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vonian from a comparative Finno-Ugric point of view

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The IFUSCO bear has goes Rīga.

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CIFU XIII

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vonian in comparative Uralic studies: an untypical outlier or a missing nk?

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he role of Livonian in traditional Uralic studies: for omparative purposes only?

ivonian belongs to the past?

"Liivin kieli on paitse Viron kieltä tässä kirjassa edistetyistä sukukielistämme ainoa, josta löytyy tukummalti kielikappaleita, vaikka kirjallisuutta tälläkään murteella ei ole ollut eikä tule koskaan olemaan, kuin sekin jo makaa kuolemaisillaan olevana raatona." (August Ahlqvist, *Suomalainen murteiskirja* [1869], p. VI.)

nasmuch Livonian differs from the rest of Finnic, this is due to language ontacts and, therefore, less interesting from comparative Uralic point of iew?

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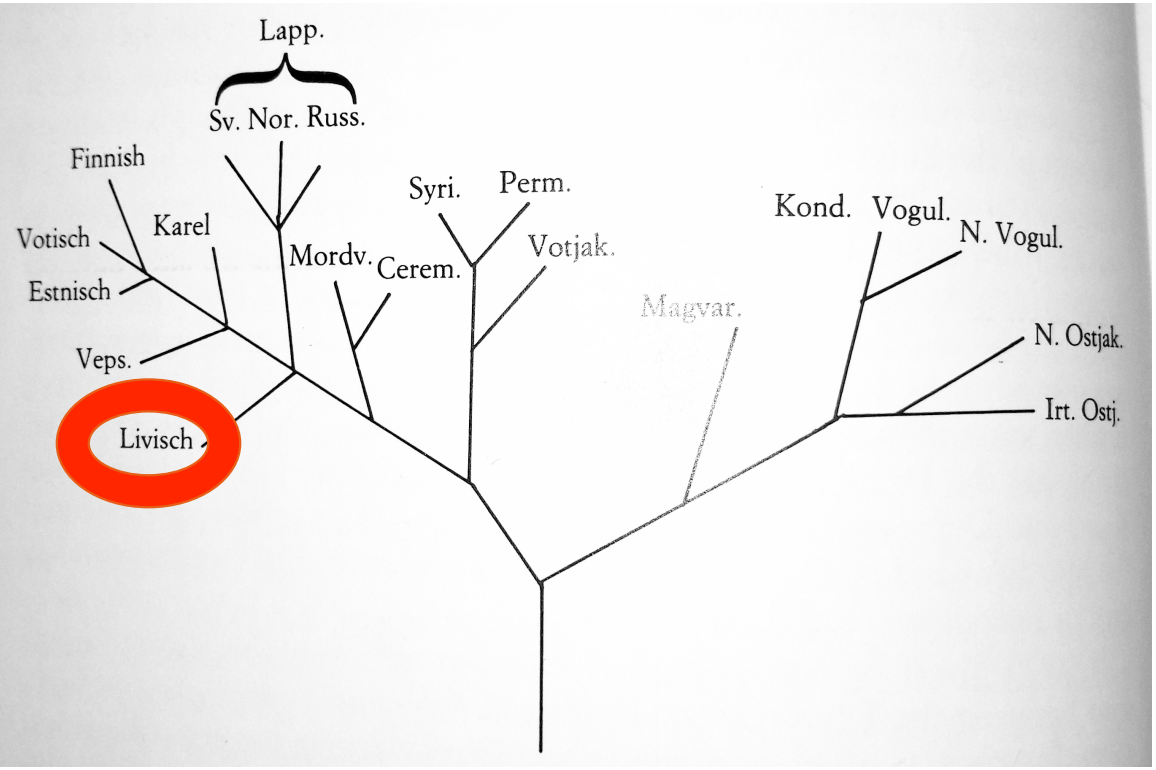
he classical binary family tree as drawn by Otto onner 1879 gave Livonian a special position...



"Within these main groupings he classed the languages in a fashion that is still acceptable i broad terms. His one error was the inclusion o Lappish in the Balto-Finnic languages as one c Livonian's closest relatives." (Korhonen 1986: 102)

... or: excluding Livonian from the Finnic group the modern sense and grouping it (on typolog grounds?) together with Saami.

