

Estonian Higher Education Accreditation Centre

Evaluation of Research in Linguistics (6.3) in Estonia

Institutes evaluated

University of Tartu

Faculty of Philosophy

Department of Germanic and Romance Philology

Department of Estonian and Finno-Ugric Linguistics

Department of Russian and Slavic Philology

Tallinn Pedagogical University

Faculty of Philology

Department of Estonian Philology

Department of Nordic Languages

Department of Germanic-Romance Philology

Department of Slavonic Philology

Institute of the Estonian Language

Department of the Estonian Dialects and Cognate Languages

Department of Literary Estonian Grammar

Department of Literary Estonian Vocabulary

Language Technology (Virtual) Workgroup

Under and Tuglas Literature Centre of the Estonian Academy of Sciences

Võru Institute

Evaluation dates

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Part I

General Overview

Introduction

At the request of the Estonian Higher Education Accreditation Centre, Tallinn (EHEAC), an evaluation team (hereafter named either the “Evaluators” or the “Team”) visited institutes in Estonia carrying out research activities in linguistics (6.3). The evaluating team consisted of Prof. Jussi Niemi (University of Joensuu) as the leader of the Team, Prof. em. Dr. Herbert Brekle (University of Regensburg), Prof. Hannu Tammola (University of Tampere), and Prof. em. Dr. Heinz Vater (University of Cologne).

The institutions to be evaluated were:

University of Tartu

Faculty of Philosophy

Department of Germanic and Romance Philology (Head: Ass. Prof. Enn Veldi)

- Chair of English Philology (Prof. Krista Vogelberg)
- Chair of German Philology (Ass. Prof. Anne Harold)
- Section of Scandinavian Philology (Visiting Prof. Stig Örjan Ohlsson)
- Chair of Classical Philology (Prof. Anne Lill)
- Chair of French Philology (Ass. Prof. Tiiu Grünthal-Roberts)
- A Survey of Linguistic Research in the Programme of Spanish Philology (Prof. Jüri Talvet)

Department of Russian and Slavic Philology (Head: Prof. Ljubov Kisseljova)

- Chair of Russian Language (Prof. Irina Külmoja)
- Chair of Slavic Philology (Prof. Aleksander Dulitšenko)

Department of Estonian and Finno-Ugric Linguistics (Prof. Ago Künnap)

- Chair of Estonian Language (Prof. Mati Ereht)
- Chair of History of the Estonian Language and Dialects (Prof. Karl Pajusalu)
- Chair of Estonian as Foreign Language (Birute Klaas)
- Chair of Finnic Languages (Prof. Tiit-Rein Viitso)
- Chair of Uralic Languages (Prof. Ago Künnap)
- Chair of General Linguistics (Prof. Haldur Õim)

Tallinn Pedagogical University

Faculty of Philology

Department of Estonian Philology (Head: Lecturer Marju Torp-Kõivupuu)

- Chair of Estonian (Prof. Helle Metslang)
- Chair of Estonian as a Foreign Language (Prof. Anu-Reet Hausenberg)
- Chair of General and Applied Linguistics (Prof. Martin Ehala)

Department of Nordic Languages (Head: Prof. Jaan Õispuu)

- Chair of Baltic-Finnic Languages (Prof. Jaan Õispuu)

Department of Germanic-Romance Philology (Head: Prof. Suliko Liiv)

- Chair of English (Prof. Suliko Liiv)
- Chair of German (Ass. Prof. Mari Tarvas)

Department of Slavonic Philology (Head: Prof. Irina Belobrovtsseva)

- Chair of Russian (Prof. Svetlana Turovskaja)

Institute of the Estonian Language (Head: Urmas Sutrop, PhD)

Department of the Estonian Dialects and Cognate Languages (Head: Kristiina Ross)

Department of Literary Estonian Grammar (Head: Peeter Päll)

Department of Literary Estonian Vocabulary (Head: Margit Langemets)

Language Technology (Virtual) Workgroup (Head: Ülle Viks)

Under and Tuglas Literature Centre of the Estonian Academy of Sciences (Director: Jaan Undusk)

Võru Institute (Head: Kaido Kama)

The evaluators were provided in advance with self-assessment reports from the institutions, prepared by the members of their groups.

