

Language attrition: the case of Livonian



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Livonian

- Uralic → Finnic → Southern Finnic
- Two main varieties:
 - Courland Livonian**
(Courland)
 - Salaca Livonian**
(Livonia/Vidzeme)



Map by Timo Rantanen, see:

<https://zenodo.org/record/4784188#.YZDprmBBzSE>

My research & Livonian

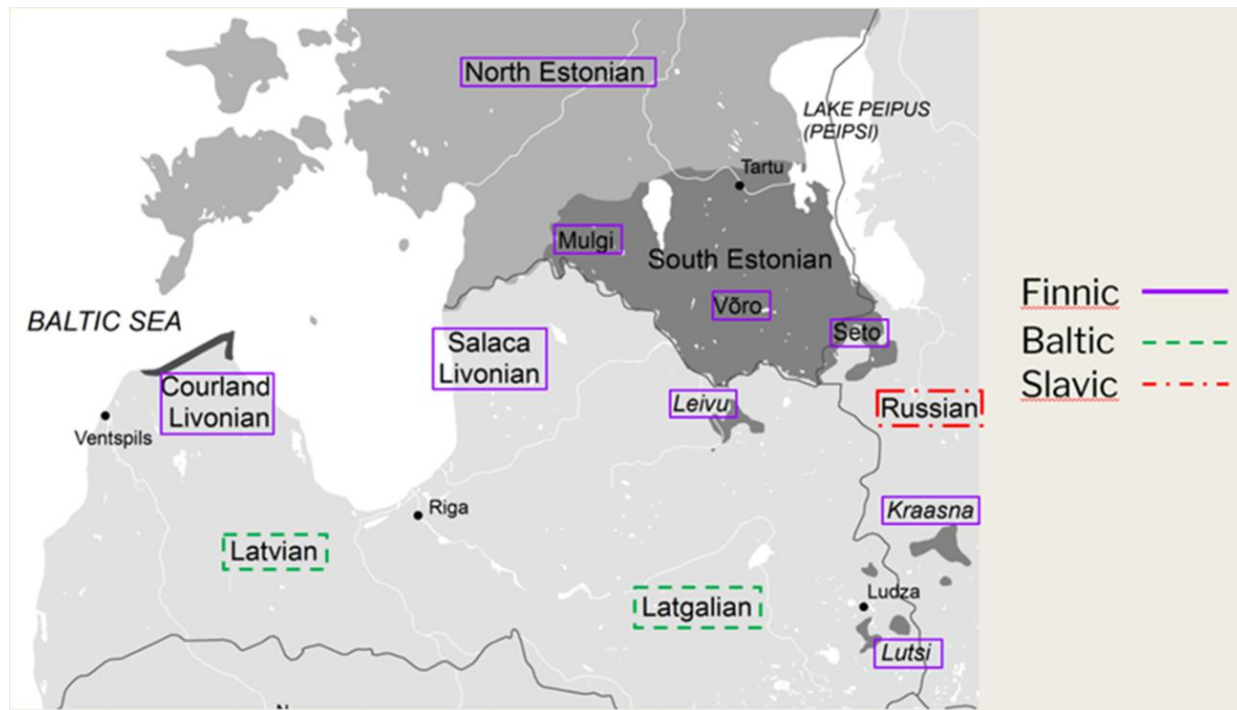
Tuleviku väljendamise vahendid salatsiliivi keeles muude Euroopa keelte ja läänemeresoome keelte taustal 'Means of expressing future time reference in **Salaca Livonian** in the context of European and Finnic languages' (MA thesis, 2010)

*Future time reference devices in **Livonian** in a Finnic context* (PhD thesis, 2015)



Latest research

- Norvik, Miina; Balodis, Uldis; Ernštreits, Valts; Kļava, Gunta; Metslang, Helle; Pajusalu, Karl; Saar, Eva (2021). ***The South Estonian language islands in the context of the Central Baltic area.*** ESUKA 12 (2), 33–72. DOI: 10.12697/jeful.2021.12.2.02.
- Norvik, Miina; Metslang, Helle; Pajusalu, Karl; Saar, Eva. ***Polar questions in Livonian against their areal background.*** To appear in 2022 in ESUKA.



