Finnic comparative constructions in an areal context[1]

Miina Norvik
University of Tartu

Eva Saar
University of Tartu

Abstract

This paper discusses comparative constructions in the Finnic languages. The main focus is on the southern Finnic languages with separate attention paid to dialect variation. By including a maximally complete micro-areal dataset, the article reviews already identified patterns and their spread, while also introducing some (later) developments that have received less attention or gone unnoticed. The results are viewed in the context of neighbouring non-cognate contact languages (Latvian, Latgalian, and Russian); some parallels are also drawn with Lithuanian. As appears, due to being at the crossroads of Finnic and Baltic, it is in the southernmost Finnic languages where the genuine separative comparative construction meets various other patterns, including those borrowed from the Baltic languages. In general, the results enable us to shed more light on the outcomes of more ancient as well as more recent contact situations. The linguistic data originate from text collections, language corpora, example sentences in dictionaries and grammar books, and our own field work data.

Keywords: particle comparatives, locational comparatives, morphosyntax, PAT-borrowing, MAT-borrowing, language contacts

1   Introduction

Comparison can be defined "as a mental act by which two objects are assigned a position on a predicative scale" (Stassen 2013; see also Stassen 1985: 24). In the case of different positions, we are dealing with a comparison of inequality, usually conveyed by means of comparative constructions, as in the Standard Estonian examples (1) and (2). Stassen (2013) makes a distinction between Particle, Locational, Exceed, and Conjoined Comparatives, distinguished on

---

the basis of expressing the standard (for the underlying cognitive schemas, see Heine 1997). European languages mainly contain examples of the Particle and Locational types. The latter includes instances of marking the standard with a locational element such as with the elative case (see example 1), which is generally used to express a separative meaning. The Particle type, in turn, involves a special comparative particle, such as Estonian *kui* (2), English *than* (see translations for 1–2).

(1)   Standard Estonian

Koer	*on*	*kassi-st*	*suure-m*
dog	be.3SG	cat-ELA	big-CMPR
comparee		**standard+**	**parameter+**
		standard marker	**parameter marker**[2]

       'The dog is bigger than the cat'

(2)   Standard Estonian

Koer	*on*	*suure-m*	*kui*	*kass*
dog	be.3SG	big-CMPR	than	cat
comparee		**parameter+**	**standard marker**	**standard**
		parameter marker		

       'The dog is bigger than the cat'

Comparative constructions show several parallels across the languages of Europe. Moreover, the Particle type is listed as a Standard Average European (SAE) trait and could be regarded as a common innovation among Indo-European languages (Haspelmath 2001; Heine & Kuteva 2006). An older strategy was to mark the standard with the ablative case or some other case with a separative meaning (see Haspelmath 1998). Another characteristic of the European languages is the use of a parameter marker (Stassen 2013) such as *-m* in (1–2). In addition to synthetic marking (comparative suffixes), analytic marking (the use of special adverbs, particles) is also found, cf. *jo* in (3) (see more in § 4.1).

---

[2] In the literature, different terms are used to denote the constitutive elements of a comparative construction. Here we have followed Treis (2018), who also presents an overview of various terms.

(3)   Courland Livonian (LELS)

*Kaš u'm   **jo   piški***
cat   be.3SG   PTCL   small

'The cat is smaller'

As examples (1–2) illustrate, a language can contain more than one type of comparative construction. This paper analyses the spread of different types and subtypes of comparative constructions with the main focus on instances where two objects expressed with NPs are compared (as in 1–2). Due to the fact that classification of comparative constructions is based on encoding the standard, primary attention is devoted to studying the ways in which the standard is expressed. Only occasionally do we draw some parallels with constructions where two situations (not objects) are compared (see 4). Such examples were only included for background information.

(4)   Standard Estonian

*Ta   on   täna   **väsinu-m kui eile***
3SG   be.3SG   today   tired-CMPR   than   yesterday

'Today s/he is (feeling) more tired than yesterday'

The main focus of the current paper lies on the Finnic branch of the Uralic languages, more precisely on the southern Finnic languages (once) spoken to the south of the Gulf of Finland (see Map 1). Traditionally, the languages included in the Southern Finnic branch are Estonian, South Estonian, Livonian, and Votic, while Finnish, Karelian, Ludian, Veps, and Ingrian are grouped into the Northern or Eastern Finnic branch (see e.g., Itkonen 1983: 217–226). In recent times, language historians have offered more elaborate and complex views on the possible diversification and taxonomy of Finnic language varieties (see e.g., Kallio 2014: 162–163; Laakso 2022a: 240–241; Prillop et al. 2020: 24–28). In this paper, we are primarily interested in the spread of patterns in geographically-related areas. Thus, as follows, 'southern' and 'northern' are uncapitalized and used as geographical descriptors. There is a special emphasis on what we refer to here as the *southernmost Finnic varieties*: South Estonian (Mulgi, Tartu, Võro, Seto), South Estonian language island varieties (once) spoken in Latvia (Lutsi, Leivu) and Russia (Kraasna), Livonian (Courland Livonian, Salaca Livonian), Votic (Krevin). With the exception of
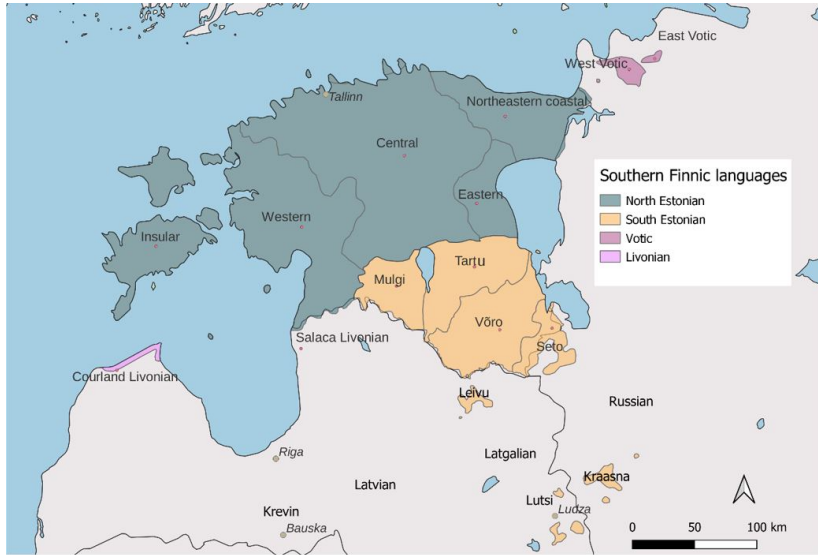
Map 1. The southern Finnic languages

the South Estonian Võro and Seto varieties, all of these varieties are critically endangered or extinct.

The current paper has two main objectives:

(i) To provide a detailed study of the comparative constructions in the Finnic languages with a special emphasis on the southernmost Finnic varieties by reviewing already identified patterns but also by looking for additional expressions / matter (MAT)- and pattern (PAT)-borrowings (if any), which may have gone unnoticed. In the case of MAT-borrowings, a phonological form is copied in the recipient language, whereas in the case of PAT-borrowings, certain principles are borrowed, not the form; it is often the case that matter is borrowed together with pattern (Matras & Sakel 2007; Sakel 2007). A more in-depth study is motivated by the rapid growth of the data collected earlier but now made available, and also by the inclusion of relatively recent data. The past decades have seen the emergence of new databases, online dictionaries, grammar books, etc.

(see Table 1 in § 3).

(ii) To offer maximally good areal coverage by viewing the results in a broader areal context, both in the context of the northern Finnic languages (Karelian, Ingrian, Vepsian, and Ludian) as well as non-cognate contact languages (Latvian, Latgalian, Lithuanian, and Russian). The standard varieties of Estonian and Finnish were also included, but only for background information.[3]

In earlier research, Finnic comparative constructions have been studied as part of more general research on Uralic particle comparatives (Raun 1960) and as one of the topics worth discussing from an areal perspective (Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli 2001), or as the main topic of separate typological research (Stolz 2013). The latter two studies, however, mainly rely on Raun's (1960) work. The grammar books/sketches and other kinds of language/dialect overviews on separate Finnic languages usually comment on comparative constructions, although there has been a tendency to focus on the form of the parameter marker ($*-mpA > *-mpi > -m$, $-mbi$, $-p$, etc.) rather than on the construction as a whole or its constituent elements or, for instance, the order of those elements.

Considering the aims listed above, we hypothesise that (i) we will be able to identify patterns/constructions that have previously gone unnoticed (at least for some varieties) or show some later developments; (ii) by offering maximally good coverage of the area, we will be able to get a more complete picture of comparative constructions across these varieties.

To collect the data, we turned to original sources: text collections, language corpora, example sentences in dictionaries and grammar books, and our own field work data. Additionally, we included relevant examples mentioned in previous research (if not already present in the dataset). The final dataset contained about 500 linguistic examples, including around 300 examples of constructions with NPs, which are in focus in this paper.

The article is structured as follows. Drawing on previous research, language descriptions, and grammar books, § 2 gives some background on the availability of information on comparative constructions in Finnic and neighbouring languages. § 3 introduces the sources and methods we used to compile

---

[3] This idea correlates with Johanna Laakso (2022a: 241) who has stated: "Paradoxically enough, although research into Finnic is for practical reasons dominated by Finnish and Estonian, these two languages are genetically heterogeneous, and 'Finnish' and 'Estonian' are not very useful concepts in the historical-comparative study of Finnic."

the dataset. § 4 introduces the main results, which in general show shift from the (more) archaic Separative type towards possibly contact-induced Particle type, especially in southernmost Finnic. In addition to east-west cline we can also observe importance of centre vs. periphery. This is followed by a discussion in § 5 and conclusions in § 6.

2 Previous research on comparative constructions in the Finnic languages and beyond

2.1 General notes

The most comprehensive comparative work on the Uralic languages, including Finnic, is by Raun (1960). He concludes that: "the Finno-Ugric (and Samoyed) languages typically use cases and postpositions for comparison. […] the predominant function of the cases and postpositions used in comparison is separation (disjunctive)", whereas particles are generally a secondary phenomenon (Raun 1960: 232–233). Finnic comparative constructions are also discussed in a study by Stolz (2013) and Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli (2001), partly drawing on Raun's (1960) work. While Stolz (2013) includes information on various Uralic languages, Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli (2001) concentrate on the Circum-Baltic languages that include, in addition to non-Uralic languages, the Finnic and Saami languages. The abovementioned studies naturally touch upon different contact situations, but there are also more specific studies on particular areas and their varieties. For instance, Vaba (2011) shows, among other things, that the South Estonian language island varieties Leivu and Lutsi follow the Latvian model and employ a negative particle (translates as 'not than') to express the standard.

