

- 1358 Stipa 1990: 115–116; Nuorteva 1999: 216–217.
 1359 Aeschillus Petraeus: *Linguae Finnicae brevis institutio* 1649; Matthias Martinius: *Hodegus Finnicus* 1689.
 1360 Vihonen 1983: 124.
 1361 See e.g. Korhonen 1986: 28–33.

Matthias Alexander Castrén and the Finnish Grammar

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The first attempts to describe the Finnish language through grammatical representations were made for pedagogical and religious purposes. Towards the end of the 16th century, two Finnish students of the Jesuit seminary in Olmütz, Olaus Sundergelteus and Johannes Jussoila, are said to have been given the task of making out a Finnish grammar to aid with the Counter-Reformation.¹³⁵⁸ Obviously the attempt failed, as anything resembling a Finnish grammar from that period of time has not been preserved. The first Finnish grammar books¹³⁵⁹ were published in the 17th century to help Swedish-born clergymen and civil servants learn the language of the eastern part of the Swedish realm.

The early Finnish grammars were strictly bound to the grammatical categories of Latin, and this was probably for practical reasons: at the time, every educated person was well aware of the structure of Latin grammar and could easily find the corresponding categories and expressions in any other grammar constructed in the same way.¹³⁶⁰ Latin was understood to be a kind of universal model of an ideal language, and Latin grammars like Donatus' *Ars grammatica* had been well-known schoolbooks everywhere in Europe since antiquity. Scientific research into grammar began only later.

The Changing Role of the Grammar

As Matthias Alexander Castrén started his academic career in the first half of the 19th century, the status of grammars was totally different than it had been in former times. The idea of Finno-Ugric language kinship was launched and accepted gradually over the course of the 18th century.¹³⁶¹ Comparative and historical methods for linguistic research on living and extinct languages were emerging. Whereas earlier only a few “sacred” languages such as Hebrew, Greek, and Latin were considered worthy of academic study and use, now any language could be chosen as the object of scientific study. The languages of Europe and beyond were analyzed and classified on more or less clearly defined linguistic grounds, both genetically and typologically. It became evident that living languages have

constantly changed over time and those changes have left detectable marks in the structure of the languages. Languages springing from a common source—a parent language—share common features or correspond to each other in a regular way in their phonetical and grammatical properties.

One of the central figures of comparative linguistics was the Dane Rasmus Rask¹³⁶² who studied both Indo-European and Finno-Ugric languages through grammatical comparison. He wrote several grammars following a specific organizational pattern: first a short description of phonology, then extensive descriptions of inflectional categories, followed by word derivation, and then syntax, and possibly a survey of metrics. Thus, he created a kind of a common framework for every grammar of any language under investigation. On the other hand, he strove to describe every language in relation to its kindred languages and their common historical background. Thus, it was important to identify the peculiar characteristics of each language and language group and describe those languages following the same pattern.

Rask emphasized the role of core grammar when determining the common origins of tentatively related languages. Previously, word comparisons had been the primary tool of research, but now it was understood that words can be easily loaned from one language to another. Thus, only the core vocabulary was considered stable enough for genetic comparisons. In any case, the grammatical system was of decisive importance.

Rask's work inspired and influenced language studies in Finland in many ways. On his journey to Russia in 1818, Rask stayed some days in Turku, got acquainted with local academics, and gave a speech to rouse public enthusiasm for Finno-Ugric studies. Anders Johan Sjögren, who was a university student at that time, could not attend the occasion, but after hearing about it, he wrote a humble letter to Rask asking for some advice on where to begin his scientific work on Finno-Ugric languages. Rask was kind enough to provide him some useful contacts in St. Petersburg, and two years later Sjögren moved to St. Petersburg to work as a private teacher, and later as the private librarian of Count N.P. Rumjancev, a well-known patron of the sciences, who also supported the Finnish dictionary project¹³⁶³ of Gustaf Renvall at Rask's suggestion. It is no wonder that Rask's name and his theoretical standpoints were often mentioned and quoted in the linguistic literature of Finland throughout the 19th century.

