

KARL PAJUSALU (Tartu)

ESTONIAN GRAMMARS
BY FERDINAND JOHANN WIEDEMANN*

Abstract. The article compares the academic Estonian grammars by Ferdinand Johann Wiedemann, a great figure in the 19th-century Estonian linguistics. More precisely, the article deals with Wiedemann's grammar of the Võru dialect of South Estonian "Versuch ueber den Werroehstnischen Dialekt" (1864) and his "Grammatik der Ehstnischen Sprache" (1875) — a major Estonian grammar focusing on the central dialect of North Estonian but also treating other dialects. First, the article characterizes F. J. Wiedemann's research methods and starting points. F. J. Wiedemann's research on Estonian grammar grew out of polemics with the Estonian grammar by Eduard Ahrens, especially its second edition published in 1853. F. J. Wiedemann stressed some features not covered by E. Ahrens' grammar of the North Estonian coastal dialect, for example, the opposition of three phonological quantities. F. J. Wiedemann applied the model of grammar first used in his grammar of the Võru dialect to his comprehensive grammar of the Estonian language. The grammars by F. J. Wiedemann present many more historical features of the Estonian language than the ones to be found in contemporary Standard Estonian. That is why F. J. Wiedemann's works continue to be an important source for the study of the historical development of the Finnic languages.

Keywords: Estonian, Võru South Estonian, history of Standard Estonian, Finnic grammar.

The first and last significant landmarks in the academic career of Ferdinand Johann Wiedemann were grammars of the Permic and Volgaic languages. Although Wiedemann was also an outstanding lexicologist and compiled comprehensive dictionaries, his calling was grammar. Among his grammars the most thorough and significant one is an Estonian grammar completed in 1873 and published in St. Petersburg in 1875 — "Grammatik der Ehstnischen Sprache".

F. J. Wiedemann's grammars of cognate languages demonstrate his effort to combine the historical-comparative and the descriptive approaches (Ariste 2005 : 123 etc.). However, the historical approach remains in the background in his grammars, at the level of single discussions and the

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comparison of a few forms of the cognate languages. The main method of F. J. Wiedemann's grammar is a descriptive synchronic account of the grammatical core structure of the languages; his thorough and systematic approach is striking. F. J. Wiedemann claimed in the preface of his Estonian grammar that his aim was to compile a descriptive grammar that described the language as it was actually used at his time (Wiedemann 1875 : I).

F. J. Wiedemann's grammars rest on three premises: (1) existing earlier accounts of the language studied, (2) German grammars of the time, and (3) the so-called classical grammars of ancient languages. F. J. Wiedemann was trained to be a classical philologist, and he started his career as a teacher of classical languages. His first linguistic hobbies were Ancient Greek and Latin; the core of the terminology he applied to the description of the Finno-Ugric languages comes from the grammars of the above languages. F. J. Wiedemann wrote his grammars in German, and one can directly recognize in them the method of categorizing linguistic phenomena and the conceptual apparatus characteristic of the German grammatical tradition of the time. The grammatical terms used in F. J. Wiedemann's Estonian grammars overlap to a great extent with the terms of the mid-19th-century German treatments. Nevertheless, F. J. Wiedemann did not attempt to fit the studied language into the framework of some ideal language, be it Hebrew, Latin, German, or Finnish. Rather, a good knowledge of several languages provided him with the skill necessary to find appropriate terms for highlighting rare features of the studied language and to apply in addition to the mere description of the structure of the language forms an explanation that uncovers general grammatical functions. It is clearly visible in F. J. Wiedemann's Estonian grammars.

F. J. Wiedemann's first in-depth preparatory work before undertaking the compilation of his Estonian grammars was a thorough critical overview of the second edition of the grammar by Eduard Ahrens published in 1853 (Wiedemann 1855). F. J. Wiedemann's one-hundred-page review acknowledged the work done by E. Ahrens in introducing the new spelling system of the Estonian language but criticized besides several individual issues E. Ahrens' general understanding of the essence of Estonian. E. Ahrens considered Estonian to be a daughter language of Finnish and treated the Estonian language as a special variety of Finnish. It is understandable, taking into consideration that E. Ahrens was the minister of Kuusalu (Ross 2003). The North Estonian coastal dialect used in the surroundings of Kuusalu is in many respects similar to Finnish; for example, no distinction is made between quantity 2 and 3. F. J. Wiedemann stressed that regarding several main characteristics Estonian was not the usage described by E. Ahrens.

