

On Adverbial Phrases Expressing Duration or Distance in the Finnish Language

Jun'ichi SAKUMA

1. Introduction

In the Finnish language some adverbial phrases expressing duration or distance are marked in the same way as verbal objects. Take the following for example:

- (1) *Viivyin matkalla viikon.*
 stay-1.sg.p. journey-adess.sg. week-gen.sg.¹⁾
 I stayed a week on the journey.(Hakulinen & Karlsson:216)
- (2) *En viipynyt matkalla viikkoa.*
 not-1.sg. stay-p.p. journey-adess.sg. week-part.sg.
 I did not stay a week on the journey.(Hakulinen & Karlsson:216)
- (3) *Viivy matkalla viikko!*
 stay-imp.-2.sg. journey-adess.sg. week-nom.sg.
 Stay a week on the journey!

In these examples there appears an adverbial phrase of duration, *viikko*, marked in the genitive case, the partitive case and the nominative case respectively. Other examples are:

- (4) *Uin kilometrin.*
 swim-1.sg.p. kilometer-gen.sg.
 I swam a kilometer.
- (5) *En uinut kilometriä.*
 not-1.sg. swim-p.p. kilometer-part.sg.
 I did not swim a kilometer.
- (6) *Ui kilometri!*
 swim-imp.-2.sg. kilometer-nom.sg.
 Swim a kilometer!

In (4)-(6) the same set of cases is used to indicate an adverbial phrase of distance, *kilometri*.

Now compare the sentences (1)-(6) with those that follow:

- (7) *Luin* *kirjan*.
 read-1.sg.p. book-gen.sg.
 I read the book.
- (8) *En* *lukenut* *kirjaa*.
 not-1.sg. read-p.p. book-part.sg.
 I did not read the book.
- (9) *Lue* *kirja!*
 read-imp.-2.sg. book-nom.sg.
 Read the book!

In (7) the verbal object, *kirja*, is indicated in the genitive case just like the adverbial phrase in (1) and (4). The same observation applies to the other sentences, for the verbal object in (8) is marked in the partitive case and that in (9) is marked in the nominative case. In short, the same set of cases used to indicate verbal objects is available for indicating adverbial phrases of duration or distance. These adverbial phrases marked in one of the cases available for indicating objects are called OSMA's for short in the Finnish grammar²⁾.

Let us now look more closely at these sentences. The sentence (8), whose object is marked in the partitive case, is a negative sentence. The same is true of the sentences (2) and (5). The sentence (9), the object of which is indicated in the nominative case, is an imperative sentence and so are the sentences (3) and (6). This means that not only the cases available but also the syntactic environments in which a specific case is used are common to both categories.

This observation, however, drives us to the question why in the first place adverbial phrases expressing duration or distance can be marked in the same way as verbal objects. One of the purposes of this paper is to answer this question.

Another question we must consider is under what condition the case marking of OSMA's is determined. In my previous papers(1997, 1999) I have argued that the genitive is the default case to indicate a dependent and the object can be marked in the nominative case only when its referent serves as the primary participant in the sentence or the clause in question. The question is whether the same is true of the case marking of OSMA's. This paper is also intended as an investigation of this question.

2. Function served by OSMA's

We will begin by considering the way verbal objects are indicated. As is commonly known, a verbal object is marked in the partitive case in three instances: a) in negative sentences or clauses, b) when the action expressed by the verb is irresultative, and c) when the object refers to an indefinite quantity. The following are examples of these three instances respectively:

(10) *En* *ostanut* *kirjaa*.
 not-1.sg. buy-p.p. book-part.sg.
 I did not buy the book.

(11) *Etsin* *kirjaa*.
 look for-1.sg.pr. book-part.sg.
 I'm looking for the book.

(12) *Ostin* *kirjoja*.
 buy-1.sg.p. book-part.pl.
 I bought some books.

