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Language contact and standardization paving the way to typological change?

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New literary standards for minor Finnic languages

- Livonian in Latvia: written standard before WWII, revised 1995
- Võro and Seto in Estonia: activism especially from the 1980s on, competing and debated orthographies
- Meänkieli in Sweden: official recognition 2000
- Kven in Norway: official recognition 2005
- Karelian in Finland: (indirect) official recognition 2010, three main varieties unevenly cultivated
- Karelian and Veps in Russia: written standards (re)developed from the 1980s on
- Votic: attempts at creating a literary standard

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But do they “feel right”?

- *umma lehte tuud tuud ma piä hindä jaos ümbre tõlkma tuu om väega määndseski kohitsedu keeleh üldiselt kirotõdu* […]
- ‘*Uma Leht* [the Võro-language bimonthly], that, that I must translate for myself, it’s very much, written in a kind of castrated language in general’ (Koreinik 2013, 91)

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Perhaps these languages shouldn't even be used in writing?

- *pruugi küll ma suurõmbalt jaolt kirota iks (.) esiki mu teksti omma iks suurõmbalt jaolt iks eesti keelen -- (.) et et võru kiil om rohkem suu perrä ja sis kiräkiil om kirutamise perrä*
- 'I use, well, mostly I still write... even my texts are, for the most part, in Estonian... as, as, the Võro language is more for the mouth (for speaking) and the standard language is for writing' (Võro activist speaker; Koreinik 2013: 68)

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Vocabulary: between purism and realism

- *minun tatam sanub kaiken aigan sinä pagižed verhal kelel, sikš ku minä sindai en el'genda, en tea miččel kelel sinä pagižed, no ed vepsän kelel, – – erased sanad potomu što hii ii tekoi, neglik da sebranik da, ken om sebranik, a podrušk a no podrušk*
- 'My father keeps telling me: you speak in a foreign language, because I don't understand you. I don't know which language you are speaking, but it's not Veps. – – Because there are certain words they [the older generation] don't know, *neglik* [hedgehog] and *sebranik* [friend], and … Who is a *sebranik*? Oh, *podrušk* [Russian *podružka* "girl-friend"], well *podrušk*.'
  (Puura et al. 2013, 141)

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The question:

- If these new languages feel strange and unauthentic, can we identify the reasons by comparing modern texts with traditional dialect recordings?
  - Note that frequencies may reflect speaker intuitions on languages/ dialects and their borders better than traditional qualitative criteria used in dialectology (Szmrecsanyi 2013:4; Lindström et al. 2015: 51) – "the extraordinary sensitivity of human beings to frequency" (Labov 1994).
- And if we find systematic differences, do they tell of an on-going typological change?

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Example 1: Action nouns in *-nd(a-)* in Veps

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Action nouns in Veps

There are relatively few deverbal derivational suffixes [for action nouns] in the strict sense of the word (*lüpsand* ['milking/giving milk' in the example below], *vihmund* ['rain(ing)']) and almost no such ones that could be used productively and without restrictions. This suffix [i.e. *-nd*] is used in literary Veps for creating neologisms *(kävutand* ['use']):

(South Veps) *lehmad heitabad lüpsandan* 'the cows stop giving milk'
(Central Veps) *hiiti jo vihmundan* 'it [has] already stopped raining'
(Literary Veps) *Humalduzainehiden kävutand kazvab lujas pigai norišton keskes*
'the use of narcotics is increasing very fast among young people'

(Grünthal 2015: 115–116, my translation and emphasis)

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Veps material

- Open corpus of Veps and Karelian, http://dictorpus.krc.karelia.ru/en
- Dialect texts mostly recorded in the 1960s
  - 208 dialect texts searched for action nouns in -nd,
  - 50 sentences with -nd nouns found in 36 texts
- 609 texts representing modern literary Veps (mostly: gazette *Kodima*)
  - 24 texts were searched for action nouns in -nd,
  - 52 sentences with -nd nouns found in 16 texts

