

DELIGHTS AND DISTRACTIONS: DESCRIPTIONS AND VOCABULARY IN THE 1927 AND 1928 LIVONIAN ETHNOGRAPHIC EXPEDITION MATERIALS OF FERDINAND LINNUS

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Abstract. Estonian researcher *Ferdinand Linnus* (1895–1942) was the first professional ethnologist to work with the Livonians. During three expeditions in 1927 and 1928, he spent seven months in the Livonian villages and recorded his observations and consultant accounts in nine notebooks, which he titled “Liivi etnograafia” (*Livonian Ethnography*). This is a unique, though underutilised, resource. The goal of this article is to publish a selection of F. Linnus’s notes and to acquaint researchers with this resource, which provides information on Livonian traditional culture and its related terminology in Livonian. This article provides accounts of delights and distractions – enjoyments and pastimes – from consultants representing every Courland Livonian dialect. Without altering their content, the accounts have been supplemented and arranged so they form fluid texts understandable to the reader. The content in Livonian is left in its original spelling with the corresponding form in the modern Livonian orthography given in brackets.

Keywords: ethnography, lexicon, language contact, culture contact, Livonian

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1. Introduction

While professional linguists began to organise their first expeditions to the Livonians in the middle of the 19th century, the first professional expedition by an ethnologist only took place in the late 1920s. This was conducted by University of Tartu scientific scholarship recipient *Ferdinand Leibock* who adopted the last name *Linnus* in 1935, and who is currently known as *Ferdinand Linnus* (1895–1942). He received his Master’s degree in ethnography in Spring 1927 and, as a gifted student, decided to associate the rest of his life with science. Immediately afterwards, on the recommendation of F. Linnus’s mentor, ethnography docent and the first head of the Estonian National Museum

Ilmari Manninen, the University of Tartu awarded him a scholarship for writing his doctoral dissertation “Estonian and Livonian ancient bee-keeping”. Likewise, I. Manninen states in his recommendation addressed to the Faculty of Philosophy that Linnus “wishes to become better acquainted with Livonian ethnography and prepare a description which is as complete as possible concerning the material culture of this little studied kindred nation”. As F. Linnus had worked in the National Museum in parallel with his studies since 1922, he had participated in the expeditions to Ruhnu and Hiiumaa Islands as well as to several places in northern Estonia, which meant that, in Manninen’s opinion, he had sufficient experience to be able to successfully undertake the documentation of Livonian ethnography (RA, EAA.2100.2.564).

On his first expedition, F. Linnus worked in the Livonian villages for four months – from July 5 to November 5, 1927. He continued his work from March 5 to May 5 in the following year as well as for one month during the summer from July 20 to August 20. Thus, in total he collected Livonian ethnographic materials for seven months. The main goal of the Summer 1928 expedition was to document Livonian buildings. For this reason, Vienna Academy of Fine Arts student *Alfred Mõtus* participated in this trip. His work was compensated by the University of Tartu and he contributed 250 drawings to F. Linnus’s Livonian ethnographic collection (RA, EAA.2100.2.564). Likewise, during the course of his expeditions, F. Linnus photographed and collected Livonian ethnographic objects as much as possible. This collection is currently stored in the collections of the Estonian National Museum in Tartu. He recorded his observations and his consultants’ narratives in a series of notebooks, which he called “Liivi etnograafia” (*Livonian Ethnography*). F. Linnus’s nine “Livonian Ethnography” notebooks and their 1159 pages filled with notes remained in the Linnus family archive for approximately 90 years and were not accessible to other researchers. However, quite recently, F. Linnus’s grandson *Tanel Linnus* donated them to the Estonian National Museum where at one time his grandfather, father *Jüri Linnus* (1926–1995), and also he had worked.

F. Linnus visited the Livonian Coast for the fourth and last time in Summer 1939 when he participated in the opening of the Livonian Community House in Mazirbe and in the filming for the first Estonian ethnographic film “Päivi Liivi rannikul” (*Days on the Livonian shore*). This film was made in cooperation with “Eesti Kulturfilm” and the author of its script was the ethnologist himself (Linnus 1982: 85).

Unfortunately, F. Linnus published only one larger study – in 1928, on the Livonian traditions associated with catching fish and crayfish, which was based on his documentation conducted in the Livonian villages (Leinbock 1928). However, he never wrote his intended study of Livonian ethnography. In Autumn 1929, F. Linnus began to work as the acting director of the National Museum (Viires 1969: 378) and little time remained for his scientific work. He also defended his dissertation about ancient Estonian bee-keeping only in 1938 (Linnus 1939). It is possible that he may have gone on to complete other studies, however, he was arrested in Summer 1941 based on untrue accusations and taken to Russia where he died in prison in February of the following year. F. Linnus was rehabilitated only in 1966 (Viires 1969: 379).

The “Livonian Ethnography” notebooks are a unique collection of sources, because there is no second such resource – one collected by a professional ethnologist who could also speak Livonian – available anywhere else in the world. In addition, up to this point it has been practically not used at all in any studies – neither in ethnology, nor in linguistics. Therefore, this goal of this article is to publish a small portion of Ferdinand Linnus’s notes, in order to acquaint researchers with this resource, which provides information on Livonian traditional culture and its associated terminology in Livonian. From a thematic standpoint, F. Linnus documented his consultants’ narratives and his own observations about everything possible: the obtaining of livelihood (fishing, farming, livestock breeding, tar extraction, etc.), clothing worn on holidays and in everyday life (production, colouring, parts of clothing, shoes, hairstyles, etc.), hygiene (washing, saunas, clothes-washing, house-cleaning, soap making, struggling against lice, etc.), food (raw materials, bread, meat-based foods, fish-based foods, vegetarian foods, also drinks), housewares (furniture, dishes, household items, lighting, etc.), the celebration of holidays (beliefs, musical instruments, games, etc.), children’s toys, distractions enjoyed by adults, etc. This publication compiles a selection of narratives from Livonian consultants regarding delights and distractions – activities they enjoyed and pastimes with which they distracted themselves. Though the consultants were interviewed in Livonian, F. Linnus wrote down the narratives in Estonian, while also including the names of objects and activities in Livonian. This can be understood, as he was not a linguist and his task was not gathering language samples. Likewise, the narratives are recorded in a concise way, identifying only that which F. Linnus considered significant.