From the sentence (11) one may say that in the Finnish language verbal aspect is relevant to the determination of the case-marking of an object. We miss the point, however, if we do not understand why an object expressing an indefinite quantity is marked in the partitive case even when the action expressed by the verb is *resultative*. This fact suggests that the opposition between resultative aspect and irresultative aspect is not the real cause of the partitive marking. The real explanation lies a little deeper.

To explain this, Leino(1991) made use of the notion of boundedness. This notion can be defined as follows: if some limit has been put on the activity or state-of-affairs, it is a bounded situation³⁰. In a sentence that expresses a bounded situation the object is marked in the genitive case. If no such bound has been placed in a sentence, the object is indicated in the unmarked partitive case.

I agree with Leino in thinking that the case alternation between the partitive case and the genitive case can be properly explained by using the notion of boundedness. Leino's view can give an unified explanation to the case alternation. This is because the notion of boundedness can be applied not only to verbal elements but also to nominal elements. If the action expressed by a verb is irresultative, the situation in which the action is involved is not bounded. Similarly, if an object denotes an indefinite quantity, the situation involving the object cannot be considered to be bounded. For it cannot be

assumed that some specific limit will be or has been reached in this situation. The same applies to negative sentences like (10) above. In negative sentences there cannot be any limit to the influence of the action expressed by the verb, since the action will not be or has not been done. This means that the situation described in a negative sentence is not bounded, either.

Then, one can safely state that the case alternation is due to the opposition between bounded situation and unbounded (= open) situation. If this is the case, the reason why adverbial phrases expressing duration or distance can be marked in the same way as verbal objects can be readily explained. As can be seen from (1) and (4) above, adverbial phrases expressing duration or distance set the telic point to the situation described in the sentence in question. In other words, adverbial phrases of duration or distance marked in the genitive case serve the same function as verbal objects in the genitive case in that both make the relevant situation bounded. Thus it may safely be assumed that the function OSMA's fulfill is the reason for the same case marking pattern⁴.

3. Correlation between an object and an OSMA

We may note, in passing, that the telic point is not always set by OSMA's. The following serves as an example:

- (13) *Maija luki kirjan loppuun.*
 M-nom. read-3.sg.p. book-gen.sg. end-illat.sg.
 Maija read the book to the end.(Heinämäki:158)

In this sentence it is the adverbial phrase marked in the illative case that sets the telic point. Another example is:

- (14) *Sari luki itsensä juristiksi.*
 S-nom. read-3.sg.p. herself-gen.sg. lawyer-translat.sg.
 Sari read for the bar.(Heinämäki:158)

Here, the telic point is set by the adverbial phrase in the translative case.

It must be noted that both in (13) and (14) the object is marked in the genitive case. This is because there is no other way to indicate that the situation expressed in (13) or (14) is bounded. As Heinämäki(1984:173) pointed out, however, a genitive object entails "only the existence of a bound, and not any particular bound." Then, "the bound itself can be given explicitly in the sentence" in an appropriate form of a suitable adverbial phrase. The following is an interesting case where the adverbial phrase

marked in the illative case is not suitable to the type of bound implied by the genitive object. That is:

- (15) **Maija luki kirjan kotiin.*
 M-nom. read-3.sg.p. book-gen.sg. home-illat.sg.
 Maija read the book all the way home.(Heinämäki:160)

In (15), *kotiin* cannot be regarded as the explicit bound of *reading the book*. Compare this sentence with (13) above. However, *kotiin* is the type of bound implied by the genitive object in the following sentence. That is:

- (16) *Maija kantoi kirjan kotiin.*
 M-nom. carry-3.sg.p. book-gen.sg. home-illat.sg.
 Maija carried the book all the way home.(Heinämäki:160)

This is because *reading the book* and *carrying the book* entail different kinds of destination to be reached. As to *reading*, the destination implied should be what is inferable from the referent of the object.