Sjögren planned an expedition to study Finno-Ugric languages spoken in Russia, and finally managed to obtain financial support from the Finnish Treasury for his journey.¹³⁶⁴ The expedition lasted

- 1362 Hovdhaugen et al. 2000: 159–165.
 1363 Gustaf Renvall's *Suomalainen Sana-Kirja* was published in two parts in 1823 and 1826.
 1364 Korhonen 1986: 41–47.

- 1365 E.N. Setälä described and classified the different parties of the struggle in his inaugural lecture in 1893. The lecture was published for the first time in 1894.
- 1366 The Finnish term *murteitten taistelu* "dialect struggle" was launched by Julius Krohn (1897: 179).

four years, and after that, he was invited to take up a post of assistantship in the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg. Later he was appointed as an Academician in Linguistics and Ethnography of Finnic and Caucasian Peoples. He was the first Finnish linguist to apply the historical-comparative methods developed by Rasmus Rask, Franz Bopp, and Jacob Grimm and to conduct fieldwork among Finno-Ugric peoples in Russia. In his highly esteemed academic position, he was also able to help younger researchers get started. The most successful of those young men was M.A. Castrén.

The New Status of the Finnish Language

Until the beginning of the 19th century, Finnish was a minority language of the Swedish realm with no legal rights. It was used as a liturgical language in the Evangelical Lutheran Church as well as the language of religious literature, but otherwise there was hardly any literature to educate or entertain the Finnish-speaking people. Society was not equal but divided into different ranks, and Finnish was the language of the lowest classes, peasants, workers, and other common people. Persons of higher rank spoke Swedish and, to a lesser extent, German or other Indo-European languages.

In 1809 Finland became a part of the Russian Empire as an autonomous Grand Duchy. Cautious attempts were made to improve the official status of the Finnish language, but the future of the language itself was thrown into confusion. The Finnish literary language had been created during the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century on the basis of the southwestern dialects, and the written form had, practically speaking, stagnated at the level of the first Finnish Bible published in 1642. A thorough reform of the literary language to bring it more in line with the spoken language was badly needed, but there were different opinions on how it should be done exactly.¹³⁶⁵ Some radicals like Carl Axel Gottlund promoted full freedom: everyone should be allowed to write the language as they spoke it, whether it be in the Savo dialect or anything else. Some moderate academics like Gustaf Renvall wanted to purify the western dialect by eliminating Swedisms and other foreign elements. Some reformers like Reinhold von Becker wanted to create a new standardized Finnish on the basis of eastern dialects. Some like Elias Lönnrot took a diplomatic approach and wanted to combine the best parts of western and eastern dialects and thereby come to a reconciliation of the "dialect struggle."¹³⁶⁶

Grammars constituted a useful weapon in this struggle. As grammars were understood to be models for language learners and users, it was important to bring about an effective model as there was a great demand for it. The first grammars of the new type came out during the first decade of autonomy. In these books, languages other than Latin were used, as they were intended to reach a wider audience. For example, Johann Strahlmann published a Finnish grammar in German and Jacob Judén published one in Swedish. A little later, the Karelian-born Grigorij Okulov published a Finnish grammar in Russian. Reinhold von Becker distinguished himself as the author of a thorough Finnish grammar written in Swedish which was esteemed very highly in academic circles. Elias Lönnrot was the first to describe the grammatical structure of Finnish in Finnish.¹³⁶⁷

