

**44-Negative sensitive items in Turkish: Negative polarity or negative concord?****Emrah GÖRGÜLÜ<sup>1</sup>**

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**Abstract**

This paper is concerned with the nature of negative sensitive items such as *hiçkimse* ‘no one’ and *asla* ‘never’ in Turkish. It is well attested in previous studies that these negative sensitive elements require the obligatory presence of sentential negation or some other licenser in the structure. However, there is still an ongoing controversy as to what these negative sensitive elements actually are and why they behave the way they do. Some researchers proposed that these elements are negative polarity items (NPIs) whereas others suggested that they are (existential) n-words or negative concord items (NCIs). Therefore, the question remains as to which category these elements belong to in the language. In this work, I address this question by using a comprehensive set of diagnostic tests proposed in prior work to find out the true characteristic of these elements. I argue that their syntactic and semantic behavior strongly indicate that they should be classified as NCIs, and not as NPIs in Turkish. I also show that these negative sensitive items display the characteristics of both the universal quantifier and the existential quantifier. This is because they can be interpreted either way in the language. This finding is compatible with the cross-linguistic predictions that NCIs are able to display the behavior of different quantificational elements across languages.

**Keywords:** Negative polarity, negative concord, universal and existential quantifier, Turkish

**Türkçede olumsuzluğa duyarlı ifadeler: Olumsuz uçluk mu olumsuz uyum mu?****Öz**

Bu makale, Türkçede *hiçkimse* ve *asla* gibi olumsuzluğa duyarlı ifadelerin doğası ile ilgilidir. Önceki çalışmalarda, bu olumsuz ifadelerin yapıda tümcesel bir olumsuzlamaya ya da başka bir izin vericiye ihtiyaç duydukları açıkça ortaya konmuştur. Buna rağmen, bu olumsuzluğa duyarlı ifadelerin tam ne oldukları ve bu tür davranışları neden gösterdiklerine ilişkin hala bir çelişki bulunmaktadır. Bazı araştırmacılar bunların olumsuz uçluk ifadeleri olduğunu ortaya sürerken, diğerleri ise aynı ifadelerin (varlıksal) olumsuz-sözcükler ya da olumsuz uyum ifadeleri olduğunu önermişlerdir. Bundan dolayı, bu olumsuzluğa duyarlı ifadelerin dilde hangi kategoriye ait oldukları sorusu hala güncelliğini korumaktadır. Bu çalışmada, önceki çalışmalarda kullanılmış birtakım bulguları testler kullanılarak, olumsuzluğa duyarlı ifadelerin gerçek özelliklerini ortaya çıkarmak adına bu soruya cevap aranmaktadır. Türkçede bu ifadelerin sözdizimsel ve anlambilimsel davranışları kendilerinin olumsuz uçluk ifadeleri değil de olumsuz uyum ifadeleri olduğunu açıkça ortaya koymaktadır. Çalışmada ayrıca bu ifadelerin hem evrensel hem de varlıksal niceleyici davranışları gösterdikleri de gösterilmektedir. Bunun sebebi, bu ifadelerin dilde hem evrensel niceleyici hem de varlıksal niceleyici olarak yorumlanabilmeleridir. Bu bulgu, olumsuz uyum

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ifadelerinin değişik dillerde farklı niceleyici elementler olarak davranış sergileyebileceklerine dair yapılan dilbilimsel tahminlerle uyum göstermektedir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Olumsuz uçluk, olumsuz uyum, evrensel ve varlıksal niceleyici, Türkçe

## 1. Introduction

There are certain negative sensitive items in Turkish such as the noun phrases *kimse* / *hiçkimse* 'no one, anyone', *hiçbir şey* 'nothing, anything', *hiçbir N* 'no, any N' as well as those functioning as adverbs like *hiç* 'never/ever', *asla* 'never', *katiyyen* 'in any way' and *sakın* 'never'. These elements do not appear in affirmative sentences and are licensed by sentential negation, the negative postposition *-s/z* 'without' and yes/no questions. It is for that reason that they were often considered to be NPIs in most previous studies (Tosun, 1998; Keleşir, 2001, 2003; Yanılmaz, 2009; Özyıldız, 2017). For instance, Tosun (1998) treats them as NPIs and argues for a structural dependency between NPIs and the negative marker, the former triggering the latter. So this is a spec-head relationship and NPIs occupy the specifier position of Neg(ative)P while negation itself appears in the head position. Similarly, Keleşir (2001) argues that these elements are NPIs and not negative quantifiers. This is because they cannot appear without negation and also they cannot license other NPIs. She goes on to say that an analysis in which NPIs are licensed in the specifier position of a negative phrase cannot capture the facts mostly because of scope reasons and constraints on movement. That is to say, not every noun phrase (NP) can move up to the specifier position of NegP. In more recent analyses, it has been argued that these elements should actually be analyzed as NCIs (Şener, 2007) or (existential) n-words (İnce, 2012; Jeretič, 2017; Kamali, 2017) rather than NPIs. In his work, Şener (2007) investigates the behavior of only one negative sensitive item (i.e. *kimse*) by using a number of criteria and concludes that it should be regarded as an NCI. However, it should be noted here that *kimse* as a negative sensitive item displays the least NCI-like properties and is still being used as an indefinite pronoun in the language. One other claim by Kamali (2017) is that these elements are morphologically negative in the sense that they include negation in their morphological makeup. Kamali calls these elements n-words and mainly focuses on why certain n-words can appear in non-negative contexts such as yes/no questions. Lastly, Jeretič (2017) takes it for granted that these elements are existential n-words since Turkish exhibits optional negative concord. She argues that the *ne... ne...* (i.e. neither... nor...) construction that behaves like a negative quantifier in terms of meaning may optionally have sentential negation.

Note that none of these studies has provided an in-depth analysis with respect to why a negative concord analysis should be more preferable over a negative polarity analysis, and vice versa. Moreover, the existence of negative concord in Turkish seems to have been motivated independent of these negative sensitive elements. In this work, the nature of all of these elements will be investigated by using a comprehensive set of diagnostic tests that are used to distinguish between NPIs and NCIs (Vallduvī, 1994; Ginnakidou, 2000, 2006; Miyagawa et al., (2016); Giannakidou and Zeijlstra, 2017). Based on the syntactic and semantic properties of these negative sensitive items, it will be shown that they display the characteristics of NCIs, not NPIs, and should be re-analyzed as such. It will also be argued that the behavior of these elements in terms of locality constraints and modification displays close similarities to that of universal quantifiers rather than indefinite or existential elements. Nevertheless, these elements do not pair with universal quantifiers in terms of some other criteria, which is not unexpected since Turkish does not exhibit lexical distinctions in terms of NCI/NPI dichotomy.

