Morphological description of Finglish

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1   Introduction

Finglish is an artificial language created for a linguistics class at the University of South Carolina in spring 2001. It borrows much of its grammar and vocabulary from Finnish[1] so it could be considered to be in the Finno-Ugrian family of languages.

Although Finglish phonology[2] is quite similar to that of Finnish, the morphology differs noticeably by using more prepositions and fewer cases than Finnish. It might be possible for a native Finnish speaker to understand, but hardly to produce, Finglish.

2   Morphophonemics

A lot of meanings in Finglish are expressed as bound suffixes. Due to the Finglish vowel harmony[2], most of the suffixes have two allomorphs, one for free morphemes using vowels /u, o, ɑ, i, e/ and one for morphemes using the other group of vowels /y, œ, æ/. This variation is very consistent in the sense that vowel /u/ in the suffix becomes /y/, vowel /o/ becomes /œ/ and vowel /ɑ/ becomes /æ/ when the suffix is attached to a free morpheme requiring particular harmony.

3   Inflection

Finglish has a quite wide range of inflection for all word classes. The most important inflectional features are the subject-verb agreement and tense, both concerning verbs. Also the noun cases are widely used to express many of the concepts that in English are expressed with prepositions.

3.1   Pronouns

Finglish pronouns inflect for cases that are discussed in section 3.3.1 so here I will only give the nominative cases of the words.

In table 1 there is a list of Finglish personal pronouns. Please note that there is no distinction between masculine and feminine and all of the pronouns are different from each other.

There are three demonstrative pronouns in Finglish: /tæmæ/ 'this' (plural /næmæ/), /tuo/ 'that' (plural /nuo/), /se/ 'that' (plural /ne/). The demonstrative pronouns are egocentric so the distinction between /tuo/ and /se/ is that you can point a finger at /tuo/ but /se/ is not around.

	Singular		Plural
'I'	/mæ/	'we'	/me/
'you'	/sæ/	'you'	/te/
'he/she'	/hæ/	'they'	/he/

Table 1: Personal pronouns

The two interrogative pronouns in Finglish are /kukɑ/ 'who' and '/mikæ/ 'what'. /mikæ/, along with /jokɑ/, is also a relative pronoun.

3.2 Adjectives

The adjectives in Finglish also have cases and plural forms. The cases, described in section 3.3.1, are needed for the adjective-noun agreement discussed later. Here I will explain adjective comparison and give few examples for adjectives and their comparison.

In Finglish, equality is expressed with nominative adjectives and the word /kuin/. In table 2 there are few examples of compared adjectives.

/nopeɑ   kuin   salamɑ/
'fast'   'as'   'lightning'

/hitɑs   kuin   etɑnɑ/
'slow'   'as'   'a snail'

/vɑnhe-mpi   kuin   mæ/
  'older'   'than'   'I'

/punɑise-mmɑ-t   poske-t/
    'reder'   'cheeks'

/suur-in   ɑuto/
'largest'   'car'

/tumm-impɑ-t   silmæ-t/
  'darkest'   'eyes'

Table 2: Adjective comparisons

The ending for comparative in nominative singular is /-mpi/ and in other singular cases it is /-mpɑ/. For nominative plural the comparative suffix is /-mmɑ/ and for other cases /-mpi/. Word /kuin/ is used as 'than' in comparative expressions.

The singular nominative superlative has a suffix /-in/ attached to the inflectional stem. The suffix changes to /-impɑ, -impæ/ when the adjective has some other singular suffixes

and when the word is a plural nominative. The superlative suffix in other plural form is /-impi/.

3.3   Nouns

The nouns are inflected by case, number, possessor and clitic particles. The case suffixes always precede the possessor suffix and the possible clitic particle must be the final morpheme of a word.

3.3.1   Cases

In Finglish there are 7 cases for adjectives, pronouns and nouns. The suffixes for all of the cases are listed in table 3.

Name	Singular	Plural
Nominative	/-/	/-t/
Genitive	/-n/	/-ien/
Partitive	/-ɑ -æ/	/-jɑ -tæ/
Adessive	/-llɑ -llæ/	/-illɑ -illæ/
Ablative	/-ltɑ -ltæ/	/-iltɑ -iltæ/
Allative	/-lle/	/-ille/

Table 3: Case suffixes

The usage of the cases are explained throughly in Finglish syntax description and the description here explains only the major features of the schematics of the cases. The subject of a sentence is in nominative and direct object is in partitive. The genitive case shows the owner as in /isɑ-n ɑuto/ 'father's car'. Adessive, ablative and allative have about the same function as English prepositions 'at/or/in', 'from', and 'to' respectively.

The schematics Finnish cases inessive ('inside'), elative ('from inside') and illative ('into') are expressed by preposition /in/ and adessive, ablative or allative respectively.

3.3.2   Possessive suffixes

In general, the possessed element is in nominative case and the possessor in genitive. If the the possessor is a personal pronoun, there is an possessive suffix attached to the possessed element and the pronoun can be omitted as in /ɑuto-ni/ 'my car'. The possessive suffixes are listed in table 4.

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	Singular	Plural
1st.	/-ni/	/-mme/
2nd.	/-si/	/-nne/
3rd.	/-hi/	/-nsɑ -nsæ/

Table 4: Possessive suffixes

The possessed word can also be in other case than nominative e.g. /tɑlo-llɑ-si/ 'house-ades.-2.sg.pos.' 'in your house' but if in nominative it is *treated* the same way as if it would be in genitive. e.g. /isæ-ni kirjɑ/ 'father-my book' 'my father's book'.

3.3.3 Clitic particles

In Finglish language there are four bound particle morphemes that have interesting semantic functions. The clitic particles are

/-ko -kœ/ A question particle. e.g. /on-ko se/ 'is it?', /vihreæ-kœ/ 'green?'.

