Discursive Features of Operation Manuals in Terms of Technical Communication

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Abstract

When consumers are in need of help concerning how to use electrical equipment they immediately take a quick look at household product manuals. Generally, household consumer product manuals contain a contents section and there are other sections such as safety rules, technical features, the use of the product, the use of the accessories, maintenance and cleaning. Product manuals are designed for a specific reader with the aim of giving the needed information. Thus, they can be thought as representing a register of their own. In order to understand these registers there are three contextual parameters which are field, tenor and mode variables. Field of discourse refers to the subject and focus of interaction. Tenor of discourse marks the relationship between the interactants. Mode of discourse refers to spoken or written interaction. These three contextual parameters are represented through three meanings; ideational, interpersonal and textual. Concerning the linguistic analysis of the study, Halliday's systemic functional grammar is applied to operational manuals. The linguistic analysis concerns 3 meanings: ideational, interpersonal and textual. In terms of ideational meaning the linguistic categories used in the analysis can be listed as follows: a) Second Person Pronoun forms b) Verb Type: Material verbs, Mental verbs, Existential verbs, Relational verbs, Behavioural verbs, Verbal verbs. In terms of interpersonal meaning, the linguistic categories used are the modal types and they can be listed as following: a) Possibility modal, b) Necessity modal, c) Imperative modal, d) Prediction modal and e) Declarative modal. In terms of the textual meaning the following linguistic categories can be listed: a) Voice: Active, Passive, Causative b) Possessive reference and c) Ellipsis. The corpus of the study consists of 10 operation manuals of the Turkish brands as Arçelik, Beko, Sinbo which are listed in the appendix section of the study. Considering the fact that foreign brands are almost always translated into Turkish, they are not taken into consideration in this study. The sample consisted of 661 sentences. Afterwards, linguistic categories were identified and calculated in Turkish user's manuals through SPSS frequency analysis and presented via tables. The findings of the study indicate that in technical communication product manuals indeed have a special register of their own.

Keywords: Register Analysis, Technical Discourse, Technical Communication, Household Product Manuals

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Öz

Tüketiciler elektrikli bir aleti nasıl kullanmaları gerektiği konusunda yardıma ihtiyaç duyduklarında, kullanım kılavuzlarına başvururlar. Kullanım kılavuzları belirli bir alıcıya yönelik gerekli bilgiyi iletmek amacıyla düzenlenmiştir. Kullanım kılavuzları gerekli bilgiyi iletmek amacıyla güvenlik kuralları, teknik özellikler, ürün kullanımı, donatıların kullanımı, temizlik ve bakım gibi kısımlardan oluşmaktadır. Bu sebeple, kullanım kılavuzlarının kendilerine özgü özel bir dil kesiti olduğu düşünülebilir. Kesitleri anlamak için alan, anlam ve biçim olarak adlandırılan üç durumsal parametre bulunmaktadır. Söylem alanı özneyi ve iletişim odağını tanımlar. Söylem anlamı katılımcılar arasındaki iletişimi tanımlar ve söylem biçimi yazılı veya sözlü iletişimi ifade eder. Bu üç bağlamsal parametre düşünsel anlam, kişilerarası anlam ve metinsel anlam gibi üç anlamla ifade edilmektedir. Dilsel inceleme çerçevesinde, Halliday'in dizgesel-işlevsel dilbilgisi kuramı kullanım kılavuzlarına uygulanmıştır. Dilsel inceleme daha önceden sözedilen bu 3 anlamı içermektedir. Bunlar düşünsel anlam, kişilerarası anlam ve metinsel anlamlardır. İncelemede düşünsel anlam bağlamında çözümlenen kategoriler aşağıdaki şekilde listelenmiştir: a) İkinci kişi zamir ekleri b) Fiil çeşitleri: Eylemsel Fiiller, Zihinsel Fiiller, Varoluşsal Fiiller, İlişkisel Fiiller, Davranışsal Fiiller, Sözel Fiiller. Kişilerarası anlam bağlamında ise aşağıdaki dilsel kategoriler çözümlenmiştir: a) Olasılık kipi b) Gereklilik kipi c) Emir kipi d) Öngörü kipi ve e) Bildiri kipi.

