

“THE OTHER ESTONIAN LANGUAGE” AT THE NEXUS OF POWER AND TECHNOLOGY: HOW A LANGUAGE BECOMES VISIBLE?

Kadri Koreinik

Rēzekne, June 16-17, 2022



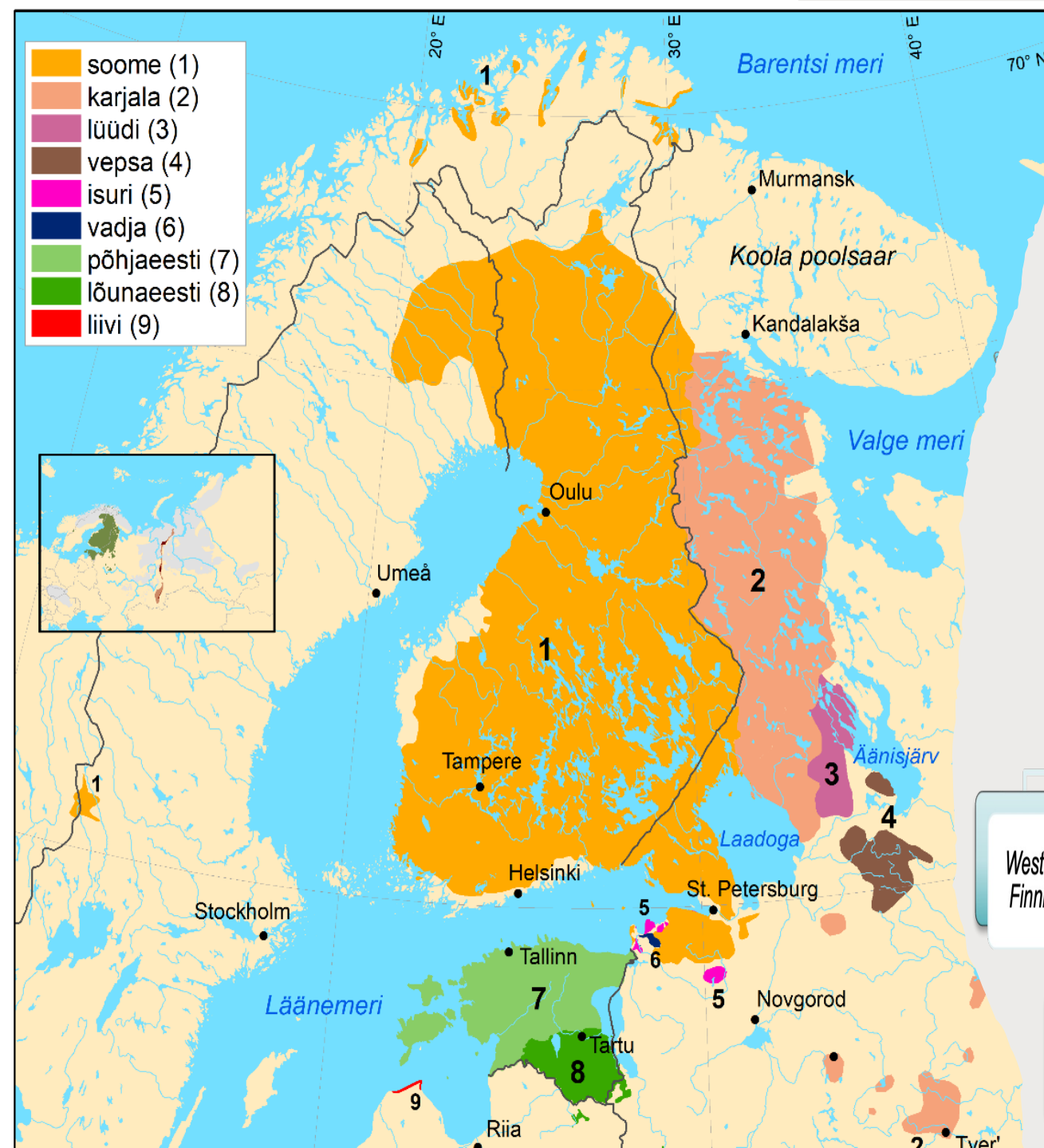


L1

heritage
language

L2

- the **most distant** variety of Standard Estonian; its collateral language;
- one of South Estonian (SE) dialects;
- the **second most spoken** and **cultivated** Estonian variety;
- **heritage** speakers (cf. Polinsky & Kagan 2007):
 - exposed and/or attached to Võro, form a continuum,
 - not exposed to the language (L1) norm through formal schooling, their baseline is the variety they were exposed to at home (ibid. 373),
 - no established/adopted written norm/standard.



