

Viena Karelians as Observers of Dialect Differences in Their Heritage Language

Abstract

This article deals with Viena Karelian laypeople's perceptions and evaluations of dialect. One aim was to determine which dialect features are discussed among laypeople and how laypeople perform in a listening task. The results show that the perceived dialect or language area of White Sea Karelian is smaller than the dialect area defined by professional linguists. Amongst the respondents, it was commonly thought that White Sea Karelian is spoken only in the Kalevala National District, and that Paanajärvi does not belong to the same dialect area. The listening task showed that the dialect awareness of Viena Karelians is not very high, as even their 'own' variety was sometimes incorrectly located. With respect to dialect perceptions, it can be said that differences in vocabulary are readily *available* and much discussed among Viena Karelians. Laypeople also commented on phonological differences but used colloquial terms such as *smooth* and *hard* to describe them. At a phonetic level, the variation between /s/ and /š/ was widely commented on by the informants. They noted that speakers of White Sea Karelian make more extensive use of /š/ whereas in the southern varieties of Karelian /s/ is more common. The speakers of White Sea Karelian were perceived to 'lisp' or 'speak with š', and speakers of other varieties were said to use a sharper /s/. According to this study, there is a perceptual connection between the form (extensive use of /š/) and the group identified as using it (speakers of White Sea Karelian).

1 Introduction

This article explores Viena Karelian laypeople's perceptions and evaluations of different varieties of Karelian. The article touches upon several kinds of borders: linguistic, geographic, and mental. The research questions are as follows:

- 1) How do Viena Karelian laypeople define the area of their 'own dialect' or 'own language'? Do they distinguish language borders between different Karelian varieties, and what kind of linguistic borders do they perceive between Finnish and their own variety?

- 2) Can laypeople recognize different varieties of Karelian and Ludian in a listening task?
- 3) Are Viena Karelians aware of dialect differences in their heritage language?
- 4) What kind of language features are discussed among laypeople?

The hypothesis is that the informants will make accurate observations about the variation in Karelian because White Sea Karelian itself has been found to include great variation (Kunnas 2007, 295). According to previous research (e.g., Juusela 1998, 72; Laurila 2008, 70), those laypeople whose dialect varies greatly are more aware of language variation than those laypeople whose dialect is more homogeneous.

Dialect perceptions and evaluations have not been researched extensively among Karelians. There are only two articles in which the perceptions of Viena Karelians have been studied (Kunnas and Arola 2010; Kunnas 2013). In addition, the dialect or language perceptions of Border Karelians, whose mother tongue is South or Olonets Karelian, have also been explored (Nupponen 2005; Palander 2015).

This article comprises eight sections. First, the data, theories, and methods used in this study are presented. Next, how Viena Karelian laypeople define the area of their 'own dialect' is examined. Section 6 relates the results of the listening task, and Section 7 presents the kinds of dialect differences Karelian laypeople are aware of and the types of language features that are discussed among the informants.

2 *Research area and data*

Traditionally, the Karelian spoken in the Republic of Karelia has been seen to be divided into three main dialects: 1) Karelian Proper, 2) Olonets Karelian, and 3) Ludian. Karelian Proper is further divided into: 1) White Sea Karelian¹, 2) Transitional dialect, and 3) South Karelian (Zaikov 2000, 27). Some researchers, as well as some of the Ludes themselves, regard Ludian as an independent language. However, amongst Russian researchers, it is still common to include Ludian as a dialect of Karelian. The opposite ends of the dialect continuum of Karelian are not mutually intelligible, and many researchers have debated whether these varieties should be treated as dialects or independent languages. (Kunnas 2007, 40–41; Karjalainen et al. 2013, 3–4; and sources mentioned.)

White Sea Karelian is spoken in northwest Russia, close to the Finnish border (see Map 2). It is the closest cognate language of Finnish, and Finns can quite easily understand White Sea Karelian dialects. White Sea Karelian is a highly endangered language. According to a 2010 census, there were some 25,000 speakers of Karelian in the Republic of Karelia, but this number only includes speakers of Olonets Karelian and Ludian (Ethnologue). Ten

1 Also called *North Karelian* and *Viena Karelian*.



Map 1. The villages of Kalevala and Jyskyjärvi in Viena Karelia.

years ago the number of speakers of White Sea Karelian was estimated to be about 8,000 (Karelstat 2005, 12–17). The majority of speakers are over fifty, and most of the younger generations have a better command of Russian than Karelian. The situation in Karelia is generally diglossic: Russian is the language of society, education, and business, and the use of Karelian focuses on issues related to private life; it is used at home and in the sphere of personal interests and hobbies. Karelian is spoken mainly in small countryside parishes and is heard only very rarely in towns. (Kunnas 2009, 178.)

The fieldwork in the present study was conducted in two villages in Viena Karelia: Kalevala (previously called Uhtua) and Jyskyjärvi (Juškozero)² (see Map 1). Jyskyjärvi is a very small village with approximately 400–500 inhabitants. Kalevala is the administrative centre of the Kalevala National District (Kalevalski natsionalnyi rajon). The Municipality of Kalevala has approximately 5,000 inhabitants.

The data include theme interviews, group interviews, and listening tasks with 13 laypeople, and the data recordings represent approximately 7 hours (427 minutes). The data were collected using snowball sampling, and the Karelian language was used with the informants in interviews. The theme

2 The names of the Karelian municipalities and villages are written first in Karelian and after that (within parentheses) in Russian.

interviews were conducted at the informants' homes. One group interview was conducted at a library in Jyskyjärvi (with Agafia and Akuliina) and three took place in the informants' homes (with Maikki, Irina, and Polina, with Ortjo and Iivo, and with Olga and Tanja).

Both women and men are represented in the data, aged from 44 to 85 years old. The reason there are only older people in the data is that few young people can speak Karelian. Additionally, many young Karelians from Jyskyjärvi and Kalevala have moved to bigger cities to study or work. Most of the informants were born and had lived their whole lives (apart from the evacuation time³) in the core area of White Sea Karelia, although one woman had been born in the speaking area of Olonets Karelian but had lived many decades in Jyskyjärvi.

Assumed names are used for the informants, and they are introduced in detail in Appendix 1. Some of the informants had been interviewed previously (Kunnas 2007), and the same assumed names are used in the present study⁴. The examples selected from the data are presented using rough Uralic Phonetic Alphabet transliteration. Two successive dashes (– –) indicate that part of the turn has been left out. A hyphen shows that a word has not been completed. The periods and question marks have grammatical functions in the examples, whereas commas refer to a pause within the sentence. Proper nouns are written with initial capital letters. Excerpts from conversations have been transcribed in a similar fashion but include line numbers.

3 *Theory and methods*

This article represents a folk linguistics approach (e.g., Niedzielski and Preston 2000) but also employs aspects of language attitude research (e.g., Ryan and Giles 1982). The social psychological paradigm, which the latter represents, focuses on language evaluations, and the main interest in folk linguistics is on how people perceive linguistic similarities or differences. The interests within these approaches often overlap (Vaattovaara 2013), and these types of studies could widely be defined as language ideology studies (see Vilhula 2012, 2).

Woolard and Schieffelin (1994, 55) have defined language ideology as “cultural conceptions of language – its nature, structure, and use”. The term language ideology covers both overt attitudes toward particular linguistic varieties and their speakers as well as underlying culturally defined notions of, for example, a hierarchical ranking of different dialects as well as the relationship between language and regional identities (Dickinson 2010, 55). Language ideologies are produced and processed through evaluations of linguistic behaviour (Bilaniuk 2005). According to Mäntynen et al. (2012), studies that observe language beliefs and valuations can also be

3 During WWII many Karelian speakers were evacuated to Komi Republic or to the Arkhangelsk area.

4 For more information about the informants, see Kunnas 2007, 359–371.

characterized as language ideology studies. They assert that conceptions concerning language boundaries are representative of language ideological processes (Mäntynen et al. 2012, 325–326).

This article uses both *direct* (group and theme interviews) and *indirect measures* (listening tasks) to discern people's language regard. The term *language regard* is used instead of *attitude* because not all beliefs are necessarily evaluative, and because both conscious and subconscious perceptions are under investigation (see Preston 2011, 10–11 and in this volume).

The metalanguage of laypeople is analysed in this study with a concentration mainly on *metalanguage one* which is, “talk about language” (Preston 1998, 75). *Metalanguage three* is also examined defined as “shared folk knowledge about language” (Preston 1998, 87) or “powerful underlying ideologies that lie behind folk beliefs” (Dennis Preston, e-mail message to author, 18 February 2015; cf., Niedzielski and Preston 2000, 308)⁵. The evaluations and perceptions of laypeople will be analysed using the method of content-oriented discourse analysis (see, e.g., Preston 1994; Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain 2009).

