

Alternating partitive and additive *-kin* in Finnish: an unhappy association

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1. In short: additional indirect evidence for an NPI-analysis of ALT-PAR

- The distribution of the Finnish *optional* or *alternating partitive* (ALT-PAR) is strikingly similar to that of negative polarity items (Kaiser 2002, 2003), and ALT-PAR leads to a negative answer bias when used in polar interrogatives in the same way as certain Finnish NPis do (Hakulinen and Karlsson 1979, Heinämäki 1994, Kiparsky 1998, Kaiser 2002, 2003)
- I present additional indirect evidence for an NPI-analysis of ALT-PAR; in polar interrogatives, the ALT-PAR reading disappears when the additive clitic *-kin* ‘too, even’ associates with a PAR-bearing object
- In general, certain additives seem to be unable to associate with NPis; it is proposed that association with *-kin* can be used as a diagnostic for ALT-PAR vs. VP-PAR in other exceptional PAR-contexts

2. Object case alternation in Finnish polar interrogatives

- Object case-marking in Finnish depends on the boundedness of the VP (Kiparsky 1998)
 - bounded VP ⇒ accusative (ACC)
 - unbounded VP ⇒ partitive (PAR)
- Unboundedness can be due either to the properties of the verb/VP or the object
 - inherently unbounded verbs, negation, progressive ⇒ VP-related partitive (VP-PAR)
 - quantitatively indeterminate objects ⇒ NP-related partitive (NP-PAR)
- In absolutely positive polar interrogatives, the object of a bounded verb may carry ACC or PAR (Kaiser 2002, 2003); the same alternation is possible in absolutely negative polar interrogatives
 - partitive in polar interrogatives ⇒ alternating partitive (ALT-PAR)

(1) Interpretations of PAR with the inherently bounded *ostaa* ‘to buy’ in a declarative

a. Jesse	osti	poroa	NP-PAR:	✓	“Jesse bought (some) reindeer”
Jesse.NOM	bought	reindeer.PAR	VP-PAR:	✓	“Jesse was buying a reindeer, when...”
b. Jesse	ei	ostanut	NP-PAR:	✓	“Jesse didn’t buy (some) reindeer”
Jesse.NOM	NEG	buy.PPRT	VP-PAR:	✓	“Jesse wasn’t buying a reindeer, when...”
			VP-PAR:	✓	“Jesse didn’t buy a/the reindeer”

(2) Interpretations of PAR with the inherently bounded *ostaa* ‘to buy’ in a polar interrogative

a. Ostiko	Jesse	poroa?	NP-PAR:	✓	“Did Jesse buy (some) reindeer?”
bought.Q	Jesse.NOM	reindeer.PAR	VP-PAR:	✓	“Was Jesse buying a/the/ø reindeer...?”
			ALT-PAR:	✓	“Did Jesse buy a/the reindeer?”
b. Eikö	Jesse	ostanut	NP-PAR:	✓	“Didn’t Jesse buy (some) reindeer?”
NEG.Q	Jesse.NOM	buy.PPRT	VP-PAR:	✓	“Wasn’t J. buying a/the/ø reindeer...?”
			ALT-PAR:	✓	“Didn’t Jesse buy a/the reindeer?”

- The partitives classified as ALT-PAR in (2) could be instances of ALT-PAR or VP-PAR (covert negation in (2a), overt in (2b)). The data with *-kin* (sections 4-5) points to the former

3. The NPI-likeness of ALT-PAR

- Kaiser 2002, 2003: ALT-PAR behaves like negative polarity items (NPis)
- Restricted distribution in interrogatives: *ALT-PAR and *NPis in information-seeking *wh*-interrogatives, clefted interrogatives, and interrogatives with *only*

(3) Interpretations of PAR in contexts that also disallow NPis in Finnish

a. Kuka	osti	poroa?	NP-PAR:	✓	“Who bought (some) reindeer?”
who.NOM	bought	reindeer.PAR	VP-PAR:	✓	“Who was buying a/the/ø reindeer...?”
			ALT-PAR:	✗	“Who bought a/the reindeer?”
b. Poroako	Jesse	osti?	NP-PAR:	✓	“Was it (some) reindeer J. bought?”
reindeer.PAR.Q	Jesse.NOM	bought	VP-PAR:	✓	“Was it a/the/ø reindeer J. was buying...?”
			ALT-PAR:	✗	“Was it a/the reindeer J. bought?”
c. Ostiko	vain	Jesse	NP-PAR:	✓	“Did only J. buy (some) reindeer?”
bought.Q	only	Jesse.NOM	VP-PAR:	✓	“Was only J. buying a/the/ø reindeer...?”
			ALT-PAR:	✗	“Did only J. buy a/the reindeer?”

- Some NPI-licensors besides sentential negation, such as *tuskin* ‘unlikely, barely’, *harva* ‘few’, and *ennen kuin* ‘before’, allow for some kind of PAR on objects of bounded VPs. It is again unclear if this PAR should be identified as ALT-PAR or VP-PAR (due to negation)

(4) Interpretations of PAR in some NPI-licensing contexts

a. Tuskin	Jesse	poroa	ostaa	NP-PAR:	✓	“It’s unlikely J. will buy reindeer”
unlikely	Jesse.NOM	reindeer.PAR	buys	?-PAR:	✓	“It’s unlikely J. will buy a/the...”
b. Ennen kuin	ostat	poroa,	...	NP-PAR:	✓	“Before you buy reindeer...”
before	buy	reindeer.PAR		?-PAR:	✓	“Before you buy a/the reindeer...”