    For the Finnic languages, comparison tends to be included as a separate section or chapter in grammar books/sketches and other kinds of overviews. The form of the parameter marker (usually a comparative suffix) has tended to gain more attention than the construction as a whole. This holds for South Estonian and Estonian dialects (see e.g., Tanning 1961: 44 for Mulgi, Hagu & Pajusalu 2021: 22 for Seto, or the overview by Viikberg 2020: 153–157, which draws on previous work on Estonian dialects) as well as other Finnic languages (e.g., Laanest 1975: 119; 1986: 124; Virtaranta 1986: 84–85; see the descriptions of Finnic languages also in Bakró-Nagy et al. 2022). The case(s) employed to express the standard are typically also mentioned. For example,

Veps grammars state that the partitive case is used to encode the standard (see Zaiceva 1981: 238–239; Grünthal 2015: 220–223). Valdai Karelian, North Karelian, and Votic sources also mention, in addition to partitive marking, the use of a particle as a standard marker (see Ariste 1948: 58–59; Palmeos 1962: 43; Zaikov 2013: 115; Markus & Rozhanskiy 2017: 610–611, respectively). In Standard Estonian and Estonian dialects, the elative and particle marking are the most common (e.g., Erelt 2017; Viikberg 2020: 156); in South Estonian and occasionally in the Insular dialect of North Estonian, partitive marking is also found (see Raun 1960: 158–159). Still, all this information is scattered among different sources written in different languages at different times. There is a need to bring this information together, while also turning to corpora and adding more recent data (whenever possible). Furthermore, there are also gaps. For instance, the order of the parameter and standard is typically not discussed.

2.2 Historical notes on comparative constructions (standard markers)

The *World Lexicon of Grammaticalization* includes the following sources for comparatives: ABLATIVE, EXCEED, HOW? (W-QUESTION), LOCATIVE, PASS, RECIPIENT, RESEMBLE, UP (see Kuteva et al. 2019: 478). In the Finnic languages, the standard is most commonly encoded by means of a separative case or the particle 'than'. These can be roughly associated with the ABLATIVE, which is a separative case, and HOW? (W-QUESTION), respectively (see more below).

Encoding the standard by means of a **separative case** (e.g., partitive,[4] elative) is claimed to be older than the particle construction, and it has remained prevalent (or the only option) in northern Finnic, i.e., Veps and Ludian (geographically in the northeastern corner of the Finnic-speaking area). As already noted, the separative type was once also characteristic of the Indo-European languages (see § 1). It could be argued that once the partitive lost its separative meaning in the Finnic languages, a newer case with a separative meaning (elative) took over (Prillop et al. 2020: 195–196; Norvik et al. 2021: 64–65).

In general, the **Particle type** is said to arise from bi-clausal sentences such as *Peter is cleverer than Paul is* (Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli 2001: 683). Finnic *ku-* is usually traced back to an interrogative pronoun, more precisely

---

[4] In Finnic, the partitive case has developed from an earlier ablative case, which used to identify the 'source' (see Grünthal 2023). Later on, the partitive developed into an object case, although traces of its earlier separative function have been preserved in some constructions in all Finnic languages (see more in Prillop et al. 2020: 192–193).

to an instructive form (*)*kuin* expressing 'how (manner, means)' (FED). It is possible that the spread of *ku-* as a standard marker is an instance of PAT-borrowing reflecting long-lasting contacts with Germanic (for an overview of contacts between Germanic and Finnic languages, see Kallio 2012). Primarily German and Swedish varieties spoken in the Finnic language area can be expected to have played a role. German, for instance, uses the particles *als* and *wie* as standard markers; the latter is, however, termed a regional variety (Duden 2009: 372). The use of *als* as a standard marker is older, while the use of *wie* as a standard marker goes back to the 15th century (DWDS: *wie*). Swedish *än* (6) is related to English *than*. *ku-* is also found in the Saami languages (Raun 1960: 212), which have had contacts with Swedish and Norwegian varieties.

(5) German (DWDS: als)

    *sie ist   nicht ält-er **als du***
    she be.3SG NEG old-CMPR than 2SG

    'She is not older than you'

(6) Swedish (SAG 1999: 201)

    *Jag har sett   vackra-re   blomm-or **än de där***
    1SG AUX see.PST beautiful-CMPR flower-PL than 3PL there

    'I have seen more beautiful flowers than the ones there'

3   Data and methods

Table 1 gives an overview of the language varieties included in the study and the main sources used for collecting the data. Standard Estonian and Standard Finnish are not included in the table since they were considered for background information on the basis of grammar books and previous research (e.g., EKG II: 132–133; Erelt 1986; 2017; VISK). Comparative data on Latvian, Latgalian, Lithuanian, and Russian also mainly originated from grammar books as well as from dialect overviews (e.g., Rudzīte 1964 for Latvian dialects, Cibuļš & Leikuma 2003 for Latgalian).

    As Table 1 illustrates, the linguistic data were obtained from various online sources (corpora and dictionaries) as well as published sources. Depending on

Table 1. Data sources on Finnic varieties (southernmost varieties indicated with grey)

Geogr. grouping	Language	Variety	Corpus, online dictionary	Published sources
Southern Finnic	North Estonian	Eastern	EDC, IMS, EMS	Raun 1960
		Northeastern Coastal	EDC, RKS, EMS	
		Western	EDC, EMS	
	Votic	Insular	EDC, KES, EMS, EKI WK, HS	
		West	VKS	Ariste 1948
		East	VKS; EDC	Raun 1960
	South Estonian	Krevin		Winkler 1997
		Mulgi	MS	Tanning 1961
		Võro	EVS, EMS	VVS; Raun 1960
		Seto	SES, SESS, EKI WK	VVS
		Tartu	EDC, EMS	Raun 1960
		Lutsi		EM IX; Raun 1960; Vaba 1977; 2011
		Leivu		EM IX; Raun 1960; Vaba 2011
		Kraasna		EM IX; Kallas 1903; AES 202; Raun 1960
	Livonian	Courland Livonian	LELS; EDC	Sjögren & Wiedemann 1861; LWB; Viitso 2008
		Salaca Livonian		Sjögren & Wiedemann 1861; Winkler & Pajusalu 2018
Northern Finnic	Ingrian	Soikkola, Heva, Lower Luga, Upper Luga*		Ariste 1960; Laanest 1966; Laanest 1997; Nirvi 1971; Raun 1960
	Karelian	North, South, Livvi	KKVS, VepKar	Palmeos 1962; Zaikov 2013
	Veps	North, Central, South	VepKar	Günthal 2015
	Ludian	North, Central, South	VepKar	Ojansuu et al. 1934; Norvik & Saar 2012

* No relevant examples were found.

the variety and source, data collection somewhat differed. As our focus was on the southernmost Finnic varieties, we consulted a greater array of sources to collect examples on these varieties. Thus, for instance, Mulgi, Seto, and Võro examples were extracted from new comprehensive dictionaries (recently published or currently being compiled). For North Estonian, all the relevant examples, which fulfilled the data collection criteria (see below), were collected from the *Estonian Dialect Corpus* (EDC) and online dictionaries on Estonian dialects (if available, e.g., EVS, IMS, KES, RKS) (for this reason they are also presented in separate rows in Table 1). For the northern Finnic languages (Karelian, Veps, Ludian, Ingrian), compilation of the dataset was more random and consisted of noting relevant examples that represented different constructions but not necessarily aiming for including all of the examples featured in a source.

Our approach also differed due to the varying amount of linguistic material available on the selected varieties. For varieties in focus but for which data were scarce (e.g., the extinct Kraasna, Leivu, Lutsi, Salaca Livonian, and Krevin varieties), we opted for maximally complete coverage.

The utilised data collection methods ranged from corpus search and semi-automated search to manual collection of the data (e.g., in the case of an overview on Kraasna published by Kallas in 1903). For Ludian and Veps, we also drew on our own fieldwork data.

It is important to note that the examples in our dataset originate from somewhat different time periods. The South Estonian and North Estonian dialect data mainly represent the language of the second half of the 20th century. The data on the South Estonian language island varieties also partly come from the turn of the 20th century. For instance, all the relevant data on the Kraasna variety goes back to that period. The earliest data on Livonian originate from the mid-19th century. For Salaca Livonian, the mid-19th century data are the only data available. Namely, Salaca Livonian along with Kraasna, Leivu, and Lutsi are all now extinct (for South Estonian language islands, see Balodis & Pajusalu 2021). Courland Livonian data span over 150 years. The Votic, Ingrian, and Karelian data presented in this study were mainly collected in the mid-20th century. Examples of Ludian are from the first decades of the 20th century. Veps data come from the VepKar corpus, which contains texts in different genres from different time periods. Additional Central Ludian and Veps data were collected by the authors of this paper in 2012, 2014, and 2015.

For compiling the final dataset, we only looked for examples where two objects were being compared and thus the standard was overtly expressed with

an NP. The presence of a standard was relevant since distinguishing between different types of comparative constructions is based on encoding the standard (see § 1). Furthermore, as shown on the basis of Estonian, variation in encoding the standard can be expected especially with NPs (see examples 1–2 in § 1), whereas in other cases (e.g., when two situations are compared, cf. example 3) the Particle type prevails (e.g., see Erelt 2017: 432). Still, to be able to give a broader picture, we decided to occasionally include examples where two situations are compared.

The final dataset contained about 500 linguistic examples, including around 300 examples, where two objects (expressed with NPs) are compared. Depending on the variety, there were 10 to 40 examples, which were coded for the following characteristics:

- The standard NP and the form of the standard marker (a case marker, adposition, or particle).

- Based on the marking of the standard, a distinction was made between the main type and subtypes:

  - **Locational type:** (i) Separative type, (ii) Goal/Locative type;
  - **Particle type:** (i) 'than', (ii) negative marker (+ 'than').

- Parameter and the form of the parameter marker (synthetic or analytic).

- Order of the parameter and standard.

Additionally, we noted other occurrences of comparative forms, such as correlative constructions, which provided information on possible developmental paths. Again, such additional examples do not feature in the general counts.

The language examples are presented with different degrees of phonological accuracy in different sources (in most cases, Finno-Ugric transcription is used). For providing examples in this article, we have simplified the transcription of the examples.

4   Results

This section presents the main results by first briefly considering the parameter marker (§ 4.1), and then concentrating on the Locational type (§ 4.2) and Particle type (§ 4.3), both distinguished on the basis of marking the standard.

While §§ 4.2–4.3 include more specific tables, Appendix A gives a general overview of the distribution of these two types across the studied varieties. In order to shed some light on the possible origins and development of standard markers, § 4.4 briefly discusses correlative comparative constructions. § 4.5 provides an overview of the order of parameter and standard in different construction types.

