



UNIwersYTET IM. ADAMA MICKIEWICZA W POZNANIU

Abstand and Ausbau in Latgalian language planning: 19th to 21st century

CLOW Contested Languages in the Old World
Warsaw, 24-25 May 2024

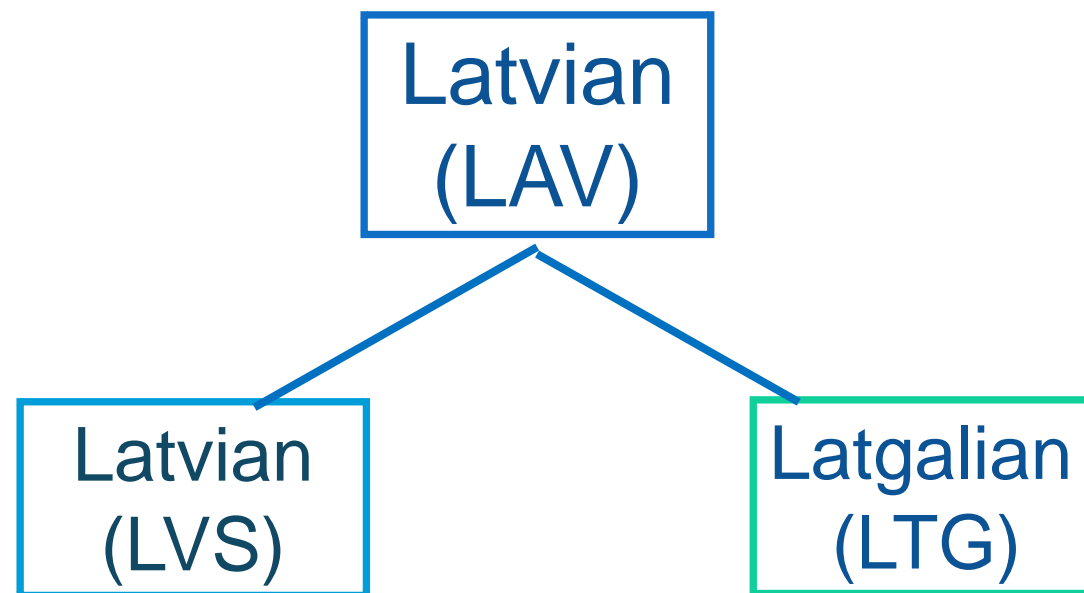
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VPP-IZM-DH-2022/1-0002

Is Latgalian a contested language?



Standard Latvian
(*Latviešu literārā valoda*)

non-standard
varieties

non-standard
varieties

Written Latgalian
(*Latgaliešu rakstu valoda*)

regional dialects
(*izloksnes*)

regional dialects
(*izloksnes*)

regional dialects
(*izloksnes*)

Is Latgalian a contested language?

Is Latgalian a language?

Is L a language?

What is a language?

The correct answer to these questions is:

Why do you ask?

More fruitful questions

- ❖ Where,
- ❖ When,
- ❖ By whom,
- ❖ To what degree,
- ❖ ...
- ❖ Why
- ❖ has Latgalian been acknowledged / not acknowledged as a language different from Latvian?