(5) Negative answer bias: both ALT-PAR and NPis may lead to an expectation of a negative answer

No, ostitko	sinä	sitä	poroa?	?-PAR:	✓	“Well, did you buy that reindeer?”
well bought.Q	you.NOM	that.PAR	reindeer.PAR			(negative answer expected)

4. Interaction with the enclitic additive focus particle *-kin*

- According to the traditional analysis, *-kin* and its negative polarity counterpart *-kAAn* only contribute an existential and/or scalar presupposition, the form of which is dependent on the associate of the focus-sensitive particle (Karttunen and Karttunen 1976, König 1991, i.a.)
- *-kin* and *-kAAn* could differ in their relative scope with respect to negation (Karttunen and Karttunen 1976), or in their lexical meaning (Rooth 1985, i.a.); the latter is assumed here

(6) Presuppositional content contributed by *-kin* and *-kAAn* (subject to vowel harmony)

a. Jessekin	lähti	i.	“[Jesse] _F left too”
Jesse.NOM.KIN	left		Asserted: Jesse left
			PS: ∃x (x ∈ Jesse _{ALT}) [left(x) = true]
		ii.	“Even [Jesse] _F left”
			Asserted: Jesse left
			PS: that Jesse leaves <likely that x (x ∈ Jesse _{ALT}) leaves
b. Jessekään	ei	lähtenyt	i.
Jesse.NOM.KAAN	NEG	leave.PPRT	“[Jesse] _F did not leave either”
			Asserted: Jesse did not leave
			PS: ∃x (x ∈ Jesse _{ALT}) [left(x) = false]
		ii.	“Even [Jesse] _F did not leave”
			Asserted: Jesse did not leave
			PS: that Jesse leaves >likely that x (x ∈ Jesse _{ALT}) leaves

- While *-kAAn* is quite clearly an NPI, *-kin* is not a positive polarity item (PPI); it may be in the scope of sentential negation if its presupposition is satisfied (Rullmann 2003)
- In polar interrogatives, however, only an NP-PAR interpretation is available for a PAR+*kin* object

(7) Partitive marking and *-kin* with sentential negation: a non-mass interpretation is available

a. Ostin	jo	hirven.	En	osta	poroakin
bought	already	elk.ACC	NEG	buy	reindeer.PAR.KIN
“I already bought an/the elk. I won’t buy a/the reindeer too”					
b. En	ostanut	hirveä.	#En	osta	poroakin
NEG	buy.PPRT	elk.PAR	NEG	buy	reindeer.PAR.KIN
“I didn’t buy an/the elk. I won’t buy a/the reindeer too”					

(8) Partitive marking and *-kin* in polar interrogatives: a non-mass interpretation is unavailable

Context: <i>Jesse osti hirven</i> ‘Jesse bought an elk’ / <i>Ostiko Jesse hirveä?</i> ‘Did Jesse buy an elk?’					
a. Ostiko	Jesse	poroakin?	NP-PAR:	✓	“Did J. buy [reindeer] _F too?”
bought	Jesse.NOM	reindeer.PAR.KIN	ALT-PAR:	✗	“Did J. buy [a/the reindeer] _F too?”
b. Eikö	Jesse	ostanut	NP-PAR:	✓	“Didn’t J. buy [reindeer] _F too?”
NEG	Jesse.NOM	buy.PPRT	ALT-PAR:	✗	“Didn’t J. buy [a/the reindeer] _F too?”

5. Using *-kin* as a diagnostic for ALT-PAR vs. VP-PAR

- All additives do not associate with NPis: while *either* can associate with an NPI-containing DP as long as its presupposition is satisfied in the context, *too* cannot (*assuming DET-*any* is F-marked)

(9) *Either* can associate with an NPI, but *too* cannot

- ✓ I already made the salad. I won’t make [the dessert]_F too
 - ✗ I already made the salad. I won’t make [*any* dessert]_F too
- ✓ I didn’t make the salad. And I won’t make [the dessert]_F either
 - ✓ I didn’t make the salad. And I won’t make [*any* dessert]_F either

- The non-mass interpretation of PAR+*kin* does **not** systematically disappear in all NPI-licensing contexts listed above for all speakers; although some speakers have stable acceptability judgments for polar interrogatives (✓ALT-PAR) and sentential negation (✓VP-PAR), they disagree on the other contexts ⇒ A proper acceptability judgment task must be run
- Next steps: i) determining the extent to which specific (telic) verbs lead to ACC vs. PAR marking on the object in the relevant contexts using corpora, and ii) sconstructing an acceptability judgment task with frequency-controlled items in felicitous contexts

(10) Non-mass interpretation of PAR+*kin* unavailable: indirect evidence for ALT-PAR (when ✓PS)

a. positive polar interrogatives	ALT-PAR:	✗	Ostiko Jesse poroakin? ⇒ (8a)
b. negative polar interrogatives	ALT-PAR:	✗	Eikö Jesse ostanut poroakin? ⇒ (8b)
c. <i>ennen kuin</i> ‘before’	ALT-PAR:	??	Ennen kuin Jesse ostaa poroakin

(11) Non-mass interpretation of PAR+*kin* available: indirect evidence for VP-PAR (when ✓PS)

a. negation	VP-PAR:	✓	En osta poroakin
b. <i>tuskin</i> ‘barely, unlikely’	VP-PAR:	??	Tuskin Jesse poroakin ostaa ⇒ (4a)
c. <i>harva</i> ‘few’	VP-PAR:	??	Harva ostaa poroakin

6. Summary

- An NPI-analysis of the *alternating partitive* (ALT-PAR) is supported by the loss of association between an additive clitic *-kin* ‘too, even’ and an ALT-PAR-object in polar interrogatives
- A controlled acceptability judgment test should be run to see whether exceptional PAR-marking in other NPI-contexts patterns with ALT-PAR or with VP-PAR (due to negation)

7. References

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