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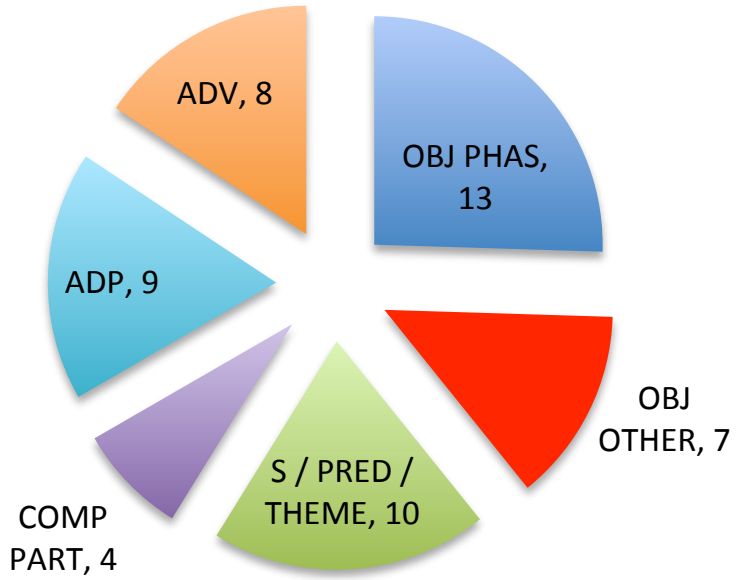
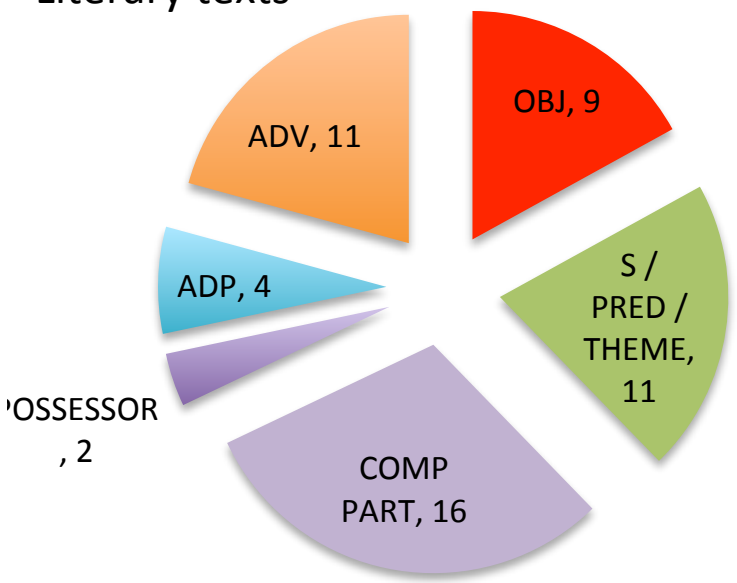
-nd action nouns in the Veps dialect corpus and in the mini-corpus of modern literary Veps

Dialect texts



Literary texts



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Object of ‘begin / stop / finish’: typical of dialect texts, lacking in the written-language mini-corpus

Makarii *hiit-i* *zvoni-nda-n.*
M. stop-PST.3SG ring-AN-GEN
‘Makariy stopped ringing the church bells.’

Künda-nda-n *lopi-b,* *potom ägesta-b.*
plough-AN-GEN finish-3SG then harrow-3SG
‘He will finish ploughing and then harrow.’

A *konz pezo-nda-n* *vaumiče-n,*
but when wash-AN-GEN finish-1SG
‘But when I have finished cleaning up,

puhthau vedou vala-m palatiiže-d (...)
I rinse the benches with clean water...’

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Object of other verb (often of a verb of perception) in dialect texts...

Kule-d	*hüb'gä-n*	*klungu-nda-n,*	*ka*	*ii*	*hüvä-ks.*
hear-2SG	owl-GEN	hoot-AN-GEN	DIP	NEG.3SG	good-TRANSL

'(If) you hear an owl's hooting, it's not a good omen.'

Pure-n	*mina*	*nece-n*	*pure-nda-n*	*i*	*häkutuso-n.*
bite-1SG	1SG	this-GEN	bite-AN-GEN	and	illness-GEN

(Magic formula:) 'I bite this hernia ("biting") and illness...'