It is unknown how well F. Linnus spoke Livonian on his first expedition. However, according to his scientific work report for the university (dated 08.12.1927), we know that following the awarding of the scholarship to him, Linnus spent one month preparing for the expedition – gathering materials about the Livonians and learning Livonian up to a “level of actual literacy” (RA, EAA.2100.2.564). It seems that F. Linnus also received valuable information about the situation in the Livonian villages from his colleague, folklore researcher *Oskar Loorits* who had already visited the Livonians on several expeditions. On July 6, 1927, i.e., the day after arriving on the Livonian Coast, Linnus wrote Loorits that he was staying in Mazirbe with Mārtiņš Lepste and that the first week will need to be devoted more to getting to know his circumstances and learning the language instead of collecting any materials (EKM EKLA, 175. f., 13:28 m., 1/1). The first “Livonian Ethnography” narrative, whose author is M. Lepste, is dated July 10 (LF1: 1–2). Therefore, F. Linnus’s knowledge of Livonian was already good enough at the beginning of his expedition to be able to begin work with consultants.

This article includes narratives from consultants who represent all of the Courland Livonian dialects: Eastern (Melānija Otomere, Konstantīns Otomers, and Kirils Veide from Kolka, Jānis Bertholds from Vaide, and Kristīne Ermanbrika from Mazirbe), Western (Lote Lindenberga, Jānis Belte, and Pēteris Didriksons from Lūžņa), and the Lielirbe village sub-dialect, which some researchers refer to as the Central dialect (Mārtiņš Lepste from Mazirbe but born in Lielirbe).

The consultant narratives included in this article are not a direct translation of the Estonian original. These are used without changing their original contents, but are expanded and organised so that they form flowing texts which are comprehensible to the reader. The text recorded in Livonian has been left exactly as it was in the original, also including clear misspellings. Modern Livonian literary forms are given in brackets following the original Livonian text, while slang terms have been rewritten to match the standards of the modern Livonian orthography. If no other form appears in brackets, then this means that the form recorded by F. Linnus is identical to that used in modern Livonian. The terms provided by consultants in the local Latvian dialect are indicated with “Latv. dial.”. These forms have also been left unchanged, though sometimes their accuracy is doubtful. The consultants were Latvian citizens and, therefore, their names are given according to modern Latvian language norms, though the Livonian form of their names is italicised and written in parentheses afterwards. The same applies to the names of the villages.

2. Consultant narratives

2.1. Smoking

As told by Kirils Veide (*Kiril Veide*, born 1865) from Kolka (*Kūolka*), written down on 27.10.1927.

They grow their own tobacco. They pick the leaves off the stems and leave them to dry in the attic until they become yellow. Afterwards they put them in a wood or tin box, which is closed or covered with something. After baking bread, while the oven is still warm, the box is placed for a few hours in the oven. If the oven is lukewarm, then the leaves are left inside for the entire night. They are left there until the taste of hay disappears (*ālaz smek* [*ōlaz smek*] ‘green taste’). Then the tobacco leaves are taken out of the oven, arranged into a bunch or a pile, and then placed in the dry and warm space next to or even on top of the oven. When some is needed, then it is taken from there and cut up on the tobacco cutting board. The fine bits of tobacco (*pōkt*, Latv. dial. *smalkums*, *pabiras*) that are left on the cutting board are used as snuff (*nūsktōb-tabak* [*nūštōb tabāk*], Latv. dial. *šņūcams-tabak*) or just thrown away.

Nearly all the men of Kolka smoke. A number of the women here also take snuff. For example, Fišeru Anna, who is nearly 100 years old and the female head of Jaunupi homestead. Tobacco is also placed inside the cheek (*panab tabak āmba pāl* [*panāb tabāk ambō pāl*] ‘tobacco is placed on the tooth’). A wad of tobacco placed in the mouth for sucking is called *puļ* by the Livonians. That is also the name of the tiny piece of food put in the mouth of a small, unruly child in order to get them to calm down. A small rag (*lupad* [*lupāt*], Latv. dial. *knopken* or *knup*) is used more often for children than these tiny pieces of food. The term for tobacco *prēm* comes from the name of a special type of chewing tobacco in English – *frēm-tabak* [*prēm tabāk*]. (LF4: 510–511)

As told by Jānis Bertholds (*Jāņ Berthold*, 1879–1935) from Žonaki household in Vaide (*Vaid*), written down on 22.04.1928 and rewritten as a clean copy on 24.04.1928.