Metinsel anlam bağlamındaki kategoriler ise aşağıdaki kategorilerdir: a) Çatı: Etken, Edilgen, Ettirgen b) iyelik gönderimi ve c) Eksiltili yapılar. Çalışmanın bütüncesini ekler kısmında listelenen Arçelik, Beko, Sinbo gibi Türk markalarına ait 10 adet kullanma kılavuzu oluşturmaktadır. Yabancı markalar çeviri olmalarında dolayı çalışmaya dahil edilmemişlerdir. Örneklem 661 cümleden oluşmaktadır. Kullanım kılavuzlarındaki söylem özellikleri sayılarak kullanım sıklıkları ve yüzdeleri tablolar halinde belirtilmiştir. Araştırmanın bulguları kullanım kılavuzlarının kendine özgü bir dil kesiti olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Kesit İncelemesi, Teknik Söylem, Teknik İletişim, Elektrikli Ev Aletleri Kullanım Kılavuzu

1. Introduction

The importance of all types of consumer product manuals is indisputable for anyone who tries to use an electrical appliance. Due to this reason, consumer product user manuals are designed in order to transfer information to the customer within the framework of legal code no.4077 article 5 (http://www.tüketiciler.org/) which is concerned with the regulation about the necessity of organization and introduction of user manuals. In accordance with this law, customers have the chance to buy the product they need and have the right to obtain detailed information with the help of product manuals. Thematically, household consumer product manuals have sections such as safety rules, technical features, steps about how to use the product, accessory usage, maintenance and cleaning. Thus, it is possible to think that operation manuals establish technical communication. The per-

son who gives technical information to consumers is termed "technical communicator" (Lannon, 2006, p. 2). McMurrey (2002, p. 3) states that the term "technical" is a term that covers not only computer and electronics but at the same time it is a term covering carpentry, plumbing, car repair, hair styling, cooking and massage therapy. Lannon (2006, p.3) states that technical communication is a user-centered type of communication. Due to this reason the technical communicator should know how to establish communication with the product users or readers. The reader or product user may be a scientist, an engineer, a director, a lawyer or a layman (Lannon, 2006, p. 28). According to Lannon (2006, p.2) non-technical readers need a document that will not waste their time and energy. He states that the instructions in product manuals must be very clear and comprehensible due to the fact that the product user or the reader gets into action immediately after taking a quick look at the manual. In order to appeal to the product user Lannon (2006, p.547) advices the technical communicator to use second person forms, possessive pronouns, active verbs and imperative mood. As Turkish operation manuals have not been studied before, this study aims to analyze Turkish operation manuals in terms of discursive features.

2. Register Variables and Metafunction Relations

Register is a variety of language defined according to its use in certain social situations (Crystal, 1992, p. 330). Registers differ from each other in terms of their distinctive grammar and lexical structure (Richards, Platt, Platt, 1992, p. 313). Many discourse fields have their own register (Finch, 2000). Thus, defining the characteristic features of registers is a very important field of study.

In order to define registers Halliday (cited in Eggins, 2004, p. 110) states three different contextual features as "field of discourse," "tenor of discourse" and "mode of discourse." According to Eggins (2004, p.90), texts differ from each other due to these three types of variables. Field of discourse marks the subject and focus of interaction. Tenor of discourse marks the relationship between the interactants. Mode of discourse defines whether the interaction is written or oral. In this study, these contextual features will be used in order to analyze the features of consumer product manuals.

3. Purpose and Method

The study aims at defining the discoursive features of operation manuals in terms of Halliday's systemic functional grammar. In terms of linguistic analysis, Halliday proposes three types of meanings. These are ideational meaning, interpersonal meaning and textual meaning as mentioned in part 2. In this study, register description of operation manuals will be carried out through Halliday's Systemic Grammar. In terms of ideational

meaning the linguistic categories used in the analysis can be listed as follows: a)Second Person Pronoun Forms, b)Verb Type: Material Verbs, Mental Verbs, Existential Verbs, Relational Verbs, Behavioural Verbs, Verbal Verbs.