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... and in the literary mini-corpus

Om lujas žal', miše Maria Ivanovna läksi neciš elospäi i
'It is a pity that Maria Ivanovna passed away ("went from this life") and

ei *nägišta-nd* *Ol'ga Žukova-n* *dissertacija-n* *polesta-nda-d.*
NEG.3SG see-CNG.PST O.Ž.-GEN dissertation-GEN defend-AN-PART

didn't see Olga Zhukova defend ("O.Zh's defence of") her dissertation.'

Nece-n *programma-n* *täht* *pid-i* *teh-ta*
this-GEN programme-GEN because.of must-PST.3SG do-INF

tege-ndo-i-d-ki.
do-AN-PL-PART-POL.P

'For this programme, one had to undertake tasks as well.'

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Subject, predicate noun, or theme NP in existential/ possessive clauses: dialect texts...

Muga *ol-i* *segoi-nd.*
so be-PST.3SG get.lost-AN
'That's (the story of) how (I) got lost.' ("... So was the getting-lost.")

Se *nai-nd* *muga* *proid-i.*
that marry-AN so proceed-PST.3SG
'This is how (I) married.' ("The marrying went so: ...")

... ka hänou *ii* *rahnoi-nd* *mele-s,* *sö-nd* *mele-s*.
DIP 3SG-ADE NEG.3SG cut-AN mind-INE eat-AN mind-INE
'... he (the hired hand) isn't thinking about harvesting, he's thinking about food/eating ("he has eating in mind/on him, eating is in mind")."

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... vs. literary texts (lexicalized and terminological nouns)

Tö-n *polesta-nd* *män-i* *lujas* *hüvin.*
work-GEN defend-AN go-PST.3SG very well

'The defence of the work (dissertation) went very well.'

Hän sanui,
'He said

miše *mugoiž-i-l* *azjtego-i-l* *om* *lujas sur'* *znamoiče-nd* *(...)*
COMP such-PL-ADE event-PL-ADE be.3SG very great mean-AN

that events like this have a very great significance.'

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Adverbial phrase with an adposition: ‘before/after’ is typical of dialect texts...

Gäl’ges	*kända-nda-d*	*pidäb*	*g’o*	*sabra-sija*	*lat’t’a.*
after	turn-AN-PART	must-3SG	already	haystack-place	make-INF

‘After (the hay) has been turned, the place for the haystack must be prepared.’

Sanu-n nügüd	*kalata-nda-n*	*polhe.*
say-1SG now	fish(v.)-AN-GEN	about

‘Now I'll tell (you) about fishing.’

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... while literary texts display causal and purposive adpositions

Rad rahvahaliže-n kul'tura-n *kaiče-nda-n* *poles* *jatkta-se*.
work nationalGEN culture-GEN protect-AN-GEN for continue-REFL.3SG
'The work for the protection of national culture continues.'

Maria Ivanovna da Ol'ga *ühtes* *valič-i-ba*
M. I. and O. together choose-PST-3PL
tema-n *oppi-nda-n* *täht.*
theme-GEN study-AN-GEN for
'Maria Ivanovna and Olga together chose the topic for the study.'

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Adverbial phrase in an adverbial case

A nece Taimir paha oli,
'But this T. [a dog] was bad,

hän	*nuta-nda-nke*	*kon'd'jan-nost i*	*Šarik-ki*	*jäl'ghe.*
3SG	bark-AN-COM	bear-PROP and	Š.-too	after

he (rushed) barking towards the bear and Sharik (went) after him.'

Ot' ku väta, ot' ku väta,
'When he started playing, when he started playing (the accordion),

ka	*čorta-d*	*kargei-ži-ba*	*surdu-nd-hassei.*
DIP	devil-PL	dance-PST-3PL	get.exhausted-AN-TERM

then the devils danced until they were exhausted.'

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Literary texts: adverbial cases also coding causal or purposive relations

Nece om	*sur' da arvokaz*	*pauk-lahj*
this be.3SG	great and valuable	reward-gift
rahvahaliže-n	*kul'tura-n*	*kaiče-nda-s*.
national-GEN	culture-GEN	protect-AN-INE

'This is a great and prestigious prize for keeping the national culture.'

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Part of a compound noun: few lexicalized examples in dialect texts...

Iunanpää-d	*vast*	*kaik*	*liči-nd-hiina-d*	*nütki-tas (...)*
St.John's.day-PART	against	all	heal-AN-grass-PL	pull-PASS

‘In the night before Midsummer Day, they collect all medicinal herbs...’

