

## FOREWORD

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This ESUKA – JEFUL’s special issue’s topic was presented to the journal’s editors in fall 2023. We proposed an idea of inviting authors to write for ESUKA about dynamic texts and interdisciplinary research of those texts. One root of the idea leads to a survey conducted as a part of a project titled “Process writing in upper secondary schools and universities: Evidence-based knowledge and practices.” In this survey, we examined, among other topics, which texts Estonian upper secondary students must write in school, what they enjoy about writing them, and what difficulties they encounter in the writing process. After analyzing the results, a very diverse picture emerged. This led us to wonder how the essence of a text is thought of – how it is shaped, standardized, molded, and how the readers seek the meaning or author of a text. How has the concept of a text expanded over time, and which paths and aspects are more vivid in the multimodal contemporary?

The content of the special issue began to take shape in the beginning of 2024, when we presented a panel titled “Texts in community, society and culture” to the first Estonian Annual Conference of Humanities. The conference took place at Tallinn University April 10–12, 2024. Our panel featured presentations discussing the essence of a text from different perspectives – including queries about the impact on texts by media, circumstances, technology or community. All seven presentations in the panel – by combining them, adjusting their focus, and expanding on them – evolved into some of the articles presented in this special issue. In addition to this, we sent out a call for contributions.

This special issue titled “In the texturing/textures of texts” received 16 abstracts, from which 11 meaningful, highly relevant and invigorating texts were finished and can be found between these covers. Nine of them are in Estonian (with abstracts in English) and two are in English. 19 different authors have contributed to this special issue – thank you all for allowing your in-depth research papers and insightful overviews to meet here! The contributions dig into textures (or into studying texts) and add texture to the texts surrounding us.

For instance, this special issue includes studies of written “student texts”. Nele Karolin Teiva (University of Tartu, UT) examines and compares hedges in bachelor’s and master’s theses and in essays from a linguistics course for undergraduates. Helena Lemendik (UT) also analyzes hedges, as well as other tools of interactional metadiscourse, in bachelor’s and master’s theses. Nele Novek (UT) looks for praise in peer feedback comments on essays from an undergraduate course in History. These studies are unique in Estonian linguistics and can serve as starting points and as a great example for further research.

Estonia’s education and upper secondary students are the focus of two articles. Ilona Tragel, Laura Kiik, Liisa-Maria Komissarov, Kati Käpp, Markus Laanoja and Nele Karolin Teiva (all UT) discuss how text types are presented in Estonian language textbooks for basic schools and upper secondary schools, explain why this kind of presentation is problematic, and propose an alternative approach. Eleriin Miilman (UT & Estonian Academy of Arts), Ilona Tragel and Nele Karolin Teiva (both UT) write about how belonging to a community can help students learn, e.g. while preparing for the state exam. Those articles from a student’s perspective guide us to search for solutions in order to keep education and learning up to date.

Additionally, three articles aim to rethink current traditions, the use of language, and the writing process. Karl Gustav Gailit, Kadri Muischnek and Kairit Sirts (all UT) discuss subjectivity in the Estonian language and describe how current models that automatically detect subjectivity in texts could be improved (the article is written in English). Minna Jaakola (University of Helsinki) offers an overview of the state and principles of the Finnish easy language – this article could potentially lead language planning and language users in Estonia to the path of a more accessible language. Vivian Puusepp (UT) adds a new perspective to the discussion of AI tools by analyzing the role of chatbots in academic writing, drawing on the extended mind thesis in philosophy. These articles demonstrate how the results once found, or agreements once made in language, are not static but dynamic.

Three articles in this special issue discuss contemporary audiovisual texts. Marie-Luise Meier (UT) uses a new method to research video games and analyzes previously undiscovered layers in two video games (the article is written in English). Oliver Issak, Jan Teevet (both from the Institute of Meetings & Non-Meetings) and Margaret Tilk (freelance

artist-researcher) describe in their essay how they transformed filling out a questionnaire into a performative durational action and observe which results this intervention brought. Karmen Juhkam (UT) and Eleriin Miilman (UT & Estonian Academy of Arts) decode the textual levels of an intriguing wedding-performance. These three texts show that video games, actions and performances also belong to the contemporary world of texts and present possibilities regarding how to study such texts.

We thank all the authors of this special issue from the bottom of our hearts for smooth and significant cooperation! It was a pleasure to learn (more) about and engage our colleagues from different areas who have crucial research interests! We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the 24 peer reviewers, whose insightful and considerate feedback helped the authors to bring out the purpose of their texts even more clearly. A thousand thanks to two kind, flexible, and very attentive language editors: Anett Pillmann and Helena Lemendik. The articles and parts of texts (abstracts, titles, keywords) in English were carefully read, edited and refined by Laura Kiik, to whom we dedicate a big part of our gratitude. Our special thanks also go to two fresh pair of eyes, Nele Novek and Liisa-Maria Komissarov.

Huge thanks to Johanna Rannu, who visualized the aim of this special issue wonderfully. The journal's cover depicts a beautifully strange and vibrant world of text – its birth, multiplication, abundance, and shifting. This world is vibrant, gorgeous and inspiring. Just as the fluttering of butterflies in the summer air catches our eye, the texts around us deserve our attention, a pause, and our curiosity. Some texts are meant to last only a day, others a year, and some are preserved for centuries. But they are all worth noticing.

To adapt the ending of our first email exchange with the authors, we wish you all:

Tärkamise märkamist – looduse, ideede, tekstide! [Notice the sprouting of nature, ideas, texts!]

Ilona & Eleriin

the editors of this special issue

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