

Variation in locative case forms in Lutsi, a South Estonian variety of Latgale

Uldis Balodis

University of Tartu, University of Latvia Livonian Institute

Lutsi – one of the three South Estonian language island varieties – was spoken for at least several centuries in the countryside surrounding the city of Ludza in Latgale (eastern Latvia) with the villages where it was spoken clustering into three geographical groups named after the historical parishes in which they are located to the south (Pilda), southeast (Nirza), and north (Mērdzene) of Ludza (Balodis & Pajusalu 2021, Norvik et al. 2021). The varieties spoken by each group are similar, but not identical or uniform (Mets et al. 2014). One observed difference is the variation in the inessive case ending, which has an analogue in South Estonian subdialects spoken in southeastern Estonia where a similar variation can be seen (Balodis 2022). However, other variations also exist in Lutsi locative case endings, for example, in the illative case.

This presentation describes the variations in locative case endings observed in the different parts of the Lutsi speech area and compares this to locative case endings in the other South Estonian language island varieties – Leivu and Kraasna, historically spoken in Latvia and Russia, respectively – as well as South Estonian varieties presently spoken in southeastern Estonia (as described, e.g., in Iva 2007). The distribution of these variations may also provide insight into possible areas in southeastern Estonia where different parts of the Lutsi speech community may have originated.

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