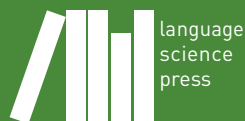


A typology of marked-S languages

Corinna Handschuh

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■ Studies in Diversity Linguistics, No 1



The study of a rare case-system

A typological study of the rare marked-S language type which overtly marks the single argument of intransitive verbs (S) while one of the arguments of transitive verbs (either A or P) is left zero-coded. The formal (overt versus zero-coding) as well as functional aspects (range of uses of individual case forms) of the phenomenon are treated. The book covers languages from the Afro-Asiatic and Nilo-Saharan languages of Africa and of the North America Pacific Northwest and Pacific regions.

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Corinna Handschuh

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Für Tommeck

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Part I

Preliminaries

Part II

The contexts studied

4 Existential and locational predication

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, two types of predications are discussed: existential and locational predications. The two types are exemplified by the English sentences in (1) and (2) respectively.

(1) *There is a tree (in the garden).*

(2) *The tree is in the garden.*

While in the existential construction (1) a statement about the existence of an entity is made, existence is presupposed in the locational construction (2) and said entity is categorized with respect to its location in space. In many languages the formal properties of the constructions, such as definiteness/indefiniteness of the arguments, correlate with these pragmatic implications of the two structures.

From a descriptive as well as a formal semantic point of view, existential and locational sentences have been treated as similar to one another, if not identical in their underlying semantic structure. Sometimes, other contexts such as predicative possession and nominal predication are also put into the same category (Payne 1997: 111–113). Nominal predication in marked-S languages has already been discussed in Chapter 3. I have chosen to treat that topic separately since in some languages in my sample nominal predication has a number of special properties that are not shared with existential or locational predications. In contrast, the context of predicative possession did not reveal any special properties in my study. The languages of my sample employ two strategies for expressing this context: either there is a transitive verb ‘have’ or predicative possession uses the same construction as existentials (while adding the possessor either as an adpositional phrase or an attributive possessor). These are also the two main types that Stassen (2009) distinguishes in his typology of predicative possession. He further introduces three subtypes of the locational possessive construction – the ‘locational possessive’, ‘with-possessive’ and ‘topic-possessive’ – the details of which are not relevant here. Another approach to the classification of types of

predicative possession are the eight types of possessive ‘event schemata’ distinguished by Heine (1997: 47). Five of these eight schemata use a formula including a predicate ‘exist’ or ‘be located’, while a sixth uses a predicate ‘be with’ which can be considered a locational concept. This approach also indicates a strong relation between the encoding of location and existence, on the one hand, and possession, on the other. For those languages of my sample that have an existential/locational/possessive construction, the data from possessive contexts are included in this chapter. Otherwise, this context is not treated in this study.

For a small number of languages in my sample, a different case-form is used for the subject of negative and positive existential predications. From a cross-linguistic perspective, this behavior is not unheard of, though also not very common (Matti Miestamo, p.c.). For instance, in Russian and Finnish, subject case-marking is different for positive and negative clauses in a number of contexts. While positive copula clauses mark their subjects with Nominative case, in the negative counterparts, Finnish employs Partitive case while Russian uses the Genitive (Dixon 2010b: 167).

The overwhelming majority of languages in my sample use the same construction to express locational and existential predication. This is, however, not a peculiar fact about languages of the marked-S type, but has been noted for the majority of the world’s languages. Historical as well as philosophical explanations have been given in order to account for this relation. In addition, when the two predications are not encoded by the same construction, the structural differences appear to be triggered by the same types of factors across languages. A brief overview of the literature treating these topics is given in Section 4.2. Afterwards, I will present the different patterns found in existential and locational constructions for the languages of my sample and formulate the research questions for the present study (Section 4.3). In the subsequent sections, I will present data from Nilo-Saharan (Section 4.4), Afro-Asiatic (Section 4.5), North-American languages (Section 4.6), and languages from the Pacific area (Section 4.7). Finally, I summarize the languages in my sample in Section 4.8.

4.2 Linguistic properties

Lyons (1967, 1968) argues that existential constructions are historically derived from locational constructions in most of the languages of the world, unless the two kinds of constructions are completely identical to each other. Indeed, the locational nature is still very obvious in the existentials of many languages since they require some locational phrase – be it as vague as ‘here’ or ‘there’ – to be

present in this construction (cf. the English existential construction ‘there is a X’). As a motivation for this historical connection, Lyons (1968: 499) argues for an ontological relation between existence and location since existence implies existence at a specific (though possibly unspecified) location. And, conversely, absence of an entity from all locations implies non-existence.

While Lyons’ discussion is concerned with the semantic and ontological relation of the two types of constructions, other scholars have concentrated on the syntactic relation between the two. Among these scholars is Freeze (1992), who argues that the underlying syntactic structure of existentials and locationals is identical. Any differences in the surface realization of the two structures in a given language are triggered by other factors such as definiteness of the S argument.