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... many more (neologistic and terminological ones) in literary texts

Naku kacu,		*mičče-d čoma-d,*	*äniko-ide-nke*	*rippu-ba*
there look.IMP.2SG		what-PL pretty-PL	flower-PL-COM	hang-3PL
päči-n	*taga,*	*magada-nd-honuse-he*	*män-de-s.*	
oven-GEN	behind	sleep-AN-room-ILL	go-INF-INE	

'Look what pretty ones, with flowers, are hanging there behind the oven as you go to the bedroom.'

Rahvahaliž-iden kel-iden	*kaiče-nd-rado-d*	*teh-tas*
national-PL.GEN language-PL.GEN	protect-AN-work-PART	do-IPS

Petroskoin kahesas municipaližes organizacijas.
'The work for protecting national languages is conducted at eight municipal organizations in Petrozavodsk.'

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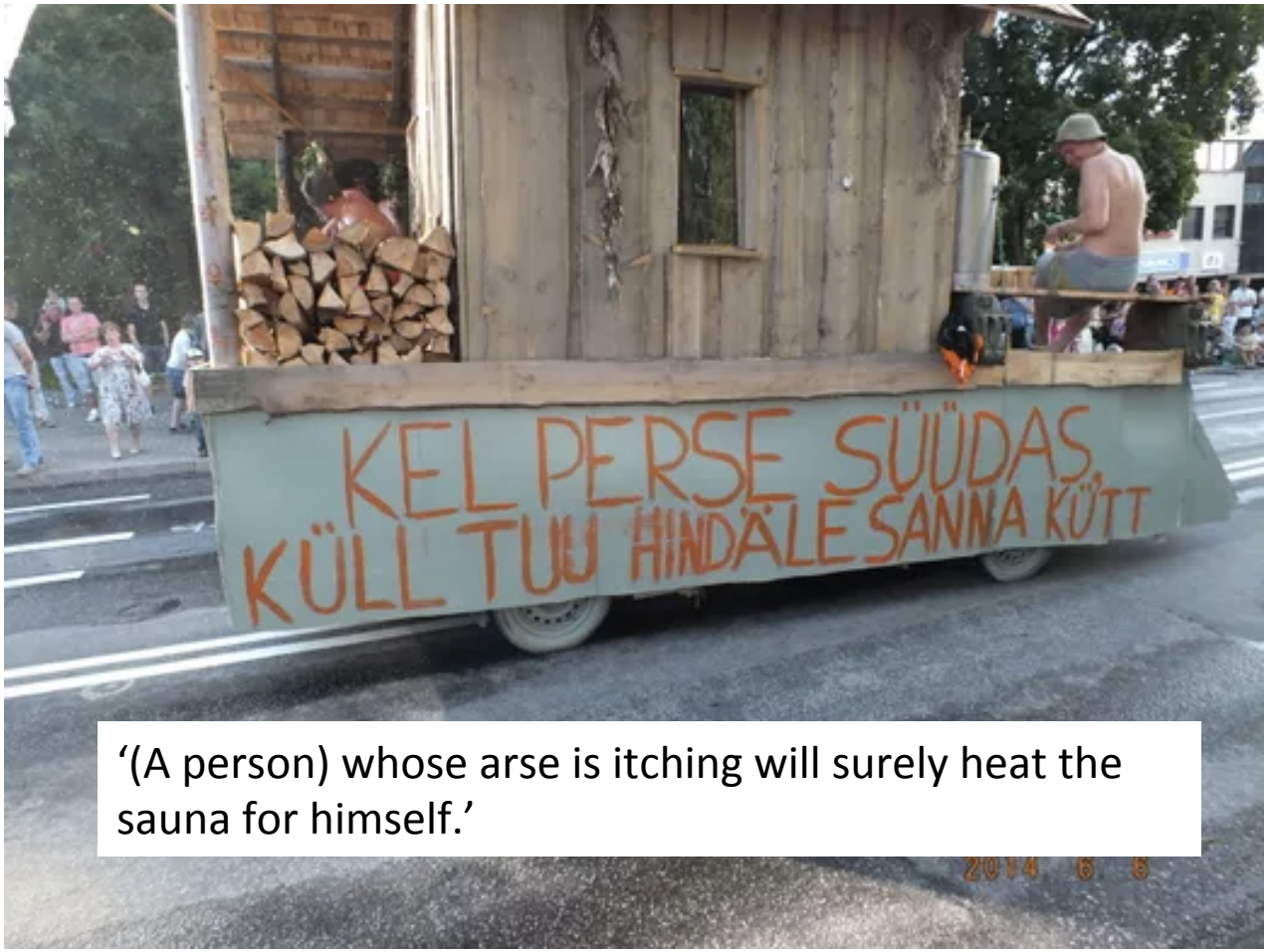
Possessor modifier: examples only in the literary-language mini-corpus

