

The future participle suffix *-jassa* in the 1811 Saami Bible

Abstract

This paper deals with the constituent *-jassa*, which is found in the so-called Swe. *sydlapska bokspråket*, here referred to as OLSS (Old Literary Southern Saami). This Saami literary language, which is mainly based on Ume Saami, was created in Sweden in the middle of the 18th century for priests in their missionary work among Saami in Sweden (Sköld 1986; Wickman 1984). An early version of the language is found in Pehr Fjellström's works from 1738. At two conferences, one held in Lycksele in 1743 and one in Umeå in 1744, improvements of the language were discussed and implemented. In 1755 the New Testament (*Ådde Testament*) was published in the revised version of the language; however, OLSS was continuously elaborated and in 1780 the comprehensive Saami-Latin-Swedish dictionary *Lexicon Lapponicum* (LL; Lindahl & Öhrling) was published.

In LL a few forms ending in *-jassa* are mentioned and they appear to be the first published occurrences of such forms. The grammar section of the dictionary treats them as equivalents of Latin future participles, e.g. OLSS *etsejassa* ~ Lat. *amaturus* 'who will love' (xlvi). The 1811 Bible (*Tat ailes tjalog* 'The holy scripture') shows *-jassa* as an integrated part of the language, whilst it is still lacking in the 1755 New Testament.

Following LL, forms ending in *-jassa* are here treated as active future participles and the constituent *-jassa* as a past participle suffix that attaches to verb stems (*etse-jassa* love-FPRT). The presentation aims to describe and analyse the semantic, morphological and syntactical properties of forms containing the suffix, by examining instances and their context in the 1811 Bible. The study also includes a comparison of passages with the suffix in the New Testament of the 1811 Bible and corresponding passages in the 1755 New Testament, in order to examine and analyse the settings where the suffix has been inserted. A comparison is also made with the 1703 Swedish Bible, the 1776 Finnish Bible, and the Swedish test translation of the Bible translated between 1774 and 1793 (Læstadius 1833: 147), to examine possible systematic correspondence between the translations pertaining to the suffix (Eklund 2010; Tiällmann 1696: 109; Vhael, Barthold G. 1733: 95). Finally, the paper discusses the background and distribution of the suffix in other Saami varieties (Hasselbrink 1981–1985: 139; Schlachter 1958: 71; Lagercrantz 1923: 107) and its etymological background.

Keywords: sydlapska bokspråket, OLSS, Saami, South Saami, Ume Saami, Pite Saami, Lule Saami, historical linguistics, literary language, standard orthography, Christian mission, religious language, translation

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