What Does It Mean for an Indefinite to Be Presuppositional?[*]

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Abstract. The paper is concerned with the nature of the presuppositionality involved in "strong" (or presuppositional) indefinite noun phrases in general, and Turkish accusative marked indefinites in particular. It investigates the semantics of Turkish accusative indefinites with regard to the categories of existential import, contextual restrictedness (or D-linking) and semantic scope, within the DRT-based Binding Theory of presupposition justification. It argues that neither contextual restrictedness nor scope properties alone can account for the semantics of Turkish Acc-indefinites. It further argues that existential import, modeled as anaphoricity encoded in the semantics of Acc-indefinites, is fundamental to "strong" indefiniteness in Turkish and can be construed as the source of both contextual restrictedness and wide scope behavior.

1 Introduction

Following the development of Discourse Representation Theories (aka. dynamic semantics) of Kamp (1984) and Heim (1982), it has become almost standard to treat indefinite noun phrases (indefinites for short) as linguistic devices that introduce new referents into the discourse model, replacing their classical Russellian analysis as existential quantifiers. According to the dynamic model, two basic characteristics of an indefinite noun phrase are that its associated referent is novel in the discourse, and the meaning of the indefinite does not involve any presuppositions. These two aspects are usually taken to be the crucial difference between indefinites and definites.

This fundamental model of indefiniteness has been further developed in various ways in the face of the fact that in many languages noun phrases appearing at certain positions or bearing certain marked forms, while behaving like ordinary indefinites in introducing new referents, encode certain relations to their sentential and extra-sentential context.

For an instance, Diesing (1992) argues that indefinites come in two varieties as presuppositional and non-presuppositional, where the type of an indefinite is decided on the basis of its syntactic position. One such position is the subject slot of an "individual-level" predicate. Indefinites appearing at that position are argued to carry an existence

presupposition (or existential import). In the following example from von Fintel (1998), the oddness of continuation (1b) is explained as the failure of the existence presupposition triggered by the subject of the "individual-level" predicate *are major*. The failure is due to the ignorance of the speaker regarding the existence of mistakes, which she declares in the opening section of the discourse.

(1)   I'm not sure yet whether there are any mistakes at all in this book manuscript, but we can definitely not publish it...

    a.   if some mistakes are found.

    b.   #if some mistakes are major.

For another presuppositionality claim regarding indefinites, Enç (1991) claims that in certain languages, at certain positions indefinites are explicitly marked as Discourse-linked (or D-linked for short).[1] Turkish is one language that employs an overt morphological marker to indicate the category of D-linking. Enç (1991) claims that indefinite noun phrases at the immediately preverbal position are bound to get interpreted as connected to the previous discourse when they carry the accusative marker (henceforth Acc). For instance while (2a), which has no overt case marking on the direct object (henceforth ∅) can be a perfectly natural discourse opener, (2b), which differs from the former only in the Acc-marker on the direct object, is not interpretable unless the hearer accommodates the speaker by inserting a familiar set of books or things to his/her discourse model; a typical effect for presuppositional expressions uttered in contexts that are insufficient to justify those presuppositions.

(2)   a.   Dün   gece bir kitap okudum.
            yesterday night a   book read.1sg
            'Last night I read a book.'

     b.   Dün   gece bir kitab-ı   okudum.
            yesterday night a   book-Acc read.1sg
            'Last night I read one of the books.'
            'Last night I read a book.' (picked from a familiar set of items)

The literature is not conclusive on the relation between the notions of existential import (or presuppositionality) and D-linking.[2] In this regard it is important to get clear about the nature of presuppositionality involved in Turkish Acc-indefinites, which could provide answers to questions like: Is D-linking the same concept as existential import? If not, which one is fundamental to the behaviour of "strong" indefinites? Is there an empirical basis for D-linking in Turkish?

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[1] The term Enç 1991 uses for her semantic category is "specificity". However, she explicitly identifies this notion with what Pesetsky (1987) calls Discourse-linking. I prefer to use the second term (and "contextual restrictedness" in the later parts) to guard ourselves from the confusion surrounding the term "specificity" as much as possible.

[2] Diesing 1992 entertains the possibility that they are the same concept, while van Geenhoven 1998 holds them distinct. Enç 1991 claims that her notion of "specificity" (D-linking) is what underlies Milsark's 1977 "strong"/"weak" distinction, which is the point of departure for Diesing 1992.

In the aim of shedding some light on these issues, the paper investigates the semantics of Turkish Acc-indefinites with regard to the categories of existential import, D-linking (or, later, contextual restrictedness) and semantic scope. In this investigation I adopt the DRT-based Binding Theory of presupposition justification (Geurts 1999; van der Sandt 1992) as the formal framework. I start in Section 2 with a closer look at D-linking as it is formalized by Enç (1991). In Section 3 I introduce the Binding Theory. In Section 4 I address the question whether D-linking and existential import are distinct, and if they are, which one is fundamental for Turkish Acc-indefinites. There I argue that Enç's (1991) proposal is not adequate in capturing the Turkish facts, and existential import is more fundamental than D-linking to the semantics of Turkish Acc-indefinites. In Section 5 I discuss and object to some potential and actual arguments in defense of Enç 1991, which give semantic scope a fundamental role in the semantics of "strong" indefiniteness. In Section 6 I present a proposal, and discuss how it handles the data left uncovered by D-linking and scope based proposals. Finally I conclude in Section 7.

2   Acc-Marking and D-Linking

Enç (1991) claims that there is a bidirectional implication between Acc-marking and D-linking. The notion of D-linking is best illustrated by an example from Enç (1991).