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(due to typological similarities and convergence)...

n Donner's times, the historical phonology of Saami (in particular, the distinction etween cognates and the copious loanwords from Finnic to Saami or vice versa) nd, consequently, the genealogical relationship between Finnic and Saami was ot yet properly understood.

herefore, certain convergent features in Saami and Livonian might appear as nared inheritance:

- superficial similarities in phonology (quantity, voicing, palatalization, diphthongs...)
- erosion of suffixes, in particular, loss of genitive **-n* in Livonian and most of Saami > morphophonological stem alternations
- lack or obsolescence of external *(*-l-)* local cases

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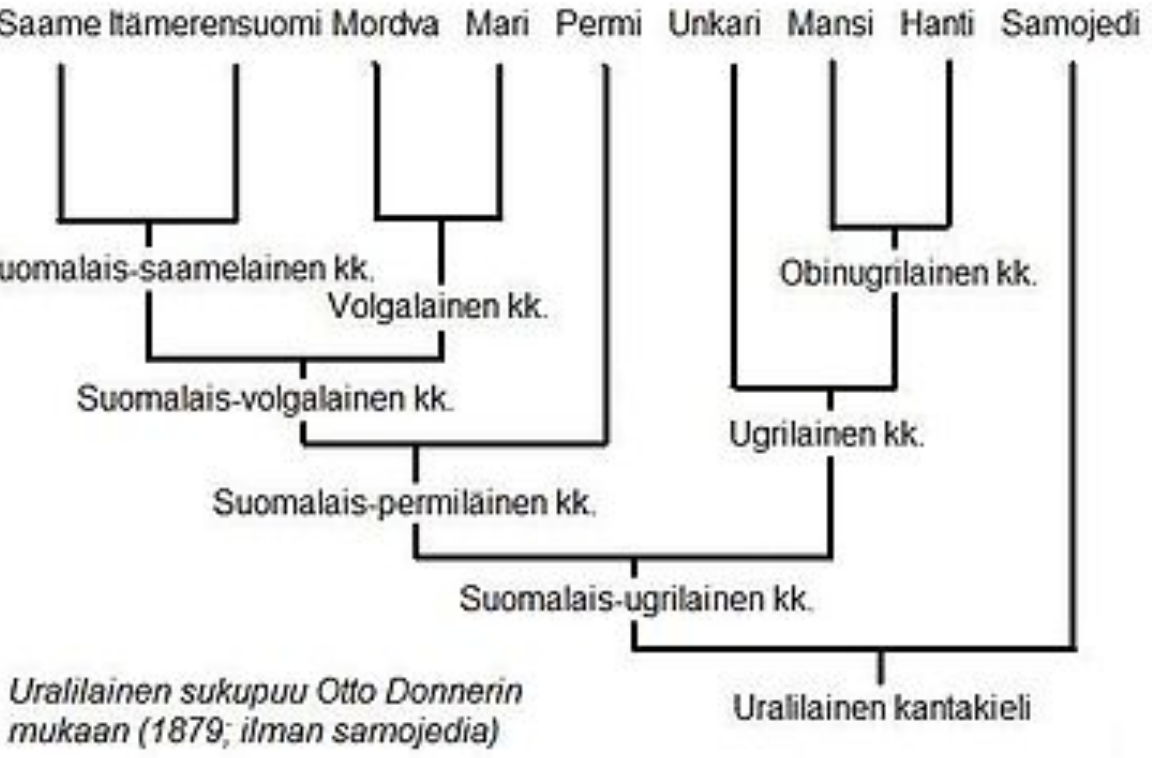
but latter-day descriptions usually bundle Livonian gether with the other Finnic languages



Uralilainen sukupuu Otto Donnerin mukaan (1879; ilman samojedia)

The traditional family tree from Wikipedia, created by Jaakko Häkkinen – with explicit reference to Otto Donner but ignoring the special position of Livonian in Donner's diagram!