Hö kirjut-i-ba	*kalendari-he*	*kirjo-iden*	*avtoro-iden*
3PL write-PST-3PL	calendar-ILL	book-PL.GEN	author-PL.GEN
sündu-nda-n	*päivmär-i-d.*		
be.born-AN-GEN	date-PL-PART		

‘They wrote birth dates of book authors into the calendar.’



‘(A person) whose arse is itching will surely heat the sauna for himself.’

Example 2: Relative clauses in Võro

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Restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses

- Non-restrictive (appositive, additive) relative clauses have been found to be rare in spontaneous speech
  - ... “two constructions cited in many discussions of relative clauses are very rare in spontaneous speech, namely non-restrictive relative clauses and infinitival relative clauses; when they do occur in speech it is typically in the discourse of people who spend much time working with written English” (Miller & Weinert 1998: 349)
- The distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses has not received much attention in the research of Finnic syntax

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Võro data

- Estonian dialect texts: search for forms of the lexeme ‘kes’ (‘who’: *kiä, kis(s), kell* etc.) in the texts from Võromaa in the Estonian dialect corpus (https://www.keel.ut.ee/et/keelekogud/murdekorpus) retrieved 357 tokens (excluding some repetitions), of these 233 (+ 20) in NOM.SG
- Võro written language: search for *kiä* (‘who’ NOM.SG) in the Võro-language Wikipedia corpus of Giellatekno (http://gtweb.uit.no/f_korp/) retrieved 326 tokens
- Due to the genre of the corpora, the overwhelming majority of the ‘who’ tokens were relative pronouns; however, 68 ‘who’ tokens in the dialect corpus cannot be (unambiguously) classified, while 40 are clearly interrogative or (con)negative

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Relative, interrogative, or what?

no siss `naat't'i viina+raha `kor'jamma (...) siss `pan't't'i viinaq lavva päle pudeldõga ja sakkuskass kahh (.) ja nii+samattõ `tal'drik (.) siss pa- kor'at't'i viina+raha siss pan'n'iq ega+üt's' (.) las'is = säl top'si `viina = jaq (.)* ***keä*** kes *siss pal'l'o siss `kiäk'k'i pan'd' = tut raha (...) sääl ol' nii (.) (...)

so then they started collecting liquor money (...) then they put the liquor on the table with bottles and zakuska, too, and also a plate, then they collected liquor money, then they put, everybody, put there a shot glass of liquor and **who** then [would put] a lot [or: "who would have wanted a lot of liquor instead of just one shot?"] then whoever put the money (...) there were so ... (Dialect corpus, Rõuge / Plaksi)

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(Con)negative (negative polar) use

Hobõs-t	*kiä*	*vankri-ga*	*lauta*	*sisse*	*aja-õs.*
horse-PART	who	carriage-COM	barn.ILL	inside.into	drive-NEG.PST

'Nobody would drive a horse with a carriage into the barn.' (Võro Wikipedia corpus)

`an't't'i = iks	*`viina*	*kat = top'si-gaq (.)*
give.IPS.PST=DIP	liquor.PART	also shot.glass-COM

es =	*siss*	*kiä*	*no*	*pud'õli-ga*	*anna =*	*õss*	*no*
NEG.PST	then	who	DIP	bottle-COM	give.CNG	NEG.PST	DIP

'They served liquor too in a shot glass, nobody would give it by the bottle.' (Estonian dialect corpus, Rõuge / Plaksi)