(3)   Odam-a   birkaç çocuk girdi.
        my-room-dat several child   entered
        'Several children entered my room.'

(4)   a.   İki kız-ı   tanıyordum.
              two girl-Acc knew.1sg
              'I knew two girls [among the children].'   (D-linked)
        b.   İki kız tanıyordum.
              two girl knew.1sg
              'I knew two girls.'   (non-D-linked)

Enç (1991) observes that in (4a) the girls are necessarily understood as belonging to the set of children mentioned in (3),[3] while those in (4b) necessarily introduce referents from a domain disjoint with the one in (3).

Enç (1991) adopts a dynamic framework, where the primary function of nominal expressions is to introduce discourse referents (modeled as variables) into the discourse

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[3] Enç 1991 alludes to the notion "partitivity" in characterizing her notion of "specificity". It is crucial to note here that the Acc-indefinite in (4a) is not interchangeable with an explicit partitive like *kızlardan ikisini* ('two of the girls') (cf. Enç 1991:6). First, the explicit partitive implies that there are more than two girls in the group, while no such implication is present for the indefinite form. Second, the acceptability of the example as a continuation to (3) significantly degrades, presumably because the presupposition involved with the explicit partitive is much harder to accommodate than the one involved with the Acc-indefinite. This is the reason why the example should not be translated as *I knew two of the girls*. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for pointing out the need for clarification at this point.

model. In Enç's (1991) treatment every NP introduces two variables (instead of the customary one). Both of these variables can be either indefinite or definite. The first variable (x_i in 5) stands for the referent of the NP, while the second variable (x_j in 5) stands for the superset this variable is required to be a subset or an element of, depending on whether the NP in question is plural or singular.

(5)   Every $[_{NP} \ \alpha]_{\langle i,j \rangle}$ is interpreted as $\alpha(x_i)$ and
   $x_i \subseteq x_j$ if $NP_{\langle i,j \rangle}$ is plural;
   $\{x_i\} \subseteq x_j$ if $NP_{\langle i,j \rangle}$ is singular.

Ordinary definite descriptions are definite in their first variable, meaning that their referent must be given in the prior discourse. Non-D-linked indefinites are indefinite in both variables, meaning that both their referents and the supersets they come from are new to the discourse. D-linked indefinites are those which are indefinite in the first variable, but definite in the second. They introduce novel referents into the discourse model, but the superset from which this novel referent is picked from has to be given in the discourse model.

Enç (1991) extends her treatment to direct objects headed by "strong" quantifiers like *every* and *most*, which obligatorily receive Acc-marking in Turkish. Thereby, D-linking is offered as a unified concept underlying the "strong"/"weak" distinction.

In Section 4 I will have a closer look at Enç's (1991) proposal. Before that I introduce the formalism used in the rest of the paper.

3 Presuppositionality as Anaphoricity

Definite descriptions like *the errors*, together with other "strong" NPs, are usually argued to carry, among possibly others, the presupposition that their domain is not empty. One way to model this is to explicitly define a definedness relation between expressions and contexts, which says that a definite description *the N* is defined (i.e. has a semantic value) in a context c only if c entails that there is exactly one individual that satisfies N.
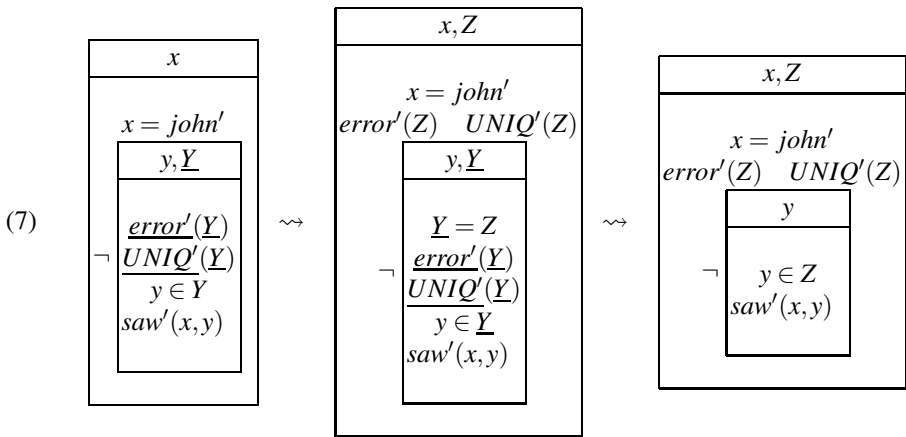
The DRT-based Binding Theory of presuppositions (Geurts 1999; van der Sandt 1992) offers an alternative way to think about presuppositionality.[4] The basic idea behind the Binding Theory is "presuppositionality as anaphoricity". Geurts (2007:253) explains how this idea can be applied to existence presuppositions triggered by "strong" NPs in the following quote: "A strong quantifier does not merely presuppose that its domain is non-empty; rather, the purpose of its presupposition is to *recover* a suitable domain from the context."

In the rest of the paper I use a simplified version of the Binding Theory. Here is an example of how a sentence involving a presupposition trigger is handled within Binding Theory.[5]

(6)   John saw none of the errors (in the article).

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[4] The present Binding Theory is totally distinct from the module of the Government Binding Theory with the same name.

[5] For space concerns I assume basic familiarity with DRT.