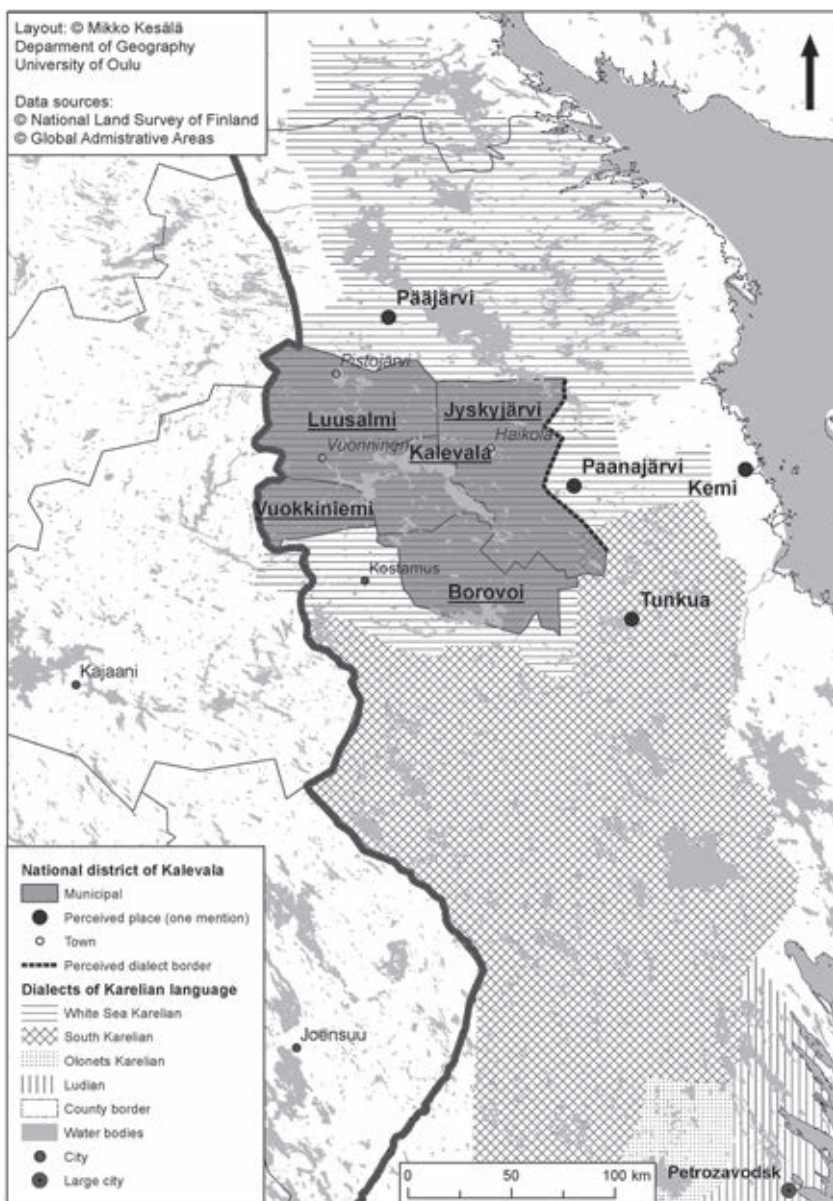
In discourse analysis, language usage is not understood as mere transmission of information; rather, it is seen as revealing the speaker's reactions to the topic of discussion. Words that are chosen for the discourse reveal what kinds of feelings and attitudes a speaker has towards the theme. Every linguistic choice is connected to the speaker's evaluations as well as the underlying sociocultural ideology. (Fairclough 1989, 90–94; Kalliokoski 1995, 8, 14; Hodge and Kress 1996, 209–211.) This article not only investigates what laypeople say but also looks at how their opinions are constructed with certain words (see Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain 2009, 198).

4 *The perceived area of White Sea Karelian*

During the theme and group interviews the informants were asked to delineate the area of their ‘own language’. As Map 2 shows, professional linguists have defined the area of White Sea Karelian as quite large. However, laypeople in Jyskyjärvi and Kalevala commonly thought that White Sea Karelian is mainly spoken in Jyskyjärvi and Kalevala, perhaps also in the villages of Vuokkiniemi (Voknavolok), Vuonninen (Voinitsa), and Kontokki. The results are represented on Map 2.

It was common among the laypeople to think that their ‘own language’ is only spoken in the Kalevala National District (*Kalevalski natsionalnyi rajon*), which includes many old Karelian villages, e.g., Kalevala, Jyskyjärvi, Vuokkiniemi, Vuonninen, Pistojärvi (Tihtozero), Haikola (Haikolja), and Luusalmi:

5 *Metalanguage two* includes references to language itself in language use. *Bill whispered that he was leaving*, for example, is a sentence that refers to the linguistic fact of whispering, but “whispering” is not the topic of the discourse. (Preston 1998, 85; Dennis Preston, e-mail message to author, 18 February 2015.)



Map 2. The perceived dialect area of White Sea Karelian.

(1) *miän karjalaŋ kieli* Jyskyjärvessä, ja Uhtuolla (Elviira)

[Our Karelian language (is spoken) in Jyskyjärvi and in Uhtua.]

(2) *niinŋku Jyskyjärven ta miän* [pakinatapa] – – *ei niis ole eruo ne ollah šamammoisie. Vuokkiniemi ta kaikki näm_ollah ihan yhemmoisie.* (Olga)

[There are no differences in the speech styles of people in Jyskyjärvi and Kalevala. Vuokkiniemi and all these are similar.]

(3) *no tiälä Jyskyjärvessä, Uhtuossa, Vuokkiniemessä ta tässä – – Vuonnisseša – – puhutaa yhennäkösesti. – – puhutah ihan omua kieltä. – – ihan oma äitiinkieli se on. – – Kalevalam piirissä še on niijku meillä oma, kieli, – – ihan oma kieli šemmoni, äitiinkieli, niijku äitiinkieli.* (Akuliina)

[Here, in Jyskyjärvi, Uhtua, Vuokkiniemi, and in Vuonnini, people speak the same way. They speak their own language. It is an own mother tongue. In the Kalevala area we have our own language, a language completely our own, that kind of mother tongue, like a mother tongue.]

(4) *tässä vet miäm [Kalevalan] piirissä – – miän kielellä – – paistii nuo rajakylät kaikki – – Koštamus, Kontokki – – sekä Alajärvi – – Jyvyälakši – – Luušalmi, tuo, Nurmilakši, Uhtuo, ja V- Vuonnini Vuokkiniemi nehäj kaikki, ne on, niijku miäj kieli.* (Ortjo)

[In this our district, in our language, it was spoken in all those border villages, all – – Koštamus, Kontokki – – both Alajärvi – – Jyvyälakši – – Luušalmi, that, Nurmilakši, Uhtuo, and V- Vuonnini Vuokkiniemi which are all, like our language.]

(5) *varmast Kalevalam piiri kaikki, yhtä ja samua puhutah.* (Marina)

[Surely they speak the same way everywhere in the Kalevala area.]

The dialect of White Sea Karelian in the Kalevala District is seen as an *own language* and *mother tongue*. Among Finnish laypeople, it is also common to define some varieties of Finnish as *languages*, e.g., *Helsingin kieli* ‘the language of Helsinki’ (Mielikäinen and Palander 2014b, 33–39). It is interesting that Akuliina calls her own dialect *äitiinkieli* ‘mother tongue’. Does she want to emphasize the nature of White Sea Karelian *as a language of its own* rather than just a dialect of Karelian? According to previous research (Kunnas 2013), many Viena Karelians think that there is a language border between Olonets Karelian and their own language, but that the border is not as sharp between Finnish dialects and White Sea Karelian. Akuliina would seem to share this view.

The data also include other comments in which the informants draw language borders between Karelian varieties:

(6) *sielä kun on še, Pienisehkä [pro Pieniselkä], Isošenkä [pro Suuriselkä] šielä eri kielellä puhutaa.* (Polina)

[There are those, Pieniselkä (Malaja Selga), Isoselkä (Bolšaja Selga), they speak a different language there.]

Pieniselkä and Isoselkä, in the municipality of Kuittinen (Kuiteža), are villages where Olonets Karelian is spoken. According to Polina, Olonets Karelian is in fact a different *language* than White Sea Karelian.

Only one informant included the village of Paanajärvi (Panozero) in the dialect area of White Sea Karelian. The city of Kem, Pääjärvi (Pjaozero), and the village of Tunkua (Tunguda), which belongs to the South Karelian dialect area, were also mentioned. None of the informants included Kiestinki (Kestenga) in the area of their ‘own language’. Akuliina, for example, related that in Kiestinki the dialect is already mixed and that people in Paanajärvi have a different language:

(7) *a vot* – – *Kiestin̄ki tuolla, hyö voijjah jo sevottua, se on ševot.* – – *Puanajärvesssä, siellä jo* – – ***toisemmoini kieli.*** (Akuliina)

[Well, In Kiestinki they may mix (the language); it is mixed. In Paanajärvi they have a different language.]

I would not go so far as to claim that the laypeople in Jyskyjärvi and Kalevala are wrong when they define the area of their own dialect differently from professional linguists. To my knowledge, there is no up-to-date research about Karelian language variation in Paanajärvi and Kiestinki, and the dialects spoken in these municipalities may actually differ greatly from dialects spoken in the Kalevala National District. In fact, non-linguists may be more sensitive to dialect boundaries than professional linguists, and they may be able to discern boundaries that linguists have not discovered (Preston 1993).

5 *Perceptions about the dialects of Paanajärvi, Tunkua, and Rukajärvi*

The village of Paanajärvi was mentioned many times when discussing dialect boundaries with the informants. Many people draw a strict line between the village of Paanajärvi and their own speech style. In the data, there are comments like:

(8) *Puanajärvi tuossa jo puhuu, toisel taval ku myö.* (Irina)

[In Paanajärvi, people speak differently from us.]

(9)

01 *tuošša Puanajärvi* – – *hyö jo toisel taval puhutaa.* (Irina)

02 *heil om pehmie šemmoini kieli* (Maikki)

[There in Paanajärvi, they speak in a different way. They have that kind of smooth language.]

(10) *Puanajärves on se, snečoiñ kieli se, puoli sanua sanotaa venyäheksi ja paljon venäjän kiellä* – – *Puanajärves käyttää [!].* (Hilja)

[They have that ‘the *snečoi* language’ in the village of Paanajärvi. They say half of the words in Russian and they use much Russian language in Paanajärvi.]

Laypeople define the Paanajärvi dialect as *different* from their own, as *smooth* and heavily influenced by Russian, what they refer to as *snečoiñ kieli* ‘the *snečoi* language’.

