

RESEARCH IN FINLAND A HISTORY

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Finns, i.e., Finnish and Swedish. New areas with a large public interest include the philosophy of technology (Niiniluoto, Airaksinen) and environmental philosophy (Pietarinen). The Philosophical Society of Finland – chaired since

1975 by Niiniluoto – has organized widely attended annual philosophical seminars. The lively new journal *niin & näin*, published by young philosophers in Tampere, is open to all philosophical schools.

LINGUISTICS

Fred Karlsson

The origins of linguistics in Finland

Since its founding in 1640, the Royal Academy of Turku had two chairs of languages, one in eloquence or Latin and the other in "languages" (*linguarum*), i.e. Hebrew and Greek. Both were mainly intended for teaching languages for future clergymen. For the modern languages, French, Italian and German, the university would hire instructors from time to time. This was done on a more regular basis in the 18th century.

The preparation of grammars can be regarded as an early practice of linguistics. During the 17th century, Finnish (Petraeus 1649), Latin (Rajalen 1682) and Hebrew (Paulinus 1692) grammars were published. In 1650, the widely read Michael Wexionius-Gyldenstolpe demonstrated the relationship between Finnish and Estonian, but until the late 18th century Finnish was described as related to the sacred languages, Hebrew and Greek. It was only then that the theory of the Finno-Ugrian family of languages came to be known in Finland. The theory came from Germany and was supported by Hungarian philologists.

In 1811, the chair of languages was divided into teaching posts for the Oriental languages

and Greek respectively. The first (extraordinary) professor in modern languages was appointed in 1828 for Russian, as Finland had been joined to the Russian Empire and the position of the latter's language was to be reinforced. In the same years, a lecturer's position in Finnish was established, followed by a professorship in 1850. The national-romantic movement increased interest in the original language of the Finns, and the philologists A. J. Sjögren and M. A. Castrén became the first to undertake long expeditions to Russia and Siberia to seek the Finno-Ugrian peoples and to chart their languages. They laid the basis for the comparative study of the Uralic languages. Castrén became the first professor of Finnish, but owing to his early death in 1852 it was his successor Elias Lönnrot who laid the basis for the teaching and study of the Finnish language. Like many other *fennoman*s of the 19th century, Lönnrot's main task was to develop Finnish into a language of learning and culture. This was also the mission of the Finnish Literature Society (founded 1831) and the Society for the Study of Finnish (1876). The Finno-Ugrian Society, which focused on the languages related to Finnish, was established in 1883.

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A chair in Swedish was instituted in 1876 and a joint chair in Germanic and Romance philology in 1894, the latter being separated in 1908. The first (extraordinary) professor in English was appointed in 1907. The Swedish Literature Society (Svenska Litteratursällskapet) was founded in 1885, and the Finnish Modern Languages Society in 1887. All these learned societies soon began to publish actively. Finland's leading journal of linguistics, *Virittäjä*, appeared for the first time in 1883, and on a regular basis from 1897 onwards. The Finno-Ugrian Society began to issue its journal *Suomalais-Ugrilaisen Seuran Aikakauskirja* in 1885 and from 1901 the *Finnisch-ugrische Forschungen* series. The journal of the Finnish Modern Languages Society is *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* (1899).

The study of the Finno-Ugrian languages

The work of outlining the linguistic relationships of Finnish, and the past and present of the language was a major task of the 19th century. The concept of the "national disciplines" was launched, also including Finnish literature, folk poetry studies and ethnography.

Studies in Fennistics and Finno-Ugristics were separated in 1892 with the founding of a chair in Finno-Ugrian studies. E. N. Setälä, the long-term (36 years) professor of Finnish language and literature and a leading cultural politician, was an influential figure in both areas. He drew up programmes for preparing dictionaries of standard Finnish, the dialects of Finnish, old literary Finnish and etymology. These projects dominated Fennistics and Finno-Ugristics throughout the 20th century.

The largest area of research in 20th-century Fennistics was dialect studies, particularly the phonetic history of dialects. Pertti Virtaranta, a latter-day Lönnrot, established the tape-recording archives of Finnish in 1959. A classic

work in this field is Lauri Kettunen's dialect atlas *Suomen murteet I-III* (1930-40). Around 1970, Terho Itkonen and Heikki Paunonen revised dialect studies in the direction of linguistics and sociolinguistics in particular.