(7)

$$
\begin{array}{c}
\boxed{\begin{array}{c}
\underline{\quad x \quad} \\[4pt]
x = john' \\
\boxed{\begin{array}{c}
\underline{\quad y,\underline{Y} \quad} \\[4pt]
\underline{error'(\underline{Y})} \\
\underline{UNIQ'(\underline{Y})} \\
\overline{y \in \underline{Y}} \\
saw'(x,y)
\end{array}}
\end{array}}
\ \rightsquigarrow\
\boxed{\begin{array}{c}
\underline{\quad x,Z \quad} \\[4pt]
x = john' \\
error'(Z) \quad UNIQ'(Z) \\
\neg\boxed{\begin{array}{c}
\underline{\quad y,\underline{Y} \quad} \\[4pt]
\underline{Y} = Z \\
\underline{error'(\underline{Y})} \\
\underline{UNIQ'(\underline{Y})} \\
\overline{y \in \underline{Y}} \\
saw'(x,y)
\end{array}}
\end{array}}
\ \rightsquigarrow\
\boxed{\begin{array}{c}
\underline{\quad x,Z \quad} \\[4pt]
x = john' \\
error'(Z) \quad UNIQ'(Z) \\
\neg\boxed{\begin{array}{c}
\underline{\quad y \quad} \\[4pt]
y \in Z \\
saw'(x,y)
\end{array}}
\end{array}}
$$

The first step of (7) consists of building a preliminary representation from (6).[6] The crucial point here is how the presupposition triggered by the definite description *the errors* is represented. The presuppositional content of the definite description is added to the same discourse representation structure (DRS) together with its assertive content (i.e. the negated box in the left most representation in 7). The presuppositional content is notationally distinguished from the assertive content by underlining. The meaning of this convention is that underlined discourse referents and conditions should get bound by antecedents in the same or a higher and accessible DRS in order for the whole representation to be interpretable. The predicate constant '$UNIQ'$' stands for "unique identifiability", which I employ as a placeholder for a more thorough formulation of definiteness.[7] What all this mechanism amounts to say is that for the representation constructed on the basis of lexical content and compositional derivation of (6) to be interpretable, the hearer needs to find a uniquely identifiable set of errors in the discourse model. Now I turn to what happens after this preliminary representation is constructed.

Two things happen in the second step of (7). One, given that (6) is a discourse opener, and hence there were no suitable antecedent for Y and its associated conditions to get bound to, an antecedent is accommodated into the main DRS.[8] In other words, the hearer acts as if there were a uniquely identifiable set of errors in the discourse context to which (6) is contributed. It is crucial at this point to note that, as a general principle, presuppositions tend to get accommodated at the highest possible position (aka "global accommodation"), especially in the absence of contextual factors that force "non-global accommodation" (see below and Geurts 1999 for more on this). Two, Y is bound to the accommodated antecedent Z by an equivative condition.

Finally, in the third step we get rid of underlined referents and conditions and arrive at the final (and interpretable) representation. The resulting representation is verified in

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[6] Notational conventions: Primes ('$'$') distinguish constants from variables. Upper case variables 'X, Y, Z' stand for sets, lower ones stand for atomic individuals. I assume that same predicate can apply both to atomic and set arguments.

[7] There also needs to be a plurality constraint, which I gloss over for simplicity.

[8] The communication fails if such an accommodation is not possible for some reason.

contexts where there is an individual John and a (uniquely identifiable) set of errors, and it is not the case that there is at least one error from this set such that John saw it.

4   Presuppositionality of Acc-Indefinites

Having seen how the Binding Theory works, now it can be used to clarify the nature of the presuppositionality involved in Turkish Acc-indefinites. An obvious way to reconstruct Enç's (1991) formulation of D-linking given in (5) above is to make the contextual restriction requirement a presupposition triggered by the Acc-marker. To illustrate, let us return to her example:[9]

(8)   Odam-a   birkaç çocuk girdi.
      my-room-dat several child   entered
      'Several children entered my room.'

(9)   a.   Bir kız-ı   tanıyordum.
           a   girl-Acc knew.1sg
           'I knew a/one girl.'   (Acc-marked: D-linked)

      b.   Bir kız tanıyordum.
           a   girl knew.1sg
           'I knew a girl.'   (∅-marked: non-D-linked)

The discourse opener (8) gets the following simple DRS:

(10)

X
$child'(X)$ $entered'(X)$

The representation for (9a), which has an Acc-marked indefinite object, is as follows:

(11)

$x, y, \underline{Z}$
$x = spkr'$ $girl'(y)$ $y \in \underline{Z}$ $\underline{UNIQ'(Z)}$ $know'(x, y)$

Here the definiteness requirement Enç (1991) puts on the superset variable of D-linked indefinites is modeled by making the superset variable Z presuppositional by underlining it, and introducing the unique identifiability requirement. (11) states that the girl in question must be part of a contextually given set. When the representation in (11) is added to the established discourse given in (10), one gets:

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[9] The example is slightly altered by switching to a singular indefinite in order not to deal with plurality. I will continue to use singular indefinites in the rest of the paper. To the best of my judgment, nothing important hinges on this alteration.

(12)

$$\begin{array}{|c|}\hline X,x,y,\underline{Z} \\ \hline \textit{child}'(X) \quad \textit{entered}'(X) \\ x = \textit{spkr}' \quad \textit{girl}'(y) \quad y \in \underline{Z} \quad \underline{UNIQ}'(\underline{Z}) \quad \textit{know}'(x,y) \\ \hline \end{array}$$

The obvious justification of the presupposition triggered by the Acc-marker is to bind Z to the set of children introduced before. This gives us the final representation below.[10]

(13)

$$\begin{array}{|c|}\hline X,x,y \\ \hline \textit{child}'(X) \quad \textit{entered}'(X) \\ x = \textit{spkr}' \quad \textit{girl}'(y) \quad y \in X \quad \textit{know}'(x,y) \\ \hline \end{array}$$

In the derivation for the ∅-marked version (9b) the superset variable Z in (11) would be novel. Enç (1991:note 11) suggests that for non-D-linked indefinites the superset is simply identified with the restrictor predicate of the head noun of the NP. This means that anything related to the superset would simply get eliminated resulting in the following.

