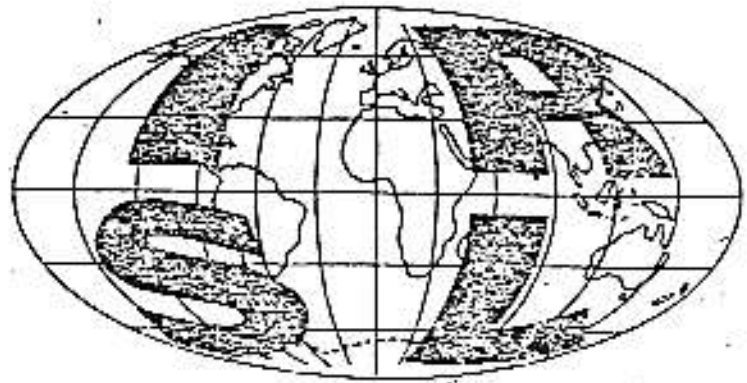


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Verbal Aspects and Object Marking:  
A Comparison between Finnish and Russian\*

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§ 1. Our main concern in this paper is to compare Finnish object marking and Russian verbal aspects in the framework of a general theory of ASPECT, whereby we try to assess the extent to which Russian and Finnish are similar with regard to aspect signalling. We also study other functions of Finnish object marking as compared with Russian. Furthermore, we briefly touch upon some Finnish-Russian similarities with regard to case marking of the grammatical subject of existential sentences. In both Finnish and Russian, there are some striking resemblances between those rules that mark transitive sentence direct objects and those that mark existential subjects. Therefore, these two sentence types should not be analysed in isolation from one another (cf. Dahl 1969, Karttunen 1970).

The problems arising in connection with a description of Russian aspects and Finnish objects are notorious and among the most difficult ones that can be encountered in the grammar of these languages. There is a vast literature on both subjects. Therefore it should be kept in mind from the outset that this paper is fairly limited in scope: we restrict our comparison to the most conspicuous common traits.

§ 2. Often, the notion 'aspect' is construed as an opposition between two types of duration for verbal actions, viz. durative/non-durative or imperfective/perfective (we shall employ the latter terminology). Russian aspectual distinctions are signalled by means of intraverbal morphological processes and according to the common conception mentioned above aspects are indeed a category belonging primarily to verbal morphology. But on the other hand the same distinction is upheld in Finnish and other Baltic-Finnish languages by the partitive/accusative opposition in the direct object, whereby the partitive case normally corresponds to the Russian imperfective aspect and the accusative to the perfective

aspects:<sup>1</sup>

(1) On <u>avokryl</u> dver'	'He opened the door'
(2) Hän avasi <u>oven</u>	(= (1))
(3) On <u>stroil</u> dom	'He built/was building a house' (ipf.)
(4) On <u>postroil</u> dom	'He built a house' (pf.)
(5) Hän rakensi <u>taloa</u>	(= (3))
(6) Hän rakensi <u>talon</u>	(= (4))

We shall start by discussing the category of aspect in general.

With some modifications, our theoretical point of departure is the theory proposed in Dahl (1974), which is partly based upon von Wright's (1963, 1967) logic of change and action. In Dahl (1974), the distinction between perfective and imperfective aspects is explicated by relating them to the concepts of STATE, EVENT, PROCESS, ACT, and ACTIVITY. STATE functions as a primitive in the theory and the other concepts are based upon it. The beginning and end of any state defines an event. Given a two-valued logic, it then follows that events cannot be extended in time. Processes are analyzed (in a somewhat simplified manner) as consisting of sequences of events.<sup>2</sup> Acts and activities refer to the intentional bringing-about of events and processes, respectively. Now, acts and events differ from activities and processes in two important ways:

- (7) acts and events are PUNCTUAL, i.e. not extended in time (whereas activities and processes are extended in time) and
- (8) since acts and events are ultimately defined by their terminating in a state, saying that an act or an event occurred LOGICALLY ENTAILS the coming-about of an end-state; activities and processes have no such entailments.

Given this conceptual scheme, it is argued, an important generalization can be extracted. PERFECTIVE SENTENCES (i.e. Russian sentences with a perfective verbal aspect marker of Finnish sentences with an accusative subject in aspectual function) basically refer to acts and events, whereas IMPERFECTIVE SENTENCES (i.e. sentences with an imperfective aspect

marker or an aspectually used partitive subject) refer to activities and processes (and furthermore to states).<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the perfective sentences (1, 2) refer to the act of 'causing the door to open' whereas the imperfective sentences (3, 5) denote the activity of 'performing house-building'. In accordance with principle (8) the sentences (1, 2) carry the logical entailment 'the door is open' whereas (3, 5) do not necessarily entail that there exists a house. On the other hand, in accordance with principle (7) only (3, 5) but not (1, 2) can co-occur with durative time adverbs such as *in two hours*. This account can be seen as an explication of the traditional observation that imperfective sentences carry a focus on the action itself whereas perfective sentences focus on the outcome or result of the action.

Now, the perfective sentences (4, 6) have those very entailment and co-occurrence properties that (3, 5) lack, thereby being parallel to (1, 2) which refer to acts, but on the other hand (4, 6) superficially seem to denote activities as do (3, 5). This appears to be contradictory.