In terms of interpersonal meaning, the linguistic categories employed are the modal types and they can be listed as the following: a) Possibility Modal, b) Necessity Modal, c) Imperative Modal, d) Prediction Modal and e) Declarative Modal

Furthermore in the textual meaning section of the study the following linguistic categories can be listed as: a) Voice: Active, Passive, Causative, b) Possessive Reference and c) Ellipsis.

The corpus of the study consists of 10 operation manuals of the Turkish brands as Arçelik, Beko, Sinbo which are listed in the appendix section of the study. Considering the fact that foreign brands are almost always translated into Turkish, they are not taken into consideration in this study. The sample consisted of 661 sentences. Afterwards, the linguistic categories were identified and calculated in Turkish product manuals through SPSS frequency analysis and presented via tables. The linguistic categories that were employed frequently in terms of ideational meaning, interpersonal meaning and textual meaning were analyzed in this part of the study in order to observe the general features of Turkish technical communication. In order to comment on the frequencies of the linguistic categories the statistical rates were grouped into four according to high or low percentages in the following: 1) significantly used linguistic categories (100-40%); 2) moderately used linguistic categories (40-10%); 3) infrequently used linguistic categories (10-1%); and 4) statistically insignificant linguistic categories (lower than 0%).

4. Analysis and Findings

4.1. Ideational Meaning

The register variable "ideational meaning" can be observed through transitivity patterns. Thus, in terms of the ideational meaning the following linguistic components will be analysed: a) Second Person Forms and Verb Types: Material verbs, Mental verbs, Existential verbs, Relational verbs, Behavioural verbs and Verbal verbs.

a) Second Person Forms

According to Lannon (2006, p. 276), in order to communicate with the consumers and to reach them easily, the best way is to use personal pronoun "you" which is addressed to the user of the household appliance. Simpson and Mayr (2010, p. 92) state the reason for the use of personal pronoun forms by saying that people want to be treated individually rather than as being part of a mass audience, especially in western societies. Pronouns are represented in three ways in Turkish. The first way is to employ subject pronouns. The second way is to omit subject pronouns from the sentence and mark the pre-

dicates with the appropriate inflections –In and –InIz to mark the direct addressee forms. Third way is to use both subject pronoun and inflection –In and –InIz. The suffix –In is used for indicating familiarity while the suffix –InIz is used for indicating formality in discourse. As stated previously, Turkish main clause predicates are marked for person and it is possible to omit subject pronouns from the sentences. Second person familiar suffix –In and formal suffix –InIz is employed to refer to direct addressee form "you" (Göksel and Kerslake, 2005, p. 273).

As an example for the use of these familiar and formal suffixes the following sentences can be given:

1. Süpürgeyi kablosundan taşımay**ın** veya çekiştirmey**in**. (Sinbo Elektrikli Süpürge Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 2) **(Familiar Suffix -In)**

    Please do not carry or tug at the vacuum cleaner by the cord. (Sinbo Vacuum Cleaner Operation Manual p. 2)

2. Arızalı cihazı kullanmaya çalışmay**ınız**. (Sinbo Elektrikli Süpürge Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 2) **(Formal suffix -InIz)**

    Do not try to start a faulty device. (Sinbo Vacuum Cleaner Operation Manual p. 2)

In order to observe the frequency of formal and familiar suffixes used in the sample, a distinction was made between the two suffixes and the sentences were grouped as the ones that use familiar suffix and the ones that use formal suffix accordingly. Table 1 demonstrates the use of formal and familiar suffixes in Turkish household manuals:

Table 1: Frequency of formal and familiar suffixes employed in technical manuals

	Frequency	Percentage
Formal –Inız Suffix	257	64,9
Familiar –In Suffix	139	35,1
Total	396	100,0
Missing	265	
Total	661	

Table 1 indicates that of the 396 sentences 257 (64,9%) sentences used formal forms with the suffix -Inız while 139 (35,1 %) sentences used familiar forms with the suffix –In. This demonstrates the fact that 64,9% of the sentences use formal forms while 35,1% of the sentences contain familiar forms. Consequently, it is possible to say that Turkish technical manuals use formal forms more often than the familiar forms. Furthermore, another issue to be mentioned is that throughout the study in the sample there were no direct subject pronouns used. This finding demonstrates that the technical communicator does not prefer to use direct subject pronoun "you" when communicating with the product user.