(14)

$$\begin{array}{|c|}\hline X,x,y \\ \hline \textit{child}'(X) \quad \textit{entered}'(X) \\ x = \textit{spkr}' \quad \textit{girl}'(y) \quad \textit{know}'(x,y) \\ \hline \end{array}$$

As far as I can see, my reconstruction of Enç's (1991) proposal in DRT terms does full justice to its original, apart from dealing with plurality.

Now I will argue that Enç's (1991) formulation is not fully adequate in capturing certain empirical facts. In this argument I make use of the behavior of Acc-indefinites under negation. Let us start by considering the negated version of (9a).

(15)   Odam-a   birkaç çocuk girdi.
       my-room-dat several child entered
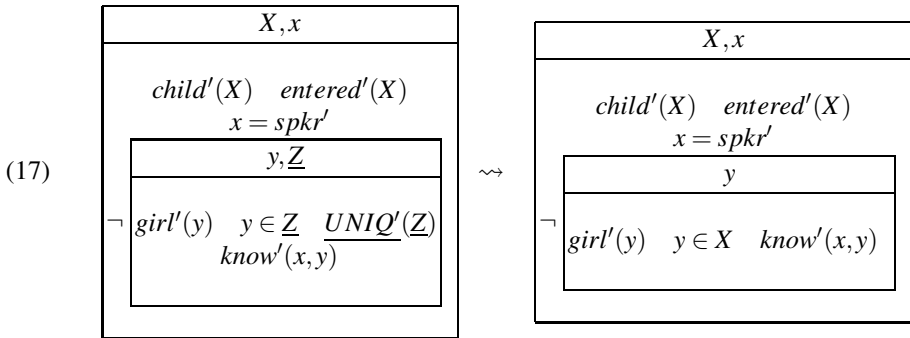   'Several children entered my room.'

(16)   a.   Bir kız-ı   tanımıyordum.
            a   girl-Acc knew-Neg.1sg
            'I didn't know a girl. (=There was a girl [among them] I didn't know.)'

       b.   Bir kız tanımıyordum.
            a   girl knew-Neg.1sg
            'I didn't know any girl.'   (non-D-linked)

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[10] Note that the unique identifiability of the set of children is assumed and left implicit in the DRSs.

The representation of the Acc-marked (16a) is given in two steps, where the presuppositional superset is again bound by the children introduced in the opening sentence (15):

(17)

$$\neg \begin{array}{|c|}
\hline
X,x \\
\hline
\begin{array}{c}
child'(X) \quad entered'(X) \\
x = spkr' \\
\hline
\begin{array}{|c|}
\hline
y, \underline{Z} \\
\hline
girl'(y) \quad y \in \underline{Z} \quad UNIQ'(\underline{Z}) \\
know'(x,y) \\
\hline
\end{array}
\end{array} \\
\hline
\end{array} \rightsquigarrow \begin{array}{|c|}
\hline
X,x \\
\hline
\begin{array}{c}
child'(X) \quad entered'(X) \\
x = spkr' \\
\hline
\begin{array}{|c|}
\hline
y \\
\hline
girl'(y) \quad y \in X \quad know'(x,y) \\
\hline
\end{array}
\end{array} \\
\hline
\end{array}$$

Informally, the end result of (17) reads:

(18)   There is no individual known by the speaker such that she is a girl and she is one of the children who entered the room of the speaker.

The crucial observation is that this interpretation is verified in a context where there are no girls among the children who entered the room. However the most immediately available interpretation of (16a) is:

(19)   There is a girl among the children who entered the room such that the speaker doesn't know her.

More strongly, to the best of my and my informants' judgement, there is no interpretation of (16a) such that a speaker can use this sentence without committing to the existence of girls among the children. Therefore (18), which is predicted by Enç's (1991) formulation, cannot be among the interpretations of (16a).[11]

I argue that the inadequacy of Enç's (1991) model lies in its ignoring the existential import as a presuppositional component of Acc-indefinites, while concentrating solely

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[11] One might attribute the unavailability of (18) as an interpretation of (16a) due to pragmatic reasons, along the following lines. In the general case, the absence or presence of girls among a bunch of children is a visually decidable matter. By this token it is reasonable to assume that the speaker of (16a) knows whether there are girls in the group. Then one continues to reason as follows: If someone wants to claim (18) on the basis of the proposition *There are no girls in the group*, then she is expected to assert this stronger proposition rather than the weaker (18). Therefore, one might argue, we infer that the speaker knows (or sees) that there are girls in the group, and this inference is the source of the existential import. However this pragmatic explanation cannot be valid: My argument can be replicated by changing the example by replacing *children* and *girls* respectively with *academicians* and *professors*, where visual identifiability is presumably not at issue. Still, the sentence *Bir profesörü tanımıyordum.* ("I didn't know a professor."), which has an accusative marker on the object, cannot get the type of interpretation given in (18), because again the speaker commits herself to the existence of professors among the academicians.

on the contextual restrictedness requirement.[12] If the semantics of the Acc-marker were that of contextual restriction, then there would be no reason why (18) cannot be expressed with (16a).[13]

Before giving the present proposal in Section 6, I look in some detail at some arguments that might be put in defense of Enç's (1991) modelling of Acc-indefinites.

