Uralic Language Contacts
(LDA-D512/SUKU-G320/SUKU-G322/SUKU-G323)

Riho Grünthal & Chingduang Yurayong
et al.
Goals

“Understand the Uralic languages from the perspective of neighbouring languages”

• Explain significant models of language contact scenarios in general
• Apply relevant language contact models to language areas and multilingual environments that concern Uralic languages
• Relate linguistic evidence to different social and demographic dynamics of Uralic speaker communities and language ecologies
• Assess whether similarities between languages are due to contact or attest to genealogical family relations
Studying methods

• Active participation in the lectures
• Learning diary on selected 8 lectures (1 page/1 lecture, in any readable language)
• Essay on the selected topic, including references (8–10 pages)
• **Due date 17 May 2019**, to be sent to chingduang.yurayong@helsinki.fi

• Course materials are available on the course page (don’t forget to log in!) https://courses.helsinki.fi/fi/lda-d3113/125484972

This course is also applicable to the following modules in **Master's Programme in Finnish and Finno-Ugrian Languages and Cultures**:

• SUKU-G311 Language contacts in the Baltic area
• SUKU-G322 Language contacts and areal linguistics
• SUKU-G323 Language contacts and minority languages
Essential readings: language contact


Essential readings: Uralic contacts

Early Indo-European contacts


Baltic contacts


Germanic contacts

Essential readings: Uralic contacts

Slavic contacts


Turkic contacts


Programme

28.1. **Languages contacts: basic principles, methods and theories; Uralic as Northern European and Eurasian languages** (Riho Grünthal & Chingduang Yurayong)

4.2. **Germanic contact** (Petri Kallio)

11.2. **Baltic contact** (Santteri Junttila)

18.2. **Slavic contact** (Janne Saarikivi)

25.2. **Turkic contact** (Chingduang Yurayong)

11.3. **Komi-Russian contact** (Marja Leinonen)

18.3. **Saami contact** (Markus Juutinen)

25.3. **Volga-Kama contact** (Riho Grünthal)

1.4. **Hungarian contact** (Sampsa Holopainen)

8.4. **Indo-Iranian contact** (Sampsa Holopainen)

15.4. **Contacts in the east of the Ural Mountains** (Juha Janhunen)

29.4. **The position of Uralic languages in the Greater Eurasian context** (Johanna Nichols, TBC)
Languages contacts:

basic principles, methods and theories

Riho Grünthal & Chingduang Yurayong
What is language contact?

“Language contact is the use of more than one language in the same place at the same time.” (Thomason 2001: 1)

“Of course language contacts are more intense in some places at some times than elsewhere and at other times.” (Thomason 2001: 9)
**Why** is language contact important and interesting for linguists?

“There is no evidence that any languages have developed in total isolation from other languages.” (Thomason 2001: 8)

“The most common result of language contact is change in some or all of the languages: typically, though not always, at least one of the languages will exert at least some influence on at least one of the other languages.” (Thomason 2001: 10)
How can we use languages contact in linguistics?

“Of course most cases of one-way or mutual influence on languages in contact situations are more prosaic, but in these too it is easy to find transfer in all areas of language structure – phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexical semantics.” (Thomason 2001: 11)

Diachronically, the majority of world’s languages have not been attested, and the attestation of most attested languages might not go back further than several decades or centuries. Therefore, other attested languages that have been involving in the contact can provide external information for reconstruction.
Types of contacts

• **Adstratum**
  A situation which provides a socially equal circumstance to all languages/cultures in contact

• **Substratum** (Graziadio Isaia Ascoli 1870)
  A situation in which commoners adopt the elites’ language/culture

• **Superstratum** (Walther von Wartburg 1936)
  A situation in which the elites adopt commoners’ language/culture

• **Perstratum**
  A situation which does not concern a contact on the speech level but on the literary level; i.e. a kind of administratively, socio-politically or religiously prestige literary language that gives model or influences the vernacular languages, e.g. Latin in the European academia, German in Habsburg or Russian in the Soviet Union.
Adstratum, Substratum, Superstratum

conditions and changes

- **Adstratum** = contact-induced change
  - Contact languages are stably maintained
  - Bidirectional change: mutual convergence or reinforcement

- **Substratum** = shift-induced change
  - The elites’ language has replaced the commoners’ language
  - Unidirectional change: imported from an abandoned *substrate* language to a target *superstrate* language

- **Superstratum** = shift-induced change
  - The commoners’ language has replaced the elites’ language
  - Unidirectional change: imported from an abandoned *superstrate* language to a target *substrate* language
Borrowing hierarchy & Intensity of contact