In 1841, the Finnish school system was reformed and the Finnish language for the first time became an academic subject in the secondary schools of Finland. The problem was that the written form was developing and changing with such speed that the grammar of Becker had become outdated, and besides, it was far too extensive and scientific to be used as a schoolbook. New grammars were published in abundance to meet the demand. In 1846, the Finnish Literature Society announced a prize of 200 silver rubles to the author of a new and complete grammar. More Finnish grammars were published again, all different from each other. None of them was awarded a prize, however. There was no fixed standard for grammatical description yet, and none of these grammars had obtained an authoritative status. In practice, the grammars of Gustaf Erik Eurén¹³⁶⁸ turned out to be the most useful for use as schoolbooks, as Eurén was able to present even complicated matters in a simple way. He had carefully read research literature and all reviews and critics concerning the Finnish grammar and made the necessary corrections and improvements.¹³⁶⁹

At the University of Helsinki, Latin was still in use as a language of academic writing in the 1840s when Castrén started his academic career. The language of instruction was Swedish, which was practical, as all students had learned it by the secondary school at the latest, if it was not already their mother tongue. There were many among them who were not even able to understand spoken or written Finnish. Yet, along with the rise of National Romanticism and the publication of the *Kalevala*, the status of Finnish rose rapidly. The language was considered as an essential factor in developing Finnish national identity, and this made Finnish an attractive object of study. So it was an exceptionally noteworthy event when M.A. Castrén decided in 1844 to give a series of lectures on Finnish grammar.

- 1367 See e.g. Häkkinen 1994: 104–109.
 1368 *Grunddragen till finsk formlära* (1846), *Finsk språklära* (1849), *Finsk språklära i sammandrag* (1851), *Suomalainen kielioppi suomalaisille* (1852).
 1369 Stark 1968.

- 1370 The knowledge of Castrén's teaching activity is scanty. According to Wichmann (1928: 294), only the academic year 1851–52 has been documented in detail in the program of the university.
- 1371 *Helsingfors' Morgonblad* 3th October 1844; Haltsonen 1938: 31–32.
- 1372 Sjögren 1854: 260.
- 1373 There is a note written in Keckman's hand on the first page of the lecture manuscript: "Min första publika föreläsning den 16. Sept. 1829."
- 1374 Anttila 1928: 281.
- 1375 A manuscript of 128 pages, FLS Coll. Keckman MF. 122–123/1990. There is a closing vignette perfectly identical with the one Castrén used in finishing his lecture manuscript on Finnish grammar. Most of Castrén's posthumous manuscripts were sent to St. Petersburg to be published by Anton Schiefner, but the materials dealing with Finnish and Lappish were left aside (Sjögren 1854: 282). The manuscript containing Keckman's lectures was found among the papers of Carl Gustaf Borg who was the editor responsible for Castrén's posthumous collections in Finland.
- 1376 Published as a scholarly edition in *Manuscripta Castreniana, Realia I*: 48–88.
- 1377 The lecture has been published in *NRF* (= *Nordiska Resor och Forskningar*) VI: 98–101, and as a scholarly edition, in the *Manuscripta Castreniana, Realia I*: 144–148.

Lectures on Finnish Grammar

It is not known when exactly Castrén introduced his series of the lectures on Finnish grammar.¹³⁷⁰ In the beginning of the autumn term of 1844, he was announced to still be on leave. In the summer of 1844, he escorted Peter von Köppen from the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg to different parts of Finland to collect statistical information.¹³⁷¹ By the time of his letter to A.J. Sjögren dated 23 November 1844, Castrén reported to have collected and arranged new material for his grammar lessons and was actively giving lectures.¹³⁷²

Castrén did not give further information about the material used for lectures, but considering the dedication and thoroughness he dedicated to all his scientific enterprises, he probably used all available materials. In fact, he was not the first scholar to give lectures on Finnish grammar in Helsinki. Just before him, Carl Niclas Keckman, the first lecturer of Finnish at the Alexander University, had started his academic career in 1829 with a course on Finnish grammar based on Reinhold von Becker's *Finsk Grammatik* (1824).¹³⁷³ Later, Keckman gave grammar lectures as a part of his private teaching career.¹³⁷⁴

There is a manuscript among Keckman's posthumous papers headed *Ur Lektor Keckmans föreläsningar öfver v. Beckers Finska Grammatik*, which was most probably written by Castrén's hand.¹³⁷⁵ Castrén either attended Keckman's private lessons or he copied the lectures from some other listener's notes. Anyway, he could not use Keckman's material as such as the basis of his own lectures. Becker's grammar did not meet the standard of new grammatical order designed by Rask, and it was not quite up to date with the present development of the Finnish literary language either.