All of (3-6) are restricted in the sense of having a possible specific END-STATE, viz. 'there exists a house'. The crucial difference between the pairs (3, 5) and (4, 6) lies in the fact that the end-state is ACHIEVED and FOCAL in the latter but only INTENDED or LATENT in the former. This difference emerges e.g. in conjunctions of the following type:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| (9) On <u>stroil</u> dom i on seččas gotov        | 'He built/was building a house and it is ready now' (ipf.)     |
| (10) On <u>stroil</u> dom, no on eiče ne gotov    | 'He built/was building a house but it is not ready yet' (ipf.) |
| (11) On <u>postroil</u> dom i on seččas gotov     | 'He built a house and it is ready now' (pf.)                   |
| (12) *On <u>postroil</u> dom, no on eiče ne gotov | 'He built a house but it is not ready yet' (pf.)               |
| (13) Hĕn rakensi <u>talos</u> ja nyt se on valmis | (= (9)) (part.)  |
| (14) Hĕn rakensi <u>talos</u> , mutta se ei       | (= (10)) (part.)   |

- viola ole valmis  
 (19) Hon rakensi talon ja nyt se on (s:11) (acc.)  
 valmis  
 (20) \*Hon rakensi talon, mutta se ei (s:12) (acc.)  
 vielä ole valmis

Imperfective clauses such as the first ones in (9, 10, 11, 14) do not necessarily entail that the end-state has been achieved and therefore they can be continued in two ways, i.e. the end-state can be reported as achieved or not. But perfective clauses such as those in (11, 12, 15, 16) entail that the end-state 'there exists a house' has been achieved and so the sentences (12, 16) are ungrammatical since they contain a final counterfactual clause negating the achievement of the end-state.

The theory presented in Dahl (1974) assumed a framework of truth-conditional (model-theoretical) semantics. In other words, the goal was to characterize for each sentence *S* a class of points in time *t* such that *S* is true at *t*. In Dahl (1975b), another type of semantics is discussed, referred to as 'constructivist semantics'. Below, the main ideas of this paper are outlined.

The fundamental thesis of constructivist semantics is that declarative sentences are INSTRUCTIONS FOR constructing models of the world. This can easily be misinterpreted as a version of the 'naive picture theory', which claims that sentences (or propositions) are isomorphic with reality. It is therefore necessary to emphasize the difference between saying 'is a model of' and 'is an instruction for building a model of'.

The basic difference between truth-conditional semantics and constructivist semantics can be formulated in the following way. In truth-conditional semantics, an (atomic) sentence is associated with a function or procedure that determines a truth-value for the sentence relative to each possible world, whereas constructivist semantics associates a sentence with a procedure for obtaining a new model of the world from an old model (which corresponds to what is presupposed in the speech situation, including linguistic context). For complex sentences (in

the sense of propositional and predicate calculus) the difference between the two alternatives is smaller.

The difference is perhaps best seen in the case of indefinite noun phrases (in predicate logic, existentially quantified expressions). An indefinite noun phrase in constructivist semantics is normally interpreted as an instruction to introduce a new element (with certain properties) in the model.

In contradistinction to the naive picture theory, constructivist semantics assumes that there are functionally different 'instructions', whereby only the most concrete ones involve a direct construction of 'pictures' or rather icons of reality (what we could call situations). The more abstract instructions then serve as general directives for building such models (in other words, they are not restricted to a single model). This would correspond to generic sentences in natural languages.

As a paradigm case of a linguistic discourse we can take a narrative text where a sequence of real or fictive events are related (a 'story'). One could compare such a text with a set of instructions for the performance of a (puppet theater) play or for the reconstruction of a chess game. A chess game can be portrayed by building a chess board (or drawing a diagram) which corresponds to each position in the game (a sequence of static models). A much more elucidating and economical way, however, is to indicate only the initial position and a sequence of operations ('moves') which successively give new positions from the initial ones. The initial state together with the operations can then be said to constitute a dynamic model. In the same way, we can describe the theater play by indicating (a) the participating characters and their states at the beginning of the play and (b) the successive changes of the states that are to be made. Simplifying somewhat, we get two kinds of instructions: (a) 'static' instructions that describe a certain state, (b) 'dynamic' instructions that yield a new state.

This is now directly related to the logic of aspects. In Dahl (1964), an event was said to be defined by the states holding before it and

after it. In constructivist semantics, we look at the problem from another angle: an event is a transformation of a state which turns it into another state. An event-describing sentence is a 'dynamic' instruction, i.e. an instruction to transform a state into another state. This means that the initial state is regarded as given, or if we like, presupposed. For instance, consider a sentence such as

(17) The window opens.

Von Wright represents the meaning of (17) as  $\neg pTp$  where  $p$  is 'The window is open' and  $T$  is 'and then', in other words, 'The window is not open and then open'. There is here no fundamental difference between the status of the initial state and the resulting state. In our theory, the initial state would belong to the model that is already presupposed when the sentence is uttered. It is an old observation that verbs of change do indeed presuppose the initial state that precede the change, as exemplified by jokes like

(18) Have you stopped beating your wife?

(which presupposes that you have earlier beaten your wife).

The thesis that the perfective aspect expresses events rather than states or processes now carries over to the new theory as the thesis that sentences with the perfective aspect are 'dynamic' instructions.

In Dahl (1974), it was claimed that sentences with perfective verbs described events or acts, which were said to have no extension in time. It was conceded that such sentences may very well be used about real-world goings-on that are in fact extended in time, but it was argued that when using a perfective verb in such a case, we either (a) focus on the end-point of the process in question, or (b) 'pretend' that the process does not take any time. Many people find this claim rather hard to stomach. The constructivist approach may offer a slightly more attractive way of formulating basically the same idea. The minimal model of the world that is implied when we use a perfective verb contains two states: an initial state and a resulting state. In the actual world, there may well be several intermediate states between these two, but that is irrelevant for the model: in other words, the transition between

them is treated as an unanalyzable jump. The 'instruction' is simply: Go to a new state by such-and-such a transformation. This seems to be well in agreement with e.g. Forsyth's formulation of the meaning of the perfective aspect as that of a 'total event summed up with reference to a single specific juncture' (Forsyth 1970).