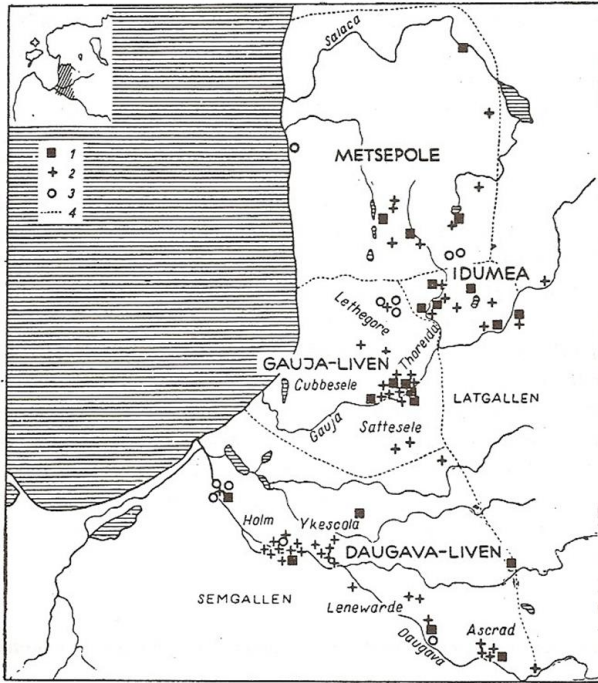
Overview

- Background
 - Areas inhabited by Livonians
 - Number of speakers
 - Livonian literary language
 - Current situation
- Linguistic examples – possible examples of attrition

Background



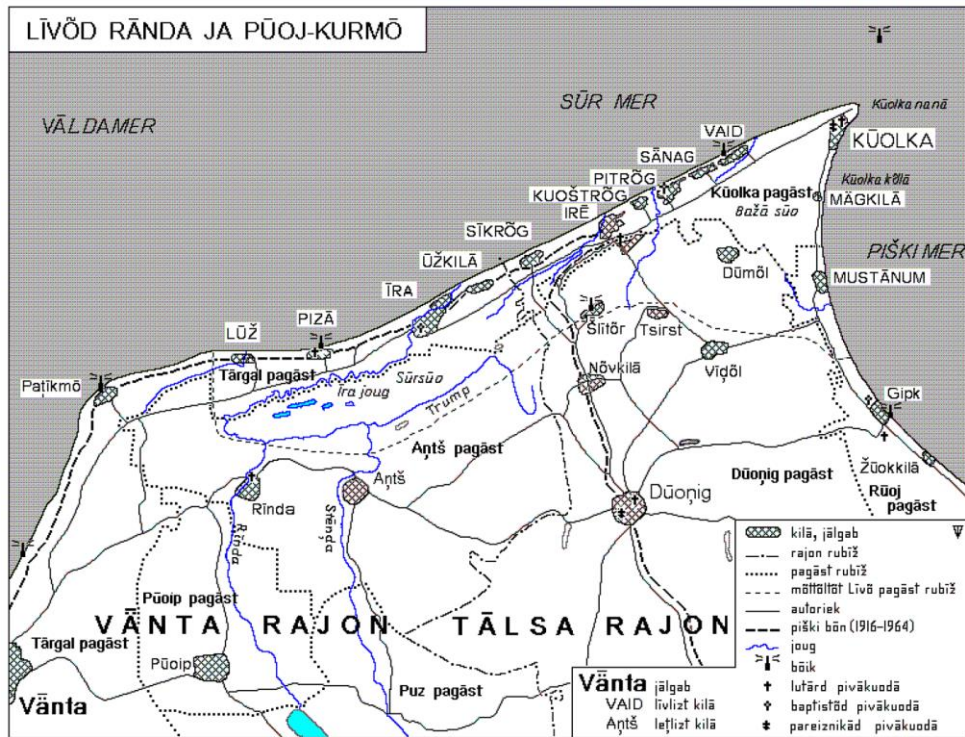
Livonian varieties in Livonia



Die livischen Gebiete am Anfang des II. Jahrtausends mit den uns bekannten 1 Burgbergen, 2 Gräberfeldern und 3 Schatzfunden; 4 — Grenzen der Gebiete.