Among Viena Karelians *snečoiñ kieli* ‘the *snečoi* language’, or *snečku* ‘the *snečku* language’, is a commonly used pejorative designation for speakers of Olonets Karelian and other southern varieties of Karelian (Kunnas 2006, 242, 2013, 312–313; Pasanen 2003, 45). According to KKS (Dictionary of Karelian, s.v. *snetšku*), *snečku* is a nickname for those Karelians who live in the former province of Olonets and who speak *smoothly*.

Although it is clear that speakers of Olonets would be labelled *snečku*, in the former Olonets province, there are also villages in which South Karelian is spoken. For example, Rukajärvi (Rugozero), where South Karelian is still spoken, was formerly part of the Olonets province (Nevalainen 1998, 292–293). Therefore, for Viena Karelians, the designation *snečku* can refer to speakers of Olonets and South Karelian – and, as becomes clear from example 10, also speakers of White Sea Karelian outside the Kalevala District.

Throughout history, Viena Karelians have separated themselves linguistically as well as culturally from ‘foreign’ Olonets Karelians (Pöllä 1995, 313). It was not until the 19th century that the designation *Karelian* began to include speakers of Olonets Karelian and Ludian with speakers of Karelian Proper (Zaikov 1987, 13; Kunnas 2007, 45). The designation *snečku/snäčky* is probably also old: Irina, who was born in the beginning of the 20th century, said that her parents used the designation: *meilä vanhemmat on sanottu snäčkyn karjala* ‘our parents used the name *Snäčky* Karelian’ (Irina).

When I asked my informants about what kind of dialect was spoken in Tunkua and Rukajärvi (Rugozero), Agafia, Akuliina, and Ortjo defined the dialects as follows:

(11) *sielä on nezeη [pro neččen] kieli* (Agafia)

[They speak a *Neze* (pro *Nečče*) language there.]

(12) *heilä on – – niijko – – Petroskoin ta tämän vienanjarjalankieli, še siitä on šekon siellä.* (Akuliina)

[They have a kind of a mixed (language). The languages of Petrozavodsk and White Sea Karelian have been mixed there.]

(13) *siellä puhutah kuule vain tätä, eiköhän enämbi jo venäjän kielen šanoja ole sevošša* (Ortjo)

[There they speak this, I suppose they have more Russian words mixed in their language.]

Agafia referred to the dialect of Karelian spoken in Tunkua and Rukajärvi as *nezeη* (pro *neččen*) *kieli* ‘*Neze* (pro *Nečče*) language’. Pasanen (2003, 45) similarly found that many Viena Karelians used the designation *neččen kieli* ‘*Nečče* language’ when they referred to Olonets Karelian. The designation *nečen* or *neččen kieli* ‘*Ne(č)če* language’ is derived from the demonstrative pronoun *neče* ‘that’, which is used in Olonets Karelian (KKS, s.v. *netše*). The designation *neččen kieli* ‘*Nečče* language’ is the same kind of expression as, for example, the *h-kieli* ‘*h-language*’ or *miu-mau-murre* ‘*miu-mau* dialect’ – expressions that Finnish laypeople use when they describe variety on the basis of dialect features (in this case, the consonant *h* in a non-initial syllable or inflected form *miun* ‘my’) (Mielikäinen and Palander 2014a, s.v. *h-kieli*, *miu-mau-kieli*). These kinds of pronoun-based labels are common among Finnish laypeople, but the Finns use personal pronouns only in these labels (Mielikäinen and Palander 2014b, 72–75). But why does Agafia use the designation *nezeη* (pro *neččen*) *kieli* ‘*Neze* (pro *Nečče*) language’ when she

describes South Karelian? As noted above, the demonstrative pronoun *neče* ‘that’ is only used in Olonets Karelian and, according to previous research, *neččen kieli* ‘*Nečče* language’ is used to refer to Olonets Karelian. It may be that by *neččen kieli* ‘*Nečče* language’ Agafia is referring to all dialects that were previously spoken in the Olonets province – similar to how the designation *snečku/snäčky* ‘the *Snečku* ~ the *Snäčky* language’ is used. Rukajärvi, where South Karelian is spoken, was previously part of the Olonets province (Nevalainen 1998, 292–293).

In the data, the dialects of Paanajärvi and Kiestinki as well as the varieties of South Karelian are described as *šekon* or *ševot* ‘mixed’ or ‘hodgepodge’ (*sevošša*) (examples 12 and 13). The implication is that the informant’s own dialect is seen as pure and authentic (see Mielikäinen and Palander 2014b, 228–229). In Finland too, laypeople commonly use words that begin with the root *seka-* ‘mixed’ when they try to describe somehow problematic dialects (Mielikäinen and Palander 2014b, 230; see Palander 2015, 47). Professional linguists categorize the villages of Tunkua and Rukajärvi as within the speaking area of South Karelian. It is true, however, that, for example, the dialect of Rukajärvi has features of Olonets Karelian as well as White Sea Karelian: plosives are often voiced, but, on the other hand, the first and second person pronouns are of the same type as in White Sea Karelian (*mie* ‘I’, *sie* ‘you’ vs. Olonets Karelian *minä* ‘I’, *sinä* ‘you’; KKS s.v. *mie*, *sie*, headword Rukajärvi).

6 Results of the listening task

The reaction test included three short (21–44 second) speech samples of Karelian and Ludian. The first was a sample of Olonets Karelian, which is mainly spoken in the southern parts of the republic. The second sample was Tver Karelian, which is spoken in Central Russia and is linguistically classified as a southern variety of Karelian Proper (for Tver Karelian, see Koivisto in this volume). The third sample was Ludian – a language that occupies an intermediate position between Olonets Karelian and the Veps language and is spoken near the Petrozavodsk area. The speakers in the samples of Olonets Karelian and Tver Karelian were women, and, in the Ludian sample, the speaker was a man. The sample of Olonets Karelian was recorded in 1996, the sample of Tver Karelian in 1957, and the sample of Ludian in 1958. Therefore, samples of Tver Karelian and Ludian represent older forms of the language than the sample of Olonets Karelian.

All the samples included dialect features that differ between White Sea Karelian and the dialect in question. The Olonets Karelian sample included a partitive form in which the partitive ending is *-du*: *suurdu* ‘big-PAR’ (cf., with White Sea Karelian *-ta*: *suurta* ‘big-PAR’). There is also a first person plural form *pastamma* (‘we roast’) in which the second component of the *i*-ending diphthong has disappeared (cf., with White Sea Karelian *paistamma* ‘we roast’). In general, the Olonets Karelian sample – as well as the other samples – featured many voiced plosives (e.g., *suurdu* ‘big-PAR’, *piiraidu* ‘pie-PL-PAR’) in the kinds of contexts in which the plosives are usually voiceless in White

Sea Karelian. The Ludian sample included a verb form typical of Ludian: *pyydab* ('fish.for-PR.3SG'; cf., White Sea Karelian *pyytäy* 'fish.for-PR.3SG') as well as *d'* in a context in which White Sea Karelian usually includes *j* (*d'oka* vs. *joka* 'every'). The speech samples were transcribed, and the excerpts can be found in Appendix 2.

The participants received no information about the samples before the listening task. After having listened to the speech samples, the respondents were asked: 'Where can you hear speech like this?' (see Vaattovaara 2012). The samples were played many times before the informants were able to suggest a location. The commentary about the samples as well as the discussions with the interviewer were recorded.

The following sections show how accurately the informants located the Olonets sample, Tver Karelian sample and Ludian sample, as well as how they described the varieties heard in the samples.

6.1 REACTIONS TO THE SAMPLE OF OLONETS KARELIAN

The first sample represented the speech style of Vitele – a small village in Southern Karelia. All the placements that the informants suggested are marked on Map 3. The dots on the maps are bigger in order of the number of times the place in question was mentioned by the respondents.

Two informants placed the sample quite close to its actual source. The speaker was said to come from *Petroskoin perältä* 'beyond Petrazavodsk' or *Petroskoin läheltä* 'near Petrozavodsk'. Three informants did not mention any specific place where the dialect in the sample might be from but labelled the dialect 'correctly'. From examples 14–16, it can be seen that the informants recognised the dialect of Vitele as Olonets Karelian (or South Karelian):

(14) *šnäčkyn kieli* (Irina)

[Šnäčky language]