On the contrary, when an adverbial phrase setting the telic point is marked in the genitive case, the object is usually indicated in the partitive case. Take the following for example:

- (17a) *Maija kantoi kirjaa tunnin.*
 M-nom. carry-3.sg.p. book-part.sg. hour-gen.sg.
 Maija carried a book for an hour.(Heinämäki:159)
- (17b) **Maija kantoi kirjan tunnin.*
 M-nom. carry-3.sg.p. book-gen.sg. hour-gen.sg.

As can be seen from this, an adverbial phrase marked in the genitive case cannot occur with the genitive object, basically. This is because an adverbial phrase in the genitive case implies not only the telic point but also the passage of time or the course of movement. As the passage of time or the course of movement entails the continuity of the action expressed by the verb, the object should be marked in the partitive case. Then, an adverbial phrase of duration or distance in the genitive case is incompatible with an object marked in the genitive case. When the object is indicated in the genitive case, the telic point is set by nothing but a destination phrase like *loppuun* in (13) above⁵¹. Otherwise, the object should be marked in the partitive case.

There are, however, a few exceptional cases. First, when a sentence is interpreted as either habitual or iterative, both an adverbial phrase of duration or distance and the object can be marked in the genitive case. Take the following for example:

(18) *Raija joi aamukahvin torilla koko kesän.*

R-nom. drink-3.sg.p. morning coffee-gen.sg. market-adess.sg. all summer-gen.sg.

Raija had morning coffee at the market throughout the summer.(Heinämäki:162)

In this sentence, the bound expressed by the adverbial phrase in the genitive case is not the type of bound implied by the genitive object. It is counted as an independent bound. The sentence is nevertheless grammatical. This is because the action expressed by the verb is habitual. What is described in this sentence is not a single but a multiple event. Then, it can be assumed that the independent bound expressed by the adverbial phrase also concerns a multiple event, while the bound implied by the genitive object concerns a single event. In other words, two bounds have different scope of application from each other. If this is the case, the independent bound expressed by the adverbial phrase can coexist in the same sentence with the bound implied by the genitive object. And, to show that not one but two bounds are set in this sentence, both bounds should be indicated in the genitive case. This is the reason both the object and the adverbial phrase of duration are marked in the genitive case in this sentence.

However, co-occurrence of a genitive object and an adverbial phrase of duration or distance in the genitive case is possible even when the sentence denotes one single event. For example:

(19) *Liisa muisti matkan vuoden.*

L-nom. remember-3.sg.p. trip-gen.sg. year-gen.sg.

Liisa remembered the trip for a year.(Maling:57)

In this sentence not only the adverbial phrase but also the verb implies duration. Then, it seems that the bound expressed by the adverbial phrase is just the type of bound implied by the object and not counted as an independent bound. Now, compare this sentence with (17) above. In (17), the adverbial phrase expressing the bound explicitly is marked in the genitive case indeed, but the object is marked in the partitive case. On the contrary, the object in (19) is marked in the genitive case. Then, what is the reason for this difference? The important point to note is that the verb in (19) expresses duration. What is described in (19) is not the process of an action but the duration of a resultant state. From a microscopic viewpoint, the telic point implied by the object is reached at all times from the very beginning. Then, strictly speaking, the bound implied by the object is not the same as that expressed explicitly by the adverbial phrase of duration. This means that in (19) there are two related but separate bounds. If this is true, both bounds should be indicated in the genitive case to show that these

two bounds are independent from each other to some extent. This may be one of the reasons not only the adverbial phrase of duration but also the object is marked in the genitive case in this sentence⁶.

