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## FINNISH DIALECT CLASSIFICATIONS

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### Abstract

To the present day, the classification of Finnish dialects has largely observed a division into Western and Eastern dialects. The first grouping of all dialects was undertaken by Lauri Kettunen (1930, 1940). His classification contained ten groups and four mixed dialect groups, as well as 45 subdialects and 71 varieties. Later researchers – Martti Rapola (1947), Terho Itkonen (1964, 1989), and Heikki Paunonen (1991, 2006) – have simplified this division. Paunonen’s (1991) classification, like the earlier ones, is an example of isoglottic dialectology, but his 2006 proposal is strongly based on a structuralist analysis. Kalevi Wiik (2004) applied quantitative methods to Kettunen’s (1940) dialect atlas, while Marjatta Palander (2011) studied non-linguists’ conceptions of regional dialects within the framework of perceptual dialectology. In general, classifications of Finnish dialects are mainly based on phonological features. Morphological and lexical features are used less, and syntactic criteria are seldomly used.

**Keywords:** isoglottic dialectology, dialectometry, perceptual dialectology, Finnish

**Name:** Suomi [suomi]

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## CLASSIFICACIONS DIALECTALS DEL FINÈS

### Resum

Fins a l'actualitat, la classificació dels dialectes finesos ha mantingut en gran part una divisió entre dialectes occidentals i orientals. El primer agrupament de tots els dialectes va ser fet per Lauri Kettunen (1930, 1940). La seva classificació contenia deu grups i quatre grups dialectals mixtos, com també 45 subdialectes i 71 varietats. Investigadors posteriors –Martti Rapola (1947), Terho Itkonen (1964, 1989) i Heikki Paunonen (1991, 2006)– han simplificat aquesta divisió. La classificació de Paunonen (1991), com les anteriors, és un exemple de dialectologia isoglòtica; la seva proposta de 2006 es basa força en una anàlisi estructuralista. Kalevi Wiik (2004) va aplicar mètodes quantitius a l'atles dialectal de Kettunen (1940), mentre que Marjatta Palander (2011) va estudiar les concepcions dels no lingüistes sobre els dialectes regionals en el marc de la dialectologia perceptual. En general, les classificacions dels dialectes finesos es basen principalment en trets fonològics. Els trets morfològics i lèxics s'utilitzen menys, i els criteris sintàctics rarament es fan servir.

**Paraules clau:** dialectologia isoglòtica, dialectometria, dialectologia perceptual, finès

## SUOMEN MURREJAOTTELUT

### Tiivistelmä

Suomen murrejaottelut ovat näihin päiviin asti noudattaneet pääosin jakoa länsi- ja itämurteisiin. Ensimmäinen kaikkia murteita koskeva murreryhmittely on Lauri Kettuselta (1930, 1940). Kettusen jaottelussa on kymmenen ryhmää ja niiden lisäksi neljä sekamurreryhmää. Alaryhmiä on 45 ja varieteetteja 71. Myöhemmät tutkijat – Martti Rapola (1947), Terho Itkonen (1964, 1989) ja Heikki Paunonen (1991, 2006) – ovat yksinkertaistaneet jakoa. Paunosen vuoden 1991 jaottelu edustaa aiempien ryhmittelyjen tavoin traditionaalista, isoglosseihin perustuvaa dialektologiaa, mutta vuoden 2006 ehdotus pohjautuu vahvasti strukturalistiseen analyysiin. Kalevi Wiik (2004) soveltaa Kettusen murrekartastoon (1940) kvantitatiivisen dialektologian menetelmiä. Marjatta Palander (2011) puolestaan selvittää kansandialektologisessa viitekehyksessä ei-lingvistien käsityksiä aluemurteista. Suomen murrejaottelut perustuvat valtaosin fonologisiin piirteisiin. Morfologisia ja leksikaalisia piirteitä on käytetty harvemmin, ja kaikkein harvinaisimpia ovat syntaktiset kriteerit.

**Avainsanat:** isoglosseihin perustuva dialektologia, dialektometria, kansandialektologia, suomi

## 1. Introduction

Finnish (Suomi) is a member of the Finnic language group of the Uralic language family. First language speakers total approximately 4.9 million, while second language speakers constitute some 0.5 million. Outside Finland, Finnish speakers can be found especially in Sweden, Norway and Russia. Finnish is also spoken, for example, in the USA and Australia (Institute for the Languages of Finland; Map 1).

Typologically, Finnish falls between agglutinating and flexion languages. This is the result of language contact that Finnish and Proto-Finnic have had with Germanic, Baltic and Slavic languages and their early forms (Dahl 2008, Saarikivi & Grünthal 2005: 127-129, Lehtinen 2007: 222-245).

The shared proto-language of Finnish and other languages closely related to it is Finnic, which was spoken on the northern and southern shores of the Gulf of Finland from approximately 500 BCE until the first millennium CE. Finnish has descended from the northern dialect of Finnic, whose speakers were spread in the eighth century from western Finland to the Ladoga area (Kallio 2012: 226, 230; 2014: 164-165). This started the separation and development of Finnish, which led to the origins of Western Finnish as well as Old Karelian in the east (Kallio 2017: 7). This theory is also supported by archaeological findings (Lang 2020: 328-331).

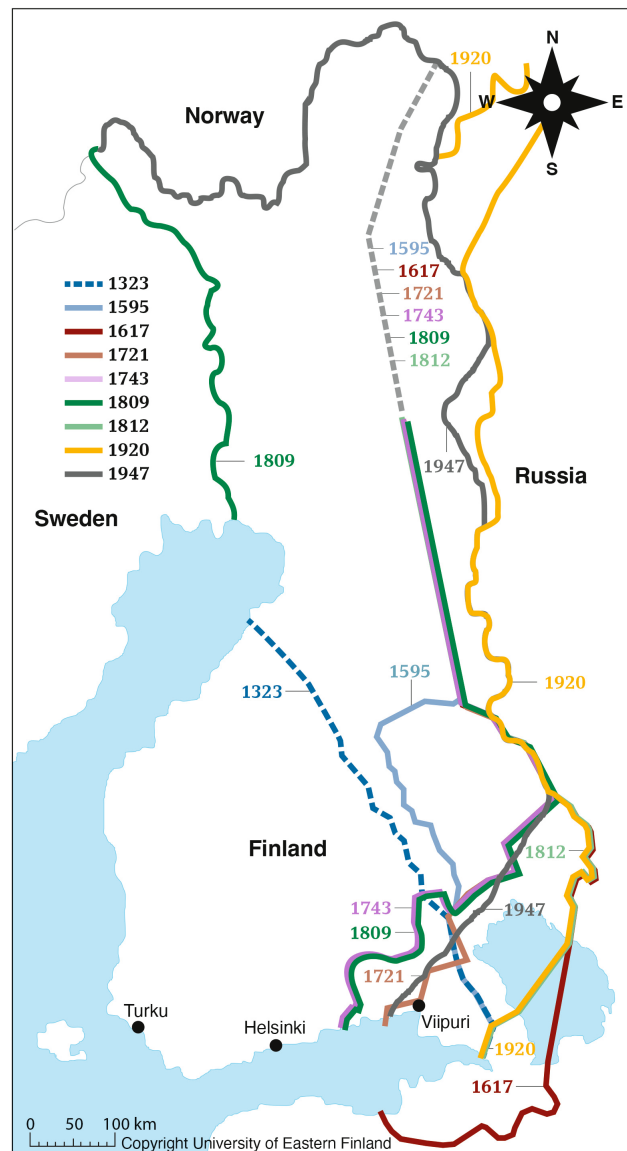


Map 1. The area of the Finnish dialects (marked in blue-grey; based on Grünthal 2020: 6).