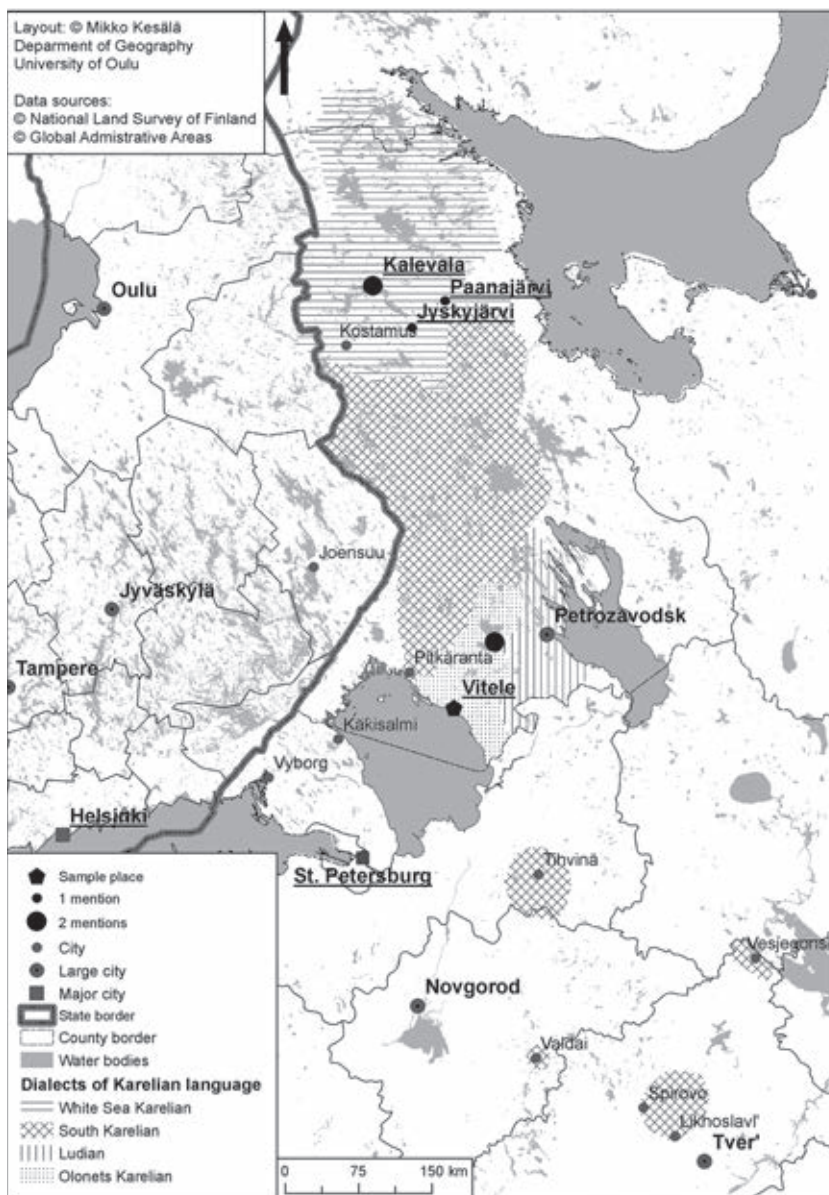
(15) *näčkyn* [!] *niinkun* (Maikki)

[kind of Näčky language]

(16) *Olońet* 's (Hilja)

[Olonets Karelian].

Some speakers located the sample to the northern parts of the republic: Kalevala, Jyskyjärvi, and Paanajärvi were all suggested. Ortjo, who lives in Jyskyjärvi, guessed that the sample represented the dialect spoken in his own village. Interestingly, Agafia, who was born in the village of Tahtasovo quite close to the village of Vitele, supposed that the speaker came from Kalevala. As in many previous studies, it was also common in the data that the listeners failed to recognize not only those dialects they themselves were rarely exposed to but also the variety that was designed to represent their own local variety. Age, residence, life history, and mobility may all affect the placements that respondents make. (See, e.g., Williams et al. 1999, 351; Garret et al. 2003, 200–201; Palander and Nupponen 2005, 43–45; Laurila 2008, 70; Vaattovaara 2009, 139.)



Map 3. Localizations of the Olonets Karelian sample.

Some informants took special note of the unfamiliar words they heard in the sample. For example, Olga guessed that the speech sample represented *eteläkieltä* – *tätä karjalaḡ kieltä* ‘south language, this Karelian language’, by which she probably meant South Karelian, because the woman in the sample used the word *šipainiekat* ‘pies’. It is true that the word does not belong to traditional White Sea Karelian, but according to the dictionary of Karelian⁶

6 KKS (Dictionary of Karelian) is a dialect dictionary. It contains examples from almost all dialects of Karelian Proper and Olonets Karelian.

(KKS, s.v. *šipanniekka*), it is only used in Olonets Karelian and not in South Karelian.

Akuliina and Palaka particularly noted the word *kartohka* ‘potato’. The women mentioned that in their dialect the word for ‘potato’ is *potakka* or *peruna*. According to KKS (s.v. *kartohka*), the word *kartohka* is not only used mostly in Olonets Karelian but also in South Karelian.

Some answers were based on words that were not actually spoken in the sample. Agafia placed the sample in Kalevala because – according to her – the woman in the sample said *keitimpiirai* ‘a pie baked in grease’. Another informant (Marina) heard the woman in the sample say *lättö* ‘pancake-PAR’. Laurila (2008, 44) and Vaattovaara (2009, 142–143) also found in their studies that sometimes people justified their answers based on words or dialect features that were not in the sample.

Irina and Maikki could not pinpoint any place the sample might be from. Rather, they simply placed the sample outside the Kalevala District:

(17) *ei se ollum me- miän näitä, piirii* (Irina)

[It wasn’t from our district.]

(18) *miäm piiriin ei, myö niin emmä* [puhu] (Maikki)

[Not our district, we don’t speak that way.]

The same kind of process of “drawing boundaries around oneself” has also been seen in the answers of Finnish laypeople when they performed listening tasks (Vaattovaara and Halonen 2015).

All in all, the reactions to the Olonets Karelian sample were, on the one hand, predictable and, on the other, surprising: many people were able to recognise the variety to be Olonets Karelian or a variety spoken in the southern parts of the republic. Others, however, placed the sample in the area of White Sea Karelian and even in their own or a nearby village. The interviewees’ perceptions of their own dialect clearly are not as exact as would be expected (see Nupponen 2011, 3).

6.2 REACTIONS TO THE SAMPLE OF TVER KARELIAN

The second sample represented the speech style of Tver Karelian. The guesses that the informants made are marked on Map 4.

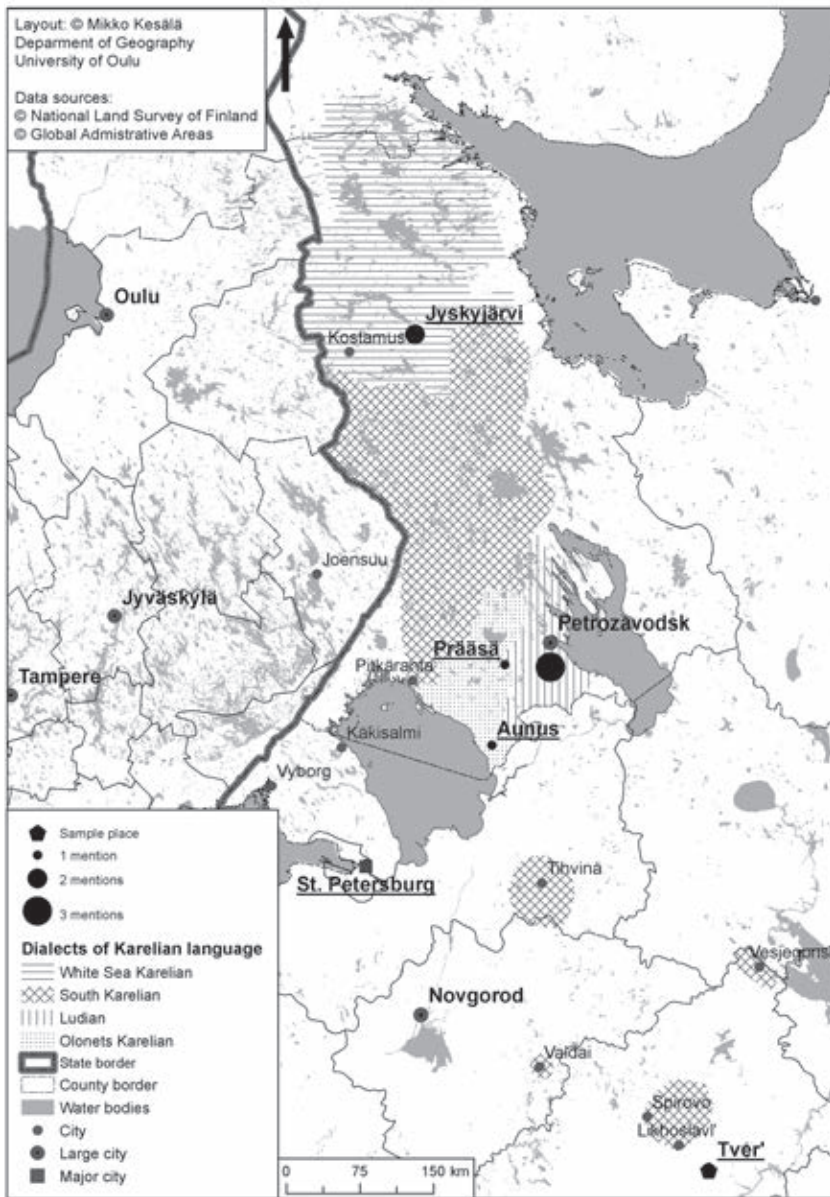
None of the informants placed the sample in the Tver area or in areas where South Karelian is spoken. Three informants located the sample near, beyond, or in the surroundings of Petrozavodsk. Three people, in fact, placed the sample in the village of Jyskyjärvi. When I asked the informants why they thought that the sample was from the Petrozavodsk area, they answered:

(19) *kuuluuhan tuosta pakinasta* (Elviira)

[You can hear it from the speech.]

(20) *pakinasta – – kuulee ttei ole me- meiän* [pakina], se. (Hilja)

[You can hear from the speech that this is not our speech.]



Map 4. Localizations of the Tver Karelian sample.

It is interesting to note that, in Finland, it is also common for laypeople to describe dialect differences with the verb *kuulua* ‘hear’ (Mielikäinen and Palander 2014b, 112).

Besides the Jyskyjärvi and Petrozavodsk areas, the sample was also located to the Olonets area, as three informants thought that the sample represented Olonets (or South) Karelian:

- (21) *snečoi* (Hilja)
[the *Snečoi* language]
(22) *Aunuksen pakina* (Agafia)
[language of Olonets]
(23) *Olońets* (Polina)
[Olonets Karelian].

One informant said that the variety was like the Veps language and another thought that the sample represented the dialect of Prääsä (Prjaža), where Ludian is spoken.