After a brief orientation meeting at EHEAC, the evaluators visited institutions mentioned above over four days, from March 24 till March 27, 2003. At these meetings staff members of the various departments presented their work. During these presentations, as well as during the subsequent discussions, additional information about the research activities was provided. This included additional documents such as copies of published papers.

Approach to the evaluation

The evaluators were asked to:

- 1) Judge the activities of research and development in the units evaluated and the research topics implemented by them to ensure the governmental funding for internationally recognised research and development. The Team was asked to concentrate on research units (university departments, laboratories) with specific comments to sub-units, groups if necessary.
- 2) Identify deficiencies in the activities of research and development units.
- 3) Give recommendations on the development concerning research and development and research areas to the state of Estonia.

The Team received the following materials: A work schedule, principles and criteria for evaluation of the research units, evaluation guidelines for the ranking of research units, and self-evaluation reports created by the research units themselves.

On a first evaluation point, the *quality of the research activities* was considered. This assessment is largely based on the records of scientific publications.

<i>Excellent</i>	<i>The majority of the submitted works are at a high international level and virtually all others at a good international level.</i>
<i>Excellent to good</i>	<i>At least one third of the submitted works are at a high international level and many others at a good international level, these together comprise a clear majority.</i>
<i>Good</i>	<i>The majority of the submitted works are at least at a good international level and virtually all others at a fair international level</i>
<i>Good to satisfactory</i>	<i>At least one third of the submitted works are at a good international level and many others at a fair international level, these together comprise a clear majority</i>

<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>The majority of the submitted works are at least at a fair international level</i>
<i>Satisfactory to unsatisfactory</i>	<i>A minority of the submitted works are at a fair international level</i>
<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>None, or virtually none, of the submitted works are at a fair international level</i>

Regarding the grading of the research activities, the evaluation team was instructed by the EHEAC to reserve the term **excellent** for groups which were found to be among the best 10% of the European groups in the corresponding field. Similarly, the term **excellent to good** should be used if the evaluated group was found to be among the best 25 % of corresponding European groups. The full scale comprised 7 levels, in addition to the highest ones the grades are **good, good to satisfactory, satisfactory, satisfactory to unsatisfactory, and unsatisfactory**.

Secondly, the *over-all capability* of a research unit was evaluated based on a combined assessment of the following criteria (each graded in three levels):

- The originality/novelty of past and ongoing research activities
- The strategy and perspective of the research
- Multidisciplinarity and relevance for other research areas
- The competence of the research groups and their capacity for development
- National and international co-operation
- Success in applying for grants

As the result of this assessment one of the four grades **excellent, good, satisfactory** or **unsatisfactory** was given for the group.

Thirdly, the *implementation opportunities* for the research results and their importance for the Estonian society were commented.

Finally, on a fourth evaluation point the critical comments and recommendations were asked to be given by the expert team.

Part II

General Comments

During the process of evaluation the Evaluators were not quite content with the somewhat chaotic presentation of most of the reports, with their many repetitions and almost a constant lack of cross-references. In addition, many newspaper articles and conference abstracts of not more than one or a couple of pages should not have been included in the lists of publications at all, or at least, they should have been listed separately. The evaluation process would also have gained from reports containing, e.g., more statistics, the main data presented in tables, as well as from more consequent and comparable figures.

Introduction

As required, in our evaluation of the language and linguistics departments at Estonian institutions of research and of higher learning (universities) we have in general taken an international perspective. This entails that the Team has done its utmost to assess these units as if they were part of the scientific scene of Central and Northern Europe. However, as linguists, we have also understood that in such a pervasively human and humanistic area as linguistics and language studies, any evaluator has sometimes to take into consideration the fact that studies of a country's so-called native or indigenous language(s) do have their social obligations. One indication of these obligations, which is transparent even to a lay person, are studies of "one's own" dialects and other studies of sociolinguistic nature of one's mother tongue.