The tobacco is prepared for use in the following way. The yellow tobacco leaves are picked off and dried at first in fresh air, but afterwards also by the oven. Just so that they do not become brittle. After-

wards the tobacco leaves are placed on the floor and trampled (*breḑub* [*breḑūb*] ‘s/he tramples’) underfoot, so that the leaves become very soft. Then the leaves are placed in a box and after bread is baked are placed with the entire box into the oven to steam (*outub*, *sutiņtōb ōis* [*ōdōb*, *sutiņtōb ōjsō*] ‘steams, steams in the oven’). So that the tobacco does not become too dry, the box has a lid over it and also a piece of cloth (*lupat* [*lupāt*]) placed around it. After a while, the box of tobacco is taken out and put in a dry place. Then the box is put in the oven and dried again in the same way, and then also placed for yet a third time in the oven. After the third time, a weight (*sluogōd allō* [*slūogōd allō*] ‘under weights’) is put on top of the the tobacco box and stored this way for the entire winter. Tobacco leaves are taken out and cut up on the cutting board or with a knife as needed. If honey water (*meiž-vieta* [*miedvež*] ‘honey water (SG PRT)’) is sprinkled over the box, then the tobacco takes on a pleasant smell (*knaš kard* ‘good, nice smell’). Tobacco flavouring agents can also be purchased at the pharmacy. (LF7: 864)

2.2. Beer brewing

As told by Pēteris Didriksons (*Pētōr Didrikson*, age 33) from Lūžņa (*Lūž*), written down on 30.09.1927 and rewritten as a clean copy in Mazirbe (*Irē*) on 05.10.1927.

For regular beer brewing one needs 40 pounds of barley malt (*magdōd* [*magḑōd*] ‘malt’, Latv. dial. *iesel*), a half pound of hops (*umald* [*umāld*] ‘hops’, Latv. dial. *appeḑd*), a quarter pound of yeast (*tiemiez* [*tīemīez*] ‘yeast’, Latv. dial. *rougs*) – nowadays store-bought yeast is used. To make it stronger, sugar is added, too. Earlier only beer yeast was used, which could be stored until the next time beer was brewed – it was stored in a bottle in the well, so the coolness would keep it fresh. This amount of ingredients would yield 40 quarts of stronger beer from the first run and then also about 20 quarts of weaker beer from the second run.

First the malt is added to a normal, larger-sized tub (Latv. dial. *saldōm bāļ*; in Dundaga the following names have also been recorded in the local dialect: *iesala baļļa* and *saldnam toveris* (Dumpe 2001: 57)). Then a pot of boiling water (*kiebi vež pēļ* [*kīebi vež pāļ*] ‘boiling water on top of/over’) is poured over the malt in the tub and left for two hours, so that the malt swells. After that, the malt is placed in a wort dripping tub (*juokstōb-bāļa* [*jūokštōbbōļa*], Latv. dial. *tecnōm bāļ*) and a full pot

of hot water is poured over it. The water used for soaking the malt in the first pot is also heated and poured into the dripping tub. Meanwhile, more portions of water are heated in the pot. The hot water is poured into the tub until it is full.

The dripping tub is a deep, hooped container made of wooden slats (the one used by P. Didriksons is 73 cm high, its upper diameter is 50 cm, a bit wider at the bottom), which has a 2–3 cm wide hole in its base. A long piece of wood or plug, which is longer than the depth of the container, is placed into it. Straw is wrapped around the lower part of the plug. Straw is also placed at the bottom of the dripping tub where small boards or pegs are laid in the shape of a cross, which prevent the straw from getting into the opening.

The full barrel is left for about an hour and a half and then the process of dripping out the wort begins. So that this is simpler to do, the dripping tub is placed on top of chairs, benches, or blocks and a bucket is put underneath. Then the plug is moved slightly so that liquid starts flowing into the bucket. The liquid has to flow evenly and with a weak stream – this is the best way. However, often the malt gets through the straw and blocks the opening. The wort that has dripped into the bucket is poured into a third container – the fermenting tub (*jāktōb-bāla* [*jōtōbbōla*] ‘cooling tub’, Latv. dial. *zesnum-baļ*). The first container, which was used for soaking the malt, can be washed and used for this purpose too.

All of the wort from the first run, that is, 40 quarts, is left in the container so it can fully cool. The hops can be added to the wort right away or also later. First, the hops are boiled in the pot for 3–4 hours and then poured into the tub. When everything has cooled and is lukewarm, the yeast is added. It is left to ferment for 24–30 hours. If the malt is good (*magdōd at saldōd* [*magdōd at saldōd*] ‘the malt is sweet’), then it takes longer, that is, it ferments (*jelab* [*jelāb*] ‘it ferments’, Latv. dial. *rūkst*) longer. If sugar is also added, then the beer can be made as strong as spirits. The sugar can be added together with the yeast or also earlier. If the wort has cooled too much and it is not fermenting (*āb jela, um pa kīlma* [*āb jelā, um pa kīlma*] ‘it is not fermenting, it is too cold’), then hot stones are placed in it, so that it warms up. That happens rarely, of course, for a good beer brewer. When the fermentation has ended, the beer is poured into barrels and left for a few days, so that it is tastier.

When the first run is finished, more water is boiled in an amount which is about half as much as the first time and poured over the malt. The second run of wort does not come out as strong, and for that reason is fermented separately. The first type of beer was meant more for holi-

days, guests, and people helping with work, but the second type was one that they would drink on their own, and was also for quenching thirst on work days. Beer is mainly brewed in the autumn when joint work takes place – threshing grain, harvesting potatoes, also for Martinmas and Christmas. Beer was not brewed for hay season, except when joint work was scheduled, for example, during haymaking. Beer was also brewed for the joint work of manure hauling (LF3: 372–375).

As told by Jānis Belte (*Jāņ Belte*, 1893–1946) from Lūžņa (*Lūž*), written down on 27.04.1928 and rewritten as a clean copy on 30.04.1928.