As was pointed out already in Dahl (1974), it is not possible to analyze the meaning of all Russian perfective verbs in terms of a transition from one state to another. For instance, many of the so-called momentaneous verbs such as *mignut'* 'blink', *podпрыgnut'* 'jump' and so on seem to denote 'events' but do not entail any change in the states of the world. There are also even more problematic cases, such as the verbs formed with the prefix *po-*, e.g. *počitat'* 'read a little', *populjat'* 'take a walk', referred to by Forsyth (1970) as 'attenuatives'. The latter category behaves eccentrically in allowing durational adverbs, e.g. *populjat' čas* 'to walk for an hour'. What is the feature common to all these different types of perfective verbs? The following quotation from Forsyth (1970, 10) gives a generalization that fits well into the semantic framework we are suggesting: 'Each perfective verb denotes an action which is a new event, bringing about or at least marking the transition to, a new state of affairs, and thus carrying the narrative forward.'

§ 3. In general terms, there is a striking functional similarity between Russian verbal aspect and the aspectual function of Finnish object marking. Basically, both systems seem to be manifestations of the same semantically and logically fundamental distinction outlined above. However, there are divergences: Finnish does not always choose an accusative object where Russian has a perfective verb. Consider for instance the following sentences:

- |                           |                               |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (19) Hän ampui sutta      | 'He shot at the wolf' (part.) |
| (20) Он выстрелил в волка | 'He shot (pf.) at the wolf'   |

Although the Russian sentence (20) has a perfective verb, the Finnish counterpart (19) has a partitive object. If the accusative form is used instead, we get another meaning:

\* OSTEN DAHL AND FRED KARLSSON!

(21) Hän ampui suden 'He shot the wolf'

The Russian counterpart would in this case be:

(22) On astrelil volka 'He shot the wolf'

What is the difference between (19) and (21)? In both sentences, a result is attained: in (19), a shot is fired and the wolf is possibly hit, in (21), a shot is fired and the wolf is hit and killed. The decisive factor is thus whether the result of the action entails a CRUCIAL CHANGE IN THE STATE OF THE OBJECT<sup>4</sup> or not. In (19), the action may or may not have an impact upon the wolf (it may be hit or not). This is the crucial state-change, by which (21) differs from (19). In fact, we may regard those instances where the denotate undergoes a crucial change as the paramount instantiations of direct objects. Kenny (1963) defines 'the object of an action' (as a semantic notion) as 'that which changes as a result of an action'. In the framework of the constructivist semantics outlined above, the direct object will be the primary element of the model to undergo a change in the transformation from one state to another.<sup>5</sup>

Obviously, it is hard to give a precise explication of the notion 'crucial change in the state of the object'. Consider the following sentences:

- (23) Hän rakensi talon 'He built a house' (acc.)
- (24) Lumi peitti maan 'The snow covered the ground' (acc.)
- (25) Lumi peitti maata 'The snow covered the ground' (part.)
- (26) Hän löi pallon 'He hit the ball' (acc.)
- (27) Hän löi palloa 'He hit the ball' (part.)
- (28) Hän nosti päätään (pynttyyn) 'He lifted his head' (acc.)
- (29) Hän nosti päätään 'He lifted his head' (part.)

This short corpus suffices to show that the notion 'crucial change in the state of the object' does not have any inherent substantive characteristics apart from context (also cf. Danison 1957). In (23), the im-



in the partitive. The partitive rule is indeed mandatory for a great number of verbs denoting emotions or clearly subjective expressions of opinion such as rakastaa 'love', vihaa 'hate', ihailia 'admire', kaivata 'barg', valittaa 'complain', syöttää 'accuse, blame', etc. For such verbs, the partitive requirement holds even if the action is otherwise of a 'perfective' nature and the corresponding Russian sentence has a perfective verb:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (31) Hän rakasti <u>minua</u> kaksi vuotta    | 'She loved me for two years'<br>(part.) |
| (32) Hän syytti <u>minua</u> lahjomisesta     | 'He accused me of bribery'<br>(part.)   |
| (33) On obvinil <u>menja</u> v vzatočnicestve | 'He accused (pf.) me of bribery'        |

Psychological verbs with an inherent 'emotive and subjective' meaning could thus be treated as a special case of the generalization that a Finnish accusative implies a change in the state of the object.

Some other psychological verbs remain problematic, however. In particular, this concerns nähdä 'see' and kuulla 'hear' - verbs of perception. These appear to take partitive or accusative objects without any clear difference in meaning (u.g. Näin sen miehen /acc./ - Näin sitä miestä /part./ 'I saw that man'). Denison (1957) tries to subsume these accusatives too under the above generalizations, claiming that the crucial change of state is that the object has appeared in the visual or aural sphere of the subject, thereby taking the accusative. At first sight this explanation might seem somewhat inconsistent with the requirement that the crucial change should involve the state of the object; rather, the explanation involves a change in the state of the subject. However, Denison's position might receive some support from the fact that psychological verbs such as muistaa 'remember' and tuntea 'know, recognize' which normally require accusative objects, clearly can be seen to express a state-change of the object with regard to the subject (i.e., what is remembered was previously unconscious or forgotten from the viewpoint of the subject, and what is felt was previously not felt by the subject).

If the accusative instantiates 'crucial changes', it also becomes understandable why that large class of verbs expressing what the action is aimed at requires partitive, not accusative on the direct object. In English, Russian, and other languages such direct objects tend to alternate with constructions containing prepositional objects, and this alternative is also permitted in Finnish along with the partitive (cf. Yli-Vakkuri 1973):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| (34) Hän koputti ovea (part.)<br>/oveen (illative)                           | 'He knocked at the door'                  |
| (35) Jalat tapasivat pohjaa (part.)<br>/pohjaan (illative)                   | 'The feet reached for the<br>bottom'      |
| (36) Hän läimäytti piiskalla saapaansa<br>vartta (part.) /varteen (illative) | 'He lashed with a whip on<br>his bootleg' |

This use of the partitive is explainable with reference to the fact that aiming for something normally does not entail decisive results or changes with regard to the object. Once more, it can be observed that mere completion of the verbal action does not suffice as a trigger of the Finnish accusative.<sup>8</sup>

It seems obvious, in summary, that one may state as a rule with a very high degree of generality that the use of the accusative case with a Finnish object-NP entails a crucial change in the state of the referent of that NP, where the notion 'crucial' is somewhat variable and dependent upon verb-idiosyncratic, pragmatic, and situational factors. Considerations of the eventual completion of the action or of its temporal duration are insignificant compared to the denotate state-change.

