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THE 60TH INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC CONFERENCE IN RIGA

On March 20–21, 2025, the Department of Latvian and Baltic Studies at the University of Latvia organised the 60th International Academic Conference in honour of Prof. Arturs Ozols: “The language system, morphemics and derivational morphology”. The conference was held under the patronage of the Latvian Research Council’s project “Database of Latvian Morphemes and Derivational Models (DLMDM)” (No. lzp-2022/1-0013). The head of the conference was Prof. Dr. Andra Kalnača.¹

The conference explored the grammatical and lexical structures of language from synchronic and diachronic perspectives. Participants presented research across ten main thematic areas.² Topics ranged from theoretical issues (e.g., morpheme delimitation, derivational motivation) to practical applica-

tions (e.g., creativity in word formation, terminology), illustrating the breadth of the presenters’ research from morphemics to derivational morphology.

Thirty-seven presentations were delivered in English, Latvian and Lithuanian³. The conference opened with a plenary lecture by Adriano Cerri (University of Pisa), who first addressed the general question of the linguistic status of numerals and then examined Latvian numerals with particular reference to texts from the 16th to 18th centuries.

The two-day programme was divided into two sections. On the first day, the first section featured eight presentations. Agnė Aleksaitė (Institute of the Lithuanian Language) introduced the Database of Lithuanian Neologisms, discussed the types of blends in Lithuanian and reviewed the productivity of blend combinations according to parts of speech and their functions. Using the same database, Daiva Murmulaitytė

¹ For more details on the scientific and organising committee, see <https://aok.2025.lu.lv/en/committee-s-and-contacts/committees-and-contacts/>.

² For more details on the main thematic areas, see <https://aok.2025.lu.lv/en/call/call-for-papers/>. Contributions in other related fields were also encouraged.

³ For more information on the conference programme and book of abstracts, see <https://aok.2025.lu.lv/en/programma/programme/>.

(Institute of the Lithuanian Language) presented on personal names with derivational endings, noting that the suffix *-ė* is used naturally to form female-gendered names, but that allowing women's surnames with the ending *-a* could introduce a foreign model, potentially disrupting Lithuanian morphology. Skaistė Mikėnaitė and Lina Inčiuraitė-Noreikienė (Vilnius University) analysed institutionalized and non-institutionalized words on Albert Einstein's Instagram profile and identified eight creative word-formation processes in user comments. Anita Butāne (University of Latvia) provided an overview of the two main types of borrowings: loanwords and loan translations (calques). She also discussed the distinction between semi-calques and hybrid words. Daiga Straupeniece (Riga Technical University Liepāja Academy) reported that in Būtiņģe and Sventāja Latvian, verb-forming suffixes are mostly similar to those in the literary language, although some reflect unique local dialect patterns. Anna Frīdenberga (University of Latvia) found that in historical Latvian texts, substantivization was a gradual process affecting adjectives and participles, often creating words whose classification as noun or participle can only be determined from context. Daiva Šveikauskienė (Institute of the Lithuanian Language) used modern language technologies to analyse the Lithuanian genitive forms of pronouns, concluding that *mano* "my", *tavo* "your", *savo* "one's own" function as posses-

sive pronouns, while *manęs* "me", *tavęs* "you", *savęs* "oneself" are personal pronouns. She confirmed these distinctions through corpus analysis, Sketch Engine data and AI tools like ChatGPT. Lauma Pretkalniņa (Institute of Mathematics and Computer Science, University of Latvia), Nicole Nau (Adam Mickiewicz University), Kristīne Pokratniece (Institute of Mathematics and Computer Science, University of Latvia) and Ilze Ziņģe (Institute of Mathematics and Computer Science, University of Latvia) presented a formal morphological analysis model for Latgalian which, using a prepared lexicon, can generate all forms of Latgalian lemmas and identify possible analyses for lexemes.