It is not surprising that the Tver Karelian sample was not recognized. None of the informants had ever visited or stayed in the speaking area of Tver Karelian. On the radio and television, they hear the varieties of Olonets Karelian, White Sea Karelian, and South Karelian spoken in the Republic of Karelia. It may well be that they had never heard this variety of Karelian before.

6.3 REACTIONS TO THE SAMPLE OF LUDIAN

The third sample was from the village of Kuujärvi (Mihailovskoje) where Ludian is spoken. The approximations that the informants offered are marked on Map 5.

Two informants located the sample correctly, guessing that it was from

- (24) *Petroskoin sieltä alu₁eelta joštaki, oñkse Jessoila vai* (Polina)
[From the district of Petrozavodsk somewhere, is it Jessoila or?]
(25) *Petroskoin alta* (Akuliina)
[In Petrozavodsk].

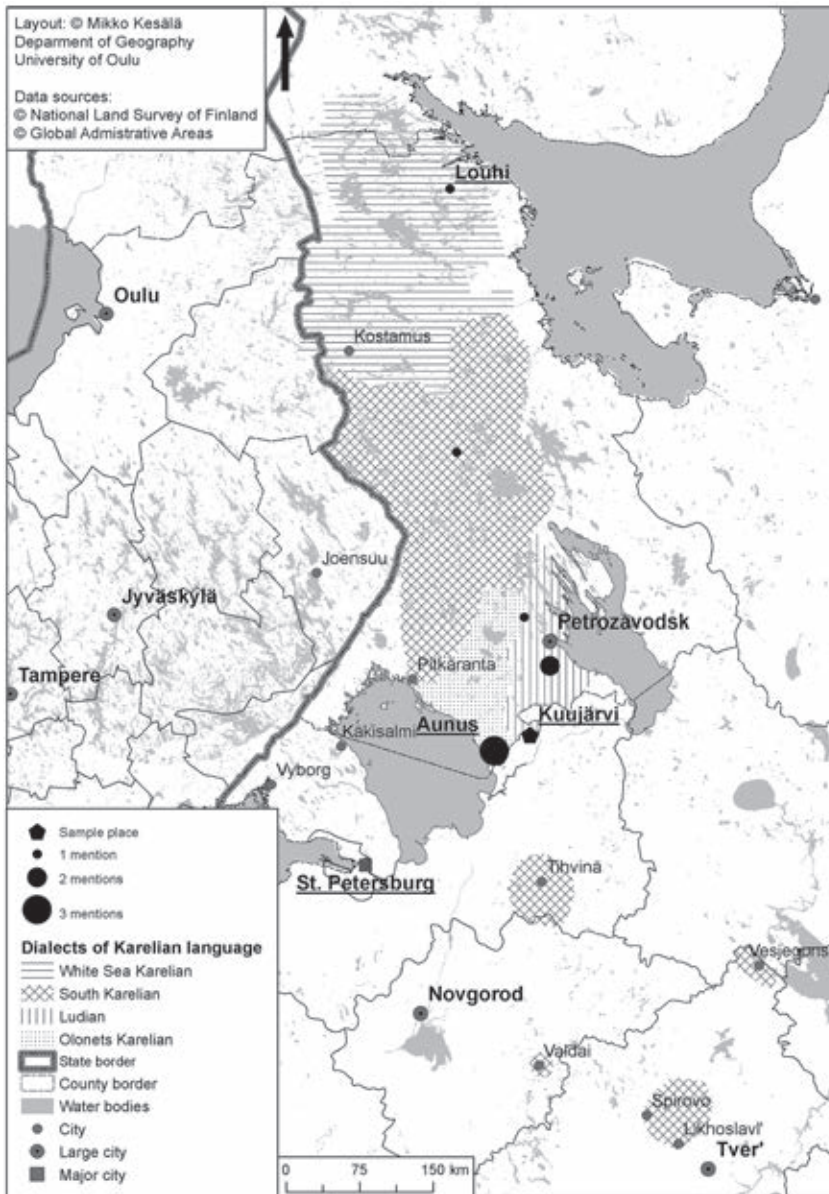
Ludian is spoken in the area surrounding of Petrozavodsk as well as in Jessoila (Essoila), which belongs to the district of Prääsä (Prjaža).

Two informants judged that the sample represented Olonets (or South) Karelian:

- (26) *se niise samua snečoiita* (Hilja)
[this is also the same *Snečoi* language]
(27) *Olońetskoita* (Lilja)
[Olonets Karelian].

Two informants located the sample to Olonets:

- (28) *Aunuksen sillä kielellä* (Irina)
[language of Olonets]
(29) *Aunuksesta* (Marina)
[from Olonets].



Map 5. Localizations of the Ludian sample.

Ortjo located the sample to the southern part of Karelia and thought that the speech represented the Veps language:

(30) *se on sielä eteläpuolel – eiköhän ole še, ihan, se vepšij kieli* (Ortjo)

[It's from the south; isn't it, it must be that Veps language?]

It is understandable that Ortjo thought that the sample was Veps. Of the varieties of Ludian, the dialect spoken in the village of Kuujärvi has been most affected by the Veps language (e.g., Kettunen 1960, 23–26).

Akuliina said that the sample is

(31) *Petroskoin alta, ili Mujejärven siinä vot, siinä välissä missä on ihan šekon ne kielit (!), ka- kaks kieltä y- yhteh – – ei sillä i nimie ole näemmä sillä šekokiellä.*

[In Petrozavodsk, or from Mujejärvi (Mujezerski), in the middle where the languages have been mixed. Two languages together; there isn't a name for this type of mixed language.]

Akuliina labels the sample a “mixed language” (*šekokieli*). However, according to Pahomov (2017), Ludian cannot be seen as such anymore. Similar to Akuliina, the name of the variety (Ludian) was completely unknown to most of the informants. Ortjo actually thought that I was speaking about the female name *Lyydi* when asked if the term Ludian was familiar to him.

The sample was also thought to represent South Karelian or the dialect of Louhi or, more broadly, a dialect different than the informants' own variety. A couple of people noted individual words they heard in the sample. Agafia, for instance, noticed that the sample included words from Russian (*siin on venäjän sanua* ‘It includes Russian words’), and Maikki drew attention to the uniquely Veps relative pronoun *kudam*, which means ‘which’:

(32) *koda, tooše missä noim paissaa, missäk, missäkä noim paissaa* (Maikki)

[*koda*, there where they speak like that; where, wherever do they speak like that?]

The informants also justified their answers to this sample based on words that were not actually uttered. For example, when Agafia discussed the Ludian sample, she noted the speaker's use of: *hierussa* ‘village-INE’ even though the man in the sample twice said: *derevnjassa* ‘village-INE’. (See Laurila 2008, 44; Vaattovaara 2009, 142–143.)

Marina located the Ludian sample outside of her own dialect area based on the cultural context of the sample:

(33)

01 *venehie laittai honkast, eihän honkast venehtä laiteta* (Marina)

[They built boats from pine? Boats aren't built from pine.]

02 *eikö?* (NK)

[Aren't they?]

03 *varmast ei, sehän heti happanou* [laughs] (Marina)

[No, certainly not, it would get mouldy immediately (laughs).]

04 [NK laughs]

05 – – *eei se meidän se, honkast ei laiteta, ei ole pakina se myös* (Marina)

[No, it is not ours, we don't build from pine, the speech is not (ours) either.]

Marina did not think the sample could represent her own dialect because in her village boats are not built of pine. As in many previous studies among Finnish laypeople (e.g., Laurila 2008), it was common in this study that people took special note of the content of the samples. In some studies, very short samples (minimum one word) have been employed to prevent people from listening too carefully to the content of the samples (Vaattovaara 2009, 137; Vilhula 2012, 11–12). However, even if the speech sample is very short, there is no such thing as neutral content (Campbell-Kibler 2009, 138), and the content of the sample always influences the perceptions of the subjects (Campbell-Kibler 2007, 34–35).

To sum up, it is understandable that many of the informants thought the sample was from the Olonets area or represented the Veps language. Ludian is spoken in the District of Olonets and the dialect of Kuujärvi is heavily affected by Veps (Kettunen 1960). However, the data show that the label ‘Ludian’ was familiar to only a couple of the respondents, with most claiming that they had never heard of it.

7 *Dialect differences in the Karelian language*

One aim of the present study was to explore the kind of dialect differences speakers of White Sea Karelian were aware of. As expected, many of the interviewed were aware of lexical differences among Karelian dialects, but they also focused on phonetic differences.

Preston (2002, 50–51) divides language perceptions according to the following taxonomy:

- 1) *Availability*: Which language features are recognized, and how easily are they commented on?
- 2) *Accuracy*: How exact are the perceptions, and how do they represent linguistic facts?
- 3) *Detail*: How detailed are the perceptions (general awareness of a variety vs. specific details)?
- 4) *Control*: How well can the informant control or imitate the specific variety?

(See also Mielikäinen and Palander 2014b, 18; Palander 2015, 35–36.)

7.1 DIFFERENCES IN VOCABULARY

As previous research has shown (e.g., Mononen 2013, 138), the lexical aspect of dialect is a topic that is much discussed by laypeople. In this sense, it can be said that it is a feature that is readily *available* (Preston 2002, 50–51). The informants were well aware that their own dialect includes more loanwords from Finnish and vice versa, and that other Karelian varieties are more influenced by Russian. This closeness to the Finnish language was a topic that every informant touched on:

(34) *meiän karjalaj kielihän se – – on – – šamammoista ku, suomalaisetki puhutaa, paissaah.* (Hilja)

[Our Karelian language is similar to the language Finnish people speak.]

