

Tuuli Tuisk, Livonian Word Prosody, Tartu 2015 (Dissertationes Philologiae Uralicae Universitatis Tartuensis 15). 162 pp.

The topic of the thesis is relevant and scientifically significant, because the previous studies on the Livonian language certainly deserve to be expanded in several aspects. Although the results of such research are of interest first and foremost for Estonian and Finnish linguists, there is also considerable interest on the part of Latvian scholars.

The historical background is presented and the historical description of previous research is done well. It was interesting to learn that the special status of Livonian tones was first noted as early as 1861 by Ferdinand Johann Wiedemann and later by such famous authors as Kalevi Wiik, Eberhard Winkler, Seppo Suhonen, Arvo Eek, Tiit-Rein Viitso, Ilse Lehiste, Karl Pajusalu etc. In Tuuli Tuisk's research the earlier studies are taken into account, but the investigation done by her is absolutely innovative. As is stated very clearly, her reason for choosing experimental acoustic phonetic analysis was that the PhD thesis "was started as part of the Finno-Ugric Prosody Project, initiated by the late Ilse Lehiste and unsolved questions that arose from Lehiste's study constitute the research basis for the thesis". The reliability of the results obtained by Tuuli Tuisk rests on the recordings of Livonian speakers covering a broad period of 1970–2010. Materials from the Tartu University Archives of Estonian Dialects and Kindred Languages are used. The author of the PhD thesis has personally participated in recording live Livonian speech in 2004 and 2010, using high quality recording equipment and she has had a valuable possibility to meet the speakers in person.

The author has chosen to develop research in three aspects:

1. "The analysis of spontaneous Livonian attempts to explain the interaction between the pitch contours and different syllabic ratios. In addition, the temporal and tonal characteristics of disyllabic weak-grade words with a short first syllable and a

half-long second syllable are discussed in the thesis. Also, the question of the tonal uniformity is studied."

2. Continuation of the analysis of different word structures, because "...the temporal structure of trisyllabic, tetrasyllabic and pentasyllabic words has not been thoroughly analysed in previous research."

3. Analysis of words with and without *stød* in order to identify the main characteristic features of *stød* and to see how stable they are in controlled and spontaneous speech. As spontaneous speech has not been analysed in previous studies this is a particularly innovative aspect to support a general description of the Livonian *stød*.

These three tasks are the main points enabling us to regard the design of the PhD thesis as *innovative* and *significant*. In view of a general description of the language the author has very appropriately chosen to analyse not only read speech but also spontaneous speech. For example, the characteristic laryngealization is realized more often in read speech than in spontaneous speech, as it could be foreseen. The author concludes that in spontaneous speech the characteristic laryngealization tends to weaken or disappear. A similar phenomenon in the analysis of the so-called broken syllable intonation in contemporary Latvian is found by researchers of the Latvian language, particularly in the High Latvian dialect. It is a great pity that Latvian phoneticians to-day prefer using artificial, isolated language segments in their experiments, not natural spontaneous speech. I appreciate the choice of spontaneous speech in the PhD thesis by Tuuli Tuisk.

In analysis of prosody phoneticians from different countries use different terms. I agree that the so-called "syllable intonation" is not the best denomination, but it is also difficult for Latvian linguists to accept the denomination "tone", because the analyzed phenomenon is character-

ized by a combination of tone (fundamental pitch), intensity and quantity. The opposition of the so-called "broken syllable intonation" and "falling syllable intonation" in deep Latgallian subdialects is phonologically realized by a specific prosodic feature — sharp (usually with glottalization) or level changes of the intensity and the fundamental pitch, while this contrast is even intensified by quantitative differences as the level toneme is longer than the sharp one. In Standard Latvian the difference between the "drawling syllable intonation" and others is also based on quantity, because sounds with the "drawling syllable intonation" are much longer. In some places the author writes "broken tone or *stød*", but more often she uses just "*stød*". I completely understand that the latter is already a traditional term and in my review I respect the term "*stød*" used by the author, but still subjectively that reminds me of a symbolical denomination and even is not in English (sorry for that note!). Therefore I would prefer something like *katke* or similar. Anyway we also need an English term (there is nothing about *stød*, for example, in Crystal 2008).