We can thus note two differences between the Russian and Finnish aspectual systems. First, since the Finnish aspectual distinction is applicable only in sentences with a direct object<sup>9</sup> and only in those cases where it is possible to envisage a change in its referent, the Finnish system has a much more limited range than the Russian one, which applies to almost any type of action or process. Second, the Finnish accusative has a more limited distribution than the Russian perfective aspect. Of course, these semantic differences between the languages are well correlated with the morphological manifestations of the underlying distinction

tions: the Russian distinction concerns the action per se and is consequently marked on the verb, whereas the Finnish distinction is directly related to the reference and meaning of the direct object and is therefore most naturally marked on the object-NP.

Notice, in this connection, that the same action may be reported in Finnish using both a partitive and an accusative direct object, depending on how the object is chosen. Thus, the event reported in (19) may be reported as (37), where the object is in the accusative:

- (37) Hän ampui laukauksen kohti sutta. 'He fired a shot at the wolf'  
(acc.)

In many traditional grammars of Finnish, it is held that one of the conditions for the use of the accusative is that 'the action is directed at the whole object or at a definite part of it'. In many instances, this rule is impossible to apply: for example, is the action in (19) or (21) directed at the whole wolf or not? What is relevant is rather the outcome of the action as explicated above, not its 'scope' vis-à-vis the referent of the object. Traditional rules such as the one just mentioned thus sometimes seem to over-emphasize the significance of the opposition between 'partial objects' and 'total objects'.

§ 4. Having compared Russian verbal aspects with the aspectual functions of Finnish object marking in some detail, we now proceed to a discussion of the other functions of object marking. First, we turn to Finnish.

As a general rule, direct objects in formally negated sentences take the partitive, cf. (38, 39). But quite often a 'semantic negation' (as opposed to morphologically expressed formal negation) is strong enough to enforce partitive on the direct object. Above all, such partitive objects occur in questions where a negative answer is expected or presupposed, and in constructions governed by adjectives such as hankala 'unwieldy', vaikea 'difficult', or the adverb tuskin 'hardly', cf. (40-43). On the other hand, accusative objects can occur in some formally negated sentence types such as questions where a positive answer is expected or presupposed, cf. (44):

- (38) Hän ei rakentanut taloa 'He did not build a house' (part.)
- (39) Hän ei avannut ovea 'He did not open the door' (part.)
- (40) Oletko tehnyt yhtään hyvää tekoa? 'Have you done a single good deed?' (part.)
- (41) Näetkö tuota kukkulan tuolla? 'Can you see that hill over there?' (part.)
- (42) On vaikea rakentaa taloa 'It is difficult to build a house' (part.)
- (43) Tuskin hän oli rakentanut taloa 'He had hardly built a house' (part.)
- (44) Eikö tehtäisi kalamatka? 'Should not we make a fishing trip?' (acc.)

Thus, the distribution of the partitive and accusative object in sentences such as the ones above is strongly influenced by semantic (cf. G. Karlsson 1957), textual, and even pragmatic factors, not by formally manifested negation alone. Obviously, the occurrence of partitive and accusative objects in questions such as (40, 41, 44) can be adequately described only on the discourse level, i.e. at the level of textual organization.

If we assume in the spirit of § 3 that the main criterion which decides the choice between the accusative and the partitive is the change or non-change of the direct object referent, the partitive/accusative distinction in (formally or semantically) negated sentences can be subsumed under the general aspectual rule, since a negated sentence always entails a non-change of the object referent (it is denied that the action and/or its result comes about). Thereby, the partitive is induced by the general aspectual rule. Such a solution is hinted at in e.g. Ikola (1973). This would however mean that Finnish works differently from Russian with regard to aspects. Although it is sometimes claimed that the imperfective aspect is favored in negated sentences, a denial that something has come about will normally be formulated in the perfective aspect:

- (45) Он все-таки дом не построил. 'Nevertheless he did not build the house' (pf.)

Furthermore, it is clear that the grammar of Russian needs a rule that assigns the genitive rather than the accusative to negated objects.



direct objects is valid only when the verbal action is resultative (i.e. perfective). Thus, we should get the following combinations of aspects and quantities, where the quantity opposition is neutralized in the imperfective aspect:

(48)	DEFINITE QUANTITY	INDEFINITE QUANTITY
PERFECTIVE ASPECT	Ostin pluen (acc.) 'I bought a/the beer'	Ostin olutta (part.) 'I bought beer'
IMPERFECTIVE ASPECT	Ostin olutta (part.) 'I bought (was buying) beer'	

As with the negated sentences, one could argue that the fundamental aspectual rule accounts for the distribution of the partitive and the accusative as markers of the quantity distinction as well. Two possible explanations could be offered for why an action is always imperfective (irresultative) when the object is an unquantified noun phrase. Either one could argue that such NP's have no denotates or referents at all, or one could take the view that such NP's denote classes or species, and only part of the class or species is involved at each time. The latter possibility is in fact that chosen by some traditional grammarians, who give rules like the following: 'The partitive is used when the action is directed at an indefinite part of the object'. Notice that both of the interpretations conform well to our explication of what enforces accusative objects: given the first one, no change of state in the referent is possible since there is no referent and given the second one, the verbal action affects only part of the referent and is therefore not resultative in the sense of leading to a crucial change (which is achieved only when the WHOLE referent is affected).