As an overall comment, the Evaluators recognized the considerable change in linguistic research activity that has taken place in Estonia after the liberation. These changes are, first of all, quantitative, as reflected e.g., through an increase in the number of and added versatility within institutions, through an increase in the number of staff and students, and through a greater number of publications. However, there is work still to be done, as we expected more international publication activities that we found, since the units were those of linguistics and/or languages. In terms of the quality of end-results of linguistic research and the recent development in Estonia, it is especially striking that Estonian linguists rarely seemed to have worked in international projects or published joint research reports with their international colleagues.

Part III

Evaluation of institutes and research groups

1. UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

Faculty of Philology

1.1 Dept. of Germanic and Romance Philology

General Comments

On the whole, the picture of the research activities going on in the Dept. of Germanic and Romance Philology appeared to us to be quite heterogeneous. The department comprises four major research areas: linguistics, literary science, cultural studies, and language teaching. In our assessment we are concentrating mainly on linguistics and language teaching. The department is subdivided into several chairs and sections: the Chair of English (Prof. Krista Vogelberg), the Chair of German Philology (Ass. Prof. Anne Harold), the Section of Scandinavian Philology (Visiting Prof. Stig Örjan Ohlsson), the Chair of Classical Philology (Prof. Anne Lill), the Chair of French Philology (Ass. Prof. Tiiu Grünthal-Roberts) and the Programme of Spanish Philology (Prof. Jüri Talvet). We decided to work out an overall assessment, adding some details referring to the different chairs and sections.

Evaluation of Research Activities

*Based on the publication record the research activities of the Department are judged **satisfactory**.*

We based our evaluation of the quality of research activities on the publication record. The overall quality of the department's research was rated *satisfactory*, with noticeable differences between the single chairs and sections. The publications presented by the chair of English are standing out in comparison to those from other chairs. On the other hand, there were no doctoral theses in English philology defended within the relevant period of time.

Evaluation of Overall Capability

*The overall capability was rated **good**.*

The overall capability was rated *good* ("7"), especially because of the fairly high number of postgraduate students and the successful applications for grants and funds.

Recommendations

We support the idea of creating a professorship of French Philology, which would ensure a stable development of the chair of French Philology.

1.2 Dept. of Russian and Slavic Philology

General Comments

The Department of Russian and Slavic Philology is divided into two units: the Russian Language section (chaired by Prof. Külmoja) and the Slavic Philology section (chaired by Prof. Dulitšenko). The staff of the Russian Language section comprises one professor's post, three assistant professor's posts, two researchers, one lecturer and one assistant. In addition, Prof. em. Šeljakin is still active in research. The Slavic Philology section has one professorship, one lecturer (teaching Czech) and assistants for Czech and Polish. Prof. em. Isakov is still active doing comparative culture and literature studies. Some of the staff members have been and are currently involved in several joint research projects.

Evaluation of Research Activities

*Based on the publication record the research activities are judged **excellent to good**.*

The majority of the publications are at least on a good international level. Some of the publications might deserve even a better qualification (excellent), especially those of the Russian language section, where also the number of scholars is relatively high. Their publications comprise a variety of topics that range from the description of the Russian grammar in a functional grammar framework (sometimes with a contrastive approach) to some solid work on historical Slavistics, lexicology, ethnolinguistics etc. The scholarly level of the publications of the Slavic Philology section is more difficult to be given a good overall

assessment, although the descriptions of a large number of minor Slavic languages performed by A. Dulitšenko are numerous and valuable as such.

Evaluation of Overall Capability

*The overall capability of the department is judged **good**.*

The overall capability was rated *good* (“8”). The scholarly activities at the department can be regarded to show some novelty and a fair level of originality with perspectives for further research. There are also multidisciplinary elements and some relevance for other areas included in the topics of research. The staff is clearly competent in research and the department has a number of postgraduate and postdoctoral students. Co-operation on the national and international level can also be given a high grading. The department has had fair success in applying grants and funds.

The implementation opportunities for the research results and their importance for the Estonian society

There are some opportunities to implement the research results of the department’s projects. This applies primarily to the efforts to describe the Russian language from a contrastive point of view, results of which can be used in language teaching and learning. Clearly of importance for the Estonian society are also the sociolinguistic investigations of language use and contacts between Russian and Estonian.

