Livonian Prosody

Tuuli Tuisk
University of Tartu

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Kuressaare
Map of Livonian Coast (by Tiit-Rein Viitso)

Studies of Livonian prosody

Lauri Kettunen 1925, 1937,
Lauri Posti 1936, 1937, 1942,
Lauri Posti and Aarni Penttilä 1941,
Marilyn May Vihman 1971,
Tiit-Rein Viitso 1981,
Seppo Suhonen 1982,
Hille Pajupuu and Tiit-Rein Viitso 1986,
Kalevi Wiik 1989,
Ilse Lehiste et al 2007, 2008
Tuuli Tuisk 2011
The prosodic features of Livonian:

1) primary stress is fixed, falling on the first syllable of a word;
2) there is a phonological opposition of short and long phoneme duration in the primary stressed syllable;
3) there is a tone opposition in the primary stressed syllable as well.

Quantity

- Short-long duration opposition:
  * kadūb ‘it disappears’, kiraz ‘ax’, sōdō ‘to get’,
  * ma āb viedā ‘I don’t drag/carry’, aigā ‘shore’, lūomoz ‘animal’, aigō ‘time, PSg’,
  * kuoiģīd ‘ship, NPI’, rūoikōd ‘you (Sg) hurry’, tieudō ‘to know’,
  * sadāb ‘it rains’, sa’ddō ‘to rain’
- Similarity to the Estonian quantity system:
  * mōtsā ‘forest’ : mōtsō ‘forest, PSg’
  (cf. Estonian metsa ‘forest, GSg’ : metsa ‘forest, PSg’)
Livonian stød

- Stød/broken tone vs. plain/rising tone
- The domain of the possible occurrence of stød is a long stressed syllable, consisting either of a long vowel, diphthong, triphthong, or a sequence of a short vowel plus the first part of a voiced geminate or voiced first consonant of a consonant cluster:
  - rō’ ‘money’, rō’dō ‘money, PSg’
  - jo’ugō ‘into river’, kuō’ig ‘ship’
  - vie’ddō ‘to pull’, na’grōb ‘he/she laughs’
- Stød has phonological task
  (tī’edō ‘to do’, tīedō ‘work, PSg’)

Livonian stød

- Stød is realized as irregular vibrations of vocal folds – laryngealization; a full glottal stop is rare
- Fundamental frequency:
  - Words without stød are pronounced with rising tone, late F0 peak
  - In words with stød F0 rises until the onset of stød and then falls, early F0 peak
- Intensity (irregular; TP earlier)
- Stød tends to lengthen short vowels and diphthongs and shorten long vowels and diphthongs
Material and method

• Read words and sentences
• Spontaneous speech
• More data
• Praat analysis system (Boersma and Weenink)
• Perception tests

Questions

• Which are the duration ratios in different word-types in spontaneous speech?
• Do pitch contours of words pronounced with and without stød differ with respect to the position of the F0 peak/turning point?
• What are the main phonetic characteristics in differentiating words with stød from words without stød?
• Is there a quality change in vowels connected to the quantity change?
• Which prosodic means are used to bring out the main and secondary stress in Livonian?
• Are there any differences between speakers from different villages?
Thank You!