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Questions and rhetorical questions

jaahh niij = et	*nohh*	*kess kess*	*tiid =*	*nohh vanast*	
yeah so	COMP DIP	who who	know.3SG	DIP	in.olden.times
näet	*kynõl'd'i*	*et*	*`soen'd'i-q*		
see.2SG	talk.IPS.PST	COMP	werewolf-PL		

‘yeah, so, I mean, well, who knows, well, in olden times, you see, they said that (there were) werewolves’

(Estonian dialect corpus, Vastseliina/Puspuri)

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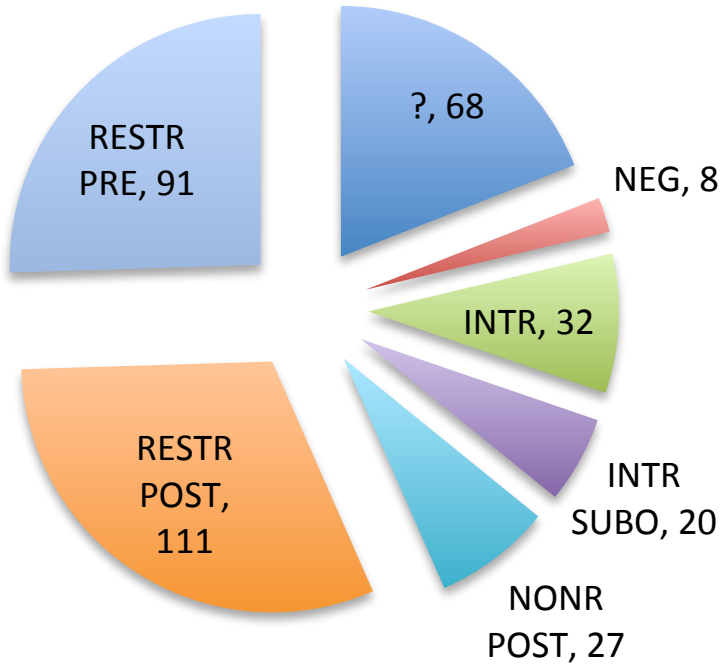
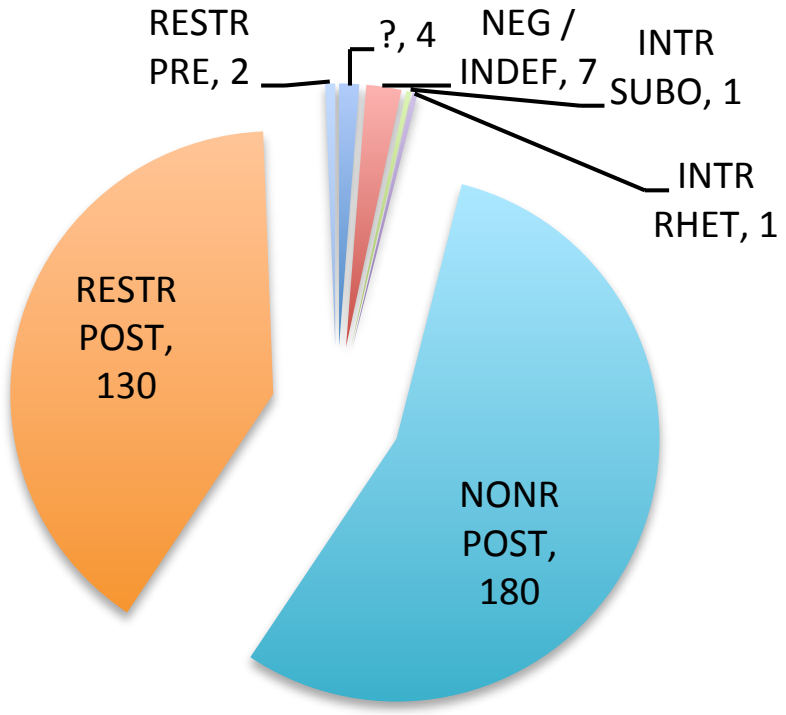
‘Who’ in Võro dialect and written-language corpora

Võro texts in the Estonian dialect corpus





Võro-language Wikipedia corpus

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Non-restrictive postponed relative clauses: relatively rare in the dialect corpus...

ja kui sii (.) kui Hurt ol'l' (.) Ottõbäh õppõttaja (.) sõss (.) ol'l'i sääl `mõisahh üttehh `mõisahh Un'ibiha `mõisahh (.) ol'l' suur' pidustus (...) ja sinnäk = kutsut't'i Hurt kahh (...) jaahh (...)