4. Conditions under which the case marking of OSMA is determined

We are now ready to consider the second question which was raised earlier in this paper. The question is under what conditions the case marking of OSMA is determined. As we have seen in section 2, adverbial phrases of duration or distance marked in the genitive case serve the same function as verbal objects in the genitive case, and this is the reason OSMA is marked in the same way as verbal objects. Then, it seems reasonable to suppose that the conditions under which the case marking is determined are also common to two categories. If this is the case, the nominative marking of OSMA is explained in the same way as that of verbal objects. That is, an OSMA is marked in the nominative case because it functions as the primary participant in the sentence in question. However, is it possible to say that an OSMA serves as the primary participant? It would be difficult indeed to call an OSMA the primary participant, since it is not a nominal element. But we should recall here that the real cause of the nominative marking of an object is that information about the state of its referent is crucial to the interpretation of the meaning of the sentence. In other words, an object is indicated in the nominative case when the resultant state of its referent is relevant to the meaning of the sentence. In order to talk about the resultant state, the telic point set by the nominative object in question must be reached in the situation described in the sentence. Then, we can say that the condition of the nominative marking is common to two categories, if the telic point set by an OSMA in the nominative case is observed to be reached in the situation described in the sentence. This is in fact the case. Take the following for example:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| (20) <i>Ui</i> | <i>kilometri!</i> |
| swim-imp.-2.sg. | kilometer-nom.sg. |
| Swim a kilometer! (=6) | |

In this sentence, the adverbial phrase of distance is marked in the nominative case. The point to observe is that in this sentence it is strongly expected that the telic point will be reached. This means that what is relevant to the meaning of this sentence is the resultant state after the telic point, and this is why the adverbial phrase of distance is marked in the nominative case⁷.

On the case marking pattern of OSMA's, there is a further point which needs to be clarified. The point is what happens when both an OSMA and a verbal object appear in the same sentence. It is possible that an OSMA is marked in the nominative case if the object is marked in the partitive case⁸⁾. For example:

- (21) *Muistele matkaa vuosi!*
 remember-imp.-2.sg. trip-part.sg. year-nom.sg.
 Remember the trip for a year!(Maling:58)

The reason for the nominative marking is just the same. Since it is extremely probable that the telic point set by the OSMA will be reached, the OSMA is marked in the nominative case.

It is also possible that both are marked in the genitive case, since the genitive is the default case to indicate a dependent. The following are good illustrations of this case. That is:

- (22) *Raija joi aamukahvin torilla koko kesän.*
 R-nom. drink-3.sg.p. morning coffee-gen.sg. market-adess.sg. all summer-gen.sg.
 Raija had morning coffee at the market throughout the summer.(=18)
- (23) *Liisa muisti matkan vuoden.*
 L-nom. remember-3.sg.p. trip-gen.sg. year-gen.sg.
 Liisa remembered the trip for a year.(=19)

Though Maling(1993) describes these cases as 'case spreading', we can dispense with such a term.

It is not possible, however, that both an OSMA and a verbal object are marked in the nominative case. Since the nominative is the case for the primary participant or the equivalent, only one argument can be marked in the nominative case⁹⁾. For example:

- (24) *Juo aamukahvi torilla koko kesän!*
 drink-imp.-2.sg. morning coffee-nom.sg. market-adess.sg. all summer-gen.sg.
 Have morning coffee at the market throughout the summer!
- (25) *Muista matka vuoden!*
 remember-imp.-2.sg. trip-nom.sg. year-gen.sg.
 Remember the trip for a year!(Maling:57)

In both of the examples, the object is marked in the nominative case, while the OSMA is indicated in the genitive case. Why cannot the reverse be true? One of the reasons is that the object ranks higher in the hierarchy of grammatical relations than the

adverbial phrase of duration. In fact, the case marking pattern in (24) and (25) can be predicted by the Case-Tier Hypothesis advocated by Maling(1993)¹⁰⁾. Her account, however, obscures the fact that semantic properties of the sentence in question can have some influence on the case marking of its arguments. The main reason for marking not the OSMA but the object in the nominative case is that the bound implied by the object has priority over that implied by the OSMA.