The structure of this paper is as follows: Section 2 provides an outline of negative polarity and negative concord as negative dependencies across languages. Section 3 analyzes the Turkish data through the use of various diagnostic tests. Section 4 turns to the negative concord phenomenon in Turkish. Section 5 considers different theoretical approaches to negative concord. Lastly, Section 6 concludes the paper and make suggestions for further work.

## 2. Negative polarity vs. negative concord

It is often noted in analyses on negation and negative elements that negative polarity items (NPIs) and negative concord items (NCIs) form some kind of *negative dependency* (Giannakidou and Zeijlstra, 2017).<sup>2</sup> This is because of the fact that neither NPIs nor NCIs appear in affirmative sentences and both require the presence of sentential negation or some other negative element in the structure. This is illustrated below, taken from Giannakidou (2011), Giannakidou and Zeijlstra (2017).

(1) a. *Bill did not buy any books.*

b. \**Bill bought any books.*

(2) a. *John left without talking to Bill either.*

b. \**John left with talking to Bill either.*

(3) a. *I do not think I like any of these.*

b. \**I think I like any of these.*

(4) a. *Gianni \*(non) ha visto niente.* (Italian)

Gianni non has seen n-thing

‘Gianni has not said anything.’

b. *Janek \*(nie) pomaga nikomu.* (Polish)

Janek not help n-person

‘Janek does not help anybody.’

In (1a) and (2a) *any*, the typical negative polarity item in English, co-occurs with sentential negation and with the negative preposition ‘without’ respectively. In (3a), the NPI is licensed by negation in the matrix clause. The absence of negation in these cases would lead to ungrammaticality in English, as illustrated in (1b), (2b) and (3b). Similarly, in (4a) and (4b), the negative elements, which are often referred to as n-words or NCIs, obligatorily appear with sentential negation.

<sup>2</sup> Negative concord items were originally named as n-words by Laka (1990), following the negative dependents whose first letter is n-, such as *nessuno* in Italian, *nadie* in Spanish, *nikomu* in Polish, *niemand* in German and Dutch and *ningu* ‘nobody’ in Portuguese. In this work, I follow the more recent work such as Watanabe (2004), Miyagawa et al. (2016) and Park (2017), and call these words negative concord items (NCIs).

It should be noted, however, that the syntactic and semantic distribution of these two types of negative sensitive items is not identical. As widely discussed in previous work, there are several criteria that are used to determine the nature of a negative sensitive element as an NPI or an NCI. For instance, Vallduvi (1994), based on previous work on negation, n-words and negative concord by Laka (1990), Zanuttini (1991) and Quer (1993), argues that NCIs.

(i) are able to occur in isolation (i.e. they can constitute a fragment answer or utterance),

(ii) can be modified by such elements as *almost* and *absolutely*,

(iii) do not need to be c-commanded by a licenser (i.e. they can appear pre-verbally),

(iv) cannot appear in non-negative contexts (i.e. yes/no questions, conditionals as well as modalities).

In addition to the list above, Longobardi (1991), Progovac (1994) and Giannakidou (1997, 1998, 2000) note that NCIs:

(v) cannot be bound long-distance (i.e. they require clause-mate negation).

This indicates that the syntax and semantics of NCIs is rather different when compared to the behavior of NPIs across languages. One question to ask at this point is whether Turkish has negative polarity or negative concord. In the next section, I will present negative sensitive elements in Turkish and give a brief overview of previous work.

## 2.1. Negative polarity and negative concord in Turkish

When we consider the phenomenon in Turkish, we observe that there are certain elements that constitute some kind of negative dependency as well. The list in (5) comprehensively illustrates these negative sensitive elements.

(5) a. *kimse / hiçkimse* 'no one, anyone', *hiçbir şey* 'nothing / anything', *hiçbir N* 'no / any N'

b. *hiç* 'never, at all', *asla* 'never', *katiyyen* 'in any way', *sakın* 'never'

The negative sensitive items in (5a) are noun phrases (NPs) and those in (5b) are functioning as adverbs. Like their counterparts in other languages, none of these can appear in affirmative sentences and they require licensing by sentential negation or some negative element, as shown in (6), (7) and (8).<sup>3</sup>

(6) a. *Hiçkimse / kimse git-me-di*.<sup>4</sup>

no one / no one go-NEG-PAST

<sup>3</sup> There is more than one sentential negative marker that can license negative sensitive items in the language. These are -*mA* 'not' in verbal clauses, *değil* 'not' in non-verbal clauses, *yok* 'not exist' in existential constructions.

<sup>4</sup> The abbreviations in the glosses are: 1 = first person; 2 = second person; 3 = third person; ABL = ablative case; ACC = accusative case; AOR = aorist marker; COND = conditional; COP = copula; DAT = dative case; DER.NOM = derived nominal; EP.COP = epistemic copula; FNOM = factive nominal; FUT = future marker; GEN = genitive case; IMP = imperative; INF = infinitive marker; LOC = locative case; NEG = negative marker; NEG.AOR = negative aorist; NEG.COP = negative copula; OPT = optative marker; PAST = past tense; PERF = perfective marker; PL = plural; PROG = progressive marker; Q = question particle; SG = singular; SBJP = subject participle; SR = subject relativizer; VN = verbal noun

'No one went.'

b. \**Hiçkimse / kimse git-ti.*

no one / no one go-PAST

'No one went.'

(7) a. *Sakın / asla / katiyyen git-me.*

never / never / in any way go-NEG

'Never go!'

b. \**Sakın / asla / katiyyen git.*

never / never / in any way go

'Never go!'

(8) a. *Ben kimse-siz-im*

I no one-without-1SG

'I don't have anyone (around me).'

b. *Biz bu ülke-ye hiçbir şey-siz gel-di-k.* (Keleşir, 2001 p.161)

we this country-DAT anything-without come-PAST-1SG

'We came to this country without anything.'