Prillop et al. 2020,
Rantanen BEDLAN



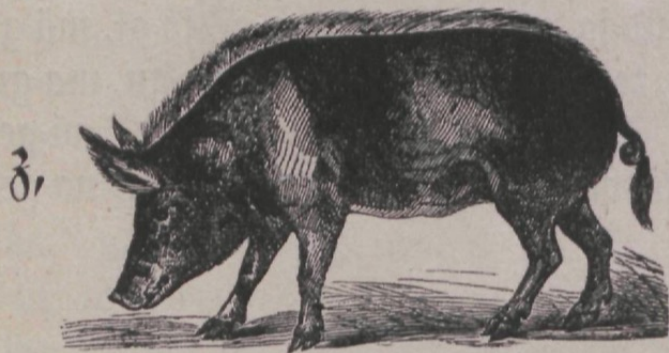
- **long-lasting contacts** and **the integration of varieties** of early Finnic;
- **the convergence** and **divergence** of Estonian varieties;
- a late modern era shift to SE-North Estonian **bilingualism** > North-Estonianization (Viitso 2007);
- shift to Standard Estonian throughout the 20th century and peaked in the 1960–1980s (Brown & Koreinik 2019);
- Age-graded variation confirms this episode:
 - born **before 1935** as L1 speakers of Võro;
 - born **1935-1960** as balanced bilinguals;
 - born **after 1960**, L1 speakers of Estonian (Org et al. 1994: 206).

fos, fus, fis, fes, mas, was, faus, räüs,
mõis, lõüs, tõus, nõus, ruus, tuus, mees,
laas, faas, raas.

f, fa, fe, fi, fu, fä, fii, fõ, fõ, falk, järk,
fälg, fõlg, fülk, fulg, fild, filt, fült, fang,
fäng, a-fi, e-fi, wä-fi, wii-fi, fo-fi, fii-fii,
fä-fii, tõi-fe, fas-fi, mas-fi, los-fi, fa-fi,
fi-fu, fu-fi.

s f saisma.

12.



za, ze, zi, zo, zu, zänk, zilk, zälf, zolk,
zirp, zirf, zoog, zi-ga, zirf za-ga, —
zän-go-ga, zöör, zaar, zii-ri zää-ri zir-gu-
fe-ne.

z zilk zäuk.

Hurt 1886

- **Two written varieties**, Tallinn- and Tartu-based, in use in churches, later in local administration, courts, schools between 17th-19th centuries;
- SE-language **literary monuments** include:
 - Agenda Parva (1622);
 - [Wastne Testament](#) (1686);
 - Tarto maa rahwa Näddali-Leht (1806);
 - Jakob Hurt's "[Wastne Wõro keeli ABD raamat](#)" (1886).

Further into 20th century

- the **unwelcome position** of dialectal, colloquial, non-standard speech between the wars, extended into the Soviet-era;
- different policies further contributed to **homogenized use** of Estonian: industrialisation + urban growth (Russian-speakers), schooling + media;
- The **rebirth** at the end of the 1980s; the Võro movement “lacks the surge of popular interest” (Kansui 1999).
- NGO Võro Society VKKF + the Võro Institute (est. 1995): focus on language maintenance and planning:
 - Kaika Summer University (since 1988); Uma Leht (since 2000), Uma Pido (since 2008)

Presence/visibility in media

- Print & hybrid media:
 - [Uma Leht](#) (since 2000), “Täheke”, “Tagamõtsa” TV series in ERR;
- Social media: FB, Võro-language Wikipedia (6,200+ entries);
- Literature, theatre & music:
 - Madis Kõiv [“Põud ja vihm..”](#) (1994, 2020) “Ennola” (2004), Kauksi Ülle, Jan Rahman, original creations & translations etc.
 - Ummamuudu & Elina Born/Stig Rästa [“Kõnõtraat”](#), Mari Kalkun & Uma Pido (2008, 2010, 2013, 2016, 2018);