The second section comprised twelve presentations. Laimute Balode (University of Latvia, University of Helsinki) found that prefixed lake names in Latvia are extremely rare (about 0.2% of all cases), much less common than in Lithuanian, and their origins and primary semantics are often obscure and debated. Pauls Balodis (University of Helsinki) highlighted that diminutive suffixes, especially *-iņ-*, are the most common type of suffix in Latvian surnames. They serve not only a diminutive function but also a patronymic one, and sometimes they indicate context such as location. Furthermore, the semantics and motivation of this type of Latvian surname vary widely. Ieva Auziņa (University of Latvia) demonstrated that in Latvian, doubling the prepositions *caur* "through" and *pār*

“over” with the adverbs *cauri* “through” and *pāri* “over” is common in both colloquial and literary language. This process adds vividness and emphasis and often appears in idiomatic or context-specific expressions. Gunta Roziņa and Indra Karapetjana (University of Latvia) showed that understanding both the literal and metaphorical meanings of cybersecurity-related terms enhances individuals’ ability to communicate cybersecurity concepts with confidence. Laura Paula Jansone (University of Latvia) noted that on the social network “X,” colloquial word formation, especially shortening, clipping and creative affixation, reflects both the linguistic creativity of users and the productivity of these processes in generating new colloquial Latvian vocabulary. Robertas Kudirkas (Kaunas Faculty of Vilnius University) documented that Lithuanian slang hybrids, particularly adjectives and verbs of English and Slavic origin, are regularly adapted with dominant Lithuanian derivational suffixes (e.g., *-inis*, *-iškas*, *-inti*), showing that slang word formation reflects standard Lithuanian morphological patterns. Agute Klints and Laura Rituma (Institute of Mathematics and Computer Science, University of Latvia) examined Latvian deverbal nouns with the suffix *-um-* in the Latvian explanatory dictionary Tezaurs.lv, analysing how their senses relate to the base verb senses and how different semantic roles correlate between them. Ilze Auziņa and Guna Rābante-Buša (Institute of Mathematics and Computer Science, Uni-

versity of Latvia) found that in Latvian connected speech, words often merge at boundaries, altering changes in syllable structure, consonant length and vowel or consonant quality. Jurgis Pakerys (Vilnius University) demonstrated that in Latvian, conversion ranges from canonical cases, where form is fully preserved and no affixes are added, to non-canonical cases, where inflecting words undergo stem changes and paradigm adjustments. Anna Vulāne (University of Latvia) analysed 160 neologisms submitted between 2020 and 2024 to the “Annual word, non-word and winged phrase” survey organised by the Latvian Language Development Group of the Riga Latvian Society, finding that most neologisms were created using morphological and morphosyntactic methods to express local, processual, object-related or agentive meanings. Regina Kvašytė (Vilnius University Šiauliai Academy) concluded that Latvian and Lithuanian word-formation terminology has historically developed different structural patterns and undergone changes over time. She also noted that considerable synonymy persists, indicating that this area of linguistic terminology remains unstable.

The second day of the conference began with a plenary lecture by Michal Škrabal (Charles University), who demonstrated how the use of the “Morfio” corpus tool provides empirical data on Latvian word-formation patterns. The first section included seven presentations. Andrejs Veisbergs (University of Latvia) emphasised that

true blended compounds in Latvian are relatively rare. However, when compounds with a single clipped element, such as *eiro-* “euro”, *spec-* “spec-ial” or *bio-* “bio”, are also considered, blended forms prove to be quite widespread, illustrating a variety of structural patterns and encompassing both established and occasional usages. Inta Urbanoviča (University of Latvia) showed that in modern Latvian, paronymic relationships occur not only between words but also between compounds and their corresponding word combinations, semantic differences being the main distinguishing factor. Vanesa Balmane (University of Latvia) examined neo-classical compounds in Latvian containing the linking element *-o-*, demonstrating that it functions as an interfix without independent meaning. Her study identified common patterns of *-o-* placement, combinations of borrowed and native roots, and the most frequent stems occurring in the initial position of such compounds. Ilze Tālberga and Aive Mandel (University of Tartu) revealed that the transcription of Latvian male personal names into Estonian was historically influenced by orthographic norms aimed at simplifying declension, such as dropping *-s*, *-š* and *-is* endings before 1963. After the 1963 reform, these endings were officially retained, but translators of Latvian literature continue to face difficulties, especially with internationally familiar names. Baiba Saulīte and Ilze Auziņa (Institute of Mathematics and Computer Science,