- **Daugava Livonian** (~ 16th c.) & **Gauja Livonian** (~ 18th c.) – the areas slowly started to diminish already with the foundation of Riga in 1201
- **Salaca Livonian** (~ the end of the 19th c.) – last speaker died 1868; however, there may have been some speakers also in the beginning of the 20th century (see Rudzīte & Karma 1975)

Courland



- **Western Livonian** (Paṭīkmō*, Lūž, Pizā, Īra)
 - Central Livonian (Īra)
 - **Eastern Livonian** (Ūžkilā, Sīkrōg, Irē, Kuoštrōg, Pitrōg, Sānag, Vaid, Kūolka, Māgkilā*, Mustānum, Gīpkō*)
- basis of the literary language

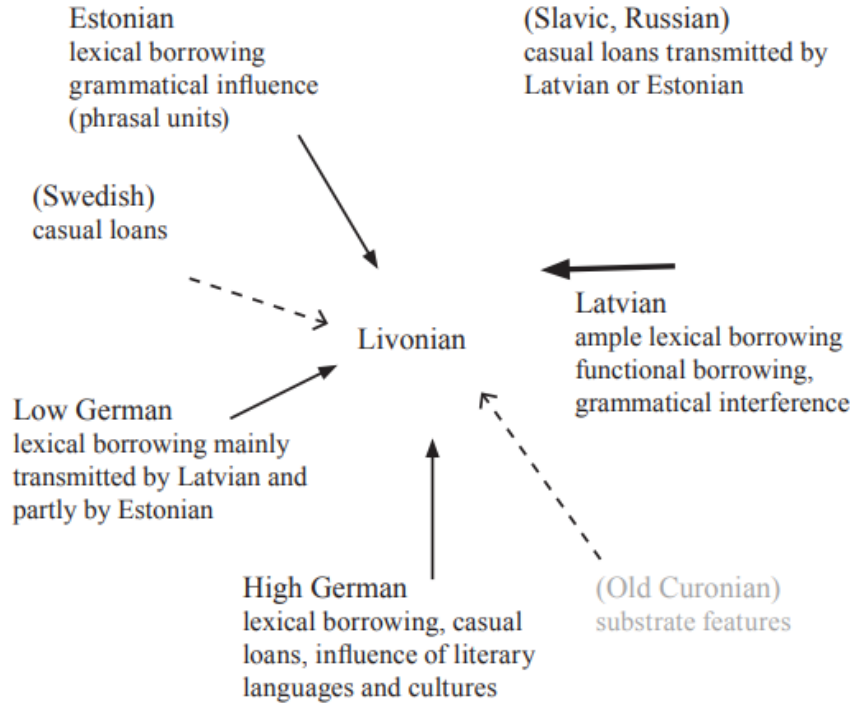
Number of speakers

12th century	~ 15,000 to 27,000
Sjögren & Wiedemann 1861	~ 2,500 in Courland, 22 in Salaca (last speaker died in 1868)
Loorits, Kettunen in the 1920s	~ 1,500
Vaalgamaa in the end of 1930s	~ 750 to 800
Damberg in the 1970s	~ 500 to 600
In the beginning of 1990s	~ 30 L1 speakers, ~ 30 others
2010s	1 to 2 L1 speakers, ~ 40 others; 250 Livonians according to Latvian census