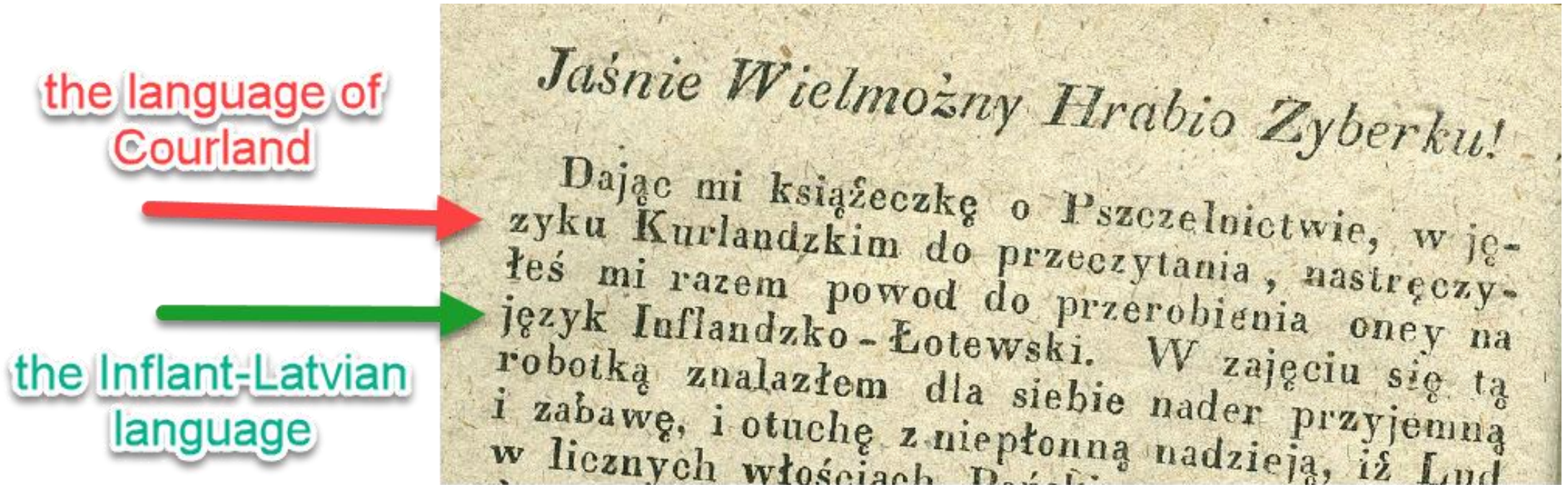
19th century: Latvian language varieties in different political borders (within one empire)



Green (Livonia) + orange (Courland) = “Baltic” or “Ostsee” provinces (governorates)

Blue: Vitebsk governorate; its western part historically Polish Livonia, in Polish: Inflanty Polskie

Akielewicz 1832 (*Abstand*?)



“When giving me the little book on beekeeping to read in **the Courland language**, you also provided me with a reason to rewrite it in **the Inflant-Latvian language**.”

18.11.1918 Proclamation of the Latvian Republic

- ❖ Before: nation-building discourse and activities, language as (most) important criterion for a nation
= unity of the two Latvian languages implied
- ❖ Northern and eastern borders drawn according to “Latvian” settlements



Unity in nation-building discourse

Argument: missing *Abstand*



Francis Trasuns
Latgalian
activist

1916 in “Drywa”

Bet jo Skoborgas kungs dumoj, ka mums ir cyta woluda, nakai baltiřim, tad jis tu lai piroda. Lai jis piroda, ka pi mums un pi baltiřim ir cytaidi gramatikas lykumi, cytaidas formas un konstrukcija, cytaids gors woludai un wordim cytaida nuzeime.

“But if Mr. Skoborgs thinks that we have a different language than the Balts (= the Latvians of the western provinces) than he shall prove it. He shall prove that we and the Balts have different grammatical rules, different forms and constructions, that the language has a different spirit and words a different meaning.”

1920s

- Two Latvian languages/varieties in one state
- “Latgalian” vs “Latvian”
- Status planning: state language Latvian, special rights for Latgalian
- Corpus planning = *Ausbau* of both (at different levels),
- Translations of some schoolbooks into Latgalian
- Standardization of Latgalian de facto reduces *Abstand* (hidden agenda?)

Since late 1980s

- ❖ Language laws: Latvian state language, Latgalian right to protection and support (corpus planning)
- ❖ 1989 law (translation from Latvian by DeepL + NN):
*The use of **the Latvian language, including its dialects and the Latgalian written language**, is guaranteed in all cultural spheres in the Soviet Socialist Republic of Latvia.*
- ❖ 1992 and later laws guarantee state protection for “**the Latgalian written language as a historical variety of Latvian**”.

And that's the end of status planning for Latgalian.

The Latvian language law

(1) The official language in the Republic of Latvia is **the Latvian language**.

