive a contrastive focus stress and reading.

When the existential predicates are not used, it turns out that sentences are grammatical with no existential reading. Note that these sentences are copular locative sentences as can be seen in (30):

- (30) a. *Biz kinoteatr-da-bız.* (Kyrgyz)
We.NOM cinema-LOC-1PL
'We are at the cinema.'
- b. *Biz sinema-da-yız.* (Turkish)
We.NOM sinema-LOC-1PL
'We are at the cinema.'

The data in (30) suggest that copular locative sentences perform the function of stating the location of the referents of personal pronouns indicating that the scrambling of personal pronouns in locative existential sentences is much more costly than using copular type of locative sentences. In addition,

there is no need to express the location of their referents using two different types of sentences if these pronouns are the topics of the sentences.

The following example illustrates the use of *this*+NP type pivots in Kyrgyz and Turkish locative existential constructions:

- (31) a. *Kitepkana-da bul kitep bar.* (Kyrgyz)
Library-LOC this book.NOM exist
'There is that book in the library.'
- b. *Kütüphane-de bu kitap var.* (Turkish)
Library-LOC this book.NOM exist
'There is that book in the library.'

As stated earlier, *this*+NP type of pivots may appear in the locative existential sentences in both languages. They receive a sentence focus reading and signal new information. There is a mismatch between their referential status as being definite NPs and their IS role. As argued by Leonetti ("Definiteness Effects: The Interplay"), an NP may assume an IS role which may not be consistent with its status as being definite or indefinite. In addition, such an inconsistency is not a ban on the use of *this*+NP type of pivots in Kyrgyz and Turkish. Scrambling of these NPs to the sentence-initial position is presented in the following example:

- (32) a. *Bul kitep kitepkana-da bar.* (Kyrgyz)
this book.NOM library-LOC exist
'There is this book in the library.'
- b. *Bu kitap kütüphane-de var.* (Turkish)
this book.NOM library-LOC exist
'There is this book in the library.'

Examples in (32) show that the scrambling of *this*+NP type pivots to the sentence initial position produces grammatical sentences in both languages. Contra to Kelepir (187) who argues that NPs have to be inside the verb phrases in order to be interpreted existentially and that when they are in the sentence-initial position they are out of the existential closure, the data in (32) suggest that this requirement is not operative for the pivots in the form of *this*+NP. These pivots have different syntactic properties in contrast to other pivot NP types in both languages. In addition, the findings suggest

that *this*+NP pivots can receive contrastive focus stress in the sentence initial position of these constructions (Kuno 339).

Based on these data, it may be argued that whenever a pivot like *this*+NP type scrambles to the sentence initial position, IS differs from that in L+S+V. The latter pattern does not include any contrastive focus but broad focus.

The pragmatic conditions which pave way to produce sentences like in (32) can be an interaction between the speaker and listener at a bookstore where they see an expensive book which they want to buy. Instead of buying it, the speaker may suggest reading it taking it from the library.

It is interesting that when existential predicates are omitted, the resulting sentences are not tolerated unlike the previous examples. In short, those locative existential sentences with pivots in the form of *this*+NP do not have equivalent copular locative sentences in both languages which are exemplified in (33):

- (33) a. **Bul kitep kitepkana-da.* (Kyrgyz)
 this book.NOM library-LOC
 ‘This book is in the library.’
- b. **Bu kitap kütüphane-de.* (Turkish)
 this book.NOM library-LOC
 ‘This book is in the library.’

Example (33) indicates that *this*+NP in sentence initial position always needs an existential predicate which asserts its presence in a specified location. It seems that this restriction is a result of the use of demonstrative pronouns. Because their bare NP counterparts such as *kitep* and *kitap* ‘book’ may occur in the subject position of copular locative sentences.

Conclusion

This study compares Kyrgyz and Turkish in terms of the definiteness effects and information structure in locative existential constructions. Major findings of the study are summarized as follows:

The definiteness effect is not operative in both languages. In addition to indefinite NPs, definite NPs including proper nouns, personal pronouns and NPs marked with demonstrative pronouns are found to function as

the pivot of locative existential sentences. It is also found that Kyrgyz and Turkish have the same information structure pattern in locative existential sentences. The pivot NPs function as the focus, and locative phrases or codas serve as the topic of these sentences. Although Kyrgyz and Turkish have scrambling, it is found not to be common in locative existential sentences. Of the NP types tested in the study, only NPs marked with demonstrative pronouns are found to have scrambling options. It seems that because of their eligibility to receive contrastive focus reading, these NPs may appear in sentence initial positions through scrambling. In short, those pivots which are eligible for contrastive focus readings may move to sentence initial position.

It is clearly seen that Kyrgyz and Turkish have a symmetrical pattern about the use of locative existential constructions and locative sentences. When the pivots cannot be moved to sentence initial position, an alternative construction, namely copular type of locative sentences, is employed in both languages. However, when scrambling is possible as in the case of *this+NP* pivots, copular type of locative sentences is not available in the languages compared.

Kyrgyz and Turkish are found to have nearly the same underlying rules in locative existential sentences in terms of both the DE and IS. Although these languages may differ in other constructions, the study concludes that their locative existential sentences share the same core properties. However, further studies are needed to have more information about these constructions in both languages. Such studies may be carried out using samples from different text types, including literary work. In addition, further contrastive studies of Turkic languages could provide much more comprehensive insights about existential sentences, information structure and other grammatical structures.

Conflict of Interest Statement

There is no conflict of interest with any institution or person within the scope of this study.

Appendix: Abbreviations used in glosses

1SG, 1PL	person indexes
AGR	agreement marker
GEN	genitive case
LOC	locative case
NOM	nominative case
POSS	possessive ending

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