B.7: Clause combining in Uralic languages: functional and interactional perspectives

Organizers: Larisa Leisiö and Ritva Laury

Clause combining is a relatively well articulated field in linguistic typology (Shopen 2007; Croft 2022, 461-615). The term refers to combining of two or several clauses into a complex sentence. In a complex sentence, the relationship between clauses can be either coordination or subordination. **Coordination** of clauses has been traditionally distinguished as asyndetic *versus* syndetic, with the shift from the former to the latter *via* development of writing systems. (Haspelmath 2007.) Further, coordinate clauses are classified into conjunctive (semantically analyzed as *additive*, Malchukov 2004: 186; Croft 2022: 470), disjunctive and adversative. Coordinate clauses can be considered as "co-ranking structures". They have finite verb predication and are contrasted to "chaining structures" that have one "dominating" verb along with clauses with "morphologically deficient verbs" (Longacre 2007: 374-376). The latter are prototypical **subordinate** clauses. A subordinate clause has a grammatical function within the main clause: it can be a modifier of a noun or verb phrase, or the entire main clause, or it can be a subject or direct object. Clausal subjects and objects are usually called complement clauses. Modifiers of noun phrase are relative clauses. Modifiers of the verb phrase or the whole clause are adverbial clauses. (Longacre 2007: 374.) The latter, but also some certain subtypes of the complement clause were identified and named on functional basis (Cristofaro 2003 and 2005, Thompson et al. 2007).

In descriptions of Uralic languages, syntax has traditionally been paid less attention to than other language levels, phonology, morphology and vocabulary. The situation has improved in the last decades. Syntax is given its due place in recent grammatical descriptions of distinct languages, e.g., Tundra Nenets by Nikolaeva 2014, and in collective monographs containing systematic descriptions of Uralic languages: Abondolo & Välijärvi (eds.) 2023, Bakró-Nagy et al. (eds.) 2022.

In the last three decades, many grammatical categories and subordinate clauses among them have been examined from usage-based and interactional linguistics perspective (e.g., Schegloff, Ochs and Thompson 1996). In interactional linguistics, language use is seen as a social activity along with other activity types (Couper-Kuhlen & Selting 2018). Subordination in Finnish and Estonian has been described in the conversation-analytical framework with special attention to complement clauses. The status of parenthetic clauses, for instance, clauses with interrogative verbs as main clauses has been disputed (Hakulinen et al. 2003; Keevallik 2006 & 2011, Laury 2006; Koivisto, Laury and Seppänen 2011). The subordinate status of Finnish relative clauses has also been questioned (Laury & Helasvuo 2023). Usage-based approaches make visible similar grammatical processes observed through regularities in conversational structures in Finnish, Estonian and Swedish conversational structures (Hakulinen et al. 2003). Thus the contiguity of cultures can lead to similar processes in language structures without visible influence of language contacts.

We know the general strategies of combining sentences in Uralic languages. These include originally asyndetically juxtaposed coordinate clauses and infinite predication of subordinate clauses including nominalization, participles, and verbal adverbs, typologically considered subordinate but not normally counted as clausal at least in Finnish grammar (e.g., Hakulinen et al. 2003). Changes in the type of subordinate predication as well as borrowing of connectors have occurred in the course of language contacts (Skribnik 2022 and references therein). The most exact structural account of clause combination has got Tundra Nenets in the grammar description (Nikolaeva 2014) and analysis of relative and complement clauses (Nikolaeva 2017).

We invite data-driven functionally informed papers on clause combining in distinct Uralic languages with the following topics, to be considered as possibilities but not limitations.

- semantics and pragmatics of coordination and subordination
- effect of language contact on clause combining
- clause combining in various forms of communication (conversation, storytelling, oral and written, public speech, etc.)
- role of intonation in clause combining
- clause combining and turn taking in conversation
- clause combining and reference tracking

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Contact persons: Larisa Leisiö larisa.leisio@uef.fi, Ritva Laury ritva.laury@helsinki.fi