It seems that the technical communicator refrains from establishing an informal communication with the product user and he achieves formality only by employing appropriate inflections –In and –InIz to mark the direct addressee forms. In other words, the technical communicator establishes contact with the product user but at the same time he keeps his formality by omitting the direct address forms when communicating.

In the same vein, in order to observe the density of the direct address forms in the sample the predicates of sentences used in technical manuals were grouped as the ones referring to the direct addressee and the ones that did not refer to the direct addressee which is labeled as "others." For example, the following example sentence which includes passive form is grouped as "others" due to not referring to a particular addressee:

Çok soğuk camları silerken dikkat edilmelidir. (Beko Buharlı Temizleyici Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 8)

Care must be taken while cleaning very cold glass. (Beko Steam Cleaner Operation Manual p. 8)

Thus, table 2 demonstrates the frequencies of direct addressee usage and sentences including other forms in Turkish household manuals:

Table 2: Frequency of Direct Addressee Employment in Technical Manuals

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Address form "You" (reference to you)	396	60.2
Other forms (sentences not directed to the form "you"	265	39.8
Total	661	100.0

Table 2 indicates the use of direct addressee form "you" in predicates via –In and –InIz suffixes. In table 1, we observe the employment of –In and –InIz suffixes while table 2 indicates the use of direct addressee form "you." The employment of direct addressee forms is found to be significant in operation manuals. It can be observed from the table that out of 661 sentences, 396 (60.2%) sentences refer to the addressee directly through "you" forms. This demonstrates the fact that most of the sentences explaining the use of household equipment establish direct contact through the use of "you" form. In other words, as stated by Simpson and Mayr (2010, p. 92), Turkish household manuals, just as in western societies, refer to the product user directly in order to be reader-friendly. In the sample, out of 661 sentences, 265 (39. 8%) sentences do not refer to the addresse "you" and due to this reason they are grouped as "others." It has been observed that 60.2% of the sentences refer to the addressee, who is the product user directly, which may create a positive effect on the product user and stimulate him or her into action to immediately use the household appliance.

b) Verb Types

Verb types carry importance in the organization of operational manuals because verbs represent experienced patterns in the physical or abstract world (Simpson, 2004). Thus, it is essential to analyze verb employment in household user manuals and table 3 demonstrates the use of the different types of verbs in Turkish manuals:

Table 3: Frequency of Verb Types Employed in Operational Manuals

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Material Verbs	545	82.5
Relational Verbs	69	10.4
Cognitive Verbs	37	5.6
Existential Verbs	9	1.4
Behavioural Verbs	1	0.2
Total	661	100.0

According to Table 3,in the sample material verbs that can be defined as verbs of "doing" such as kill, fell, ran away are significantly used while relational verbs which give meanings of states of "being" as in the example sentence "We were in the house" are moderately used in the sample. Cognitive verbs, existential verbs, behavioural verbs are infrequently used. Out of 661 sentences, 545 (82.5%) contain material verbs of "doing." As an example for material verbs the following example can be given:

1. Lütfen bu kılavuzu dikkatlice okuyunuz ve gelecekte başvurmak üzere **saklayınız.** (Arçelik Yumurta Pişirme Makinesi p. 3)

    Please read this operation manual carefully and keep it available for reference in the future. (Arçelik Egg Cooker Operation Manual p. 3)

This rate demonstrates the fact that in Turkish technical manuals material verbs, i.e. action verbs, are employed frequently. In other words, to encourage the product user into using the household device the technical communicator uses action verbs. The frequent use of material verbs indicates the fact that technical manuals are highly instructional texts.

Out of 661 sentences 69 sentences (10.4%) are made with relational verbs. These verbs give meaning to states of "being." A related example concerning the use of relational verbs in the product manuals is as follows:

1. Ürünün üzerinde bulunan işaretlemelerde veya ürünle birlikte verilen diğer basılı dökümanlarda beyan edilen değerler, ilgili standartlara göre laboratuar ortamında elde edilen **değerlerdir**. (Beko Süpürge Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 3)

    The values declared in the markings found on the product, or in the printed documents given together with the product are the values obtained in the labora-

tory medium according to the related standards. (Beko Vacuum Cleaner Operation Manual p. 3)