F. J. Wiedemann chose as his first object to describe Estonian something that was as far as possible from the usage described in E. Ahrens' grammar — the Võru Estonian dialect, as he called it. F. J. Wiedemann completed his "Versuch ueber den Werroehstnischen Dialekt" or a study of the Võru dialect in 1863, ten years after the grammar by E. Ahrens, and it was published in 1864. A facsimile edition of the above grammar with commented translations into Estonian was published in the Publication Series of the Chair of the Estonian Language at the University of Tartu in 2002. F. J. Wiedemann admitted in the preface of the above grammar that

the South Estonian usage called the Tartu dialect differed to such an extent from the usage of the Tallinn area that it could be treated separately, like Finnish or Livonian. However, one can notice a partial overlap of the essential grammatical features of the two language varieties and their gradual merger in the area of Central Estonia. Occasionally F. J. Wiedemann used the name Võru dialect in the meaning of the Tartu dialect, but, on the other hand, he emphasized that these were two different main varieties of the South Estonian main dialect. Moreover, he claimed that the Võru dialect spoken in south-eastern Võrumaa was a purer language variety that would suit better as the South Estonian standard language.

F. J. Wiedemann treated the relationship between North and South Estonian already in his paper "Ein Vorschlag zur genaueren Erforschung der ehstnischen Sprache" published in 1861. F. J. Wiedemann's paper raised the question in connection with the need for a more comprehensive Estonian grammar. He claimed that the South and North Estonian dialects differed from each other to the same extent as Polish and Bohemian (or Czech). As nobody would consider writing a joint grammar of Polish and Czech, it would also be impossible to write a joint grammar of North and South Estonian. Only North Estonian should be taken as a starting point. Nevertheless, F. J. Wiedemann started his research on Estonian grammar by compiling a grammar of the Võru dialect; its main method turned out to be a comparison between the Võru and the Tallinn dialects, which was treated in E. Ahrens' grammar.

The sections dealing with the linguistic phenomena that the E. Ahrens' grammar addresses briefly or fails to treat at all are those more thoroughly dealt with in the grammar of the Võru dialect by F. J. Wiedemann. For example, the following surveys in the phonetics section: vowel harmony, palatalization as a property of consonants, consonant gemination and its relation to word stress and quantity alternation, which he describes separately when presenting types of gradation. F. J. Wiedemann notes that "some words when inflected express also grade II and III, so that grade I (more rarely also grade II) is omitted or all the grades follow each other" (1864 : 33). For example, *rügä* 'rye' *g röö*, inf *rükä*, ill *rükkä* (Wiedemann 1864 : 35). Thus, F. J. Wiedemann even provides examples of paradigms that consist of four grades. As for vowel harmony F. J. Wiedemann provides interesting examples of the *a*-plural, for example, *täkka* 'stallions', *kärä* 'wheelbarrows', pointing out that such forms are not affected by vowel harmony.

The derivation section of F. J. Wiedemann's grammar of the Võru dialect also contains much new data. The noun morphology is to a great extent presented in comparison with the data provided in E. Ahrens' grammar (1853), but different terminology is used; it can be explained to a great extent by the different understanding of the functions of the forms. In his Estonian grammar (1875) F. J. Wiedemann applies mainly the same data presentation method he used in his grammar of the Võru dialect (1864).

Table 1 shows that F. J. Wiedemann's presentation of the case system of the Võru grammar is largely similar to E. Ahrens' grammar. The names ascribed to inflected or grammatical cases differ and also to some extent the description of their functions and the presentation of the comitative as the instrumental in the section on adverb formation. The 1875 grammar by F. J. Wiedemann follows quite closely the presentation method in his

Võru grammar. Only the names of the clitic cases are different; the terminative is presented in the section on adverb formation.

Table 1

Estonian Cases in Grammars by Ahrens and Wiedemann

Ahrens 1853	Wiedemann 1864	Wiedemann 1875	Today (EKG)
Inflected cases (according to J. F. Heller):			
Definitive	Nominative	Nominative	Nominative
Relative	Genitive	Genitive	Genitive
Indefinitive	Infinitive	Infinitive	Partitive
Suffixed cases (according to G. Renvall):			
Essive	*Essive	*Essive	Essive
Factive	Factive	Factive	Translative
Illative	Illative	Illative	Illative
Inessive	Inessive	Inessive	Inessive
Elative	Elative	Elative	Elative
Allative	Allative	Allative	Allative
Adessive	Adessive	Adessive	Adessive
Ablative	Ablative	Ablative	Ablative
Caritive	Caritive	*Abessive	Abessive
	*Instrumental	*Comitative	Comitative
		*Terminative	

Numerous notes in the Võru grammar show that the E. Ahrens' grammar served as an important source of comparison for F. J. Wiedemann. The following note on the inflectional patterns of nominal words could serve as an example: "In order to make the two main dialects better comparable, the division into types will follow as much as possible E. Ahrens' grammar of the Tallinn dialect; we will deviate from this principle only if it does not seem expedient in occasional cases or if the peculiarity of the Võru dialect requires it" (Wiedemann 1864 : 47).

