

Kazakh Es-Words are Strict Negative Concord Items

This paper investigates the nature of Kazakh ES-words (boldfaced in (1)).

(1)

a) Magan **es-kim** kelmejdı / *keledi
Me.DAT **ES-one** come.NEG.PRES *come.PRES.3SG

“Nobody comes to visit me”

b) Mariam **es-tene es-kimge** degen zhok
Mariam **ES-thing ES-one.DAT** sayNOT

“Mary didn’t say anything to anyone”

Although ES-words appear to pattern like Turkish hic-words, which have been classified as NPIs (see Keleşir 2011) I present compelling evidence that they are Strict Negative Concord Items (SNCIs) (see Zeijlstra 2001).

Strict NCI vs. NPI analysis

Just like NPIs, more than one NCI can co-occur in a sentence with a negative marker resulting in one semantic negation only (see 1b). In addition in strict NC languages the sentence is ungrammatical without negation (see 1a).

However there are some important differences:

A) Unlike English NPI “any” Es-words can appear in fragmentary answers, which indicates the different dependencies between negation+NPI and negation+nc-word. In contrast, English conveys the same answer via a negative determiner. (see v. and vi. in Appendix)

B) Kazakh ES-words are licensed by only negation and not in other weaker Downward entailing (DE) contexts like, e.g antecedent of conditionals (see vii.)

C) Unlike English Kazakh and other strict NC languages lack negative determiners.

Proposal.

In languages lacking negative determiners like English *no* (see viii), like Kazakh, their meaning is obtained via the combination of a Strict Negative Concord Item denoting an existential determiner with a sentential negative marker (see ix in Appendix)

Predictions

A) The proposal explains why DEness is not sufficient to license them: A nonantimorphic DE function together with an existential determiner will not be equivalent to a negative determiner. For example, the restrictor of universal quantifier is DE (see Ladusaw 1980) however ES-word in that position does not trigger negative reading, this is why the following construction is ill-formed.

(2) ***Eşkandaj** kıtaptı oqıgan arbir student emtihan tapsırad
Es book.acc theonewhoread every student exam pass.fut.3
“Every student who read any book passed.”

B) The proposal makes two additional desirable predictions: n-words plus negative markers can result in a negative determiner only if no scope bearing operator intervenes between them (see 3a) and the clause mate negation constraint (see 3b). Semantically these do not lead to sentences equivalent to those with the negative determiners.

(3) a) *Arkım **eškımdı** korgen emes
Everybody **es-person.acc** see.past neg
Intended meaning: “Not everybody saw anybody” $\neg \forall > \exists$

b) [bul kitaptı okıga **es-kımnın** shamasınan kel**ME**jtinin] bilemin.
[Thisbook.acc toread **es-person** be ableto.**not**] know.I

“I know that noone is able to read this book” KNOW $\neg\exists$

- c) * [bul kitaptı okuga **es-kimnin** shamasinan keletinini] bil**ME**jmin.
 [Thisbook.acc to read **es-person** be ableto] know.**not**.I
 Intended meaning: $\neg\rightarrow$ KNOW $\rightarrow\exists$

Previous accounts on strict NC (Zeijlstra 2001) that treat negative markers as NCIs licensed by a silent negative operator fail to make these three predictions.

Conclusion: This analysis of Es-words has advantages over an NPI view as well as previous views on strict negative concord in that it straightforwardly predicts both the differences these items present when compared with NPIs and the locality constraints they are subject to.

Key words: Negative polarity, negative concord, downward entailing, n-word, existential, negative determiner

References:

[1] Keleşir, Meltem. (2001), *Topics in Turkish syntax: clausal structure and scope*. PhD dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology [2] Ladusaw, W. (1980) Polarity Sensitivity as Inherent Scope Relations. Garland Press, New York. [3] Lahiri, Utpal (1998), *Focus and Negative Polarity in Hindi*, Natural Language Semantics [4] Penka, Doris (2010), *Negative Indefinites*, number 32 in ‘Oxford Studies in Theoretical Linguistics’, Oxford University Press, Oxford/NY. [5] Zeijlstra, Hedde (2004), *Sentential Negation and Negative Concord*, PhD thesis, University of Amsterdam.

Appendix:

Licensing environments of Kazakh Es-words

i. Object position:

Men eştene al*(**ma**)dim
 I anythingboughtNOT
 “I didn’t buy anything”

ii. Subjectposition:

Eşkım kel*(**me**)di
 Anyonecame*(NOT)
 “No onecame”

iii. There is (not) construction:

Eşkandajzhumıszhok (***bar**)
 Anyjobthere is not (*there is)
 “There is noanyjob”

iv. With (without):

Men keşegeeshnarse-**SIZ** (-***MEN**) geldim
 I party.DAT anything**WITHOUT**(***WITH**)came
 “I came to party without anything”

v. Fragmentary answer:

Kimdi kordin? Eskimdi
 Who see.past.2sg nobody.acc

vi. Who did you see?

*anyone / nobody

vii. Conditionals

*Eşkım-di korsen, magan
 habar ber¹
 *Anyone.acc see.cond.2 I.dat
 Inform “If you see anyone, tell me

1 The grammaticality judgments have been provided by native speaker.

viii. Lexical entry of NO:

[[no]] (f) (g) = 1 iff $\neg\exists x$ such that f(x)=1 and g(x)=1

ix. [[not]] ([[Eş]]) (f) (g) = 1 iff $\neg\exists x$ such that f(x)=1 and g(x)=1
 $\neg\exists x$ such that f(x)=1 and g(x)=1