One structural correlate of these factors is an alternation of word-order in the two types of constructions. These word-order effects are the main focus of the study by Clark (1978) on existential, locational and possessive constructions. She argues that the ordering correlates with the properties of the subject in terms of definiteness and specificity. This is shown, for example, by the English data (cf. example (1) and (2) above), in which the indefinite subject of existentials is not in the canonical subject position but instead a dummy location is inserted in this position.¹ The (usually) definite subject of locationals on the other hand preferably occurs in the canonical subject position (i.e. sentence initially). Clark’s findings suggest that this is not only the case in English, but that the correlation between word-order and predication type is a cross-linguistic tendency, since the overwhelming majority of her sample of 30 languages (with some bias toward European languages) showed this tendency. The correlation between word-order and existential vs. locational sentences was particularly high for languages without a morphosyntactic means to distinguish definites and indefinites.

Though Clark’s findings are intriguing, her collapsing of the categories existential and locational with the notion of indefinite versus definite subject may be somewhat problematic. To distinguish between existentials and locationals, the criterion whether the subject of a clause in definite or indefinite is a good approximation, but counterexamples do occur. The following made-up tabloid headline would probably be interpreted as a statement about existence rather than location by most speakers of English, yet the subject is marked with the definite article (3).

¹ The example such as (i) and (ii) are possible in English, but very unusual. Example (i) gets better when the locational phrase is added.

(i) *A tree is (in the garden).*

(ii) *A tree exists.*

(3) *The Yeti exists.*

So the question has to be answered whether Clark's correlation really is between word-order and existential versus locational predications, or rather between word-order and definiteness, which in most cases coincides with the distinction between existentials and locationals.

In studies of existential and locational predication, not much is said about the case-marking of subjects in these constructions. Or, to put it in other terms, the question is whether the S-like argument in existentials and locationals behaves like other S elements. Given the topic of this study, this is my main interest with regard to these contexts. Payne (1997: 123) notes that there "[u]sually is no or reduced evidence of grammatical relations in existential constructions." If this is true, one would not expect S of existential predications to be encoded like more typical intransitive subjects in marked-S languages.

4.3 Research question

In the subsequent sections, I will present data on locational and existential predications in the languages of the marked-S type. The special focus is on the case-forms employed for the S-like arguments in these clauses. More specifically, I selected three contexts: locational predications, as well as positive and negative existential predications. In each of these contexts, the marking of the respective subject is investigated. Thus, data for the following three roles were collected for each language of the sample:

- subject of positive existential predication
- subject of negative existential predication
- subject of locational predication

The distinction between negative and positive predications is only made for existentials here. If a language uses the same construction for existential and locational contexts, any differences between negative and positive existentials will also be found with negative locationals. However, there are languages in which the difference between positive and negative contexts is only found with existentials to the exclusion of locationals, while no language makes such a distinction exclusively in the locational context.

Most marked-S languages use the same constructions for existential and locational predications. Usually, these constructions encode their subjects like subjects of regular intransitive clauses. A distinction between the encoding of subjects of positive and negative contexts is only found in few of the languages. Not all languages appear to have dedicated constructions for locationals and/or existentials. The contexts (or subset of these contexts) are often expressed through the use of a generic intransitive verb expressing some kind of local orientation, such as ‘sit’, ‘stand’ or ‘lie’. In these cases, the locational and existential predications can be regarded as instances of regular intransitive clauses. Thus subjects are expected to be in the S-case.²

First, I will give an example of this majority pattern. The S element in (4a) and (4b) is marked with the Nominative case-suffix *-č* in Mojave, just as any intransitive S argument is. Note that Mojave does not have a single existential or locational verb, using instead a number of stative verbs in both existential and locational predications.

(4) Mojave (Yuman; Arizona; Munro 1976: 33, 212)

- a. *hukθar-č ?avi:-θ-lʷ idi:-k*
 coyote-NOM mountain-DEM-LOC lie-TNS
 ‘There are coyotes in those hills.’
- b. *pi:pa nʷamaθa:m kʷəloyaw kʷ-tapoy-h-nʷ-č ?ava:-lʷ iva-m*
 person tomorrow chicken REL-kill-IRR-DEM-NOM house-LOC sit-TNS
 ‘The man who’s going to kill the chicken tomorrow is in the house.’

Nias also uses the same type of construction to encode locational and existential meanings. However, different constructions are used for positive and negative contexts. While the construction used for positive contexts (5a) employs the S element in the Mutated form of a noun (i.e. the same as for regular intransitive S), in negative contexts the S-like element is in the Unmutated form (5b).

(5) Nias (Sundic; Sumatra, Indonesia; Brown 2001: 344, 358)

- a. *ga so göcoa*
 here exist cockroach.MUT
 ‘There’s a cockroach here.’

² Recall that the label S-CASE is a shorthand for: the nominative case if a language has nominative-accusative alignment and the absolutive case if a language has ergative-absolutive alignment.

4 Existential and locational predication

- b. *löna baʃi ba mbanu ha'a*
NEG.exist pig LOC village.MUT PROX
'There are no pigs in this village.'

Finally, there is one language in my sample in which different constructions are used for existentials and locationals (at least by some speakers). While in Tennes existentials the subject can be zero-coded (6a), with locationals the Nominative case is always used (6b).