5   Acc-Indefinites and Scope

It might be argued that the most prominent reading of (16a) given in (19), which cannot be captured by (my reconstruction of) Enç's (1991) proposal, is a so called "specific" or "existential taking scope over negation" reading. In this case the existence of at least one girl among the students would be an assertion rather than a presupposition of (16a). If one could add an independent mechanism that forces the Acc-indefinite to take a wider scope than negation, then one could defend Enç's (1991) proposal. I look at two forms such an argument can take.

Argument 1. The Acc-marker has a scopal semantics which forces its host NP to raise in some level of logical form.[14] This mechanism gives the Acc-marked indefinite in (16a) wide scope over negation, thereby resulting in an assertion of existence.

Objection. Acc-marked indefinites do not necessarily take wide-scope over commanding operators (see Enç 1991 and Özge 2011 on the interaction of Acc-indefinites with various intensional and nominal operators).[15] The possibility of narrow scope Acc-indefinites does not in itself refute the general argument from scope, however. There may be other mechanisms at work that force Acc-indefinites to take wide scope in certain occasions. Now I turn to an argument alluding to such a mechanism.

Argument 2. It is common for marked (or "strong") indefinites to tend to take wide scope with respect to commanding operators (see Farkas 2002 for a review).

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[12] See Kelepir 2001 for an earlier claim that the essential interpretative aspect of Acc-marking is the presupposition that the domain of the indefinite is not empty. Her claim is backed by the observation that in the object position of referentially opaque verbs Acc-marked indefinites get a referential reading without being D-linked (or partitive). Therefore, she concludes, D-linking cannot be the underlying semantics of Acc-marking.

[13] It should also be noted that (18) is not available with (16b) either, which has the following interpretation:

(i)   The speaker does not know any girl (whomsoever).

If (18) were available with the ∅-marked (16b) then it would have been possible to make an argument from Gricean inference to the effect that the existence committing reading (19) is a by-product of using the marked (Acc) form, in a situation where the unmarked (∅) form could have been used as well. We will have more on this below.

[14] See Aygen-Tosun 1999 for such a proposal on Acc-marked indefinites in Turkish; and Farkas 2002 for various cross-linguistic examples of scopal semantics of special indefinites.

[15] This may not be so obvious for example (16a) in particular, and negation in general, due to certain contextual factors that interact with negation. Below we will see that once these contextual factors are adjusted, the so called "specific" or wide-scope reading in (19) is not the only reading one could get.

Furthermore, it is also common, and true for Turkish, that unmarked forms are obligatorily narrow scope. Given these facts, Enç (1991:23) suggests that a Gricean inferential mechanism might be responsible for giving Acc-marked indefinites wider scope than commanding operators. As far as I can see, Enç's (1991) Gricean argument hinges on flouting the maxim of quantity and can be stated as follows:
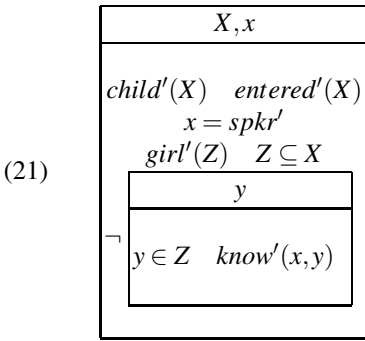
(20)   If the speaker wants to convey a narrow-scope reading, it is enough that he uses the unmarked ∅-form. But he uses the stronger (more informative) Acc-marked form, therefore he either flouts the maxim of quantity by saying more than needed, or his aim is not to convey a narrow scope reading. Since I assume the speaker is a cooperative one, I go for the second possibility.

Therefore, the argument would go, it is this wide scope implicature, rather than the presuppositional properties of the Acc-marked indefinite, that is the source of existential import.

Objection. In order for the argument in (20) to go through two conditions need to be met: (i) The Acc-marking should not be already motivated by something other than scope; (ii) The Acc-marked form should indeed be stronger (more informative) than the ∅-marked form. Remember from note 13 that (16b) is interpreted as claiming that the speaker does not know any girl whomsoever. It crucially lacks an interpretation which states that the speaker does not know any girl from among the given set of children. This corroborates Enç's (1991) intuition that the ∅-marked indefinites are context independent, giving the classical narrow reading of so called "non-specific" indefinites. This also shows that the first necessary condition of a Gricean inference is not met in our example, since the Acc-marker is motivated to "link" the girl to the given set of children.[16] The second requirement is violated as well. Thanks to the downward entailing context of (16a), the Acc-marked version, which the argument in (20) requires to be stronger than the ∅-marked version, is indeed weaker than it: If I do not know any girls, then I do not know a girl among the children who entered my room; but even if I do not know a girl among the children who entered my room, it may still be the case that I know some other girls. I conclude that the Gricean inference argument in (20) does not go through. Therefore we still lack an explanation regarding the source of the existential import of (16a).

I have another objection directed towards the argument from scope in general. This objection is based on the independence of existential import from wide-scope. In note 15 above, I claimed that the so called "specific" reading (19) is not the only reading one can get from (16a). I claim that there is also the reading represented as (21), which says that the speaker does not know any of the girls among the given set of children. I argue that this reading is inhibited in the context of (8) due to pragmatic concerns. Specifically, in order for (21) to be available, the context should attribute a "significance" to the state of affairs represented in (21); and (8) does not meet this requirement.