The first theoretical expansion of work on grammar took place in 1957 with the publication of Aarni Penttilä's grammar of Finnish *Suomen kielioppi*. Interest in syntax also grew in the 1950s through the work of Osmo Ilkka and Paavo Siro and it is still active. The development of Fennistics during the second half of the 20th century was marked by the rapid diversification of research themes and the fact that general linguistic theory was increasingly taken into account. Core subjects of research were meanings and their nature, complete texts and their interpretation, the interaction of verbal and non-verbal communication, the relationship of language and cognition, the quantitative features of Finnish and the acquisition of language by children.

In Finno-Ugristics, the "period of great expeditions" to Russia ended with national independence for Finland in 1917 and the closing of the borders with the Soviet Union. After Castrén, long field trips had been taken by August Ahlqvist to Central Russia, Heikki Paasonen to the Mordvins, Mari and Hantis, and by Yrjö Wichmann to the Udmurts, Komis and Mari. Kai Donner and Toivo Lehtisalo worked among the Samoyeds. For many years, central themes of study were the phonetic history of the Finno-Ugrian languages, etymology and studies of loan words. The most prominent figures in Finno-Ugristics after independence were Paavo Ravila and Erkki Itkonen, both members of the Academy of Finland. The former specialized in the Sámi and Mordvin languages, while the latter worked in almost all the Finno-Ugrian languages from the perspectives of phonetics, morphology and syntax alike.

The classic problem of comparative Finno-Ugristics has been the issue of kinship between languages. How are the Finno-Ugrian languages related? Did there exist uniform parent languages in the distant past (a possible Proto-Uralic language ca. 4000-6000 BC)? Are the Finno-Ugrian languages related to the Indo-European languages? Can the original home area be identified? Could the descent of languages be explained with a family-tree model? When did the ancestors of the present-day Finns come to Finland? Aulis J. Joki, Mikko Korhonen, Pekka Sammallahti, Juha Janhunen and Kaisa Häkkinen have carried on this discussion. At the turn of the millennium it has found new impetus with the radical hypotheses of the phoneticist Kalevi Wiik, who claimed that 10,000 years ago Finno-Ugrians lived in a more western part of Europe than traditionally assumed.

Other European languages

In the 1920s the new Finnish-language University of Turku and the Swedish-language Åbo Akademi University came to have chairs of Finnish and Swedish and German respectively. A chair of Finnish was established at the Jyväskylä College of Education in 1936. With the expansion of higher education that began in the 1950s, faculties of the humanities were established at the universities of Jyväskylä, Oulu, Tampere, Joensuu and Vaasa, with teaching in linguistics. Foreign languages have gained a stronger position, initially for German and French and later for English. Until the Second World War theoretical-linguistic influences came from Germany, which was followed by the English-speaking countries.

In 2003 Finnish universities had approximately 150 chairs in philologies and linguistics. The latest positions have been founded in

African languages, Japanese, Arabic, computational linguistics, applied linguistics, translation studies and language immersion teaching. Specialization and diversification are a significant trend. Another distinct trend is the increased instrumental value of linguistics.

The main focus of Nordistics was for long in philology, or the study of old Nordic texts. The study of features specific to Swedish spoken in Finland focused on dialects and place-names. Hugo Pipping's early career began in the field of phonetics at the University of Kiel in 1888. He became a professor in Helsinki in 1907. Pipping developed a theory based on the sense of hearing on which languages actually have to change in pronunciation from one generation to another, and he applied it in describing the evolution of the phonetic structure of the Nordic languages.

Pipping's successor Tor Karstén concentrated on the early contacts between the Finns and the Ancient Germans and suggested that the Germanic loan words of Finnish were considerably older than assumed, for example, by Vilhelm Thomsen of Denmark in the 1860s. The main work of Rolf Pipping, professor at Åbo Akademi University was his monumental commentary of the medieval Chronicle of Erik (*Kommentar till Erikskrönikan*) from 1928. He also studied the religious writings of Jöns Budde, a monk who lived in the late 15th century at Naantali in West Finland. Budde's texts have interested other scholars of Swedish. Toponymics has been a popular field of study, one of its practitioners being Lars Huldén, who also made significant career as a poet. The most recent orientation in Nordistics is sociolinguistics.

