

Chapter 1 : Formats and Editions of A short grammar of Latvian [www.nxgvision.com]

A Short Grammar of Latvian contains all of the basic grammar of Latvian: phonology, morphology, syntax, with material on word formation. There is a long chapter devoted to the verb's forms, categories, and use.

Nicole Nau Nicole Nau: The present grammar is no more than a small contribution towards answering this need and to making Latgalian known to a broader linguistic audience. The grammar is based on texts of different times and different genres. The vast majority of examples are taken from texts written in recent years, many of them published on the Internet. They contain short journalistic prose squibs, blogs, short stories and literary self-portraits of contemporary writers. By choosing these two kinds of sources, I chose to document varieties of Latgalian that are planned and elaborated, and at the same time in many respects close to the spoken language. I thus deliberately neglected more formal written genres, as newspaper articles, academic prose, religious texts, and the language of fiction of the 20th century. In my experience, the language of such sources is often very close to Standard Latvian and contains much less of the phenomena that make Latgalian special. All examples are cited in the same way that they are written in the source, which means that at least three different orthographic conventions are used, the main characteristics of which are briefly explained in Chapter 2. There are many people who supported and helped me, in one way or the other, in writing this book and whom I would like to thank sincerely: Ulrike Mosel has always encouraged me to write grammars and has been a model for me, in this and many other ways. My greatest gratitude goes to the speakers who keep this beautiful language alive, for: When a language resides only in dictionaries, primers and prayer books, the language is no more. The language belongs to the Eastern group of the Baltic branch of Indo-European. Within this group it is more closely related to Latvian than to Lithuanian. On the other hand, there are several lexical and morphological parallels between Latgalian and Lithuanian not shared by Modern Latvian. It is possible that Latgalian will be officially recognized as a regional language in the near future; such a goal has been pursued by Latgalian activists for several years. Most Latgalians regard themselves as ethnic Latvians with a separate language. There is also regional variation within Latgalian which may be broadly captured by distinguishing a Northern, a Southern, and a Central-Eastern variant. The sources used for this grammar reflect mostly the Central-Eastern variant. The Latgalian Research Institute at Daugavpils University gives an estimated number of , " , speakers who use Latgalian in everyday communication Latgale "Latgola. About two thirds of the respondents claimed to know Latgalian. There are probably no monolingual speakers of Latgalian. Most speakers are trilingual and regularly use Latvian and Russian in addition to Latgalian. In the process, the 1 English sources on the history of written Latgalian are Leikuma and Stafecka ; see also Lelis See also the historical and sociolinguistic overview given in Mercator In later times, historical factors led to separate developments in the language of Latvians in the Eastern and the Western part of the territory. For several centuries Latgalia was politically and culturally separated from the territories where other varieties of Latvian were used. In , after decades of war, Latgalia was integrated into the Polish- Lithuanian Commonwealth. With the First Partition of Poland in it became part of the Russian governorate of Vitebsk, remaining so until the end of the Russian Empire in During the 17th and the 18th centuries, Polish language and culture became increasingly influential in the region. Polish missionaries, especially Jesuits, were active in spreading and stabilizing the Catholic faith, and from that time Catholicism has always played an important role for Latgalian identity, and it has become a feature of distinction from Protestant, western Latvia. The Jesuits were also active in the field of education and the spread of literacy. In the 18th century, the first religious books in Latgalian were printed. The oldest preserved Latgalian book is the Evangelio toto anno of Publications with secular content followed in the 19th century, among them the first grammars and dictionaries see below. The orthography used in these early texts is based on the Polish writing of the time, and the typeface used in print is Antiqua. In contrast, from the 17th to the 19th centuries, Latvian books were printed using Blackletter Gothic script , and the orthography was based on German. A consequence of these differences was that, although the spoken languages were mutually comprehensible and regarded as dialects of the same language, printed Latvian books seemed foreign to Latgalian readers and vice versa , and the two