The data above clearly show that these negative sensitive items need the presence of sentential negation in order to be licensed, like in (6) and (7). Some (but not all) of them can also appear along with the negative (comitative) suffix *-sIz* 'without', like in (8). The question that arises at this point is how can one account for the data in Turkish? As has been already discussed in Section 1, there are several analyses that have dealt with the distribution and certain characteristics of these negative sensitive items in the language. These studies constitute two different but somewhat related camps. Aygen (1998), Keleşir (2001, 2003) and Yanılmaz (2009) analyze these negative items as NPIs since they are primarily licensed by sentential negation and the negative suffix. On the other hand, Şener (2007), Kamali (2017) and Jeretič (2017) argue that they should be treated as n-words or NCIs since they also have certain NCIs characteristics. However, none of these analyses has provided a comprehensive account of the syntactic and semantic characteristics of these negative sensitive items. Similarly, these studies have not addressed the issues concerning the apparent counterexamples in the data, nor have they offered a formal analysis to account for the true nature of these items. Therefore, a detailed analysis seems to be warranted. In the next section, I will consider each negative sensitive element in Turkish and check their behavior against the diagnostic tests introduced in Section 1.

### 3. The Turkish data

#### 3.1. Fragment answers

One of the distinguishing characteristics of NCIs is that they can be used as fragment answers or utterances. Basically, a fragment answer appears as a part of an entire sentence that has somehow disappeared. If the negative sensitive items in Turkish are behaving more like NCIs, and less like NPIs, then they should be used as fragment answers. Consider the question (A) and answer (B) pairs below.

(9) A: *Kim gel-di?*

who come-PAST

'Who came?'

B: *Hiçkimse.*<sup>5</sup>

no one

'No one.'

(10) A: *Bugün ne al-dı-n?*

today who come-PAST

'Who came?'

B: *Hiçbir şey.*

not one thing

'Nothing.'

As the examples in (9) and (10) illustrate, the negative sensitive elements in Turkish can be used as fragment answers without leading to ungrammaticality. Let us now consider those that are functioning as adverbs to see their behavior.

(11) A: *Yalan söyle-r mi-sin?*

lie tell-AOR Q-2SG

'Do you lie?'

B: *Asla.*

never

<sup>5</sup> One might ask at this point the question how the negative sensitive items can appear without negation in fragment answers. If we assume that the elided part of the answer contains sentential negation (Giannakidou 2000, 2006), then we can account for the grammaticality of these structures.

'Never.'

(12) A: *Oraya gid-e-yim mi?*

there go-1SG.OPT Q

'Shall I go there?'

B: *Sakin!*

never

'Never!'

As shown by the data above, the negative sensitive items in Turkish, regardless of their function in the sentence, can be used as fragment answers. Thus the first diagnostic test shows that these elements are behaving more like NCIs rather than NPIs. Note that this is not possible with typical NPIs in a language like English since they cannot be licensed as fragment answers.

(13) a. A: *What did you buy?*

B: *\*Anything.*

b. A: *Who did you see?*

B: *\*Anyone.*

(14) A: *Have you been there?*

B: *\*Ever.*

It was established in this section that negative sensitive items in Turkish behave like NCIs in terms of being able to act as fragment answers. In the next section, I will consider modifiability possibilities of these elements.

### 3.2. Modifiability

The second diagnostic test concerns the modifiability of negative sensitive elements. It was shown in previous studies that NCIs can be modified by such adverbs as 'almost' and 'absolutely' whereas it is not the case for NPIs. The question that arises is whether the negative sensitive items can be modified by the counterparts of these adverbs in Turkish. Consider the examples below.

(15) a. *Neredeyse hiçkimse gel-me-di.*

almost no one come-NEG-PAST

'Almost no one came.'

b. *Kesinlikle hiçkimse gel-me-di.*

absolutely no one come-NEG-PAST

‘Absolutely no one came.’

(16) a. *Neredeyse hiçbir şey satın al-ma-dı.*

almost not one thing buying take-NEG-PAST

‘S/he almost didn’t buy anything.’

b. *Kesinlikle hiçbir şey satın al-ma-dı.*

absolutely not one thing buying take-NEG-PAST

‘S/he absolutely didn’t buy anything.’

(17) a. *Neredeyse hiç görüş-me-di-k.*

almost never see-NEG-PAST-1PL

‘We almost never saw each other.’

b. *Kesinlikle hiç görüş-me-di-k.*

absolutely never see-NEG-PAST-1PL

‘We absolutely never saw each other.’

The data above indicate that these negative sensitive elements can be modified by *nerdeyse* ‘almost’ and *kesinlikle* ‘absolutely’ in Turkish, displaying again the characteristics of NCIs. Let us now consider whether these two adverbs are also compatible with other negative sensitive elements functioning as adverbs in the language.

(18) a. *Kesinlikle asla güven-me.*

absolutely almost never trust-NEG

‘Don’t you ever trust (him).’

b. *#Neredeyse asla güven-me.*

almost never trust-NEG

‘Almost never trust (him).’

(19) a. *Kesinlikle sakın güven-me.*

absolutely never trust-NEG

‘Almost don’t trust (him) at all.’

b. #*Neredeyse sakın güven-me.*

almost never trust-NEG

'Almost never trust (him).'

The examples in (18a) and (19a) show that the adverbial negative sensitive items can be modified by *kesinlikle* 'absolutely'. However, the same elements are not so compatible with *neredeyse* 'almost' as their co-occurrence seems to cause some kind of infelicity in the sentence. One reason for this would be that the elements like *asla*, *katiyyen* and *sakın* "express a determination on the part of the subject that the event shall never occur" (Göksel and Kerslake, 2005). Therefore, using them in the same context with an adverb like *neredeyse* would not be felicitous. However, the fact that these negative sensitive elements can be modified by *kesinlikle*, in addition to other negative sensitive elements that are modified by the same element, is just another indication that their behavior patterns with NCIs. Note also that NPIs in languages like English do not generally get modified by these elements, as shown by Giannakidou (2000).

(20) a. \*He didn't meet almost anybody. / \*Did he meet almost anybody?

b. \*Will you tell him absolutely anything?

In the next section, I will consider whether it is possible for these negative sensitive elements to occur pre-verbally in Turkish.

### 3.3. Appearing preverbally

Another significant difference between the two types of negative sensitive items is that NPIs such as *anybody* and *anything* in English cannot appear pre-verbally. That is to say, they cannot occur before negation. This is, however, not the case for NCIs since they are able to precede negation without leading to ungrammaticality. Consider the examples below, taken from Giannakidou and Zeijlstra (2017) and Vallduvı (1994).