The third type of beer, *tāpiņ* [*tōpiņ*], which is made by fermenting the wort obtained from a third run. The beer from the first and second runs is just called the first beer (*ežmi vōl* [*ežmi vól*]) and second beer (*tuōi vōl* [*tuoi vól*]). There is also a fourth type – *pattōk*; also *tōr* (Kettunen 1938: 430), which, however, is not considered beer. It is an unfermented non-alcoholic drink, which is prepared as follows: the brewer's grain (*draba* [*drabā*], Latv. dial. *drabiņ*), that is, the remainder of the malt and hops (*sie perri siest vōllōst* [*sīe perri sīestō vōlstō*] ‘the last from that beer’), is placed in a tub and cold water is poured over it. Some bread crusts or anything similar can also be added. As much as can be drunk, can be poured out past the plug. (LF8: 995)

Jānis Belte used the Latvian borrowing *mis* (Latvian: *misa*) to refer to wort in Livonian, even though a word of Livonian origin, *vīrdōg*, had also been recorded for it (Kettunen 1938: 225).

2.3. Toasts and drinking

Ferdinand Linnus's written recording of Belte's descriptions finally fills one particular blank spot in our knowledge of the Livonian lexicon, namely, what toasts the Livonians used. He lists the following: *juom* [*jūomō!*] ‘let's drink!’, *vōtam!* [*vōtām!*] ‘let's take (it)!’, *tēriņš!* [*tēriņš!*] ‘healthy!’, *sveik!* (a borrowing from Latvian ‘sveiki’), *šmuorōm!* [*šmūorōm!*] ‘let's get stewed!’, *ie-ēitam!* [*ieētām!*] ‘let's toss it back!’, *dzēr āl!* [*dzer āl!*] (a borrowing from Latvian ‘dzer alu’ (drink beer)).

In response to the question *Mis pāl mēg juom?* [*Mis pāl mēg jūomō?*] ‘What are we drinking to?’ one can answer as follows:

Tād vōņ pāl! [*Tād vōn pāl!*] ‘To your fortune!’;

Tād puōga pāl! [*Tād pūoga pāl!*] ‘To your son!’;

Tād šeft pāl! Laz jōvist iztulg! [*Tād šeft pāl! Laz jōvist iztulg!*] ‘To your business undertaking! May it turn out well!’;

Iejuom tāddōn sie ažā pāl! [*Jūomō tāddōn sīe ažā pāl!*] ‘Let’s drink to you for that thing!’.

If several people are drinking from the same bottle (*ku juob īdst potiļōst* [*ku jūob īdstō potiļst*] ‘when one drinks from one bottle’), then the one who gets the last pour says: *Tie sa sie puoga!* [*Tīe sa sīe pūoga!*] ‘You make that son!’, Latv. dial. *tais dēls!*.

Drinking to a woman’s health, one says: *Prōzit, lai dzīvo rōzit!* ‘Cheers, long live the sweet rose!’ (Latv. dial.).

About someone who drinks the entire contents of their glass or mug in a single go, one says: *siē um perimiez; siēn at sangdōd bikšōd jālgas; ta vaņtlōb krūzōn vōllō puojō* [*se um perīmīez; sīen at sangdōd bikšōd jālgas; ta vaņtlōb krūzōn vōllō pūojō*] ‘this is the head of the house; who wears thick trousers; he looks at the bottom of his mug’.

About someone who drinks a lot, one says: *ta um juoji* (Latv. dial. *dzēres*), *sūr ieētaji, sūr šmōrmaņ* [*ta um jūoji, sūr ieētaji, sūr šmūorman*] ‘he is a drunkard, a big boozer, a big souze’.

About severe drunkenness, one can say:

ma uztiēb mingikōrd ~ mundareit jōva kit [*ma tīeb mingizkōrd jōvā kit*] ‘sometimes I really make putty’;

siēn um kil kit = sie um kil jarā juōbōn [*sīen um kil kit = se um kil jarā jūobōn*] ‘that one really has some putty = that one really is drunk’;

ma nī uob kil kits [*ma nī ūob kil kitsō*] ‘I’m really in the putty now’.

About very strong drinks, one says: *siē um kil neiku žinēvōz, nei ku trapezund* [*se um kil neiku žinēvōz, neiku trapezund*] ‘it really is like *žinēvōz*, like *trapezund*’. “*Žinēvōz*” and “*Trapezund*” are old types of spirits; additionally, the latter was even stronger than the former.

When one starts hiccupping while drinking beer, others ask: *Kis tēdi mādlōb* [*Kis tēdi mādlōb?*] ‘Who is remembering/mentioning, you?’ (LF8: 995–996).

As told by Lote Lindenberga (*Lot Lindenberg*, 1866–1945) from *Lūžņa (Lūž)*. Written down on 28.04.1928 and rewritten as a clean copy on 29.04.1928.

When a calf is weaned from its mother (*vīrtub vaškist* [*vōrtōb vāškizt*] ‘a calf is weaned’) and it is given milk to drink from a dish for the first time, the calf is told to drink as much as so and so – the person in the area who is known to be the heaviest drinker. For example, *juo nei ku Jāņ* [*jūo neiku Jōņ*] ‘drink like Jōņ’ if Jōņ is the given name of the area’s heaviest drinker. This is said so that the calf will drink the milk with the same enthusiasm as Jōņ drinks his beer or liquor.

About a heavy drinker, one says: *siēn āb uo suormō sūzō vajāg, sie juōb nei-tz* [*sīen āb ūo suormō sūzō vajāg, se jūob nei-tz*] ‘he does not need a finger in his mouth, he will drink anyway’. This expression comes from the method used for getting a calf accustomed to drinking milk from a dish. At first, when a calf is only used to drinking from an udder and does not want to drink from a dish, a finger is placed in its mouth and the edge of the milk dish is forced up to its mouth.