As far as verb morphology is concerned, the Võru grammar by F. J. Wiedemann contains some categories that E. Ahrens does not have, for example, the relative or quotative, as it is called today. Incidentally, F. J. Wiedemann presents both the present and past paradigms of reported speech. Here it is noteworthy that in the present he provides examples of *vat*-ending forms characteristic of the Tartu dialect, such as *olevat* 'is said to be', but not the *v*-ending forms characteristic of the Võru dialect, for example, *ollõv* 'being'. As an example of a past relative form F. J. Wiedemann presents a single *nud*-participle like *olnu* 'been' and in the plural its special variety *wa*-ending *olnuwa*. E. Ahrens' grammar covers only three moods — the imperative, the indicative, and the optative, which stands for the conditional mood. In addition to the above three moods, F. J. Wiedemann provides the relative as the fourth mood and the *ne*-potential or the conjunctive denoting possibility as the fifth mood; for example, *ma saane* 'perhaps I can', *sa saanet* 'perhaps you can'. For F. J. Wiedemann the

* F. J. Wiedemann does not present the marked cases as productive; they occur, however, in the chapter on word formation where derivation is described.

potential stands for the conjunctive; he uses the modern term conditional to which he added in brackets the former term optative.

As for the inflection of nouns and verbs, F. J. Wiedemann abandoned in his *Võru* grammar the general system of declension and conjugation developed by E. Ahrens. For F. J. Wiedemann the stem changes serve as a criterion for distinguishing between 24 types of nouns and 13 types of verbs. In his Estonian grammar, however, F. J. Wiedemann provides seven declensions and six conjugations, describing more specific type differences inside them. F. J. Wiedemann makes valuable additions concerning the possible use of various inflectional forms.

F. J. Wiedemann's *Võru* grammar has no part on syntax; in his Estonian grammar F. J. Wiedemann illustrates syntax with a large number of examples. However, here his treatment is largely based on the section on syntax in the grammar by E. Ahrens, though arguing against the latter on several occasions. It is apparent that because F. J. Wiedemann was not a native speaker of Estonian, syntax posed more problems to him, and the majority of inaccuracies occur in the part on syntax (Alvre 1975 : 726).

F. J. Wiedemann suggested a long name to his comprehensive Estonian grammar published in 1875 — "Grammatik der Ehstnischen Sprache, zu-anderer Dialekte", which means that it is first and foremost a grammar of Central Estonian dialects but also takes into account the other Estonian dialects. F. J. Wiedemann claimed in the preface of his longest 664-page grammar that his Estonian grammar was the first attempt to describe the Estonian language more comprehensively than it had ever been done before (1875 : V). In order to identify the feature that are characteristic of the structure of a language, it is not enough to compare a few dialects that are in the foreground and thus better known. One has to know and treat individual languages and all their varieties as a whole (Wiedemann 1875 : IV). At the same time F. J. Wiedemann does stress that similarly to a botanist a linguist has to identify more characteristic regions and concentrate on them (1875 : V).

The comprehensive Estonian grammar by F. J. Wiedemann is a result of extensive fieldwork. F. J. Wiedemann emphasized in the preface of his grammar that he had largely gathered the linguistic data directly from the people during thirteen summers; in addition, he used the data and collections of other researchers and Estonian-language written records. It is noteworthy that F. J. Wiedemann highlights the contribution of Jakob Hurt in connection with *Võru* grammar. At the time of writing the *Võru* grammar the then young student Jakob Hurt had been F. J. Wiedemann's main informant; in his comprehensive Estonian grammar F. J. Wiedemann expresses special gratitude to J. Hurt who had meanwhile become a minister at Otepää. F. J. Wiedemann notes that J. Hurt was not only his main helper in learning the *Võru* Estonian language, but his thorough knowledge of Estonian was of help also in other areas, especially in the case of several syntactic difficulties (Wiedemann 1875 : VIII).

It is noteworthy that despite the long title, F. J. Wiedemann has included almost the entire *Võru* grammar in his Estonian grammar, including examples and technical errors; actually, it largely forms the backbone of his Estonian grammar. For example, he presented the above five moods in both grammars, even in the same order. The only difference is that he uses besides conjunctive the term concessive to denote the potential. Moreover, in addi-

tion to the forms retained in South Estonian dialects, he also provided examples from Old Written North Estonian, such as the word *leeneb* 'will be' that occurs in the 1715 New Testament and comparisons from the language of folklore. At the end of the treatment of the potential F. J. Wiedemann simply admitted that in more recent North Estonian the relevant grammatical meanings are expressed by means of the verb *pidama* 'must' or the indicative.