(2) In the Republic of Latvia, everyone has the right to present submissions and communicate **in the official language** in institutions, public and religious organizations and companies.

(3) The State shall ensure the development and use of the Latvian sign language for communication with people with impaired hearing.

(4) The State shall ensure the maintenance, protection and development of the **Latgalian written language** as a **historic variant of the Latvian language**.

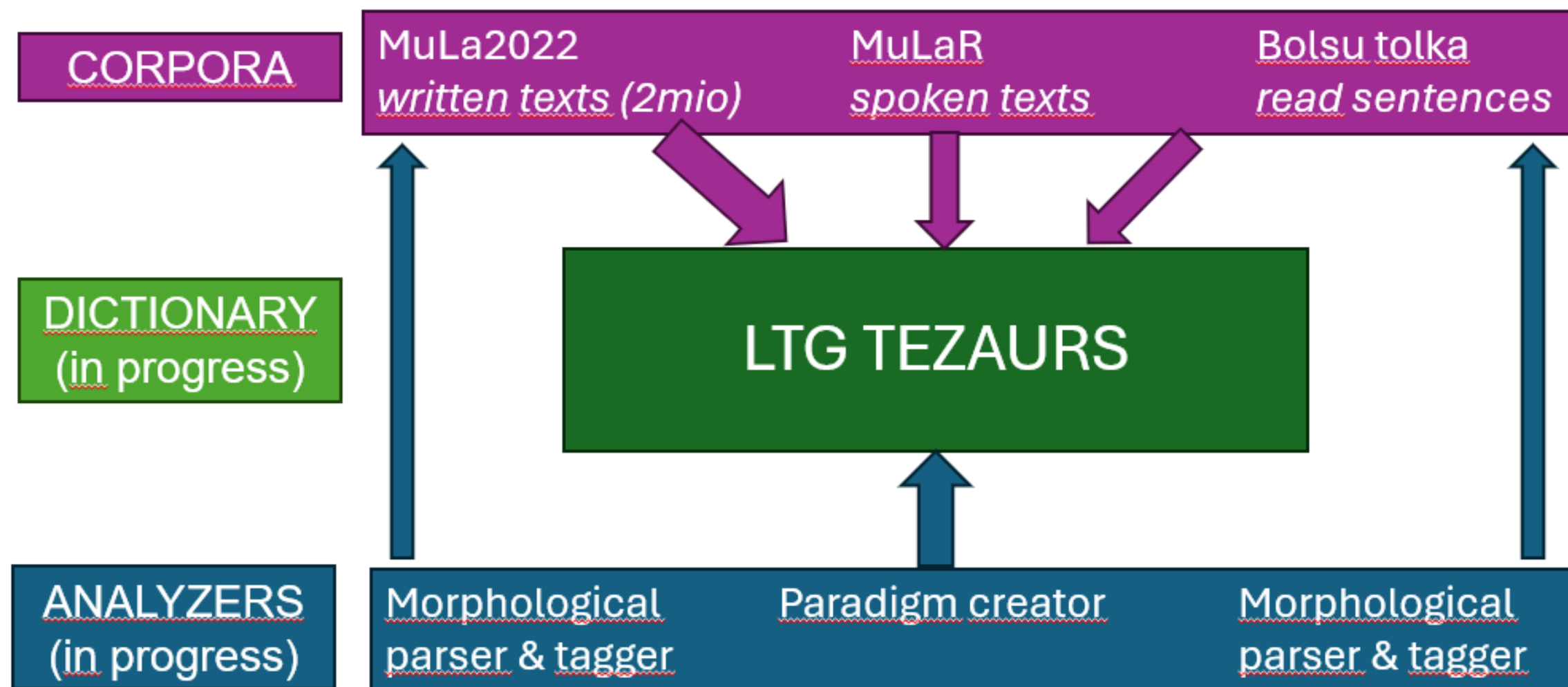
21st century: linguistic description

- ❖ Latvian linguists: separate descriptions of Standard Latvian and Latgalian. Only unified grammar of Latvian (LAV) by Jānis Endzelīns 1922.
- ❖ Foreign linguists interested in Baltic languages and language typologists start treating Latgalian as a separate language when researching language structures (Arkadiev et al. 2015).
- ❖ Entries on Latgalian as a language in international handbooks and encyclopedias (Andronov 2010).