(6) *Tennes (Surmic; Sudan; Randal 1998: 236, 236)*

- a. *ányák mám cééz-a*
have water house-OBL
'There is water in the house.'
- b. *áve loúdó keét-á vúrt-â*
be_located Loudo.NOM tree-OBL under-OBL
'Loudo is under the tree.'

The following sections provide a detailed study of the contexts of positive and negative existential predication and locational predication in marked-S languages. The data are divided by genealogical and areal grouping into the Nilo-Saharan (4.4) and Afro-Asiatic languages (4.5), and the languages of North America (4.6) and the Pacific area (4.7). In many cases, it has been difficult to obtain information on the contexts studied here for individual languages. This is probably due to the fact that clauses of the existential and locational type are often encoded like regular intransitive clauses and thus are not explicitly discussed in many grammars. Hence, in the following sections there are no data on one or the other context for a number of languages.

4.4 Nilo-Saharan

For most marked-S languages of the Nilo-Saharan stock, the S arguments of existential and locational predications are encoded alike, since the same constructions are used in both contexts. However, some languages show interesting patterns, especially in having alternative constructions in the different subdomains.

In Murle, the prototypical situation is attested, in which parallel constructions are used for existential (7a) and locational predication (7b). And indeed this construction is also parallel to other intransitive verbs (7c). Nandi (8) and Datooga (9) behave similarly.

- (7) Murle (Surmic; Sudan; Arensen 1982: 49, 50)
- a. *abil guumun-i kɛɛt taddina*
stands owl-NOM tree up
'There is an owl up in the tree.'
 - b. *ɛɛl tor-et-a ceeza*
stand gun-PL-NOM in_house
'The guns are in the house.'
 - c. *ako agul-i ci appi liila*
goes crocodile-NOM REL big into_river
'The big crocodile goes into the river.'
- (8) Nandi (Nilotic; Kenya; Creider & Creider 1989: 123)
- a. *mì:t-éy ngetún-ta*
COP-IPFV lion.NOM-THEM
'There is a lion.'
 - b. *mì:t-éy kipro:no kitâ:li*
COP-IPFV Kiprono.NOM Kitale
'Kiprono is in Kitale.'
- (9) Datooga (Nilotic; Tanzania; Kiessling 2007: 184, 171)
- a. *mà-ndá dúu-sù jáa gá-wá gwá-róopí*
3.NEG-be_there cattle.NOM-PROX.PL NOM.FUT.REL 3-go 3-meet
'There are none of these cattle that he may go to meet.'
 - b. *gwándà gádéemgá jèedá dūhwà*
3-be_there women.NOM among cattle.ACC
'The women were among the cattle.'

As noted before, the same is true for the majority of languages in my sample. However, there are some languages which have an alternative construction for one of these two types of predication that differs from the encoding of the other type. Also, in some languages at least some types of existential and/or locational predications do not encode their subject in the same way as prototypical intransitive clauses encode their subjects (S). In the following, I will focus on these languages.

The first Nilo-Saharan language which exhibits some variation with respect to the encoding of the S argument in existential and locational predications is Turkana. At least two different constructions are used in Turkana for encoding

existential and locational contexts. First, existentials can be encoded like nominal predicates. As seen in the previous chapter (3.7), this construction usually does not have a verb, unless it is negated or in non-present tense. In those verbless clauses, the S argument is in the Accusative case (10a). If a verb is present – whether to encode negation or past tense, or because construction with a lexicalized verb is used, as in the next example – Nominative case is used for the S argument (10b).³

(10) *Turkana* (Nilotic; Kenya; Dimmendaal 1982: 74, 75)

- a. *ɣɪ-dɛ` omwɔn`*
 NC-children.ACC four
 ‘There are four children.’
- b. *ɛ-màa-sè ɣɪ-dè omwɔn`*
 3-drink-PL children.NOM four
 ‘There are four children.’

The second construction I will discuss here is interpreted as either existential, locational or possessive. Other than the nominal predication construction, in which an overt copula only occurs when it is needed to host negation or tense marking, the copula is usually used in all cases. As is to be expected in constructions which have an overt verb, the Nominative case is used for the S argument (11). In the possessive interpretation of this construction, the possessee is always interpreted as being indefinite (12a). If one wants to formulate a possessive sentence with a definite possessee, the non-verbal construction used in nominal predications has to be employed (12b) according to Dimmendaal (1982: 82).

(11) *Turkana* (Dimmendaal 1982: 82)

- a. *è-yàka-sì ɣa-àtùk*
 3-be-PL NC-COWS.NOM
 ‘There are cows (or the cows are there).’
- b. *è-yè-i` a-pèsɛ a-pèy*
 3-be-ASP NC-girl.NOM NC-one.NOM
 ‘There is one girl (or one girl is there).’

³ The example in (10b) is an idiomatic expression, in which the verb ‘drink’ is deprived of its lexical meaning. The high potential of verbs of eating and drinking to undergo metaphorical extensions is discussed in Newman (2009).

