

KARL PAJUSALU, HELLE METSLANG, KÜLLI HABICHT

University of Tartu

karl.pajusalu@ut.ee, helle.metslang@ut.ee, kylli.habicht@ut.ee

## **Polar question markers in the Baltic region**

In the Baltic language area, the sources of polar question markers are largely similar. In our paper we focus on grammaticalization of interrogative particles in various Finnic and Baltic languages and dialects of the region, i.e. Estonian, Southern Estonian, Livonian, Latvian, Latgalian, and Lithuanian. The results of our study indicate that in these languages polar question markers have developed primarily from disjunctive and conjunctive coordination markers. Common features of particles, driven by language contacts, can be the result of contact-induced grammaticalization, development analogous to that of a neighboring language or the borrowing of a linguistic form together with its polysemy in the source language. We study also separate developments based on principles of grammaticalization and the borrowing of linguistic forms in one particular function. The formation of polar question markers demonstrates diverse connections between languages of the Baltic region.