

The particles *näköjään* ('I see/seemingly') and *kuulemma* ('hearsay') of Finnish as evidential markers

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Evidentiality refers to the source(s) of information speakers have for their statements. The evidence can be based, e.g., on direct sensory evidence or hearsay. All languages can refer to the information source, but languages differ according to whether the expression of evidentiality is obligatory or not. Finnish belongs to the latter group of languages. Finnish refers to the source of information by verbs (like 'see', 'hear', 'feel') or particles. In this presentation, the focus will be on two of these particles, namely *näköjään* ('I see/seemingly') and *kuulemma* (hearsay). Our starting point is that *kuulemma* is used as a hearsay/quotative particle, while *näköjään* is used for sensory perception and inference. We take a closer look at the division of labor between the particles by examining their use in different contexts. Also contexts in which neither of the particles is felicitous are considered for arriving at a better understanding of how the particles are used.

Our paper is based on a questionnaire study we conducted with 134 native speakers of Finnish. The questionnaire comprised 32 questions, where the participants needed to fill in either of the two particles, and they also had a chance to leave a question blank. The questions concerned different situations with various kinds of information sources (all kinds of sensory evidence, hearsay, facts, different kinds of inference), and often there was more than one kind of evidence available. The central findings of our study are:

1. *Kuulemma* is used primarily for hearsay, but not for direct auditive information.
2. *Näköjään* occurs when the speaker is referring to a salient source of information, while *kuulemma* is preferred if the speaker must rely on less salient sources.
3. *Näköjään* is used for visual, auditive and tactile evidence, but its use is restricted with smell and taste.
4. *Näköjään* is also used for various kinds of inference; the more evident the causal relation is the more readily *näköjään* appears.
5. In case of multiple kinds of evidence, *näköjään* is preferred if the speaker's own evidence support hearsay evidence, while *kuulemma* is favored in conflicts.
6. Both particles enable the speaker to distance him/herself from his/her sayings. *Kuulemma* is, however, not possible, if we have direct evidence for our statements.
7. Neither particle can be used with facts or events that the speaker has instigated intentionally.

Our findings are largely compatible with earlier findings. However, a larger-scale examination of the particles has broadened our understanding of the use of the particles. For example, the nature of the causal relation and the use of the particles as distancing mechanisms have not been discussed earlier. Moreover, even though our study is based only on Finnish, we believe that it is relevant also to the study of evidentiality in other languages. Most importantly, our study shows that different instances of sensory perception form a hierarchy; e.g., direct reliable visual evidence outranks hearsay evidence.

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