

Locative and existential predication

Core and periphery



Outline

- Introduction & definition of the domains
- “Core” expressions
 - Copula constructions
 - Existential items
- “Peripheral” expressions
 - Postural verbs as linking elements
 - Invenitive verbs as linking elements
 - Impersonalised/detransitivised have-possessives
- Overview of the talks

Introduction

Locative predication:
The apple is on the book.



Existential predication:
There are apples on the table.



Definition of the domains

- general features of locative (LOC) and existential (EX) predication
 - instances of non-verbal predication (see also next slide)
 - semantic structure shared by both domains (Freeze 1992, Hengeveld 1992, Creissels 2019, Haspelmath 2022): presence or absence of a *figure* (a.k.a. theme, pivot) in a *ground* (a.k.a. location, coda)
 - might be opposed to generic existentials/hyparctics *there are many unhappy people* (--> not the focus of the workshop)
 - comparative concepts (Haspelmath 2010) ~ construction-functions (Croft 2022)
- distinction of LOC vs EX via perspectivisation, instantiated through information (focus-background) structure
 - figure > ground in LOC, ground > figure in EX
 - figure excluded from focus domain in LOC, figure included in focus domain in EX



Definition of the domains

- Croft (2022) and Haspelmath (2022) see EX as non-predicational constructions
- however,
 - EX can contain a sentence topic (often the ground)
 - (1) *Pöydä-llä on kirja.*
table-ADE be.3SG book
 ‘There is a book on the table.’
 (Finnish (< Uralic); personal knowledge)
 - contextual domain or spatio-temporal parameters of the situation can serve as starting point for the utterance (Francez 2007, Erteschik-Shir 2019)
 - also *there is no more coffee* has a starting point, namely the given discourse situation
 - leads to, e.g., verb fronting in Slavic, Hungarian, partly Romance...



“Core” expressions

- first observation (cf. Creissels 2019):
 - in roughly half of the languages in the sample, LOC and EX share their morphosyntax
 - either distinction via word order
 - or no formal distinction
 - other half: dedicated existential construction
- locative predication often close to nominal/adjectival predication (cf. Hengeveld 1992, Croft 2022) → often (zero) copula constructions
- existential predication often has a more complex structure, frequent types:
 - existential items (Turkish *var*, *yok*)
 - expletive constructions (English *there is*, French *il y a*)



“Peripheral” constructions - Postural verbs

- Newman (2002) and Ameka & Levinson (2007), among others, demonstrate that postural verbs often occur in LOC (2a) and EX (2b), cf. Khanty and Mansi (< Uralic; Däbritz forth.)

(2) a. *moχa taj-əm topas-ŋət χɔ:t-ŋət isə wot-et-na ɔ:məs-t-ajŋ*
before have-PTCP.PST storage-DU house-DU same place-3SG-LOC **sit-PRS-3DU**

‘The storage and the house, which he had before, are [lit. sit] at the same place.’
(Sherkaly Khanty; Steinitz 1975: 299–300)

b. *paol jɔlə-pääl-t kwiir-wəx-ne khul woon-ə*
village down-side-LOC iron-beat-PTCP.PRS house **sit-PRS.3SG**

‘Under the village, there is [lit. sits] a forge.’
(Tavda Mansi; Munkácsi 1896: 355, transcription adapted)

- central question here: how to distinguish intransitive predication with postural verbs from LOC and EX?



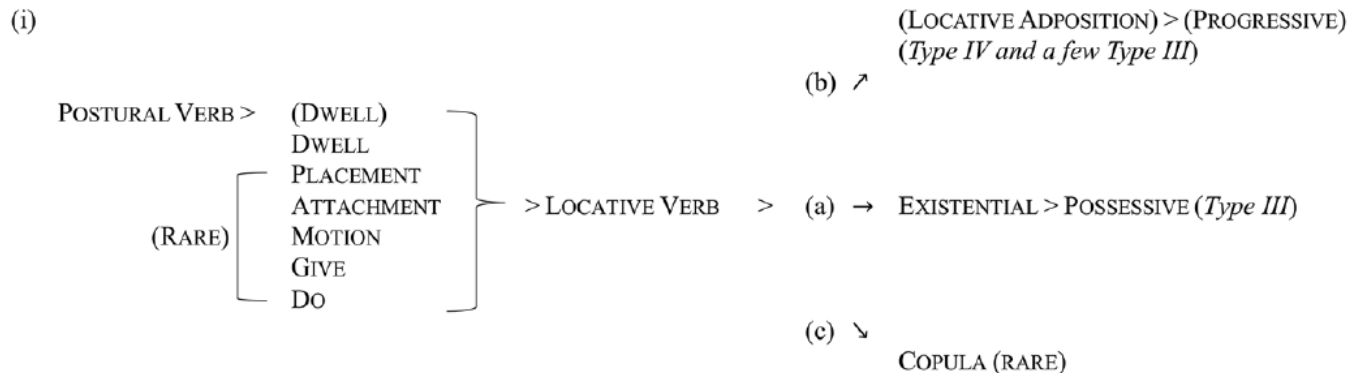
“Peripheral” constructions - Postural verbs

- factors that may be relevant
 - animacy and shape of the figure (tables hardly “sit”, paper hardly “stands”)
 - extra-linguistic context/world knowledge (is it common that people stand/sit/lie in the given situation?)
- cf. Ob-Ugric postural verbs and their selectional criteria