Old power relations regarding the government of Finland had a crucial impact on the development of Finnish dialects (Map 2). The Swedes occupied Finland in the era of the Crusades, 1150-1350. During the same period, Swedish migrants settled on the southern and western coastal areas of Finland (Paunonen 2020: 58). Around the turn of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the city of Turku was established on the south-west coast (Salonen, Harjula & Immonen 2021), remaining the capital of Finland until 1809. The South-



western and Häme dialects are the oldest of all the Finnish dialects. As the population spread northwards along the coast, the various dialects of Ostrobothnia appeared.



Map 2. The development of the eastern border of Finland

In the east, the areas of Old Karelian were occupied by Novgorod in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and by Russia at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and the language came under the influence of Russian (Kallio 2017: 13). Old Karelian was the basis for the Eastern dialects of Finnish: The Savo dialects and, finally, the South-eastern Finnish dialects that are based on Viipuri (Vyborg) Karelian. Viipuri was the hub of Eastern Finland and hence the Karelian spoken there was probably affected by Western Finnish as early as

in the Medieval era. Hence, South-eastern Finnish dialects are different in many ways from the Savo dialects (Leskinen 1964: 106-107).

The areas where Finnish dialects were spoken expanded especially from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, when the border of Sweden moved further east and north. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, people from the Savo dialect area migrated to Central Sweden and Southern Norway, which led to the development of the dialect of the so-called Forest Finns (Saloheimo 2009: 11). In 1721, southern areas of South-east Finland which had previously belonged to Sweden were annexed by Russia, influencing the ultimate development of South-eastern Finnish dialects. In 1809, all of Finland transferred to Russian rule as a grand duchy. The new borders of 1809-1812 also influenced the language situation along the western border of Finland in the north, since the river Torne now divided the western dialects of the Far North into two different states. The border remained in place after Finland became independent in 1917, which led to a further differentiation of the dialects. In 2000 the Far North dialects on the Swedish side of the border, Meänkieli, gained minority language status (Arola, Kunnas & Winsa 2011). For their part, the dialects of Finns who migrated from Northern Finland into Northern Norway in the 17<sup>th</sup> century obtained Kven minority language rights in 2005 (Ryymin 2007: 143).

Modern Finnish is based largely on Western Finnish. Written Finnish emerged in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, in particular thanks to the translation activities of the Bishop of Turku, Mikael Agricola (Häkkinen 1994: 79-86). In his prologue to the New Testament (1548), Agricola also proposes for the first time a dialect division within Finnish: he lists the seven provinces of Finland, which all have their own ways of speaking. Agricola does not define the dialects in closer detail, but he states that in his translations he uses mainly the language of Finland (of the Turku area), i.e., the South-western dialect. The South-western basis for written Finnish was also supported by other influential figures at the turn of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, such as the legal translator Ljungo Tuomaanpoika in his Finnish translation of the Swedish peasants' law (1601; Ulkuniemi 1975: 9). The dialects of Ostrobothnia began to appear in written Finnish from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards (Häkkinen 1994: 446).

In 1733 Bartholdus Vhael published a grammar of Finnish. Vhael mentions two dialects, by which he means the Western and Eastern dialects. Somewhat later, in 1777, Erik Lencqvist published in the Åbo Tidningar magazine the first study of the Finnish dialects, in which he divided the dialects into three main groups: 1) Southern Finnish, or the Turku dialect, 2) the Ostrobothnian dialect with its Häme and Satakunta variants, and 3) the Savo dialect, which included, for instance, the Karelian and Ingrian Finnish dialects.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century was a time of national romanticism in Finland, enhanced by the discovery of the expressive richness of Eastern Finnish folk poetry. It was also the period during which written Finnish underwent standardisation. This process was the outcome of the so-called battle of the dialects, which ended in a compromise between the Western and Eastern dialects (Häkkinen 1994: 446-451).

The classification of the Finnish dialects became established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century into Eastern and Western ones. In his linguistic dissertation in 1801, Henric Gabriel Porthan identifies two main dialects, the more common of which (i.e., the Western dialect) is spoken in the major part of the country, especially in the coastal areas. This is the language of literature and the church. The other main dialect is the Savo dialect, which is spoken in Eastern and Central Finland. In the prologue to his grammar (1824), Reinhold von Becker also mentions two main dialects, which he calls the Häme and Savo dialects. Von Becker lists (op. cit.: IV-V) phonological and morphological differences between and within them that have remained relevant in the classification of regional dialects to this day. During the battle of the dialects in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Von Becker stood up for the Eastern dialects. Another significant developer of written Finnish was Gustav Renvall, a supporter of Western dialects. In 1840 he published a grammar of Finnish, in which the main dialects are for the first time labelled as Western and Eastern dialects. Renvall summarises phonological and morphological differences between them (op. cit.: 6), but he states that the dialect division cannot be defined exactly.

In 1848 Anders Warelius published a study of the inhabitants and peoples of Finland. He also defined the border between the Western and Eastern dialects, which

he had himself mapped by travelling on foot from the coast of the Gulf of Finland to South Ostrobothnia. As his criterion he used the realisation of the weak grade of *t*, which is one of the most typical distinguishing features between the Western and Eastern dialects (e.g., Western *meilän* or *meirän* vs. Eastern *meiän*, Standard Finnish *meidän* ‘our’ op. cit.: 76). Warelius (op. cit.: 76-77) lists the civil parishes using Western or Eastern dialects. On the basis of his account, it is possible to draw a line on the map (Paunonen 1991: 78) which largely corresponds to the 20<sup>th</sup> century understanding of the borders of the Western and Eastern dialects, but Warelius comments that the division is not a strict one. He also presents both the Western and Eastern features found in the northern Kainuu dialects (op. cit.: 85-90), which can be considered the first steps towards the recognition of the special status of the northern dialects (Leino, Hyvönen & Salmenkivi, 2006: 34; see chapter 2.4.2). The study compiled by Warelius is the most detailed account of the dialectal differences prior to the histories of sound changes at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and Lauri Kettunen’s volume series *Finnish Dialects I-III*, which was published in the 1930s and 1940s and began the classification of Finnish dialects on the basis of their phonological, morphological and lexical features.