'and then, when (Jakob) Hurt was the pastor in Otepää, then there, at a manor, the manor of Unipiha, there were great festivities, and there Hurt was also invited, yeah...'

aga	*sii (.)*	*kihlkunna*	*herr (.) Mittendor'hv*	*kelle-ga*	*nüüd*	*Hurt (.)*
but	that	parish.GEN	squire M.	who-COM	now	H.

suurõ-s = sõbra-q ol'l'iva (...)	*sii*	*ol'l'i*	*ka*	*sääl (.)*
great-PL friend-PL be.PST.3PL	that	be.PST.3SG	also	there

'but the squire in that parish, Mittendorf, with whom Hurt was close friends, he was there too'

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... but very frequent in the literary-language corpus

Riigi	*edimäne*	*valitsõja*	*oll'*	*Otto,*
realm.GEN	first	ruler	be.PST.3SG	O.
kiä	*krooni-ti*	*kuningas*	*962.*	
who	crown-IPS.PST	king.TRSL	962	

'The first ruler of the state was Otto, who was crowned king in 962.'

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Restrictive postponed relative clauses: fairly frequent both in dialect texts...

ja siin = umm `praegust üt's' kat's' kolm (...) nel'l'i (...) nel'l'i
and here be.3SG nowadays 1 2 3 4 4

nuur-t (...) `pois's'i omm kess sya+väeq jo lõppõttanuq
young-PART boy.PART be.3SG who army.PL already finish-PTCP.PST

'and here are now one, two, three, four... four young boys there are who have already finished their service in the army'

(Estonian dialect corpus, Vastseliina/Kerepäälse)

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... and in the literary language

Tä	*oll'*	*edimäne*	*inemine,*	*kiä*	*joud'*
3SG	be.PST.3SG	first	person	who	get.PST.3SG

nii	*lõuna-*	*kui*	*põh'a-naba-lõ.*
so	south(.GEN)	as	north(.GEN)-navel-ALL

'He was the first person who reached both the South and the North Pole.'

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Restrictive preposed relative clauses: fairly frequent in dialect texts...

ja	*kess*	*hobõs-tõ-ga*	*tüü-d*	*te-i*	*nu-i-l*
and	who	horse-PL-COM	work-PART	do-PST.3SG	those-PL-ADE

`las'-t'i	*siss*	*kat's'*	*tun'n'i*	*söögi+vahõ-t*
let-IPS.PST	then	2	hour.PART	meal.GEN-pause-PART

'And who worked with horses, they were given a two-hour lunch pause.'

(Estonian dialect corpus, Hargla / Ruuksu)