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[16] Enç (1991) herself states that her Gricean argument works only for out-of-the-blue Acc-marked indefinites, where, she argues, this linking function does not apply.

$$
\boxed{
\begin{array}{c}
\hline
X, x \\
\hline
child'(X) \quad entered'(X) \\
x = spkr' \\
girl'(Z) \quad Z \subseteq X \\
\boxed{
\begin{array}{c}
\hline
y \\
\hline
\end{array}
}
\\
\neg \quad \boxed{y \in Z \quad know'(x,y)}
\end{array}
}
$$

(21)

Now I will provide a context where the type of reading depicted in (21) is available.[17] Assume a camping context where there is a given set of campers. The individual John took an excursion. On his return he told about some dangers he faced with, and how hard it was for him to be able to get back to the camp. Someone utters the following:[18]

(22) Neyse ki   John giderken   yanına   bir çocuğ-u   almamış.
      fortunately J.   while going with-him a   child-Acc take-Neg-Past.4sg
      'Fortunately, John hasn't taken a child with him to the excursion.'

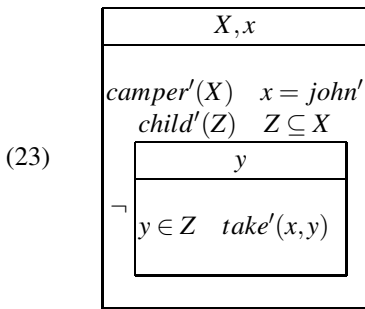which can naturally get the following interpretation, ignoring the contribution of *fortunately*.[19]

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[17] The reading in (21) is readily available with a free-choice determiner *herhangi bir* ('any') or the negative polarity item *hiç bir* ('lit. 'none a'') as the determiner and with an accusative marker on the indefinite:

(i) a. Hiç bir kız-ı   tanımıyordum.
         none a   girl-**Acc** knew-Neg.1sg
         'I knew none of the girls.'   (D-linked)

     b. Hiç   bir kız tanımıyordum.
         none a   girl knew-Neg.1sg
         'I didn't know any girls (whomsoever).'   (non-D-linked)

As the glosses make clear, the function of the Acc-marker cannot be reduced to a scope difference, as in both variants the indefinite takes scope under negation.

[18] It should be noted that (22) is not the most natural way to put the meaning represented in (23). The explicit partitive *çocuklardan birini* ("one of the children") would be more natural. I nevertheless think that (22) is an acceptable Turkish sentence which gives the meaning contrast I build the argument over. In any case, the scope versus existential import distinction is empirically quite reliable for free choice and negative polarity items of note 17.

[19] The reason why I think we do not need to pay attention to the contribution of *fortunately* is that whatever analysis one adopts for this (presumably focus sensitive) operator, one needs to "feed" it with a representation like (23), with a focus marking on the "most interesting" constituent *çocuğ-u* ('child-Acc'). Under the assumption of compositionality, this means that one should have the representation in (23) *at some point* in the computation of the meaning of (22).

(23)

$$
\boxed{
\begin{array}{l}
\underline{X, x} \\[4pt]
\begin{array}{ll}
camper'(X) & x = john' \\
child'(Z) & Z \subseteq X
\end{array} \\[4pt]
\neg \;
\boxed{
\begin{array}{c}
\underline{y} \\[2pt]
y \in Z \quad take'(x, y)
\end{array}
}
\end{array}
}
$$

It is important to observe that (22) is not an "emphatic denial". We have the following reasons behind this judgment. One, it is not necessary that John took some non-child individual with him—he may well have gone alone; or it is likewise not necessary that whether John should take a child with him or not be a question under discussion previously. Two, the example passes the test of "*why*-question contextualization" proposed in Szabolcsi 2004: For instance, (22) might be a response to the question *Why do you feel so relieved?*, asked when John is reported to be currently on a dangerous excursion. Such type of contextualization is not available for "emphatic denials".

The most relevant point concerning (22) is its triggering the inference that there were children among the campers. The speaker could not be talking about any child, which would be possible without the accusative marking on the indefinite. She necessarily commits to the existence of children among the campers. This in turn shows that her utterance carries the existential import associated with the indefinite *bir çocuğ-u* ('a child-Acc') without giving the indefinite a wider scope than negation. I think this is a clear illustration of why existential import should be kept distinct from scope.

Let us sum up what we had so far. We translated Enç's (1991) proposal for Turkish Acc-marked indefinites (and similar constructions in other languages) into a DRT-based Binding Theory of presupposition justification. Then, with the aid of negation, we showed that Enç's (1991) model is too weak to capture the relevant empirical facts. Specifically, her model fails to account for existential import while concentrating on contextual restrictedness. Next, we considered some potential arguments that can be put in defense of Enç (1991). These arguments proposed that the source of the effects of the Acc-marker under negation might be due to scope properties of the marker rather than any presupposition triggered by it. I provided various objections to these arguments, and established that existential import should be kept distinct from scope as well. The upshot of the discussion so far is that existential import should be kept apart from both contextual restriction/dependence and semantic scope; its effects cannot be reduced to either of them. In the next section I will propose a model that aims to do justice to these observations.