As Livonian trisyllabic, tetrasyllabic and pentasyllabic words have not been thoroughly analysed in previous research I trust the author's opinion and I am glad that we have got new data and conclusions, which could be used in further research. Comparative analysis with previous research of polysyllabic words (for example, with Lehiste, Teras, Ernštreits, Lippus, Pajusalu, Tuisk, Viitso 2008; Pajusalu, Help, Lippus, Niit, Teras, Viitso 2005) is highly appreciated. In the rather broad comparison of Livonian and Estonian languages I would rather rely on the author's scientific background, because I am not an expert in Estonian. If the results in author's paper (Tuisk, Teras 2009) do not confirm the conclusions or findings of previous researchers: "WG [weak grade] words without *stød* had a late F0 peak or peak occurred during the onset of the second syllable or even at the beginning of the second syllable vowel", however, "in SG [strong grade] words without *stød*, the peak was

also late in most cases, but sometimes occurred earlier as well", I would rather prefer explaining the phenomenon by the essence of spontaneous speech. At least in Latvian utterance-level intonation will not influence such variation.

The figures provided, examples and the author's *stød* analysis all work well to convince the reader that there is an opposition of words with and without *stød* in Livonian and that *stød* has a phonological role in differentiating meaning. I completely accept the idea of Tuuli Tuisk that "*stød* can be defined as a phonological unit, which on the suprasegmental level has particular characteristic features". Tuuli Tuisk certainly demonstrates the specific shape of pitch excursion, laryngealization and irregular intensity in the stressed syllable. The temporal structure of words and acoustic features of *stød* are described in detail covering the temporal characteristics and their variations, tonal characteristics (especially an early location of the F0 peak or turning point and the characteristic shape of the pitch contour), intensity contours and irregularity. The author also indicates that the acoustic characteristics of the second syllable should receive greater attention in describing words with and without *stød*. These studies of the second syllable would also be interesting for Latvian phoneticians, because due to the native language stereotype it is difficult for us to hear the second syllable in Livonian, for example, in a word *ka'llõ*, we tend to perceive it like a word with one syllable with a broken tone at the end, but in the word *ka'ldi* we hear two syllables.

Finally some notes about the analysis of spontaneous speech. What I evaluate as very substantial and relevant is the aspect that Tuuli Tuisk has investigated words' prosodic features in spontaneous speech, too. It provides for a much more complete description of the relevant phenomena. Even in case the investigated phenomenon weakens in spontaneous speech, it is natural speech analysed in the process of communication, which provides data about the process happening in actual speech. Compared with the situation in the Latvian language, in

contemporary Standard Latvian and some subdialects there is a tendency to replace the broken intonation with a falling intonation. The language norms of Standard Latvian suggest that the difference in SYLLABLE INTONATION should be considered only in those word pairs in which they change the meaning of the word. At the same time people speaking deep Latgallian subdialects from the High Latvian dialect, who live in North-East Vidzeme (near the Estonian boarder) still stand out for a very strong broken syllable intonation with glottalization. As the broken syllable intonation, contrary to the Livonian *stød*, can occur not only in the first stressed syllable, but in any syllable, even at the end of the last syllable, for example, *kal?na:?*, therefore the broken syllable intonation is heard frequently in Latvian. The broken syllable intonation is very conservative and is heard in dialect speakers also while using Standard Latvian. I have this speech version, together with other typical characteristics, categorized as an officially not recognized Malenian variant of deep Latgallian subdialects. I fully agree with Tuuli Tuisk's conclusion about the Lithuanian language in that "The distinction between tones is most clear in the western part of Lithuania, especially in Northern Samogitian subdialects, where the main acute tone is realized by the broken (glottalized) tone", because the pronunciation of Northern Samogitian subdialects indeed reminds that of the Malenian variant from North-East Vidzeme. Unfor-

tunately, in recent years Latvian phonetics has been dominated by investigations of artificially structured sound formations and isolated sounds, while there is a definite lack of natural speech research.

I would be pleased if during further research Tuuli Tuisk would help to classify accurate terminology of prosody and would also convince our Latvian colleagues of the best version. Of course, I felt delighted that Tuuli Tuisk has referred to investigations of Latvian prosody, too.

The listed publications of Tuuli Tuisk give an overview of a scientifically motivated and methodically focused research of Livonian word prosody. In the articles with co-author the contribution of each author is correctly indicated. The presentation has a logical structure and is clearly understandable. In general Tuuli Tuisk's doctoral thesis "Livonian word prosody" is the scientific investigation of an original and independent author, where we can also get an overview of the contribution of previous researchers as well as inspiration for further research. "Livonian word prosody" by Tuuli Tuisk is certainly a significant contribution to Livonian language studies.

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