4.1   Marking the parameter

Finnic comparative constructions typically contain a synthetically expressed parameter marker, i.e., the comparative suffix *-mpA* (> *-mpi*), which is present in all Finnic varieties, although in different phonetic shapes, e.g., *suur* 'big' → North Estonian *suure-m*, Seto South Estonian *suurõ-(m)b* ∼ *suurõ-(m)p*, Standard Finnish *suure-mpi* 'bigger' (for southernmost Finnic see, e.g., Norvik et al. 2021: 46). In Livonian, however, the comparative suffix is present, but it tends to be used with a rather limited number of adjectives, e.g., *madāli* 'low' → *madāl-imi* 'lower' (Viitso 2008: 330). The comparative or the superlative suffix appears instead in some lexicalised forms such as *vaṇīmi* 'elder, senior', *vanāva'nbizt* 'grandparents'; a more common way to form comparatives analytically uses the particle *jo* (Laakso 2022b: 384–385), e.g., *pitkā* 'long' → *jo pitkā* 'longer'. Although analytic constructions for expressing the parameter dominate in Livonian, they are also known in Estonian. The patterns/possibilities occurring in the dataset are the following:

A. The analytic construction does not contain a comparative suffix at all, as in (7);

(7)   Courland Livonian (EDC)

     jo   ***vanā*** *ku*   *minā*
     PTCL   old   than   1SG

     'older than me'

B. The historical parameter marker is encoded on the adjective, e.g., Estonian *suure-**m*** [big-CMPR] (see examples in § 4.2.1);

C. The historical parameter marker is encoded on the adverb, e.g., Estonian *rohke**m*** 'more', *ena**m*** 'more', *vähe**m*** 'less', which then combines with an adjective in the positive degree (e.g., 8);

(8) Standard Estonian (EKSS: *vähem*)

> *Sa   pole teiste-st   **vähe-m   tark***
> 2SG NEG other.PL-ELA little-CMPR smart

> 'you are not less smart than others'

D. The historical parameter marker is marked on the adverb (see above), but it additionally combines with the comparative form of an adjective (e.g., 9). Thus, in such constructions, the comparative is double-marked.

(9) North Estonian (Western; EDC)

> *seal ol-i   üks **rohke-m vane-m** kui ma*
> there be-PST.3SG one lot-CMPR old-CMPR than 1SG

> 'there was one [woman] more older than me'

The patterns C and D are characteristic of Standard Estonian and (mainly North) Estonian dialects. By comparison, in Swedish, unlike in Estonian, the choice between a synthetic or analytic formation in some cases depends on word structure, and double marking does not seem possible, at least not in the standard language (see SAG 1999: 196, 200).

The North Estonian Insular dialect (Hiiu) has occurrences where both the parameter and the standard can be marked with the partitive case (10). In riddles and proverbs this pattern is also known in other parts of Estonia (Raun 1960: 158–159). One example containing a parameter in the partitive case also occurred in Eastern Votic (11).

(10) North Estonian (Insular, Hiiu; Raun 1960: 159)

> ***parama-t te-ᴅa***   *mā olε   kül̄*
> better-PRT 3SG-PRT 1SG be.1SG indeed

> 'sure (indeed) I am better than he'

(11) Eastern Votic (VKS)

> *mees **varmõ-pi-t**   tšem naizikko*
> man strong-CMPR-PRT than woman

> 'a man is stronger than a woman'

4.2   Locational type

The Finnic languages contain two kinds of Locational types, referred to here
as the Separative type and the Goal/Locative type. Using Heine's terminology,
the respective cognitive schemas at play are the Source Schema, Goal Schema,
and Location Schema (see Heine 1997: 111–112).

4.2.1   Separative type (case marking)

The Separative type primarily includes instances where the standard is marked
with the elative (12) or partitive (13). Still, while the elative case is commonly
used to mark separation/source, the partitive case is associated with the separa-
tive function only historically (Lehtinen 2007: 78; Prillop et al. 2020: 192).
An original separative function is also attributed to the Russian genitive used
in comparative constructions (see Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli 2001: 683–
684).

(12)   Võro (EVS)

*üts´ kleit´ **tõsõ-st**   **uhkõ-mb***
one   dress other-ELA gorgeous-CMPR

'One dress [is] more gorgeous than the other'

(13)   Western Votic (VKS)

*muna on   **viisaa-pi**   **kannaa***
egg   be.3SG smart-CMPR   hen.PRT

'The egg is smarter than the hen'

Table 2 provides an overall picture of cases used to encode the standard in the
studied varieties. Here and elsewhere, the symbol + is used to mark the presence
of a particular method; if it is necessary to identify the presence of a method in a
specific variety, an abbreviation in parentheses is used instead (see Ins – insular,
OWE – Old Written Estonian). Colour coding is used to illustrate whether a
specific method is common/general (dark grey) or restricted/infrequent (light
grey).

As can be seen, there is a cline from east to west with partitive marking
best preserved in the northern Finnic varieties (geographically located in the

Table 2. Cases used to encode the standard

Case	CLiv	SLiv	StEst	NEst	Mul, Trt	Vro	Set, Kra, Lut, Lei	WVot, SIng, LIng, StFin	EVot, HIng, Lud, Kar, Vps
Prt	+	+	(OWE)	(Ins)	+	+	+	+	+
Ela	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	
Gen								+	

east; see example 14) and the least in Livonian, Standard Estonian, and North Estonian varieties (i.e., in southern Finnic languages located geographically in the west). For some varieties, however, it is not always possible to determine, which type prevails; this is the situation for Võro, which has been under stronger influence from Standard Estonian. In general, in languages that show more than one way of marking the standard (e.g., 15), one type can be expected to be primary. For instance, in South Estonian varieties (Seto, Kraasna, Lutsi, Leivu), the partitive construction is prevalent. Western Votic, Soikkola Ingrian, Lower Luga Ingrian, and Standard Finnish show a similar picture, fitting geographically with a continuum from east to west, and at the same time cross-cutting Ingrian and Votic.

(14)   North Ludian (Mundjärvi; Ojansuu et al. 1934: 13)

    kah-t   ***kogo-d***   ***tobd'e-mb***
    two-PRT   haystack-PRT big-CMPR

    'bigger than two haystacks'

(15)   Seto (SES)

    Vello   *olle*   ***mui-st***   ***madala-b*** $\sim$ ***madala-b*** ***mui-d***
    brother be.PST.3SG other.PL-ELA low-CMPR $\sim$ low-CMPR other.PL-PRT

    'the brother was shorter than the others'

Table 2 also shows that – of the synthetic constructions (case marking) – elative marking has become the only option in North Estonian, including in Standard Estonian. In the latter, the partitive forms are obsolete – they can be found in

Old Written Estonian (e. g., 16) and to some extent also in 20th century texts. Nowadays, however, the partitive is not mentioned as an option for encoding the standard (see, e. g., Erelt 2017). The North Estonian dialect data contained occurrences mainly from the periphery such as from Hiiumaa Island (17). The South Estonian varieties bordering with North Estonian – Mulgi and Tartu – have been found to contain some remnants of partitive marking primarily in folklore records (e. g., riddles, proverbs, see Raun 1960: 158–159). The retreat of the partitive could be expected, as the standard language is largely based on North Estonian and Mulgi and Tartu are the South Estonian varieties, which have been most affected by the written language.

(16)   Old Written Estonian (COWE[1739])

   wanne-m   min-d
   old-CMPR   1SG-PRT

   'older than me'

(17)   North Estonian (Insular, Hiiu; HS)

   sɛɛdus   on   ***vana-ma-d   mei-d***
   law   be.3SG   old-CMPR-PRT   1PL-PRT

   'the law is older than us'

Unlike in the rest of the studied varieties, neither type of marking turned out to be preferred in the Livonian varieties (shown in light grey in Table 2). The Salaca Livonian dataset, representing the language use of the mid-19th century, contained no examples of elative marking; there was only one example of the partitive case used with a pronoun (18). Even the Courland Livonian data, which spans over 150 years, contained only a handful of examples with the elative and partitive (mainly from the 19th century). As noted by Sjögren & Wiedemann (1861: 128), the elative was hardly ever heard already in the mid-19th century.

(18)   Salaca Livonian (Winkler & Pajusalu 2018)

   Ana   *minne-l*   ***piški-m   sä-da***
   give.IMP.2SG   1SG-ALL;ADE   small-CMPR   DEM-PRT

   'Give me less than this'

It is important to note that in the varieties where the use of the partitive for marking the standard has receded, it seems to have been preserved the longest with pronouns. Thus, the only example with the partitive in Salaca Livonian contains a demonstrative pronoun (18) and the examples from the Estonian Insular dialect (e. g., 17) also contained a pronoun. The Estonian dialect data also included examples of the parameter appearing in the partitive case, as in (17).

Although genitive marking of the standard has its own semantic and pragmatic reasons, Finnish still stands out in its use of the genitive for standard marking (19). This phenomenon is restricted to the demonstrative pronouns *se*, *tuo*, *tämä* (VISK § 639). Not surprisingly, we found similar examples from Lower Luga Ingrian spoken in close proximity (see 20).

(19) Standard Finnish (VISK § 639)

    *Onneksi matka   ei   ol-lut   **tämä-n   pite-mpi***
    luckily   journey NEG.3SG be-ACT.PST.PTCP DEM-GEN LONG-CMPR

    'luckily the journey was no longer than that'

(20) Lower Luga Ingrian (Nirvi 1971: 514)

    *se   ei   mää   **se-n   hape-mma-ks***
    DEM NEG.3SG go.CNG DEM-GEN sour-CMPR-TRA

    'this [sauerkraut] doesn't get any sourer than it is'

We are aware that Stolz (2013: 102) did not classify the genitive as a separative case, but since there are examples where the genitive appears in comparative correlative constructions (e. g., 21), we have nevertheless included it in Table 2. The genitive is used in correlative constructions in northern Finnic languages such as Ingrian, Finnish, and Karelian (see also § 4.4). However, at least for Finnish, it has been noted that the more common construction is formed with partitive – partitive, i. e., *mitä – sitä*, instead of with the genitive *sen – mitä* (VISK § 639).

(21) Soikkola Ingrian (Nirvi 1971: 309)

    mi-n   enemв palkkaa,   se-m   paremв
    what-GEN more   salary.PRT DEM-GEN better

    'the more salary the better'

Table 2 suggests that the Separative type is attested in all of the studied varieties, although it is not necessarily the most common way of expressing comparison of inequality. For instance, Courland Livonian and Salaca Livonian both contained only a few examples, and a more common way to introduce the standard was to use a particle construction (see more in § 4.3).

4.2.2   Goal/Locative type (adpositional marking)

Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli (2001: 684) present the Goal/Locative type primarily on the basis of the Baltic languages, mainly drawing on prepositions with the original meaning 'behind' and 'above, about' < 'before'; the latter instances are included under "over/for". Here, we have used 'over, about' to capture these meanings. Stolz (2013: 102), in turn, includes Livonian *yl* (*ül*) ∼ *i'ļ* 'over' along with the non-standard Estonian *vasta* 'against' under the subtype "other". As already noted by Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli (2001), it is not always easy to make a distinction between the goal and locative functions, thus, we also have used the term Goal/Locative type. Table 3 includes information on the southernmost Finnic varieties as well as neighbouring non-cognate contact varieties where instances of these types could be found.

  Typologically, grammatical markers conveying spatial meanings are regarded as expected sources for the markers of the standard (Kuteva et al. 2019: 268). However, while UP is given separate attention (ibid., 446–448) (it could be roughly associated with 'over, above' and 'on'), BEHIND and AGAINST are not mentioned as separate sources. In general, both the Goal and Locative type seem to be marginal in Europe (Stolz 2013: 32, 319, 322).