The foundations of Romance philology and the study of French literature at University of Helsinki were laid by C. G. Estlander, who had studied in France. Werner Söderhjelm, a leading figure in developing neophilology in Finland, studied in Paris under Gaston Paris,

the leading Romanist of the period. In 1894, Söderhjelm became professor of Germanic and Romance philology, choosing the latter when the chair was divided in 1908. His successors to the chair, Axel Wallensköld, Arthur Långfors and Veikko Väänänen were also internationally esteemed philologists. Långfors specialized in the interpretation of medieval texts and he received an honorary doctorate from the Sorbonne.

The best known of the three was Veikko Väänänen, whose doctoral dissertation from 1937 was on the vulgar or vernacular Latin of graffiti inscriptions in Pompeii. His textbook on vulgar Latin has been translated into many languages and is highly regarded. Italian philology, a rare subject in Finland, has also been represented by Tauno Nurmela, a well-known figure in cultural and research policy.

After the division of Romance and Germanic philology, Hugo Suolahti became professor of German. He achieved renown as a scholar of word history in German through his studies of animal terminology in Old High German and the influence of French on German. Suolahti's studies of vocabulary provided Finnish Germanistics with a tradition of long standing. French, Italian and Spanish loans in German were studied by Suolahti's pupil and successor, Emil Öhmann, the founder of the Öhmann school that is highly respected in Germany and elsewhere. This school included Jorma Koivulehto, who investigated Germanic and other Indo-European loans in the Finno-Ugrian languages, demonstrating them to be considerably older than previously assumed. During the second half of the 20th century, the study of German grammar, particularly from the perspective dependency and valency grammar has been a prominent feature of Germanistics.

Uno Lindelöf, who studied the northern dialects of Old English, was the first representative of English philology in Finland. The second was Ole Reuter, who studied the relative

clauses of English. Together, they held the chair of English at the University of Helsinki for a total of 62 years. The flood of students after the Second World War placed Reuter under a heavy workload as the only professor of English. A second professorship was not founded until 1961. Its holder was Tauno Mustanoja, who published his magnum opus *A Middle English Syntax* in 1960. This massive handbook has maintained its position as a basic work of the history of English and is one of the most widely known international works by a Finnish linguist. Mustanoja's method was characterized by a focus on the material, avoiding the fashionable trends of syntax theories. A research project headed by Mustanoja's pupil and successor Matti Rissanen compiled the *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts: Diachronic and Dialectal*, an important computerized database in use in dozens of universities around the world. At the turn of the millennium, this work led to a centre of excellence at the University of Helsinki for the study of variation and change in English, led by Matti Rissanen and later Terttu Nevalainen.

New linguistics was introduced into Anglistics in Finland by Professor Nils Erik Enkvist at Åbo Akademi University in the second half of the twentieth century. Enkvist's works on stylistics and textual linguistics were in wide use in the 1970s and 1980s, and he was an influential figure in the introduction of applied linguistics in Finland.

The development of Slavistics in Finland and its popularity as a subject of study have been influenced by scholarly, political and culture-political trends. After Finland became independent in 1917, the chair of Russian was discontinued and was not re-established until after the Second World War in 1947. On the other hand, the chair of Slavic philology was made permanent in 1921. Appointed to this chair was J. J. Mikkola, who had served as an extraordinary professor and had become widely known for his grammar of

Proto-Slavic. His successor Valentin Kiparsky was also an internationally recognized Slavist. From 1958 to 1963, Kiparsky was professor of Slavic philology at the Freie Universität Berlin. His major work is a four-volume historical grammar of Russian. Kiparsky's practical knowledge of numerous languages aroused respect tinged with amazement.

