

Double Case in Finnish

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Case in and across Languages
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Overview

- 1 Introduction
- 2 On-going Phenomena
- 3 Emergent New Case
- 4 Explaining the Morphotactics
- 5 Theoretical Implications

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By Way of Introduction

- The current, standardized Finnish system has fifteen cases
- Six of these comprise the locative subsystem—inner and outer locative cases

<i>talossa</i>	'in the house'	<i>talolla</i>	'at the house'
<i>talosta</i>	'out of the house'	<i>talolta</i>	'from the house'
<i>taloon</i>	'into the house'	<i>talolle</i>	'to the house'

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Emergence of the Locative Subsystem

- The original three-way local system in Uralic languages was:
 - (non-directional) LOCATIVE $-nA$: 'being in or at somewhere'
 - (directional) SEPARATIVE $-tA$: 'moving from or further from somewhere'
 - (directional) LATIVE (possibly) $-*k$: 'moving towards or closer to somewhere'
- The “frame” elements, $-s-$ and $-l-$, were supposedly taken from other cases (or clitics) in the system, giving rise to, eg., $-*s+nA > -ssA$ 'INESSIVE'
- That is, a set of double cases is proposed for some historical period of Balto-Finnic languages

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On-going phenomena

- On-going instances of double-case can be classified into:
 - 1 reanalytic double case (“form drives meaning”),
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Reanalytic Double Case

- Stem + case is interpreted as simple adverbial stem
- eg., *sinällään* 'in itself, *per se*' (standard lg. *sinänsä*)
- ... which consists of
si + nä + llä + Vn
'it' + ESS + ADESS + POSS:3SG
- From the point of view of usage, the resulting form has only single case, although historically it carries the formatives of two

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Pleonastic Double Case

- The case formative is added repetitiously for apparent morphosyntactic reasons
- Case in point: *moni* 'many'
- PARTITIVE marks syntactically both the object and negation
- So: in positive sentences, *moni* takes now one PART formative (*monta*), in negative ones two (*montaa*, currently standardized)
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Motivation for a New Case

- Unlike closely related Estonian, Finnish does not have a Terminative case proper
- Finnish Translative case can however have a temporal terminative (*terminus ante quem*) interpretation
- The interpretation requires that the word in question can signify (or index) a point or a sequence in time; for instance:
 - *Tulen sinne kahdeksi* 'I'll be there by 2 [o'clock]'
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Translative of Demonstrative Pronouns

- The deictic nature of the demonstrative pronouns naturally satisfies the criterion (“time point or a sequence in time”)
- The singular forms *tämä* ‘this’ : *tuo* ‘that’ : *se* ‘it’ can denote a temporal as well as local points:
 - *Tästä eteenpäin* ‘From here on’ ~ ‘From now on’ (both a local and temporal interpretation)
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Conflicting Interpretations

- Thus, *siksi* has now two possible interpretations, both of which are quite frequent in everyday speech: a terminative and a causal
- Causal interpretation seems to be gaining ground
- This might result from iconic and indexical contacts with the question word *miksi* 'why' (the Translative of *mikä* 'what')
- For instance, there's the minimal question–answer pair *Miksi? — Siksi.* 'Why? — Because.'
- In most instances of use the two interpretations can be kept distinct but the conflict remains

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Terminative *-hVksi*

- A new word form, *siiheksi*, seems to solve the interpretation
- It is coined from the Illative of *se* where the Translative suffix is added
 - The Illative suffix is (here) *-hVn* (where *V* stands for the vowel immediately preceding the suffix) from which the final *-n* is often deleted before other suffixes
- *siiheksi* now denotes only the temporal terminative, 'until', 'by that time' function
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Frequency Data

- Most text corpora do not have a single instance of *siiheksi* since it is still strictly substandard form
- However, we can use Google:
 - *siiheksi*: 1,890 hits (a quick look testifies that most seem to be relevant here)
 - *tähäksi* (from *tämä* 'this'): 1 hit, quite relevant: *Tähäksi en ehdi käsitellä viestisi loppuosuutta*. 'Right now I don't have time to elaborate on the latter part of your message'
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Competing Explanations for the Constituent Order

- 1 Null hypothesis: “happenstance”—no specific reason to found
- 2 Salience: order motivated by the need to preserve the distinctive identities of the constituents
- 3 Rhythmic motivation: more natural rhythmic flow of the phonological material
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- Maybe ILL+TRANSL is more salient than TRANSL+ILL?
- If we are following the morphophonological rules of Finnish, the medial *-h-* in ILL only keeps a stem vowel apart from a short vowel in the case suffix
- Thus, we would not get *-*ksihin* in any case but *-*ksiin*
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- The syllabification of the former pattern would result in two heavy (more than two morae) syllables word-finally: *-k.siin*
- In contrast, *-hVksi* is syllabified *-hVk.si* where the final syllable is light (one mora)
- Cf. also Kalevi Wiik's " $2\frac{1}{2}$ morae rule" for Balto-Finnic rhythmic feet

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- Cf. the inner and outer locative cases:
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 - FRAME is either *-s-* for inner or *-l-* for outer locative cases
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- Thus there are morphemes and morphemes—a continuity of morphological independence

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Thank You!

- That's all folks!