It has been observed that infrequently employed verbs are cognitive verbs which are verbs such as thinking, knowing and understanding (Halliday, 1985, p. 111). Out of 661 sentences, 37 (5.6%) sentences contain cognitive verbs. A related example concerning the use of cognition verbs in the sample is as follows:

1. Kabloyu keskin kenarlardan, sıcak yüzeylerden koruyunuz ve kapı aralıklarına sıkışmamasına dikkat ediniz. (Beko Elektrikli Süpürge Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 2)

    Protect the cord from sharp edges and hot surfaces, and make sure that it does not get stuck in the doorways. (Beko Vacuum Cleaner Operation Manual p. 2)

Another infrequently employed verb in operation manuals is existential verbs. These verbs describe that "something happens or exists." The number of existential verb use is 9 (1,4%). A related example concerning the use of existential verbs in the product manuals is as follows:

1. Genellikle otomobil motor ve jantlarının temizlenmesinde kullanılmakla birlikte daha birçok yerde kullanılmakla birlikte daha birçok yerde kullanım alanı **vardır**. (Beko Buharlı Temizleyici Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 8)

    Apart from being generally used in cleaning the car engines and the wheel rims, it has areas of use in many more places (Beko Steam Cleaner Operation Manual p. 8)

In addition, in the sample behavioural verb use is only 1 sentence (0.2%). The related example is as follows:

1. Çocukların ürünle oynamasına izin vermeyin ve kullanırken zarar görmelerini önlemek için daima çocukları dikkatli bir şekilde **izleyin**. (Arçelik Su Isıtıcısı Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 2)

    Do not permit the children play with the appliance and for the children not to have any damage it is always essential to watch them carefully.

In the sample, it was observed that material verbs were employed significantly while cognitive verbs, existential verbs and behavioural verbs were infrequently employed. Since household manuals are giving instructions on how to use the equipment material verbs are employed frequently. Since manuals do not argue about an opinion cognitive verbs are infrequently employed and manuals are not texts reflecting experiences existential verbs and behavioural verbs are also infrequently employed. Thus, manuals are texts that can not be considered as complex texts and they only aim at giving instructions on how to use the household appliance (Eggins, 2004, pp. 233-240).

4.2. Interpersonal Meaning

The tenor variable denotes social role relationships between people (Eggins, 1994, p. 63). Formal and informal discourses are the two opposite variables of this interpersonal meaning. In defining the relation between product user and the technical communicator the relation may be thought to represent an unequal relation that can be observed between a student and a teacher. The product producer has knowledge about the situation and is an expert on the topic (Eggins, 2004). Because of this, the product user or the consumer wants to get the information from the technical communicator. Grammatically, moods and modality choices can define the interpersonal relations between the people communicating with each other (Lassen, 2003). In Turkish there are five types of modals for expressing the subjective attitude of the speaker. These are possibility modals, necessity modals, declarative modals, prediction modals and imperative modals.

Thus, in this section of the article the distribution of the modals in operation manuals are presented respectively.

Table 4 demonstrates the distribution of modal types in Turkish household manuals:

Table 4: Frequency of Modal Types employed in Technical Manuals

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Imperative	360	54.5
Declarative	128	19.10
Possibility	81	12.20
Prediction	46	7.0
Necessity	35	5.3
None existing	13	0.2
Total	661	100.0

Table 4 indicates the significant use of imperative modals in operation manuals. In Turkish –In suffix is added to the predicates for expressing commands. Out of 661 sentences, 360 sentences (54.5%) are formed of imperative forms. According to Simpson and Mayr imperatives serve to form an intimate and personal relationship between the technical communicator and the product user (2010, p. 92). A related example concerning the use of imperative modal is as follows:

1. Cihazı su haznesinde su olmaksızın çalıştırmayın. (Arçelik Sterilizatör Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 2)

    Do not operate the device without water in its water tank. (Arçelik Sterilizatör Operation Manual)

It has been found in the sample that declarative modals are moderately employed. The number of declarative modals in operation manuals is 126 (18.8%). The grammatical markers that express this type of modality are the aorist forms –(A/I)r /-mAz in verbal sentences and the modality marker –Dır in nominal sentences (Göksel and Kerslake, 2005, p. 339). Sansa Tura indicates that the suffixes IR and DIR fulfills the same functions (1986, p. 153).

