

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

Lower Beginner S1 #1

Talking About Yourself in Finnish

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INTRODUCTION

Brandon: Hello, and welcome to FinnishPod101.com. This is Lower Beginner, season 1, Lesson 1 – Talking About Yourself in Finnish. My name is Brandon, and I'm hosting this series along with my co-host...

Nico: Hei, minä olen Nico. Hello, I'm Nico. Thank you for joining us, listeners!

Brandon: In the first two lessons of this new series we'll be reviewing some basic grammar. In this lesson we will learn the nominative, partitive, and genitive cases. They're the first cases you need for saying anything at all in Finnish.

Nico: We have only one person speaking in this lesson. He'll be introducing himself by speaking standard Finnish.

Brandon: Ok, let's listen to the conversation.

LESSON CONVERSATION

Petri: Minä olen Petri Lahtinen. Olen ohjelmoija. Aloitan tänään uuden työn. Se on mielenkiintoista. Minulla oli onnea, kun sain paikan.

English Host: Let's hear the conversation one time slowly.

Petri: Minä olen Petri Lahtinen. Olen ohjelmoija. Aloitan tänään uuden työn. Se on mielenkiintoista. Minulla oli onnea, kun sain paikan.

English Host: Now let's hear it with the English translation.

Petri: Minä olen Petri Lahtinen. Olen ohjelmoija. Aloitan tänään uuden työn. Se on mielenkiintoista. Minulla oli onnea, kun sain paikan.

Brandon: I'm Petri Lahtinen. I'm a programmer. I'll start at a new job today. It's interesting. I was lucky to get the job.

POST CONVERSATION BANTER

Brandon: So, Petri is starting a new job. Do Finns change jobs a lot, or do they tend to stay in the same company?

Nico: Well, there are people who stay in the same company for almost their whole career, but that's becoming more rare. Young people especially are quick to change jobs if they don't like their current one.

Brandon: So you don't have to show loyalty to your employer by sticking around?

Nico: No, I think changing jobs every 2 to 4 years is quite normal for a young person. Of course, if you change jobs very often, eventually employers will start to wonder why you can't stay in one place.

Brandon: That makes sense. What are some reasons people stay or leave?

Nico: Money is one reason, but not necessarily the biggest. I've heard that young people want to do something interesting, something they can enjoy. Not just something that pays for their expenses.

Brandon: OK. Now let's move on to the vocab.

VOCAB LIST

Brandon: Let's take a look at the vocabulary for this lesson.

: The first word we shall see is:

Nico: ohjelmoija [natural native speed]

Brandon: programmer

Nico: ohjelmoija [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nico: ohjelmoija [natural native speed]

: Next:

Nico: aloittaa [natural native speed]

Brandon: to start, to begin

Nico: aloittaa [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nico: aloittaa [natural native speed]

: Next:

Nico: tänään [natural native speed]

Brandon: today

Nico: tänään [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nico: tänään [natural native speed]

: Next:

Nico: uusi [natural native speed]

Brandon: new

Nico: uusi [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nico: uusi [natural native speed]

: Next:

Nico: työ [natural native speed]

Brandon: job, work

Nico: työ [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nico: työ [natural native speed]

: Next:

Nico: mielenkiintoinen [natural native speed]

Brandon: interesting

Nico: mielenkiintoinen [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nico: mielenkiintoinen [natural native speed]

: Next:

Nico: onni [natural native speed]

Brandon: luck, fortune, happiness

Nico: onni [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nico: onni [natural native speed]

: Next:

Nico: kun [natural native speed]

Brandon: when

Nico: kun [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nico: kun [natural native speed]

: Next:

Nico: saada [natural native speed]

Brandon: to get, to receive

Nico: saada [slowly - broken down by

syllable]

Nico: saada [natural native speed]

: And last:

Nico: paikka [natural native speed]

Brandon: place, position; seat; job

Nico: paikka [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nico: paikka [natural native speed]

KEY VOCAB AND PHRASES

Brandon: Let's take a closer look at the usage of some of the words and phrases from this lesson.

Nico: The first word is aloittaa, and it means "to start." What you need to know about this verb is that it's something called a transitive verb.

Brandon: What exactly does that mean?