The Finnish Institute in Rome at the Villa Lante (founded 1954), and the Finnish Institute in Athens (1985) have played a decisive role in furthering the study of the languages and cultures of Antiquity and their teaching to large numbers of Finnish students. Classical philology in its various forms has developed into one of the areas of focus of language study in Finland. Fridolf Gustafsson, professor of Latin, and Professor of Greek Ivar A. Heikel both served for 38 years, and the legendary Latinist Edwin Linkomies for as long as forty years. The latter is better known as Finland's wartime prime minister in 1943-1944 and as a high-ranking official of the University of Helsinki than as a scholar of Roman literature. Henrik Zilliacus, in turn, launched Finnish papyrus studies, and this tradition has been carried on by Jaakko Frösén around whom centre of excellence was formed at the turn of the millennium.

The Finnish institutes and Finnish studies concerning Antiquity are good windows abroad. In the 1920s, the foreign affairs administration of newly independent Finland made use of scholars of foreign languages by appointing them as diplomats. The Romanist Söderhjelm, the Altaist Ramstedt, the Assyriologist Harri Holma and the Finno-Ugrist Serälä all served as ambassadors.

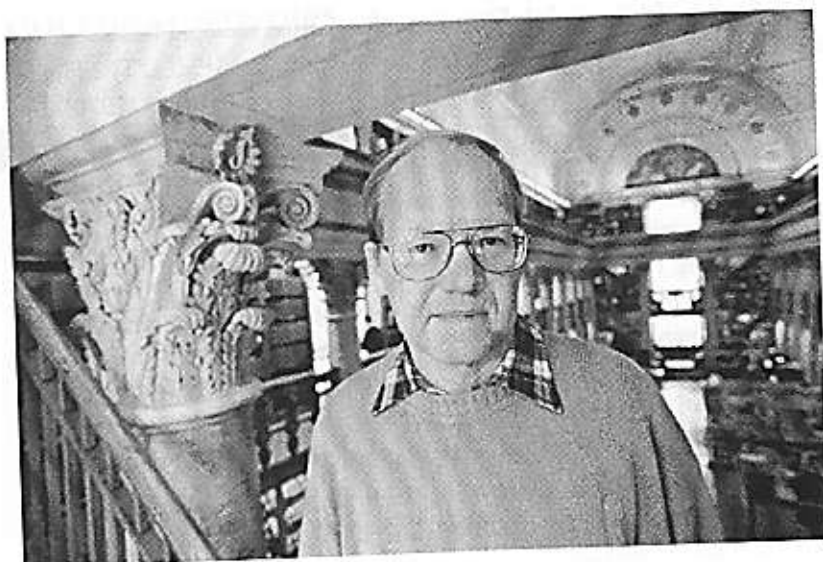
Non-European languages

The University of Helsinki has had a professor of Oriental languages, later known as Semitic

languages, since 1811. A separate position for Arabic was obtained in 1982 and for African languages in 1989. In other respects, the tradition of teaching and studies in non-European languages has been maintained through personal extraordinary professorships. These subjects have not been available in any other universities in Finland. Assyriology was introduced into Finland in the 1890s by Knut Tallqvist, professor of Oriental languages. This tradition of research has continued until the present day through the work of Armas Salonen and Simo Parpola, both of whom have been professors at the University of Chicago. Since 1986, Parpola has headed the international project on the state archives of Assyria, one of the centres of excellence of linguistics in Finland. His brother Asko Parpola has in turn furthered studies in Indology and has aroused attention with his works on the nature of the ancient Indus script.

Finnish philologists have been interested in Asian languages since the early 19th century. G. J. Ramstedt, who is also known as the founder of Mongolistics, achieved world fame as an Altaist and explorer. While serving as Finland's chargé d'affaires in Tokyo from 1919 until 1930, Ramstedt learnt Korean, of which he wrote *A Korean Grammar* (1939) which is still highly regarded. Pentti Aalto was an expert in the Turkic and Mongol languages as well as Sanskrit. Of the younger generation, Juha Janhunen has studied many of the languages of northern and eastern Eurasia, the Uralic languages in particular and among them the Samoyed languages. He has also studied the Tungus and Mongol languages as well as Japanese, Korean and Chinese. Ethnolinguistic research in this broad perspective carries on the traditions of M. A. Castrén.