21st century: speech technology, digital language resources and tools

- ❖ First Latgalian corpus MuLa 2012 (Lithuanian-Latvian project).
- ❖ Extension MuLa 2022 (Latvian project, at RTA).
- ❖ First Latgalian speech corpus MuLaR 2023 (RTA).
- ❖ Currently: collaboration between RTA and the language lab of the Latvian University in Riga:
 - Corpora of read speech through data collection on Common Voice (Balsu talka / Bolsu tolka)
 - Lemmatizer, morphological tagger and paradigm creator for Latgalian
 - A separate lexical database and superdictionary for Latgalian

Digital resources and tools for Latgalian



Collateral languages and technology

Latgalian and Standard Latvian are...

- so different that each needs its own set of resources and tools,
- so similar that tools for Latgalian may partly be based on tools developed for Standard Latvian.

Compare, for example:

Bernhard, Delphine, Anne-Laure Ligozat, Myriam Bras, Fanny Martin, Marianne Vergez-Couret, et al. 2018. Collecting and annotating corpora for three under-resourced languages of France: Methodological issues. *Language Documentation & Conservation*, University of Hawai'i Press 2021, 15, pp.316-357. <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-03273196>



[T]: vārds vai frāze



Pameklēt plašāk

Apkaime

galdaiņš

Galdakano

galdapuža

Galdara

galdarēt

galdasauts

galdāts

galdauts

galdavāģi

galddators

galddrāna

galddrānis

galdelis

galdene

Galdēņi

MLVV

galdauts

galdauts

galdauts vīriešu dzimtes 1. deklinācijas lietvārds

Locīšana

Galda pārklājs (parasti no auduma).

AVOTI: LLVV

Korpora piemēri

Ziņot

Dalīties

Korpora piemēri

Šie piemēri no latviešu valodas tekstu korpusa ir atlasīti automātiski un var būt neprecīzi.

- Mājās man ir stikla galds, un nesen dāvanā saņēmu galdautu.
- Skāde nav liela – tikai galdauts pagalam un caurums galdā. „
- Galdauti ar nokarenām malām bērniem ir kā aicinājums tos noraut lejā!



Klikšķini šeit un nāc balsu talkā!

Iemūžini mūsdienās runāto latviešu valodu, lai saglabātu to nākamajām paaudzēm!

«Extended search» finds Latgalian data

Paplašinātā meklēšana

Meklējam **galdauts**.

► Atrasts vārdos (1):

Vārdu savienojumos nav.

▼ Atrasts skaidrojumos (9):

- **auts** Četrstūrainis auduma gabals (piemēram, **galdauts**, kaklauts).
- **linauts** Četrstūrainis linaudekla gabals (piemēram, **galdauts**, dvielis).
- **abryuss** **galdauts**.
- **galda palags** **galdauts**.
- **linauts** Linu **galdauts**.
- **sedziņa** Neliels **galdauts**, neliels (piemēram, mēbeļu) pārklājs.
- **skāteris** Skārtele - velšu dvielis, sedzene, **galdauts**.
- **viengabalis** Tas (piemēram, sega, **galdauts**), kas gatavots no viena gabala.
- **skārtele** Velšu dvielis, sedzene, **galdauts**.

Entries coming
from different
sources

abryuss dialektisms

abryuss latgalisko izlokšņu grupa

1. Dvielis.

2. Galdauts.

AVOTI: Let

abrūss

abrūss apvidvārds

Dvielis.