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vonian: from the historical-taxonomic point of view, efutably a Finnic language

ivonian shares practically all the central (Pre-)Proto-Finnic (largely: eductive or assimilative) sound changes...

also some widespread Post-Proto-Finnic (mostly: South or West Finnic) ones (Kallio 2016), such as

- **c* > **s* *: *sigā* 'pig' ~ Est. *siga,* Fi. *sika* etc. ~ SEst. *tsiga*
- *pt/*kt* > **ht: *ükte-n* one-GEN > Liv. *ī'd*, Fi. *yhden,* Veps *ühten* etc. ~ SEst. *üte*
- **Vns* > **V̄s: mōškõz* 'strawberry' ~ Est. *maasikas* ~ Fi. *mansikka*

. and the central morphosyntactic innovations as well?

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vonian between Finnic and other branches of Uralic?

exicon: speculations around *Leitfossilien* such as Liv. *umāŗz* 'apple' ~ lordv. *umar'* or the old Baltic loanwords in (Southern?) Finnic and lordvin

älchli 2000:

- Dative-genitive split? (Dative in **-n* reflecting both genitive **-n* and locative **-na*?)
- Imperative/prohibitive in subordinate purposive clauses?
- Negation: tense and person marked on the negation marker, number marked on the main verb

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ative in Livonian and Hungarian: the (almost) only rue dative" in Uralic?

larks the recipient in the prototypical 'give' construction

Ja ma āndab näntõn igāniz jelāmiz (...)
Örök életet adok nekik (...)
'I give them eternal life (...)' (John 10: 28)

oes *not* belong to a series of local or local-possessive cases

- cf. recipient allative in Finnic, recipient illative in Saami, "dative-allative" in Permic (~ Mari?)

lso marks the possessor in predicative possession...

Min pūogan um neiku kanāmunā pā̄ (...)
A fiamnak tojásfeje van
'My son has a head like an egg...'

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. and the experiencer, the agent in necessive constructions, external ossessor, etc.

Minnõn um kīlma / (Nekem) hidegem van

'I'm cold'

Jegāīdõn um kāndamõst eņtš rištõ / Mindenkinek vinnie kell a keresztjét

'Everyone must carry their own cross'

Jemā sigūb tidārõn ibūkši / Az anya fésüli lányának a haját

'The mother is combing her daughter's hair.'

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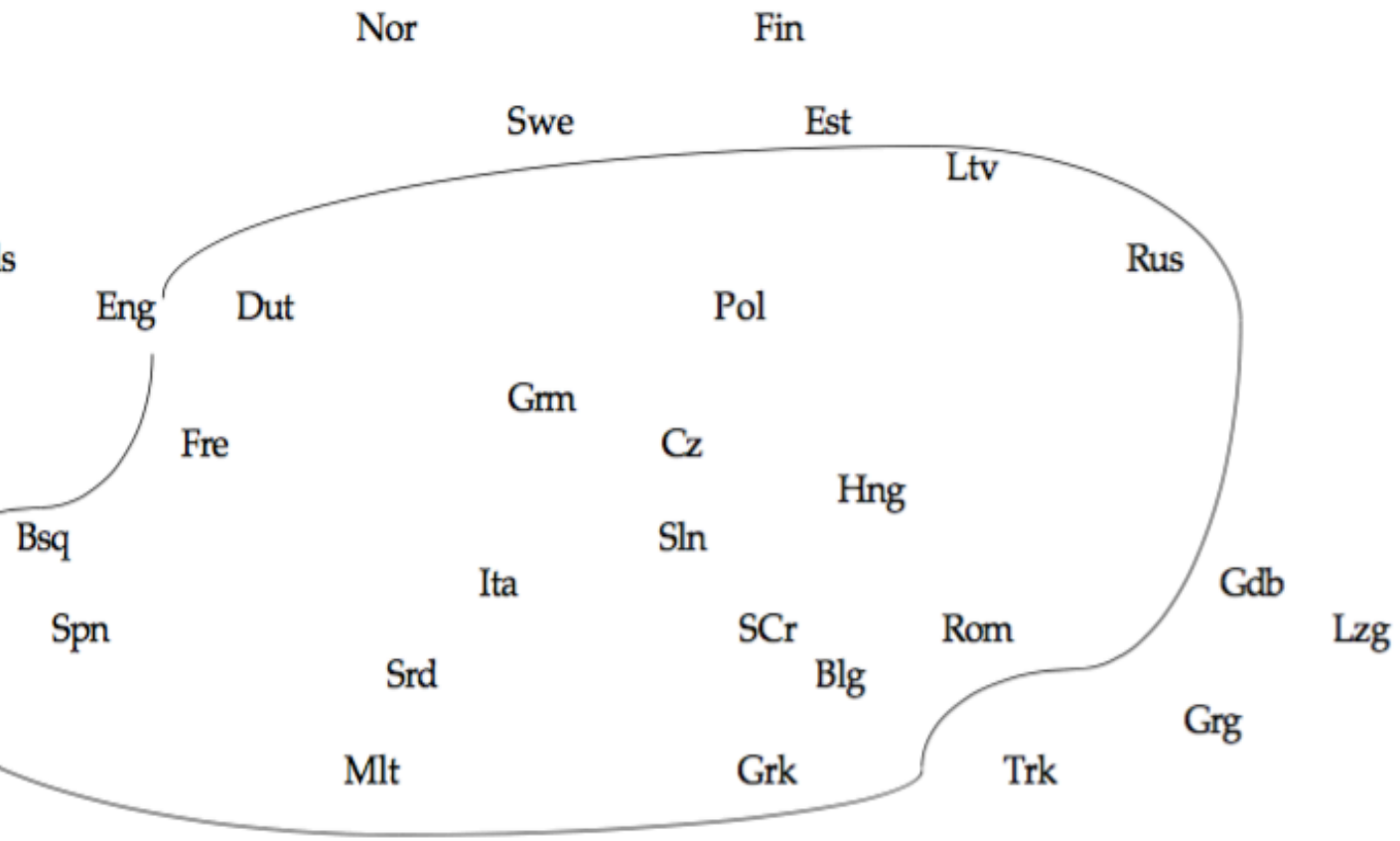