Furthermore, it is worth noting that there is no overt difference between the 'perfective-indefinite' and 'imperfective' readings of sentences such as Ostin olutta, i.e. 'I bought beer' and 'I was buying beer'. Rather, the appropriate reading is chosen depending on context:

- (50) Ostin olutta ja sitten menin kotiin 'I bought beer and then I went home' (pf.)
- (51) Ostin olutta kun hän tuli sisääen 'I was buying beer when he came in' (ipf.)

Notice, that the two readings under discussion differ only in terms of the eventual termination of the action, but this parameter is strictly speaking irrelevant for object case assignment: the decisive factor is the notion 'crucial change', and this is not to be confused with 'termination of the action'. All these facts seem to suggest that the distinction between definite and indefinite quantity could be subsumed under the aspectual rule.

Further arguments can be brought forth in favor of this interpretation. Notice first, that the quantitative opposition is neutralized in negated sentences, where almost all objects have to be marked with the partitive<sup>10</sup> as noted above. The absence of oppositions such as:

- (52) En ostanut olutta 'I did not buy beer'
- (53) \*En ostanut oluen 'I did not buy a/the beer'

would in fact be most naturally explained if we assumed the existence of a single aspectual rule for object marking. No 'crucial changes' can be attained in negated sentences and therefore (53) is automatically ruled ungrammatical.

Furthermore, there are clear instances of verbs where all the theoretical possibilities of (49) are not realized: these verbs are 'cumulative' in the sense of Dahl (1975). Consider the sentence:

- (54) Juonin olutta 'I drank beer' (part.)

We should expect (54) to have two readings corresponding to those in (50, 51), viz. (i) denoting a perfective action which concerns an indefinite quantity of beer, and (ii) denoting an imperfective action of drinking beer. But the distinction does not seem clear. Neither does (54) combine with time adverbs the way true perfective sentences should (cf. Yli-Vakkuri 1973):

- (55) Join oluen tunnissa 'I drank a/the beer in an hour'  
 (56) \*Join olutta tunnissa 'I drank beer in an hour'

These verbs do not combine with other resultative adjectives either, and similar anomalies occur in other languages as well:

- (57) \*I drank up beer.  
 (58) \*Jag drack upp öl (Swedish)  
 (59) \*Ja s'el jablok 'I ate up apples' (Russian)

In summary, several arguments can be adduced for regarding the traditional Finnish quantitative object opposition as a special manifestation of the basic aspectual rule (also cf. Ikola 1972), at least for unquantified NP-objects. This implies that (60) should be substituted for (49) as a representation of the relevant Finnish structure, with the further qualification that the difference between (50, 51) is determined on the basis of textual considerations:

(60)

PERFECTIVE ASPECT	Ostin oluen (acc.) 'I bought a/the beer'
IMPERFECTIVE ASPECT	Ostin olutta (part.) 'I bought/was buying beer'

But on the other hand, QUANTIFIED indefinite objects are quite normal in perfective as well as imperfective sentences:

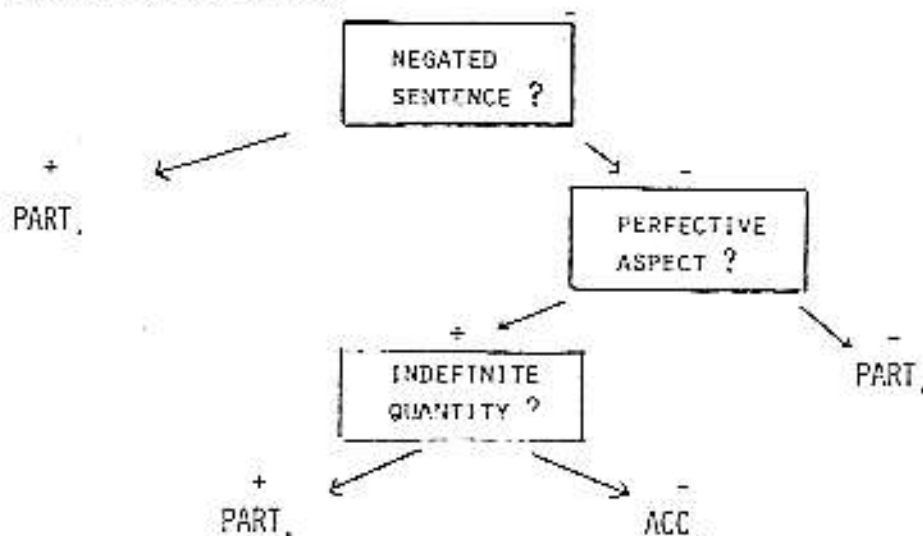
- (61) Monia suunnitelmia tehtiin 'Many plans were made'  
 (pf., ipf.)  
 (62) Tunniassa tehtiin monia suunnitelmia 'In an hour, many plans were made' (pf.)

Such facts suggest that the reduction of (49) to (50) in order to gain theoretical simplicity might be premature, confusing the issue in actual practice, even though it seems rather undisputable that (60) has explanatory value at least for unquantified object-NP's. It might thus be better to keep the parameters 'perfective-imperfective' and 'definite-

quantity/indefinite quantity' apart, at least until the behavior of quantified object-NP's is better understood. For some further discussion, cf. Verkuyl (1972), Dahl (1975), and Hakulinen & Karlsson (1975).

Summing up the preceding discussion, we present the following hierarchic model for object marking in Finnish, where we keep the parameters negation, aspect, and quantity separate. Negation is strongest in the sense that the oppositions perfective/imperfective aspect and definite/indefinite quantity are normally neutralized in negated sentences. Furthermore, quantity is subordinate to aspect since the former opposition is upheld only in perfective sentences but neutralized in imperfective ones.

