

Another 'look!' (to the left and to the right): The Latvian particle *lūk* in parliamentary discourse

The particle *lūk* is derived from the imperative of the verb *lūkot* 'try; look'. It is used in formal and informal varieties of spoken and written discourse as a presentative particle (cf. Petit 2010; Porhiel 2012) and marker of stance (cf. Chojnicka 2012). In this paper I will analyze its use and functions as attested in the corpus SAEIMA, compiled from transcripts of sittings of the Latvian parliament. Prosodic features will be examined with selected examples from the recordings of the sittings. In this corpus, *lūk* is much more frequent than in the balanced corpus LVK2018 (298.2 vs. 59.92 per million). This difference reflects its main uses, which can be roughly characterized as that of presenting, evaluating and stressing facts within an argumentation. A main goal of this paper is to establish in which way different functions are bound to different positions of the particle and whether *lūk* is developing a "right-margin" use. In (1) – (3) I give examples for three different functions: presenting own facts and arguments, presenting speech and arguments of others, mostly with a negative stance, and emphatically affirming one's utterance. *Lūk* seems to be always speaker-oriented. Where it occurs, speakers are not seeking agreement nor invite a response. Maybe the lack of such intersubjective meanings prevents *lūk* to fuse with the previous utterance and become an element of the right margin, or acquire a turn-yielding function.

This study will contribute to the cross-linguistic study of functions at the left and the right margin (Traugott 2012; Beeching & Detges, eds. 2014) and to that of particles originating in forms of perception verbs (Fagard 2010; Aijmer & Elgemark 2013).

(1) *Lūk, piemērs:*

'Here is an example:'

(2) *iedzīvotājiem stāsta, ka tarifi esot jāceļ tādēļ, ka, lūk, "Latvenergo" neesot naudas, ar ko sakārtot gaisa vadus*

'residents are told that the rates have to be raised because **LŪK** allegedly Latvenergo doesn't have money to fix the aerial lines'

(3) *Ja jūs maldāties, man nav jāpiekrīt jums. Lūk!*

'If you are wrong, I don't have to agree with you. **LŪK!**'

References

- Aijmer, Karin & Elgemark, Anna. 2013. The pragmatic markers *look* and *listen* in a cross-linguistic perspective. In Johannesson, Nils-Lennart, Melchers, Gunnel and Beyza Björkman (eds.), *Of butterflies and birds, of dialects and genres. Essays in honour of Philip Shaw*, 333-348. Stockholm: University.
- Beeching, Kate & Detges, Ulrich (eds.). 2014. *Discourse functions at the left and right periphery: Cross-linguistic investigations of language use and language change*. Leiden: Brill.
- Chojnicka, Joanna. 2012. *Linguistic markers of stance in Latvian parliamentary debates*. Saarbrücken: Akademieverlag.
- Fagard, Benjamin. 2010. É vida, olha...: Imperatives as discourse markers and grammaticalization paths in Romance: A diachronic corpus study. *Languages in Contrast* 10(2): 245-267.
- Petit, Daniel. 2010. On presentative particles in the Baltic languages. In Nau, Nicole & Ostrowski, Norbert, eds., *Particles and connectives in Baltic*, 151-170. Vilnius: Vilnius University.
- Porhiel, Sylvie. 2012. The presentative *voici/voilà* – Towards a pragmatic definition. *Journal of Pragmatics* 44 (2012) 435–452
- Traugott, Elizabeth Closs. 2012. Intersubjectification and clause periphery. *English Text Construction* 5(1): 7-28.