## 2. Classifications

This section contains the different classifications of the Finnish dialects that have been presented in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century: Lauri Kettunen (1930, 1940), Martti Rapola (1947), Terho Itkonen (1964, 1989), Heikki Paunonen (1991, 2006), Kalevi Wiik (2004) and Marjatta Palander (2011).

### 2.1 Lauri Kettunen (1930, 1940)

Lauri Kettunen (1885-1963) was a scholar who investigated the history of sound changes in Finnic languages. In the field of Finnish linguistics, he is known particularly as the creator of a dialect atlas of Finnish. Kettunen was the sole author of a

publication series titled *Finnish Dialects*, which was published in the 1930s and 1940s and accounted for all civil parish dialects of the language.

### 2.1.1 Framework: Isoglottic dialectology

Kettunen collected his data by travelling from one civil parish to another and interviewing dialect speakers of different ages. In the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were over 500 civil parishes in Finland. Kettunen recorded his interviewees' speech with a phonograph and a parlograph and often checked the texts he transcribed together with his informants (Kettunen 1930a: XXIV). The recorded dialect samples formed the basis for Kettunen's publication *Finnish dialects I. Dialect samples* (1930a). The second volume, *Dialect areas* (1930b), was based on the features of the phonology, morphology, and lexis. The third volume was entitled *Dialect atlas* (1940a), which included a volume of commentary (1940b).

The published dialect atlas includes 213 maps, but at the fieldwork stage the maps numbered as many as about 400 (Kettunen 1930a: XXII). Most of the maps describe the geographic distribution of sound features. There are some ten features that are mainly morphological, a single morphosyntactic feature and some lexical features. The lexical features nevertheless also focus on phonemic variation. Strictly syntactic dialect features are not included in the atlas; even the later Finnish dialect classifications do not always make references to syntax (Table 1).

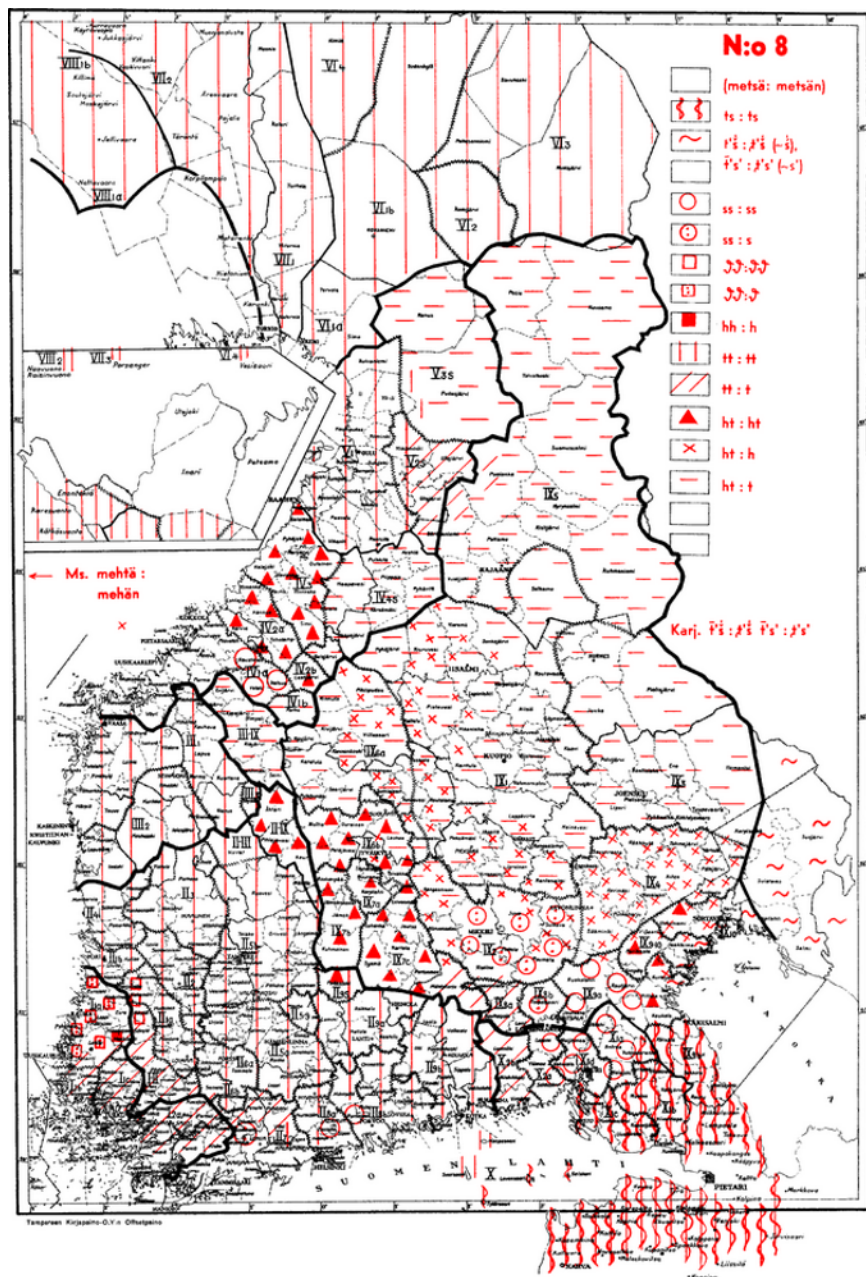
Language domain	Features
Phonology	Gemination of consonants before a long vowel or a diphthong ( <i>sannoo</i> / <i>sanoo</i> 's/he says'); Variants of the weak grade of <i>t</i> ( <i>padan</i> / <i>paran</i> / <i>palan</i> / <i>paan</i> 'pot', gen.); The variation <i>mennä</i> / <i>männä</i> 'to go'.
Nominal morphology	Suffix of the abessive ( <i>kalatta</i> / <i>kalata</i> / <i>kalati</i> / <i>kalat</i> 'without a fish'); Plural genitive ( <i>vakkain</i> / <i>vakkajen</i> / <i>vakkojen</i> / <i>vakkoin</i> 'basket'); Possessive suffix of the 3rd person ( <i>kätensä</i> / <i>kätesä</i> / <i>kätese</i> / <i>kä(t)teese(n)</i> 'her/his hand').

Verbal morphology	Active past participle ( <i>nähnyt / nähny / nähnä / nähnyssä / näht</i> 'seen'); Plural 3rd person forms of two-syllable verbs ( <i>antaa / antaavat / antaat</i> 'they give').
Morphosyntax	Variation between the personal suffix and the passive in the verb forms of the plural 1st person ( <i>me annamme / me annetaan</i> 'we give').
Lexicon	The conjunction <i>jahka / jakka</i> 'as long as'; The interjection for cows: <i>vat'sii / vat'siihen / vassii</i> 'hold still!'; <i>savu / savvu / sauhu</i> 'smoke'.