RE 1: ***The geographical distribution of the dative EP construction in Europe***

Dative external possessor: European areal convergence phenomenon, also present in German and Latvian! (Haspelmath 1999)

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nperative/prohibitive in subordinate purposive auses

Hungarian

ezt te-dd ki az ablak-ba hogy ne jö-jjön be szúnyog

this.ACC put-IMP.2SG.OBC out DEF window-ILL so.that NEG.IMP come.IMP.3SG in mosquito

'Put this on the window so that mosquitoes won't come in.'

Livonian

Kieudõn paŋ suoļm tutkāmõ, algõ ta läkkõ lebbõ

rope.DAT put.PST.3SG knot(.GEN) end.ILL NEG.IMP.3SG 3SG go.IMP.3SG through

'To the rope, (they) tied a knot into (its) end, so that it would not slip through'

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vonian in Uralic typology

honology: innovative, but how exceptional?

Livonian largely patterns with Finnic-Saamic / South Finnic

some peculiarities in Finnic comparison, such as alternations in vowel quantity involving lengthening of etymologically short vowels (as in *rānda* ‘shore’: PART.SG *randõ*)

lorphology:

reduction of at least some subsystems: obsolescence of *-l*-cases and [certain subsystems of] derivation; person marking; loss (?) of the all-Finnic impersonal...?

**Eine besonderheit des livischen ist, dass es zu den verbalformen kein p a s s i v gibt (z.b. *kī*
agt' und 'man sagt, es wird gesagt'). Nur von den partizipien ist es regelmässig vorhan
rscheinlich sind die aktiv- und passivformen oft lautlich zusammengefallen, und dadurch
durch fremden einfluss) ist die verschiedenheit beseitigt worden.** (Kettunen 1938: LX)

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vonian in Uralic typology (2)

lorphosyntax: only a few studies on detail questions focusing on ivonian, such as

- object case: notable deviances from the Finnic DOM pattern (Tveite 2004)
- recent hot topics in typological studies: negation, evidentiality

exical typology? What is there in Livonian, beyond the numerous and xtensively investigated loanwords?

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vonian: an untypical Uralic language?