Lexicon
  ↓
Syntax
  ↓
Phonology
  ↓
Morphology

Less intense
  ↓
More intense
Identifying *substrate* features in a language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>More likely</th>
<th>Less likely</th>
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<tr>
<td>Common among the substrate language and its cognate languages</td>
<td>Common among the shift-target language and its cognate languages</td>
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<td>Rare language-internal development</td>
<td>Usual language-internal development</td>
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<td>Unstable and prone to contact-induced change</td>
<td>Stable and resistant to contact-induced change</td>
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<td>Typologically rare among the world’s languages</td>
<td>Typologically common among the world’s languages</td>
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(modified from Saarikivi 2000: 398–399)
Uralic as Northern European and Eurasian languages

Riho Grünthal & Chingduang Yurayong
Typological profile of Uralic languages

• Intolerant towards initial consonant clusters:
  • ranta (< Germanic *strandō-)

• Head-final order:
  • ADJ-NOUN
  • OBJ-VERB
  • Postposition

• Agglutinative:
  • talo-ssa-ni-kin [house-INES-1SG-PTCL] ‘also in my house’

• No grammatical gender:
  • vanha mies ‘old man’ = vanha nainen ‘old woman’
Historical profile of Uralic languages

• Different views on the date of Proto-Uralic

• Always been the northern neighbours to Indo-European-speaking population
### Dating from Proto-Uralic to Proto-Finnic

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Homeland of the intermediate protolanguages
The homeland of Uralic-speaking population

1. Volga bend (Collinder, Décsy, Fodor)
   • Linguistic palaeontology
   • Linguistic geography
   • Loanwords
The homeland of Uralic-speaking population

2. East Asia (Janhunen)

• Typological similarities with the Altaic languages
• Closer location to the homeland of the Turkic, Mongolic and Tungusic languages in East Asia
The role of language contacts in the development of Uralic languages

• A huge number of loanwords from neighbouring languages:
  • Early Indo-European (Indo-Iranian) in Uralic languages (except Samoyedic)
  • Germanic and Baltic in the western Uralic (especially Finnic and to a lesser extent Saamic) languages
  • Early Slavic in the west and Later Slavic in the majority of Russia’s Uralic languages
  • Turkic in the Uralic languages of Central Russia and Southern Siberia

  + **Paleo-Siberian adstrate/substrate** in Ob-Ugric and Northern Samoyedic languages
  + **Paleo-European substrate** in Saamic languages

• A list of influences on the language-structural level
  • Foreign phonemes, e.g., palatal sounds in modern Finnic languages
  • Foreign morphemes, e.g., Germanic and Slavic derivational suffixes in Finnic
  • NP-internal agreement, e.g., Finnic languages
  • Word order variation, e.g., prepositions (vs. prototypical postpositions)
Evidence of the assumed contact situations

• Lexical evidence
  • Pre-historical contact (based on reconstruction)
  • Historical contact (based on documented languages)

• Grammatical evidence
  • Typological divergence between Uralic languages (possibly contact-induced)

• Sociolinguistic evidence: contemporary contact situation
  • Random contact
  • Extended bilingualism
The significance of language contacts for Uralic linguistics

• Uralic languages are not diachronically well-attested:
  • Old Hungarian (1055, a fragment intermingled with Latin text) & (1190s, in the Funeral Sermon and Prayer)
  • Turaida Livonian (1211, in the Chronicle of Livonia 1224–1227)
    Et ait Lyvo de cas tro: 'Maga magamas', id est: Iacebis hic in eternum (XV.3).
  • Saaremaa Estonian (1215, in the Chronicle Livonia 1224–1227)
    Et occur rentes ei in ore fluminis Osilienses (...) caput et dor sum ut riusque clav is suis percucientes, irridebant dic entes: 'Laula! Laula! Pappi' (XVIII.8).
  • Novgorod Finnic (ca 1240 – 1260, in Novgorod Birch Bark Letter No. 292)
    юмолануолиїнимижи (jumolanuliinimiži).
    нуулисєханолиомобу (nulisěhanoliomobu).
    юмоласоудьнипохови (jumolasudinipohovi).

• Information from the attested neighbouring languages (IE, Turkic, etc.) is needed!
The affiliation to the Uralic language family is in dispute.
Ural-Altaic hypothesis

• Uralic languages resemble Turkic, Mongolic, Tungusic, Koreanic and Japonic languages a lot by their structure > genealogical relation?

• Primary attention of early day’s Finnish historical linguistics between the late 19th c. and the early 20th century

• Problem: we cannot establish a firm argument for Ural-Altaic relation on the basis of regular sound correspondences in lexicon, which is the primary method in historical linguistics, because the similarities only concern the area of grammar

• Modern view: Uralic languages and the rest resemble each other only in their language structure but not substance > contact explanation!