6 A Proposal

I claim that the basic distinction between an Acc-marked indefinite and a ∅-marked one is that the restrictor of the former is an anaphoric expression where the restrictor

of the latter is an ordinary predicate. In an Acc-indefinite like *bir çocuğu* ('a child-Acc'), there is an anaphoric component that is slightly different from an ordinary plural pronoun like *they*. The difference is that while *they* does not have any lexical content apart from plurality, the anaphoric component of the Acc-indefinite *bir çocuğu* ('a child-Acc') "seeks" an antecedent that satisfies the predicate *child'*. To illustrate let us revisit (9a) considered again in the context of (8). The discourse opener (8) has the same interpretation as above:

(24)

X
$child'(X)$ $entered'(X)$

(9a) gets the following preliminary representation under the present proposal:

(25)

$x, y, \underline{Z}$
$x = spkr'$ $\underline{girl'(Z)}$ $y \in \underline{Z}$ $\underline{UNIQ'(Z)}$ $know'(x, y)$

Merging these two representations gives the following:

(26)

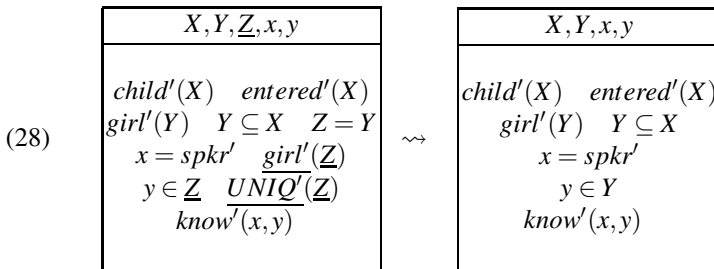| $X, \underline{Z}, x, y$ |
|---|
| $child'(X)$ $entered'(X)$ |
| $x = spkr'$ $\underline{girl'(Z)}$ $y \in \underline{Z}$ $\underline{UNIQ'(Z)}$ $know'(x, y)$ |

In order to arrive at an interpretable representation from here we need to resolve the underlined anaphora, either by binding them to some elements already present in the discourse model, or we need to first adjust our model by introducing some suitable referents, and then bind our anaphora to these accommodated referents. The first option is not available. Binding Z to the given set of children X is no more an option, thanks to the anaphoric condition '$girl'(Z)$'. What is left as an option is to accommodate a set of girls (Y below). This computation is depicted as follows:

(27)

$X, Y, \underline{Z}, x, y$
$child'(X)$ $entered'(X)$
$girl'(Y)$
$x = spkr'$ $\underline{girl'(Z)}$ $y \in \underline{Z}$ $\underline{UNIQ'(Z)}$ $know'(x, y)$

At this point performing the binding $Y = Z$ still cannot give a fully satisfactory representation. What is missing is the information that the accommodated girls belong among the children. One option here is to introduce a contextual restriction predicate into the semantics of the Acc-indefinite which needs to get bound in the discourse context. For the sake of homogeneity of the representation we can model this as a set, and add an extra condition that our anaphoric restrictor is a subset of this contextual restrictor set. In this setting, the most natural binder of this contextual restriction set would be the set of children, eventually giving us the result we desire.

For all its technical clarity, we are rather sceptic about the necessity of a semantically coded contextual restriction mechanism. After all we are dealing with anaphora resolution, which is a highly "intelligent" process that trades on various factors like recency, salience, and so on. As the proposal goes, the task of the interpretation process at the point the structure in (25) is built is to find a uniquely identifiable set of girls as an antecedent for Z, thanks to the $UNIQ'$ condition on Z. It appears reasonable at this point for an inference to occur, which "carves out" a set of girls from the set of children and makes this set available for binding. Therefore, I suggest that contextual restrictedness involved in Acc-indefinites in Turkish may simply be a by-product of the inferential anaphora resolution process which is responsible for taking care of the anaphoric (or, equivalently, presuppositional) constraints semantically encoded into Acc-indefinites.

In its final form, the present model handles the example under discussion as in (28), where the contextual restriction information (i.e. $Y \subseteq X$) is part of the accommodated information.[20]

(28)

$X, Y, \underline{Z}, x, y$
$child'(X)$ $entered'(X)$
$girl'(Y)$ $Y \subseteq X$ $Z = Y$
$x = spkr'$ $girl'(\underline{Z})$
$y \in \underline{Z}$ $\underline{UNIQ'(\underline{Z})}$
$know'(x,y)$

$\rightsquigarrow$

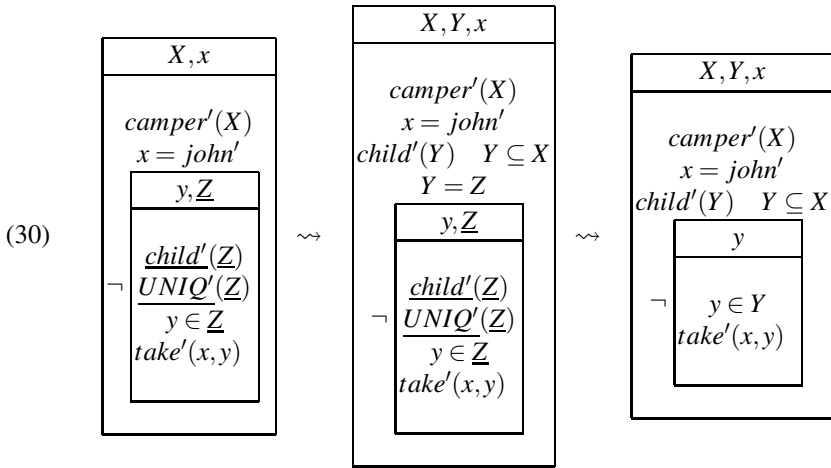| X, Y, x, y |
| --- |
| $child'(X)$ $entered'(X)$ |
| $girl'(Y)$ $Y \subseteq X$ |
| $x = spkr'$ |
| $y \in Y$ |
| $know'(x,y)$ |

Before moving on to how our proposal handles more complicated examples discussed above, a remark concerning number is in order. (28) is not fully specified with regard to the number of girls in the children set; it may be something between one and the size of the children set. I think this is a desirable situation because apart from the uses of stressed *bir* ('one'), which gives a plurality implicature for the restrictor, indefinites are underspecified as to the plurality of their restrictor.