University of Latvia) presented an experimental grammar analysis of spoken Latvian based on a specially compiled subset of transcribed speech recordings. They highlighted the challenges of syntactic analysis when speech is not divided into sentences and compared transcription with automated tools. Tatjana Pakalne (University of Latvia) showed that adverbs with the suffix *-i* in Latvian are usually derived from adjectives and participles, but corpus data reveal cases where derivation can skip these forms and come directly from nouns or compounds. Evelīna Zilgalve (University of Latvia, Latvian Language Agency) demonstrated that distinguishing between adverbs and particles in Latvian, especially in cases of homonymy like those of *jau* “already”, *tad* “then” and *vēl* “yet”, is challenging because semantic and syntactic criteria alone are often insufficient. By analysing corpus data, the study identified additional distinguishing criteria.

The second section featured nine presentations. Lina Inčiuraitė-Noreikienė and Erika Rimkutė (Vytautas Magnus University) found in a pilot study that Lithuanian loanwords with the suffix *-istas*, *-ė* fall into two main types: simplex words and correlative derivatives. They also highlighted cases where the direction of derivation is unclear due to the lack of identifiable base words. Ilze Lokmane, Gunta Nešpore-Bērzkalne, Madara Stāde, Laura Rituma and Agute Klints (Institute of Mathematics and

Computer Science, University of Latvia) demonstrated that derivationally related Latvian words often show asymmetry between the meanings of the base word and its derivative. In some cases, the derivative connects to only part of the base word's meanings, while in others, it develops new, specific senses with no direct semantic link to the base word. Jurgita Mikelionienė (Kaunas University of Technology) confirmed in her study that, among Lithuanian derivatives with the suffix *-ynas*, place names dominate, whereas purely collective nouns account for only about 6% of such derivatives. Although collective nouns are considered a disappearing category, new words are still being created with them. Gita Bērziņa (University of Latvia) observed that Latin colour vocabulary exhibits a wide range of derivational patterns and semantic nuances. Many of these terms carry metaphorical or symbolic meanings, which often pose challenges for precise translation into Latvian. Gunta Ločmele (University of Latvia) noted that Latvian advertising vocabulary has been historically shaped by language contact and translation, initially influenced by German and later by Russian, French and English. Oskars Otomers (University of Latvia) examined how ship identification in Latvian differs between official registration and everyday usage. While ships have formally assigned names and codes, in colloquial language they are often given metaphorical or humorous labels, which makes consistent identification

difficult. Milan Hoplíček (University of Latvia) demonstrated that both Latvian and Czech adapt newly borrowed verbs by adding prefixes. While the usage of prefixes is productive in both languages, their range and role in marking verbal aspect differ. Daiki Horiguchi (Kyoto University) found that deverbal compounds with international elements in Latvian are rarely used as fully inflected verbs but are productive in forming nouns, adjectives and adverbs. Andra Kalnača and Ilze Lokmane (University of Latvia) concluded that the Latvian particle and conjunction *vai* "or" is multifunctional, serving as an uncertainty marker, coordinating conjunction, and more, depending on context. They also found that its usage has expanded historically, often replacing older particles, and shows greater semantic and syntactic versatility than previously recognised.

During the conference closing, the organisers thanked everyone for the insightful presentations and discussions on morphemics and word formation. Participants were invited to submit papers based on the presentations, which are planned for publication in the conference proceedings "Language: Meaning and Form", a journal prepared by the Department of Latvian and Baltic Studies, Faculty of Humanities, University of Latvia.

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