Linguistic contacts

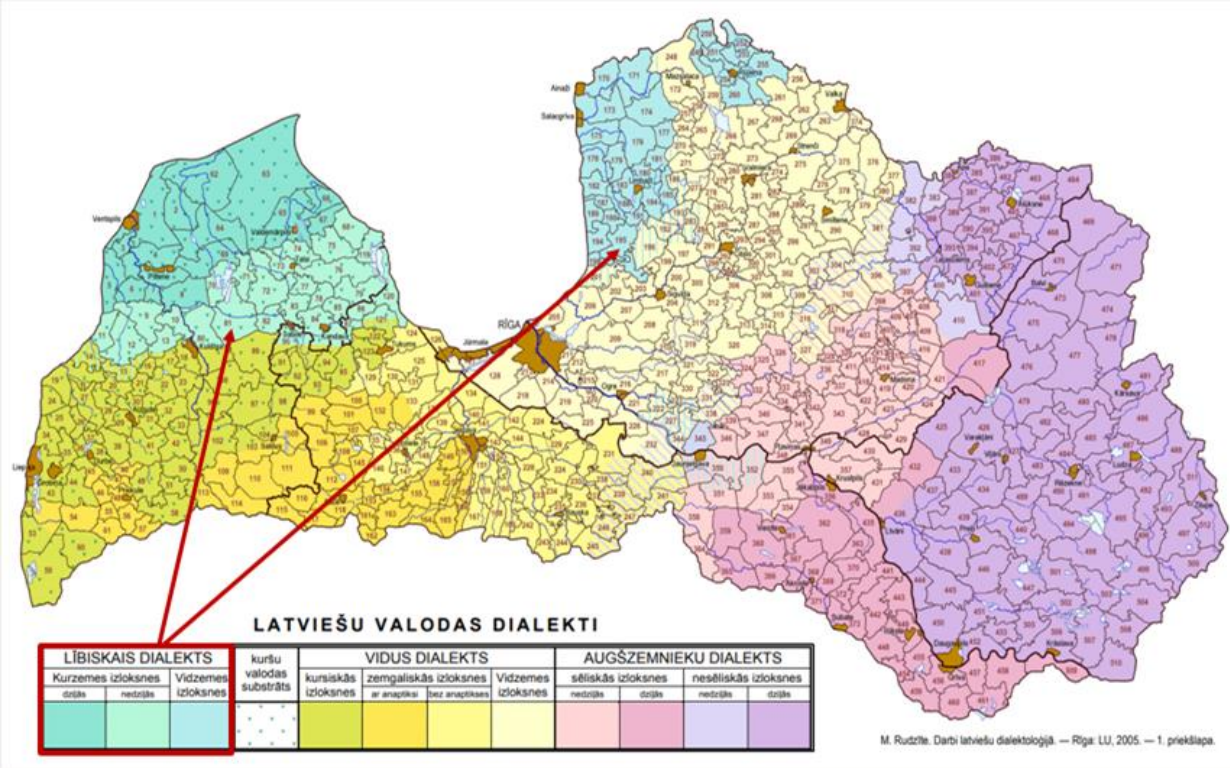
! Extensive bilingualism (Livonian & Latvian) for several centuries (Ernštreits 2013: 14)

Figure 1. The influence of language contacts on Livonian.



(Grünthal 2015: 57)

Latvian dialects



Lībiskais dialekts =
Livonian-like
dialects

Livonian literary language

- Has its roots in the second half of the 19th century – the **Gospel of Matthew** (published in 1880) was the first book in Livonian that Livonians had at home.
- Based on the **Eastern Livonian dialect**; for writing down other dialects, only orthographic rules are applied, while dialectal features are preserved, e.g.,
 - e.g., Eastern Livonian *ta tulāb* 3sg come. 3sg
 - Western Livonian *ta tulūb* 3sg come. 3sg
- The current standard follows the rules agreed upon at a conference in **1995**.