Now we can return to the negative example (22), repeated here:

(29)   Neyse ki   John giderken   yanına   bir çocuğ-u   almamış.
        fortunately J.   while going   with-him a   child-Acc   take-Neg-Past.4sg
        'Fortunately, John hasn't taken a child with him to the excursion.'

---

[20] Also note that the unique identifiability of the accommodated set is left implicit in the final representation and the accommodation and binding operations are given together in the first representation.

The computation of an interpretable representation is given as follows:

$$(30)$$

$$
\begin{array}{|l|}
\hline
X,x \\
\hline
camper'(X) \\
x = john' \\
\quad
\begin{array}{|l|}
\hline
y,\underline{Z} \\
\hline
\neg\;
\begin{array}{|l|}
\hline
\underline{child'(Z)} \\
\underline{UNIQ'(Z)} \\
\hline
y \in \underline{Z} \\
\end{array}
\\
take'(x,y) \\
\hline
\end{array}
\\
\hline
\end{array}
\;\leadsto\;
\begin{array}{|l|}
\hline
X,Y,x \\
\hline
camper'(X) \\
x = john' \\
child'(Y) \quad Y \subseteq X \\
Y = Z \\
\quad
\begin{array}{|l|}
\hline
y,\underline{Z} \\
\hline
\neg\;
\begin{array}{|l|}
\hline
\underline{child'(Z)} \\
\underline{UNIQ'(Z)} \\
\hline
y \in \underline{Z} \\
\end{array}
\\
take'(x,y) \\
\hline
\end{array}
\\
\hline
\end{array}
\;\leadsto\;
\begin{array}{|l|}
\hline
X,Y,x \\
\hline
camper'(X) \\
x = john' \\
child'(Y) \quad Y \subseteq X \\
\quad
\begin{array}{|l|}
\hline
y \\
\hline
\neg\;
\begin{array}{|l|}
\hline
y \in Y \\
take'(x,y) \\
\hline
\end{array}
\\
\hline
\end{array}
\\
\hline
\end{array}
$$

Once again I assume that the contextual link, namely that the child set is a subset of the camper set, is an explicit part of the accommodation step, obviating the need for an explicit contextual restriction mechanism. The antecedent child set is accommodated in the top most discourse representation structure in line with the interpretive principles of the Binging Theory.

An important question that is brought to my attention by Rick Nouwen (p.c.) is how do we know that the "right" set of children is accommodated in (30)? Assume that there are 5 children in the camp, and John took one of them to the excursion. The DRS in (30) gets verified, if the hearer accommodates a set of 4 children, excluding the one who went with John. In order to avoid this problem, we need to assume that the accommodated set is maximal in the sense that it includes all the children in the camp. This kind of constraints on accommodation of antecedent sets should in the end be articulated in an explicit account of speaker intentions as represented by hearers.

One remaining question before I conclude is what happens to so called "specific" readings. For the above example, such a reading would state that there is one particular child that John didn't take to the excursion. Although this reading is not contextually well-supported in this example, we know from (19) that such readings are quite readily available in the absence of contextual factors that foreground readings like those in (30).

The proposed mechanism is, at least technically, capable of capturing "specific" readings. All we need to do to arrive at a "specific" reading for (30) is to accommodate the additional information that the accommodated set of children is a singleton.[21] At this point care should be taken not to think that accommodating a singleton set of children amounts to committing oneself to the claim that there is only one children among the campers. The hearer could be totally ignorant about the actual number of children

---

[21] Such a move could be thought of as a model of the notion "epistemic specificity" or "speaker having an individual in mind' (Farkas 2002). I think that a fruitful way of implementing this type of "specificity" in the present system would be to use anchoring relations of the type defended in Kamp and Bende-Farkas submitted. I leave this as future work.

among the campers, both when accommodating *some* set of children and when accommodating a singleton set of children. All he or she needs is to find (or create) an antecedent in the discourse model.[22]

Having proposed a technical solution, I leave it open whether or not an independent mechanism is needed for the so called "specific" readings. The decision on this matter needs to be based partly on an investigation of whether the present proposal on its own is adequate in capturing various scope phenomena, which usually motivates the existence of the so called "specific" readings. I do not have room here for such an investigation.

7 Conclusion

The general question this paper was concerned with is the nature of the presuppositionality involved in special types of indefinites, sometimes called "strong" or presuppositional indefinites. We concentrated on Turkish Acc-marked indefinites. I tried to clarify the semantics of Acc-indefinites with respect to three semantic properties: existential import, contextual restrictedness (or D-linking) and operator scope. I argued that neither contextual restrictedness nor scope properties alone can account for the semantics of Turkish Acc-indefinites. I also argued that existential import, modeled as anaphoricity encoded in the semantics of Acc-indefinites, is not only fundamental to "strong" indefiniteness in Turkish, but also can be construed as the source of both contextual restrictedness and wide scope behavior. Admittedly our position is more tentative on scope than it is on contextual restrictedness.

Although this paper concentrated on Turkish Acc-indefinites, I believe that our discussion has implications concerning "strong" indefiniteness in general and the relation between "strong" indefinites and determiner phrases headed by "strong" determiners like *each*, *every*, *most*, and so on. I leave the investigation of these issues to a forthcoming paper.

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[22] The solution I offer here for "specific" readings is closely related, but not identical, to proposals like Schwarzschild 2002. The most major point I diverge from such proposals is that I do not treat indefinites as existential quantifiers.

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