(63) FINNISH OBJECT MARKING



This scheme displays the basic structure of the Finnish object marking system by handling most 'normal objects', but it does not take into consideration those somewhat infrequent instances where the quantity opposition is still upheld in negated and imperfective sentences.

§ 5. Next, we turn to an examination of Russian object marking. To start with, we find that the same factors that determine case selection in

Finnish are at play in Russian too, although they interact in a different way. The direct object in negated sentences tends to be in the genitive in Russian as it tends to be in the partitive in Finnish, but the accusative is also used in many contexts. As noted above, accusative objects may occur in Finnish negated sentences too under specific conditions, but Russian still allows for a more extensive use of the accusative in this context:

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| (64) Ja ne kupil doma          | 'I did not buy (any) house'<br>(gen.)       |
| (65) Ja ne kupil dom (Petrova) | 'I did not buy (Petrov's)<br>'house' (acc.) |
| (66) En ostanut taloa          | (-(64, 65))                                 |

Turning to aspect and indefiniteness of quantity, we find that they too influence the choice between accusative and genitive, but not in the same way as in Finnish. The genitive can be used if two conditions are fulfilled: (a) the object denotes an indefinite quantity, and (b) the verb is perfective. The main difference compared to Finnish is that the object of an imperfective verb always takes the accusative. However, one could say that the systems are still in accordance by neutralizing the distinction between definite and indefinite quantity in the imperfective aspect. We obtain the following paradigm for the example 'I bought beer':

(67)	DEFINITE QUANTITY	INDEFINITE QUANTITY
PERFECTIVE ASPECT	Ja kupil pivo (pf., acc.)	Ja kupil piva (pf., gen.)
IMPERFECTIVE ASPECT	Ja pokupal pivo (impf., acc.)	

Thus, the basic structure of the object marking system comprising aspect and quantity is the same in Finnish and Russian, cf. (49) and (67). The differences are (:) that Russian has overt morphological differences between all occurring combinations due to the independence of verbal aspects and object marking (both are marked by the same

morphological device in Finnish), and (ii) that Russian has the accusative in the imperfective whereas Finnish has the partitive.

Let us now in more detail consider the Russian rules for distinguishing between the accusative and the genitive in negated sentences. The following factors are relevant:

- (i) definiteness (definite objects tend to take the accusative);
- (ii) abstractness (abstract objects tend to take the accusative);
- (iii) the position of the object (objects in topic position tend to take the accusative).

In Dahl (1971), the following minimal pair was quoted:

- |      |     |                   |                              |
|------|-----|-------------------|------------------------------|
| (68) | (a) | Ja ne vižu mat'   | 'I can't /don't/ see Mother' |
|      |     |                   | (acc.)                       |
|      | (b) | Ja ne vižu materi | 'I can't /don't/ see Mother' |
|      |     |                   | (gen.)                       |

The following were given as natural contexts for the two sentences:

- (69) (a) Please get out of my way; I can't see Mother.
- (b) I can't see Mother anywhere, probably she has gone.

The difference here might be formulated in terms of what the sentences entail: only (68a) entails the presence of the denotate of the direct object. 'Presence' can be regarded as existence relative to a certain location. It was noted in Dahl (1971) that the genitive in Russian tends to be used whenever a noun phrase does not entail the existence of what it denotes.

Notice that indefinite noun phrases generally entail the existence of their denotates, but that the introduction of a negation into the sentence usually has the effect of suspending that entailment. The same does not generally hold for definite noun phrases, which are connected with existence entailments even in most negated sentences, with some notable exceptions as (68b). These cases are also exceptions to the general tendency to use the accusative for negated definite direct ob-

jects. We thus suggest the following rule: Direct objects in negated sentences take the genitive if there is no existence entailment. Interestingly, this rule seems to be capable of accounting for at least some of the 'unexpected' accusatives in Finnish negated sentences as well, such as the following one discussed by G. Karlsson (1957):

(70) -- ellei se tun likijalla veden      '-- if it does make the reader's  
 (acc.) suuhun.                                      mouth water'.

(70) seems to contain a clear existence entailment which induces the accusative. Furthermore, similar considerations govern the distribution of nominative and partitive as subject cases in quite normal and frequent sentences like the following:

(71) Äiti ei ole kotona. (nom.)              'Mother is not at home'  
 (entailment: 'she is somewhere else')

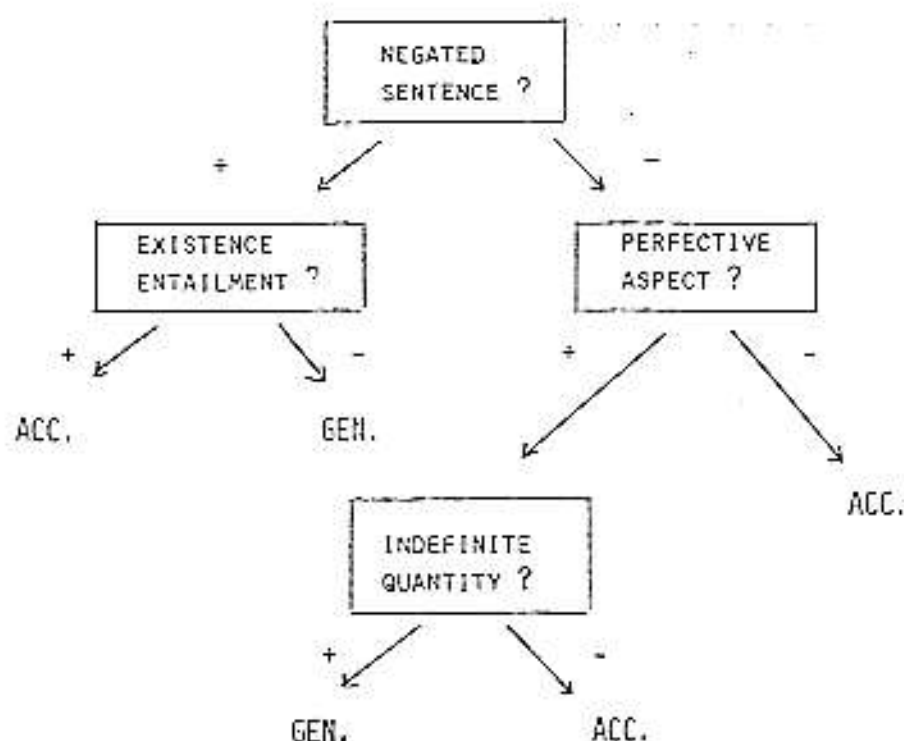
(72) Äitiä ei ole (kotona) (part.)          'There is no Mother (at home)'  
 (compatible with 'Mother being dead')

Also cf. in this connection the discussion of Finnish negated questions on p. 12.