(12) *Turkana* (Dimmendaal 1982: 82)

- a. *è-yàka-sì a-yɔŋ` ɲa-àtùk*
 3-be-PL NC-me NC-COWS.NOM
 ‘I have cows.’
- b. *ɲa-atuk` ɲugu` ɲa-kaŋ`*
 COWS.ACC these.ACC NC-mine
 ‘These cows are mine’

Maa is another language that shows some variation on the constructions used for existential and locational contexts. According to Payne (2007), there are two types of existentials in Maa, those constructed with the verb *tii* ‘be at’ and those constructed with the verb *ata* ‘have’. The first construction, i.e. the one with *tii*, encodes both existential and locational contexts. In this construction, the S argument is always marked with the Nominative case (13a, b). Existentials constructed with the verb *ata* on the other hand have zero-coded S arguments and do not have a locational meaning (13c).

(13) *Maa* (Nilotic; Kenya; Payne 2007: ex.19a, ex.17, ex.20a)

- a. *N-é-tíí apá, ɔl-mərraní óbo*
 CON-3-be.at long_ago M.SG-warrior.NOM one.NOM
 ‘Long ago, there was a warrior.’
- b. *e-tíí enk-áyíóní ol-kejó*
 3-be_at F.SG-boy.NOM M.SG-leg.ACC
 ‘The boy is at the river.’ (lit. ‘The boy is at the big leg.’)
- c. *n-é-yioló-u áàjò k-é-áta-ɪ enk-ái ná-râ*
 CON-3-know-INCEP that.PL DSCN-3-exist-PASS F.SG-God.ACC REL.F-be
papâ
 father.ACC
 ‘They knew that there is God who is the father.’

In the above example of the *ata*-existential, the verb is in the passive. Since passive verbs always take their subjects in the zero-coded Accusative form in Maa, this is not surprising.⁴ However, there are some non-passive *ata*-existentials which nevertheless take zero-coded subjects. Examples of the type demonstrated in (14) make up a quarter of the instances of *ata*-existentials in Payne’s corpus.

⁴ The following examples, from Payne (2007: ex.16, ex.15), demonstrate the Maa Passive and the corresponding active clause:

(14) *Maa* (Payne 2007)

- a. ...amô m-ε-átà **ɔl-tʊɣáni** ó-ítieu
 because NEG-3-exist M.SG-person.ACC M.SG.REL.ACC-dare
 ‘...because there is no one who can face him.’
- b. M-ε-étà **ɔl-mórráni** lé-m-é-nyórr te=n-e-i-pus-íék-ì
 NEG-3-exist M.SG-warrior.ACC REL.M-NEG-3-like OBL=CON-3-VBLZ-blue-INS-PASS
 enk-áíná
 F.SG-arm.ACC
 ‘There isn’t a warrior who doesn’t want to (have his) hand be made blue.’

In the previous section, data from Tenneset have already been introduced. Randal (1998: 236) notes that in Tenneset not all speakers use parallel constructions for existential and locational predications. Some speakers use the standard locational construction for existentials as well. In this construction, the S argument is in the Nominative case (15a, b). Other speakers use a different construction for existential contexts, which has a zero-coded S argument (16a). For negative existential and locational predications the subject is always zero-coded (16b). The basic variation between the two groups of speakers is thus whether the positive existential context is covered by the same construction as the negative existential context or as the positive locational context.

(15) *Tenneset* (Surmic; Sudan; Randal 1998: 223)

- a. áve **loúdó** keét-á vúrt-â
 be_located Loudo.NOM tree-OBL under-OBL
 ‘Loudo is under the tree.’
- b. ávte **burú-nâ** lebel-á
 stay.PL eggs-NOM platform-OBL
 ‘(The) eggs are on the platform.’

-
- (i) a. ε-te-εn-ák-ì **ɔl-apúrròni**
 3-PRF-tie-PRF-PASS M.SG-thief.ACC
 ‘The thief was arrested.’
- b. ε-ibóŋ-á ɪ-s’íkarní **ɔl-apúrròni**
 3-catch-PRF PL-police.NOM M.SG-thief.ACC
 ‘The policemen have arrested the thief.’

(16) *Tennet* (Randal 1998: 236)

- a. *ányák mám cééz-a*
 have water house-OBL
 ‘There is water in the house.’
- b. *illóí mám cééz-a*
 absent water house-OBL
 ‘There’s no water in the house.’

The Nilo-Saharan data are summarized in Table 4.1. The data from Maa and Tennenet are split up between two lines for each of the two languages. For Maa, the first line represents the construction with *tii* ‘be at’, while the second line represents the construction with *ata* ‘have’. In Tennenet, the two lines represent the interspeaker variation regarding which construction to use for positive existentials. The table shows that all languages use nominative case for locational subjects. Most languages also make use of the nominative for existential subjects, but in this context more variation is found. A distinction in encoding between negative and positive existentials is only found in Turkana and with some Tennenet speakers. While in Turkana negative existentials receive Nominative case-marking, in Tennenet this context is zero-coded.

