

Conférences de Linguistique Générale et Finno-Ougrienne

dans le cadre du Projet franco-estonien
*Questions and Answers Pairs in Estonian and French
compared with some other languages**

Le lundi 12 décembre 2011

de 14h00 à 16h30

**CNRS, Centre André-Georges Haudricourt
Bâtiment D, Salle de Conférence**

7, rue Guy Môquet, 94801 Villejuif

- Helle METSLANG, University of Tartu, Estonia :
**Types of question markers in Estonian
in comparison with some other languages**
- Krista MIHKELS, University of Tartu, Estonia :
**Other-initiated repair in Estonian conversation:
a multi-modal perspective**

Ces conférences seront suivies d'une discussion et d'un pot amical.

* IIIe Atelier International du Projet ISTDY 2 : QAPEF PHC (Partenariats Hubert Curien)

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ABSTRACTS-->

Types of question markers in Estonian in comparison with some other languages

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European languages are characterized by the formation of general questions by means of inversion, in which case the verb is placed at the beginning of the sentence. Inverted questions are also found in the Circum-Baltic languages, but explicit markers are typical to the region: e.g. sentence-initial particles, post-verbal clitics and particles. Forming polar questions with sentence-initial particles is characteristic of, for example, Livonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Russian, and Polish, as well as being found in Southern Sami and some Swedish and Norwegian dialects; post-verbal clitics are used in, e.g., Russian, Finnish and Sami.

In Estonian, the polar interrogatives are typically marked by analytical means: sentence-initial particles (1), (2), (3); a sentence-final particle (4), sentence-final question tags (5). Polar questions may also be expressed by the verb-initial sentence (6).

- (1) **Kas** ta mõtles ümber?
Q s/he thought around
'Did s/he change her/his mind?'
- (2) **Ega** ta ümber ei mõtelnud?
Q s/he around NEG think:PST.PTCP
'Didn't s/he change her/his mind?'
- (3) **Või** ta mõtles ümber?
Q s/he thought around
'Or did s/he change her/his mind?'
- (4) Ta mõtles ümber **või**?
s/he thought around Q
'Did s/he change her/his mind?'
- (5) Ta mõtles ümber, **eks_ole**?
s/he thought around Q
'S/he changed her/his mind, **didn't s/he**?'
- (6) **Oled sa** kunagi metsa ära eksinud?
be:2SG you.SG ever forest.ILL away get_lost:PST.PTCP
'**Have you** ever got lost in a forest?'

Estonian has not inherited the Finnic question marker type, clitic (**-ko*), but has developed new interrogative particles. The main contact languages of Estonian, German and English form the general question in the simple sentence first and foremost by means of inversion; Russian and Finnish, on the other hand, employ mainly question particles.

According to their sources Estonian interrogative particles may be divided into conjunctive and disjunctive. Conjunctive particles are *kas* (< 'also') and *ega* (< 'also not'), disjunctive particles are *või* (< 'or') and *eks* (< 'whether not'). In addition to these yes/no-markers with a broad sphere of use, Estonian reveals a limited use of the conjunctions *aga*, *kuid* 'but' as a yes/no-marker, which mainly function as an adversative-conjunctive conjunction.

Disjunctive particles are found also in Livonian, Latvian, Russian; also in Thai and Vietnamese; conjunctive particles in Lithuanian. The use of adversative conjunctions as question markers can also be found in several languages.

References

- Achariyayos, Jirasak 2011, Question Markers in Thai. (Paper presented at the Parrot' project seminar „Question-response pairs in Estonian and French compared to languages from other linguistic families“, Paris, 5.5.2011)
- Do-Hurinville, Danh-Thành 2011, Focus Particles in answers in Vietnamese. (Paper presented at the Parrot' project seminar „Question-response pairs in Estonian and French compared to languages from other linguistic families“, Paris, 5.5.2011)
- Klaas, Birute 2011, Some features of Lithuanian interrogative sentences. (Paper presented at the Parrot' project seminar "Questions and answers", Tartu, 23.09.2011.)
- Metslang, Helle, Karl Pajusalu, Külli Habicht 2011, Conjunction *aga* 'but' as marker of general questions in Estonian. (Paper presented at the Parrot' project seminar "Questions and answers", Tartu, 23.09.2011.)
- Metslang, Helle; Külli Habicht, Karl Pajusalu 2011, Developmental paths of interrogative particles: the case of Estonian. – *Folia Linguistica Historica* 32: 149–188.

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Other-initiated repair in Estonian conversation: a multi-modal perspective

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When people talk together they frequently encounter problems of hearing, speaking and understanding. According to conversation analysis, there exists an organized set of practices, the repair organization, through which participants in conversation address and resolve problems of speaking, hearing or understanding (Schegloff, Jefferson, Sacks 1977). Repair can be initiated either by the speaker of the trouble-source or by the co-participant.

The first purpose of the presentation is to give an overview of question forms and constructions that co-participants use to initiate the repair in Estonian conversation. This research is based on a selection of audiotapes taken from Corpus of spoken Estonian.

The question forms and constructions that co-participants use to initiate the repair are quite systematically described in different languages and settings. However, there exist fewer surveys that document the precise ways in which talk, gesture, posture, gaze, and aspects of the material surround are brought together to form coherent courses of action (e.g. C. Goodwin 2000; Stivers, Sidnell 2005).

The second aim of the presentation is to analyze the interrelations between linguistic form and non-verbal modalities (gaze, gesture, posture, usage of material artifacts) during the other-initiated repair sequences using the collection of repair sequences in Estonian elementary classroom interaction.

In the presentation I will show that non-verbal modalities can give information about the process of the repair sequence and the boundaries of the repair sequence might be marked non-verbally.

Methods of conversation analysis are used in this presentation.

References

- Goodwin, C. 2000. Action and embodiment within situated human interaction. *Journal of Pragmatics* 32, 1489-1522.
- Schegloff, E.; Jefferson, G.; Sacks, H. 1977. The preference for self-correction in the organization of repair in conversation. – *Language* 52 (2), 361-382.
- Stivers, T.; Sidnell, J. 2005. Introduction: Multimodal interaction. *Semiotica* 156 1(4), 1-20.

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