(21) a. \**Any student didn't see Bill.*

b. \**Anybody didn't go.*

(22) *Dnes nikdo \*(ne)-volá nikoho. (Czech)*

today n-body NEG-calls n-body

'Today no one calls anybody.'

Even though sentential negation is present in (21a) and (21b), this is not enough to license the NPIs. This is because of the fact that NPIs have to be in the scope of (i.e. overtly c-commanded by) negation itself. Failure to do so would result in ungrammaticality. This is however, not the case for NCIs in languages like Czech, as the grammaticality of the example in (22) illustrates. NCIs can precede sentential negation and appear in the subject position. When we consider the same phenomenon in Turkish, we observe that the negative sensitive elements are actually able to appear pre-verbally. That

is to say, they can occur in the subject position without leading to ungrammaticality, as exemplified in (23) and (24).

(23) a. *Hiçkimse hiçbir şey gör-me-di.*

no one not one thing see-NEG-PAST

'No one saw anything.'

b. *Kimse hiçbiryer-e git-me-di.*

anyone anywhere-DAT go-NEG-PAST

'No one went anywhere.'

(24) a. *Hiçbir şey belli değil.*

not one thing certain not

'Nothing is certain.'

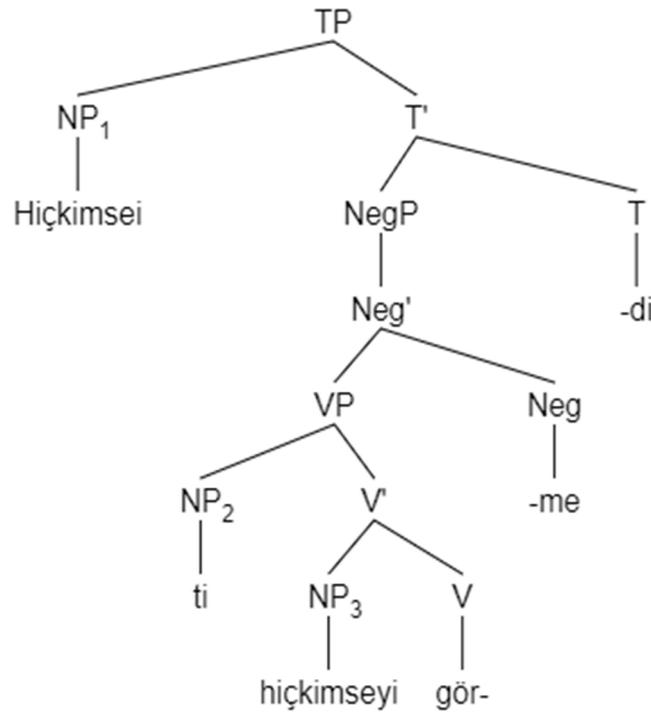
b. *Hiçbir hasta orta-da yok.*

not one patient middle-LOC not exist

'None of the patients is around.'

The examples in (23) and (24) clearly illustrate that the negative sensitive elements in the language can appear pre-verbally without yielding an ungrammatical structure. Note, however, that unlike English, Turkish is a head-final language and both subject and object NPs precede the verb. This means that they also come before negation as well. The syntactic structure of (23a) is given in (25).

(25)



The subject NP in (25) is outside the scope of negation without yielding ungrammaticality. One way to account for the grammaticality of the structure is to argue that unlike NPIs which always need to be inside the scope of negation at the surface structure, NCIs can appear outside its scope. This is because they are able to reconstruct to their original (i.e. base) position at the interpretive level (Fălăuş and Nicolae, 2016). However, this is obviously not the case for NPIs. If they could reconstruct back to their base position, they would appear inside the scope of negation and get licensed. In the next section, I will investigate non-negative contexts and the permissibility of negative sensitive elements in them.

### 3.4. Non-negative contexts

The next diagnostic states that NCIs, as opposed to NPIs, cannot appear in non-negative contexts such as questions, conditionals, modalities and imperatives. Thus the assumption here is that if negative sensitive elements in Turkish are in fact NCIs, they should not be able to appear in non-negative contexts. Consider the data below.

(26) \**Hiçkimse gel-ir-se, ban-a haber ver.*

no one come-AOR-COND I-DAT news give

'If anyone comes, let me know.'

(27) \**Oraya asla / katiyyen git-ti-n mi?*

there never in no way go-PAST-2SG Q

‘Did you ever go there?’

(28) ??*San-a hiçkimse beş-te buluş-acağ-ımız-ı söyle-di mi?* (Kelepir, p. ??)

you-DAT no one 5-LOC meet-FUT-1PL-ACC tell-PAST Q

‘Did anyone tell you that we were meeting at five?’

The examples above indicate that negative sensitive elements do not appear in non-negative contexts in the language. Note, however, that some (but not all) negative sensitive items can appear in yes/no questions in Turkish (Kelepir, 2001; İnce, 2012).

(29) *Oraya hiç git-ti-n mi?*

there ever go-PAST-2SG Q

‘Have you ever gone there?’

(30) *Orada kimse var mı?*

there no one exist Q

‘Is there anyone over there?’

The fact that these negative sensitive items *hiç* ‘ever / at all’ and *kimse* ‘no one’ are licensed in yes/no questions (i.e. non-negative contexts) in (29) and (30) seems to pose a challenge for their NCI status in the language. However, there are different arguments in previous work to account for the presence of these two in yes/no questions. For instance, Progovac (1994) argues that the sentential negative marker -mA and the question particle mI are morphologically related in Turkish. The question particle has the same root (i.e. m-) as the negative marker and it is reasonable to argue that *kimse* and *hiç* are licensed by the question marker itself. In that sense, the question marker has the same negative force as the negative marker. On the other hand, İnce (2012) notes that the semantics of yes/no questions involves a set of propositions that contains both a positive and a negative answer (i.e. p & ¬p) and this is how the NCI is licensed. This, of course, should be considered to be semantic licensing rather than a syntactic one. Nevertheless, each approach provides an analysis of how these negative sensitive items are able to appear in yes/no questions and both include the presence of negation. Another argument for the acceptability of these elements in yes/no questions would be that they are in fact polysemous. This is what Suleymanova and Hoeksema (2018) argue for similar elements in Azerbaijani. Consider (31) and (32).

(31) *hiç* ‘never’ (-); ‘ever’ (?)

(32) *kimse* ‘no one’ (-); ‘someone, anyone’ (?)