Thus, F. J. Wiedemann abandoned his claim made about ten years earlier that it is impossible to compile a joint grammar of North and South Estonian. In order to fully describe the peculiarities of Estonian, he needed both, and often it was South Estonian that served as a basis for describing Central Estonian usage. F. J. Wiedemann's Estonian grammar also contains a chapter on vowel harmony. First, the chapter focuses on the general rules historically characteristic of Estonian; then the vowel harmony of the Võru dialect is described, and finally the rudiments of vowel harmony in old North Estonian and in the dialects are presented. Even the drawbacks of F. J. Wiedemann's account of vowel harmony are of some interest. Similarly to Võru grammar he does not treat *õ*-harmony, claiming that both *õ* and *ö* are neutral. Perhaps the reason was the fact that his native language was German whereby such forms as the German *alle* and Võru *kõgõ* 'most' sounded similar to him both containing reduced *e* in the second syllable.

By comparison with the Võru grammar the comprehensive Estonian grammar contains a new chapter on accent, where F. J. Wiedemann deals with word stress and quantity alternation. However, even in this chapter the analysis of the Võru dialect forms occupies the key position. Namely, F. J. Wiedemann presents the opposition of three quantities in the noun paradigms of the Võru dialect, for example, *hädä* 'trouble', *hätä*, *hättä* (1875 : 136). He even points out the difference between long and overlong mid vowels in South Estonian, for example, *keele* vs *kiil* 'language', where he claims that the difference in quantity is complemented by the difference in quality. When dealing with quantity alternation and vowel harmony F. J. Wiedemann finds a systematic occurrence in South Estonian, which provides a basis for explaining the defective oppositions in North Estonian.

On several occasions F. J. Wiedemann presents the South Estonian material in his comprehensive Estonian grammar even in greater detail than in his Võru grammar. For example, the passive forms are generally divided into personal and impersonal passive forms. While the Võru grammar only mentions the difference between the singular and the plural forms, the comprehensive Estonian grammar presents the whole paradigm of the personal passive.

A possible reason why F. J. Wiedemann combined the grammars of North and South Estonian was his intention to provide as diverse and comprehensive account of the peculiarities of the Estonian language as possible. He actually stressed the above goal in the preface of his grammar, and he was able to reach it. The Estonian language described by F. J. Wiedemann is richer with regard to morphology than contemporary Standard Estonian. To date F. J. Wiedemann's Estonian grammar is the most thorough presentation of the rich historical morphology of Estonian, which covers more facts of the structure of the Estonian language than any more recent grammar. F. J. Wiedemann's grammar shows what Standard Estonian may

have been like if its creators could have drawn more inspiration from the Estonian popular language. That is why F. J. Wiedemann's work has not lost its importance.

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КАРЛ ПАЮСАЛУ (Тарту)

ЭСТОНСКИЕ ГРАММАТИКИ ФЕРДИНАНДА ЙОХАННА ВИДЕМАННА

В статье в сопоставительном плане анализируются написанные выдающимся представителем эстонского языкознания Ф. Й. Видеманном научные грамматики эстонского языка — грамматика южноэстонского вырусского диалекта «*Versuch ueber den Werroehstnischen Dialekt*» (1864) и основанная на северноэстонском центральном диалекте, но с учетом и других эстонских диалектов монументальная «*Grammatik der Ehstnischen Sprache*» (1875). Прежде всего автор дает характеристику исследовательских методов и источников Ф. Й. Видеманна. Работы ученого по эстонской грамматике рождались в полемике с грамматикой эстонского языка Эдуарда Аренса, в первую очередь имеется в виду ее второе издание, увидевшее свет в 1853 году. Ф. Й. Видеманн уделяет особое внимание тем разделам, которые не нашли отражения в работе Э. Аренса, основанной на материале северноэстонского прибрежного диалекта, например 3-й фонологической степени долготы. Грамматическая модель, представленная Ф. Й. Видеманном в южноэстонской вырусской грамматике, в значительной мере используется и в его монументальной грамматике эстонского языка. Полностью обновлен лишь раздел синтаксиса. В подаче именных и глагольных типов он вернулся к классификации более крупных склонений и спряжений, которые позволяют напрямую сопоставлять их с таковыми в грамматике Э. Аренса.

Граматики Ф. Й. Видеманна представляют гораздо больше исторических особенностей эстонского языка, чем содержит их современный литературный эстонский язык, поэтому его труды сохраняют свое большое значение как источник для исследования истории формирования прибалтийско-финских языков.