An example of declarative modal found in the sample is as follows:

1. Ürün yerden kaldırma ya da devrilme durumunda otomatik olarak devreden çıkma özelliğine sahiptir. (Beko Fanlı Isıtıcı Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 5)

    The product has a property of being switched-off when it is picked up from the ground or overturning. (Beko Fan Heater Operation Manual p. 5)

The use of declarative modal indicates that operation manuals not only give commands through imperative forms but also they give information on how to use the product as well.

Another moderately employed modal is possibility modal which is indicated with the modal marker –(y) Abil in Turkish. The number of possibility modals found in the sample is 81 (12.20%) and this rate indicates that possibility modals are moderately employed. This employment of the modal indicates what the consumers can do with the product and gives information to the user. As an example for this modal the following Turkish sentence can be given:

1. Otomatik yumurta pişirici, aynı anda 6 yumurtayı bir arada **pişirebilir.** (Arçelik Yumurta Pişirme Makinesi Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 5)

    The automatic egg cooker can cook 6 eggs at the same time. (Arçelik Egg Cooker Operation Manual p. 5)

In operation manuals the infrequently employed modals are prediction modals and necessity modals. Among 661 predicates 46 (7.0%) are found to contain prediction modals which shows that prediction employment is infrequent. The suffix of this modal is –(y) ACAK and it indicates certainty and also it indicates what will happen in the future. The infrequent use of this modal in household manuals may be due to the fact that the manuals may refrain from stating certainty as this may reflect the subjectivity of the text producer, and the technical communicator aims to establish an objective viewpoint in explaining the household equipments. Furthermore, since technical manuals are not giving any information about the future –(y) ACAK suffix is infrequently employed. An example of the prediction modal in Turkish household manuals is as follows:

1. Aksi taktirde, piyasadan temin edebileceğiniz filtrelerin toz tutma kapasitesi yetersiz olduğundan, süpürgenizde oluşabilecek arızalara garanti dışı işlem **yapılacaktır**. (Beko Elektrikli Süpürge Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 7)

    Nonetheless, the dust holding capacity of the filters you can obtain from the market is insufficient, process outside the guarantee will be performed for the

faults that might arise in your vacuum cleaner. (Beko Vacuum Cleaner Operation Manual p. 7)

Another infrequently used modal in the sample is necessity modal. In Turkish obligation is indicated with the modal marker –mAlı. Out of 661 predicates, 35 (5.3%) are found to contain necessity modals. Turkish language employs necessity modals for giving advice. Thus, rather than giving advice on how to use the household equipment the technical communicator gives prescriptions on how to use the household equipment and because of this reason he may prefer to use this modal infrequently. An example concerning the use of necessity modals in Turkish product manuals is as follows:

1. Fanlı ısıtıcı ile diğer nesneler arasında 50 cm'lik mesafe **bırakılmalıdır**. (Beko Fanlı Isıtıcı Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 2)

   Distance of 50 cm must be left between the Fan Heater and the other objects. (Beko Fan Heater Operation Manual p. 2)

In the sample, it was observed that the necessity modals employed were at the same time in passive form. Thus, when the technical communicator needs to state a general rule that manual user must obey due to the event oriented nature of passive forms he will prefer to use the necessity forms and passive forms in combination with each other. As a result, by the help of necessitative and passive form combination the obligation becomes a general rule that everybody must obey and the imposing effect on the product user disappears completely.

4.3. Textual Meaning

The mode variable is represented via textual meaning. It can be interpreted as distinguishing the features between written language and spoken language. The components that are worth examining in this type of meaning are as follows: a) active sentences, passive sentences and causative sentences, b) Possessive references and c) ellipsis (Lassen, 2003). This section analyzes the use of aforementioned grammatical items.

a) Active Sentences, Passive Sentences and Causative Sentences

Active Sentences

A related example concerning the use of active forms in the sample is as follows:

1. Ürün devrede olduğu sürece şebeke lambası **yanacaktır**. (Beko Fanlı Isıtıcı Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 4)

   As soon as the product is on network the lamp will be on (Beko Fan Heater Operation Manual p. 4)

Passive Sentences

The main form of passive is the suffix {-IL} in Turkish but if there is a verb ending in a vowel or the consonant /l/, the passive suffix is {-In} in these cases (Kornfilt, 1997, p. 323).

