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Special issue

**Uralic and Indo-European language contacts**

Guest editors

Iris Metsmägi, Meeli Sedrik and Mari Uusküla



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## FOREWORD

This special issue of the *Journal of Estonian and Finno-Ugric Linguistics* consists of articles originally presented as plenaries, talks and poster presentations at the conference entitled “Uralic and Indo-European language contacts”, held at the Institute of the Estonian Language on 21 November 2013. The topic of the conference was meant to be fairly broad, although presented papers mainly focused on Uralic languages and their contacts with the neighbouring languages, whereas Anna Stafecka’s plenary talk concentrated on Latvian dialects and their contacts with Livonian and Estonian languages and dialects. The Institute of the Estonian Language hosts annual conferences and workshops on various topics related to studies of Finno-Ugric languages, especially Finno-Ugric lexicology and lexicography. The events are organised by the Department of Finno-Ugric Languages and Dialects and supported by the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research.

The articles in the present volume are arranged alphabetically. In her article, Inna Kaysina examines discourse markers in the speech of Udmurt-Russian bilinguals in the Russian republic of Udmurtia. This language variety is called *Suro-Požo* by its speakers. The analysis of *Suro-Požo* discourse markers reveals that the language is in transition from code-mixing to mixed code, using Peter Auer’s terms. Angela Marcantonio’s article provides insight into the opposition of an “old school” versus “new school” in Uralic studies, in the author’s terminology. Her article stresses the factual and methodological differences (and flaws) between the two opposing views, and she takes a strong position, claiming for example that the idea of borrowing between proto-languages is highly questionable, and that sound changes can be rather ambiguous as these are often unsystematic and irregular. Iris Metsmägi, Meeli Sedrik and Vilja Oja focus on the variability of some Estonian dialect words (*kann* ‘jug’, *nunn* ‘nun’, *kirn* ‘churn’, *kartul* ‘potato’, *kapsas* ‘cabbage’ etc.), resulted from different loan sources. According to their analysis, which the first two authors have used in compiling the Estonian Etymological Dictionary, besides the phonetic criteria, the areal distribution of variants in Estonian dialects sometimes provide valuable information about the possible loan sources. While the article by Metsmägi, Sedrik and Oja concentrates on Esto-

nian dialect words, Vilja Oja focuses on areal relations of Indo-European loanwords in Finnic dialects. The database which she uses as a source consists of many lexical maps of the *Atlas Linguarum Fennicarum* and the *Atlas Linguarum Europae*, and she explores the centres and routes of the spread of Indo-European loanwords in several Finnic dialects. Elena Ryabina examines Russian loan colour terms in two Komi languages, Komi-Zyrian and Komi-Permyak, using the classical field method of Davies and Corbett (1994). She concludes that the most salient Russian colour term in Komi-Permyak is *zelonej* ‘green’, and she foresees the increasing usage of *koričnevej* ‘brown’, *fioletovej* ‘purple’ and *oranževaj* ‘orange’ in both Komi languages in the near future, as the usage of Komi native words decreases. She also states that, interestingly, the Russian basic colour terms *rozovyj* ‘pink’ and *goluboj* ‘light-blue’ seem not to be salient in either Komi language. Anna Stafecka’s article provides variety in this special issue, since her study focuses on Finnic influence in two Baltic languages, Latvian and Lithuanian. Latvian dialects and sub-dialects have mainly been influenced by Estonian and Livonian. She claims that using geolinguistic research and studying language contacts may also provide some answers to questions related to the ethnic history. The article by Ene Vainik is innovative in Uralic studies, as she gives an account of early emotional contacts between predecessors of Estonians and peoples speaking Indo-European languages. Using Estonian emotion words which according to the Estonian Etymological Dictionary have Indo-European origin, she paints a breath-taking picture of a prehistoric world where these contacts might have taken place, along with a description of population, climate change, material culture and cultural development. She concludes that the sequence in which emotion words were borrowed does not always match the allegedly universal sequence presented in literature. However, the development of emotional categories seems to be in line with the increasing complexity of social relations and material culture. The special issue concludes with an article by Jüri Viikberg, who describes the situation of Estonian linguistic enclaves on the territory of the former Russian Empire in Crimea, the Caucasus and Transcaucasia, Siberia, and the Far East, which he visited during his expeditions in the 1980s and 1990s. He reports his results collected during these visits and emphasises the influence of surrounding languages, which have all left traces on the Estonian spoken in linguistic enclaves.

