

GASTVORTRAG

Some peculiarities of Finnish voice phenomena

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In this talk, I will discuss the category of voice in Finnish using the framework detailed in Zúñiga & Kittilä (2019). I will first discuss how the different voices are coded in Finnish, excluding naturally those that are not attested in the language (applicatives, antiapplicatives and antipassives). I will also discuss some voice-like phenomena like the so-called zero person, which shares several functional features with the passive. This will be followed by a more thorough discussion of some specific features of causatives, reflexives and passives, as these all comprise some formal/functional features that can be viewed as typologically interesting.

Causatives are extremely productive in Finnish; they can be formed basically from any verb (with some exceptions, such as the verb *antaa* ‘give’), and also basically from any noun (with varying functional consequences). Causatives are also recursive and one verb can easily get two, or even three, causative morphemes attached to it. Causatives are quite heterogeneous regarding their function; in addition to the prototypical agent-adding function, they can also decrease transitivity, and they very productively express the function ‘feel like having X’.

The most intriguing aspect of Finnish reflexives are the functional differences between transitive and intransitive reflexives (the former include a reflexive pronoun, the latter are expressed by a reflexive affix on the verb). Transitive reflexives can be formed basically from any transitive verb (keeping the semantic felicity of the produced constructions in mind), while intransitive reflexives can be formed only from a handful of verbs (most notably verbs of bodily grooming). The functional differences between the two reflexives are not entirely clear, but I will discuss some features that may be relevant in this regard.

Finally, the passive is also a very commonly used voice in Finnish, and even some meteorological verbs allow passivization. Passive is also one of the disputed categories of Finnish grammar, and I will discuss some reasons that have been given for against the presence of passive in the language.

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