In (24), just like in (18) above, a multiple event is described. In such a case, as we have seen, the bound implied by the object has different scope of application from that implied by the OSMA. As the former concerns a single event and has a narrower scope of application, the telic point set by the former is first reached. This may be the reason not the OSMA but the object is marked in the nominative case in this sentence. (25), on the other hand, denotes one single event. It seems that in this sentence there is only one bound implied by the object and expressed explicitly by the OSMA. However, not one but two bounds are set in (25), just like in (19), since also in (25) not the process of an action but the duration of a resultant state is described. And, the telic point implied by the object is reached at the very beginning of the duration. This is why not the OSMA but the object is indicated in the nominative case in this sentence.

5. Concluding remarks

From what has been said above, it should be concluded that the case marking of OSMA is determined under the same conditions as that of verbal objects, since OSMA serve the same function as verbal objects in that both can make the relevant situation bounded. The conditions under which the case marking is determined are as follows:

- i) A verbal object or an OSMA is indicated in the unmarked partitive case unless the sentence containing it expresses a bounded situation¹¹⁾. Even if the sentence expresses a bounded situation, however, the object is usually marked in the partitive case, when it co-occurs with an OSMA in the same sentence. This is because the bound is expressed not by the object but by the OSMA in this case.
- ii) A verbal object or an OSMA is indicated in the genitive case if the sentence containing it expresses a bounded situation¹²⁾.
- iii) The genitive used to indicate a verbal object or an OSMA is replaced with the nominative, if the sentence expresses a situation in which it is strongly expected that the telic point will be reached. When an object and an OSMA co-occur in

the same sentence, however, the OSMA cannot be marked in the nominative case. This is because the bound implied by the object has priority over that implied by the OSMA.

Notes

- 1) In the traditional grammar it is said that *viikon* in (1) is in the accusative singular case. The so-called accusative case is, however, identical in form with the genitive case in the singular and with the nominative case in the plural. Only the personal pronouns including the interrogative pronoun meaning 'who' have a distinct accusative form. Then, I will not consider the form like *viikon* in (1) to be the accusative singular form but the genitive singular form.
- 2) OSMA is the abbreviation of *objektin sijainen määrän adverbiaali*. This means 'object-like measure adverbial' in English. For further details of OSMA's, see Tuomikoski(1978) in particular. The case marking pattern of OSMA's is dealt in Hakulinen & Karlsson (1979), Heinämäki(1984), Maling(1993) and Vilkuna(1996) for example.
- 3) On the notion of boundedness, see also Heinämäki(1984).
- 4) There are some differences indeed between verbal objects and OSMA's. Needless to say, OSMA's cannot denote an indefinite quantity. The action expressed by a verb co-occurring with an OSMA should be interpreted as resultative since the OSMA sets the telic point to the situation described in the sentence. Therefore, OSMA's are marked in the partitive case only when they appear in negative sentences like (2) and (5) in principle. However, an OSMA can sometimes be indicated in the partitive case, even when the sentence containing it is not a negative sentence. For example:

- i) *Kirsi ui vielä kilometriä.*
 K-nom. swim-3.sg.pr. still kilometer-part.sg.
 Kirsi is still swimming a kilometer.(Heinämäki:174)

Vilkuna(1996) also cited a similar example. That is:

- ii) *Uolevi käy tätä kurssia jo kolmatta kertaa.*
 U-nom. go-3.sg.pr. this-part.sg. course-part.sg. already third-part.sg. time-part.sg.
 This is already third time that Uolevi attends this course.(Vilkuna:168)

In this sentence the adverbial phrase of frequency is marked in the partitive case, though the sentence is affirmative.

- 5) An adverbial phrase marked in the inessive case can also be regarded as a destination phrase. For example:

- i) *Maija luki kirjan tunnissa.*
 M-nom. read-3.sg.p. book-gen.sg. hour-iness.sg.
 Maija read the book within an hour.