VERB	CHARACTERISTICS	OB-UGRIC LEXEMES
STAND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - referent in a vertically elongated position - high degree of control and balance - active zone: legs/feet 	Western Khanty <i>tət'</i> - Eastern Khanty <i>jal'</i> - ~ <i>ʃi:p.ʃi-</i> Mansi <i>liu:l-</i> ; <i>tunisi-</i> ~ <i>toon's'</i> -
SIT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - referent in a compact position - medium degree of control and balance - active zone: buttocks 	Western Khanty <i>ɔ:məs-</i> Eastern Khanty <i>aməs-</i> ~ <i>p:məs-</i> Mansi <i>u:nl-</i> ~ <i>wunl-</i> ~ <i>woon-</i>
LIE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - referent in a horizontally elongated position - low degree of control and balance - active zone: whole body 	Western Khanty <i>ol-</i> Eastern Khanty <i>al-</i> ~ <i>e:t-</i> ~ <i>ola-</i> Mansi <i>koj-</i> ~ <i>xuj-</i>

“Peripheral” constructions - Postural verbs

- postural verbs are often copularised (cf. Hengeveld 1992, Pustet 2003)
- grammaticalisation pathway (Chappell & Lü 2022: 37)





“Peripheral” constructions - Inventive verbs

- inventive verbs function as FIND-based strategies that convey a locational function
 - have a root with meaning FIND which undergoes semantic bleaching;
 - feature a morphological or periphrastic valency- or voice-changing marker;
 - express a locational function without semantically marking a specific posture.
- Defined in Basile (2023) - downloadable for free at OSF (<https://osf.io/tjbn6>)
- Previously called *situative* verbs (Basile 2021)



“Peripheral” constructions - Invenitive verbs

- invenitive verbs can occur in both LOC and EX (here: LOC)

(3) *Il gatto si trova sull' albero.*
 DEF cat MID.3SG find.3SG on.DEF tree

‘The cat is on the tree.’

(Italian (< Indo-European); personal knowledge)

(4) *Olut löyt-y-y jääkaapi-sta.*
 beer find-MID-3SG fridge-ELA

‘The beer is in the fridge.’

(Finnish (< Uralic); personal knowledge)



“Peripheral” constructions - *have*-verbs in EX

- many languages show *have*-verbs in EX (French *il y a*, dialectal German *es hat*, Bulgarian *imati* etc.)
- common source: impersonalisation of *have*-possessives (Creissels 2019, Chappell & Lü 2022, Creissels 2023)
 - (1) X have Y
 - (2) X_{n.spec.} have Y ‘(at some place) people have Y’
 - (3) (X_{expl.}) have Y ‘(at some place) there is Y’
 - (4) at X, (it) have Y ‘there is Y at X’



“Peripheral” constructions - *have*-verbs in EX

- question: how to distinguish existential from possessive predication?
 - animacy of ground/possessum
 - (extra-)linguistic context
 - ...

- (5) a. *Ta chōría den échoun dáskalous.*
 the villages NEG have.PRS.3PL teachers.ACC
 ‘The villages don’t have teachers.’
- b. *Den eíche dáskalous sta chōría.*
 NEG have.PST.3SG teachers.ACC in.the villages
 ‘There were no teachers in the villages.’
 [also possible: ‘S/he did not teachers in the villages.’]
 (Greek (< Indo-European); Creissels 2023: 43-44)



Goals of the workshop

- discuss both “core” and “peripheral” strategies
- discuss possible criteria of discriminating EX and LOC against other domains
 - intransitive verbal clauses with postural verbs
 - intransitive verbal clauses with inventive verbs
 - (impersonal) transitive possessive clauses
- discuss possible areal patterns
- ...



Overview of the talks

- rather theoretical contributions on interaction of LOC and EX
 - introduction
 - Martin Haspelmath: *On existential and predicative locative construction-functions and construction-strategies*
- rather language-specific contributions on interaction of LOC and EX
 - Josefina Budzisch: *Existentials in Forest Nenets*
 - Anastasia Panova & Henrik Liljegren: *Locative and existential predication in Gawarbati (Indo-Aryan) and the surrounding region*
 - Anna Kampanarou: *Locative and Existential sentences have distinct predicative structures: Evidence from Greek*



Overview of the talks

- postural verbs:
 - Laurits Knudsen & Eleanor Yacopetti & Tom Ennever: *Postural verbs and their roles in locative and existential predication in three Australian languages*
 - Lilián Guerrero & Valeria A. Belloro: *Existential and locative clauses in Yaqui*
 - Cristian Juárez: Locative relations and valence extension: *multifunctional locative markers in Mocoví (Guaycuruan, Argentina)*
- inenitive verbs:
 - Gerson Klumpp & Rodolfo Basile: *On locational constructions in Uralic languages*



Overview of the talks

- existential and possessive predication
 - Chris Lasse Däbritz: *Transitive habeo-verbs in existential predication in the Uralic languages*
 - Birsel Karakoç: *Discrimination of existential against possessive clauses in Turkic*
 - Erin SanGregory: Possessive Predicates as Locative Constructions in Wakhi --> poster presentation
 - Susanne Michaelis: *Coexpression of existential and possessive predication in creole languages*



Schedule - Thursday



11:30-11:55	Introduction
12:00-12:25	Haspelmath
12:30-12:55	Juárez
Lunch	
14:00-14:25	Kampanarou
14:30-14:55	Panova & Liljegren
15:00-15:25	Karakoç
Coffee Break	
16:00-16:25	Budzisch
16:30-16:55	Michaelis

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Schedule - Friday



11:00-11:25	Knudsen & Ennever & Yacopetti
11:30-11:55	Däbritz
12:00-12:25	Klumpp & Basile
12:30-12:55	Guerrero & Belloro
13:00-13:25	Final discussion

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Organisational remarks

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- Presentations:
 - send to sle2023.exloc@gmail.com
 - will be uploaded to zenodo with DOI
 - introductory slides: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8301273>
- Publications:
 - edited volume at Language Science Press
 - deadline for first versions: 31 October 2023

Thank you for your attention!



References



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