In recent years, language research in Finland has expanded to include Arabic, Japanese, and of the African languages Swahili in particular.



Professor of Indology
Asko Parpola at the
University Library in
Helsinki. Photo Timo Palm
Lehtikuva Picture Agency.

The theories, methods and applications of linguistics

In Finland, the traditions of phonetics began with the work of Hugo Pipping in the 1890s. Antti Sovijärvi was professor of phonetics at the University of Helsinki for almost four decades. In his doctoral dissertation from 1965, Kalevi Wiik compared the vowel systems of Finnish and English and tried to predict problems of learning in both directions. In 1977 Matti Leiwo defended his doctoral dissertation on the delayed and exceptional linguistic development of Finnish-speaking children. Research in logopaedics began in the 1980s on a broader scale as did investigation of reflection of disturbances in the brain on the use of linguistic usage.

On the one hand, general linguistics carries on the traditions of comparative linguistics that emerged in the 19th century. Mikko Korhonen was the most renowned modern theorist of this field. On the other hand, linguistic theory has always been closely associated with philosophy; a core representative of this orientation was the philosopher Erik Ahlman. In its present sense, general linguistics encompasses in particular

work on models for describing languages, the typological comparison of languages, the search for linguistic universals and studies on the theoretical, methodological and philosophical foundations of linguistics. Important Finnish forerunners in the field were Aarni Penttilä, Paavo Ravila and Paavo Siro, all of whom were strongly influenced by the philosopher Eino Kaila. There were heated theoretical debates in the 1940s between Siro and Ravila, and around the year 1970, when new orientations began to make themselves felt. The emergence of modern linguistics in Finland primarily took place outside Helsinki, in Jyväskylä (Ahlman, Penttilä), Turku (Siro, Wiik, Enkvist) and Tampere (where Siro began to work in 1965). Esa Itkonen has studied the meta-theory of linguistics, and Fred Karlsson and Kimmo Koskenniemi have investigated the theoretical bases of the automatic processing of languages.

There are also Finnish linguists serving as professors in America. The best known among them is Paul Kiparsky, son of Valentin Kiparsky and a professor at Stanford University. In many of his works, Paul Kiparsky has developed the formal theory of phonology. Raimo Anttila, professor at UCLA, is a widely

known morphologist and theorist of historical linguistics. The best known semanticist, however, is Lauri Karttunen, also a professor at Stanford.

In the 1960s, linguistics began to be applied in solving practical problems, especially in the teaching of languages, but also in areas such as automatic translation and planning related to language policies. Early pioneers in this respect were Enkvist, Wiik and Auli Hakulinen. A centre for applied language research was established in Jyväskylä under the direction of Kari Sajavaara. This facility studies questions related to the learning and teaching of languages. The raising of the translator training institutes to the MA-level in 1980 led to translation research and finally in the 1990s to the discipline of translation studies. One of the focuses of the University of Vaasa has been the study and furthering of language immersion teaching.

Founded in 1976, the Research Institute for languages of Finland has been a factor promoting research concerning Finnish and Swedish alongside the departments of the universities. Over the decades new learned societies have been founded for linguists and philologists: Suomen Itämainen Seura (The Finnish Oriental Society 1917), Suomen Kielen Seura (The Finnish Language Society, 1929)

Föreningen för nordisk filologi (The Society for Nordic Philology, 1932), AFinLa, The Finnish Society of Applied Linguistics (1970) and The Linguistic Association of Finland (1977). International cooperation has been practised in the form of various congresses. The first congress of Finno-Ugrists was held in Budapest in 1960. This tradition of conferences provided significant international identity for the field of Finno-Ugristics. A national conference on syntax and semantics was held in Tampere in 1972; in 1976 the conference was renamed the Finnish Congress of Linguistics. The first meetings focusing on phonetics were held in Turku in 1971.

The future

The most important contribution of Finno-Ugristics to Finnish society has been the construction of national identity. The practical benefits of studies of foreign languages lie in the training of language teachers. Around the turn of the millennium, internationalization, the new political situation in Europe and the "humanization" of information technology have created a wide range of new demand for studies of language and their applications.