There are also many verbs in Russian that tend to take the genitive with their objects even if the conditions mentioned are not fulfilled. The most important group is verbs with the general meaning 'desire, ask, expect' (In Finnish, the corresponding verbs belong to the category that are 'inherently irresultative' with respect to their objects, thus always take the partitive.) These have in common with the negated sentences that they often do not entail existence. The factors that govern the choice of case with these verbs also seem to be more or less the same as with negated verbs. For simplicity, we have not included them in the sphere below.

The above discussion can be summarized in the following diagram:

## 173) RUSSIAN OBJECT MARKING



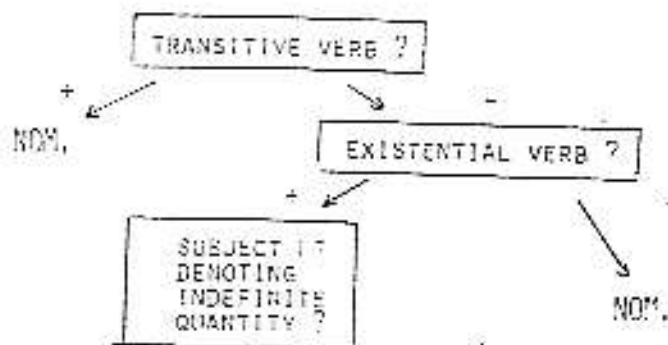
In conclusion, we can say that the same factors (aspect, negation, quantity) govern object case selection in both Finnish and Russian. The basic difference is that the accusative has a more narrow distribution in Finnish than in Russian (or, conversely, that the Russian genitive has a more narrow distribution than the Finnish partitive). This difference emerges most conspicuously in negated sentences (Russian allows accusatives where Finnish does not), and in imperfective sentences (Russian mostly has accusative objects, Finnish only partitive objects). At the heart of this difference is the fact that Finnish object marking in all its manifestations has a basically aspectual function, whereas in Russian object marking and aspects are distinct parameters. Those instances where Finnish object marking deviates from Russian can thus basically be regarded as due to 'aspectual interference'.

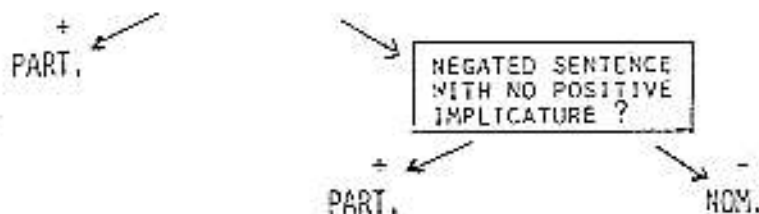
§ 6. Even if this paper is mainly concerned with object marking, we shall also briefly consider the case marking of subjects in Finnish and Russian. In both languages, we have a choice between genitive/partitive on one hand and nominative on the other. Finnish grammars give rules like the following for the case of the subject:

- (74) The subject takes the partitive if it denotes an indefinite quantity and the verb is intransitive and has an existential meaning. Ex.:
- (a) Pöydällä on maitoa 'There is milk on the table'
- (b) Pihalla juoksi poikia 'There ran boys in the yard'
- (75) The subject is in the partitive if the verb is negated intransitive, existential, and no positive implicatures prevail (also in corresponding questions with a negative import). Ex.:
- (a) Kadulla ei ole autoa 'There is no car on the street'
- (b) Minulla ei ole vaimoa 'I have no wife'
- (76) Otherwise, the subject takes the nominative.

The rules (74 - 76) can be hierarchically summarized in the following diagram:

(1) FINNISH SUBJECT MARKING





We see that the notion 'existential verb' is important here. These verbs include e.g. *olla* 'be', *istua* 'sit', *mennä* 'go', *juosta* 'run', *syntyä* 'be born' *lähteä* 'leave', and hundreds of others. The verbs belonging to this group have (at least in part) meanings such as 'exist', 'be present', 'begin to exist or be present', and 'cease to exist or be present'. These verbs have peculiar properties in many languages. For instance, it seems to be this very group of verbs that allows (or even requires) periphrases with the so-called 'formal subject' or 'expletive *it*' in Germanic languages (*det* in Swedish) (cf. Dahl 1969). The main function of such existential constructions is in fact discorial or textual: they serve as mechanisms for the introduction of new discourse elements (cf. Wähämäki 1975).