Standard/standardisation/re-standardisation

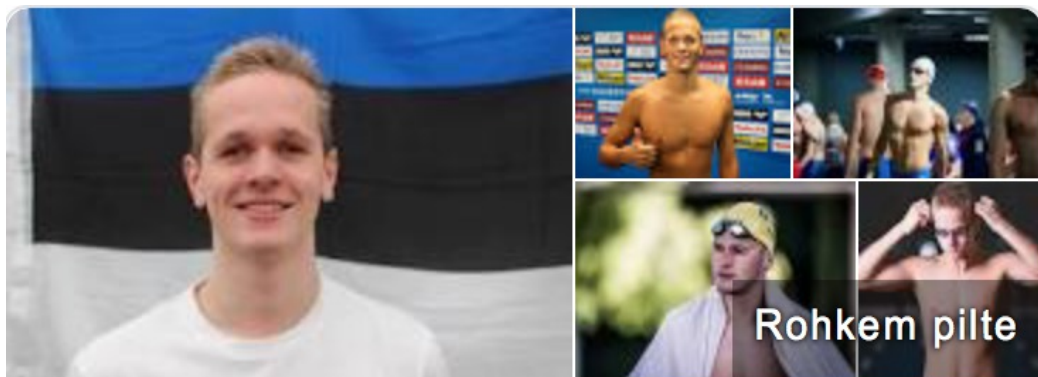
- a **new standard**; a compromise
- **graphisation > the matter of greatest dispute**
- In Haugen's revised model (1983): **decision** (selection, status planning) & **standardisation** (codification, corpus planning):
 - “just two sides of one and the same coin” (Fishman 2006: 17).
 - **Corpus planning** has some purely linguistic aspects, but its underlying principles are extralinguistic (Kaplan & Baldauf 1997: 38).
- Different speaker groups may have **competing motivations** for advancing a language and representing it in a certain way (Grenoble & Whaley 2006:138).

The graphic representation of Võro-specific phonemes representation:

- raised mid vowel /i/;
- palatalisation (all consonants but one, grammatical function, e.g., 3SG);
- glottal stop (max COM, TERM, ABL, IMP, COND, INF, PART, negative forms, plural marker;
- affricate;
- diphtongs (äü, öü), vowel harmony.

Adapted from Tender, Kasak 1995

	glottal stop	palatalisation	Raised mid vowel/i/	affricate	overlong raised mid vowels
Hurt (1904)	'	‘	ũ	z	ie uo üö ãõ
Kaalep (1989)	Ɂ [IPA]	.	ô	ts ds	ẹẹ ọọ öö ôô
Help (1990)	q	y	î	c dz	ie uo üö îe
Kuutsi (1992)	q	j	î	c dz	ĵ ĵ uų üü ĩĩ
<i>Vahtsõnõ kiräviis</i> (1994/1995)	q	‘ ´	y	c ds	ii uu üü yy
<i>Uma Leht</i> since 2003		‘ ´	õ	ts ds	ii uu üü õõ
simplified <i>vahtsõnõ kiräviis</i> (since 2005)	q	‘ ´	õ or ọ̃	ts ds	ii uu üü õõ
VI publications (since 2010s)		‘ ´	õ	ts ds	ii uu üü õõ
Estonian standard orthography	(')	(ä ö ü)	õ	ts, ds	ii, uu, üü, õõ



Kregor Zirk

Ujuja



Kregor Zirk on eesti ujuja. Tema treener on 2010. aastast Kaja Haljaste. Alates 2013. aastast kuulub Kregor Zirk Eesti ujumiskoondisse. Ta on paljukordne Eesti meister nii täiskasvanute seas kui ka nooremates vanuseklassides. [Wikipedia](#)

Sündis: 3. juuli 1999 (vanus 20 aastat), [Tartu](#)

Pikkus: 1,79 m

Source: Wikipedia



Jürgen Zopp

Tennisist



Jürgen Zopp on Eesti tennisist. Tema senine parim koht ATP üksikmängu edetabelis oli 71. ja paarismängus 218. Alates 2017. aasta augustist on tema treener Kim Tiilikainen. 2015. aastast oli tema treener Märten Tamla ja 2010. aastast Pasi Virtanen. [Wikipedia](#)

Sündis: 29. märts 1988 (vanus 31 aastat), [Tallinn](#)

Pikkus: 1,91 m

Kaal: 88 kg

Auhinnaraha: 1,08 miljonit USD

Kõrgeim koht edetabelis: 218. (11. juuli 2016)

Wimbledon: 1. ring (2012, 2013, 2014)