AVOTI: KiV

The entry in the Latgalian *tezaurs*

||||| [LTG]:

Pameklēt plašāk

Apkaime

aba

abādys

abarmots

abave

abīda

ab|a

abryuss

abryuss 🗨️ ▼ Locīšana 🏠 [LLLD 2013, Lukaševičs 2011, KiV]

abruss [Lukaševičs 2011]

1. Dvielis. [Lukaševičs 2011, Let, KiV]

2. Galdauts. [Lukaševičs 2011, Let]

Avoti: LLLD 2013, Lukaševičs 2011, Let, KiV

The Latgalian *tezaur*s (in progress)

||||| [LTG]:

vārds vai frāze

Pameklēt plašāk

Apkaime

auži

aužkīne

aviļš

avišys

azneica

až

ažnak

baba

babaunīks

babrs

babuleite

bačjans

bačš

bādynuot

baduni

Tēzaurš

baba

baba

baba [baba] sieviešu dzimte, lietvārds  Locīšana  [LLLD 2013, Lukaševičs 2011, KiV]

babeņa deminutīvs  [LLLD 2013, Lukaševičs 2011, Slišāns 2009]

babeite deminutīvs  [Lukaševičs 2011]

babuleite deminutīvs 

babuņa deminutīvs  [Lukaševičs 2011]

babcja deminutīvs  [Lukaševičs 2011]

1. Mātes vai tēva māte; vecāmāte. [LLLD 2013, Lukaševičs 2011, KiV]

▼ Piemēri *Mamys vacuoki gon ir nu iteinis – dzeds vītejais, baba nu poļaku.*

2. Veca sieviete; vecene.

▼ Piemēri *Kai atzeist ilze Sperga: "Munu tekstu deļ babys ir kļigušys bazneicā i čūt ni atsasacejušys nu „Katōļu Dzeivis” abonementa.*

3. Sieviete, kas sniedz palīdzību dzemdībās; vecmāte. [KiV]

Avoti: LLLD 2013, Bērzkalns 2007, Lukaševičs 2011, KiV, Slišāns 2009

Lexicographic resources where
the word is documented

baba [baba] sieviešu dzimte, lietvārds  ^ Locīšana

	Vsk.	Dsk.
Nom.	<i>baba</i>	<i>babys, babas (retāk)</i>
Ģen.	<i>babys, babas (retāk)</i>	<i>babu</i>
Dat.	<i>babai</i>	<i>babom</i>
Akuz.	<i>babu</i>	<i>babys, babas (retāk)</i>
Lok.	<i>babā</i>	<i>babuos</i>

Pop-up inflectional paradigms

Examples from corpora
(manually selected)

Word in the same
spelling in (LVS)
tēzaurš

Conclusions: general

- ❖ Different motives lead to different answers to the question “is L a language?”.
- ❖ Without a motive, the question is irrelevant.
- ❖ Different answers may coexist.
- ❖ Criteria of *Abstand* and *Ausbau* may be used for any motive.
- ❖ There are different ways in which a language may be acknowledged or contested.
- ❖ Denying a language the label “language” is not bad *per se*.

Conclusion: Latgalian – current status and what follows from it

- Political motives, *Abstand* criteria = **variety** of Latvian (contested?) => more specific status planning (use in official situations)
- Political motives, *Ausbau* criteria = **special variety**, worthy protection (acknowledged?) => corpus and acquisition planning
- Practical motives, *Abstand* criteria = **language** (acknowledged) => corpus and acquisition planning

References

Andronovs, Aleksejs. 2010. Lingvistiskās un kultūrvēsturiskās informācijas daudzums kā kritērijs valodas un dialekta atšķiršanā. *Centrs i perifereja: perspektīvu maiņa. Marijis Andžānis symtgadei. 2. storptautyskuo latgalistikys konference* (Rēzekne, 2009. goda 15.–17. oktobris). Rēzekne: Rēzeknes Augstskola, 7.–14. lpp.

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Paļdis!

Prezentācija tapusi Valsts pētījuma programmas "Humanitāro zinātņu digitālie resursi" projekta "Atvērtas un FAIR principi atbilstīgas digitālo humanitāro zinātņu ekosistēmas attīstība Latvijā" (Nr. VPP-IZM-DH-2022/1-0002) ietvaros.