  The prepositional construction containing 'over, above' could be attested in both Livonian varieties. Still, its occurrence appeared to be more prevalent in the Salaca Livonian dataset – 5 out of 13 examples were instances of the Locational type, and among these, 4 examples were formed with *yl* (e.g., 22) and one with partitive (see § 4.2.1, ex. 18). It is likely that the 'over, above' constructions in Livonian (e.g., 22–23) are instances of PAT-borrowing from Latvian. As regards the collection of the Salaca Livonian data, it has been noted that about 60% of the linguistic data were obtained by asking for translations of Latvian sentences (see Winkler & Pajusalu 2018: 155). Since the respective examples containing a comparative construction are provided with a Latvian counterpart all including *par*, they seem to be instances of translations. Although Sjögren & Wiedemann (1861) have noted down some examples of Courland Livonian *i'ļ*, such pattern does not seem to have spread

Table 3. Goal/Locative type in southernmost Finnic in an areal context

	Lith	Lav	Ltg	CLiv	SLiv	Set, Vro, Lei, Lut	Rus
'on'		*uz*					
'over, above'		*par*	*par*	*i'ļ*	*yl*		
'against'	*prieš*	*pret*				*vasta*	
'behind'	*už*	*aiz*					*za*

in the course of time (indicated in light grey). Latvian *par* was also borrowed into Latgalian to fulfil the same function (Nau 2011: 72). The fact that it was not inherent to Latgalian might also explain why neither Lutsi nor Leivu show traces of *üle* used in comparative constructions (at least we were not able to find any examples in the dataset). Otherwise, Leivu and Lutsi *üle* show functions and meanings concurrent with Latvian *par*, but comparative constructions are not mentioned (see Vaba 2011: 224–225).

(22)   Salaca Livonian (Winkler & Pajusalu 2018: 88–89)

   Läeli-m   yl   kaks birkau
   heavy-CMPR over two   ship_pound.GEN

   'heavier than two ship-pounds'

(23)   Courland Livonian (LWB 308)

   ta   mõtlõ-b, ku ta vȯl-ks   i'ļ   munt   pōrak,   bet
   3SG think-3SG that 3SG be-COND.3SG over other.GEN important but

      äb   ūo
      NEG.3SG be.CNG

   's/he thinks that s/he is more important (beautiful) than the others, but s/he is not'

The prepositional constructions containing 'against' occurred only in the southernmost South Estonian varieties: Seto (24), Võro, Lutsi (25), and Leivu (see Table 3). The latter two varieties are now extinct. In Seto, the 'against'-construction is not predominant; though it may be old, it is still common (L1

speaker Maeve Leivo, p. c.). Relevant examples of Võro are collected from the close vicinity of Seto. In Western Võro, such constructions are not known (Mariko Faster, p. c.). In North Estonian (including in Standard Estonian), comparative constructions containing *vastu* (26) can also be found, but they are primarily associated with negative constructions. As explained in EKSS, *vastu* is used to express that someone or something is not comparable with/equal to someone or something. It is important to note that *vasta*/*vastu* can be attested with a wide array of meanings (as is the case of *üle* described above); in addition to its use in comparative constructions, dictionaries (EKSS, SES) also include meanings such as 'towards', 'opposite of', 'in front of', 'before', etc.

(24) Seto (SES)

*kuld om **vasta hõpõ-t** õks viil pallo **kalli-p***
gold be.3SG against silver-PRT still more much expensive-CMPR

'gold is still much more expensive than silver'

(25) Lutsi (Raun 1960: 211)

*pallo om sjoo-h külä-h **vasta minnu vanõ-mb-it***
many be.3SG DEM-INE village-INE against 1SG.PRT old-CMPR-PL.PRT

'there are many in this village who are older than me'

(26) Standard Estonian (EKSS)

Ei rukkileiva vastu** pole teis-t **vägeva-ma-t
NEG rye_bread.GEN against NEG other-PRT mighty-CMPR-PRT

'There is nothing mightier than rye bread'

Again, parallels can be drawn with the Baltic languages. In Lithuanian, the corresponding construction consists of *prieš* 'against' + accusative, which "occasionally denotes an object with which the subject is compared" (see example 27; Ambrazas 1997: 583). The Latvian cognate is *pret*, in which case a similar pattern could be possible, but it seems to be less established; (28) is one of the few examples (Eglė Žilinskaitė-Šinkūnienė, p. c.).

(27)   Lithuanian (Ambrazas 1997: 583)

*Sūnus   **prieš   tevą**   negražus*
son.NOM.SG against father.ACC.SG not.handsome.NOM.SG.M

'The son is not handsome compared to (lit. 'against') the father'

(28)   a.   Latvian (LiLa)

Viņš   saprata,   ka   atrodas   nelādzīgā
3SG.M   realise.PST.3   that   find.PRS.3   unfavourable.LOC.SG

*pozīcijā   **pret   stāvētāju***
position.LOC.SG   against   stander.ACC

b.   Lithuanian (LiLa)

*Jis   suprato,   kad   **prieš   stovintįjį**   yra*
3SG.M   realise.PST.3   that   against   stander.ACC.SG   be.3

nepatogioje   pozicijoje,   atrodė
unfavourable.LOC.SG   position.LOC.SG   find

'He realised that he was in an unfavourable position compared to (lit. 'against') the stander'

The 'behind' (see 29) and 'on'-subtypes, in turn, do not seem to be present in the Finnic languages. They exist in the Baltic languages, though in Latvian only marginally (see Endzelin 1923: 353–354 for Latvian *aiz* and *uz*). In the neighbouring Slavic languages (e.g., see SRNG for Pskov Russian) 'behind' is most probably a Baltic substrate (Čekmonas 2001: 120; Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli 2001: 684).

(29)   Russian (DRJa 1985: 179)

*Mlaže   **za   menja***
young.CMPR   behind   1SG.ACC

'younger than me'

In general, it seems that the Goal/Locative constructions are restricted to the southernmost Finnic and Baltic contact area; they are relatively infrequent and seem to be contact-induced. So far, we have not been able to find the

corresponding patterns in the northern Finnic languages, but further research is needed.

4.3　Particle type

Below, § 4.3.1 gives an overview of the particle making use of the pronoun *ku-* and § 4.3.2 takes a closer look at instances where this particle is accompanied by a negative marker or the negative marker is the sole marker of the standard. § 4.3.3 discusses instances, which include the pronoun *mi-* or a corresponding Russian loan. The Particle type is present in all Finnic languages, except in Kraasna (see Appendix A). However, since the marker *ku-* could be attested in the language but the data on Kraasna are the scarcest, it is possible that simply no instances were recorded.

4.3.1　Particle *ku-* 'than'

The majority of the studied varieties make use of the standard marker *ku-*, which originates from an interrogative pronoun (FED; see also § 2). Such comparative constructions have spread in all southern Finnic languages and there are also examples found in Ingrian (e. g., 30), Karelian, and Finnish (31; VISK § 635–637). We were not able to find any examples of *ku-* used in Veps or Ludian as a standard marker. The dataset only contained instances of another pronoun (*mi-*) and a MAT-borrowing from Russian, suggesting that such particle constructions are of later origin (see more in § 4.3.3).

(30)　Soikkola Ingrian (Nirvi 1971: 674)

　　　*muna ei　　jǭ　　konsā ved **vīzahe-mp kuiŋ kana***
　　　egg　NEG.3SG be.CNG never PTCL smart-CMPR than hen

　　　'An egg is never smarter than a hen'

(31)　Standard Finnish (VISK § 635)

　　　*Toinen kirja-si　　　on　**parempi kuin ensimmäinen***
　　　second book-POSS.2SG be.3SG better　　than first

　　　'Your second book is better than the first'

Table 4. Comparative conjunctions using a negative marker

	CLiv	SLiv	Krev	Lei	Lut	Lat	Ltg	Lith	Rus
NEG + 'than'	**äb ku ~ äbku**	**ap** ka		**ei**'ku, **ei**kku, **e** ku, **is**ku	**eigu**, **üs**kui	**nekā**	**na**kai ~ **ni**kai	**ne**gu kaip, **ne**kaip, **ne**gu	**ne**želi
NEG			**ep**	**is**	**ei**	**ne**	**na**	**nei**, **ne**	

In Standard Estonian and Standard Finnish, the particle *ku-* tends to be interchangeable with the case-marked (partitive, elative) standard when the standard is an NP. However, for a wider range of constructions when comparison is intended (e.g., infinitival constructions), the particle *ku-* is the only option (see for Estonian Erelt 2017: 432, for Finnish VISK § 637). As already noted, it is likely that the Separative type represents an older type and the Particle type emerged later. The stage of transition is thought to have enabled the use of the (original) partitive together with the particle *ku-* in North Estonian (Raun 1960: 159).

4.3.2 (*ku-* +) a negative marker

The use of a particle in combination with a negative marker is a typologically infrequent pattern (see Stassen 1985: 217; Stolz 2013: 73). In the Circum-Baltic Area, the standard marker includes a negative element in the Baltic languages, Polish, and to some extent also Russian (see Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli 2001: 683). Latvian can be seen as the source for the occurrence of the corresponding markers in Leivu, Lutsi (Vaba 1977: 20, 24), and Livonian. Table 4 gives an overview of the forms occurring in the dataset and in previous literature.

According to Table 4, all Finnic varieties (once) spoken in present-day Latvia make use of a negative marker, either (i) in connection with 'than' (in the Livonian varieties; as in 32), (ii) as the sole standard marker (Krevin; e.g., 33), or (iii) both (Lutsi, Leivu). Still, since Krevin data were scarce, no far-reaching conclusions can be made about the presence/absence of a negative marker used with 'than'.

(32) Courland Livonian (EDC)

> *Jo   kovāl* **äb** **ku** *tämā*
> PTCL smart NEG than 3SG

'smarter than him/her'

(33) Krevin (Winkler 1997: 390)

> *se   õikõ käsi väkevä-mp* **ep** *se   kura*
> DEM right hand strong-CMPR NEG DEM left

'The right hand is stronger than the left hand'

Table 4 suggests that the Finnic varieties primarily contain examples of PAT-borrowing since the pattern (combining a negative marker with a particle) is taken rather than the matter – the negative marker is of native origin. Furthermore, Lutsi and Leivu examples indicate that both present and past tense markers can be used to introduce the standard: *e(i)* refers to present and *is/üs* to past. However, a closer look at the examples shows that their use is not dependent on temporal reference but that instead they are used interchangeably (see also Norvik et al. 2021). The Livonian dataset, in turn, only contained instances of the present negative marker used to mark the standard (e. g., 32), although Livonian varieties also make a distinction between present and past negation much as in Lutsi and Leivu.

The use of a sole negative marker seems to represent an older pattern since it is present in now extinct Finnic varieties (Krevin, Leivu, Lutsi), Latgalian *na* is listed as infrequent in Modern Latgalian (Nau 2011: 72), and Latvian *ne* is not mentioned at all in modern grammars (cf. Endzelin 1923: 353–254, where *ne* is listed as one option although *nekā* and *par* are considered the most common).

There are some rare examples of comparative conjunctions including a negative marker also in the northern Finnic languages. Still, these examples are instances of comparison, where two situations are compared, not two NPs (see 34–35; cf. § 1). As argued by Raun (1960: 219), Karelian examples follow the Russian pattern. It is possible that these examples reflect the use of Russian *neželi*, which is termed to be old-fashioned (see Timberlake 2004: 215) and occurs instead in the literary language (36; Tolkovye).

