

Partitive case and association with additives

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Finnish polar interrogatives and a handful of other contexts show an interesting pattern of object case-marking, where objects of bounded verbal predicates may carry partitive instead of accusative. This optional or alternating partitive has previously been linked to the partitive of negation due to the implicit negativity involved in its interpretation (Hakulinen and Karlsson 1979, Heinämäki 1994, Kiparsky 1998). More recently, Kaiser (2002, 2003) has shown that the distribution of the alternating partitive correlates with the distribution of negative polarity items (NPIs) in Finnish.

In this presentation, I discuss the results of an acceptability judgment experiment on the interaction of partitive object marking and the Finnish additive focus clitic *-kin* ‘also, even’ in different NPI-licensing contexts. Additive focus particles are compatible with sentential negation as long as their presuppositional requirements are satisfied in the context (Rullmann 2003), but they cannot associate with NPIs regardless of contextual felicity. Association with *-kin* can therefore provide evidence for classifying different negation-related uses of the Finnish partitive into partitive of negation (association with *-kin* is possible) and alternating NPI-partitive (association with *-kin* is not possible).

References

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