Recommendations

Whereas the Russian language studies at the department show a fair diversity in topics and a number of different methodological approaches, the profile of the Slavic section is not that impressive in this respect. Perhaps this can be very easily explained by the small number of the staff. However, some strengthening of the research input into the core Slavic linguistics with theoretically founded methodology would be desirable.

1.3 Department of Estonian and Finno-Ugric Linguistics

General Comments

In terms of the number of academic disciplines the Department is a versatile organization as it is composed of the sections (which Estonians prefer somewhat non-canonically to call “chairs”), viz., those of Estonian Language, History of the Estonian Language and Dialects, Estonian as a Foreign Language, Finnic Languages, Uralic Languages, and General Linguistics. Since the majority of the disciplines are well-established at Tartu, they are expected to be strong on most evaluation criteria.

Evaluation of Research Activities

*Based on the publication record the research activities are judged **excellent to good**.*

A (minor) point of negative criticism is the fact that the typological studies published in various series — mainly in the Department’s special series of *Estonian Typological Studies* — often lack a real typological approach or contrastive data. In most cases these papers offer valuable descriptions and data for a contrastive analysis and typological conclusions, though methodologically they are somehow misplaced among Typology Studies, or do not take enough earlier contrastive and typological analyses into consideration.

Evaluation of Overall Capability

*The overall capability of the department is judged **good**.*

The overall capability was rated *good* (“9”). Overall, the scholarly activities at the department can be regarded to show some novelty and a fair level of originality with perspectives for further research. There are also multidisciplinary elements and some points relevant for other areas included in the topics of research. (These latter aspects are especially highlighted in our evaluation of General Linguistics.) The staff is clearly competent in research and the department has a number of postgraduate and postdoctoral students. Co-operation at the national and international level can also be given a high grading. The department has been very successful in applying grants and funds. The Evaluators considered also a higher grading, but in an overall assessment the overall capability of the whole department can not be regarded higher than good.

The implementation opportunities for the research results and their importance for the Estonian society

In addition to basic research in the history of Estonian and other Uralic languages and the present-day properties of these, the Department is able to produce high-quality applications in language technology on Estonian (parsing programs, tagged corpora), which are a necessity in high-level computer-based language analyses to be used in producing dictionaries, speech synthesis etc.

2. TALLINN PEDAGOGICAL UNIVERSITY

2.1 Dept. of Estonian Philology

General Comments

The Department of Estonian has three disciplines, each chaired by a professor, viz., Estonian, Estonian as a Foreign Language, and General and Applied Linguistics. As institutions all these three are relatively new and have been created during the 1990s.

Evaluation of Research Activities

*Based on the publication record the research activities of the Department are judged **excellent to good**.*

Evaluation of Overall Capability

*The overall capability of the department is judged **excellent**.*

Based on the publication record the overall capability of the Department is judged *excellent* (“10”). There is, however, a curious asymmetry in external funding: on the basis of the Self-evaluation Report it appears that only General and Applied Linguistics of the three units has received external funding during the period of the present evaluation.

The implementation opportunities for the research results and their importance for the Estonian society

The Department also produces studies of sociolinguistic nature, and these are in need in a *de facto* bilingual country like Estonia.

Recommendations

Although application of any scientific work is a laudable form of activity, the Evaluators are somewhat dubious whether the Section of General and Applied Linguistics should be associated with secondary school mother language textbook writing as it is now.

2.2 Department of Nordic Languages

General Comments

The Department, somewhat infelicitously and misleadingly called that of Nordic Languages, has only one professor’s post, viz., that of Baltic-Finnic Languages, and non-Finnic Nordic languages (like Swedish) are taught at lower levels only.

Evaluation of Research Activities

*Based on the publication record the research activities of the Department are judged **unsatisfactory**.*

Based on the publication record the research activities of the Department are judged *unsatisfactory*, since the relatively few publications do not in general meet international criteria.

Evaluation of Overall Capability

*The overall capability of the Department is judged **unsatisfactory**.*

The overall capability of the Department is judged *unsatisfactory* (“2”). The Evaluators assessed that the Department’s scholarly activities carried no novelty, had a low level of strategic planning, showed virtually no multidisciplinaryity, and reflected low competence. Only on the points of co-operation and external funding did they obtain moderate ratings.