Castrén's lectures consisted of different sections. He opened with an informal introduction which was not documented in any way. After that, he went on reading his article titled *Anmärkningar om Savolotscheskaja Tschud*.¹³⁷⁶ Then he gave a short opening lecture in which he brought out some general aspects of linguistic and philological research and underlined the national significance of his study.¹³⁷⁷ Then he proceeded to discuss Finnish grammar, most probably in the same order that Rask had used in his grammatical descriptions. At the end of the autumn term, Castrén closed the series with an impassioned patriotic speech,¹³⁷⁸ in which he bade farewell to those present and announced his upcoming expedition.

The audience was enthusiastic. The memoirs one of his students, August Schauman, recalls that Castrén's lectures were the highlight of the whole academic year, even if he himself could hardly understand a word of Finnish.¹³⁷⁹ Now he started to study Renvall's

grammar,¹³⁸⁰ Lönnrot's articles,¹³⁸¹ and everything he considered to be useful in developing his skills in Finnish. He took private lessons under Zacharias Cajander, an eccentric figure who came across as a genuine boor and taught vernacular Finnish for financial compensation. The very next summer, Schauman and some of his friends decided to travel to the Finnish countryside to learn more about the language and the Finnish people. The highly patriotic atmosphere was the most important aspect of the Finnish lectures, not so much the linguistic details.

Many of Castrén's friends, colleagues, and travel companions attended the lectures, among them Johan Reinhold Bergstadi, Herman Kellgren, and Robert Tengström.¹³⁸² Bergstadi even wanted to collect and publish Castrén's grammar lectures afterwards, but he never found time to put his plan into effect. Fabian Collan, the headmaster of the upper high school (gymnasium) of Kuopio urgently requested Castrén to write a new Finnish grammar on the basis of his lectures, but growing tired of waiting, he asked his friend Herman Kellgren to copy his notes and send them to Kuopio. Castrén was kind enough to let Kellgren reproduce his original lecture material, but it turned out that the manuscript was short and sketchy and definitely not ready for publication. Besides, there were mistakes and slots to suggest that Castrén, in Kellgren's opinion, had forgotten much of his command of Finnish during his long and arduous travels.¹³⁸³ Instead of editing Castrén's material, Collan decided to write a grammar by himself. The book appeared in 1847 and, in the preface, Collan gives an account of the linguistic background of the grammar and expresses his gratitude to Kellgren and Castrén.

In the manuscript collection of Castrén, there are several sheets and notebooks containing grammatical manuscript fragments, checklists, and scattered notes.¹³⁸⁴ There is also a small leaflet which, judging by its content, might represent the basic material used for the lectures, as it contains material on different aspects of grammar in a concise format. However, this is not certain, as the phonology portion seems to be missing. Nevertheless, Kellgren wrote to his friend Collan that the phonology in particular was the best part of Castrén's lectures.

Anyway, in spite of all his other obligations, Castrén had started to write out a full transcript of his lectures. There is an uncompleted manuscript the title of which is "Föreläsningar i Finsk Grammatik" (Lectures on Finnish grammar).¹³⁸⁵ The manuscript contains only the phonological part of the Finnish grammar: letters and sounds,¹³⁸⁶ vowels, consonants and consonant clusters, including gradation and other sound alternations, accent, and quantity. It is perfectly possible that Kellgren saw the clean manuscript of

- 1378 The lecture has been published in *NRF* VI: 101–108, and as a scholarly edition in 2018 in the series *Manuscripta Castréniana, Realia* I: 144–155.
- 1379 Schauman [1892] 1967: 230.
- 1380 Renvall 1840.
- 1381 Lönnrot 1841.
- 1382 G. Castrén 1945: 74–75.
- 1383 G. Castrén 1945: 75.
- 1384 KK Coll. 539.2.12.
- 1385 KK Coll. 539.2.7.
- 1386 Letters (orthography) and sounds (phonetics) are not always kept apart clearly.