(34)   South Karelian (Raun 1960: 221)

nagraja-n   šuu-h   parembi kaččuo **ei   kuin** *itkijän*
laugher-GEN mouth-ILL better   look.INF NEG than weeper.GEN

'it is better to look into the mouth of a laughing person than of a weeping person'

(35)   North Karelian (KKVS)

poro-lla   paremmim peäše-t **ei   kun** *hepose-lla*
reindeer-ADE better   get_by-2SG NEG than horse-ADE

'one gets by better with an reindeer than with a horse'

(36)   Russian (Tolkovye [Stasova, Vospominanija])

Eto byl   orator sovsem drugogo tipa, **neželi** *Lenin*
DEM be.PST.M orator totally other.GEN type.GEN than Lenin

'It was a totally different kind of orator than Lenin'

4.3.3   Particle 'than' making use of the pronoun *mi-*

The dataset also included examples of the native pronoun *mi-* 'what' used as a standard marker (e.g., 37a). There were also instances of bi-clausal sentences, which serve as further evidence (see 38; cf. §2.2). These examples can be analysed as instances of PAT-borrowing from Russian, since the interrogative or demonstrative pronoun *čem* 'with what (instrumental)' used in the comparative constructions originates from *čto* 'what' (Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli 2001: 683). Raun (1960: 222) provides examples from Kildin Saami and Finnic, e.g., Võro, Eastern Votic (Ičäpäivä), Lower Luga Ingrian (Kallivere), Tver Karelian (Bježeck). For its wider spread in the Kola Peninsula and examples in Skolt Saami, see Itkonen (2011: 247–248).

(37)   a.   Veps (VepKar)

spičk om   nügüd'   nece pide-mb, **mi** *nece d'orš*
match be.3SG nowadays DEM long-CMPR what DEM ruffe

b.   Russian

sejčas spički   dela-jut   dlinn-ee **čem** *etot   erš*
now   match.PL make-3PL long-CMPR than DEM.M ruffe

'a match is nowadays longer than this ruffe (Gymnocephalus cernua)'

(38)   Lower Luga Ingrian (Nirvi 1971: 579)

hän tekehüis   paremma-ks **mi-tä**   *on*
3SG pretend.3SG better-TRA   what-PRT be.3SG

'he pretends to be better than he is'

In addition to PAT-borrowings, there are also MAT-borrowings. In previous literature, MAT-borrowings (accompanying a PAT-borrowing) have been attested in Mordvin and further to the east (see Raun 1960: 230; Stolz 2013: 102–103). We were also able to find MAT-borrowings in the Finnic languages, e. g., (39) represents the extinct Eastern Votic dialect. Palmeos (1962) lists one Valdai Karelian example (40) and we can contribute an example from our recent fieldwork data (41). Examples (40–41) are, however, instances where two situations are compared. Thus, it seems possible that such structures are especially open to foreign influences, both PAT- and MAT-borrowing (see also 28 above).

(39 = 11)   Eastern Votic (VKS)

mees varmõ-pit   **tšem** *naizikko*
man   strong-CMPR.PRT than woman

'a man is stronger than a woman'

(40)   South Karelian (Valdai; Palmeos 1962: 43)

enämbi miu-šša razvo-a **čim**   *šiu-šša*
more   1SG-INE fat-PRT than 2SG-INE

'I have more fat than you (I'm more fat than you)'

(41)   Central Ludian (Norvik & Saar 2012)

*kala-d   ljubi-n   enämbä **čem** liha-d*
fish-PRT like-1SG more   than meat-PRT

'I like fish more than meat'

4.4   Correlative comparative constructions

Correlative comparative constructions like *the sooner the better* (also referred to as *conditional correlatives*, *propositional correlatives*; see more in Dikken 2005) shed light on the development of parameter markers as well as standard markers. For instance, the Latvian correlative construction *jo – jo* is regarded as the source for the Livonian **parameter marker** *jo*; however, in Standard Latvian, *jo* is always followed by a comparative form (Stolz 2013: 107). In Livonian, however, it tends to combine with a parameter in the positive degree (see 42), including in the case of correlative constructions (43). Use of *jo* + positive degree is claimed to be a characteristic of the Latvian varieties spoken in western Courland (Endzelin 1923: 352; Rudzīte 1964: 221–222). There is also a form with a similar usage in Lithuanian, primarily in Samogitian (spoken in the western part of Lithuania) – *juo*, which is considered an instrumental form of the pronoun *io-* (Endzelin 1923: 353). Thus, this suggests an areal continuum from northern Courland via western Courland to Samogitia. One of the Lutsi examples (44) expressing a superlative degree is composed of *kõige* + *jo* followed by a comparative form.

(42)   Courland Livonian

***jo**   sūr*
PTCL big

'bigger'

(43)   Courland Livonian (EDC)

***jo**   lei'žgili su'g,   **jo**   sūr-d   mūm-õd*
PTCL close   relative PTCL big-PL wedding.present-PL

'the closer the relative, the bigger the wedding-presents'

(44)   Lutsi (EM IX: 134)

kõige **jo** *nūre-mb   sõzar*
all.GEN PTCL young-CMPR sister

'the youngest sister (of all)'

The role of correlative constructions in the rise of **standard markers** can
be observed in Veps, cf. the use of Russian *čem* and Veps *mi* in correlative
constructions (45a–b) and as comparative particles (46a–b) (for *mi* as a PAT-
borrowing from Russian, see § 4.2.3). While the Standard Estonian correlative
comparative construction (45c) makes use of *mida – seda* (comparable to
Veps *mi – se*), unlike Veps and Russian, Estonian constructs the comparative
construction in (46c) using *kui* (not *mis*).

(45)   a.   Veps (VepKar)

Mi   *enamb rahvas-t,*   **se**   *pahe-mba   kulu-b*
what more   people-PRT DEM worse-CMPR sound-3SG
  tapand-se
  threshing-DEF

   b.   Russian

Čem *bol'še ljudej   molotit,*   **tem** *sil'n-ee   slyšna*
REL   more people.ACC thresh.3SG COREL stong-CMPR hear
  molot'ba
  threshing

   c.   Standard Estonian

Mi-da   *enam rahvas-t,*   **se-da**   *hullemini on*
what-PRT more people-PRT DEM-PRT worse   be.3SG
  rehepeksu   kuul-da
  threshing.PRT hear-INF

'The more people, the louder (worse) the threshing sound'

(46 = 37)   a.   Veps (VepKar)

*spičk om   nügüd'   nece pide-mb, **mi** nece d'orš*
match be.3SG nowadays DEM long-CMPR what DEM ruffe

b.   Russian

*sejčas spički   delajut   dlinn-ee   **čem** etot   erš*
now   match.PL make.3PL long-CMPR than DEM.M ruffe

c.   Standard Estonian

*tikk   on   nüüd   pike-m   **kui** see kiisk*
match be.3SG nowadays long-CMPR than DEM ruffe

'a match is nowadays longer than this ruffe (*Gymnocephalus cernua*)'

The fact that, according to Raun (1960), *mi-* is considered to be marginal and the use of *čem* ∼ *čim* as a standard marker is not mentioned for Finnic languages point to a relatively recent use/emergence of the pronoun *mi* and the Russian loan *čem* ∼ *čim* in comparative constructions.

Correlative comparative constructions may also show the **preservation** of older forms. In (Standard) Estonian, for instance, only the correlative constructions contain (have preserved) the partitive form of pronouns referring to the standard. In Salaca Livonian *too*, *mida* – *seda* is claimed to have been older and only later replaced by *jo* – *jo* (Sjögren & Wiedemann 1861: 127). In addition to the partitive, which is found with correlative constructions both in the southern as well as northern Finnic varieties (see, e.g., 45c and 47), in some northern Finnic languages (Ingrian, Finnish, and Karelian), a pronoun can even appear in its genitive form (48).

(47)   North Ludian (Virtaranta 1986: 85)

mi-d_enamban magada-d, **ši-da**   keuhe-mba-kš l'iene-d
what-PRT_more sleep-2SG, DEM-PRT poor-CMPR-TRA will.be-2SG

'the more you sleep, the poorer you become'

(48)   Livvi Karelian (KKVS)

       mi-n   *bohate-mbi,* **se-n**   *julgie-mbi*
       what-GEN rich-CMPR, DEM-GEN brave-CMPR

       'the richer, the braver'

4.5 The order of the standard and parameter

Comparative constructions show strong correlations with basic word order (Stassen 1985: 53–56). For instance, in Stassen's sample, Location Schema is exclusively used with SVO languages and Source Schema (corresponds to Separative type) is preferred with SOV languages. Over time, Finnic languages have shifted to being SVO languages (although, broadly speaking, word order is still quite free / still shows variability, especially in spoken language). However, in most of these languages, the Separative type is common or is even the predominant form (as is the case with the Finnic languages located geographically in the east), which also reflects their history.

    The expected order for SOV languages is standard + parameter, as is common in the Uralic languages further in the east (e.g., Stolz 2013). In the Finnic dataset, for the Separative type, the order of the standard and parameter tends to depend on the encoding of the standard marker of the comparative construction. The order standard + parameter was preferred with elative marking (see 49), which was noted as being a newer way of encoding the standard (see § 2.2). For partitive marking, the preferred order was parameter + standard (see 50). The order standard + parameter also occurred in Veps, Ludian, and Karelian though less commonly (e.g., see 14 in § 4.2.1). Interestingly, in Kraasna and Leivu, the parameter appears to precede the standard regardless of the case used for the standard marking.

(49)   Standard Estonian

       minu-st *targe-m*
       1SG-ELA smart-CMPR

       'smarter than me'

(50)   Seto

   targõ-p   minno
   smart-CMPR 1SG.PRT

   'smarter than me'

For the Goal/Locative type and Particle type (incl. NEG + PTCL), the order is (primarily) parameter + standard.

5   Discussion

Previous research on comparative constructions has shown that areal continuity is more important than genealogy (e.g., see Heine 1997). This finds support on the micro-areal level too. For instance, the negative marker occurs as part of the standard marker (or as the sole standard marker) in the Finnic varieties (once) spoken in present-day Latvia: Courland Livonian, Salaca Livonian, Lutsi, Leivu, and Krevin. These instances are almost exclusively cases of PAT-borrowing of Latvian *nekā* (Latgalian *nakai*, *nikai*). To compare, we were not able to find any such instances in the Estonian varieties spoken within the borders of present-day Estonia. This seems to suggest that for a negative marker to be employed, long-lasting contact with a language making use of such means is needed. By comparison, although Karelian varieties show traces of a similar development, the corresponding Russian standard marker (*neželi*) has become obsolete, which might be the reason why the respective pattern did not spread in the neighbouring Finnic varieties.

   Still, examples of distributions that do not follow political borders were more common. For instance, the Particle type including *ku-* as a standard marker was the most prevalent in the southern Finnic languages but was also attested in Ingrian, Finnish, North Karelian, and Livvi Karelian-speaking areas (but absent in Ludian and Veps), which are all contiguous with one another. Since the use of the Particle type is regarded as a SAE feature (again, as a PAT-borrowing, see § 1), its presence already indicates adherence to SAE. Unlike in the other studied varieties, in Livonian, the Particle type has overridden the Separative type and has ultimately become almost the only option. Thus, it could be concluded that Courland Livonian has come closest to SAE in this respect (Salaca Livonian became extinct already in the 19th century).