Turning again to Russian, we find once more that the determining factors are the same, although their interaction is different. The subject in Russian is in the genitive mainly in once class of cases: when the verb is an intransitive existential one and the sentence is negated, as in the sentence

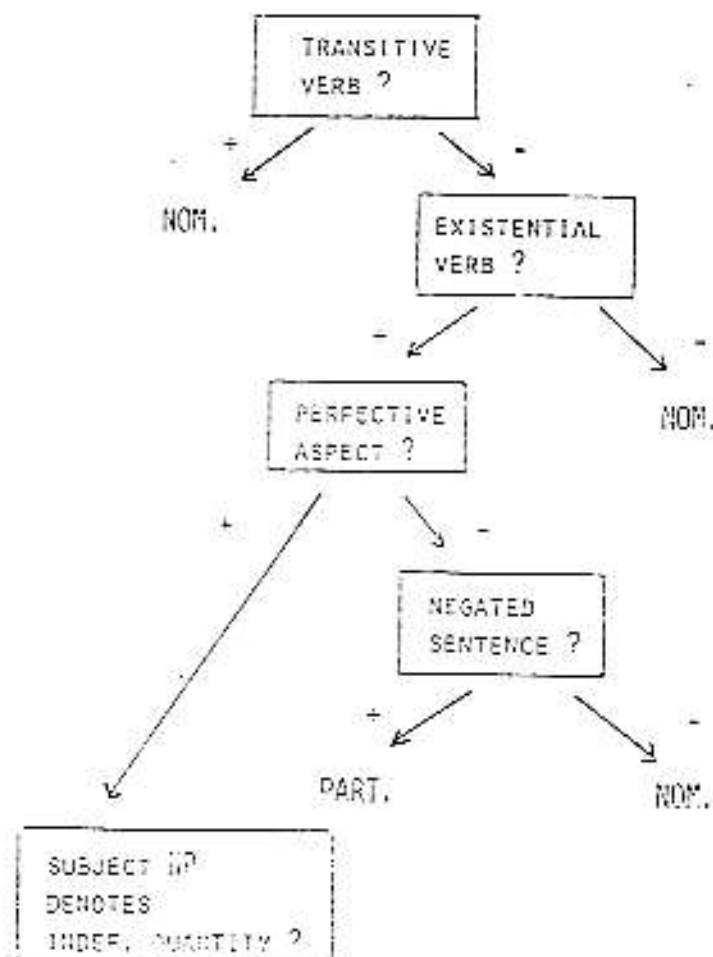
- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| (78) <i>Ne bylo u menja magnitofona</i> | 'I had no tape-recorder' (gen.) |
| but for instance:                       |                                 |
| <i>Byl u menja magnitofon</i>           | 'I had a tape-recorder' (nom.)  |

There is, however, another case, the status of which is more peripheral and which is usually not discussed in Russian grammars. Existential verbs may take the genitive even if they are not negated provided that they are perfective and the quantity is indefinite. This construction appears to be slightly colloquial, which may be the reason that it is not often mentioned. Cf.

- (79) Sobralos' narodu 'People congregated' (pf., gen.)  
 but  
 (80) Sobiralsja narod 'People were congregating'  
 (not: \*Sobralos' narodu) (ipl., nom.)

As we see, the rules for subject marking are quite similar to those for object marking. We can represent them as follows:

(81) RUSSIAN SUBJECT MARKING





underlying the Russian verbal aspects: it is tied directly to the referent of the direct object, with the accusative entailing a change in the state of this referent, and the partitive lacking such an entailment.

#### FOOTNOTES

\* We are indebted to Danuta Ciasnocha, Jelena Dahl, Auli Hakulinen, Elena Hellberg, Gunnar Jacobsson and Olof Paulsson for fruitful discussions in connection with this paper.

1 The resemblance between Finnish object marking and Slavonic aspects has been previously noted in the literature, cf. Denison (1957) for a review of some older treatments, and Vahros (1959) for a more detailed list of some similarities and differences. A common flaw in many treatments of the Finnish object is that the aspectual function of object marking has often been somewhat unduly regarded as subordinate to its function as a distinguisher between 'partial objects' and 'total objects'.

2 In a strict sense, this will hold only for iterative actions such as drop, kick, knock.

3 States go with activities rather than with acts since states cannot have end-states: they can only be terminated by a change-inducing event.

4 We use the shorter locution 'the state of the object' instead of the more correct although clumsier 'the state of the denotate/referent of the object'.

5 This would include both 'affected' objects and 'effected' objects. In the latter case, the change would be one from non-existence to existence.

6 Which is in basic accord with those previous treatments of the Finnish object opposition that stress the parameter resultative/irresultative rather than partial/total, cf. e.g. G. Karlsson (1957), Denison (1957), and Yli-Vakkuri (1973).

7 Exceptions due to poetic licence occur, such as Eino Leino's often-cited sentence Hän rakasti minun(acc.) rappiolle 'She loved me into decay'. Notice, that this sentence clearly expresses an accusative-inducing change in the state of the object.

8 It is interesting to speculate about the possibility of there being 'archetypal' and perhaps universal uses of cases. The accusative might have one such use, viz. that of denoting 'what is changed'. Notice the difference between such a hypothesis and that underlying the case grammars of Fillmore et al. There would not necessarily be a limited number of semantic primitives in terms of which all possible case uses and meanings can be classified; rather, case uses would tend to cluster around the 'archetypes'.  
Cf. in this connection such pairs as the following, which have received

some attention in recent discussion:

- (i) John smeared paint on the wall  
 (ii) John smeared the wall with paint

It has been pointed out that (ii) differs from (i) by the implication that the whole wall was affected by the smearing. Anderson (1970) attributes this difference in meaning to the fact that the wall is direct object only in (ii). Notice that only in (ii) is it possible to talk about decisive change in the state of the wall.

9 There is one exception to this claim, however, viz. specific adjuncts of time, measure, and the like, when used together with intransitive achievement verbs - the so-called 'object-like modifiers' of traditional Finnish grammar. Cf. Hän juoksi mailin 'He ran a mile' (acc.) - Hän ei juossut mailia 'He did not run a mile' (part.). In such expressions, the accusative is used in a fashion similar to that governing (6): the crucial end-state is achieved when the mile is covered, as it is achieved when the house is finished in (5). Here, we refrain from a more detailed treatment of the 'object-like modifiers'.

10 Cf. G. Karlsson (1957) for a discussion of some specific conditions under which the accusative still is possible in negated sentences.

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