Table 4.1: Overview of the marking of existential and locational predication in the Nilo-Saharan languages

language	S exist. (+)	S exist.(-)	S loc. pred.
Datooga	NOM	NOM	NOM
Maa (<i>be at</i>)	NOM	-	NOM
Maa (<i>have</i>)	ACC	ACC	n.a.
Murle	NOM	-	NOM
Nandi	NOM	-	NOM
Tennenet (<i>variety 1</i>)	ACC	ACC	NOM
Tennenet (<i>variety 2</i>)	NOM	ACC	NOM
Turkana	ACC/NOM	NOM	NOM

4.5 Afro-Asiatic

For the Afro-Asiatic marked-S languages, very little information on existential and locational predications is given in the relevant grammars. Most of the data given in the following were gathered by extensively studying all examples provided throughout the grammars and trying to identify the ones with locational or existential meanings. The data that could be gathered on the relevant contexts did not reveal any remarkable patterns. Whether a grammar provided data on existentials, locationals or both types, the subject element always was marked with the S-case. A minor exception to this pattern was attested in Harar Oromo and will be discussed below. Also, no variation between negative and positive contexts could be identified in any Afro-Asiatic language, but then again, hardly any negative examples were found at all.

The only Afro-Asiatic language in which alternations in case-marking on the S argument of existential and locationals can be observed is the Harar dialect of Oromo. The subject of locational phrases is normally in Nominative case, especially when definite (17b). In some situations, the emphatic subject form is used (17c) and thus no Nominative case-marking occurs on the subject. The construction with the emphatic subject-marker appears to be limited to the existential reading, but this might just be a tendency parallel to the correlation between indefiniteness and existential reading observed by Clark (1978) and not an absolute selectional restriction. For negative contexts, no examples were found.

(17) *Oromo (Harar) (Eastern Cushitic; Ethiopia; Owens 1985: 101, 109)*

- a. *c'uf-tíi xéesá jir-an*
all-NOM in exist-PL
'All are inside.'
- b. *kitaab-níi miizá rrá jira*
book-NOM table on exist
'The book is on the table.'
- c. *miizá rrá kitaabáa-túu jira*
table on book-EMPH.SBJ exist
'There is a book on the table.'

In K'abeena (18), locationals as well as existentials mark the S argument in Nominative case. Also, there does not seem to be any alternation between positive and negative sentences – unless the non-accessible negative existentials reveal an alternative pattern. However, since the same verb is used for existential and

locational predications, even though *yoo* is sometimes glossed as ‘to exist’ and sometimes as ‘to be located’ by Crass (2005), negative existentials very likely employ the same pattern as negative locationals.

- (18) *K'abeena (Eastern Cushitic; Ethiopia; Crass 2005: 98, 115, 98)*

- a. *wiim^u 'abogodáa'nutⁱ yoo-sⁱ*
 many friends.NOM.PL exist.3-3SG.M.OBJ
 'He has got many friends,' lit.: 'Many friends are to him.'
 original translation: 'Er hat viele Freunde' lit.: 'Viele Freunde existieren [bei] ihm.'
- b. *máncu-s^e bokku yoo*
 man.NOM-DEF.M house.ACC be_located.3
 'The man is in the house.'
 original translation: 'Der Mann ist im Haus.'
- c. *wolk'itt'eenⁱ tees^u wuu yoo-ba*
 Wolkite.LOC now water.NOM exist.3-NEG
 'In Wolkite there is no water right now.'
 original translation: 'In Wolkite gibt es jetzt kein Wasser.'

In Arbore, only examples of the existential predication could be identified. The subject of this construction in the Nominative case as demonstrated in (19).⁵

- (19) *Arbore (Eastern Cushitic; Ethiopia; Hayward 1984: 132) ?iNgir-é ?a-y*
 louse-NOM PVS-3SG
gírta
 exist.3SG.F
 'There is a louse.'

For Boraana Oromo (20), Gamo (21), and Wolaytta (22), only locational examples could be extracted from the grammatical descriptions. The Nominative case is always used to encode the S argument.

- (20) *Oromo (Boraana) (Eastern Cushitic; Kenya; Owens 1982: 54) nàm-i*
 man-NOM
jànn-i dibi-in sùn arm jir
 brave-NOM other-NOM DEM here be
 'That other brave man is here.'

⁵ The Nominative form *?iNgiré* is distinct from the zero-coded form of the noun *?ingir*.

- The data are summarized in Table 4.2. There are a lot of missing data for the Afro-Asiatic languages on the contexts of existential and locational predications. Therefore, any tendencies described here have to be viewed as a preliminary result. The languages of this family encode existential as well as locational subjects in the nominative case. No differences between the encoding of subjects in positive and negative existential predications could be found in the Afro-Asiatic marked-S languages.

The marked-S languages of North America tend to have no dedicated constructions for encoding existential and locational predications. They usually employ stative verbs in these contexts. However, at least for the Yuman languages, the option not to use the S-case on subjects in existential contexts seems to exist, or even to be preferred or obligatory for some languages. This is generally the case if the S-case is an optional marker (cf. also Section 2.6). This tendency is in accordance with the claim by Payne (1997: 123) that existentials mark grammatical relations only to a limited degree.