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ey languages in reconstruction

- *Key language"* : emergent or epiphenomenal concept in historical reconstruction
- cf. the role of Sanskrit and Lithuanian in the reconstruction of Proto-Indo-European
- often used in a negative sense, criticizing purported biases in reconstruction
- innic (alongside Saami) on the one hand, Samoyedic on the other hand as key anguages in modern mainstream Uralic studies ("lateral theory")
- conservation of unstressed syllables and, consequently, suffix elements and word architectonics
- conservative character of Finnish in particular (partly illusory, due to archaizing standard language planning)

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vonian – particularly unsuitable for a key language?

mall and unstratified speech community, little variation attested, radition of documentation focusing of idealization and reconstruction nstead of variation > little depth for internal reconstruction

eavy influences from internally diverse or interrelated superstrate and dstrate languages (during the documented history of Livonian), due to ong traditions of bilingualism or multilingualism

honological innovations: Erosive sound changes triggering a typological nift (irreparable loss and reanalysis of suffixal elements)

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n the other hand...

onservativity vs. diversity in Finnic: most conservative phonology (?), norphology (?) and word structure in the Northern periphery vs. deepest iversity in the South (Livonian and South Estonian)

lusory archaism leading to a Finnish bias in comparative Finnic studies?

"Away from Finnish" in language reconstructions of recent years:

- central vowel *(õ)* reconstructed already for Proto-Finnic (fronting *õ* > *e* is a North Finnic innovation?) – see Holst (2001), Kallio (2014)
- more generally, Pre-Finnic reconstructions operate with more and more un-Finnish vowel systems (no phonematic (vowel) quantity? no phonematic vowel harmony? reduced vowels?)

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vonian from the point of view of language contact

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vonian “at the crossroads of language ntact” (Grünthal 2015)

Vith the exception of the extinct Krevin and South Estonian enclave ialects, Livonian is the only Uralic language characterized by a strong ontact with Baltic (Latvian)

erman (in many varieties), Russian and Swedish also present but ifferently from the rest of Finnic

nfluences of (different varieties of) Estonian at different levels

nique constellation of language contacts?

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orrowed vs. inherited: The legacy of Uralic research aditions

Unfortunately, the discussion of areal implications in Uralic linguistics is often haracterized by a strong polarization. Areal influence is either completely denied or it is resented as the only reason for some diachronic developments. (...) If one looks more losely, there is nearly always a delicate intertwining of language contact, a continuation f inherited tendencies and new independent developments." (Wälchli 2000: 211)

s usually in Uralic studies: Strong tradition of loanword research, far less research on ther possible contact-induced developments

ecent studies – also on Livonian – highlight the importance of contacts between sister arieties ("lateral transmission"), but also the problems of these approaches.

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ontact, common inheritance or convergence?

’Rourke & Pajusalu (2016) list 23 features shared by Livonian and (S)W Estonian dialects and due
ither shared (post-)Proto-Finnic inheritance or Livonian substrate in Estonian. However, many o
hem have parallels elsewhere in Finnic, reflecting contact influences or (accidental) convergence

- *e* > *ä* (sporadically) in SW Finnish (< Swedish);
- past participle in (**-nUt* >) *-n* also in various Finnish, Karelian and Veps dialects;
- merger of allative and adessive also in Karelian;
- analytic jussive in subordinate (e.g. purposive) clauses also in Karelian

  sendähhäi seppy piihtet pidee, anna ei ńäpit pala ‘the blacksmith uses thongs, so that (“let”) his fingers won’t burn’ (KKS Tulemaj)
- future ‘be’ verb for future reference (as in Liv. *pūoga līb aŗšt* ‘the son will be a doctor’) also in Karelian ar Veps (NKar Uhtua *huomenekšella mie l'ienen siellä* ‘in the morning I will be there’)

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nguage contact, obsolescence, and revitalization

uthenticity issues in the planning of minority languages spoken by bilingual communities

- Does a language "lose its cultural value with too many foreign words" (Garland 2008: 115)? Or, conversely, does a language lose its authenticity with too much purism?

  minun tatam sanub kaiken aigan sinä pagižed verhal kelel, sikš ku minä sindai en el'genda, en tea mičč̈el 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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hat is Livonian, and what will it be?

