

Prosodic structure of the trisyllabic foot in Soikkola Ingrian (Finnic)

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Ternary feet present challenges for metrical stress theories and are a subject of a hot theoretical debate. It is questioned whether such feet exist at all and how they should be best represented formally: as flat ternary feet, recursive binary feet, binary feet with extrametrical syllables, combinations of binary and unary feet, or as an alternation of stressed and stressless feet (Martínez-Paricio 2013; Martínez-Paricio & Kager 2015; Martínez-Paricio & Kager 2021; Torres-Tamarit & Jurgec 2015; Torres-Tamarit & Cabré 2021; Golston 2021; Féry et al. 2024).

In this talk, we discuss phonetic and phonological data on the ternary foot in Soikkola Ingrian, a minor Finnic variety spoken in Russia (cf. Kuznetsova et al. 2023; Kuznetsova 2023). In particular, we compare the following prosodic units:

- 1) a disyllabic foot;
- 2) a trisyllabic word consisting of a disyllabic foot and a monosyllabic foot (2+1 foot);
- 3) a trisyllabic word consisting of a monosyllabic foot and a disyllabic foot (1+2 foot);
- 4) a trisyllabic foot.

Table 1. Processes in different types of prosodic units in Soikkola Ingrian

	1) 2-syllabic foot	2) 2+1 foot trisyllable	2) 1+2 foot trisyllable	4) 3-syllabic foot
a) long V2 shortening	× <i>kurkkī</i>	× <i>kerkkīmā</i>	× <i>pā-pōli</i>	✓ <i>kerkkimä</i> < * <i>kerkkīmmä</i>
b) loss of <i>h</i> S_S	× <i>vaha</i>	× <i>ahtahān</i>	× <i>mā-halttias</i>	✓ <i>ahtahan</i> ['ahtayan ~ 'ahta:n]
c) gemination 'S_V:	✓ <i>kurkkī</i>	✓ <i>kerkkīmā</i>	✓ <i>mā-halttias</i>	✓ <i>kerkkimä</i> < * <i>kerkkīmmä</i> < * <i>kerkīmmä</i>
d) gemination 'S_V	× <i>kurki</i>	× <i>murkinā</i>	× <i>nōr-kansa</i>	✓ *-CVCV(C) <i>murkkina</i> < * <i>murkina</i>

By the sum of its prosodic properties, the trisyllabic foot does not correspond to any of the other three units, cf. Table 1 with a summary of the prosodic processes that either apply (✓) or do not apply (×) to each unit:

- a) post-stress long vowel shortening after the heavy stressed syllable, which has led to the merger of the /V/ – /V:/ contrast in the post-stress syllable;
- b) loss of intersyllabic *h*;

- c) prosodic “secondary” gemination after a stressed syllable before a long vowel;
- d) prosodic “secondary” gemination after a stressed syllable before a short vowel.

We conclude that Soikkola Ingrian manifests one of the most compelling cases of the ternary foot both in the Finnic space and against a broader cross-linguistic background. By inspecting the prosodic properties of the second vs. third syllable of the Soikkola Ingrian trisyllabic foot, we also briefly address the question of how this foot might be best represented in formal phonology.

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