Nico: It means that it always needs an object. Unlike in English, Finnish verbs either take an object or they don't. So you can't translate the English sentences "I will start a new book" and "The book starts well" with the same verb in Finnish.

Brandon: I see. So it's the "I will start a new book" sentence that would have this verb in it?

Nico: Exactly. The Finnish sentence would be Minä aloitan uuden kirjan.

Brandon: OK. What's the next word?

Nico: Onni. It can be both "luck" as in what you hope for at a casino, and "happiness", as in something money can't buy.

Brandon: So you don't make the distinction in Finnish?

Nico: Not with this word. There are some other words that mean specifically "luck", such as tuuri and lykky, but onni also means "happiness".

Brandon: I see. What's the next word?

Nico: Paikka. It has a wide range of meanings, pretty much like the English word "place".

Brandon: And it also means "a seat", right?

Nico: That's right. It's used to refer to the seats in a theater or vehicle, among other places. It can also mean a position or job, and you'll see it in the compound word työpaikka. Työpaikka literally means "workplace"; but in addition to the physical environment, it can also mean a job or a position.

Brandon: Great. Okay, now onto the grammar.

LESSON FOCUS

Brandon: In this lesson, we'll learn the nominative, partitive, and genitive cases. The nominative is the dictionary form of nouns, adjectives, numerals, and pronouns. The subject of a sentence, that is, the person or thing that does something, is usually in the

nominative.

Nico: In the dialogue, we had the sentences *Minä olen Petri Lahtinen. Olen ohjelmoija.* The words *minä* for “I”, the name *Petri Lahtinen*, and *ohjelmoija* for “programmer” were in the nominative.

Brandon: But the name *Petri Lahtinen* and the word *programmer* are not subjects in these sentences.

Nico: That’s true. In sentences like this, the words that are used to give information about the subject are often also in the nominative.

Brandon: But not always?

Nico: No, sometimes they’re in the partitive. The key is knowing whether the subject is distinct and specific or not.

Brandon: Let’s have some examples to clear this up.

Nico: Sure. Imagine you have an apple and a glass of milk in the fridge. Then you could say the apple is cold, *Omena on kylmä.* The apple is a specific entity, so we use the nominative for both the subject *omena* meaning “apple” and for the adjective *kylmä* meaning “cold”.

Brandon: Now imagine you also want to say the milk is cold.

Nico: Since you’re talking about a specific amount of milk, the subject *maito* will be in the nominative.

Brandon: *maito* is a mass noun, and even though you’re referring to a specific amount of milk in the glass, it’s still not an distinct and specific entity.

Nico Therefore, you have to put the word *kylmä* in the partitive, *Maito on kylmää.*

Brandon: I see. What about the subject, are there some instances when it’s not in the nominative?

Nico: Yes. If you can think of using the word “some” in front of the subject in English, you probably need to use the partitive in Finnish.

Brandon: How about an example?

Nico: Well, if you’re clumsy and knock the glass over so that all the milk spills on the table, you’d use the nominative and say *Maito kaatui pöydälle* for “The milk was spilled on the table.” However, if you only spill some of the milk, you’d say *Maitoa kaatui pöydälle*, meaning “Some milk was spilled on the table.”

Brandon: OK, so when you’re talking about all the milk you use the nominative, and when you’re talking about some of the milk, you use the partitive.

Nico: Exactly.

Brandon: Now let’s talk about the genitive. The object of a sentence is in the genitive if the action affects the entire object, and in the partitive if it affects only some of it.

Nico: So you’d say *Syön omenan* for “I’ll eat the apple” if you’re going to eat the entire apple, and *Syön omenaa*, meaning “I’ll eat some apple,” if you’re only going to eat some of it.

Brandon: OK. And the genitive also indicates possession, right?

Nico: Yes, that’s its other function. “Petri’s apple” would be *Petrin omena* in Finnish.

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OUTRO

Brandon: Well, I think that's all the time we have for this lesson. Please check the lesson notes for more details and examples. And if you have any questions or comments, leave us a post at FinnishPod101.com.

Nico: Yes, we're happy to help!

Brandon: Thanks for joining us, everyone, and we'll see you next time! Bye!

Nico: Hei hei!