

About the South Estonian case inflection

The basic feature of the Finno-Ugric languages is their rich case inflection. In my article, I have presented the case inflection of the four dialects of South Estonian (Võro, Seto, Mulgi, and the Tartu language), which is basically the same as literary North Estonian. Officially, there are fourteen grammatical cases in literary Estonian. However, considering the grammars of the South Estonian dialects, there is no complete agreement on the number of grammatical cases. According to some grammars, for example, the essive case is used, while others say that it is absent from the South Estonian dialects. Several case forms are identical to literary North Estonian (e.g. elativus, adessivus, comitativus), but some case forms have developed in a completely different way than in the North Estonian, e.g. abessivus. In case of inflection, the formation of the partitive and illative cases in particular shows differences. All South Estonian dialects have preserved the unmarked nominative case and the use of the Uralic *i* plural.

Keywords: South Estonian languages, dialects, Võro, Seto, Mulgi, Tartu, nominal inflection, case inflection

ERIK KORMOS