When a drunken person is staggering down the road, then one says: *siēn ikšigīn um tikkiz riēk* [*sīen ikšiggiņ um tikkiž riek*] ‘he has the whole road to himself’.

Other things said about drunkards:

imub neki pizar [*imūb neiku pizār*] ‘sucks like a leach’;
siē um ēņšta nei piēlakkōn ku... [*se um ēņtšta nei pielakkōn ku...*] ‘he has lapped up his fill like...’;

Žūpō-Bārtel [*Žūpō Bārtōl*] (This is a borrowing from the Latvian Žūpu Bērtulis, who symbolises a heavy drinker in the national imagination. – R. B. “Žūpu Bērtulis” is a Danish author Ludvig Holberg in the Latvian-language version of “Jeppe på Bjerget”, which was localised and translated in 1790 by A. J. Stenders. The play is written from the perspective of a farmer who imagines he is a manor lord after waking up from his drunken stupor.¹);

va, krāmbambel = *seli rištīng, kis va krāmbambelt tā'b* [*va, krāmbambōl = seli rištīng, kis va krāmbambōlt tō'b*] ‘look, a krāmbambōl = the type of person who, look, wants a krāmbambōl’. (This word may have possibly come at one time from a German alcoholic drink “Krāmbambuli”, which was manufactured in Gdansk and was made from spirits and a juniper berry extract. – R. B.)

1 “Jeppe på Bjerget”. Available online at <https://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeppe_på_Bjerget>; “Žūpu Bērtulis”. Available online at <https://lv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Žūpu_Bērtulis>. Accessed on 01.09.2018.

A drunkard was also called a *rok-vārpiļ* [*rokvārpiļ*] ‘a sour barley and curds soup tankard’². *Vārpiļ um rāz jo piški ku pit* [*vārpiļ um rōz jo piški ku pit*] ‘a tankard is a little bit smaller than a barrel’, for example, *rok-vārpiļ* [*rokvārpiļ*], *vōllō-vārpiļ* [*vōllōvārpiļ*] ‘a beer barrel’ (LF7: 954–955)].

2.4. Competitions among men

As told by Mārtiņš Lepste (Maŗt Lepste, 1881–1958). Written down in Mazirbe (Irē) on 14.10.1927.

During this consultant’s youth, competitions among young men were still a beloved pastime, to which they would devote any available moment. The word *joudkāļōmi* [*joudkōļimi*] ‘matching strength, engaging in a contest with another’ refers to not only competitions as such but also a specific kind of wrestling style.

The simplest kind of competition was finger wrestling (lit. cramp pulling) *krāmp-viedami* [*krāmpviedāmi*], which was usually done with the middle finger, but could also be done with any other finger if the competitors agreed. Regular wrestling where both competitors grip the upper body of their opponent with both arms is called *rump pāl jouđō kāļōm* [*rump pāl jouđō kōļimi*] ‘body wrestling’. A different wrestling style was *bikšōd pāl lēmi* or *bikšōd pāl jouđō kāļōmi* [*bikšōd pāl lēmi; bikšōd pāl jouđō kōļimi*] ‘trouser wrestling’. In this style it was not permitted to touch the upper body of one’s opponent, both competitors held on to the top of their opponent’s trousers. The victor was the one who had stronger arms and could lift his opponent off the ground where he was powerless. A third wrestling style was *krāigōd pāl lēmi* or *joudkāļōmi* [*krōigōd pāl lēmi, joudkōļimi*] ‘collar wrestling’ where each competitor would grip their opponent by their jacket collar and try to throw them to the ground. Another widespread style was the so-called gypsy wrestling *čigiņ-bikšōd pāl joudkāļōmi* [*tsigīņ bikšōd pāl joudkōļimi*] ‘gypsy trouser wrestling’. For this wrestling style, the two participants would get down on the ground, hold their opponent under each of their arms, and then try to hurl their opponent over their head.³

2 A *vārpiļ* is a barrel-like container, which can be in a variety of sizes. A *vārpiļ* is larger than a *legīļ*, but smaller than a *pit*.

3 The consultant also described the beginning foot position of the two participants, but F. Linnus’s notes do not provide much clarity on this matter so it is not included here.

The victor would slap their opponent two or three times across their backside (*il pierzō [il pierz]* ‘across the backside’).

Another competition style called “getting up” (*ilznūzōmi [ilznūzimi]*) was also very widespread. One competitor would lie down on his stomach on the ground and the other one would lie down on top of him. The one on top would thread his arms underneath his opponent’s arms by his armpits so that he could place his palms on the back of his opponent’s head. The competitor on the bottom would then have to try to get up, but his opponent had to keep him down while maintaining his position. Additionally, both legs of the competitor on top would be located on the ground on either side of the body of his opponent. Usually, the stronger competitor would also be the victor in this competition style; however, if the competitor on top knew what he was doing, he could lift his opponent’s shoulders up with a swift movement while simultaneously pushing his opponent’s head down so low that his opponent’s ability to breathe would be constricted. This would render his opponent helpless. The consultant’s brother had once managed to almost suffocate a thickset country-dweller (i.e., a Latvian – R. B.). This man was already blue in the face, despite being a strong man, and had even laughed beforehand about such a weak young boy even trying to wrestle with him.

“Lifting” (*ilznostami [ilznustāmi]*) was also popular. One competitor would get down on the ground, the other one would remain standing and position his feet on each side of his opponent’s feet. He would then grip his opponent’s legs with his thighs and try to lift him up. His opponent on the ground would not be permitted to wriggle around – he had to keep his body straight. The standing competitor would be slightly bent over, so that his opponent’s feet would be supported against the ground behind his (the standing competitor’s) back.