   The expression of the standard by employing (what were originally) spatial markers as the main means and the existence of several such markers seems to

point to an older or inherent part of the system. For instance, the Separative type, which is associated with the majority of Uralic languages (Stolz 2013: 103) and can be argued to represent the original system (see § 4.2.1), was present in all of the studied Finnic varieties, except in Krevin (probably due to the scarcity of the data). Further evidence of change in the system is the replacement of an older separative marker (partitive case) with a newer one (elative case) to encode the standard. Still, there were differences between the varieties with respect to whether partitive or elative marking was used or if both were possible. We observe a cline from east to west with a more conservative partitive marking better preserved in the east (see Table 2 in § 4.2.1) and elative marking prevailing in the west. It is possible that several factors are at play. Russian may have had a preserving effect, in which case the synthetic marking of the standard has served as a model. At the same time, the respective languages have not retained the order historically associated with the Separative type, i.e., standard + parameter (see § 4.5); it is possible that Russian has provided the model for parameter + standard (e.g., 51). By comparison, no such model has existed in Livonian, for which Latvian is the main contact language. This could be one of the reasons why the Separative type has receded in Livonian.

(51)   a.   Veps (VepKar)

Proud om   kal'he-mb   kuuda-d
truth   be.3SG   precious-CMPR   gold-PRT

      b.   Russian

Pravda dorože   zolota
truth   precious.CMPR   gold.GEN

'The truth is more precious than gold'

Although in general there is a cline from east to west, the centre-periphery division also plays a role. For North Estonian and South Estonian varieties, it can be argued that a location at the periphery may have helped to preserve partitive encoding of the standard. The partitive is best preserved in the southeastern corner (Seto and Võro), though some rare examples can also be found in the western Estonian islands of Saaremaa and Hiiumaa (in the Hiiumaa examples, even the parameter can be in the partitive). One can see that Standard Estonian (mainly based on the Central dialect of North Estonian) has left its imprint on

the bordering South Estonian varieties of Mulgi and Tartu where only some rudiments of partitive marking could be found.

In addition to separation, the languages in the studied area also contained examples of standard markers having developed from markers originally conveying GOAL and/or LOCATION (represented by 'over, above' and 'against' in Finnic). These markers were, however, restricted to the southernmost Finnic and Baltic/Slavic contact area. The 'over, above' type was a clear instance of PAT-borrowing from Latvian into Livonian, with the majority of examples coming from Salaca Livonian. This could be seen as a result of the data collection method – these examples had a Latvian counterpart containing *par*. At the time, the data were collected (mid-19th century), most speakers were bilingual and Salaca Livonian was on the verge of disappearing. By comparison, the Courland Livonian dataset does not show the spread of the 'over, above' type over time.

When compiling the dataset, we also identified several other spatial adpositions that might serve as possible sources for marking the standard in a comparative construction and could be associated withr the Goal/Locative type. These cases involved comparison of the type X is Y by/at/near Z (Seto *man* and *kottal*); X is next to Z (occurs in North Estonian as well as South Estonian); see (52–53). Seto *man* and *kottal* allow us to draw a slight parallel with Hungarian, where a case marker expressing 'by, at, near' (-*nál*/-*nél*) is the primary method for encoding the standard in a comparative construction (see also Raun 1960: 192). It must be noted that these cases do not contain a parameter in the comparative form; these examples only illustrate the use of spatial sources for comparison in a general sense.

(52) Seto

    Serga   timä   man om   poiśokanõ
    Serga (prop.) 3SG.GEN by   be.3SG boy.DIM

    'Serga is a boy compared to him'

(53) Seto (EKI WK; SES)

    mis tä mu   kõrval om,   sitt
    what 3SG 1SG.GEN beside be.3SG shit

    'what is he compared to me, shit'

MAT-borrowings were clearly less common than PAT-borrowings. MAT-borrowings could be attested only in the case of the Particle type standard marker (Valdai Karelian *čim*, Eastern Votic and Central Ludian *čem*) and the parameter marker (Livonian *jo*). While Valdai Karelian represented the language use of the 1960s, Ludian *čem* originated from fieldwork data in 2012. It is important to note that all relevant examples have been collected from bilingual speakers at the last stage of these varieties. By comparison, the entire text collection by Ojansuu et al. (1934) contained no examples of *čem*. Raun (1960), for instance, does not mention corresponding MAT-borrowings for any Finnic languages (only for Mordvin and further east). This seems to suggest that such MAT-borrowings are of relatively recent origin.

The use of *jo* (< MAT-borrowing from Latvian) as the main means for marking the parameter in Courland Livonian makes it stand out among the other Finnic varieties. Namely, Finnic comparative constructions can generally be expected to contain a synthetic parameter marker (< *mpV), which was also the case for the examples in the dataset. Courland Livonian, by contrast, tends to contain instances of *jo* + positive degree. However, while the Particle type makes Courland Livonian the closest to SAE, not using a synthetic parameter marker but replacing it with an analytic marker could place it even one step closer. As noted, using a special affix for a parameter marker is especially common in the languages spoken in Europe (Stassen 2013; see also § 1). Still, as shown in the examples from certain Germanic languages (see § 4.1), synthetic marking is not always possible and an analytic marker is used instead. For instance, in Swedish, words with certain structures do not permit synthetic parameter marking. At the same time, in North Estonian and especially in its western and insular dialects, the historical parameter marker can be encoded on the parameter (synthetic marking) or on the adverb (analytic marking), the latter then combines with an adjective in the positive or comparative degree, while the choice between synthetic and analytic marking does not depend on the structure of the adjective (e.g., the North Estonian options for saying 'more beautiful': *ilusam* ∼ *rohkem ilus* ∼ *rohkem ilusam*). By comparison, in the eastern Uralic languages it is more common for a parameter marker (either synthetic or analytic) to occur only optionally (see Stolz 2013).

6   Conclusions

This study reviewed already identified patterns of Finnic comparative construc-
tions, while also looking for additional possible ways of expressing comparison
and the paths of development for these constructions. The main focus of the
study was on the southernmost Finnic varieties. In order to be able to identify
the spread of different constructions, linguistic data were included from vari-
ous sources and time periods. The data were collected from all relevant local
varieties; many of which have previously found less attention in comparative
work (e. g., North Estonian and South Estonian dialect data). The results were
placed in an areal context by including information from the neighbouring
non-cognate languages: Latvian, Latgalian, Russian, and to some extent also
Lithuanian.

   The main types of comparative constructions that were analysed were
grouped into two main types, the **Locational type** (i. e., (a) the Separative type
containing the standard encoded using the partitive, elative, or genitive case;
(b) the Goal/Locative type encoded using the adpositions 'over, above' and
'against') and the **Particle type** (i. e., three possible subtypes: *ku-* 'than', (*ku-*
+) a negative marker, *mi-* 'what'). The spread of these construction types shows
the importance of areal effects but also points to possible language-internal
developments. For instance, for the case marking used with the Separative
type (a subtype of the Locational type), it was possible to observe a cline from
east to west. Namely, the partitive case, which in the Finnic languages is an
old separative case, was better preserved in the east (but also in the peripheral
areas of western Estonia). A similar kind of synthetic marking is also used in
the neighboring Russian language, which also shows similarities in the order
of the parameter and standard. In general, pronouns tended to have the best
preservative effect. In North Estonian and the surrounding South Estonian
varieties, the elative case (a newer separative case) has taken over. Use of the
elative has also extended to the western dialects of Votic and Ingrian. By using
a separative case, these varieties, however, also show the need to adhere to
the Separative type, which is originally associated with Uralic comparative
constructions. Livonian, by preferring the Particle type, has moved furthest
from the Separative type, and closest to SAE.

   The Goal/Locative type was the other main subtype of locational compar-
atives discussed in this paper. This type could be presented primarily due to
contacts between Finnic, Baltic, and Slavic in the Central Baltic area. The
Livonian examples of the 'over, above' type (*yl* (*ül*) ∼ *i'l*), which were clear

instances of PAT-borrowing from Latvian *par*, seem to indicate that replacing native case-marking of the standard with an adpositional construction is a possible outcome of contacts in a multilingual setting. A typological peculiarity we noted was the 'against' construction used in South Estonian (Seto, eastern Võro, Lutsi, Leivu), which correlates with similar (archaic) examples from Latvian and Lithuanian. Still, there were further examples of adpositional constructions, which could be considered possible sources for marking the standard. These examples contained adpositions with the source meaning 'next to', 'near, by, at'. By comparison, Hungarian uses a case with the latter meaning to mark the standard in comparative constructions.

The Particle type was present in all of the studied Finnic varieties, with the native *ku-* (originally an instructive form expressing 'how'; cf. German *wie* 'how') being spread most widely (except in Ludian and Veps), though to different extents. In the Finnic varieties spoken in present-day Latvia, *ku-* could also be accompanied by a negative marker or, less commonly, the negative marker could be the sole marker. Compared to the Separative type, the use of *ku-* in the Finnic languages is a more recent way of encoding the standard; however, given its wide spread, it is still relatively old. This seems be supported by the fact that Veps uses the pronoun *mi-* 'what', which copies the corresponding Russian interrogative marker *čem* 'with what'. Furthermore, in Valdai Karelian (South Karelian) and eastern Votic but also in the recent Ludian data, Russian *čem* even appeared as a MAT-borrowing. Along with Livonian *jo*, which is originally a MAT-borrowing from Latvian, used as an analytical standard marker, *čem* was another example of MAT-borrowing in the area. In general, PAT-borrowings were more common.

To conclude, the development of comparative constructions in Finnic varieties can be observed as an ongoing process where both the language-internal developments and (non-cognate) contact languages have an important role.

Acknowledgements

Abbreviations

1, 2, 3	person
ACC	accusative
ADE	adessive
ALL	allative
ACT–	active
AUX	auxiliary
CL	clitic
CLiv	Courland Livonian
CMPR	comparative
CNG	connegative
COM	comitative
COND	conditional
CONJ	conjunction
DEM	demonstrative
DIM	diminutive
EVot	Eastern Votic
ELA	elative
GEN	genitive
HIng	Heva dialect of Ingrian
ILL	illative
IMP	imperative
INE	inessive
INF	infinitive
INS	insular
IPS	impersonal
Kra	Kraasna
Kre	Krevin
Lav	Latvian
Lei	Leivu
Lith	Lithuanian
LIng	Lower Luga Ingrian
LOC	locative
Ltg	Latgalian
Lud	Ludian
Lut	Lutsi
M	masculine
Mul	Mulgi
NEG	negative
NEst	North Estonian

NKar	North Karelian
NOM	nominative
PL	plural
POSS	possessive
PRS	present
PRT	partitive
PST	past
PTCL	particle
PTCP	participle
Q	question particle
REFL	reflexive
Rus	Russian
Set	Seto
SG	singular
SIng	Soikkola Ingrian
SKar	South Karelian
SLiv	Salaca Livonian
StEst	Standard Estonian
StFin	Standard Finnish
SUP	supine
TERM	terminative
TRA	translative
Trt	Tartu
Vot	Votic
Vps	Veps
Vro	Võro
WVot	Western Votic

Data sources

AES 202 = *Akadeemilise Emakeele Seltsi ülevaated: Häälikuloolisi andmeid ja tekste Kraasna murdest* [Reviews of the Academic Mother Language Society: Soundhistorical data and texts from the Kraasna dialect]. Ed. by Ojansuu, Heikki [1938]. Eesti Keele Instituut.
(http://emsuka.eki.ee/view/book/175/0). (Accessed 2022-12-20).
Ariste 1960 = Ariste, Paul. 1960. Isuri keelenäiteid [Text examples of Ingrian]. In Ariste, Paul (ed.), *Soome-ugri keelte küsimusi*, 7–68. (Keele ja Kirjanduse Instituudi uurimused V). Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus.