literatures developed largely independently of each other. Old Latgalian texts display a considerable influence from Polish in syntax and lexicon; most of the early writers were not native speakers of Latgalian. In the second half of the 19th century, the Russian Empire pursued a severe policy of Russification, which greatly impeded the further development of written Latgalian. Education was now available only in Russian; the Catholic Church was persecuted and its activities stopped. In a ban of printing in Latin alphabet was issued, which in fact meant the end of printing in Latgalian. Some attempts to print Latgalian texts in Cyrillic were not successful – readers were too used to the traditional script, and furthermore, Cyrillic was associated with the Orthodox Church and therefore unacceptable to the faithful Catholic. Instead, Latgalian activists copied books manually in an astonishing amount, and children were taught to read in Latgalian at home. This dark period lasted until 1918. By that time, the first Latgalian intellectuals had entered the scene, and the early 20th century was the time of a national or rather, ethnic and cultural Latgalian awakening. By now those who wrote in Latgalian were native speakers of some Latgalian dialect. Politically, Latgalian intellectuals strived for an independent Latvia with Latgalia as a politically and economically-integrated part of the proposed state, with a certain autonomy only in matters of culture and language. This goal was achieved in 1918. In the newly founded Latvian republic, Latgalian was used in primary schools and in local administration. It was acknowledged as one of the ways of using Latvian, the national language, and Latgalian literature was included in school canons. These favourable circumstances changed under the authoritarian rule of president Ulmanis, where Latgalian was marginalized in the name of a unified nation with a unified language. There were also noticeable Latgalian communities in Soviet Russia, and in the first, liberal, period of Soviet language policy, Latgalian was acknowledged as a minority language and used in primary schools in Russia. During the Second World War, the first Soviet occupation of Latvia is notable for the persecution of intellectuals, while the German occupation, despite its terror, adopted a liberal policy towards Latgalian doubtlessly for strategic reasons, not out of sympathy with minorities, and in this period, a noticeable number of books, including dictionaries and text books, were published in Latgalian. At the end of the war, with the beginning of the second Soviet occupation in 1945, many intellectuals fled to the West, and in the following decades activities based on the Latgalian language, literature, and culture were mainly carried out in exile communities in countries such as Western Germany, the USA, or Canada. In Soviet Latvia, Latgalian was used in print rather rarely until the mid 1980s. Afterwards, although not officially forbidden, the language did not get any support and its use in public was discouraged. Spoken Latgalian is used most often in families and among neighbours and friends. Another traditional domain of the language is the Roman Catholic Church. Services where Mass is said in Latgalian are offered in Catholic churches even in Riga, the capital of Latvia. The Latgalian radio station *Latgales radeja* is now also owned by the Catholic Church. Recent years have brought about an increasing use of Latgalian in further public domains, most noticeable on the Internet: Several nongovernmental organizations are active in supporting Latgalian language and culture, in the region itself as well as in the capital. The oldest preserved grammar Kossowski has only 32 pages and is mostly of historical value. The first grammar published by a native speaker is *Skrinda*, written in Russian. The author belonged to the circle of Latgalian intellectuals who studied and worked in St. Petersburg at the beginning of the 20th century. His grammar became the basis for discussions about language reform and standardization that started at that time and intensified after Latvia had become an independent state. The grammars by *Trasuns* and *Strods* are milestones in this standardization process. It is interesting to note that up to this time, no special name was used for Latgalian: During the centuries of separation Latgalians as well as speakers of other Latvian dialects had regarded their language simply as Latvian. As contacts were rare, there was no need to distinguish it from other varieties of Latvian. The situation changed in the newly founded republic, where Latgalians found themselves and their language confronted by a different Latvian, which was dominant in the public domain and considered superior by its speakers. This confrontation was the ground for developing a concept of Latgalian as a language distinct from Latvian. His dictionary *Strods* codified this standard. In the 1920s and early 1930s, some practical grammars and text books for the use in schools were published in Latvia, and also in Soviet Russia, where Latgalian was a minority language. It is designed as a practical grammar but contains various remarks from the point of view of historical linguistics. In Soviet Latvia, and later continued more intensely in

the s in the restored Latvian Republic, research concerning Latgalian was carried out on Latvian dialectology and historical Baltic linguistics, mostly by linguists who were native speakers of Latgalian. Another, already much smaller area of research was concerned with Old Latgalian writings. During the s, a commission lead by Antons Breidaks worked on a reform of Latgalian orthography; the result became official in LPN. In recent years, research on Latgalian has broadened, but it is still a small field. Currently a corpus of contemporary Latgalian is under construction, which hopefully will open new possibilities for research. In , the annual International Conference on Latgalistics was founded as a forum for research on Latgalian language, literature and culture. The order of noun phrase constituents, on the other hand, is fixed: In traditional texts, only prepositions are found. Prepositions govern case, mainly genitive or accusative. Prepositions governing accusative in the singular combine with dative noun phrases in the plural. Latgalian is a dependent marking nominative-accusative language. All nominal arguments are morphologically marked for case. Direct objects show variation between accusative and genitive marking. Apart from nominative subjects, dative arguments may be primary core arguments and display behavioural properties of subjects. Adjectives and other determiners always agree with the noun they modify. Grammatical categories are mainly expressed by suffixes. The major parts-of-speech are clearly distinguished by morphology. Nominal word-forms consist of a stem and an ending which expresses several categories simultaneously. Nouns are inflected for case and number, adjectives for case, number, gender and definiteness. The derivation of diminutives is very common and regular for nouns. Verbs inflect for person in three tenses.