A related example concerning the use of passive forms in the sample is as follows:

1. Toz fırçası kırılabilir hassas eşyaların ve perdelerin tozunu almak için **kullanılır**. (Beko Elektrikli Süpürge Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 6)

   The dust brush is used to take the dust of delicate goods and curtains (Beko Electrical Vacuum Cleaner Operation Manual p. 6)

Causative

A causative is formed by adding either the suffix {-DIR } or {-t } to the stem of the verb. A related example concerning the use of causative form in the sample is as follows:

1. Fanlı ısıtıcınızı kesinlikle su ile temas **ettirmeyiniz**. (Beko Fanlı Isıtıcı p.2, p. 6)

   Do not establish contact with water directly. (Beko Fan Heater p. 2, p. 6)

As can be observed from the examples in technical operation manuals, causative and negative form –mA is used in combination. As stated by Göksel and Kerslake if the performer of the action (the causee) is human or machine which can be considered to have power causative form is used (2005, p. 146).

Table 5 demonstrates the use of active, passive and causative sentences in Turkish household manuals:

Table 5: Frequency of Active, Passive and Causative Forms Employed in Technical Manuals

	Frequency	Percentage
Active	506	76.6
Passive	81	12.3
Causative	74	11.20
Total	661	100.0

According to the table, active sentences are significantly employed in the sample. Active sentences are 506 (76.6%) out of 661 sentences. Passive sentences and causative sentences are moderately used. Passive sentence use is 81 (12.3%) while causative employment is 74 (11.20%) sentences. It is possible to state that active sentence use has a higher frequency than passive sentence use. Although it is the property of written language to use passive structures frequently, it was observed in this study that Turkish technical manuals use active structures more frequently than passive structures. Active sentences carry importance in discourse because they put the emphasis on who is doing the action rather than the event itself (Leeuwen, 2009, p. 280). By the employment of active sentences the technical communicator gives the emphasis on the product user as it is the product user that will use the household equipment. Thus, the technical communicator establishes direct contact with the user and wants the product user to get into immediate action that is to be active in the event of using the household equipment after taking a quick look at the manual.

b) Possessive References

The use of personal pronoun "you" and the use of possessive reference is the best way to refer to the large audience or product user in isolation rather than referring to them as part of an audience. Possessive reference is indicated with possessive suffixes in a noun phrase.

An example for Possessive form in Turkish household manuals is as follows:

2. <u>Süpürgenizi</u> prize takılı bırakmayınız. (Beko Elektrikli Süpürge Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 2)

   Do not leave <u>your vacuum cleaner</u> plugged in. (Beko Vacuum Cleaner Operation Manual p. 2)

Table 6 indicates the frequencies of Possessive form use in Turkish household manuals:

Table 6: Frequencies of Possessive Forms Employed in Technical Manuals

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Others (not including possessive forms)	424	64.1
Possessive form Existing	237	35.9
Total	661	100.0

According to table 6, possessive form is moderately employed. The number of possessive forms in the sample is 237 (35.9%) sentences. The technical communicator aims at reaching the product user individually through these uses. Furthermore, the technical communicator indicates that the product user owns the household appliance.

c) Ellipsis

Ellipsis is defined as the "leaving- out" of a part of a sentence (or utterance), usually because it is assumed to be readily recoverable from somewhere in the text or to be understood from the immediate situation (Hillier, 2004, p. 251).

A related example concerning the use of ellipsis in Turkish household product manuals is as follows:

1. (Süpürgenizi) Kullanmadığınız zaman ve servis gerektiren durumlarda fişi prizden çekiniz. (Beko Elektrikli Süpürge Kullanma Kılavuzu p. 2)

   Unplug your vacuum cleaner when you are not using it and in the event it needs technical service. (Beko Vacuum Cleaner Operation Manual p. 2)

Table 7 demonstrates the frequencies of elliptical forms employed in Turkish user manuals:

Table 7: Frequencies of Elliptical Forms Employed in Technical Manuals

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Ellipsis (non existing)	536	81.1
Ellipsis (existing)	125	19.0
Total	661	100.0

According to table 7, elliptical expression is moderately employed in the sample. It can be observed that of 661 sentences analyzed 536 (81.1%) do not contain elliptical expression while 125 (19.0%) sentences contain elliptical forms. This finding indicates that operation manuals are short texts which are to the point and they are not time consuming because the product user will get into immediate action after having a quick look at the manual.