COWE = *Vana kirjakeele korpus* [Corpus of old written Estonian]. (https://vakk.ut.ee/). (Accessed 2023-01-20).

DRJa = Avanesov, Ruben I. & Gorškov, Aleksandr I. (eds.). 1985. *Dialektografija russkogo jazyka* [Dialectography of the Russian language]. Nauka.

EDC = Lindström, Liina & Todesk, Triin & Pilvik, Maarja-Liisa. 2022. *Eesti murrete korpus* [Estonian dialect corpus]. Tartu Ülikooli eesti ja üldkeeleteaduse instituut. https://doi.org/10.23673/re-365

EKI WK = *Wiedemanni sõnavarakogu* [Wiedemann's archive]. Eesti Keele Instituudi eesti murrete ja soome-ugri keelte arhiiv.

EKSS 2009 = Langemets, Margit & Tiits, Mai & Valdre, Tiia & Veskis, Leidi & Viks, Ülle & Voll, Piret (eds). 2009. *Eesti keele seletav sõnaraamat* [Explanatory dictionary of the Estonian language]. Eesti Keele Sihtasutus. (http://www.eki.ee/dict/ekss/). (Accessed 2023-01-10).

EMS = Haak, Anu & Juhkam, Evi & Lonn, Varje et al. (eds.). 1994–2022. *Eesti murrete sõnaraamat* [Dictionary of Estonian dialects] (*a–puisklema*). Eesti Keele Instituut. (https://www.eki.ee/dict/ems/). (Accessed 2023-01-10).

EM IX = Mets, Mari & Haak, Anu & Iva, Triin & Juhkason, Grethe & Kalmus, Mervi & Norvik, Miina & Pajusalu, Karl & Teras, Pire & Tuisk, Tuuli & Vaba, Lembit (eds.). 2014. *Eesti murded IX: Lõunaeesti keelesaarte tekstid* [Estonian dialects IX: Texts of South Estonian language islands]. Eesti Keele Instituut, Tartu Ülikool.

EVS = *Eesti-võro sõnaraamat / Võro-eesti sõnaraamat* [Estonian-Võro dictionary / Võro-Estonian dictionary]. Võro Instituut. (https://synaq.org/). (Accessed 2023-01-10).

HS = Kokla, Paul. 2015. *Hiiu sõnaraamat* [Hiiu dictionary]. Ed. by Sedrik, Meeli. Eesti Keele Sihtasutus. (http://www.eki.ee/dict/hiiu/). (Accessed 2023-01-06).

IMS = Pall, Valdek. 2016. *Idamurde sõnastik* [Eastern dialect dictionary]. 2., täiendatud ja parandatud trükk. Ed. by Niit, Ellen. Eesti Keele Sihtasutus. (http://www.eki.ee/dict/ida/). (Accessed 2022-12-16).

Kallas 1903 = Kallas, Oskar. 1903. *Kraasna maarahvas* [Kraasna county folk]. Soome Kirjanduse Selts.

KES = Leas, Reene & Könninge, Reti & Murulauk, Silvi & Niit, Ellen. 2016. *Kihnu sõnaraamat* [Kihnu dictionary]. Ed. by Pajusalu, Karl & Viikberg, Jüri. Eesti Keele Sihtasutus. (http://www.eki.ee/dict/kihnu/). (Accessed 2022-12-16).

KKVS = Torikka, Marja & Joki, Leena (eds.). 2009. *Karjalan kielen verkkosanakirja*. (Kotimaisten kielten tutkimuskeskuksen verkkojulkaisuja 18). Kotimaisten Kielten Keskus. (https://kaino.kotus.fi/cgi-bin/kks/karjala.cgi). (Accessed 2022-12-16).

Laanest 1966 = Laanest, Arvo. 1966. *Isuri murdetekste*. [Ingrian dialectal texts]. Valgus.

Laanest 1997 = Laanest, Arvo. 1997. *Isuri keele hevaha murde sõnastik* [Dictionary of the Hevaha dialect of Ingrian]. Eesti Keele Instituut.

LELS = Viitso, Tiit-Rein & Ernštreits, Valts. 2012. *Līvõkīel-ēstikīel-leţkīel sõnārōntõz / Liivi-eesti-läti sõnaraamat / Lībiešu-igauņu-latviešu vārdnīca* [Livonian-Estonian-Latvian dictionary]. Tartu Ülikool, Latviešu valodas aģentūra.

LiLa = *Lithuanian-Latvian-Lithuanian parallel corpus*. (http://lila.korpuss.lv/). (Accessed 2022-12-01).

LWB = Kettunen, Lauri. 1938. *Livisches Wörterbuch mit grammatischen Einleitung*. (Lexica Societatis Fenno-Ugricae V). Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seura.

MS = Ilves, Kristi & Laande, Alli & Pajusalu, Karl & Todesk, Triin & Tomingas, Marili. 2021. *Mulgi sõnaraamat I* [Mulgi dictionary I]. Mulgi Kultuuri Instituut, Eesti Keele Instituut, Tartu Ülikool. (http://www.eki.ee/dict/mulgisuur/). (Accessed 2022-12-01).

Nirvi 1971 = Nirvi, Ruben E. 1971. *Inkeroismurteiden sanakirja*. (Lexica Societas Fenno-Ugricae XVIII). Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seura.

Norvik & Saar 2012 = Norvik, Miina & Saar, Eva. 2012. Unpublished transcriptions of fieldwork recordings.

Ojansuu et al. 1934 = Ojansuu, Heikki & Kujola, Juho & Kalima, Jalo & Kettunen, Lauri (eds.). 1934. *Lyydiläisiä kielennäytteitä*. (Suomalais-Ugrilaisen Seuran Toimituksia LXIX). Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seura.

RKS = Norvik, Piret & Kendra, Heli. 2019. *Kuusalu rannakeele sõnaraamat* [Dictionary of the Coastal dialect of Kuusalu]. Ed. by Oja, Vilja. Emakeele Sihtasutus. (https://www.eki.ee/dict/kuusalu/). (Accessed 2022-11-11).

SES = Saar, Eva & Hagu, Paul & Käsi, Inge & Leivo, Maeve & Mets, Mari & Pook, Hanna & Pajusalu, Karl. In preparation. *Seto-eesti sõnaraamat* [Seto-Estonian dictionary].

SESS = Saar, Eva & Hagu, Paul & Käsi, Inge & Leivo, Maeve & Pook, Hanna & Pajusalu, Karl. 2020. *Seto eripäraste sõnade sõnaraamat* [Seto dictionary of unique words]. Ed. by Saar, Eva & Viikberg, Jüri. Emakeele Sihtasutus. (https://www.eki.ee/dict/setoeri/). (Accessed 2023-07-11).

SRNG = *Slovar' russkix narodnyx govorov 35* [Dictionary of Russian folk dialects 35]. (*Revet'–Rjaščik*). 2001. Rossijskaja akademija nauk, Institut lingvističeskix issledovanij, Nauka.

Tolkovye = *Tolkovye onlajn-slovari russkogo jazyka* [Explanatory online dictionaries of the Russian language]. (https://lexicography.online/explanatory/). (Accessed 2022-02-13).

VepKar = *Open corpus of Veps and Karelian languages*. (http://dictorpus.krc.karelia.ru/en). (Accessed 2022-11-11).

VKS = *Vadja keele sõnaraamat / Vaďďaa tšeelee sõna-tširja / Словарь водского языка* [Votic dictionary]. 2013. 2., täiendatud ja parandatud trükk. Ed. by Grünberg, Silja. Eesti Keele Instituut, Eesti Keele Sihtasutus.

(https://www.eki.ee/dict/vadja/). (Accessed 2023-09-27).

VVS = Käsi, Inge. 2011. *Vanapärase Võru murde sõnaraamat: Rõuge, Vastseliina, Setu* [The dictionary of old Võru dialect: Rõuge, Vastseliina, Setu]. Ed. by Neetar, Helmi. Eesti Keele Sihtasutus.

References

Ambrazas, Vytautas (ed.). 1997. *Lithuanian grammar*. Baltos lankos.

Ariste, Paul. 1948. *Vadja keele grammatika* [Grammar of Votic]. (Nõukogude soome-ugri teadused 9). Teaduslik Kirjandus.

— 1960. Isuri keelenäiteid [Text examples of Ingrian]. In Ariste, Paul (ed.), *Soome-ugri keelte küsimusi*, 7–68. (Keele ja Kirjanduse Instituudi uurimused V). Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus.

Bakró-Nagy, Marianne & Laakso, Johanna & Skribnik, Elena (eds.). 2022. *The Oxford guide to the Uralic languages*. Oxford University Press.

Balodis, Uldis & Pajusalu, Karl. 2021. Introductory survey of the South Estonian language islands. *Eesti ja soome-ugri keeleteaduse ajakiri = Journal of Estonian and Finno-Ugric Linguistics* 12(2). 7–31. https://doi.org/10.12697/jeful.2021.12.2.01

Čekmonas, Valery. 2001. On some Circum-Baltic features of the Pskov-Novgorod (Northwestern Central Russian) dialect. In Dahl, Östen & Koptjevskaja-Tamm, Maria (eds.), *The Circum-Baltic languages: Typology and contact, volume 1: Typology and contact*, 339–359. (Studies in Language Companion Series 55). John Benjamins.

Cibuļš, Juris & Leikuma, Lidija. 2003. *Vasals! Latgaliešu valodas mācība* [Hello! Learning the Latgalian language]. n. i. m. s.
(https://www.lu.lv/filol/dialekt/publikacijas/Vasals.pdf). (Accessed 2023-01-30).

Dikken, Marcel. 2005. Comparative correlatives comparatively. *Linguistic Inquiry* 36(4). 497–532.

Duden. 2009. *Die Grammatik: Unentbehrlich für richtiges Deutsch, Band 4*. 8., überarbeitete Auflage. Dudenverlag.

DWDS = *Der deutsche Wortschatz von 1600 bis heute*. 2023.
(https://www.dwds.de/). (Accessed 2023-01-24).

EKG II = Erelt, Mati & Kasi, Reet & Metslang, Helle & Rajandi, Henno & Ross, Kristiina & Saari, Henn & Tael, Kaja & Vare, Silvi. 1993. Eesti keele grammatika II: Süntaks: Lisa: kiri [Estonian Grammar II: Syntax: Supplement: letter]. In Erelt, Mati & Erelt, Tiiu & Saari, Henn & Viks, Ülle (eds.), Eesti Teaduste Akadeemia Keele ja Kirjanduse Instituut.