According to this, these elements have more than one meaning. In yes/no questions they do not have negative force and have an indefinite-like interpretation. On the other hand, they carry negative force and are interpreted as NCIs in negative contexts. Note that this is not a phenomenon that is only observed in Turkish. As shown by Przepiórkowski and Kupść (1997), some Polish NCIs are also polysemous and those with a non-NCI interpretation do not require a strictly negative context.

This argumentation, however, does not seem to be fully compatible with Kelepir's (2001) claim that *kimse* used to occur in indefinite phrases in Turkish similar to *-body* in English but not anymore. Kelepir provides (33) to illustrate that.

(33) a. *bir kimse*

a/one person

'somebody / some person'

b. *kimse-ler*

somebody-PL

'(some) people'

c. *bazı kimse-ler*

some person-PL

'some people'

Kelepir (2001) argues that the indefinite noun phrase *kimse* in (33) has more or less lost its indefinite usage in contemporary Turkish and has turned into a true NPI. However, a small-scale corpus research (TS Corpus v2, Sezer and Sezer, 2013) has shown that this element is still being used as an indefinite in the language, as illustrated below.

(34) a. *Yazı-nız-da belirt-tiğ-iniz gibi Gökmen de mavi göz-lü kimse*

writing-2PL-LOC mention-FNOM-2PL like Gökmen too blue eye-with person

*ol-arak tanımla-n-muş-tır.*

be-GER define-PASS-PERF-EP.COP

'Like you say in your writing, Gökmen too was defined as someone with blue eyes.'

b. *Fransızca gourmet, ye-mek-ten iç-mek-ten anla-yan kimse*

French gourmet eat-INF-ABL drink-INF-ABL understand person

*anlam-ı-nda-dır.*

meaning-3SG-LOC-COP

'Gourmet in French means someone who knows about eating and drinking.'

c. *Sadece çok az kimse bu-na uy-muş-tur.*

only many few person this-DAT obey-PERF-EP.COP

‘Only a few people have conformed to this.’

In (34), *kimse* is interpreted as an indefinite element such as 'someone' or 'anyone' rather than a negative sensitive item like 'no one'. Therefore, the conclusion is that we are not dealing with a negative sensitive item here but an instance of an indefinite noun phrase.

The discussion above showed that there are a couple of negative sensitive elements that can appear in one non-negative context. However, it was shown that this does not pose a challenge for their NCI status as their appearance is justified. Besides, the non-negative contexts that a true NPI can be found is much wider, as shown below.

(35) *If you tell that to anyone else, I will never forgive you.* (if-conditional)

(36) *Who has seen any students?* (wh-question)

(37) *Everyone who knows anything about the case should speak.* (restrictor of V)

(38) *I Elektra ine poli kurasma ni ja na milisi se kanenan.* (too-clause, Greek)

the Electra be.3SG too tired for SUBJ talk to anyone

‘Electra is too tired to talk to anyone.’

As partially exemplified above, the various contexts that NPIs, but not NCIs, can appear in are: (i) antecedent of conditionals, (ii) wh-questions, (iii) imperatives, (iv) modals, (v) habituals, (vi) comparatives, (vii) restriction of the universal quantifier, and (viii) too-clauses, among others (Giannakidou, 1999, 2000). None of the negative sensitive items in Turkish can appear in these contexts. In the next section, I will look at locality conditions as the final diagnostic test.

### 3.5. Locality

It is well-attested in previous work that NCIs, unlike NPIs, are not long distance bound. They require clause-mate negation in the structure. This is illustrated in (39) and (40).

(39) a. *Ahmet [hiçkimse-nin burada ol-ma-dıĝ-ı]-ni bil-(mi)-iyor-du.*

Ahmet no one-GEN here be-NEG-VN-3SG-ACC know-(NEG)-PROG-PAST

‘Ahmet knew / didn’t know no one was here.’

b. \**Ahmet [hiçkimse-nin burada ol-duĝ-u]-nu bil-mi-yor-du.*

Ahmet no one-GEN here be-VN-3SG-ACC know-NEG-PROG-PAST

‘Ahmet didn’t know that no one was here.’

(40) a. *Ahmet [oraya hiç git-me-diĝ-im-i] bil-(mi)-iyor.*

Ahmet there never go-NEG-VN-1SG-ACC know-NEG-PROG

'Ahmet knows / does not know I never went there.'

b. \*Ahmet [oraya hiç git-tiğ-im-i] bil-mi-yor.

Ahmet there never go-NEG-VN-1SG-ACC know-NEG-PROG

'Ahmet does not know I never went there.'

The ungrammaticality of (39b) and (40b), as opposed to the grammaticality of (39a) and (40a), indicates that the negative sensitive items cannot be long distance bound. In other words, clause-mateness of negation is required. As already observed by Kornfilt (1984) and Kelepir (2001), finite and factive complements do not allow long distance licensing of these negative sensitive items. They are opaque to long distance relationships in the language.

The question that arises is whether this is also the case for clauses that are non-finite and non-factive? Kelepir (2001) notes that the predicates that allow long-distance licensing are neg-raising predicates like *san-* 'think' and *iste-* 'want', perception predicates such as *duy-* 'hear', *gör-* 'see', and attitude predicates such as *izin ver-* 'permit'.

(41) Ahmet-in hiçkimse-yi sev-diğ-in-i san-mu-yor-um.

Ahmet-GEN nobody-ACC love-DIK-3POSS-ACC think-NEG-PROG-1SG

'I don't think Ahmet loves anybody.'

(42) Müdür hiçkimse-nin dışarı çık-ma-sı-na izin ver-mi-yor.

manager nobody-GEN outside go-MA-3POSS-DAT permission give-NEG-PROG

'The manager does not allow anybody to go out.'

However, this does not affect the status of these items since NCIs are long distance in certain transparent contexts such as subjunctives, infinitives, neg-raising verbs and non-factive verbs across languages (Giannakidou, 2000, 2006). NPIs in languages like English, on the other hand, do not need to be locally bound. They do not need to have clause-mate negation, as illustrated below.

(43) a. *I do not know if he told the police anything.*

b. *She does not say that she saw anyone.*

Based on the discussion above, the conclusion is that the negative sensitive items in Turkish should be re-analyzed as NCIs rather than NPIs. If this analysis is on the right track, it follows that Turkish is a negative concord language. This result is not unexpected since there are at least two pieces of independent arguments for negative concord as a phenomenon in the language. This issue will be explored in the next section.