Graphisation debate I

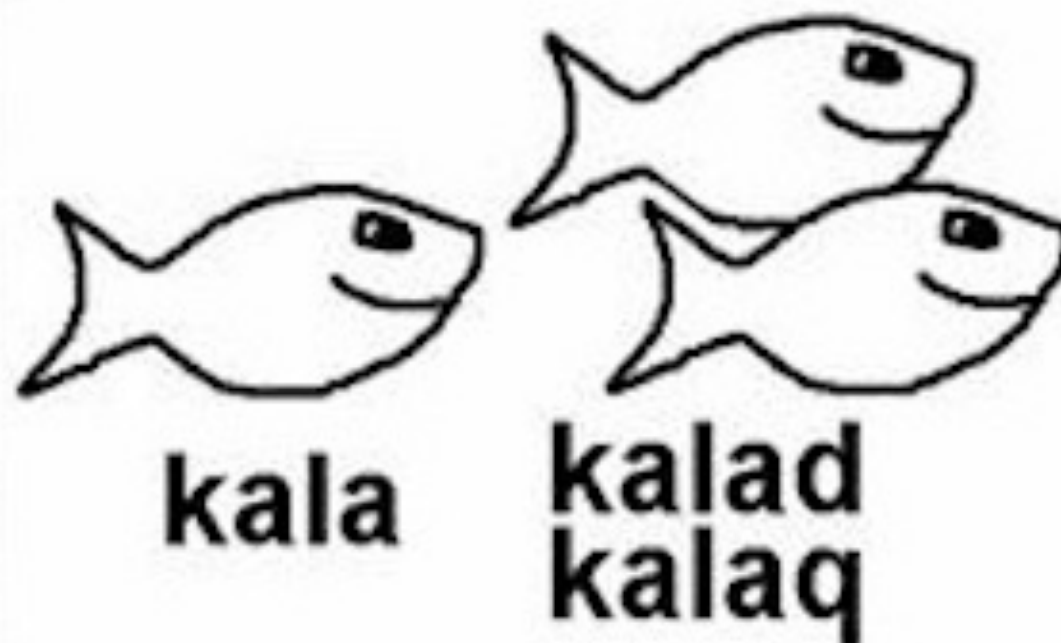
- “revisions of existing orthographies or **new competing orthographies** are almost certain to lead to division within the community, even where the existing system(s) may be problematic” (Bradley 2010: 137).
- **Brownian motion** (Tender & Kasak 1995; Tender et al. 1996);
- “upgrade” a dialect to a language;
- **a plethora of graphic representations** in the late 1980s and early 1990s.
- **two camps**: those for and against phonetism.

Graphisation debate II

makse konsonantid alla punkt, ni kapi — kapi — kapi. Toime simeonai taks-
tinäitena vastavasisulise lõigu: "Ugala keelen olé'iq kolmandat väldet. Um
nigu eesti keelengi kacj edimäst väldet aq pääle tųų um vijl kacj painu — ta-
zapain (I ni II väldeq) ni liigpain (III väldeq eesti keelen). **Tazapain** um ku
um pääsilpj ja peräsilpj.... **liigpain** um ku um pikj pääsilpj.... Painu ei olé
vaya märki, ku sîna naķas lûxkeze pääsilbiga ni edesi tulê peräsilpj.... — tųų
um egäkêrd tazapain. Ku sîna um ücainus pikj pääsilpj.... — um liigpain.
Opyidê jaos vêinuq painu märki, ku sîna naķas pikä pääsilbiga ni edesi tulê
peräsilp.... Kia ummaq xarinu kirotama ja lugêma eesti kijlt, nuųq taxtva al-
gusên tarvita kaķê S, K, P, T täxte liigpainu kirotamizês, aq LL, MM, NN,
RR ja VV kirotamizêl saias toimê, näütüzes: *vala* — *valla(maja)* — (*uks on*)
valla; *pani* — (*ahju*)*panni* — (*laku*) *panni*. Tuųperäst vêinuq kiräviisiga xa-
rinêimizê aigu tarvita ja kirola egäkêrd punktj väega rêhutêt S, K, P, T ala,
tuųnäütäs et taad täxte um ximo kirola katêkêrdzêlt (Ş=SS, K=KK, P=PP,
T=TT). Edespidi xäös tųų punktj ärq, tedä olé'iq vaya niguq LL, MM, NN, RR
mangi."18