Arm strength could also be tested with arm wrestling, though the consultant did not know its name in Livonian. The competitors would place their elbows on the table, clasp each other’s hands, and would attempt to press their opponent’s hand down onto the table. Lifting one’s elbow off the table was not permitted.

Among other methods for demonstrating one’s strength, he also mentioned lifting up a chair with one foot. Rod pulling (*matard viedam [matārdviedāmi]*) was also a particularly popular method. This was a game similar to tug of war but using a rod instead of a rope. At fairs, one could also find strength testers, where an individual had to hit a spot between either bull’s or devil’s horns with sufficient strength that an

arrow would fly up along a track and show the degree of strength possessed by that person. Here it is called “hitting the devil” (*kurrō rabbōm* ‘to hit the devil’ [*kuŗrō rabbimi* ‘hitting the devil’]) (LF4: 438–441).

As told by Jānis Belte (*Jāņ Belte*, 1893–1946) from Lūžņa (*Lūž*), written down on 15.03.1928.

About wrestling terms:

joudō kāļōmi [*joudō kōļimi*] was a regular match – *akub sidamōt immer* [*akūb sidāmt immōr*] ‘grab (him) around the waist’;

krāigōd pāl lēmi [*krōigōd pāl lēmi*] – wrestling, while holding onto the opponent’s collar;

bikšōd pāl lēmi – gripping one’s opponent by the upper part of their trousers near their waist, attempting to lift them off the ground and throw them down;

sprungiļdi viedab ‘pulls rods’ [*sprungiļdviedāmi*] – pulling rods. In the distant past there also had been a *sprungiļ-dantš* [*sprungiļdantš*] ‘rod dance’, but no one knows it anymore nowadays. J. Belte also explained that the word *sprungiļ* borrowed from the Latvian *sprungulis* (Latv. dial. *sprunguls*) is *rāz jo jāmdō ku stok* [*rōz jo jamdō ku stok*] ‘a little thicker than a cane’ (LF5: 623).

2.5. The “Pea bear” board game

As told by Melānija Otomere (*Māliņ Ottomer*, age 58) from Kolka (*Kūolka*), written down on 28.10.1927.

On Christmas Eve, beer, flounder, pork, and whatever else anyone had were placed on the table. On the subsequent nights of the holiday there was also dancing, but not on Christmas Eve itself. Still, there was singing and the playing of games. All evening long and even at night people would sit and play the game “Pea bear” (*iernōd okš* [*jernōd okš*], Latv. dial. *zirnju-lācis*): *iernidi nuokietisti kous tāuž, lōda pāl iernisti tegisti okš* [*jernidi nuokietiztō kouš tāuž, lōda pāl jernist teitō okš*] ‘a full bowl of peas were cooked, and a bear would be made out of the peas on the table’. In addition, every bear bone had a specific number of peas. Then the guessing would begin: *ikš kizub, tuoi tabub* [*ikš kizūb, tuoi tabūb*] ‘one asks, another guesses’. So, the first game

player would name a particular bone (for example, the sacrum), but the other would have to say how many peas that bone has. In addition, the person answering would be sitting with their back to the table or sitting (standing) further off in the corner of the room, so they could not see the table and would not be able to count. If their answer was correct, then that bone would be removed from the bear. The game would continue until all the bones, that is, the entire bear, would be divided up. Then the players could change. Sometimes it would take the entire night for the bear to be divided up into its bones (LF4: 541–542).

The consultant claimed that she knew how to form a bear out of peas and had actually played the game quite a lot. However, her brother Kirils Veide, who F. Linnus interviewed that same day and who also claimed to have played this game often, remembered it somewhat differently. Brother and sister each stuck firmly to their own opinion and would absolutely not yield.

Kirils Veide’s description of the game “Pea bear”, written down in Kolka (*Kūolka*) on 28.10.1927.

A player would point to one of the bones and ask the other person what bone it is, or also, whether this is such and such a bone (for example, *rištlū* ‘sacrum’). The other player, who would be standing with his back turned to the bear, had to say which bone it was or alternatively had to say whether the questioner had named the correct bone (LF4: 543).

As told by Konstantīns Otomers (*Konstantīn Ottomer*, approx. age 15) from Kolka (*Kūolka*). The description was written down with Mārtiņš Lepste’s assistance on 02.05.1928.

It seems that F. Linnus wished to record a logical description of the game, so he involved the younger generation. This became possible with the help of Melānija Otomere who received this information from her son Konstantīns. Linnus obtained not only a description of the game, but also a drawing of the bear.

On the table, the figure of a bear would be formed out of 45 peas (candies could also be used or anything similar) as shown on Figure 1.