/-kin/ Means 'also' like /pekkɑ-kin/ 'also Pekka'.

/-kɑɑn -kææn/ Opposite of /-kin/. Means roughly 'not even'. e.g. /ɑuto-t-kɑɑn/ 'not even the cars'.

/-ip/ Means roughly 'and' and is used as Latin -que particle. e.g. /tyttœ poikɑ-ip/ 'girl boy-c.p.' 'girl and boy'.

3.4 Verbs

There are four tenses, six persons and two imperatives for verbs in Finglish. The person suffix of the predicate of a sentence always agrees with the subject.

The four tenses of Finglish are the same as in English: present, imperfect, perfect and pluperfect. The marker for present is /-ɑ- -æ-/ and for imperfect /-i-/. The perfect and pluperfect tenses are compound formed respectively by verb /ol-ɑ-/ or /ol-i-/ with personal suffix, followed by the original verb with suffix /-nut -nyt/ in singular or /-neet/ in plural.

After the tense suffixes there is a personal suffix which are summarized in table 5. When the subject is a personal pronoun and the verb is in 1. or 2. person, the pronoun is omitted.

Person	Singular	Plural
1st.	/-n/	/-mme/
2nd.	/-t/	/-tte/
3rd.	/-ɑ -æ/	/-vɑt -væt/

Table 5: Verb personal suffixes

The final two inflectional suffixes for verbs are the imperative forms. The imperative forms are used to give an order or a command, like /ɑj-ɑ/ 'drive!'. The suffix for 2. person singular is /-ɑ -æ/ and for plural is /-kɑɑ -kææ/. Finglish, unlike Finnish, does not have imperative forms for other persons. In table 6 there are examples of inflection of a few common verbs.

4 Derivation

Most of Finglish derivational morphology is suffixes. Most of the derivational suffixes are very productive i.e. the meaning of the word is changed predictably. In table 7 there are some examples of derivational suffixes.

References

[1] H. Sulkala, M. Karjalainen: Finnish, Routledge, (1992)

[2] K. Palin: Phonological description of Finglish, University of South Carolina, (2001)

Type	'to be'	'to love'	'to eat'
Infinitive	/ol-ɑɑ/	/rɑkɑst-ɑɑ/	/sy-ææ/
1. sg. pres.	/ol-ɑ-n/	/rɑkɑst-ɑ-n/	/sy-æ-n/
2. sg. pres.	/ol-ɑ-t/	/rɑkɑst-ɑ-t/	/sy-æ-t/
3. sg. pres.	/ol-ɑ-ɑ/	/rɑkɑst-ɑ-ɑ/	/sy-æ-æ/
1. pl. pres.	/ol-ɑ-mme/	/rɑkɑst-ɑ-mme/	/sy-æ-mme/
2. pl. pres.	/ol-ɑ-tte/	/rɑkɑst-ɑ-tte/	/sy-æ-tte/
3. pl. pres.	/ol-ɑ-vat/	/rɑkɑst-ɑ-vat/	/sy-æ-væt/
1. sg. imperf.	/ol-i-n/	/rɑkɑst-i-n/	/sy-i-n/
2. sg. imperf.	/ol-i-t/	/rɑkɑst-i-t/	/sy-i-t/
3. sg. imperf.	/ol-i-ɑ/	/rɑkɑst-i-ɑ/	/sy-i-æ/
1. sg. perf.	/ol-ɑ-n ol-nut/	/ol-ɑ-n rɑkɑst-ɑ-nut/	/ol-ɑ-n sy-æ-nyt/
2. sg. perf.	/ol-ɑ-t ol-nut/	/ol-ɑ-t rɑkɑst-ɑ-nut/	/ol-ɑ-t sy-æ-nyt/
3. sg. perf.	/ol-ɑ-ɑ ol-nut/	/ol-ɑ-ɑ rɑkɑst-ɑ-nut/	/ol-ɑ-ɑ sy-æ-nyt/
1. pl. perf.	/ol-ɑ-mme ol-neet/	/ol-ɑ-mme rɑkɑst-ɑ-neet/	/ol-ɑ-mme sy-æ-neet/
1. sg. pluperf.	/ol-i-n ol-nut/	/ol-i-n rɑkɑst-ɑ-nut/	/ol-i-n sy-æ-nyt/
2. sg. pluperf.	/ol-i-t ol-nut/	/ol-i-t rɑkɑst-ɑ-nut/	/ol-i-t sy-æ-nyt/
3. sg. pluperf.	/ol-i-ɑ ol-nut/	/ol-i-ɑ rɑkɑst-ɑ-nut/	/ol-i-ɑ sy-æ-nyt/
1. pl. pluperf.	/ol-i-mme ol-neet/	/ol-i-mme rɑkɑst-ɑ-neet/	/ol-i-mme sy-æ-neet/
sg. imper.	/ol-ɑ/	/rɑkɑst-ɑ/	/sy-æ/
pl. imper.	/ol-kɑɑ/	/rɑkɑst-kɑɑ/	/sy-kææ/

Table 6: Examples of verb inflection.

/ɑjoitus/	'dating' 'timing'	/ɑjoit-tɑɑ/	'to date'
/viehætys/	'charm'	/viehæt-tææ/	to charm
/amerikkɑ/	'America'	/amerikkɑ-lɑinen/	'American'
/sɑksɑ/	'Germany'	/sɑksɑ-lɑinen/	'German'
/punɑ/	'red' color, noun	/punɑ-inen/	'red' adj.
/ɑuto/	'car'	/ɑuto-inen/	'with (lot of) cars' adj.

Table 7: Derivational morphology