(35) *meil ol lähellä niijkun šuomeŋ kieldä* (Irina)

[Our Karelian language is close to the Finnish language.]

(36) *karjala še on šama šuomi – – on se melkein šama, no on niitä šanoja vähäni*
[erilaisia] (Iivo)

[Karelian and Finnish: they are the same; it's almost the same. Well, there are some words that are different.]

(37) *meil oŋ karjalaŋ kieli ševotettuna šuomeŋ kieleh* (Lilja)

[We have a Karelian language that's mixed with the Finnish language.]

(38) *tämä miäŋ Kale- Kalevalan [murre] nii hän on oikeil lähel – – suomeŋ, kielellä* (Irina)

[This, our Kalevala dialect, is very close to the Finnish language.]

Ortjo, in fact, considers that his dialect is Finnish:

(39) *myö puhumma – – šuomeŋ kielellä vet*

[We speak the Finnish language.]

In a previous study (Kunnas 2013), it was shown that many Viena Karelian laypeople designate their own variety as *Finnish* and do not draw a language border between White Sea Karelian and Finnish. On the other hand, Viena Karelians may draw a language border between Olonets and White Sea Karelian (see Section 4 and Kunnas 2013).

According to the laypeople, the use of Finnish loanwords varies from village to village inside the speaking area of White Sea Karelian, and Finnish was not seen to have affected the dialect of Jyskyjärvi that much:

(40) *meillä [Kalevalassa] ta Vuokkiniemeš on paremmin, šitä suomalaist enempi šanoja, suomalaisie šanoja – – toizemmoini siellä heil [Jyskyjärvellä] on* (Olga)

[In the dialects of Kalevala and Vuokkiniemi, we have more Finnish words; the dialect of Jyskyjärvi is different.]

(41) [Jyskyjärvellä] *on semmosii karjalaisii [sanoja] jotta ei – – ole nikun, suomalaisi, a sanoja* (Irina)

[In Jyskyjärvi, we have Karelian words, not really Finnish words.]

In previous research (Kunnas 2007, 43), Karelian laypeople have also commented on the fact that in the western villages of the Viena area the influence of the Finnish language is greater than in Jyskyjärvi.

According to Hilja, on the other hand, the heavy influence of Russian begins nearby, in the village of Paanajärvi. She claimed that

(42) *Puanajärves – – puoli sanua sanotaa venyäheksi ja paljon venäjän kieldä – – Puanajärves käyttää. – – enemmän käytössä se venäjän kieli.*

[In the village of Paanajärvi they say half of the words in Russian and they use a lot of Russian. They use more Russian.]

Akuliina also said to Agafia, who was born in the speaking area of Olonets Karelian, that

(43) *teil* [livviläisillä] *on enemmän niijku venäjän kieli*

[Your language is more like the Russian language.]

Some informants commented on single words that are different in Karelian varieties. Agafia drew attention to variation in the words for ‘frog’, ‘curtain’, and ‘rubbish’. She had noticed that in White Sea Karelian ‘frog’ is *skokuna*, but in Olonets Karelian it is *slöppi*⁷, and ‘curtain’ is *sanaveskad* in Olonets Karelian, but the people in Jyskyjärvi use the Finnish loanword *verho(t)*. Agafia had also found that in Jyskyjärvi, the commonly used word for ‘rubbish’ is *ruhka* whereas the word *toppa*, which is used in Olonets Karelian with the meaning ‘rubbish’, means ‘flue’ in White Sea Karelian dialects. Olga claimed that the word ‘clean’ is different in Jyskyjärvi and in her own dialect. According to Olga, people in Kalevala use the verb *siivota* ‘to clean’ whereas the people in Jyskyjärvi use the verb *rabiestoa* ‘to clean’. Akuliina also had noticed that the word for ‘door clasp’ differs in Karelian varieties: she had not understood when a woman from the speaking area of Olonets Karelian had said *pane d’sokka se oveeh* ‘Close the door clasp!’ In White Sea Karelian, the word for ‘door clasp’ is *čäppi*.

7.2 PHONOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES

Viena Karelian laypeople are also aware of some phonological differences between different Karelian varieties. For example, the informants described other Karelian varieties spoken on the eastern or southern sides of their own language area as *smoother*. Comments like (44) are common in the data.

(44) *Petroskoil luo – – hyö nin, oikeim pehmi_essa (!) paissaa, oikeim pehmiesti. Vot Agafia Petrovna* [Aunuksen alueelta kotoisin oleva], *hänel oma kieli on oikeim pehmi_ kieli. – – hyö paissah oikeim pehmiesti paissaa, heil om pehmi semmoni kieli.* (Akuliina)

[Around Petrozavodsk, they speak very smoothly, very smoothly, Agafia Petrovna (a speaker of Olonets Karelian) her own language is a very smooth language, they speak very smoothly, they have got that kind of smooth language.]

Olonets Karelian, in general, and the dialect of Paanajärvi were also described as *smoother* than the informants’ own dialect, and the dialect of Olonets Karelian was labelled *pehmi_ pakina* ‘smooth speech’. Added to that, Lilja defined her own dialect as *pure* and *hard*:

(45) *meil oli iham puhas karjalan_ kieli, ko- niijku kovalla* (Lilja)

[We had a completely pure Karelian language, har- it’s like hard.]

7 According to KKS, *šlöpoi*.

These comments have been interpreted to mean that the respondents mean that in other varieties of Karelian there are more voiced plosives than in their own dialect, e.g., *pelto* vs. *peldo* ‘field’. Many Finnish laypeople have also described Olonets and the South Karelian spoken in Border Karelia as *smooth* and commented that the plosives are often voiced, e.g., *buabo* ‘grandmother’ (Palander 2015, 49, 51; see Mielikäinen and Palander 2014a, s.v. *pehmeä*, *pehmyt*). It is not uncommon for laypeople to be able to separate voiced and voiceless consonants, typically using the terms *smooth* and *hard* (Mielikäinen and Palander 2014b, 221).

The data also contain one example that indicates that the informant had noticed differences in plosives between White Sea Karelian and southern varieties of Karelian:

(46) *Petroskoim perällä: ‘buaji daa da, šano daa da’* [nauraa]. ‘Elä *buaji* – – miän, miän ihmised – – paissah. (Hilja)

[Beyond Petrozavodsk: speak daa da, say daa da (laughs). Don’t speak. – – Our, our people speak.]

Hilja’s mimicking includes the voiced plosives /b/ and /d/, and she gave the impression that Karelian speakers beyond or in the surroundings of Petrozavodsk use these phonemes extensively – or at least more than in her own dialect. In this imitation, Hilja cited the speakers of Karelian near Petrozavodsk. Among laypeople, imitation is commonly used to illustrate dialectal and often phonological differences (Mielikäinen and Palander 2014b, 26–27, 151). Hilja also claimed that speakers of Karelian near Petrozavodsk use the verb *buajie* ‘to speak’ whereas the speakers of White Sea Karelian use the verb *paissa* ‘to speak’ instead. This is interesting because, according to KKS (s.v. *poajie*), *poajie* or *puajie* ‘to speak’ is a verb used only in northern parts of Karelia and only in dialects of White Sea Karelian. Here, the folk knowledge on the dialect differences is not accurate compared with linguistic knowledge.

With respect to the phonological perceptions of laypeople, it can be stated that the quality of consonants is a language feature that is readily *available* and much commented on. However, the perceptions are not very *detailed*: the informants spoke only about *smooth* or *hard* consonants or speech styles. In the one example of imitation, the plosives were concretely pronounced (voiced), and, in that case, it can be said that the variety was well *controlled*. It is interesting to note that none of the Kalevala laypeople had noticed that the dialect of the nearby village of Jyskyjärvi already includes more voiced plosives than their own speech style and that none of the informants commented on the vowel differences between Karelian dialects.

7.3 PHONETIC DIFFERENCES

At the phonetic level, there is one phone that was commented on very much: /s/. Many people had noted the variation in /s/ and /š/ in Karelian dialects.

Agafia, who was born in the speaking area of Olonets Karelian, said:

(47)

01 *tiälä* [Jyskyjärvešs] *oltih -s šše, a mie aina sanon kissa, lammas* – –. (Agafia)

[Here (in Jyskyjärvi) was šše, but I always say *kissa* (a cat), *lammas* (a sheep).]

02 *oŋko se äš täälä erimoini ku siel?* (NK)

[Is the š here different from there (in the speaking area of Olonets Karelian)?]

03 *no še on tiäl enem- – – šše, semmoine, a meil on ess enemmä, pakinoissa, vop*

04 *pakinoissa ni jo samassa kuuluu semmoni sanaki* [pro äännekin.] (Agafia)

[Well, here it is more šše, that kind of, and we have more *ess* in our speech; in the word *pakinoissa* you can hear that kind of word (should be *sound*).]

Agafia had noticed that she uses a sharper /s/ whereas those people whose mother tongue is White Sea Karelian more extensively use /š/.

Akuiliina compared Olonets Karelian with her own dialect and said:

(48) *meil on šemmoni jo ššš, äššätämmä myö, semmoni – – kieli on*

[We (Viena Karelians) have a kind of š, we speak with š, that kind of language.]

Polina, as well, drew attention to the phenomenon that speakers of White Sea Karelian use /š/ more extensively than Karelian speakers in the southern parts of the republic:

(49) *tiälä Pohjolassa* [Karjalan pohjoisosassa] *paremmi, šš, šössö-, šössötellää* (Polina)

[Here in the North, more šš, lisp- maybe we're sort of lisping.]