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ast, present, and future?

hilological Livonian: Analyses and interpretations of “pre-scientific” or “early cientific” sources (up to Sjögren?), also including varieties outside Courland extinct lready before the 20th century (in particular, Salaca Livonian), and the early radition of Livonian literature

lassical Livonian: documentation (and, to some extent, planning) of the language of ast (?) pre-shift speech communities, up to the last post-WWII speakers

evitalized Livonian: planning of the language for late 20th – 21st century bi- or nultilingual speakers with (primarily?) Latvian as the dominant language

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hat do we mean by “Livonian”?

orvik (2016):

(...) there is a considerable amount of previous research to take into account (...) Although the present article gives several examples which reveal that the grammar authored by Sjögren and Wiedemann (1861a) is partly outdated, their work still provides information on several matters that have not been discussed elsewhere and that can be compared with newer data. A challenge related to this is to what extent one can hope to fill all the gaps. There are, for instance, many narratives and texts, but fewer interviews or free conversations. A separate question is how to find a balance between written and spoken language.

“Outdated” with respect to which Livonian? “Newer data” from 20th-century speakers or from the language use of today’s revitalized language users? “Written/spoken language” or “free conversations” from which period? Etc.

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tality and state of revitalization in Uralic comparison

imensions of vitality / language maintenance

- intergenerational transmission / reclaiming language
- research and documentation
- institutional/supra-individual support:
  - education system
    - in particular: presence of efficient revitalization efforts (i.e. effective support for transmission/ acquisition; so far, only for some Saami varieties)
  - top-down: role and visibility in (regional) ethnopolitics
  - bottom-up: “civil society”, speaker activism

long some of these dimensions, Livonian performs fairly well (research, documentation, ? ctivism), on some other ones, it is in a relatively poor position