#### 4. Negative concord<sup>6</sup>

##### 4.1. Negative concord in Turkish

The first piece of evidence comes from the *ne... ne...* (neither... nor...) construction in the language. As noted by Keleşir (2001) and Şener and İşsever (2003), the behavior of the *ne... ne...* construction is similar to that of negative quantifiers such as *no one* and *nothing* in English. This is because the construction is semantically negative and does not require the presence of sentential negation in the structure. This is exemplified in (44).

(44) *Ne anne-m ne baba-m ev-e gel-di.*

neither mother-1SG nor father-1SG home-DAT come-PAST

‘Neither my mother nor my father came home.’

Note, however, that it is also possible for the *ne... ne...* construction to co-occur with sentential negation without any change in meaning, as in (45).

(45) *Ne anne-m ne baba-m ev-e gel-me-di*

neither mother-1SG nor father-1SG home-DAT come-NEG-PAST

‘Neither my mother nor my father came home.’

The important thing in (45) is that even though there are two negative elements in the structure, namely the *ne... ne...* construction and the sentential negation, negation is interpreted only once. This means that the double negation (DN) reading is unavailable in these cases, which is expected from a language with negative concord (Keleşir 2001; Şener and İşsever 2003).<sup>7</sup>

Secondly, it is well-attested that languages without negative concord display what is known as double negation (DN). English and Dutch are good examples for this type of languages. Crucially, each negative morpheme in these languages contributes negation to the interpretation of the sentence, resulting in a DN meaning, as shown below, taken from Giannakidou and Zeijlstra 2017).

(46) a. *No one saw nothing.*<sup>8</sup> = (Everyone actually did see something)

b. *Niemand heeft niets gezegd.*

nobody has nothing said

‘Nobody has said nothing.’ = ‘Everybody has said something.’

On the other hand, double negation does not occur in Turkish since two NCIs in the same sentence do not result in this type of interpretation, as in the case of the *ne... ne...* construction and sentential negation. This is shown in (47).

<sup>6</sup> The term 'negative concord' is due to Labov (1972).

<sup>7</sup> The specifics of Double Negation (DN) will be discussed later in this section.

<sup>8</sup> Note that in some varieties of English, this sentence would receive an NC reading.

(47) *Hiçkimse hiçbir şey gör-me-di.*

no one not one thing see-NEG-PAST

(i) ‘No one saw anything.’

(ii) ‘\*Everybody saw something.’

Now that it was established that Turkish is a negative concord language and has NCIs rather than NPIs, the question that needs to be addressed is whether it has strict or non-strict concord. The distinction is important because the behavior of NCIs exhibits differences even within negative concord languages. In the next section, I will explore this issue.

#### 4.2. Strict and non-strict negative concord

In the cross-linguistic analyses of negative concord (NC), the issue of strict and non-strict NC has been closely investigated (Vallduvi 1994; Giannakidou 1998, 2000, 2006; Giannakidou and Zeijlstra 2017, among others). One thing that is often noted is that strict NC languages always require the presence of negation regardless of the function and position of NCIs in the sentence. In other words, negation in these languages is always present whether the NCI is the subject or object, or adjunct. Note that this does not change whether the NCI is pre-verbal or post-verbal. Some well-known strict NCI languages are Serbian/Croatian, Hungarian, Japanese and Greek. Consider the examples from Serbian/Croatian, taken from Progovac (1994).

(48) a. *Milan \*(ne) vidi ništa.*

Milan not see-3SG n-thing

‘Milan cannot see anything.’

b. *Milan nikada \*(ne) vozi.*

Milan n-when not drive.3SG

‘Milan never drives.’

The examples in (48a) and (48b) show that the presence of negation is obligatory at all times. Its absence would lead to ungrammaticality. Note that this is also the case even if there is more than one NCI in the structure. Consider the examples below from Greek and Hungarian respectively, taken from Giannakidou (2006).

(49) a. *KANENAS \*(dhen) ipe TIPOTA.*<sup>9</sup> (Greek)

n-person not said.3SG n-thing

‘Nobody said anything.’

<sup>9</sup> Upper-case letters in the Greek NCIs indicate that they are pronounced emphatically.

b. *Balázs \*(nem) beszélt senkivel semmiröl. (Hungarian)*

Balázs not spoke.3SG n-person n-thing

‘Balázs did not talk about anything with anybody.’

On the other hand, in non-strict NC languages such as Italian and Spanish, the presence of sentential negation is not always required. If there is more than one NCI, the former can license the latter. This is a phenomenon called negative spread (den Besten, 1986) and is illustrated in (50) and (51).

(50) *Nessuno ha letto niente. (Italian)*

n-person have.3SG read n-thing

‘Nobody read anything.’

(51) *Nadie dijo nada. (Spanish)*

n-person said.3SG n-thing

‘Nobody said anything.’

The important thing in (50) and (51) is that the insertion of sentential negation would lead to a double negation reading in the structure.

In addition to that, in non-strict NC languages NCIs can appear pre-verbally in the absence of negation. Consider the Catalan examples below, taken from Vallduvi (1994).

(52) a. *No funciona res.*

no 3SG.work nothing

‘Nothing works.’

b. *Res (no) funciona.*

nothing no 3SG.work

‘Nothing works.’

(53) a. *No funciona mai.*

no 3SG.work never

‘It never works.’

b. *Mai (no) funciona.*

never no 3SG.work

'It never works.'

As shown in (52b) and (53b), sentential negation in Catalan is optional when the NCI is in the preverbal position.

The data in Section 4.1 and 4.2 showed that Turkish patterns with strict NC languages. This is because the presence of clause-mate negation is required at all times in order to license NCIs. This is true regardless of the number of NCIs in the structure. Moreover, negative spread that is observed in non-strict NC does not exist in the language. Therefore, the conclusion is that Turkish is a strict NC language. In the next section, I will give an overview of a number of theoretical accounts of negative concord and see whether any of them is compatible with the Turkish data.