(Ernštreits 2013: 188–189)



Current situation (1)



Latvijas Universitāte un Lībiešu kultūras centrs ielūdz Jūs
uz LATVIJAS UNIVERSITĀTES LĪBIEŠU INSTITŪTĀ atklāšanu
2018. gada 21. septembrī pulksten 15.00
Latvijas Universitātes Lielajā aulā Rīgā,
Raiņa bulvārī 19.

v. ov. Miina Norvik jemānd

Leļmō Ilļiskūol ja Līvō kultūr sidām pōlabōd Tēdi
LEĻMŌ ILĪZSKUŌL LĪVŌD INSTITŪT vāldiž tīemiz pāl
2018. āigast 21. septembōrs kīela 15.00
Leļmō Ilļizskuōl Sūrs aulas Rīgōs, Raiņā bulvārs 19.

2018 – LU Livonian Institute

Current situation (2)

LIVONIAN TECH


Words⁰¹ Places⁰² Sound⁰³ Teaching aids⁰⁴ English ▼ Pierakstītes

Words

◀ ▶

i'j vóstāji <i>s *175</i> buyer	ī'd kōrdi <i>adj *187</i> simple, plain, ordinary	i'lz pūgō <i>vt *49</i> to hang (a person)	ī'd ku'bbi <i>adj *182'</i> shared, common
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LIVONES.NET



UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA
LIVONIAN INSTITUTE

LV
LIV
ENG

UL LIVONIAN INSTITUTE

RESEARCHERS	EVENTS	RESEARCH	PROJECTS	LIV-EE-LV DICTIONARY	PLACENAMES	🔍
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LIVONIAN INSTITUTE / PROJECTS / RESEARCH PROJECTS

Current situation (3)



Livõ Kõl

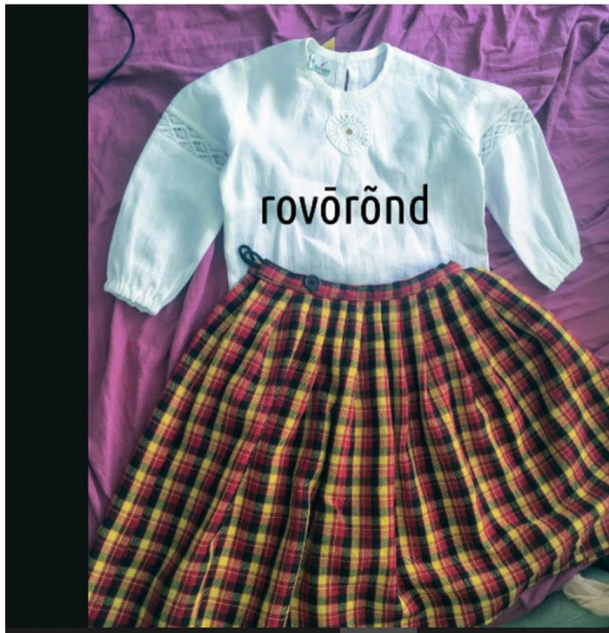
21. juuni kell 23:46 · 🌐

Päva sõna: tautastërps * national costume

Lauzums: "õrõnd"