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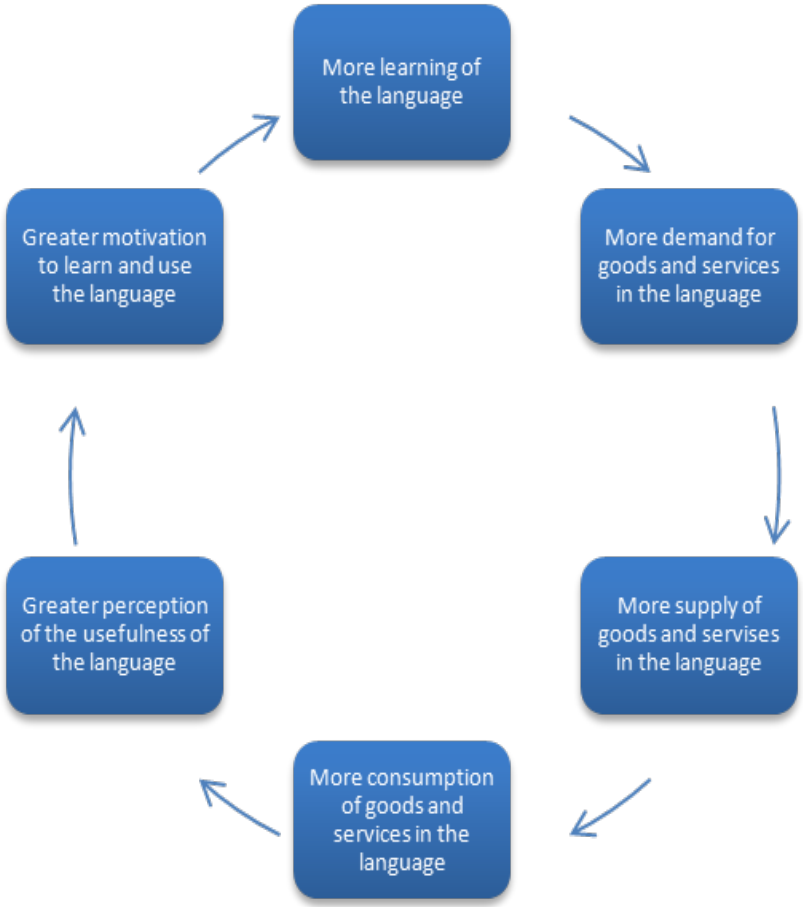
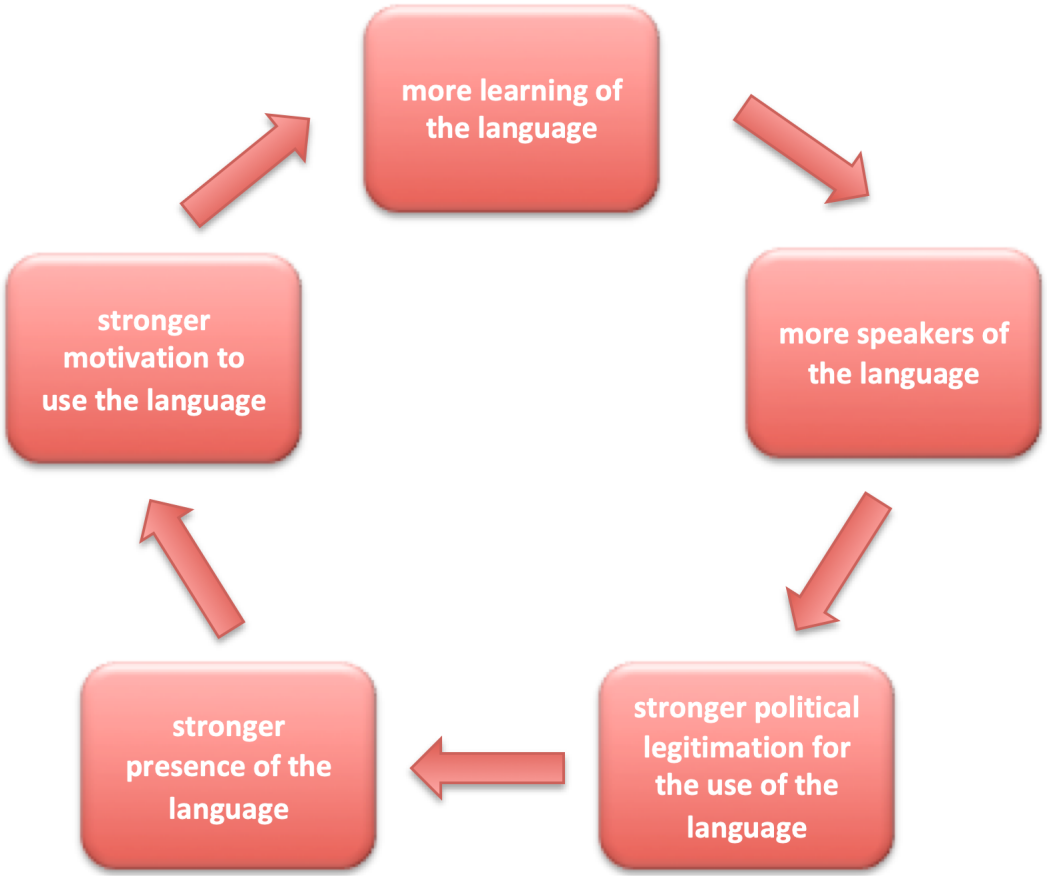
e Catherine Wheel (Strubell 1999)...



... and what is really at stake for many Uralic languages



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silience and language endangerment – in a Uralic context?

avid Bradley (2010): *Resilience thinking* in the study of ecosystems

systems move through four phases: (1) growth, (2) conservation, (3) release [= language shift], (4) reorganization

therefore, the goal is

- either to avoid the release phase: conserve the language
- or to move on to the reorganization phase: create a new multilingual situation in which the traditional language still plays whichever role the community wishes

Roche (2017) criticizes the idea of universal adaptive cycles but does not deny the potential of resilience thinking

post-shift (revitalized) Livonian a better case for resilience thinking than those ralic minority languages for which the question of revitalization still revolves round the conservation of (traditional) identities and linguistic environments, ithin the framework of (post-Soviet) ethnopolitics?

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onclusion (?)

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he potential of Livonian for all-Uralic comparisons: allenges in all dimensions

istorical linguistics: language genealogy and contact linguistics

- Livonian as a variety compact in itself but embedded in diversity

anguage typology

- Livonian patterns both with its closely related neighbours and with some distantly related varieties

anguage policy and the (socio-)linguistics of language revitalization

- Livonian represents both ("modern") ethnolinguistic emancipation and post-shift ("postmodern") language planning

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