Chapter 2 : Latvian Phrases

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The Baltic languages are of particular interest to linguists because they retain many archaic features believed to have been present in the Proto-Indo-European language. While the possession of many archaic features is undeniable, the exact manner by which the Baltic languages have developed from the Proto-Indo-European language is not clear. According to some glottochronological speculations, the Eastern Baltic languages split from Western Baltic or, perhaps, from the hypothetical proto-Baltic language between and At a minimum, transitional dialects existed until the 14th century or 15th century, and perhaps as late as the 17th century. This process of consolidation started in the 13th century after the Livonian Crusade and forced christianization. These tribes came under Livonian rule thus forming a unified political, economic and religious space. Until the 19th century, the Latvian language was heavily influenced by the German language , because the upper class of local society was formed by Baltic Germans. Participants in this movement laid the foundations for standard Latvian and also popularized the Latvianization of loan words. During this period, some Latvian scholars[who? Another feature of the language, in common with its sister language Lithuanian, that was developed at that time is that proper names from other countries and languages are altered phonetically to fit the phonological system of Latvian. Even if the original language also uses the Latin alphabet, this process takes place. Moreover, the names are modified in order to ensure that they have noun declension endings, declining like all other nouns. For example, a place such as Lecropt a Scottish parish is likely to become Lekropta; the Scottish village of Tillicoultry becomes Tilikutrija. This is a good example of linguistic purism in this language. During the Soviet occupation ” , the policy of Russification greatly affected the Latvian language. In Soviet Latvia, most of the immigrants who settled in the country did not learn Latvian. Latvian is taught as a second language in the initial stages too, as is officially declared, in order to encourage proficiency in that language, aiming at avoiding alienation from the Latvian-speaking linguistic majority and for the sake of facilitating academic and professional achievements. Several regulatory acts associated with this law have been adopted. To counter the influence of Russian and English , government organizations namely the Terminology Commission of the Latvian Academy of Science and the State Language Center try to popularize the use of Latvian terms and linguistic purism. For example, a heated debate arose when the Terminology Commission suggested that eira, with its Latvianized ending, would be a better term for euro than the widely used eiro. Other new terms are calques or new loanwords. Still others are older or more euphonic loanwords rather than Latvian words. However, for some time now dators has been considered an appropriate translation. There are several contests held annually to promote correct use of Latvian. These mistakes, often quite amusing, are both grammatical and stylistic; sometimes also obvious typos and mistranslations are considered to belong here. Organizers claim that mistakes are largely collected in areas heavily populated by Russian-speakers, as well as from Lithuanian-owned chain stores. Mistranslations are not necessarily grammatical, but also stylistic and vocabulary mistakes, such as literal translations from the English language. Dialects[edit] There are three dialects in Latvian: Latvian dialects and their varieties should not be confused with the Livonian , Curonian , Semigallian and Selonian languages. Livonian dialect[edit] Map showing geographical distribution of the dialects in Latvia. The Livonian dialect of Latvian was more affected by the Livonian language substratum than Latvian in other parts of Latvia. There are two intonations in the Livonian dialect. In Courland short vowels in the endings of words are discarded, while long vowels are shortened. In all genders and numbers only one form of the verb is used. In prefixes ie is changed to e. Due to migration and the introduction of a standardised language this dialect has declined. It arose from assimilated Livonians , who started to speak in Latvian and assimilated Livonian grammar into Latvian. Middle dialect[edit] The Middle dialect is spoken in central and Southwestern Latvia. Kursenieki language , which used to be spoken along Curonian Spit , is closely related to the varieties of middle dialect spoken in Courland. The dialect is divided

into the Vidzeme variety, the Curonian variety and the Semigallian variety. The Vidzeme variety and the Semigallian variety are closer to each other than to the Curonian variety, which is more archaic than the other two. There are three intonations in the Middle dialect. Standard Latvian is based on the middle dialect. It is set apart from rest of the Latvian by number of phonetic differences. The dialect has two main varieties – Selonian and Non-Selonian. There is a standard language, the Latgalian language, which is based on deep Non-Selonian varieties spoken in south of Latgale. The term "Latgalian" is sometimes also applied to all Non-Selonian varieties or even the whole dialect. However, it is unclear if it is accurate to use the term for any varieties besides the standard language. While the term may refer to varieties spoken in Latgale or by Latgalians, not all speakers identify as speaking Latgalian, for example, speakers of deep Non-Selonian varieties in Vidzeme explicitly deny speaking Latgalian. The immigrant and minority population in Latvia is, people: Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians, Poles, and others. The majority of immigrants came to Latvia between 1850 and 1918; supplementing pre-existing ethnic minority communities Latvian Germans, Latvian Jews. The adoption of Latvian by minorities was brought about by its status as the only official language of the country, its prominence in the education system, its sole use in the public sector [citation needed] and by changes in the society after the fall of the Soviet Union that shifted linguistic focus away from Russian. As an example, in universities and colleges for the first time received applications from prospective students who had a bilingual secondary education in schools for minorities. Fluency in Latvian is expected in a variety of professions and careers. Latvian grammar Latvian is an inflecting language with many analytical forms. Primary word stress, with a few exceptions, is on the first syllable. There are no articles in Latvian, however definiteness is expressed by inflection of adjectives. Basic word order in Latvian is subject–verb–object; however, word order is relatively free. Latvian declension There are two grammatical genders in Latvian masculine and feminine and two numbers, singular and plural. Nouns and adjectives decline into seven cases: There are six declensions and no articles.

Chapter 3 : Terje Mathiassen, A short grammar of Latvian | Rosinas | Baltistica

The first modern descriptive grammar of Lithuanian in English, this book is intended above all for university students and linguists, but is readily accessible to a broader audience if they are willing to look up a few grammatical terms in a dictionary. The fourteen chapters of the book cover almost.

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