Table 1. Some of the features used by Kettunen in his classification of the Finnish dialects

### 2.1.2 Classification of dialects and subdialects

Kettunen divides the dialects of Finnish into ten groups (see Map 3; Table 2). The preliminary classification is presented in the volume *Dialect areas* (1930b) but it has been corrected in some respects for the dialect atlas (1940a). The classification is based on the broader division into Western and Eastern dialects (for mentions of the Western group, see 1930a: XXXV and for the eastern group, 1930b: 103). In addition to the ten main groups, Kettunen identifies four mixed dialect groups that are located on the borders of the dialect groups proper. There are also smaller mixed or transitional areas within the dialect groups. Furthermore, Kettunen makes references to the dialect of the Forest Finns (in central Scandinavia) with respect to numerous features. According to him, this dialect is based on the language of people who moved from the external Western Savo dialect area to Central Sweden and Norway in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (e.g., 1940b: 4, 9, 277). Later historical research (Saloheimo 2009) argues that the majority of the migrants came from further east, i.e., Southern Savo. Kettunen does not classify the dialect of the Forest Finns as a separate dialect group.



Map 3. An example of the maps in the dialect atlas of Finnish: the variation of the *ts* cluster (Kettunen 1940a: Map 8)

In Kettunen's maps, South-eastern Finland (the dialects of Viipuri and the northern and western coasts of Lake Ladoga) belongs to Finland. These territories were lost in 1944 to the Soviet Union, and their population moved to other parts of Finland as resettled Karelians. Dialect maps of Finnish published after Kettunen's work typically also include these old South-east Finnish dialects. The Northern Swedish and Northern Norwegian dialects of Finnish mentioned by Kettunen (VIII, VI, VII) were acknowledged

as Meänkieli and Kven minority languages at the beginning of the 21st century (see Section 1).

Dialect	Number	Subdialects	Varieties
South-west	I	1 West 2 East	3 2
Turku uplands	I-II		1
Häme	II	1 Lower Satakunta 2 Southern Upper Satakunta 3 Northern Upper Satakunta 4 Coastal Upper Satakunta 5 Central Häme 5-9 Hauho-Tuulos group 6 South-West 7 Vihti group 8 Nurmijärvi-Mäntsälä group 8-9 Orimattila group 9 South-east	2 1 1 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 3
Mixed dialect of Häme and Savo (Ähtäri)	II-IX		1
Häme-Ostrobothnian mixed dialect (Virrat)	II-III		1
South Ostrobothnia	III	1 North 2 South 3 Töysä	1 1 1
South Ostrobothnian Savo dialect	III-IX		1
Central Ostrobothnia	IV	1 Vetelinjoki 2 Lestijoki 3 Kalajoki-Pyhäjoki 4 Kalajoki-Pyhäjoki uplands	2 2 1 1
North Ostrobothnia (Oulu)	V	1 Coast 2 Southern Uplands 3 Northern Uplands	1 1 1
Kemijoki	VI	1 Kemi 2 Kemijärvi 3 Kuolajärvi 4 Kittilä (and Vesisaari in Norway)	2 1 1 1
Tornionjoki	VII	1 Riverside in Finland and Sweden 2 Vittanki (in Sweden) 3 Porsanger (in Norway)	1 1 1
Dialects of Jällivaara (Sweden) and the fjords of Norway	VIII	1 Nattavaara and Soutojärvi (in Sweden) 2 Naavuono and Raisinvuono (in Norway)	2 1



Savo	IX	1 North Savo	1
		2 South Savo	1
		3 Northern part of Eastern external group	1
		4 Southern part of Eastern external group	1
		5 Northern external group	1
		6 Western external group	2
		7 South-western external group	3
		8 South-Saimaa group of the Southern external group	2
		9 Käkisalmi group of the Southern external group	2
		9-10 Parikkala-Jaakkima group of the Southern external group	1
10 Sortavala group of the Southern external group	1		
Viipuri	X	1 East	4
		2 West	2

Table 2. Finnish dialects and subdialects (Kettunen 1940a)

## 2.2 Martti Rapola (1947)

Martti Rapola (1891-1972) was a scholar of Old Written Finnish and the history of sound changes in dialects. He presents his dialect classification in his book *Introduction to Finnish dialects* (1947), which has subsequently been published in three editions (1962, 1969 and 1990). The classification remains the same in all editions.

### 2.2.1 Framework: Isoglottic dialectology

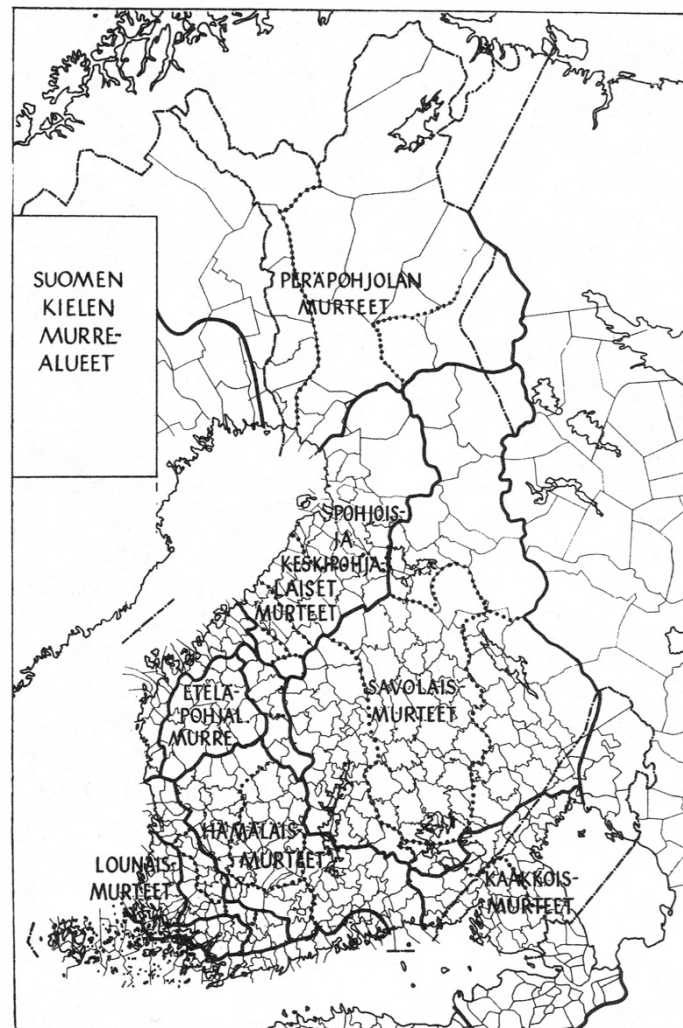
Rapola emphasised the significance of phonological history, but in his examination of the sound changes he also accounted for morphology. In this sense, he deviated from the neogrammarian tradition that prevailed at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. When discussing dialectal differences, he not only described the phonology and morphology but also paid attention to lexicon and made some mention of syntax (Rapola 1947: 21-22, 53-55; Table 3).