Table 4.2: Overview on the marking of existential and locational predication in the Afro-Asiatic languages

language	S exist. (+)	S exist.(-)	S loc. pred.
Arbore	NOM	-	-
Gamo	-	-	NOM
K'abeena	NOM	NOM	NOM
Oromo (Boraana)	-	-	NOM
Oromo (Harar)	emphatic subject	-	NOM
Wolaytta	-	-	NOM
Zayse	NOM	-	NOM

Mojave has been shown in Section 4.3 to use the same type of construction for locational (24a) and existential predications (24b). In this construction, a number of stative verbs can occur, and the S argument is usually encoded with the Nominative case. Hence, these contexts can best be analyzed as being regular intransitive clauses. Negative existentials also exhibit this intransitive pattern with Nominative marking on the S argument (24c).

(24) *Mojave (Yuman; Arizona; Munro 1976: 21, 212, 70)*

- a. *pi:pa-č k^wəča:nava:-l^y uwa:-k*
 person-NOM Yuma-LOC be_in-TNS
 'There is someone in Yuma ...'
- b. *pi:pa n^yamaθa:m k^wəloyaw k^w-tapoy-h-n^y-č ?ava:-l^y iva-m*
 person tomorrow chicken REL-kill-IRR-DEM-NOM house-LOC sit-TNS
 'The man who's going to kill the chicken tomorrow is in the house.'
- c. *hatčəq havasu:-č kava:r-ta:han-e*
 dog blue-NOM not-very-AUGV
 'There are no blue dogs'

- In Jamul Tiipay S arguments of presentational clauses are always zero-coded (26a), whereas in locational contexts Nominative marking does occur (26b). In the closely-related language Diegueño⁶, S arguments of existential clauses are apparently also zero-coded (27a). Whether they also allow for encoding of the S argument in the Nominative like locational clauses (27b) is not clear, since unfortunately none of the materials on the language give information on this question.

- For Yavapai, all examples listed in the grammar are of an existential nature if one takes the English translation into account. Whether a locational reading

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is also possible cannot conclusively told from the information in the grammar. All S arguments are in the Nominative case. And finally, in Havasupai, only one example was found, which is existential according to the translation provided. In this example the S argument is in the Nominative case (29).

(28) *Yavapai (Yuman; Arizona; Kendall 1976: 28, 98)*

- a. *h^wat-c viya-k wi-o-m*
blood-NOM here-LOC have-APPL-FAFF
'There is blood here.'
- b. *cmyul ñ-wa:-c-c via ʔ-wa:-v-m pay-a yo:*
ant POSS-house-PL-NOM here 1-house-DEM-around all-TNS exist
'There are ant hills all around my house.'
- c. *cnapuk-c miyyul-l yu-m*
red_ant-NOM sugar-LOC be-FAFF
'There is an ant in the sugar.'

(29) *Havasupai (Yuman; Arizona; Kozłowski 1972: 61) pa-c-v hlah-l*
man-DEM-NOM moon-LOC
θa-l yu-k-yu
there-in be-IND-AUX
'There is a man in the moon.'

The Wappo data provide a mirror image of the Yavapai situation. The translations suggest an existential reading of the following examples. Possibly, examples such as (30c) can also be interpreted as locationals, depending on the previous discourse, but the grammar does not provide any information on this topic. One reason for this might be the lack of textual data due to the fact that, as Thompson et al. (2006) note in the introduction to their grammar, their informant (and last speaker of the language) did not enjoy working on narratives. Be that as it may, all the examples have Nominative S arguments, and no difference is made between positive (30a) and negative clauses (30b).

(30) *Wappo (Wappo-Yukian; California; Thompson et al. 2006: 105)*

- a. *pol'-i ōi:-khi?*
dirt-NOM exist-STAT
'There's a bucket of dirt.'
- b. *heta hut'-i la-khi?*
here coyote-NOM missing-STAT
'There aren't any coyotes here.'

- c. *c'ic'a-t-i hol-wil'uh le?a-hki?*
 bird-PL-NOM tree-on many-STAT
 'There are lots of birds on the tree.'

In Maidu the S argument of existential (31) and locational clauses (32) is marked with Nominative case.

- (31) *Maidu (Maiduan; California; Dixon 1912: 10) "ʔnuñ' ko'doi-di kan sede-m'*
 this word-LOC and blood-NOM
uma'pem," atsoi'a
 shall_exist say.PST.3SG
 ' "There shall be blood in the world", he said'
- (32) *Maidu (Shipley 1964: 58) ?adóm my-k'í pándak-am kykým ma-?ám*
 then DEM-GEN rifle-NOM PSTREM be-PT_PST.3
mymý-k kapóta-m k'anájdi
 he-GEN coat-NOM under
 'His rifle was there under his coat.'