- 1387 *De affinitate declinationum in lingua Fennica, Esthonica et Lapponica* 1839.
- 1388 Castrén 1839: 1.
- 1389 Castrén 1839: 2.
- 1390 KK Coll. 539.2.10. There is no title page for this grammar manuscript. In the collection catalogue it is headed *Annotatio grammaticalia*.
- 1391 KK Coll. 539.2.12.

the phonological part and the sketchy notes of the rest of grammar and then came to the natural conclusion that the phonology was the only portion of the lectures which was worthy of later use. This manuscript is now published in a scholarly edition for the first time as a part of the *Fennica* volume of *Manuscripta Castreniana*. It has not been published before.

The Finnish Grammar Book

As described above, an authoritative Finnish grammar was badly needed in the middle of the 19th century. Great expectations fell on Castrén, who had published a groundbreaking thesis on the interrelationship between Finnish, Estonian, and Lappish nominal inflection systems and thus introduced the new comparative method of Rasmus Rask and Franz Bopp to the University of Helsinki.¹³⁸⁷

In the beginning of his thesis, Castrén quoted Bopp and thus made clear his own ideas on the importance of grammar: “Eine Grammatik in höherem, wissenschaftlichem Sinne soll eine Geschichte und Naturbeschreibung sein; sie soll, so weit es möglich ist, geschichtlich den Weg ausmitteln, wodurch sie zu ihrer Höhe emporgestiegen oder zu ihre Dürftigkeit herabgesunken ist.”¹³⁸⁸ In the introductory part of his thesis Castrén proclaimed: “Grammatica continet leges, ingenium, vel ut ita dicam, linguae cujusque animum, cum e contrario vocabula solam ejus formam efficiunt.” (Grammar contains the laws of the language, the real nature, or in other words, the vital power of each language, whereas words only constitute its form.)¹³⁸⁹ For Castrén, grammars were much more than simple learning aids.

After his successful lectures on Finnish grammar in 1844, Castrén seems to have started to compose a Finnish grammar book as well. It is possible that he left the lecture manuscript deliberately incomplete and preferred to work on the grammar book project instead, seeing that he only managed to make progress on the grammar manuscript. There is a nearly clean manuscript preserved in the manuscript collection, reaching from the phonology until the end of the inflection of pronouns.¹³⁹⁰ In addition, among the grammatical notes¹³⁹¹ there is a draft on verb inflection and a concise survey of other word classes in the form of a plain list without any explanations or comments. Even most titles are missing in this final part. The Finnish grammar book to be published for the first time in this volume of *Manuscripta Castreniana* has been compiled from those separate pieces of manuscripts mentioned above. It does not exist as an integrated whole in Castrén’s papers.

Among the posthumous papers of Castrén, there are still some half-done manuscripts to show that the competition in grammar writing combined with the insufficient knowledge of the historical phonology of the Uralic languages caused much trouble and stress in academic circles in the middle of the 19th century, and even Castrén could not avoid involvement in these polemics.¹³⁹² A burning question at the time was how to choose and describe the basic form of nominal inflection. Should it be an existing form like nominative singular or might it be a constructed form, a kind of abstract root or “original nominative¹³⁹³”? The starting points of the debates were not equal, as Castrén wanted to proceed on the basis of the comparative method and the evidence provided by other Uralic languages, but most of the contemporary Finnish grammar writers had no knowledge of the kindred languages. In this quarrel, Castrén was on his own.¹³⁹⁴

In Castrén’s papers, there are two different versions of an article headed *Om Nominal-stammen i Finska språket*, full of corrections, removed passages and chapters, and half-done sentences. Both versions are incomplete. The same goes for his review of an 1845 study¹³⁹⁵ on Finnish phonology written by Matthias Akiander. Castrén started to draft his review¹³⁹⁶ in his 1846 interfoliated¹³⁹⁷ calendar while in Siberia, but even here he got stuck in the problem of the basic form of nouns. After all the trouble, Castrén never came to a satisfactory solution ready for the printing press.