Language domain	Features
Phonology	Gradation of <i>k</i> after <i>l</i> or <i>r</i> ( <i>jälki</i> : <i>jäljet</i> / <i>jälet</i> 'track' sg: pl; <i>märkä</i> : <i>märjät</i> / <i>märää</i> / <i>märät</i> 'wet' sg : pl; Representation of <i>tv</i> in the word <i>latva</i> 'top' ( <i>latva</i> / <i>lalva</i> / <i>larva</i> ); The variation <i>kylpeä</i> / <i>kylpöä</i> 'to bathe'.
Nominal morphology	The accusative of personal pronouns ( <i>minun</i> / <i>minut</i> 'I', <i>hänen</i> / <i>hänet</i> 's/he').
Verbal morphology	Suffix of imperative 2pl ( <i>ottakaa</i> / <i>ottoa(ten)</i> 'take').
Syntax	The construction <i>tulla tehtyä</i> / <i>tulla tehdyksi</i> 'become done/get to be done'.
Lexicon	<i>ehtoo</i> / <i>ilta</i> 'evening', <i>puhua</i> / <i>haastaa</i> 'speak', <i>takki</i> / <i>nuttu</i> 'coat', <i>nisu</i> / <i>vehnä</i> 'wheat', <i>karitsa</i> / <i>vuo(n)na</i> 'lamb'.

Table 3. Some of the features used by Rapola in his classification of the Finnish dialects

### 2.2.2 Classification of dialects and subdialects

Rapola (1947) begins his dialect classification with the main division into Western and Eastern dialects (Map 4 and Table 4). He utilizes the sound change histories that had thus far been written, Kettunen's dialect atlas, and other dialect studies. Rapola considers the Western dialects to include the South-west and Häme dialects, South Ostrobothnia dialect, Central and North Ostrobothnia dialects, and Far North dialects. The Eastern dialects consist of the Savo and South-east Finnish dialects. He names seven dialect groups proper. In addition, he identifies three transitional subdialects near the South-west and two near the Häme dialects (Rapola 1947: 84-85, 92-93) and two transitional areas on the west side of the Savo dialects, the neighbouring South Ostrobothnia and the Häme dialects (Rapola 1947: 101). He marks further internal dialect boundaries within the Central Ostrobothnia dialects and a distinct subdialect in southern Central Savo.



Map 4. Finnish dialect groups (Rapola 1990: 103). (CC-BY-SA Martti Rapola)

Dialect	Subdialects	Varieties
South-west		1
Transitional dialects near the South-west	Turku uplands	1
	Somero and Somerniemi	2
	West Uusimaa	1
Häme	Upper Satakunta	1
	Central Häme	1
	South Häme	1
	South-east	1
Transitional dialects near Häme	Lower Satakunta	1
	Pori region	1
South Ostrobothnia		1
Central and North Ostrobothnia		4

Far North	Kemijärvi	1
	Kemi	1
	Tornio (in Finland and Sweden)	1
	Ruija (in Norway)	1
Savo	Central Savo	2
	East Savo	1
	West Savo	1
	Kainuu	1
Transitional dialects near Savo	Ähtäri-Keuruu	1
	Evijärvi-Soini	1
South-east	East side of Vuoksi	1
	West side of Vuoksi	1

Table 4. Finnish dialects and subdialects (Rapola, 1947)

### 2.3 Terho Itkonen (1964, 1989)

Terho Itkonen (1933-1998) was a scholar of Finnish with a broad range of research interests. He developed fieldwork methods for the collection of place names and morphology and founded the Morphology Archive of the University of Helsinki. He published important studies of the origins and development of the Finnic languages as well as a number of publications devoted to language planning and guidance. He also had an interest in Finnish lexical etymology. Itkonen was one of the first in Finland to apply concepts that drew on American structuralist linguistics, but he was critical of generativist theories.

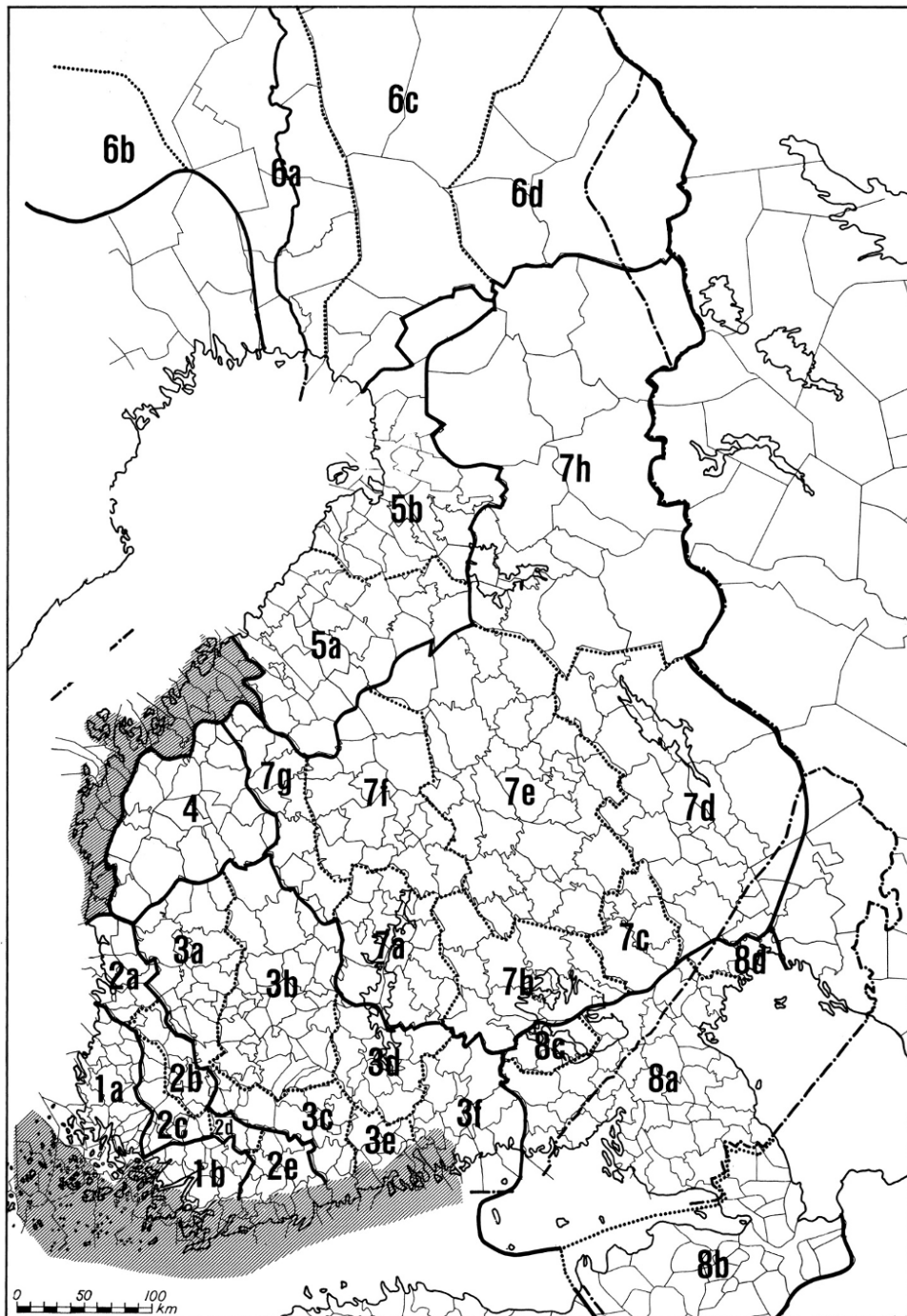
#### 2.3.1 Framework: Isoglottic dialectology