- ignores Tartu-based and NE-Finnic orthographic traditions;
- „at the limit of tolerance for the Latin alphabet“ (Eller & Kama 1988)
- “elitist” orthography „supersaturated with almost phonetic transcriptions would conteract massive literacy in SE;
- 1980s-1990s: phonetism
- the 2000s: the issue of foreign grapheme q.

d ↑ põh'aeesti
q ↓ lõunõeesti



Graphisation debate III

- UL effectively tested the **social acceptance** of the new spelling.
- the editorial policy to allow its authors the **freedom** to choose their orthography;
- In 2003, the orthography was further simplified: **ʏ** and **ɞ**; but **q** survived beyond its journalistic application;
- Since the early 2010s, **q** not used in most texts, except language learning textbooks, children's books and (academic) publications.
- In Estonian-Võro dictionary glottal stops are represented by a half-transparent superscript letter **q**; the latest textbooks offer a choice to learners and their teachers.

Briefly on the acquisition planning of Võro

- **not included in the national curriculum**, its teaching depends both on on each school and the school owner
- School may initiate Võro teaching or to propose to a municipality to introduce Võro-language classes, but in most cases, **teaching depends on motivated teachers**
- primarily targeted to **all primary school pupils** in the language area (*ca* 5,000 in 2021/22); Today, 300 pupils are **exposed to Võro** in 10 schools once a week, taught by 15 teachers.
- Only those young informants, who were exposed to it beyond school, demonstrated good conversational skills in 2018.
- Reading/writings skills are low for all cohorts (Koreinik et. al 2013)

The internet as a platform

- **Hybrid language use** is common in social media (Belmar & Glass 2019).
 - over 11,000 people have joined an open FB group *Võro kiil* ‘Võro language’ (since 2012);
 - The content: **memes**, posts and discussions about Võro, its prestige, relationship to Seto, and the lexical and grammatical features of Võro.
 - The topic of **marking glottal stop** rarely comes up.

Conclusion I

- Standardization as a tool for revitalizing minoritized language; builds a language community via **the broader reach** and **higher prestige of written word**;
- The acceptance of orthography is **socially conditioned** and often **intersects with another language** and **identity** (Cahill 2011).
- The most important counterargument to Võro one-to-one sound-spelling correspondence is the **existence of Standard Estonian**.
- The “foreign” letters q and y are seen as alien or **inauthentic** to both Estonian and Võro, but the **underrepresentation** of the glottal stop and palatalization can be problematic for language learners.

Conclusion II

- A few **technological limitations** stand on the way of reproducing any signs; fonts are available;
- **Digital media** has brought speakers with different exposure to L closer to representing the language they want to read and write;
- a dynamic from a “complex” to “simple” orthography, or from over- to underrepresentation of Võro-specific sounds (Koreinik & Plado 2022).
- There are at least three reasons behind this process:
 - recognised as “The other Estonian language”;
 - progressing language shift requires more **resilient graphization** solutions;
 - the virtual community **encourages communication** by bringing together different speaker types, language uses, and the unsettled standard.



Wõõra tähe.

G, c,

G, c

(nimi tje, kõneldas kui t, ent e, i, ä, ja ö een kui z) Carl, Columbus, Cornelius, Capré; (kui z) Cirus, Cäsarea,

Ch, ch Ceder, Censur.

Ch, ch

(nimi tjeha kõneldas kui kõwa h ehk hh, alostusen ka kui t). Zachäus, Zacha-

Sch, sch rias, Chaldäa, Christus, Clodwig.

Sch, sch

(nimi estjeha, selle häält lase hendäle ette ütelda). Schiller, Schütze, Schuh-

S, f

mann, Schubert.

S, f

(nimi ehw, kõneldas kui kõwa w). Friß, Franz, Ferdinand, Friedrich, forte.

V, v

(nimi vau, kõneldas tõisten keelten kui w, ent Saksa keelen kui f). Victor, Victoria, von.

Q, q

(nimi ku, loetas kui kw). Quarta, Quinta, Quittung, Quedlinburg, Quattrille.

X, x

(nimi ifs kõneldas kui fs). Alexander Felix, Herres, Kantippe.

AITUMA!