## 5. Theoretical accounts of negative concord

One of the questions that has been asked and answered repeatedly in work on the negative concord phenomenon is whether it is possible to classify negative sensitive items in more general terms. Are there any elements that exhibit similar behavior? Are there any elements that are subject to the same constraints? There are several theoretical approaches that have addressed these issues across languages. They can be divided into two different groups, namely non-negative and negative approaches. The first group includes the (semantically) non-negative analyses. In this group, NCIs are treated either as (i) indefinites (Ladusaw, 1992, 1994; Acquaviva, 1993; Giannakidou and Quer, 1995; Giannakidou, 1997), as (ii) indefinites that are licensed in syntax through syntactic agreement (Ladusaw, 1992; Zeijlstra, 2004, 2008, 2013), or as (iii) universal quantifiers (Szabolcsi, 1981; Giannakidou, 1998, 2000, 2006). On the other hand, the negative approach includes the neg-absorption analysis by Zanuttini (1991), Haegeman and Zanuttini (1991, 1996), De Swart and Sag (2002), and De Swart (2010). Watanabe (2004) also argues for a negative approach whose analysis involves the theory of feature checking as well as feature copying.<sup>10</sup> In this section, I will consider two very influential analyses of negative concord and argue that the universal quantifier analysis seems to better account for the NC phenomena in Turkish.<sup>11</sup>

### 5.1. The indefinites approach

The main questions addressed in most analyses of negative concord are basically why NCIs are subject to certain syntactic and semantic licensing conditions. The first approach, initiated by Ladusaw (1992, 1994) and further developed by Acquaviva (1993), Giannakidou and Quer (1995) and Giannakidou (1997), holds the idea that NC is an instance of binding of indefinite elements. More specifically, NCIs are treated as indefinites that do not carry any quantificational force, an idea proposed by Kamp (1981) and Heim (1982) for indefinite NPs. What this means is that NCIs contribute only a free variable and a predicative condition on that variable. Consider the examples in (54).

(54) a. [[a person]] = **person** (x)

b. [[n-person]] = **person** (x)

<sup>10</sup> I will not discuss the neg-absorption analysis mostly because in this approach all n-words/NCIs are regarded as negative quantifiers and their negative force is absorbed through a semantic process.

<sup>11</sup> Note that an attempt to assess all the theoretical accounts of NC against the data presented here is beyond the scope of this paper.

According to this view, the denotation of the NCI in (54b) is no different from that of the indefinite noun phrase in (54a). In other words, there is no negation in its denotation and the NCI is just like regular indefinite NPs like *a person*, *some person* or *any person*. Nevertheless, NCIs are different from indefinites in one crucial respect, however, since they come with a “roofing” requirement (Ladusaw, 1992, 1994). This is something that NPIs like *any* are also subject to. The requirement states that NCIs need to be bound at the sentence level by existential closure under negation.

Another argument in favor of the indefinite analysis, discussed in Giannakidou and Zeijlstra (2017), is the fact that NCIs morphologically have an existential component that translates to *one*. This is observed in the Italian word ‘nessuno’ *n-body* where ‘uno’ means *one*. Similarly, the Greek word ‘kanenas’ has ‘enas’ which also has the same meaning. Let us now consider the morphological makeup of NCIs in Turkish.

(55) a. *kimse / hiçkimse*

b. *hiçbir şey / hiçbir yer / hiçbir öğrenci / hiçbir kimse*

c. *hiç / asla / sakın / katiyyen*

The data above show that some of these items do include the numeral ‘bir’ *one*, which is consistent with the examples in Italian and Greek. However, it should also be noted that this does not entirely reflect the paradigm, as it is the only one that has ‘bir’ in its morphological makeup. Therefore, it would not be reasonable to make the claim that NCIs morphologically reflect an existential component in the language. Besides, this is merely a morphological classification that does not address any issues with respect to syntax and semantics of these items.

Another argument that NCIs behave in a way similar to indefinites would be that just like indefinites, they can be licensed long distance. Note, however, that as it was discussed in detail in section 3.5, NCIs, unlike indefinites, cannot be licensed long distance in Turkish. Some examples are repeated below for convenience.

(56) a. \**Ahmet [hiçkimse-nin burada ol-duğ-u]-nu bil-mi-yor-du.*

Ahmet no one-GEN here be-VN-3SG-ACC know-NEG-PROG-PAST

‘Ahmet didn’t know that no one was here.’

b. \**Ahmet [oraya hiç git-tiğ-im-i] bil-mi-yor.*

Ahmet there never go-NEG-VN-1SG-ACC know-NEG-PROG

‘Ahmet does not know I never went there.’

The conclusion here is that if NCIs were indefinites, we should not be able to observe any locality constraints since indefinites have unbounded scope across languages. In the following section, I will consider the universal quantifier approach and see if NCIs in Turkish share any of the characteristics of universal quantifiers.

## 5.2. The universal quantifier approach

It was shown in previous studies that there are close similarities between NCIs and universal quantifiers across languages. For instance, Szabolcsi (1981), in an earlier paper, investigates the behavior of NCIs in Hungarian and analyzes them as universal quantifiers. This idea is also found in the analyses of other languages such as Greek (Giannakidou, 1998, 2000, 2006), Japanese (Shimoyama, 2011) and Korean (Sells and Kim, 2006; Yoon, 2008). Similarly, Giannakidou (2000, 2006) shows that there are certain significant characteristics that NCIs as universal quantifiers have in common across languages. The first criterion that Giannakidou provides is NCIs are licensed only by local negation; long distance licensing may be allowed only through transparent domains (infinitival and subjunctive clause). The second one is that these elements can be modified by adverbial modifiers corresponding to *almost / absolutely*. As already shown in Section 3.2 and 3.5, Turkish NCIs meet both criteria. In that sense, as far as these two criteria are concerned, their behavior is similar to that of universal quantifiers. Note that these two are taken as such significant criteria in some negative concord analyses since they make a sharp distinction between indefinite/existential and universal quantification.

The third criterion, on the other hand, states that like universals, and unlike existential quantifiers, NCIs cannot be used as predicate nominals (Giannakidou and Quer, 1995). Let us now consider the Turkish data in (57).

(57) a. *O bir pilot değil.*

s/he one pilot NEG.COP

‘S/he is not a pilot.’

b. *\*O hiçbir pilot değil.*

s/he not one pilot NEG.COP

‘S/he is no pilot.’

The ungrammaticality of (57b) indicates that NCIs cannot be used as predicate nominals in Turkish. Note that the sentence in (58) is grammatical but the truth condition of the sentence is quite different from the one in (57a).

(58) *O hiç (te) pilot değil.*

s/he never FOC pilot NEG.COP

‘S/he is no pilot (at all).’