(50) *meil on tässä niijku Kalevalam piirissä – – niijku Kaenuun (!), tämä murre, tämä šöš-, šössötelly, šössöttely, äššällä puhuta, – – Kalevalam piiriššä, ašunto ei ašunto kun ašunto ašunto.* (Polina)

[In the Kalevala District we have the same kind of dialect as in Kainuu (one area of Finland), this kind of lisping, lisping, we speak with š in the Kalevala District. We say *ašunto* ('apartment') not *asunto* ('apartment').]

It is clear that in examples 49 and 50 Polina is using the word *šössöttely* 'lisping' to refer to the phenomenon that speakers of White Sea Karelian use /š/ extensively. What is interesting in this context is that other speaking areas of Karelian were also ascribed the label *šössöttely* 'lisping' by the informants. Varieties of Karelian spoken in the Petrozavodsk area as well as in Paanajärvi were also described as marked by 'lisping':

(51)

01 *tuošša Puanaajärvi – – hyö jo toisel taval puhutaa* (Irina)

[People in Paanajärvi speak differently than we do.]

02 *heil om pehmie šemmoini kieli* (Maikki)

[They have that kind of smooth language.]

03 *no ne sössötetää* – – *hyö toiseeh tapaah paissaa kum myö* (Irina)

[Well, they lisp, they speak differently than we do.]

(51)

01 *tuolla Petroskoin lähellä, siellä niikuin* – – (Polina)

[There near Petrozavodsk, they kind of...]

--

02 *sössöttämällä paissaa* (Irina)

[lisp when they speak].

The various interpretations of ‘lispings’ may be due to laypeople finding it hard to describe linguistic phenomena. The colloquial language term ‘lispings’ can also mean different dialect features to different informants (see Niedzielski and Preston 2000, 4–5; Mielikäinen and Palander 2014b, 80).

During her student days, Akuliina had noted the speech style of a woman from the village of Mujejärvi, where South Karelian is spoken. Akuliina imitated the woman:

(52)

01 *niim pakasi jotta: ‘sinä sano sinä vot – – si si’, vot niim pakasi hän,*

02 *essätti, essätti. essätti niijku, essätti niin, hiän. hänel šemmone kieli oli.*

[She spoke like: ‘You speak you, *si-si-*’, well that was the way she spoke, she spoke with *s*, she had that kind of language.]

In example 52, in line 1, Akuliina articulates every sibilant in a very fronted position. In addition, Akuliina mentions that the woman from Mujejärvi *essätti* ‘spoke with *s*’. In this context, the verb *essättää* ‘to speak with *s*’ probably means that the woman used a sharp, fronted /*s*/ instead of /*š*/. /*s*/ is transliterated into Russian as *c* and pronounced [es]. Pekka Zaikov (e-mail message, 10 June 2014) has posited that the designation *snečku* (pronounced with a sharp *s*) is also connected to the abundant use of sharp /*s*/ among speakers of Olonets Karelian.

It is clear that to laypeople these sibilants are somehow markers of separate varieties of Karelian. Despite the saliency and folk awareness of /*s*/ variation, sociolinguists have conducted little research on this variable. There are, however, a couple of studies in which the focus has been on the dialectal distribution of /*s*/ and /*š*/ in Karelian (e.g., Virtaranta 1946, 1984; Zaikov 2011).

All varieties of Karelian include the voiceless postalveolar sibilant /*š*/, but could it be that it is somehow acoustically different in different dialects? Virtaranta (1946, 38) argues that the noise of /*š*/ is more intense in Olonets Karelian, Veps, North Ludian, and the northern villages of the South Karelian speaking area than in the northern villages of the South Karelian speaking area. He (1946, 38) does not comment on the /*š*/ that is used in White Sea Karelian.

Even though the informants claim that speakers of White Sea Karelian use more /š/ (see also Zaikov 2013, 37), in certain contexts /š/ is more common in Olonets Karelian. For example, after a diphthong that ends in *i*, or in consonant clusters after *i*, there is no /š/ in White Sea Karelian, but in southern varieties of Karelian, /š/ occurs: *lašku* ‘lazy’, *mušta* ‘black’, *išköy* ‘hits’ (Virtaranta 1984, 269; KKM, maps 36, 78–82, 170). In this context, the folk findings on the distribution of /š/ are not accurate compared with linguistic knowledge. However, in word-initial contexts, /š/ is more common in Karelian Proper than in Olonets Karelian (*šada* vs. *sada* ‘hundred’, *šilmä* vs. *silmä* ‘eye’; Virtaranta 1946, 5, 1984, 263–265; KKM, maps 74–76, 86, 93–95, 125). In specific cases, /š/ is also more common in word-internal positions in White Sea Karelian: *kešä* ‘summer’, *lapši* ‘child’, *kuuši* ‘six’ (Virtaranta 1984, 267; KKM, maps 77, 88, 89, 91, 96).

Zaikov (2011) supposes that North Russian dialects have affected White Sea Karelian such that the /š/ has become very common in White Sea Karelian. On the other hand, Virtaranta (1946, 39) has noticed that in some South Karelian dialects, which are very close to the Russian areas, /š/ is not very common. Virtaranta (1946, 36–39) has also found that /š/ is used more systematically in the northern villages of the South Karelian speaking area than in southern villages.

Ingrian Finnish, which is also spoken in Russia, also includes /š/. According to Mononen (2013), Ingrian Finn laypeople think that the ‘shaa’ sound (the Russian original /š/ pronounced [shaa]) is a typical feature of Ingrian Finnish. One informant noted that when young Ingrian Finns speak Finnish they absolutely try to avoid this ‘stigmatized’ sound. It is also suggested that the /š/ fades out of the idiolect when the speakers move to Finland. (Mononen 2013, 140–142.) As a matter of fact, Finnish laypeople are very accurate observers of sound differences: An informant who had moved to Finland from the speaking area of Olonets Karelian was identified as Karelian based on her/his sibilants. Finnish laypeople commented on the informant’s speech: *sihahtaa niin kummasti* ‘(your speech) hisses so weirdly’. (Mielikäinen and Palander 2014b, 221.) Riionheimo and Palander (2017) have conducted listening tasks with Finnish laypeople, and, according to their data, it is common that laypeople notice /š/ when they hear a sample of Karelian language.

Variation in /s/ seems to be a phenomenon that laypeople universally recognize. In Finland, the fronted, sharp /s/, in particular, has been a point of much comment. For example, in recent folk linguistics studies outside the Helsinki area, the fronted, sharp /s/ was defined as a ‘metropolitan’ language feature, whereas laypeople in the Helsinki area defined a fronted, sharp /s/ as a feature of girls from East Helsinki. (E.g., Mielikäinen and Palander 2002, 97; Vaattovaara and Sojininen-Stojanov 2006; Palander 2007, 43.) According to Aittokallio (2002, 80), the fronted sharp /s/ is a ‘feminine’ [s] in Finnish. In Sweden, there are similar areal and social differences in the *sj* sound. The fronted *sj* is regarded as ‘more elegant’, and it is associated with middle class norms about good social skills in the Stockholm area. In Sweden the fronted *sj* is also considered ‘feminine’ in nature. (Elert 1989, 77.)

The variation of /s/ is a marker of social identity in many speech communities (Vaattovaara and Halonen 2015; and sources mentioned). In Britain, the frontness of /s/ discloses the social class to which people belong (Levon and Holmes-Elliott 2012). Certain types of /s/ has been shown to be indexical of the *Pissis* speech style⁸ of Helsinki Finnish (Vaattovaara 2013), gayness and femininity in ‘modern Copenhagen speech’ (e.g., Pharaoh et al. 2014), femininity and gayness in a man’s voice in Afrikaans (Bekker and Levon 2016), and gayness as well as non-heteronormative identity in English (e.g., Campbell-Kipler 2011; Podesva and van Hofwegen 2014; Saigusa 2016). Based on the results presented in this section, it seems that in many speech communities the fronted /s/ has a higher status than the voiceless postalveolar sibilant /š/. In addition to Ingrian Finnish, in specific dialects of German, using /š/ is stigmatized (Mielikäinen and Palander 2014b, 222; and sources mentioned).

There are three semiotic processes by which people construct ideological representations of linguistic differences: 1) *iconization*, 2) *fractal recursivity*, and 3) *erasure* (Irvine and Gal 2000, 37–39; Kroskrity 2000, 22; Milani 2010, 120–121). In iconization, linguistic features are associated with the language user as if they were her/his natural features. One example of iconization is the connection between the fronted, sharp /s/ and teenage girls from (East) Helsinki. Erasure means that certain linguistic features are totally ignored or are isolated to the peculiarity of a single small group. In fact, erasure and iconization, as processes, are closely related to each other. (Mäntynen et al. 2012, 330–331.) In the present data, the process of iconization can be seen when laypeople connect extensive use of the voiceless postalveolar sibilant /š/ to speakers of White Sea Karelian. On the other hand, the same process could also qualify as erasure because extensive use of /š/ is represented as a peculiarity of one group of Karelian speakers, and laypeople do not seem to recognize that other speakers of Karelian also use it. Furthermore, we can talk about *enregisterment* (Agha 2005). Enregisterment is a language-ideological process, where, e.g., a certain type of sound becomes prominent in a language and begins to carry social meaning (Vaattovaara and Halonen 2015, 71). In northern parts of the Republic of Karelia, the voiceless postalveolar sibilant /š/ carries the meaning of being a speaker of White Sea Karelian.

Although this data set is small, and the study is more like a pilot in nature, it can be asserted that there is a perceptual connection between the form (extensive use of /š/) and the group identified as using it (speakers of White Sea Karelian). However, this /s/ vs. /š/ phenomenon needs additional study to find out what this is all about. Verbal guise tests with very short stimulus that emphasize different types of /s/ are needed as well as interviews with laypeople from all over Karelia. Dialectological as well as folk linguistic studies will be needed to deepen knowledge about the /s/ variation and its social nature.