This special issue of the *Journal of Estonian and Finno-Ugric Linguistics* also contains two regular papers. Both of these focus on

the Mari language. Elena Vedernikova examines the impact of native culture and religion on the Mari language, while Kristina Yuzieva's article concentrates on bird images and names from an ethnolinguistic perspective.

The editors of this special issue of *Journal of Estonian and Finno-Ugric Linguistics* are indebted to the editor-in-chief, Professor Urmas Sutrop, for the opportunity to act as guest editors. We are also grateful to all our contributors for their excellent collaboration, and to all our anonymous reviewers for their invaluable comments and guidelines. This special issue has been supported by the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (target financing to the Institute of the Estonian Language for research on and development of Finno-Ugric languages).

Iris Metsmägi, Meeli Sedrik and Mari Uusküla  
Tallinn, 15 October 2014



## CONTENTS

### **Special issue “Uralic and Indo-European language contacts”**

<i>Inna Kaysina</i> . The emergence of an Udmurt-Russian mixed code: evidence from discourse markers.....	9
<i>Angela Marcantonio</i> . Uralic vs Indo-European contacts: borrowing vs local emergence vs chance resemblances .....	29
<i>Iris Metsmägi, Meeli Sedrik, Vilja Oja</i> . Different loan sources as a reason for variability of some Estonian dialect words .....	51
<i>Vilja Oja</i> . Areal relations of Indo-European loanwords in Finnic dialects .....	71
<i>Elena Ryabina</i> . A study of loan colour terms in the Komi languages.....	91
<i>Anna Stafacka</i> . Baltic and Finnic linguistic relations reflected in geolinguistic studies of the Baltic languages .....	117
<i>Ene Vainik</i> . Early emotional contacts with the Indo-Europeans. Lexical evidence of Estonian against a broader background.....	139
<i>Jüri Viikberg</i> . Estonian linguistic enclaves on the territory of the former Russian Empire: contacts with local languages.....	169
 <b>Regular papers</b>	
<i>Elena Vedernikova</i> . Impact of native culture and religion on the Mari language .....	185
<i>Kristina Yuzieva</i> . Bird image in the traditional vision of the Mari people (ethnolinguistic aspect): the cuckoo .....	205

## SISUKORD

### **Erinumbri „Uurali ja indoeuroopa keelte kontaktid” kaastööd**

<i>Inna Kaysina</i> . Udmurdi-vene segakoodi esiletulek diskursusemarkerite alusel .....	9
<i>Angela Marcantonio</i> . Uurali ja indoeuroopa keelte kontaktid: laenamine, kohalik kujunemine, juhuslik sarnasus .....	29
<i>Iris Metsmägi, Meeli Sedrik, Vilja Oja</i> . Erinevad laenuallikad eesti murdesõnade variatiivsuse põhjusena.....	51
<i>Vilja Oja</i> . Indoeuroopa laensõnade levikust läänemeresoome keelte murretes .....	71
<i>Elena Ryabina</i> . Laenvärvinimedest komi keeltes .....	91
<i>Anna StafECKa</i> . Balti ja läänemeresoome keelesuhete kajastus balti keelte geolingvistilistes uurimustes.....	117
<i>Ene Vainik</i> . Emotsionaalsed kontaktid indoeurooplastega. Eesti keele laensõnad laiema eelajaloolisel taustal .....	139
<i>Jüri Viikberg</i> . Eesti keelesaared omaaegse Tsaari-Venemaa aladel: kontaktid kohalike keeltega.....	169

### **Korralised kaastööd**

<i>Elena Vedernikova</i> . Rahvakultuuri ja -usundi mõju mari keelele .....	185
<i>Kristina Yuzieva</i> . Linnu kujutamine mari rahva traditsioonilises nägemuses: kägu (etnolingvistiline aspekt).....	205