One more time he returned to the themes of his famous grammar lecture series, as he was appointed Professor of the Finnish Language and Literature in 1851. In his inaugural lecture¹³⁹⁸ on 5 May 1851, he left linguistic details aside. He spoke about the status of the Finnish language, its relation to Swedish, and the constant need to develop favourable conditions for national culture.

A Grammar That Never Came About

In his letter of 18 October 1844 to J.V. Snellman,¹³⁹⁹ Castrén stated “Grammars are not my main object in life, but without them I cannot attain my goal.” The ultimate goal of Matthias Alexander Castrén was the cultural elevation and development of his own people through their own language. He wanted to show that the Finns were not alone in the world, but were related at least to one-sixth of humankind.

In his letter¹⁴⁰⁰ to Wilhelm Schott written in December 1851, Castrén told that so far, he had never had the time or opportunity to devote himself completely to comparative studies. Even now he

1392 Castrén accounts for the positions as follows: “Såsom hufvud-representanter för striden har man att anse: å ena sidan v. Becker och Lönnrot, samt å den andra Rask, Renvall och Akiander. Undertecknad har befunnit sig i midten af de stridande, icke derföre att han älskar den gyllene medel-vägen utan af skäl att han ansett sanningen ligga i midten af de motsatta åsigter.”

1393 Finnish *alkuperäinen nominatiivi*, the term used by Elias Lönnrot.

1394 Castrén regrets the circumstances in the margin: “Res Förf[attaren] erkänner gerna, att d[e]n[na] lilla uppsatts hade vunnit både i intresse och redighet, ge[nom] en förb[unden?] öppen polemik emot stridiga åsigter, ð Ty wärr! är ~~kritiken~~ ~~anl~~ en litterär polemik i vårt land en så ny sak, att en Förf[attare] ge[nom] den lindrigaste kritik ådaga ådrager sig moraliska tilltalelser och af sådan anl[edning] har man här læ endast låtit den torra saken tala.”

1395 Försök till utredning af Finska språkets ljudbildning in *Suomi* 1845.

1396 KK Coll. 539.26.14.

1397 Previously, it was common to add empty pages to all kinds of books in order to make space for one’s own notes.

1398 Published in *Joukahainen XIV* (1913), and as a scholarly edition in 2018 in the series *Manuscripta Castreniana, Realia I*: 156–166.

1399 Published by Rein 1928: 398.

1400 Published by Haltsonen 1962.

1401 KK Coll. 539.2.7. Castrén gave the original lectures on Finnish grammar during the autumn term of 1844 only on the basis of some sketchy grammatical notes (G. Castrén 1945: 74–75). He also started to elaborate on a full copy of his preliminary manuscript material, but the work remained unfinished.

was extremely busy with the duties of his new position as Professor of Finnish Language and Literature. He thought, however, that the situation would be better in a couple of years. He was planning a long journey to Berlin with his young wife Natalia and their baby boy Robert. There he would be free to deepen his knowledge of comparative grammar research and complete his grammar of Samoyedic languages as well as some other unfinished studies.

All those plans crashed as Castrén's health broke down. He died on 7 May 1852. Most of his scientific collections were sent to the Imperial Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg and published by his friend Anton Schiefner in a twelve-volume series *Nordische Reisen und Forschungen von Dr. M.A. Castrén*. The series contains several grammars and dictionaries, travel accounts, letters, and some minor studies and lectures, but not the lectures on Finnish grammar or the Finnish grammar book. They have been hidden in the archives, until now.