A summary of the data is provided in Table 4.3. In Jamul Tiipay and Diegueño, existential subjects are in the zero-coded accusative. Both languages mark locational subjects with the Nominative. All other marked-S languages of this area appear to use the nominative case in locational as well as existential contexts. Although for many of the examples, the grammars give an existential translation, the same sentences can probably also be translated as locationals in a given contexts since they employ regular intransitive verbs such as 'sit/stand/lie', and in many cases a locational phrase is added. For none of the languages of this area was any variation found in the subject-marking of positive and negative existentials.

4.7 Pacific

The languages of the Pacific region, though there are only three of them with informative data in my sample, exhibit the most interesting patterns with regard to existential and locational predications. All languages have at least two different constructions to encode this domain of grammar. The semantic distinctions that individual constructions encode vary to quite an extent between the languages. Differences between negative and positive contexts are wide-spread in this

Table 4.3: Overview of the marking of existential and locational predication in the languages of North America

language	S exist. (+)	S exist.(-)	S loc. pred.
Diegueño (Mesa Grande)	ACC	-	NOM
Havasupai	NOM	-	NOM
Jamul Tiipay	ACC	-	NOM
Mojave	NOM	NOM	NOM
Yavapai	NOM	-	NOM
Maidu	NOM	-	NOM
Wappo	NOM	NOM	NOM

very limited selection of Austronesian and non-Austronesian languages of this region.

The distinction between positive and negative existentials in Nias has already been demonstrated in Section 4.3. Now I will discuss the data in more detail. In Nias, existential and locational predications use parallel constructions (possessive constructions use the same pattern as well). For both types of predication, there is one construction that is used for positive sentences (existence, location) and another one for negative ones (non-existence, absence). Positive existential/locational constructions are built with the verb *ga* which takes the Mutated form of the noun it predicates over (33). Negative existential/locational constructions contain the verb *lōna*⁷, which takes a noun in Unmutated form (34).

(33) *Nias (Sundic; Sumatra, Indonesia; Brown 2001: 344, 570)*

- a. *ga so göcoa*
 here exist cockroach.MUT
 ‘There’s a cockroach here.’
- b. *so nono-nia do-mbua*
 exist child.MUT-3SG.POSS two-CLF.MUT
 ‘She has two children.’

(34) *Nias (Brown 2001: 358, 575)*

⁷ *Lōna* is also the form of the standard verbal negator in Nias. When used as verbal negator, the case-marking is the same as it would be with the non-negated verb (Brown 2001: 471–475).

- a. *löna baʃi ba mbanu ha'a*
 exist.NEG pig LOC village.MUT PROX
 'There are no pigs in this village.'
- b. *löna ono-nia.*
 exist.NEG child-3SG.POSS
 'She doesn't have any children.'

Ajië is an Austronesian language from New Caledonia. It has two positive existential constructions, one positive locational construction, and one construction used for both negative existentials and locationals. First there is the 'unmarked' existential verb *wii/wi* (35a,(35b)). With this verb, the Nominative marker is optionally used (Lichtenberk 1978: 109).

(35) *Ajië (Oceanic; New Caledonia; Lichtenberk 1978: 102)*

- a. *na wii rha mʌʔu ka kani ə*
 3SG exist one yam REL grow good
 'There is a yam that grows good.'
- b. *wi tɔ-wɛ na pũ-ẽ?*
 exist be_where NOM trunk-3SG
 'Where is its trunk?'

Apart from this construction, there is the human existential verb *ta/tʌ*. The Nominative is always used to mark the subject with this verb (36a). In addition, there is a locational verb *tɔ* 'be at a place'. Most examples given of this verb do not have an overt subject nominal. Those that do have one mark it with the Nominative preposition *na* (36b). For the negative contexts, the same construction is used for existentials and locationals. For both non-human and human S arguments in negative existential/locational predications, it is not possible to be marked with the Nominative preposition, thus they are always zero-coded. Those sentences are constructed with the negative existential *yɛri* (37).

(36) *Ajië (Lichtenberk 1978: 110)*

- a. *na ta mā na bwe? yɛ kaunuae*
 3SG exist PSTREM NOM woman from K.
 'Long ago there was a woman from Kaunuae.'
- b. *gɛ yɛ ta tɔ-a na gɛi*
 2SG PROSP be be_there NOM you
 'You are going to stay over there.'

(37) *Ajië* (Lichtenberk 1978: 110)

- a. *na yeri kamo? rro-i*
3SG NEG.exist man in_there
'There was no-one there.'
- b. *na yeri mwane*
3SG NEG.exist money
'There is no money.'

Savosavo – the only non-Austronesian languages of the Pacific discussed in this chapter – has a large number of locational constructions. Only one of these constructions can have an existential interpretation. In this type of locational construction (a subtype of what Wegener (2008) calls 'predicate-subject locational') the predicate is marked by the focus emphatic =e, and the following S argument may (38a) or may not (38b) be marked with the Nominative clitic. Other than for positive existentials, which do not seem to have a dedicated construction, negative existentials are formed with the verb *baighoza* 'not exist'. The S argument is marked with the Nominative in this construction (38c).

