CHAPTER 7

Object Case in Relation to Verb Form

1 Introduction

As case alternation depends on boundedness, an important constituent of which is the form of the verb, a study was carried out looking at objects of imperative verbs, infinitives and participles. It is expected that objects of infinitives and present participles would be more likely to be in the partitive case, and this has been the finding for the -ma infinitive by Kont (1963: 119). The present study has been carried out to look at this quantitatively, and to show any differences between the various Finnic languages. Passive infinitives have been discussed in Chapter 6. Passive participles are described in this chapter in Sections 4.2 and 4.4. All the synchronic and the Estonian and Finnish diachronic data come from St. Matthew’s gospel and 1 Corinthians, while the diachronic data in the other languages comes only from the gospel. Some secular material is used in addition for Veps to get some historical perspective. Affirmative clauses only have been included in the tables, although some mention of negative ones is made in Livonian.

2 Imperative Verbs

2.1 Synchronic Study

Canonically in Finnic languages the accusative noun object of imperative verbs is expressed by the nominative form in the singular and plural. The main exception is Livonian, where the singular non-partitive object is in the genitive case (Kettunen 1938: XLI), although for many nouns it has the same form as the nominative. The following example shows an object in the genitive-accusative case, where the morphology is different from the nominative (7.1).

(7.1) L ēta-gid ābkōlbatōb pālkaliz ulzō
    throw-IMPV.2PL useless servant.SG.GEN/ACC out
    ‘throw the useless servant out’
    (Matt. 25:30)

* Some of the material in this chapter has been published in Lees (2010).
Plural nominative and genitive nouns are always homonymous, so any plural object could also be considered genitive. In the 1942 New Testament the determiner is genitive for plural noun objects in the genitive / nominative case, suggesting this possibility (see Chapter 4, Section 2.2 for a detailed discussion). There are no instances in the 1942 NT of plural objects of imperative verbs with a genitive determiner which is not a possessive pronoun, nor are there any nominative determiners. Accusative 3rd person plural pronouns as objects are in the genitive form. There are no 1st person objects of imperative verbs in the Livonian corpus. Example (7.2) illustrates the difference between Livonian and the other languages.

\[(7.2)\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{a. E} & \quad \text{kisu} & \text{ta} & \text{vālja} \\
& \quad \text{tear.IMPV.2SG} & \text{3SG.NOM/ACC} & \text{out}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{b. L} & \quad \text{kīsk} & \text{tām} & \text{ulzō} \\
& \quad \text{tear.IMPV.2SG} & \text{3SG.GEN/ACC} & \text{out}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{c. F} & \quad \text{repāise} & \text{se} & \text{irti} \\
& \quad \text{tear.IMPV.2SG} & \text{it.NOM/ACC} & \text{loose}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{d. K} & \quad \text{kiško} & \text{se} \\
& \quad \text{tear.IMPV.2SG} & \text{it.NOM/ACC}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{e. V} & \quad \text{ratkaida} & \text{se} \\
& \quad \text{tear.IMPV.2SG} & \text{it.NOM/ACC}
\end{align*}\]

‘tear it out’

(Matt. 5:29)

The above set of examples shows the use of the genitive-accusative object of an imperative verb in Livonian. Estonian and Livonian need a bounding particle, but for the other languages the sense is complete just with the use of the accusative, although Finnish does have a bounding element in this instance. It also illustrates the use of the animate 3rd person pronoun for non-animate objects in Estonian and Livonian. A 3rd person pronoun plural object is also in the genitive-accusative form in Livonian (7.3).

\[(7.3)\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{L} & \quad \text{tūo-gid} & \text{nānt} & \text{min} & \text{jūr} \\
& \quad \text{bring-IMPV.2PL} & \text{3PL.GEN/ACC} & \text{1SG.GEN} & \text{to}
\end{align*}\]

‘bring them to me’

(Matt. 21:2)