Form, meaning and use of participial imperatives in Dutch. A constructional perspective.

Apart from the imperative form of the verb and the infinitival imperative, Dutch has a third way to express imperative meaning, which is coined 'participial imperative' by Rooryck & Postma (2007). Since this construction has a highly restricted productivity, we can give a rather complete inventory of verbs which can be used as participles with imperative meaning. On the basis of the limited productivity of the construction, Hoeksema (1992) formulates the hypothesis that such imperatives are lexicalised and they are not free combinations of a verb with its complements and modifiers, but idioms that need to be learned one by one.

Our paper elaborates on the distribution of this type of imperative construction and on the question to what extent the relevant set of verbs is indeed purely lexicalised. We will show that the participial imperative should not be characterised as a diverse set of participles with a lexically determined sensitivity to be used with imperative meaning. Such a position cannot account for the striking similarities among participial imperatives with regard to their form, meaning and use. One observation, which has not been reported previously, is that cases of participial imperatives are, without exception, weakly conjugated forms.

Our inventory shows that four subcategories can be identified within the set of participial imperatives, which can be distinguished on the basis of their meaning, form and use:

- forms of subtype *opgehoepeld* (1a) have the prefix *op-* ('up'), express the command to go away from the speaker and have a colloquial, aggressive connotation.
- forms of subtype *ingerukt* (1b) have a prefix, express the command to dismiss and are used in military and related contexts.
- forms of subtype *opgelet* (1c) have the prefix *op-* and express a warning (rather than a command) to be careful.
- forms of subtype *niet getreurd* (1d) are introduced by the negative particle *niet* and express an exhortation to stop hesitating to perform a certain action.

In our paper, these properties are considered in more detail from the perspective of cognitive grammar (Langacker 2008) and construction grammar (Goldberg 2006). The participial imperative will be analysed as a construction which can be embedded in a construction network by relating it to other formally connected constructions. Furthermore, the assumption can be made that the participial imperative is a construction with a number of common characteristics, but which can be decomposed in four subconstructions with their own properties.

A problem of the analysis by Rooryck & Postma is that some of their generalisations only apply to a subset of the group of participial imperatives. For example, Rooryck & Postma (2007: 285) claim that "participial imperatives (…) are systematically formed with particle verbs, in most if not all cases containing the particle *op*". However, this generalization does not apply to the subtypes *niet getreurd* and _ingerukt_. Our paper presents a constructional view on the participial imperative in which such properties are related to a set of subtypes of the construction.

(1)　　a.　*opgerot – opgesodemiederd – opgedonderd – opgehoepeld – opgekrast – opgetieft – opgeflikkerd – opgekankerd – opgelazerd – opgekrast – opgeduveld – opgehoerd – opgefuckt – opgekut – opgesodeflikkerd – opgemieterd – opgehomood – opgesodehoepeld – opgesodehoerd – opgekloot – opgezeikt – opgeteringd – opgeneukt – opgesodestraald – opgesodedonderd – opgesodekanderd – opgesodetieft*
('Go away!')

　　b.　*ingerukt – opgemarcheerd – ingepakt – opgerukt – afgemarcheerd – uitgerukt*
('Dismiss!')

　　c.　*opgelet – opgepast* ('Take care! / Look out!')

　　d.　*niet getreurd – niet geklaagd – niet gezeurd – niet getreuzeld – niet gedraald – niet getalmd – niet gejammerd – niet getwijfeld – niet geleuterd – niet gezeverd – niet gemekkerd – niet geaarzeld – niet geschroomd – niet gesakkerd – niet geweifeld*
('Don't hold back!')

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