The implementation opportunities for the research results and their importance for the Estonian society

On this point we kindly refer to the previous paragraph.

Recommendations

The Department should definitely be strengthened with senior (i.e., PhD) scholars, and at least some of the several languages now taught under the heading Nordic Languages should be developed towards organizations that one expects of a university-level (language) department / section. At the present state the majority of the foreign languages remain at a level or state resembling those of Language Center units.

2.3 Department of Germanic-Romance Philology

General Comments

The department comprises the Chair of English (Prof. Suliko Liiv), the Chair of German (Ass. Prof. Mati Tarvas) and the Unit of French (founded in 1996 in cooperation with the French Embassy in Estonia). The two chairs and the unit deal with linguistics as well as literature and didactics. In our assessment we concentrate specifically on research in linguistics.

Evaluation of Research Activities

*Based on the publication record the research activities are judged **good**.*

We evaluated the department's research activity as *good*. The fields covered include phonology, syntax, lexicology, translation theory and didactics (language learning and teaching); there are fairly many contrastive studies among the publications as well as among the defended theses.

Evaluation of Overall Capability

*The overall capability of the department is judged **good**.*

The overall capability was rated as *good* ("9"), especially considering the multidisciplinary of research and the high number of doctoral theses defended.

Implementation opportunities

The implementation opportunities for the department's research activity are fairly good.

Recommendations

We recommend the establishment of a professorship of French, which would ensure considerable improvement of research and teaching at the Unit of French.

2.4 Department of Slavonic Philology

Chair of Russian (Prof. Svetlana Turovskaja)

The Department of Slavonic Philology at the TPU has preferred not to be evaluated at this point referring to the recent changes at the department. Additionally, they refer to an evaluation in which they have participated earlier. The results of this evaluation have not been available to the Evaluators.

3. INSTITUTE OF ESTONIAN LANGUAGE

3.1 Department of the Estonian Dialects and Cognate Languages (Head: Kristiina Ross)

According to the Self-evaluation Report submitted to the Evaluation Team a major part of the research conducted at the Department of the Estonian Dialects and Cognate Languages during the evaluation period (1998-2002) was associated with and funded through the project-specifically funded topic *The grammar and lexis of the Estonian dialects and cognate languages* (Main researcher Kristiina Ross).

The full-time senior research staff at the Department is relatively large on the language studies arena of Estonia. In addition to eight senior full-time researchers two senior researchers have part-time research duties at the Department. In conjunction with basic research on Estonian (dialects) and closely related languages, the scholarly activities at the Department fall in the area of applied linguistics, since the members of the staff are active producers of dictionaries.

Evaluation of Research Activities

Based on the publication record the research activities of the Department are judged excellent to good.

Quite understandably, both for historical reasons and in regard of the status and national duties of the whole Institute of the Estonian Language, the research activities of the Department of the Estonian Dialects and Cognate Languages are either (i) of practical nature, e.g., compilation and publication of (dialect) dictionaries, or (ii) they are typically related to these applied activities, e.g., to the methodology of diachronic linguistics or dictionary work. In both these respects the Department was deemed of high quality.

Evaluation of Overall Capability

The overall capability of the Department was judged good.

The overall capability was rated as *good* (“8”). The Department is especially strong in terms of its academic competence, its good PhD turnout, and its ability and success in obtaining external funding. As the Department acts in a complementary manner with the other departments of the Institute (e.g., the section on grammar), their focus on the dictionary-related work is quite natural and highly recommendable.

The implementation opportunities for the research results and their importance for the Estonian society

In the case of the Institute and its subdivisions, the core work being carried out by these units is a necessity in any linguistic community like Estonia, and, furthermore, we see it unlikely that for a small language like Estonian any non-governmental organization (e.g., a commercial publishing house) could perform the core duties required of the Institute.

Recommendations

Since the Department is the main repository of lexical material collected from Estonian dialects and related languages, these data bases should be also used for purposes other than non-traditional (e.g., lexicographic) ones. One novel avenue could be found in cognitive analyses of diachronic lexical change and more sociolinguistically based inter-dialectal contacts. Moreover, the internal division of the Institute into the present department and that of Literary Estonian Vocabulary is metatheoretically somewhat fuzzy and artificial, and some overlap can be seen in, e.g., the publications of these two departments.