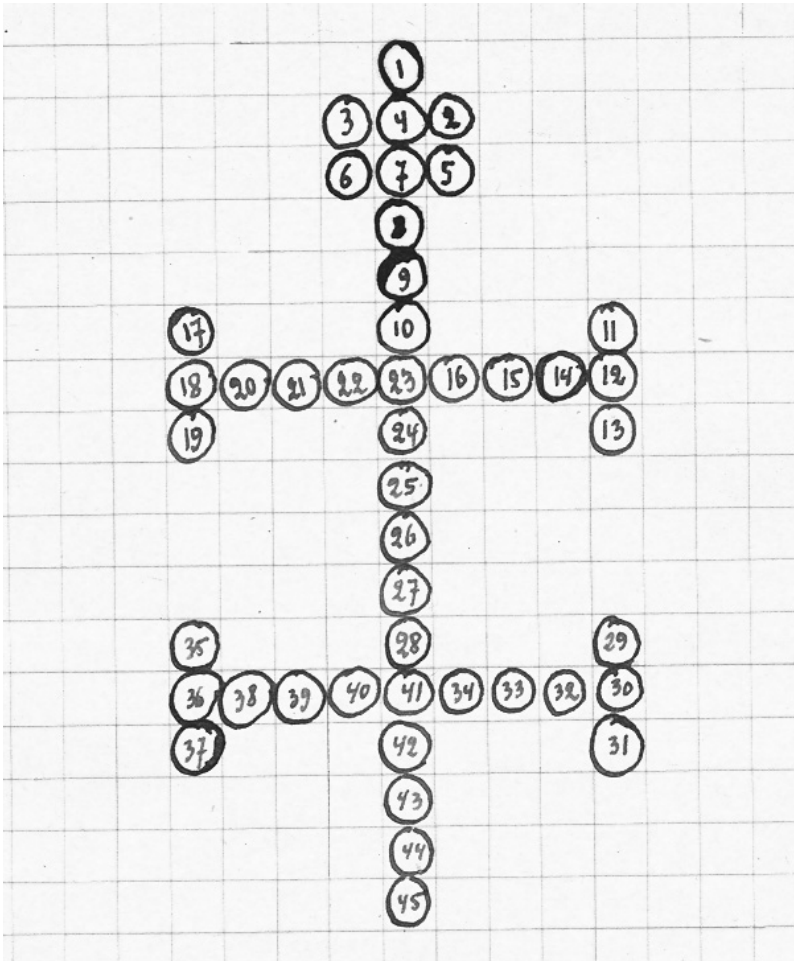


Figure 1. The figure of a bear would be formed out of 45 peas.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 = <i>kir</i> 'back of the head' | 23 = <i>ablū</i> 'shoulder blade' |
| 2, 3 = <i>sīlmad</i> 'eyes' | 24–28 = <i>sālġanugar</i> [<i>sālġanugār</i>] 'spine' |
| 4 = <i>vōntsa</i> [<i>vōntsa</i>] 'forehead' | 29–31 = <i>kāpa</i> [<i>kāpā</i>] 'paw' |
| 5, 6 = <i>kuorad</i> [<i>kūorad</i>] 'ears' | 32–34 = <i>sēr</i> 'shank' |
| 7 = <i>nik</i> 'snout' | 35–37 = <i>kāpa</i> [<i>kāpā</i>] 'paw' |
| 8–10 = <i>kaglōlū</i> [<i>kaggōllū</i>] 'collarbone' | 38–40 = <i>sēr</i> 'shank' |
| 11–13 = <i>kāpa</i> [<i>kāpā</i>] 'paw' | 41 = <i>rištlū</i> 'sacrum' |
| 14–16 = <i>sēr</i> 'shank' | 42–45 = <i>tabarlū</i> [<i>tabārlū</i>] 'tailbone' |
| 17–19 = <i>kāpa</i> [<i>kāpā</i>] 'paw' | |
| 20–22 = <i>sēr</i> 'shank' | |

The pieces making up the bear belong to the guesser, his opponent is the questioner. The guesser stands with his back to the table and answers without looking at the table. The order of the questions is always the same as the numerical order. Thus, the questioner puts their finger or pointer stick next to pea no. 1 and asks: *Mis sie um?* [*Mis se um?*] ‘What is this?’ The answer: *Kir!* ‘Back of the neck!’ The questioner points to pea no. 2: *Mis sie um?* [*Mis se um?*] The answer: *Silma!* ‘Eye!’ And so on, in the same way up to pea no. 45. If the guesser answers incorrectly, for example, at pea no. 23 saying “Sēr!”, then the questioner gets the entire bear, that is, all of the peas (candies), for himself. If the guesser confirms that he knows he has made a mistake, but actually does know how the bear is put together, then he can lay out a new bear on the table using his own materials, as long as another braggart does not appear first. To win the game, the guesser has to have a good idea of the structure of the bear as well as remember the numerical order of the peas and the number of peas in each bone.

It should be noted that the consultant could not remember the name of the seventh pea (snout) in Livonian, so F. Linnus and M. Lepste decided to call it *nik* ‘snout’ (LF8: 1028–1030).

2.6. Teasing children and simpletons

As told by Kristīne Ermanbrika (*Kristīn Ermanbrik*, approx. age 40) from Mazirbe (*Irē*), written down on 19.03.1928.

When it came to felting fabric⁴ (*vaņtōm*, *rukkōm* [*vantō*, *rukkō*] ‘to felt’), it was always a big joke to send a child or even some older person, who did not know about this trick, to a neighbouring house to look for a *rukkōm* (*rukkōmt vojšōm* [*rukkōmt vōšō*] ‘to search for a *rukkōm*’). The *rukkōm*⁵ was supposedly some kind of tool used for felting. Actually, there was no such tool and the neighbours would place heavy pieces of iron or something similar into their guest’s bag and caution their guest that they could not look into the bag or look back on their way home. When this person would, out of breath, finally get his heavy load home, he would be told that the neighbours had given him the wrong item and

4 Broadcloth and linsey-woolsey, which were woven at home, were felted so that the fabric would become thicker and softer.

5 The word ‘*rukkōm*’ is also described in L. Kettunen’s dictionary (Kettunen 1938: 347): undefined; something whose nature is unknown.

that he needed to take it back. Then this person would either do this or he would be sent to look for the necessary tool at still some other place. It continued like this until this person would notice that something was not quite right or also when somewhere amidst great laughter he would be told that it was all just a joke. This kind of joking around was widely practiced even up until the present (LF5: 694).

Incidentally, fooling someone by sending them to go find a “rukams” (Dundaga Latvian dialect: *rukam*) was also practiced among the Livonians’ close Latvian neighbours in Dundaga municipality. There the only difference was that one would be sent to find a “rukams” when new material was placed on the loom in preparation for it to be woven (Dravniece 2008: 66–67).