Itkonen does not define the characteristics of Finnish dialect classification, since he is engaged in using the classification to guide his own research. In his own publications Itkonen discusses features of the phonology and morphology but also the lexical and syntactic differences to be found in dialects. His characterizations of Finnish dialects are based on earlier studies as well as on extensive archive materials and also his own fieldwork.

### 2.3.2 Classification of dialects and subdialects

Itkonen presents the classification of Finnish dialects in his doctoral thesis on the final *k* sound in Proto-Finnic (1964: 30-32). He states that the division is broadly based on Rapola's groupings. Itkonen's classification has eight main groups, and he also identifies five transitional dialect groups, of which the transitional dialects between the South-west and Häme dialects form an independent group similar to the other main dialect areas. Itkonen also further defines the border between the Savo and South-east Finnish dialects as corresponding to that presented in the study made by Mielikäinen (1981).

In the *Nurmijärvi dialect book*, published in 1989, the western border of the Kainuu dialects is updated according to Räisänen (1972) and the southern border of the Päijät-Häme dialects is corrected (Itkonen 1989: 343). The names of transitional dialect groups are shortened and specified, and the term interdialect is introduced. The dialect of the Forest Finns, which is no longer spoken, has been left out (Map 5).



Map 5. Finnish dialect groups (Itkonen 1989: 343). (CC-BY-SA Terho Itkonen)

The dialect groups are presented in Table 5. Groups 1-6 belong to the Western dialects and groups 7-8 to the Eastern ones.

Dialect	Number	Subdialects	Varieties
South-west	1	a Northern b Eastern	1 1
Interdialects between the South-west and Häme dialects	2	a Pori region b Lower Satakunta c Turku uplands d Somero e West Uusimaa	1 1 1 1 1
Häme	3	a Upper Satakunta b Central Häme c South Häme d South-East Häme	1 1 1 3
South Ostrobothnia	4		1
Central and North Ostrobothnia	5	a Central Ostrobothnia b North Ostrobothnia	1 1
Far North	6	a Tornio (in Finland and Sweden) b Gällivare (in Sweden) c Kemi d Kemijärvi e Fjord dialects in Norway	1  1 1 1 1
Savo	7	a Päijät-Häme b South Savo c Interdialects of the Savonlinna region d North Karelia e North Savo f Central Finland g Interdialects along the line Keuruu-Evijärvi h Kainuu	1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1
South-east	8	a South-east proper b Ingermanland c Interdialects of the Lappeenranta region d Interdialects of the Sortavala region	1 1 1 1

Table 5. Finnish dialects and subdialects (Itkonen 1989)

Itkonen's classification has been in general use into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, although recent research has also introduced new alternatives alongside it.

## 2.4 Heikki Paunonen (1991, 2006)

The East-West division of Finnish dialects, dating back to the 18th century, was questioned in the early 1990s by Heikki Paunonen (1946-). Paunonen is Itkonen's student, who in the early stages of his career contributed to the creation of the Morphology Archive. He is a dialectologist and a pioneer in Finnish sociolinguistics, leading an extensive research project on urban spoken language in the 1970s and 1980s. Paunonen is known especially as an expert in Helsinki vernacular and slang.

### 2.4.1 Framework: Isoglottic dialectology

In his article of 1991, Paunonen criticizes Rapola's (1962) feature division for distinguishing between the Western and Eastern dialects. Rapola's East-West division is based on a phase in history when  $*\delta$ , the Proto-Finnic counterpart of weak  $t$ , disappeared from the Eastern dialects but was maintained in the Western ones. This occurred 600-900 years ago. Paunonen argues that Rapola's division is therefore based on language historical reconstructions and does not take the present status of the dialects into account. Paunonen pays particular attention to the position of three northern dialect groups (Central and North Ostrobothnian and Far North dialects). In Rapola's classification, these dialects belonged in the Western dialects, which he justified with the population history of the areas: the Finnish language population was originally from the West of Finland and speakers of Eastern dialects arrived later.

Paunonen examines the northern dialects in terms of the key central Western and Eastern phonological and morphological features mentioned by Rapola (1962). In addition, he examines 115 words, some of which are clearly Western and others Eastern in origin. (Table 6.) With this selection of features, Paunonen demonstrates that the northern dialects have elements of both Western and Eastern dialects.



Language domain	Features
Phonology	Representation of <i>ts</i> ( <i>mettä</i> : <i>mettän</i> , <i>mehtä</i> : <i>mehtän</i> 'forest' gen. sg) Gradation of <i>st</i> ( <i>pestä</i> / <i>pessä</i> 'to wash') Variation of <i>hiihtää</i> / <i>hihtää</i> / <i>hihtaa</i> 'to ski'.
Nominal morphology	Inessive ( <i>talossa</i> / <i>talosa</i> 'in a house') Genitive pl <i>poikain</i> / <i>poikien</i> / <i>pojitten</i> 'boy' Comparative <i>pa(r)ree</i> / <i>parempi</i> 'better'.
Verbal morphology	Suffix of 3rd person sg ( <i>juo</i> / <i>juopi</i> 's/he drinks').
Syntax	The construction <i>tulla tehtyä</i> / <i>tulla tehynsi</i> 'become done/get to be done'.
Lexicon	<i>kiiski</i> / <i>rökäs</i> 'ruffe', <i>kaali</i> / <i>naatti</i> 'root vegetable top', <i>kettu</i> / <i>repo</i> 'fox', <i>vihta</i> / <i>vasta</i> 'sauna whisk', <i>nisu</i> / <i>vehnä</i> 'wheat'.