<http://www.livones.net/.../ro%E2%80%99v%7C%C7%AD%E2%80...>

Vaata tõlget



**Some examples:
possible indications of attrition**

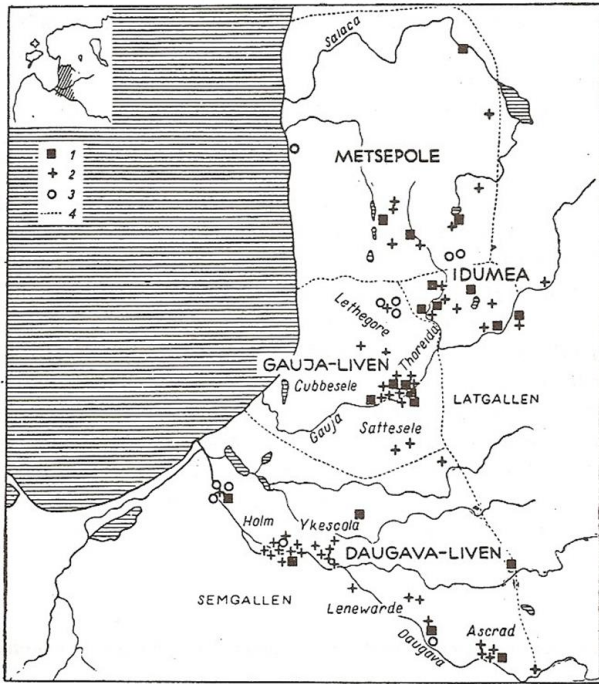


Salaca Livonian data

- Earliest data from 1655, noted down by Thomas Hiärne
- A. J. Sjögren's trip to Livonia in 29.05–07.09.1846
 - 17.06–04.07 – in Salaca Livonia
 - two informants
 - used also a translator and some literary sources (in Latvian)

→ Sjögren, Andreas Johan & Ferdinand Johann Wiedemann. 1861. *Joh. Andreas Sjögren's Gesammelte Schriften. Band II. Theil I, Joh. Andreas Sjögren's Livische Grammatik nebst Sprachproben*. St. Petersburg.

Contains examples of sentences!



Die livischen Gebiete am Anfang des II. Jahrtausends mit den uns bekannten 1 Burgbergen, 2 Gräberfeldern und 3 Schatzfunden; 4 — Grenzen der Gebiete.



The area inhabited by Salaca Livonians in 1846 (map taken from Pajusalu & Winkler 2011: 177)

Courland Livonian data

- Estonian Dialect Corpus <https://www.murre.ut.ee/mkweb/>
- Livonian Literary Corpus (under construction)
- Archives of Estonian Dialects and Kindred Languages
<https://murdearhiiv.ut.ee/>

NB! The following examples introduced by NN and OO originate from a recording recorded in 2021; the examples are presented following the Livonian orthography.

Example 1. Towards double negative

Present & past paradigms of the verb *jellõ* 'to live'

Person	Prs	Prs neg	Pst	Pst neg
1 – ma	jelā/b	äb jelā	jel/īz	iz je'l
2 – sa	jelā/d	äd jelā	jel/īz/t	iz/t je'l
3 – ta	jelā/b	äb jelā	jel/īz	iz je'l
1 – mēg	jelā/m	äb jelā/m	jel/īz/mõ	iz jelā/m
2 – tēg	jelā/t	ät jelā/t	jel/īz/tõ	iz/t jelā/t
3 – ne	jelā/bõd	äb jelā/t	jel/īz/tõ	iz/t jelā/t

BUT cf.

NN: *Tämmõn **iz vò!*** (pro *iz ūo*) *gramatik*

3SG.DAT NEG.PST.3SG be.PST.3SG grammar_book

‘S/he did not have a grammar book’

(However, the speaker also uses *iz ūo*)

NN: *Min izān vanbizt **iz mūoštiztõ*** (pro *iz mūošt*) *jemīņ livõ kiēldõ*

1SG.GEN father.DAT parent.PL NEG.PST.3PL know.PST.3PL anymore Livonian.PRT language.PRT

‘My father’s parents did not speak Livonian anymore’

NN: *Amād kalāmīed **āb ārmastõb*** (pro *āb ārmastõt*) *nēđi*

all.PL fisherman.PL NEG.PRS.3SG love.3SG 3PL.PRT

‘All the fisherman do not love them’

Prs	ma um	‘I live’
Prs neg	ma äb ūo	‘I do not live’
Pst	ma vò!	‘I lived’
Pst neg	ma iz ūo	‘I did not live’

Prs	ne ārmastõbõd	‘they love’
Prs neg	ne äb ārmastõt	‘they don’t love’

Cf. Salaca Livonian

	Prs		Pst	
1Sg	-b		∅	
2Sg	-d		-d	∅
3Sg	-b		∅	
1Pl	-mi, -m	-b	-mi	∅
2Pl	-ti, -t	-b	-ti	∅
3Pl	-bVd	-b	-t	∅

(Table based on Norvik et al. 2021)

Negation:

Prs **ab ~ ap** + cng, e.g. *ma ab vuj* (1SG NEG.PRS can.CNG) ‘I cannot’

Pst **is ~ iz** + cng, e.g. *täma iz uj* (3SG NEG.PST can.CNG) ‘s/he couldn’t’

However, also forms including a personal ending have been found, e.g. *tee ab uoti* (2PL NEG.PRS be.2PL) ‘you are not’.