(38) *Savosavo* (Solomons East Papuan; Solomon Islands; Wegener 2008: 209, 122)

- a. *apoi ata=e te lo keva=na* 'Because here (is) the
because here=EMPH EMPH DET.SG.M path=NOM
road.'
- b. *lo lo buringa=la=e edo kola=ga*
3SG.M 3SG.M.GEN back=LOC.M=EMPH two tree=PL
'At his back (are) two trees./ There are two trees at his back.'
- c. *lo mama mau lo-va nanaghiza=na te baighoza-i*
DET.SG.M mother father 3SG.M-GEN.M teaching=NOM EMPH notexist-FIN
'The teaching of the parents does not exist (any more)'

Locational contexts can be expressed with a number of different constructions in Savosavo. In addition to the 'predicate-subject locational with an emphatic predicate' (39a) already discussed above, there is also the 'predicate-subject locational with a particle subject enclitic' (39b) as well as the 'subject-predicate locational' construction (39c). The S argument of all these locational constructions is in the Nominative case. However, as noted above, zero-coding is possible for the 'predicate-subject locational' with an emphatic predicate.

(39) *Savosavo* (Wegener 2008: 92, 208, 209)

- a. *Apoi ata=e te lo keva=na*
 because here=EMPH EMPH DET.SG.M path=NOM
 ‘Because here (is) the road.’
- b. *ny-omata te=lo*
 1SG-at PART=3.SG.M.NOM
 ‘With me (is) it.’ lit.: ‘At me (is) it.’
- c. *lo-va sokasoka=na lo-va kata papale=la*
 3SG.M-GEN.M brush=NOM 3SG.M-GEN.M bushwards side=LOC.M
 ‘His brush is at his bushwards side.’

The data from the marked-S languages of the Pacific area are summarized in Table 4.4. Subjects of locational sentences are predominantly coded by the overt S-case (Nominative in Savosavo and Ajië, Absolutive in Nias), but in one of the Savosavo locational constructions they can also be zero-coded.⁸ All languages of this region have – at least optionally – variation between negative and positive existential contexts. While this variation is always found in Nias, Ajië and Savosavo have two coding options for positive existentials – overt nominative case or zero-coding – but only one in negative contexts. Ajië negative existentials are always zero-coded, Savosavo on the other hand codes negative existentials with Nominative case.

Table 4.4: Overview of the marking of existential and locational predication in the marked-S languages of the Pacific

language	S exist. (+)	S exist.(-)	S loc. pred.
Ajië	NOM/ACC	ACC	NOM
Nias	ABS	ERG	ABS
Savosavo	NOM/ACC	NOM	NOM/(ACC)

4.8 Summary

The encoding of subjects in positive and negative existential predications as well as locational predications is summarized in Table 4.5. In locational predications,

⁸ Remember that for the locationals only the positive context is included here, since no language has a variation between negative and positive locationals but not with existentials. Thus the Nias negative locational construction is not represented in the table.

all languages allow for the marking of subjects with the overt S-case. In most languages, this is the only pattern available for this role. Languages that show variation in the encoding of existentials (either between positive or negative contexts, or simply have multiple coding options) may also exhibit the same variation in locationals (e.g. Nias and Savosavo). With existentials in a number of languages encoding the subject in the zero-case is at least one of the options. This is, for example, the case for North American Jamul Tiipay and Diegueño, Nilo-Saharan Tennet and Turkana and all three Pacific languages. Variation in subject-marking between positive and negative existentials can be found in a small number of languages (for example Nias and Turkana). However, there is no clear directionality in the distribution of overt versus zero-coding between positive and negative contexts. Ajië, Nias, and Tennet use the zero-coded form in the negative contexts, while the positive contexts have overtly coded case-forms (at least as an option). In Turkana and Savosavo, overt marking is used in the negative context, while positive existentials can have zero-coded subjects. Since zero-coding of subjects is more commonly found with existentials than with locationals, the data to some extent support the claim that existentials exhibit a limited degree of grammatical relation marking (Payne 1997: 123).

Table 4.5: Overview of the marking of existential and locational predication

language	S exist. (+)	S exist.(-)	S loc. pred.
Ajië	NOM/ACC	ACC	NOM
Arbore	NOM	-	-
Datooga	NOM	NOM	NOM
Diegueno	ACC	-	NOM
Gamo	-	-	NOM
Havasupai	NOM	-	NOM
Jamul Tiipay	ACC	-	NOM
K'abeena	NOM	NOM	NOM
Maa	NOM/ACC	ACC	NOM
Maidu	NOM	-	NOM
Mojave	NOM	NOM	NOM
Murle	NOM	-	NOM
Nandi	NOM	-	NOM
Nias	ABS	ERG	ABS
Oromo (Boraana)	-	-	NOM
Oromo (Harar)	emphatic subject	-	NOM
Savosavo	NOM/ACC	NOM	NOM/ACC
Tennet	NOM/ACC	ACC	NOM
Turkana	NOM/ACC	NOM?	NOM
Wappo	NOM	NOM	NOM
Wolaytta	-	-	NOM
Yavapai	NOM	-	NOM
Zayse	NOM	-	NOM

Part III

Analysis of the data

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