Table 6: Some features used by Paunonen for the classification of Northern Finnish dialects

Paunonen's (1991: 93; 2006) account of the position of the South-western dialects also deviates from the traditional. Lencqvist (1777), too, considered the Turku dialect so different from the rest that he regarded it as one of the three main dialects of Finnish. Paunonen (2006) presents, from a synchronic-structural perspective, several features of phonotaxis, phonology and morphology in the South-west dialects that distinguish them typologically from the other Finnish dialects. This special position of the South-west dialects is also brought up by Mielikäinen (2001) in her analysis of the hierarchy of isoglosses in Finnish dialects.

#### 2.4.2 Classification of dialects and subdialects

Paunonen's earlier dialect classification (1991) has three main groups: 1) pure Western dialects (South-west, Häme and South Ostrobothnia dialects), 2) pure Eastern dialects (Savo and South-east dialects) and 3) Northern mixed dialects (Central and North Ostrobothnia and Far North dialects). Distinguishing the northern dialects as their own main group is supported by the study by Leino, Hyvönen & Salmenkivi (2006), where the grouping of the dialects is investigated by clustering 9,000 lexical maps. The lexical data indicate that, in addition to the dialects of Central and North Ostrobothnia and the Far North, the Kainuu dialects could also be included in the Northern group (Leino, Hyvönen & Salmenkivi 1996: 33, 36-37).

In his article discussing the position of the South-west dialects, Paunonen (2006: 268) concludes that there are four main dialect groups, including 1) the South-west dialects, 2) Western dialects (transitional South-west, Häme, and South Ostrobothnia dialects), 3) Eastern dialects (Savo and South-east dialects) and 4) Northern dialects (Central and North Ostrobothnia and the Far North dialects). Both divisions into either three or four main groups can be considered fully justified. It seems, however, that researchers have difficulty in relinquishing the old East-West division that is maintained by older academic textbooks.

### *2.5 Kalevi Wiik (2004)*

Kalevi Wiik (1932-2015) was Professor of Phonetics, publishing in the fields of phonetics and Finnish morphophonology. His work also included much-debated studies on the prehistory of Finns and Europeans. Wiik had an interest in Finnish dialects, and he published academic and popular books on the subject.

#### 2.5.1 Framework: Dialectometry

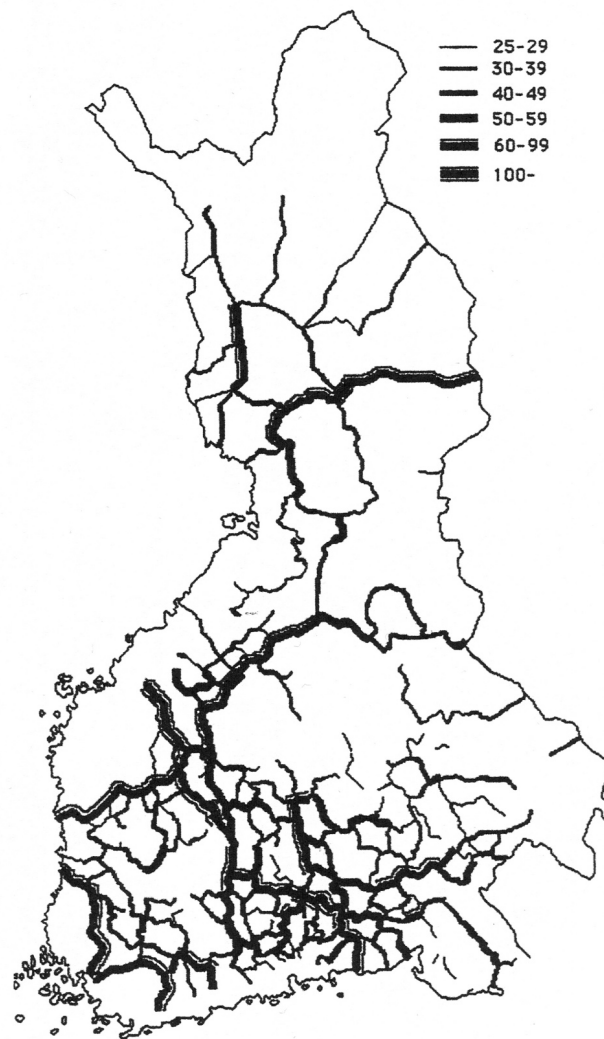
As his data Wiik (2004) uses the 213 maps on phonology and morphology in Kettunen's (1940a) dialect atlas to examine the strictness of the dialect borders. His method belongs to the field of dialectometry. Wiik calculates manually how many features change their representations on the borders of each civil parish. Besides dialect borders, Wiik examines the density of distinct dialects, i.e., to what extent features characteristic of specific dialects are represented in different parts of Finland. He defines the densities based on the characteristic features that are mentioned by Rapola (1969) and Kettunen (1930b) and included in Kettunen's dialect atlas. For example, features indicating the difference between Eastern and Western dialects are 40 in total. By counting the percentages of Western and Eastern features in each civil parish, one can identify the core areas of Eastern and Western dialects (Wiik 2004: 50-55). By using the same method, Wiik has also deciphered the attestation percentages of all main dialects (e.g., the South-west, Häme, and Savo dialects).

Wiik illuminates the heterogeneity and homogeneity of dialect groups by calculating the distance of each civil parish dialect to other dialects within the group. In addition to Wiik, Kettunen's dialect atlas has been used as data for quantitative research by Sheila Embleton and Eric S. Wheeler (1997, 2000), and also by Kaj Syrjänen, Terhi Honkola, Jyri Lehtinen, Antti Leino and Outi Vesakoski (2016). Syrjänen et al. apply the methods of population genetics to the data. Using quantitative methods, these studies also examine similarities and differences across civil parish dialects and how the dialects are grouped.

#### 2.5.2 Classification of dialects and subdialects

Wiik's calculations reveal some inconsistencies in Kettunen's dialect divisions. It appears that Kettunen did not always place the borders between or within dialect groups in the places where the differences were the strongest. At least in some cases, Kettunen's decisions may have been based on the representation of some individual feature that weighed in significance over the others (Wiik 2004: 205, 246).

Wiik also compares his calculation method to other researchers' interpretations of the dialect borders. More comprehensive research data in newer studies have specified the dialect classifications further. Using Kettunen's maps, Wiik (2004: 29) compiled all of his dialect borders, with six different strengths, as shown in Map 6.



Map 6. A compilation map of the dialect borders of Lauri Kettunen's dialect atlas (Wiik 2004: 29). (CC-BY-SA Kalevi Wiik)

## 2.6 Marjatta Palander (2011)

Marjatta Palander (1955-) is a dialectologist and sociolinguist who has studied in particular changes in the Eastern dialects of Finnish. She is one of the first researchers in Finland working in the field of folk linguistics and folk dialectology.