The sentence in (58) differs from the one in (57a) in terms of its meaning. As noted by Giannakidou (2000) and Giannakidou and Zeijlstra (2017), this kind of difference between an NCI and an indefinite is evaluative in nature and results in a truth-conditional difference. In the latter, the person in question can still be a pilot but not a good one. On the other hand, the former sentence is just a natural

statement and the person happens to be not a pilot by profession. Note, however, that the negative existential in (59) is fine.

(59) *Ahmet-in bu konu-yla hiçbir ilgi-si yok.*

Ahmet-GEN this topic-with not one interest-3POSS not.exist

'Ahmet has nothing to do with this issue.'

This suggests that NCIs in Turkish may be interpreted as existentials as well.

The next diagnostic is about existential commitment. NCIs are argued to express existential commitment since they are interpreted with a non-empty restriction, a property also shared by universal quantifiers. When we consider the same phenomenon in Turkish, we observe that the universal quantifier and the NCIs behave similarly with respect to existential commitment. Consider the sentences in (60) and (61).

(60) *#Ahmet hiçbir ejderha-yı gör-me-di.*

Ahmet not one dragon-ACC see-NEG-PAST

'Ahmet saw none of the dragons.'

(61) *#Ahmet her ejderha-yı gör-me-di.*

Ahmet every dragon-ACC see-NEG-PAST

'Ahmet did not see every dragon.'

The sentence in (60) is somewhat odd. Its reading involves the inference that dragons do exist, which leads to the oddity of the sentence. This is also the case with the universal quantifier 'her' *every* in (61). Again, the oddity comes from the fact that the universal quantifier is associated with existence inference. The existence inference of universal statements is generally regarded as presupposition (Strawson, 1952; Giannakidou, 2000). The presence of accusative-case marking in (60) and (61) is obligatory and accusative-marked NPs are interpreted presuppositionally (Kelepir 2001). Thus the set of references is non-empty since the set is presupposed. Note, however, that NCIs in Turkish do not need to be invariably presuppositional, as shown below.

(62) a. *Su iç-en hiçbir ejderha gör-me-di-m.*

water drink-SR not one dragon see-NEG-PAST-1SG

'I haven't seen any water-drinking dragon.'

b. *Bir problem gör-me-di-m çünkü hiçbir problem yok.*

one problem see-NEG-PAST-1SG because not one problem not.exist

'I didn't see a problem because there is not any problem.'

The example in (62a) illustrates that NCIs do not always require accusative-case marking. In other words, it does not get interpreted presuppositionality. Similarly, existential commitment is not necessarily generated in (62b) where both the indefinite and the NCI co-occur.

The final diagnostic is concerned with whether an NCI can be moved to a peripheral position through topicalization. The idea here is that universal quantifiers generally refer to familiar discourse entities and hence they are good candidates for topics. Therefore, they are able to go through syntactic movement. This is something an indefinite or existential cannot do as an indefinite carries new information and cannot be a topic (Cinque, 1990; Giannakidou, 2000, 2006; Suranyi, 2002). When we consider the Turkish data, we observe that topicalization of the NCIs to the left periphery is allowed so long as it obeys locality.

(63) a. *Hiçbir çocuk<sub>i</sub>-la [Ülkü bu konu-da t<sub>i</sub> konuş-ma-dı].*

not one kid-with Ülkü this matter-LOC talk-NEG-PAST

‘No children, Ülkü talked to about this matter.’

b. *\*Hiçkimse-yi Ali [Ahmet-in t<sub>i</sub> gör-me-diğ-in-i] söyle-di.*

no one-ACC Ali Ahmet-GEN see-NEG-FNOM-3POSS-ACC say-NEG-PAST

‘Ali said that Ahmet did not see anyone.’

c. *\*Asla<sub>i</sub> Ali [Ahmet-in o-na t<sub>i</sub> inan-ma-dığ-in-i] söyle-di.*

never Ali Ahmet-GEN him-DAT believe-NEG-FNOM-3POSS-ACC say-PAST

‘Ali said that Ahmet never believed him.’

The grammaticality of (63a), as opposed to the ungrammaticality of (63b) and (63c) clearly indicates that Turkish NCIs, just like universals, can be topicalized provided that it is not long distance movement.

In this section, the question whether it is possible to classify Turkish NCIs has been explored. More specifically, based on a number of criteria the issue whether NCIs in Turkish behave more like indefinites/existentials or universal quantifiers has been explored. It was shown that NCIs in Turkish display certain characteristics similar to existential quantifiers in terms of morphological criteria. However, it was also shown that they share certain syntactic and semantics characteristics with universal quantifiers. Nevertheless, some diagnostics indicated that NCIs in Turkish do not always behave like universal quantifiers. In other words, they display the characteristics of both existential and universal quantification. The question that arises then is why this could be the case. One of the reasons would be that Turkish is a language that encodes both existential and universal negation by way of NCIs. If this is the case, then it follows that NCIs should be expected to display both existential and universal quantifier characteristics in the language. Note that this conclusion is compatible with Giannakidou’s (2000, 2006) prediction that there could be languages that realize both universal and existential negation through n-words/NCIs. In her work on negative dependencies in Greek, Giannakidou concluded that n-words/NCIs in languages like Greek are either universals (emphatic n-

words) or only existentials (non-emphatic n-words), allowing both of them and splitting both readings. Some Slavic NCIs, on the other hand, exhibit the properties of both existentials and universals, putting the semantic distinction between a universal and existential quantifier under negation together. Similarly, Surányi (2008) concludes that in certain cases NCIs/n-words in Hungarian can also be interpreted as universal quantifiers; however, in other instances that they can have the existentially quantified reading. The findings above indicate that Turkish patterns with Hungarian and Slavic languages in the sense that NCIs do not always correspond to universal quantification under negation. There is no lexical distinction in the negative concord paradigm that would indicate a split between existential and universal negation.

## 6. Conclusion

In this paper, the nature of negative sensitive elements in Turkish was investigated. Based on a set of criteria proposed in previous work, it was shown that the negative elements have the syntactic and semantic characteristics of NCIs rather than NPIs in the language. That finding and other pieces of evidence have led to the conclusion that Turkish is a strict negative concord language. It was also shown that Turkish NCIs display certain characteristics similar to universal quantifiers and not the existential quantifier or indefinites with respect to modifiability and locality. However, the analysis also indicated that NCIs do not always have the universal quantifier reading. For future work, it would be worthwhile to investigate the interaction of negation with different elements such as quantifiers and other negative elements in the language.

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