(Winkler & Pajusalu 2018: 128–130)

Example 2. Towards plural with numerals

ikš mīez (man.SG.NOM) ‘one man’ : ***kakš, kuolm... mīeztõ*** (man.SG.PRT) ‘two, three men’

Cf.

NN: *Minnõn vòltõ set **kakš nimūd*** (pro *vòl set kakš nimmõ*)

1SG.DAT be.PST.3PL only two.SG.NOM name.PL.NOM

‘I had only two names’

NN: *kuolm vaggi **sūrd mīezt*** (pro *sūrtõ mīeztõ*) (pl.nom – *sūrd mīed*)

three very big.PL.NOM man.SG.PRT

‘three very big men’

Cf. Salaca Livonian

- Typically the singular form is used, e.g.,
*juks rupil : tjum **rupild***
one ruble ten ruble.SG.PRT
'one ruble : ten rubles'
- However, occasionally also plural occurs, e.g.,
*tjum **työnikad***
ten worker.PL.NOM
'ten workers'

(Winkler & Pajusalu 2018: 184)

Example 3. Conflation of illative and inessive

NN: *Ma iz lekš **lapsttarās*** (pro *iz lā apstarrō*)

1SG NEG.PST.1SG go.PST.1SG kindergarten.INE

‘I didn’t go to kindergarten’

NN: *Lekš jālgīņ **Parīzōs*** (pro *Parīzō*) /.../ ***Amērikas*** (pro *Amērikō*)

go.PST.3SG on_foot Paris.INE

America.INE ‘to America’

‘[S/he] went to Paris on foot’

NN: *Mēg lekšmō **sāl*** (pro *sīņō*)

1PL go.PST.1PL there.INE

‘We went there’

Cf. fossilised expressions of *l*-cases:

a’bbōl lā’dō appi minna ▫ iet palīgā ‘(go) to help’

a’bbōl vōlda olla abis ▫ būt palīgā ‘be helping’

pōrandōl istō pōrandal istuda ▫ sēdēt uz grīdas ‘to sit on the floor’, but also ‘to sit onto the floor’

(Viitso & Ernštreits 2012)

Cf. Salaca Livonian

Allative-adessive -l ~ -ll	Illative
<i>ybil</i> horse.ADE/ALL	<i>kjulg</i> ~ <i>tjulg</i> side.ILL (overlaps with NOM) <i>myts</i> forest.ILL (cf. <i>mytsa</i> forest.NOM)
	Inessive -s ~ -s, -z
	<i>työs</i> ~ <i>työz</i> work.INE
Ablative -lt	Elative -st
<i>kaugelt</i> ‘from far away’ <u>abl + ela</u> : <i>päältest</i> ~ <i>päältst</i> ‘from the top of’	<i>unst</i> sleep.ELA

(Winkler & Pajusalu 2018: 78–79)

Example 4. Towards *laz* + indicative

Typically ***laz* + jussive**, e.g. *laz ta tulgõ* ‘let him/her come’. However, already Sjögren & Wiedemann (1861: 156-157) include *laz mēg äb sã* ‘let us not get’.

