Nicole Nau (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań)

Another 'look!': The Latvian particle *lūk* in parliamentary discourse

Latvian has developed a set of pragmatic markers out of verbs of perception. *Lūk* differs from other members of this class in that (i) it is less strongly associated with its source verb *lūkot* (today 'try', formerly 'look'), and (ii) it appears in both formal and informal varieties of spoken and written discourse. In this paper I will analyze its use in parliamentary discourse as attested in transcripts and audio recordings of sittings of the Latvian parliament. The transcripts have been compiled into the corpus SAEIMA, where *lūk* has a frequency of 298.2 per million. This is remarkably higher than its frequency in the balanced corpus LVK2018 (59.92 per million), and shows it as a register feature. The full transcripts and the audio recordings allow a better analysis of the context of individual observations. Prosodic characteristics of selected examples are analyzed with Praat.

The aim is to determine

- the functions of *lūk* in this discourse,
- the syntactic positions in which it occurs,
- its prosodic characteristics, and
- correlations between functions, syntax, and prosody,

and

- to analyze how *lūk* differs from related Latvian particles, especially *re* (< 'see') and *klau* (< 'listen'), and
- to discuss similarities and differences between Latvian *lūk* and pragmatic markers based on 'look!' in other European languages, as described by Waltereit (2002), Fagard (2010), Van Olmen (2010), Aijmer & Elgemark (2013), and others.

Results

First, as a syntactically and prosodically separate unit, *lūk* is used as a discourse-structuring **argumentation marker**, indicating the beginning, less often the end, of a subtopic or illustrative example. A different use is as **presentative particle** (cf. Petit 2010; Porhiel 2012), similar to French *voici* and *voilà*, where *lūk* marks examples and illustrations of a particular point the speaker is making. Here *lūk* appears mainly at the left margin of a syntactic as well as an intonational unit. Third, *lūk* marks **quotations** and contrasting **viewpoints**, appearing either after the complementizer *ka* 'that' in one intonational unit, or parenthetically within a clause or phrase, where it is prosodically more or less integrated into the surrounding.

In contrast to 'look'-particles in other languages, Latvian *lūk* almost always appears within a turn and does not have turn-taking or turn-yielding functions. Especially, it does not appear at the right margin of a turn, nor of a syntactic unit. This may support the claim that intersubjective functions develop at the right margin (Traugott 2012; cf. contributions to Beeching & Detges, eds., 2014). Among the Latvian particles of the given set, only *klau* (< 'listen') seems to have such functions at the right margin of clauses (as a tag), closing a turn. Second, the quotative uses of *lūk* cannot be related to intersubjective uses (as Fagard 2010 suggests for Romance languages), nor do they seem to originate from a use within a quote to evoke the dynamics of direct speech, as Van Olmen (2010) argues for English and Dutch. The latter may characterize the use of *re* (< 'see'), while *lūk* marks a (disputed) viewpoint rather than reported speech.

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