In this sentence the object is marked in the genitive case. Compare this sentence with the following:

- ii) *Maija luki kirjaa tunnin.*
 M-nom. read-3.sg.p. book-part.sg. hour-gen.sg.
 Maija read the book for an hour.(Heinämäki:154)

In this sentence, on the other hand, the object is marked in the partitive case.

6) As Heinämäki(1984:166) pointed out, the genitive marking of the object in (19) may have something to do with the frequent use of the verb *muistaa* as an achievement verb. There is room for argument, however, on the ultimate explanation of this phenomenon. On this subject, see also Vilkuna(1996:123-124).

7) OSMA's can be marked in the nominative case in three instances: a) in imperative sentences, b) in impersonal passive sentences, and c) in the necessitative construction. (20) is an example of the first instance. The following are examples of the other two instances respectively:

i) *Siellä viivytettiin kokonainen viikko.*
 there stay-pass.-p. whole-nom.sg. week-nom.sg.

They stayed there a whole week.(Maling:53)

ii) *Kansan täytyy luottaa Kekkoeseen vuosi.*
 people-gen.sg. must-3.sg.pr. trust-inf. K-illat. year-nom.sg.

The people must trust Kekkonen for a year.(Maling:55)

In both of the examples the resultant state after the telic point set by the OSMA is relevant to the meaning of the sentence.

8) In some cases, the genitive marking also seems possible, although the nominative is the preferred case. Take the following for example:

i) *Lapsen täytyy opiskella englantia koko vuosi.*
 child-gen.sg. must-3.sg.pr. study-inf. English-part.sg. all year-nom.sg.

The child must study English all the year.

ii) *Lapsen täytyy opiskella englantia koko vuoden.*
 child-gen.sg. must-3.sg.pr. study-inf. English-part.sg. all year-gen.sg.

The child must study English all the year.

These are examples of the necessitative construction. The reason why both are possible is open to question.

9) In the Finnish language, some argument other than the subject and the object can be marked in the nominative case. For example:

i) *Lapsen oli jano.*
 child-gen.sg. be-3.sg.p. thirst-nom.sg.

The child was thirsty.

In this sentence the theme argument, *jano*, is indicated in the nominative case. This is because it functions as the primary participant. An OSMA expressing duration can indeed be added to this sentence, but it cannot be marked in the nominative case but in the genitive case. That is:

ii) *Lapsen oli jano yhden illan.*
 child-gen.sg. be-3.sg.p. thirst-nom.sg. one-gen.sg. evening-gen.sg.

The child was thirsty for one evening.(Maling:56)

What is described in this sentence is a state. Since the state expressed by the theme argument holds throughout the duration expressed by the OSMA, the theme argument plays a more essential role in the described state than the OSMA. This is why not the OSMA but the theme argument is marked in the nominative case in this sentence.

10) For further details of the Case-Tier Hypothesis, see Maling(1993). The accusative in her paper corresponds to the genitive in this paper.

11) Since OSMA's usually imply a bounded situation, OSMA's are rarely marked in the partitive case except in negative sentences. See the note 4) above.

12) This does not apply to the personal pronouns including the interrogative pronoun meaning 'who' on the one hand and noun phrases in the plural on the other hand. A personal pronoun

functioning as an object is never marked in the genitive case, since it has a specific accusative form. On the other hand, a noun phrase in the plural functioning as an object is marked not in the genitive case but in the nominative case, if the partitive case is unavailable. This is because such a noun phrase refers to an extremely definite entity. This extreme definiteness of the referent implies that the referent acts as the equivalent for the primary participant in the sentence. Since the nominative is the case for the primary participant or the equivalent, the noun phrase in question is marked in the nominative case.

Abbreviations

sg. - singular	pl. - plural
nom. - nominative	gen. - genitive
part. - partitive	translat. - translative
iness. - inessive	illat. - illative
adess. - adessive	inf. - infinitive
pr. - present	p. - past
p.p. - past participle	imp. - imperative
pass. - impersonal passive	

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