Another joke along these lines would be as follows. Someone would ask whether anyone wanted to see daggers dance (*dun̄tšōd dan̄tšōbōd* [*dūn̄tšid dan̄tšōbōd*] ‘daggers are dancing’). Usually, some smaller boy would be interested. Then the table would be covered with knives, and the curious individual would be told to close his eyes and given an old hat to hold whose bottom had been covered with soot. Then this individual would be told to push the hat up to his eyes so they could see the daggers dancing. The child would press the hat to his eyes, but see nothing. He would be told to press it even tighter. He would still not see anything. Finally, the child would get bored and take the hat from his eyes. Those around him, of course, would start laughing upon see his smudged face. However, the child could not see his own face and so would not understand at first why everyone was laughing.

A third type of joke of the same type was *kārpō aijōm* [*kārpō ajjimi* ‘skunk chasing’]. The others would tell the victim that they needed to drive out a skunk that was hiding in the hayloft. The victim, as he is unaware of the joke, would be told to hold a sack open under the hatch: when the frightened skunk would jump through the hatch, the victim would just need to remember to hold on tightly to the sack. The others would climb up to the hayloft and make a lot of noise, but instead of a skunk, they would suddenly throw a bucket of water onto the person holding the sack (LF5: 695).

3. Conclusions

This article publishes only a small portion of the Livonian ethnographic materials written down by F. Linnus in 1927 and 1928. However, even the publication of only a limited amount of these materials

demonstrates the possibilities F. Linnus's notes offer to researchers. First of all, this is a unique documentation of Livonian traditional life in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which fundamentally expands the memories of everyday life in older times written in the post-war years from members of older generations. Second of all, though F. Linnus's notes were not recorded for linguistic purposes, they still can be used for studies in this field. Using these notes, it is possible to expand the Livonian lexicon, as the notes contain new meanings for already known words as well as words and expressions (for example, toasts) which were not previously known. Likewise, they also contain explanations of rarely used or already forgotten words and expressions.

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Source archives

Estonian Literary Museum. Estonian Cultural History Archives (EKM EKLA)
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Estonian National Museum (ERM)
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Kokkuvõte. Renāte Blumberga: Rõõmud ja takistused: Ferdinand Linnuse 1927. ja 1928. aasta liivi etnograafiliste ekspeditsioonide materjalide kirjeldused ja sõnavara. Eestlane Ferdinand Linnus (1895–1942) oli esimene elukutseline etnoloog, kes töötas liivlaste juures. Kolme ekspeditsiooni käigus 1927. ja 1928. aastal viibis ta liivi külades kokku seitse kuud ning kirjutas keelejuhtide jutustusi üles üheksas vihikus, millele andis pealkirja “Liivi etnograafia”. See on ainulaadne allikate kogum, mida seni pole uurimustes peaaegu üldse kasutatud. Käesoleva artikli eesmärgiks on avaldada väike osa Ferdinand Linnuse üleskirjutustest ning tutvustada uurijatele seda allikat, mis pakub teavet liivi rahvuskultuurist ja sellega seonduvast terminoloogiast liivi keeles. Käesolevasse publikatsiooni on valikuliselt koondatud liivlaste jutustusi naudingute ja meelelahutuste kohta. Keelejuhid esindavad kõiki Kuramaa liivi keele murdeid. Jutustusi on nende algset sisu muutmata täiendatud ja korrastatud nii, et kujuneks ladus ja lugeja jaoks arusaadav tekst. Liivi keeles üles kirjutatud tekst on avaldatud vastavalt originaalile, aga nurksulgudes on esitatud tänapäeva liivi kirjakeele vaste.

Märksõnad: etnograafia, leksika, keelekontakt, kultuurikontakt, liivi keel, liivi kultuur

Kubbōvōttōks. Renāte Blumberga: Virtimi ja mīel lagtimi: kērad ja sōnāvīļa Ferdinand Linnus 1927. ja 1928. āigast līvōd etnogrāflizt ekspedītsijid materiālīš. Ēstli Ferdinand Linnus (1895–1942) vōļ ežmi profesionāli etnolog, kis vōļ kilās līvlizt jūs. Kuolm ekspedītsij āigal 1927. ja 1928. āigasts ta jelīz līvōd kilīs īdskubs seis kūdō ja kēratiz ilzō eņtš tādōl pandōd ažād ja kīeljūodijizt nīžōd īdōks rōntō sil, nāntōn īdskubs ta āndiz nim “Līvōd etnogrāfij”. Se um īdkōrdali kub, mis seņtš pigātagā āb ūo tuņšlimižis kōļbatōd. Sīepierāst sīe kēra ilzandōks um ulzō andō īd piškīz jag F. Linnus ilzkēratōkšist, las tuņšlijizt sōgōd tundtōbōks sīe materiālōks, mis tarmōb tieutidi iļ līvōd irdiz kultūr ja sīesō kōļbatōd sōnāvīļa. Kērast āt lieudtōb līvōd nīžōd iļ virtimiz ja mīel lagtimiz, ja kīeljūodijid ātō perīņ jegāst Kurmō līvōd kīelmurdst. Nīžōd, mōitiņtōmōt nānt sižāliz, āt pandōd kōrdōl ja sādōd nei, laz suggōg jōvīst jūokšiji ja luggijiz pierāst arū sodōb tekst. Līvō kīelkōks ilzō kēratōd tekst um ulzō andtōd nemē se um kēratōd origināls, bet kvadrātklāmbaņis se um nāgņōd tāmpizōs līvō kērakīels.