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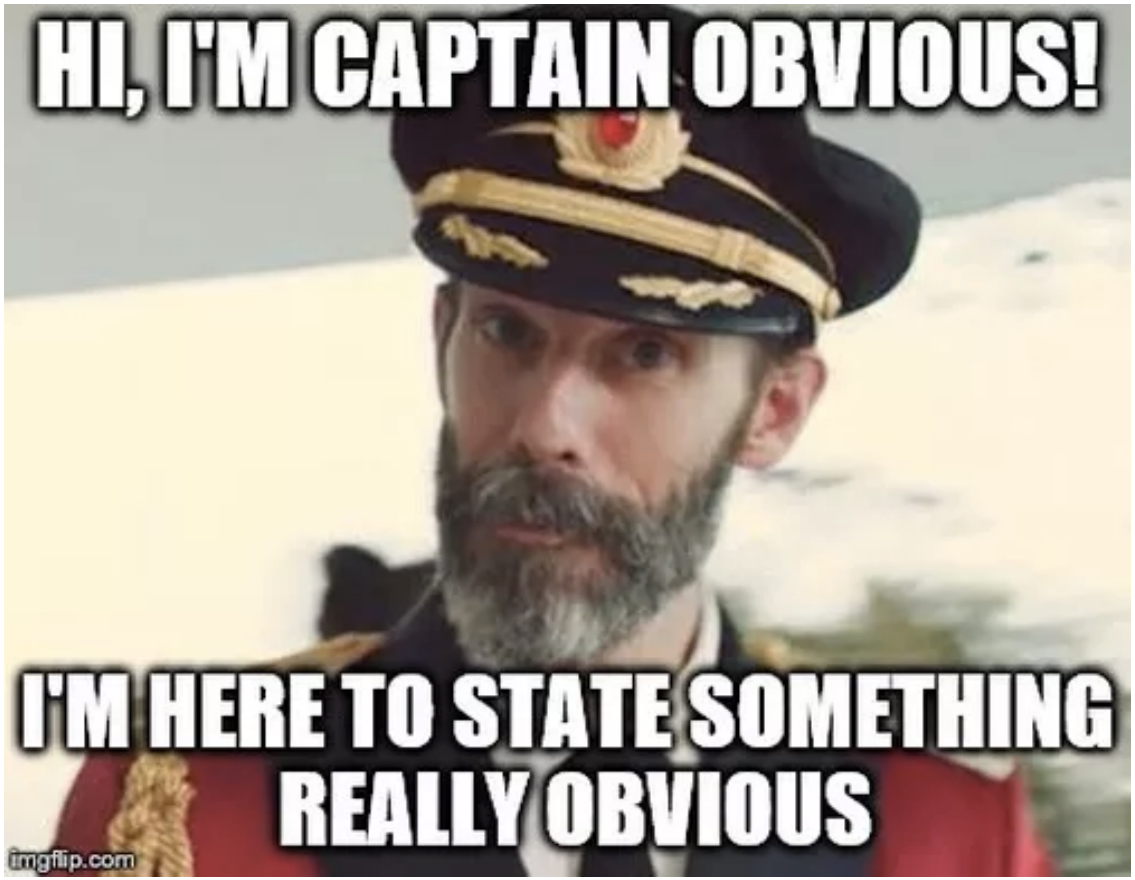
... but rare in the literary-language corpus

Päält	*tuu-d*	*pan-tivaq*	*ülikooli*		*raud-värehti-q*	
after	that-PART	put-IPS.PST	university.GEN		iron-gate-PL	
ilma	*armu-lda*	*kinniq*	*ja*	*kiä*	*ilda-s*	*jä-i*,
without	mercy-ABE	closed	and	who	late-TRSL	stay-PST.3SG
tuu-d	*inämb*	*sisse*	*es*		*las-ta-q.*	
that-PART	more	in	NEG.PST.3SG		let-IPS-CNG	

'After that, the iron gates of the university were mercilessly closed, and who was late wasn't allowed in any more.'



Some further thoughts

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Genre effects, or something else?

- Is the more “nouny” (and less “verby”?) behaviour of action nouns in written language due to the written modality? Why? How?
- Why does the occurrence of non-restrictive (“appositive”) relative clauses correlate with (written) modality or even (more formal) style (see Birkner 2008 for spoken German)?

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Language contact?

- Veps neologistic *nd* nouns, especially compounds often seem to have models in Finnish (*magadand+honus* – Fi. *makuu+huone* ‘bedroom’, “sleeping room”; *panend* ‘contribution’ – Fi. *panos*)
- Paths of interference: translation, or simply the acquisition of structural-stylistic conventions?

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Typology: Will revitalization and language standardization change the 'feel' of the language...

- Compare:
  - the post-Reformation "Europeanization" of Finnish and Estonian by way of literarization
  - the standardization of Modern Finnish in the late 19th century, which has led to diglossia with major differences between written standard and colloquial varieties
  - the standardization of Modern (North) Estonian, which involved the introduction of some morphosyntactic innovations
- Is this a dangerous topic? (Compare the discourse on the revitalization of Karelian in Finland, in which the languageness of Karelian is sometimes contested.)

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... or make it typologically "less Finno-Ugric", or, to the contrary, "turn back the wheel of time"?

- Compare:
  - the possessive suffixes in Modern Standard Finnish
  - the introduction (restoration??) of preposed same-subject converb clauses in written Finnish with the support of Latin (Lindén 1966)

    Agricola:
    Mutta homenelda palai-te-sa-ns caupungihin, isosi hen.
    but in.the.morning return-INF-INE-POSS.3SG to.city...
    < Vulgata: *Mane autem revertens in civitatem, esuriit*