### 2.6.1 Framework: Perceptual dialectology

Folk dialectological research began in Finland in the 2000s. It is largely based on Dennis R. Preston's theories (1989, 1999) concerning non-linguists' language

awareness and attitudes. The methods of research include interviews, questionnaires, drawing mental maps, recognition tests of regional dialects, the study of dialect literature and imitations, dialect translation, and self-reporting tests (Mielikäinen & Palander 2014: 21-25).

The object of research in Palander’s study (2011) consisted of young people aged 20-30, who represented Eastern Finland and the capital city area of Helsinki. Their task was to draw on a map of Finland what they considered the regional dialect areas to be, to name the dialects, and to characterize them, preferably by using linguistic examples. The study involved 108 Eastern Finnish participants and 116 Helsinki participants.

The most common observations of dialect features concern the first- and second-person singular pronouns, the representations of the weak grade of *t*, and primary gemination, which occur in parts of both Eastern and Western dialects. The observations are mostly correct, but the imitations of the features also contain hyperdialectal forms. The observations concern mainly phonology and lexicon, less frequently morphology, and least of all syntax (Table 7).

Grammar field	Features
Phonology	<i>r</i> instead of Standard Finnish <i>d</i> in the Häme dialect; diphthongization of <i>aa</i> , <i>ää</i> in the Savo dialect ( <i>mua</i> , <i>piä</i> in Standard Finnish <i>maa</i> ‘ground’, <i>pää</i> ‘head’); Gemination in the dialect of North Karelia ( <i>pannaani</i> , in Standard Finnish <i>banaani</i> ‘banana’).
Nominal morphology	<i>minä</i> / <i>mie</i> / <i>miä</i> / <i>mä</i> / <i>mää</i> ‘I’.
Verbal morphology	Imperfect with the analogous <i>-si</i> mark in the dialect of Turku ( <i>istusin</i> , in Standard Finnish <i>istuin</i> ‘I sat’).
Syntax	Singular second person verb construction in the Helsinki dialect ( <i>kun sä teet</i> ‘as you do’ meaning ‘as it is done’); Questions without clitic <i>-ko</i> , <i>-kö</i> in the South Karelian dialect ( <i>kuulit sie</i> , in Standard Finnish <i>kuulitko sinä</i> ‘did you hear’).
Lexicon	<i>notta</i> in the dialect of Ostrobothnia, in Standard Finnish <i>että</i> ‘that’; <i>kläppi</i> ‘child’ in the dialect of Lapland; Interrogative particle <i>tokko</i> ‘whether’ in the Savo dialect.

Table 7. Some of the most prominent features used by non-linguists in their description of the Finnish dialects (Palander 2011)

## 2.6.2 Classification of dialects

Non-linguists typically name the dialects on the basis of historical provinces (e.g., Savo dialect), sometimes also their inhabitants (e.g., dialect of the Savo people). Finns also mention a few urban dialects. Laypersons do not see dialects as hierarchical, for example as Western and Eastern dialects that divide further into subdialects, but rather the dialects named after single localities or larger areas are considered to be at the same level.

Dialect areas drawn by young people deviate from linguistic dialect maps, but the respondents clearly also have shared knowledge about dialects' names and areas. Dialects that are geographically more distant are placed on the map more imprecisely than those that are spoken close by, and the descriptions of more distant dialects also tend to be vaguer. Dialect impressions are affected not only by the respondents' own experiences but also by popular culture and the entertainment industry, as well as by oral traditional knowledge passed down from older generations. All in all, the respondents representing the capital city area have less knowledge of regional dialects than do the Eastern Finns (Table 8).

<b>Regional dialects by non-linguists</b>	<b>Regional dialects by linguists</b>
Lapland	Far North
Savo	North Savo
Turku	South-west
Ostrobothnia	South Ostrobothnia
Karelia	North Karelia and/or South-east
Häme	Häme
Oulu	North Ostrobothnia
North Karelia	North Karelia
Tampere	Häme
Central Finland	Central Finland
The slang of Stadi	
Kainuu	Kainuu
Rauma	South-west
South Karelia	South-east
Helsinki	South Häme, West Uusimaa and Häme

Table 8. The most frequently mentioned perceptual Finnish dialects by young eastern and southern Finns (Palander 2011: 35) and their corresponding linguistic labels

One of the regional dialects identified by non-linguists is the slang of Stadi, or old Helsinki slang (*stadi* is a slang name for Helsinki, the capital of Finland, from Swedish *stad* ‘city’). The traditional dialect divisions do not include urban dialects in the Finnish dialect areas. Old Helsinki slang is a mixed variety of Finnish, Swedish and Russian and it developed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (Lehtonen & Paunonen 2022: 125-128). Because residents are increasingly moving from rural areas to urban centres, non-linguists today regard the colloquial languages of the largest cities as regional dialects.

### 3. Discussion

The earliest mentions of Finnish regional dialects date from 1548 in Agricola’s Finnish translation of the New Testament. According to Agricola, all seven of Finland’s provinces have their own ways of speaking. The provinces he mentions are all located in present-day Southern and Central Finland, and the most prominent of them is the Turku or South-western regional dialect, which he selected as the basis for his Written Finnish. The conception of two main dialect areas, Western and Eastern, arose in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and became an established division in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Dialect groupings proper begin in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Finnish dialects have been classified within the frameworks of Isoglottic and Perceptual Dialectology and Dialectometry (Table 9).

Year	Isoglottic Dialectology	Perceptual Dialectology	Dialectometry
1900-1949	Kettunen (1930a, b, 1940a, b) Rapola (1947)		
1950-1999	Itkonen (1964, 1989) Paunonen (1991)		
2000>	Paunonen (2006)	Palander (2011)	Wiik (2004)

Table 9. Analysis of different theoretical frameworks in Finnish dialectology

The oldest classification (Kettunen) represents Isoglottic Dialectology, as do Rapola's and Itkonen's classifications, which are also based on Kettunen's work albeit by elaborating and updating it. Paunonen's three-way division (1991) also belongs in the field of Isoglottic Dialectology. The main focus in all these classifications is on phonological variation. Morphological and lexical phenomena are also included but syntactic features are rare.

The newer trends in dialectology only arise in the classifications produced in the 2000s. Wiik uses Kettunen's atlas but takes a quantitative, dialectometric approach to the features presented. Paunonen's (2006) division into four main groups is based especially on a structural examination of the South-western dialects, with an emphasis on the impact of sound changes on the morphological system. Palander's folk linguistic research, in turn, describes non-linguists' impressions of Finnish regional dialects.

Digital methods facilitate the study of extensive data sets, and lexical distribution maps have already been used to test the traditional West-East division. Over the past few decades, the study of Finnish dialects has also made successful use of new syntactic theories. Dialect syntax has been examined in, for example, the following research projects: FinDiaSyn 2008-2011, SUBEXPRESS 2011-2014, and KATVE 2018-2022. Syntax has still to a great extent been overlooked, but it may quite possibly offer new, supplementary perspectives on the division of dialects.

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