Endzelin, Janis. 1923. *Lettische Grammatik*. Carl Winter.

Erelt, Mati. 1986. *Eesti adjektiivisüntaks* [Syntax of Estonian adjectives]. (Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia Emakeele Seltsi toimetised 19). Valgus.

— 2017. Võrdlustarind omadus- ja määrsõnafraasina [Comparative construction used as an adjective and adverb phrase]. In Erelt, Mati & Metslang, Helle (eds.), *Eesti keele süntaks* [Estonian syntax], 430–445. (Eesti keele varamu III). Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus.

FED = *Suomen etymologinen sanakirja*. 2022.
(https://kaino.kotus.fi/suomenetymologinensanakirja). (Accessed 2023-01-06).

Grünthal, Riho. 2015. *Vepsän kielioppi*. (Apuneuvoja suomalais-ugrilaisten kielten opintoja varten XVII). Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seura.

— 2023. Diachronic bottlenecks of the Uralic (ablative-)partitive. *Linguistic Variation* 23(1). 124–156. https://doi.org/10.1075/lv.21003.gru

Hagu, Paul & Pajusalu, Karl. 2021. *Seto keele teejuht* [A guide to the Seto language]. Seto Instituut.

Haspelmath, Martin. 1998. How young is standard average European? *Language Sciences* 20(3). 271–287.

— 2001. The European linguistic area: Standard average European. In Haspelmath, Martin & König, Ekkehard & Oesterreicher, Wulf & Raible, Wolfgang (eds.), *Language typology and language universals: An international handbook, vol. 2*, 1492–1510. (Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft 20.2). Walter de Gruyter.

Heine, Bernd. 1997. *Cognitive foundations of grammar*. Oxford University Press.

Heine, Bernd & Kuteva, Tania. 2006. *The changing languages of Europe*. Oxford University Press.

Itkonen, Terho. 1983. Välikatsaus suomen kielen juuriin. *Virittäjä* 87(2–3). 190–229, 349–386.

— 2011. *Koltan- ja kuolanlapin sanakirja*. (Lexica Societatis Fenno-Ugricae XV). Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seura.

Kallio, Petri. 2012. The prehistoric Germanic loanword strata in Finnic. In Grünthal, Riho & Kallio, Petri (eds.), *A linguistic map of prehistoric Northern Europe*, 225–238. (Mémoires de la Société Finno-Ougrienne 266).

— 2014. The diversification of Proto-Finnic. In Ahola, Joonas & Frog & Tolley, Clive (eds.), *Fibula, fabula, fact: The viking age in Finland*, 155–170. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.

Koptjevskaja-Tamm, Maria & Wälchli, Bernhard. 2001. The Circum-Baltic languages: An areal-typological approach. In Dahl, Östen & Koptjevskaja-Tamm, Maria (eds.), *The Circum-Baltic languages: Typology and contact, volume 2: Grammar and typology*, 615–750. (Studies in Language Companion Series 55). John Benjamins.

Kuteva, Tania & Heine, Bernd & Hong, Bo & Long, Haiping & Narrog, Heiko & Rhee, Seongha. 2019. *World lexicon of grammaticalization*. 2nd edn. Cambridge University Press.

Laakso, Johanna. 2022a. Finnic. In Bakró-Nagy, Marianne & Laakso, Johanna & Skribnik, Elena (eds.), *The Oxford guide to the Uralic languages*, 240–253. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198767664.003

— 2022b. Livonian. In Bakró-Nagy, Marianne & Laakso, Johanna & Skribnik, Elena (eds.), *The Oxford guide to the Uralic languages*, 380–391. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198767664.003

Laanest, Arvo. 1975. *Sissejuhatus läänemeresoome keeltesse* [Introduction to Finnic languages]. Ed. by Valmen Hallap. Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia Keele ja Kirjanduse Instituut.

— 1986. *Isuri keele ajalooline foneetika ja fonoloogia* [Historical phonetics and phonology of Ingrian]. Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia Keele ja Kirjanduse Instituut.

Lehtinen, Tapani. 2007. *Kielen vuosituhannet: Suomen kielen kehitys kantauralista varhaissuomeen* [Xxx.] (Tietolipas 215). Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.

Markus, Elena & Rozhanskiy, Fedor. 2017. *Sovremennyj vodskij jazyk*. 2-e izdanije, ispravlennoje i dopolnennoje. Nestor-Istorija.

Matras, Yaron & Sakel, Jeanette. 2007. Investigating the mechanisms of pattern replication in language convergence. *Studies in Language* 31(4). 829–865.

Nau, Nicole. 2011. *A short grammar of Latgalian*. (Languages of the World/Materials 482). Lincom Europa.

Palmeos, Paula. 1962. *Karjala valdai murrak* [The Valdai Karelian dialect]. (Emakeele Seltsi Toimetised 5). Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia.

Prillop, Külli & Pajusalu, Karl & Saar, Eva & Soosaar, Sven-Erik & Viitso, Tiit-Rein. 2020. *Eesti keele ajalugu* [History of the Estonian Language]. (Eesti keele varamu VI). Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus.

Raun, Alo. 1960. The equivalents of English "than" in Finno-Ugric. In Sebeok, Thomas A. (ed.), *American studies in Uralic linguistics*, 149–247. (Uralic and Altaic Series 1). Indiana University.

Rudzīte, Marta. 1964. *Latviešu dialektoloģija* [Latvian dialectology]. Latvijas valsts izdevniecība.

SAG = Teleman, Ulf & Hellberg, Staffan & Andersson, Erik. 1999. *Svenska Akademiens grammatik 1–4*. Svenska akademien & Norstedts ordbok. (https://svenska.se/grammatik/). (Accessed 2023-07-11).

Sakel, Jeanette. 2007. Types of loan: Matter and pattern. In Matras, Yaron & Sakel, Jeanette (eds.), *Grammatical borrowing in cross-linguistic perspective, empirical approaches to language typology [EALT]*, 15–29. Mouton de Gruyter.

Sjögren, Andreas Johan & Wiedemann, Ferdinand Johann. 1861. *Joh. Andreas Sjögren's gesammelte Schriften, Band II, Theil I: Joh. Andreas Sjögren's Livische Grammatik nebst Sprachproben*.

Stassen, Leon. 1985. *Comparison and Universal Grammar*. Blackwell.

— 2013. Comparative constructions. In Dryer, Matthew S. & Haspelmath, Martin (eds.), *The world atlas of language structures online*. Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology.
(http://wals.info/chapter/121). (Accessed 2022-11-11).

Stolz, Thomas. 2013. *Competing comparative constructions in Europe*. Akademie Verlag. https://doi.org/10.1524/9783050064994

Tanning, Salme. 1961. *Mulgi murdetekstid* [Dialectal texts of Mulgi]. (Eesti murded I). Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus.

Timberlake, Alan. 2004. *A reference grammar of Russian*. Cambridge University Press.

Treis, Yvonne. 2018. Comparative constructions: An introduction. *Linguistic Discovery* 16(1). https://doi.org/10.1349/PS1.1537-0852.A.492

Vaba, Lembit. 1977. *Läti laensõnad eesti keeles* [Latvian loanwords in Estonian]. Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia Keele ja Kirjanduse Instituut.

— 2011. Kuidas läti-eesti keelekontakt on mõjutanud eesti murdekeele grammatikat ja sõnamoodustust [Impact of Latvian-Estonian language contacts on the grammar and word-formation of Estonian dialect]. *Emakeele Seltsi aastaraamat* 56(1). 204–246. https://doi.org/10.3176/esa56

Viikberg, Jüri. 2020. *Eesti murrete grammatika* [Grammar of Estonian dialects]. (Eesti keele varamu). Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus.

Viitso, Tiit-Rein. 2008. Liivi keele erijooned läänemeresoome keeleruumis [Special features of Livonian in the context of Finnic languages]. In Pajusalu, Karl & Sutrop, Urmas & Teras, Pire (eds.), *Liivi keel ja läänemeresoome keelemaastikud*, 309–355. Eesti Keele Sihtasutus.

Virtaranta, Pertti. 1986. *Haljärven lyydiläismurteen muoto-oppia*. (Suomalais-Ugrilaisen Seuran toimituksia 190). Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seura.

VISK = Hakulinen, Auli & Vilkuna, Maria & Korhonen, Riitta & Koivisto, Vesa & Heinonen, Tarja Riitta & Alho, Irja. 2004. *Iso suomen kielioppi*. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
(http://scripta.kotus.fi/visk). (Accessed 2023-09-27).

Winkler, Eberhard. 1997. *Krewinisch: Zur erschließung einer ausgestorbenen ost-seefinnischen Sprache*. (Veröffentlichungen der Societas Uralo-Altaica 49). Harrassowitz.

Winkler, Eberhard & Pajusalu, Karl. 2018. *Salis-Livisch II: Grammatik und Wörterverzeichnis: Mit einem Anhang zu den salis-livischen Sprichwörtern*. Harrassowitz.

Zaiceva, Maria Ivanovna. 1981. *Grammatika vepsskogo jazyka: Fonetika i morfologija* [Grammar of Veps]. Akademia nauk CCCP, Karel'skij filial, Institut Jazyka, Literatury i Istorij.

Zaikov, Pekka. 2013. *Vienankarjalan kielioppi*. Karjalan Sivistysseura.

Appendix A   Distribution of comparative constructions in the Finnic varieties

Area	Language / Variety	Separative			Goal/Locative		Particle	Neg + 'than'	Neg
		Prt	Ela	Gen	against	over, above	*ku-; mi; < čem*		
North Estonian	Northeastern Coastal		+				*ku, kui*		
	Eastern		+				*ku, kui*		
	Insular	+					*kui, kuije, kut*		
	Western		+				*kui*		
South Estonian	Mulgi	+	+				*ku*		
	Tartu	+	+				*ku*		
	Võro	+	+				*ku*		
	Seto	+	+		*vasta*		*ku, kui*		
Varieties (once) spoken in present-day Latvia	SLivonian	+	+			*ül*	*ku, kui*	*ap ku, ap ka*	
	CLivonian	+	+			*i'l*	*ku*	*äb ku ~ äbku*	
	Krevin			+					*ep*
	Leivu	+	+		*vasta*		*ku*	*ei? ku, ei*	*is*
								ku, iš ku, nigu	
	Lutsi	+	+	+	*vasta*		*kau*	*eiga, iiskui*	*ei*
Varieties (once) spoken in present-day Russia	Kraasna	+	+				*ku, kui, tšem*		
	Votic	+	+				*ku, kuin*		
	Ingrian	+	+				*ku, kui, kun,*		
	Karelian	+	+				*kuin*		
	Valdai (SKar)	+					*čim*		
	Ludian	+	+				*čem*		
	Veps	+					*mi*		

Contact information:

Miina Norvik
Institute of Estonian and General Linguistics
Ülikooli 18
50090 Tartu
Estonia
e-mail: miina(dot)norvik(at)ut(dot)ee

Eva Saar
Institute of Estonian and General Linguistics
Ülikooli 18
50090 Tartu
Estonia
e-mail: eva(dot)saar(at)ut(dot)ee