

Covert order in Võro conjugation classes
Matthew Baerman, Surrey Morphology Group
m.baerman@surrey.ac.uk

The inflectional suffixes of Võro (a variety of South Estonian with its own literary tradition) show an extraordinary distributional complexity: although no more than three competing allomorphs are found for any morphosyntactic value, their various combinations yield 23 distinct suffix paradigms.

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII
PRS 3SG	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	s	s	s	s	s	s
PST 1SG	si	V	V	V	V	V	si	si	si	si	si	V
INF	(A)q	(A)q	(A)q	(A)q	(A)q	t(A)q	d(A)q	d(A)q	d(A)q	d(A)q	t(A)q	(A)q
GER	(E)n	(E)n	(E)n	(E)n	(E)n	t(E)n	d(E)n	d(E)n	t(E)n	t(E)n	t(E)n	(E)n
JUSS	guq	guq	guq	guq	kuq	kuq	guq	guq	guq	kuq	kuq	guq
IMPRS PRS	tAs	(A)s	dAs	tAs	tAs	tAs	dAs	tAs	tAs	tAs	tAs	(A)s
IMPRS PTCP SG	t	d	t	t	t	t	t	t	t	t	t	d
PTCP PRS	v	vA	v	v	vA	v	v	v	v	v	v	vA

	XIII	XIV	XV	XVI	XVII	XVIII	XIX	XX	XXI	XXII	XXIII
PRS 3SG	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s
PST 1SG	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V
INF	(A)q	(A)q	(A)q	(A)q	(A)q	(A)q	d(A)q	d(A)q	d(A)q	d(A)q	t(A)q
GER	(E)n	(E)n	(E)n	(E)n	(E)n	(E)n	d(E)n	d(E)n	d(E)n	d(E)n	t(E)n
JUSS	guq	guq	guq	guq	kuq	kuq	guq	guq	guq	guq	kuq
IMPRS PRS	dAs	dAs	tAs	tAs	dAs	tAs	dAs	dAs	tAs	tAs	tAs
IMPRS PTCP SG	d	t	t	t	t	t	d	t	t	t	t
PTCP PRS	v	v	v	vA	v	vA	v	v	v	vA	v

Table 1: Võro inflection suffixes, reference forms only (adapted from Iva 2007: 121f)

Unlike ‘conventional’ morphological complexity, assessed by complexity of form (either their sheer number or irregularity), this sort of pattern complexity seems to require both lexical listing (of principal parts) and rule-based generation (given the restricted inventory of forms). However, on a hierarchical, layered approach to the inflectional subsystems, adapted from Blevins (2007), the complexity is seen to be distributed across components: the bulk of these paradigm variants can be derived through implication from aspects of the stem alternation patterns, which in turn must at least in part be lexically listed. The complex patterns in Table 1 are thus the echo of a system of complex forms.