Cf. *laz* + indicative

NN: *laz ta āndab*

HORT 3SG give.3SG

‘let him/her give’

NN: *mēg pōlizmõ, laz ta nägtõb mädđõn*

1PL ask.PST.1PL HORT 3SG show.3SG 1PL.DAT

‘We asked that s/he would show us’

Cf. Latvian *lai* ‘let’ + indicative,

e.g. *lai dod* ‘let [him/her] give’

(see also Dailidēnaitė 2022)

Cf. Salaca Livonian

- Typically *las* ~ *lass* + jussive, e.g.
Lass tulg (*j*)*enim imist/raust*
HORT come.SG more people.PL
'let more people come'
- There are also instances of *las* ~ *lass* + indicative, e.g.
Jumal ***lass*** *tädl joud* ***anab*** ...
God HORT 2PL.ADE/ALL strength give.3SG
'Let God give you strength...'
< Latvian influence (Winkler & Pajusalu 2018: 123–124)

Example 5. Partitive over genitive

The object tends to occur in the genitive case with a countable object & completed action (see Viitso 2008: 341) But cf.:

NN: *Mēg vōstīzmõ **siedā piškīzt** (pro sīe piškīz) kuodā*

1PL buy.PST.1PL this.PRT small.PRT house.NOM/GEN

‘We bought this small house’

NN: *āndiz järā **siedā kuoddõ** (pro sīe kuodā), kus mēg jelām*

give.PST.3SG away this.PRT house.PRT where 1PL live.1PL

‘[S/he] gave away this house where we live’

OO: *[Kis se um tīend sīe kāndla?] – NN: **siedā** (pro sīe) um tīend...*

who it be.3SG make.ACT.PST.PTCP this.GEN zither.GEN – this.PRT be.3SG make.ACT.PST.PTCP

‘Who made this zither? - This was made by ... ‘

The nom/gen form seems to be preferred with certain word types? E.g.,

NN: *Tämmõn iz vò!* (pro *iz ūo*) **gramatik** (pro *gramatikõ*)

3SG.DAT NEG.PST.3SG be.PST.3SG grammar_book

‘S/he didn’t have a grammar book’

NN: *Säl ma opīz muzīk* (pro *muzīkõ*)

there 1SG study.PST.1SG music

‘There I studied music’

The role of literary language

Some examples from sources compiled by Kõrli Stalte:

- (Re)introduction of the question particle **kas** (Norvik et al., to appear)

Kas sa tuodlistiz siedā äd tīeda? (Stalte 2011)

Q 2SG really this.PRT NEG.PRS.2SG know.CNG

‘You really don’t know this?’

! To compare, in general, **või** is common in various sources and times; Salaca Livonian texts only include examples of *või*, e.g.,

Voi täädl om puogad? (Winkler & Pajusalu 2018: 164)

Q 2PL.ADE/ALL be.3SG son.PL

‘Do you have sons?’

- **ja** ‘and’ instead of *un* ‘and’

Cf. Latvian *vai*

Vai viņš ir greizsirdīgs?

Q he.NOM be.COP.PRS.3 jealous.NOM.M

‘Is he jealous?’

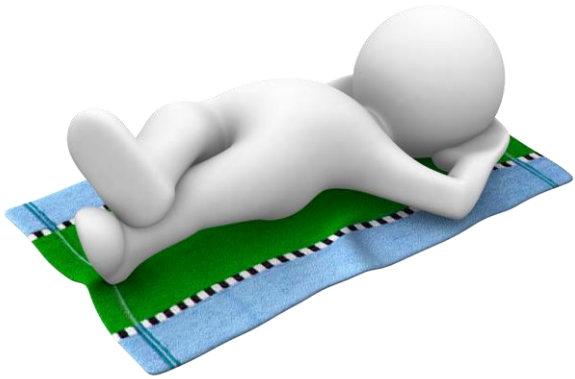
(Kalnača & Lokmane 2021: 470)

- Expression of change-of-state by means of **sōdõ**, e.g.,
Vanātõṭi kītiz, ku pōisõst sōb vist miermīez. (Stalte 2012: 63)
old_man say.PST.3SG that boy.ELA get.3SG probably seaman
‘The old man said that the boy will probably become a seaman.’

Cf. *īedõ* ‘stay, remain’, which is common in the spoken language, e.g.,
ni muḷki nai īend pa kovālõks (Setälä 1953: 135)
now fool women remain.PTCP PTCL smart.TRA
‘now the fool woman became smart’

(Norvik 2014)

Conclusions



References

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Tienū!

