

The combinations of a Finnish imperative-form verb and a clitic particle as constructions

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This presentation discusses the Finnish expressions that consist of a clitic particle (CLT) and a grammatically positive imperative-form verb (V_{IMP}) a clitic particle is attached to. The example 1 illustrates this kind of expression.

(1) *Muista-kin olla ajoissa.*

remember.IMP.SG2-CLT to be on time

‘Do remember to be on time.’

The meanings of the Finnish clitic particles have been considered complex to explain because of their very flexible, context dependent nature (e.g., Carlson 1993). For example, the definition of the clitic particle *-kin* includes the meanings ‘also’, ‘even’ and ‘anyway’. On the other hand, the meanings of the different clitic particles can also be very similar in some contexts (e.g., *Muista-kin olla ajoissa* ~ *Muista-pa olla ajoissa* ‘Remember to be on time’). However, the meanings of these kinds of minimal pairs predictably differ from each other in some way (Langacker 1988, 10–11; 2008, 439–440).

The presentation aims to illustrate the most common $V_{IMP}CLT$ combinations and their meanings. In this presentation, I consider these structures as constructions, within the framework of construction grammar (e.g., Goldberg 2006) and cognitive grammar (e.g., Langacker 2008). The constructional approach is useful especially when examining the clitic particles whose meanings are very flexible (e.g., Mäntylä 2020). This presentation is based on the data that consists of over 6 000 $V_{IMP}CLT$ examples collected from Suomi24 corpus that includes Finnish internet forum conversations from Suomi24 forum.

It seems that the expressions $V_{IMP}CLT$ are not arbitrary constructed, but some combinations of an imperative-form verb and a clitic particle are established with no strictly predictable meaning. According to the present findings, the combination of an imperative-form verb and the *kin*-particle tends to express the process in which a mental verb with the *kin*-particle has an infinitive verb or a clause as a complement. In the data, the most common finite imperative-form verbs with the *kin*-particle are *muistaa* (‘to remember’), *tietää* (‘to know’) *katsoa*, (‘to look’), *varoa* (‘to be careful’) and *uskaltaa* (‘to dare’). In contrast to the clitic particle *-kin*, the other Finnish clitic particles (*-pa*, *-pAs*, *-s* and *-hAn*) have not such a strong tendency to be attached to an imperative-form mental verb. Additionally, these mental verbs can also have a NP as a complement especially when existing with the clitic particles *-pa*, *-pAs*, *-s* and *-hAn*. The presentation illustrates in more detail about how the variant V_{IMPkin} differs from the other combinations of an imperative-form verb and a clitic particle and, more generally, how these expressions correspond to the definition of construction in terms of sufficient frequency and unpredictably meaning.

References

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