5. Overall Discussion and Conclusion

This study has aimed at delineating the borders of Turkish technical operation manuals. The linguistic categories that were employed frequently in terms of ideational meaning, interpersonal meaning and textual meaning will be explained in this part of the study in order to observe the general features of Turkish technical terminology in communication.

In terms of ideational meaning, suffixes –In and –InIz which indicate direct address form "You" is significantly employed. Of 661 sentences, 396 sentences refer to the addressee. Similar to the register of advertisements, it is possible to say that Turkish technical manuals employ direct addressee second person form "you" frequently (Simpson and Mayr, 2010, p. 90). The reason for the use of personal pronoun "you" is related to the fact that consumers want to be treated individually as in western societies. Thus, the technical communicator employs personalized "you" to establish direct contact with the product user. Furthermore, in the sample a distinction was made between the use of familiar suffix -In and formal suffix -InIz. It was found that Turkish operation manuals employ -InIz suffix more than the -In suffix. Thus, the technical writer prefers formal and polite forms in addressing the product user. Another linguistic category employed frequently is material verb use. In the sample out of 661 material verbs, 545 (82.5%) sentences use material verbs. The use of material verbs such as "keep," "connect" and "unplug" shows that the technical communicator tries to direct the product user into action immediately and he gets into personal contact with the product user. Thus, it can be said that technical operation manual texts are highly instructional.

In terms of interpersonal meaning, imperative modal use is observed in operation manuals. In other words, out of 661 sentences in the sample 360 sentences, (54.5%) are imperatives. In Turkish language in technical manuals it seems that to reflect the instrutional nature of household product use imperatives are frequently used.

In terms of textual meaning the only significant value is active sentence employment. In other words, of 661 sentences 506 sentences (76.6%) are found to be active. Since product manuals are addressed to the consumer agent, by the employment of active forms the product user becomes active. Through the use of active sentences, the technical communicator establishes direct contact with the product user.

To sum up, in the light of the analysis carried out in this study, it is possible to explain the basics of technical communication in terms of systemic functional grammar. The study indicates that technical communication is highly instructive. The language is designed so as to allow the technical communicator and the user of the household appliance to establish contact easily through reading the manual. The findings of the study indicate that operation manuals aim at helping the product user as quick as possible. As a result, it is possible to say that operation manuals have a special register of their own.

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Appendix: Manuals Employed in the Usage Manuals for Domestic Appliances

Arçelik Su Isıtıcı Kullanma Kılavuzu (Arçelik Water Heating Operation Manual)

Arçelik Sterilizatör Kullanma Kılavuzu K9610 (Arçelik K9610 Sterilizer Operation Manual)

Arçelik Biberon Isıtıcısı Kullanma Kılavuzu K9110 (Arçelik K9110 Feeding Bottle Heater Operation Manual)

Arçelik Yumurta Pişirme Makinesi Kullanma Kılavuzu K2810 (Arçelik K2810 Egg-boiler Machine Operation Manual)

Arçelik Buharlı Temizleyici Kullanma Kılavuzu BKK 1100 (Beko BKK 1100 Steam Cleaner Operation Manual)

Sinbo Elektrikli Süpürge Kullanma Kılavuzu SVC 3438 (Sinbo Vacuum Cleaner Operation Manual)

Beko Şarjlı Süpürge Kullanma Kılavuzu BKK 2171 (BKK 2171 Charged Vacuum Cleaner Operation Manual)

Beko El Blender Kullanma Kılavuzu BKK 2261 (BKK2261 Beko Hand Blender Operation Manual)

Beko Fanlı Isıtıcı Kullanma Kılavuzu BKK 2000 (Beko 2000 Fan Heater Operation Manual)

Beko Elektrikli Süpürge Kullanma Kılavuzu BKS 1270 EY (Beko Vacuum Cleaner Operation Manual)