3.2 Department of Literary Estonian Grammar (Head: Peeter Päll)

General Comments

Thematically the Department of Literary Estonian Grammar is divided into two research groups, viz., into that of Grammar and that of Language Planning, each with its own aims and methods. The former group concentrates on the grammar of what is somewhat misleadingly called “literary” *pro standard (written)* Estonian, the latter on Estonian terminology.

Evaluation of Research Activities

Based on the publication record the research activities of the Department are judged good.

The Department falls short on being active on the international research arena, although publishing high-quality (international) research reports on Estonian grammar would be a natural form of activity expected of the present group of Estonian linguists.

Evaluation of Overall Capability

The overall capability of the Department group was judged good.

The overall capability was rated as *good* (“8”). The Department is high on their scholarly competence and on their success in the competition for external funding. However, it is to be stressed that the analyses of Estonian grammar and the comparative studies could benefit from recent developments in syntax, morphology, language contact and typology.

The implementation opportunities for the research results and their importance for the Estonian society

To somewhat reiterate our comments on the previously discussed unit of the Institute: In the case of the Institute and its subdivisions, the core work being carried out by these units is a necessity in any linguistic community like Estonia, and, furthermore, we see it highly unlikely that for a small language like Estonian any non-governmental organization (e.g., a commercial publishing house) could perform the core duties required of the Institute.

Recommendations

More than it is the case today the Department could avail itself of co-operation in order to improve their theoretical and methodological basis. There are two independent ways to accomplish this goal, nationally and internationally, viz., increased co-operation with the experts in theoretical (general) linguistics in Estonia or abroad.

3.3 Department of Literary Estonian Vocabulary (Head: Margit Langemets)

General Comments

The work of the Department is characterized by research in what is somewhat oddly called “literary” (pro *standard*) Estonian vocabulary and its conversion into dictionaries, both monolingual and bilingual. To once again reiterate: In the case of the Institute and its subdivisions, the core work being carried out by these units is a necessity in any linguistic community like Estonia, and, furthermore, we see it highly unlikely that for a small language like Estonian any non-governmental organization (e.g., a commercial publishing house) could perform the core duties required of the Institute.

Evaluation of Research Activities

*Based on the publication record the research activities of the Department are judged **good**.*

Evaluation of Overall Capability

*The overall capability of the research group was judged **good**.*

The overall capability was rated as *good* (“9”). The Department of Literary Estonian Vocabulary is considerably strong in its multidisciplinary approach, in scholarly competence and in attracting external funding.

The implementation opportunities for the research results and their importance for the Estonian society

In spite of the fact that the Department is active in the publication sphere, the staff should publish more on the structure of the Estonian lexicon in international forums by adding more linguistic expertise to their pool of resources.

Recommendations

Since the Department is a major locale of lexical material of Estonian and expertise on dictionary compilation for the Estonian language, it is strongly recommended that this potential be also used for purposes other than non-traditional (e.g., lexicographic) ones. One area in vocabulary work could be found in its increased use of theoretical and applied studies of the Estonian lexicon. Moreover, as already stated above, the internal division of the Institute to the present department and that of Literary Estonian Vocabulary is meta-theoretically somewhat fuzzy and artificial, and some overlap can be seen in, e.g., the publications of these two departments.

3.4 Language Technology (Virtual) Workgroup (Head: Ülle Viks)

General Comments

As the name of the workgroup implies, this group is a virtual conglomeration of linguists and other members of the Institute (ca. 12 in total). It is this workgroup which aims to digitalize language data available at the Institute. The financial foundations of the group are to be found within the project-specifically funded topic *The grammatical structure and typology of literary Estonian* (PI: Ülle Viks, Dr. Philol.)

Evaluation of Research Activities

*Based on the publication record the research activities of the Department are judged **good to satisfactory**.*

Evaluation of Overall Capability

*The overall capability of the research group was judged **satisfactory**.*

The overall capability was rated as *satisfactory* (“4”), but since all funding for the group comes from other departments, we can not directly assess its grant applications. Although the basic rationale of the workgroup is well-founded, the actual products of the activities have not reached the standards that could have been expected. Especially in terms of the novelty of approach, the workgroup copies the work (more successfully) performed at other institutions.