8 *Pissis* or *Pissa-Liisa* ‘Piss-Lisa’ refers to ill-mannered, cider-drinking teenage girls who wear (tight-fitting) brand-name clothes (Paunonen 2006; Vaattovaara 2013, footnote 3; Lehtonen 2015, 142–144).

8 Conclusion

This article has examined dialect perceptions of Viena Karelian laypeople. It has also explored how these people evaluate and designate different varieties of Karelian. One aim has been to determine the dialect features that are discussed among laypeople, as well as the kinds of dialect differences they are aware of, and how well they can perform in the listening task.

The findings show that, according to the informants, the perceived dialect or language area of White Sea Karelian is much smaller than the dialect area defined by professional linguists. It was common to think that White Sea Karelian is spoken only in the Kalevala National District. Many informants also thought that Paanajärvi does not belong to the dialect area of White Sea Karelian, and that the dialect spoken there is different from the informants' own dialect. The dialect of Paanajärvi was described as *Snečoi language* and heavily influenced by Russian. The dialects spoken in Tunkua and Rukajärvi, in the speaking area of South Karelian, were described as *Nečče language* as well as mixed varieties.

In the listening task, the informants heard samples of Olonets Karelian, Tver Karelian, and Ludian. A few people recognized the Olonets sample as Olonets Karelian or a southern variety of Karelian, but it was also located to the speaking area of White Sea Karelian. The Tver Karelian sample was not located to Central Russia or the speaking area of South Karelian. The sample was mostly placed near Petrozavodsk or in the speaking area of Olonets Karelian. Many informants located the sample of Ludian quite close to the real place. The sample was thought to represent Olonets Karelian or the speech style that is spoken near Petrozavodsk. However, no one named the sample as Ludian, and this was a completely strange designation to most of the informants. The listening task showed that the dialect awareness of Viena Karelians is not very high, and even their 'own' variety was incorrectly located in one case.

When it comes to dialect perceptions, it can be said that differences in vocabulary are readily *available* and much discussed among Viena Karelians. The informants had accurate perceptions about Finnish origin words and their distribution as well as about the influence of Russian. At the phonological level, the quality of consonants, especially plosives, was also *available* amongst the informants. However, the perceptions of the informants were not very *accurate*, and it was common to describe the differences with colloquial terms like *smooth* and *hard*.

At the phonetic level, the variation in /s/ and /š/ was widely commented on by the informants. They had noticed the phenomenon that speakers of White Sea Karelian use /š/ extensively whereas in southern varieties of Karelian /s/ is more common. The speakers of White Sea Karelian were described to 'lisp' or 'speak with š', and speakers of other varieties were said to use the sharp /s/ more. According to the data, there is a perceptual connection between the form (extensive use of /š/) and the group identified as using it (speakers of White Sea Karelian). This connection could also be characterized as semiotic processes of iconization or erasure. By these

processes, people construct ideological representations of linguistic differences.

This study raises many questions: What kind of variation is there in modern day dialects of White Sea Karelian outside the Kalevala National District? Are those dialects really as different from the Kalevala and Jyskyjärvi dialects as the informants suggest? At the phonetic level, it is clear that the abundant use of /š/ is an index of being a speaker of White Sea Karelian, but what is the larger picture? Sociolinguistic as well as sociophonetic methods are required to deepen knowledge of /s/ and /š/ variation in Karelian varieties as well as perceptions about their distribution. Nonetheless, this study has shown that, like many other language communities, this small endangered minority language community has built a social and linguistic identity around a particular type of sibilant.

Data

Recordings of laypeople in Jyskyjärvi and Kalevala: ONA IMS 225 – ONA IMS 238.

Recording archive of Oulu. University of Oulu.

Sample of Olonets Karelian: ONA IMS 212: 2. Recording archive of Oulu. University of Oulu.

Sample of Tver Karelian: SKNA 87:1a. Archive of Finnish language. Institute for the Languages of Finland. Helsinki.

Sample of Ludian: SKNA 110:1. Archive of Finnish language. Institute for the Languages of Finland. Helsinki.

Glossing abbreviations

3SG	third person singular
INE	inessive
PAR	partitive
PL	plural
PR	present tense

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Appendix 1. The informants.

Informants in Jyskyjärvi

Agafia. At the time of the interview, a woman of 75 years of age. Agafia was born in the speaking area of Olonets Karelian but moved to Jyskyjärvi in 1950s. She has had eight years of school in Finnish language.

Akuliina. At the time of the interview, a woman of 50 years of age.

Hilja. At the time of the interview, a woman of 78 years of age. Hilja has relatives in Kalevala, in Paanajärvi, and in Finland, and she has visited Finland many times. In Karelia, she has travelled very little.

Iivo. Middle-aged son of Ortjo.

Irina. At the time of the interview, a woman of 79 years of age. Irina has many Finnish friends, and she has visited Finland, too. Irina has accommodated Finnish tourists.

Lilja. At the moment of the interview, a woman of 78 years of age.

Maikki. At the time of the interview, woman of 79 years of age. Maikki has not visited Finland and has not travelled a lot in Karelia either.

Marina. At the time of the interview, a woman of 72 years of age. Marina has lived in Petrozavodsk and in Vuokkiniemi, too. Marina belongs to the folklore group that performs dances and songs in Karelian and in Finnish. Marina has many friends in Finland, and she has visited Finland many times.

Ortjo. At the time of the interview, a man of 85 years of age.

Polina. Middle-aged daughter of Maikki. Polina lived in Finland at the time of the interview.

Informants in Kalevala

Olga. At the time of the interview, a woman of 72 years of age. Olga has lived in Petrozavodsk, in Borovoi, and in central Russia. Olga has accommodated Finnish tourists, and she has many Finnish friends.

Palaka. At the time of the interview, a woman of 78 years of age. Palaka has accommodated Finnish tourists, but she has not visited Finland and has not travelled a lot in Karelia either.

Tanja. At the time of the interview, a woman of 44 years of age. Tanja is the daughter of Olga. Tanja belongs to an amateur theatre group that uses White Sea Karelian in its performances.

Appendix 2. Transcribed samples of the listening task.

Sample of Olonets Karelian (41 seconds)

ylen puakšuh, pastammo piirua kaiken jyttymie rahtovatruskua, piiraidu, karjalampiiirakak Suomes šanotah karjalampiiirakad meil sanotah šipainiekad, vod niitã pastammo joka pyhiã päiviã, blinua suurdu blinua pienem bli- blinua, lolanjoa [!] kai-kaiken jyttymie pastus- ainos pastammo, a keitämmie, kalarokkua, liharokkua, maimua toičči, kuorihes kuivattuu, kartohkua suorimme da kagriettua – – salaattua kaiken jyttymie.

[Very often we bake pies, all kinds of pies: quark pies, pastries, Karelian pastries, in Finland they say Karelian pastries but we say *šipainiekad* [a kind of pie]. Well those we bake in all days of feasts. Blinis too, we bake all the time: big blinis, smaller blinis, all kinds of blinis. And we boil [different things]: fish soup, meat soup, little fishes sometimes, dried smelts. We prepare potatoes and oats, all kinds of salads.]

Sample of Tver Karelian (21 seconds)

mi se on. yön itettäjäine, päivän põllättäjäine annan mie šiula ruadua yöksi i päiväksi. Ombel sie, yö i päivä, oigei hengiel pl'atenččal, hot miun vunukkain käy yönitettäjän – – yö i päivä. plat'ast, oigie hengie platenččal on, yöksi i päiväksi oma upokojain.

[What is that? He who laments the night, frightens the day. I give you tasks for night and day. You should sew night and day, good spirit for newborn, even though my grandchild goes with lamenter of night. Night and day. Newborn has a good spirit. For night and day, my own deceased.]

Sample of Ludian (44 seconds)

d'oga iżand, d'revnas kudamb eli, d'ärved vaste, hän, obižatelo pidi venehen, venehel tãl no tol'ko ajel' piãliži, ehtade(t)i, vedi mõta heinad, tošt'a haugod tuu ve- venehel vedab, kalad pyydab, veneh om, d'oka taluož, kus oma d'ärved, a vot kel ii ole veneht, se pakičeb, tuleb velhe, andab veneht, mi gi(?), pidab ajada, piã(l)iči d'ärves, nu andab, konz om a veneh d'outai, konz ele d'outai, ei anda veneht, muga, ned mii-ed, pozit'ës, venehed oli me(i)l hubaažed, ei suured venehed, miest yhesa, viiž, kest veneht ema, piã(li)či jaroštob ajada, a venehed vot kut sieteh(e), venehed sietii mõl, siga d'ervnas om muast'er, ei voidu ka mii sietã veneht, a se sietab muaster, zakažib venehen, hän venehen zakazan ottab, sietab venehen, veneh sietaze hongaažest lau-, veneh sietaze hongaažest laudas-, hongain om puu, lujemb i paremb, – – ku kuuz.

[Every house holder in the village, who lived by the lake, he absolutely kept the boat. He just cruised across the lake. They crossed (the lake), shipped some hay. They carried wood by the boat, too. He fishes. There is a boat in every house that is situated by the lake. Well, and who hasn't got a boat, he asks for it. Somebody comes and gives a boat that has to be rowed across the lake. Well, he gives it if it is spare. When it is not spare, he does not give the boat, so. Those who – – in the villages. We had bad boats, not big boats. Nine men, five. – – cross the lake. And boats, how were they built? The boats were built in our area, there is a master in the village. And who could not build a boat then the master builds (it). Orders a boat. He (orders) a boat. Takes an order, builds a boat. The boat is built from Pine board. Pine wood is stronger and better than Spruce.]