Questions?

koreinik@ut.ee

References I

- Belmar, Guillem & Maggy Glass. 2019. Virtual communities as breathing spaces for minority languages: Re-framing minority language use in social media. *Adeptus*, 2019(4). <https://doi.org/10.11649/a.1968>
- Blommaert, Jan (ed.) 1999. *Language Ideological Debates*. De Gruyter Mouton.
- Bradley, D. 2010. Language Endangerment and Resilience Linguistics: Case Studies of Gong and Lisu. *Anthropological Linguistics* 52 (2). 123–140.
- Brown, Kara D. & Kadri Koreinik. 2019. Contested counting? What the census and schools reveal about Võro in Southeastern Estonia. In Sanita Lazdiņa, & Heiko F. Marten (eds.). *Multilingualism in the Baltic States: Societal Discourses and Language Policies*, 89–121. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cahill, Michael. 2011. Non-linguistic factors in orthographies. Linguistic Society of America Annual Meeting, Pittsburgh, Jan. 6-9, 2011 Symposium on Developing Orthographies for Unwritten Languages. www.researchgate.net/profile/Mike-Cahill/publication/267786206
- Belmar, Guillem & Maggy Glass. 2019. Virtual communities as breathing spaces for minority languages: Re-framing minority language use in social media. *Adeptus*, 2019(4). <https://doi.org/10.11649/a.1968>
- Grenoble, Lenore A. & Lindsay J. Whaley. 2006. *Saving Languages. An Introduction to Language Revitalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Help, Toomas. 1990. Selgituseks. In Tea Avarmaa, Ülle Kauksi, Madis Kõiv & Agu Vissel (eds.). *Kaika suvõülikuul. Valit tüü 6.–9.augustil 1989 Kaikal peet edimedsest võrokiilsest oppajide õppamisest*, 62–67. Tartu: Eesti Kostabi Šelts.
- Kansui, Akiko. 1999. *Tiiki syugi undou ni okeru gengo to tisiki zin – Esutonia nanbu Voru tihou no zirei kara*. PhD Dissertation, unpublished English summary. Osaka: Sougou Kenkyuu Daigakuin Daigaku.
- Kaplan, Robert B. & Richard B. Baldauf. 1997. *Language Planning from Practice to Theory*. Multilingual Matters.

References II

- Koreinik, K., Plado, H. 2022. Linguistic and extra-linguistic arguments in graphization debates: an unsettled standard of Southern Estonian. In J. Bradley, & M. Csire, (Eds). *Tonavan Laakso – Eine Festschrift für Johanna Laakso*. Central European Uralic Studies 2 (xx-xx). Vienna: Praesens Verlag [ilmumas].
- Koreinik, Kadri, Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermarck, Eva Kūhhirt, Anneli Sarhimaa & Reetta Toivanen. 2013. The Võro language in Estonia: ELDIA Case-Specific Report. Mainz, Wien, Helsinki, Tartu, Mariehamn, Oulu, Maribor: Johannes Gutenberg-Universität.
- Lane, P. 2015. Minority Language Standardization and the role of users. – *Language Policy* 14: 263-283.
- Org, Ervin, Nele Reimann, Katrin Uind, Eva Velsker & Karl Pajusalu 1994. Vastseliina Sute küla elanike murdepruugist ja keelehoiakutest [On the dialect use and language attitude of the residents of Sute village in Vastseliina]. *Keel ja Kirjandus* 4. 203–209.
- Polinsky, M., Kagan, O. 2007. Heritage Languages: In the 'Wild' and in the Classroom. *Language and Linguistics Compass*. 1. 10.1111/j.1749-818X.2007.00022.x.
- Prillop, K., Pajusalu, K., Saar, E. Soosaar S.-E., Viitso, T.-R. 2020. Eesti keele ajalgu. Eesti keele varamu. Tartu: TÜK.
- Raag, R. 1999. One plus one equals one: The forging of Standard Estonian. – *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 139: 17–38.
- Tender, Tõnu, Sulev Iva & Enn Kasak. 1996. Võru uuemad kirjaviisid ja Brown(e)'i liikumine. II. *Keel ja Kirjandus* 9. 606–610.
- Tender, Tõnu & Enn Kasak. 1995. Võru uuemad kirjaviisid ja Brown(e)'i liikumine. *Keel ja Kirjandus* 5. 312–319.
- Viitso, Tiit-Rein. 2007. The linguistic background of the Estonian language. In Mati Ereht (ed.). *Estonian language. Linguistica Uralica. Supplementary Series, Volume 1, Second edition*, 131–160. Tallinn: Estonian Academy Publishers.
- Õunapuu, A. 1927. Kõneõpetus meie koolides. *Kasvatus* 10: 439-441.