The implementation opportunities for the research results and their importance for the Estonian society and recommendations

Since most of language technology products (usually programs) are in principle commercializable and since this line of approach has been adopted in many countries, it may be worth while to consider whether the Estonian language technology pursuits could be at least partially externalized to private enterprises.

4. Under and Tuglas Literature Centre

General Comments

In evaluating the institute we had to take into account that we were asked to perform the evaluation as experts in linguistics rather than in literary theory. Therefore, our comments will necessarily concentrate on the linguistic aspects of the research carried out at the Under and Tuglas Institute. We would like to refer to the partial evaluation done in November 2002, concerning mainly the project **Semiotic Aspect of Estonian Literary History** (1998–2002).

Evaluation of Research Activities

*Based on the publication record the research activities are judged **excellent to good**.*

The activities taking place at the Under and Tuglas Literary Centre of the Estonian Academy of Sciences is supervised by the Academic Board, consisting of 13 members, 7 of them being scholars not working at the Centre. The chairman of the Board and director of the Centre is Dr. Jaan Undusk; Mrs. Piret Kruuspere, MA, is the holds the Vice-Chair and is the academic secretary of the Centre.

We based our evaluation of the quality of research activities on the publication record and rated it *excellent to good*, since the majority of the publications can be considered to be on a high international level.

Evaluation of Overall Capability

*The overall capability of the research group is rated as **good**.*

Implementation opportunities

The Centre has done a good job in studying Estonian literary culture (both in historical and theoretical perspective) and promotes literature and culture in line with contemporary world trends. It, thus, makes important contributions for the Estonian society.

Recommendations

We recommend that the research group takes recent approaches of text linguistics into account and tries to cooperate with linguists analyzing literary texts.

5. Võru Institute

General Comments

The Võru Institute was founded in 1994 and, thus, is a “young” institute. Its main objective is to promote research and development of the special traits of Võrumaa, primarily by studying, preserving and developing its regional language and culture. This, to us, seems to be an important task.

Evaluation of Research Activities

*Based on the publication record the research activities are judged **good**.*

The research activity of the institute, based on the publication record, is rated *good*. Especially the work done in the phonological analysis of the Võru language and the toponymical maps elaborated so far are quite impressive; the maps are also of great use for the official Estonian cartography.

Evaluation of Overall Capability

*The overall capability of the group was rated **good**.*

The overall capability of the group was rated *good* (“9”). It should be taken into consideration that all of the members of the Võru Institute team are quite young (3 of them working towards their PhD, one of them working towards the MA). In our discussions we got a very favorable impression as to the group’s developmental capability. All of them are highly motivated and dedicated to their work. There is a good cooperation with the University of Tartu, the Institute of the Estonian Language in Tallinn and some foreign universities as well. The work done by the Võru Institute is, in our view, of great relevance for Võrumaa and for Estonian culture in general.

Implementation opportunities

The results so far obtained show valuable implementation effects, especially in the domain of primary school teaching. The institute has also produced very useful and enjoyable books for children in the Võru language.

Recommendations

The Institute’s technical equipment is rather modest; therefore, we recommend that the group’s equipment should be upgraded.

Part IV

Summary of evaluation

The research at the Department of Germanic and Romance Philology of Tartu University was evaluated as *satisfactory* and its overall capability as *good*.

The research at the Department of Russian and Slavic Philology of Tartu University was evaluated as *excellent to good* and its overall capability as *good*.

The research at the Department of Estonian and Finno-Ugric Linguistics of Tartu University was evaluated as *excellent to good* and its overall capability as *good*.

The research at the Department of Estonian Philology of Tallinn Pedagogical University (TPU) was evaluated as *excellent to good* and its overall capability as *excellent*.

The research at the Department of Nordic Languages of TPU was evaluated as *unsatisfactory* and its overall capability as *unsatisfactory*.

The research at the Department of Germanic-Romance Philology of TPU was evaluated as *good* and the overall capability as *good*.

The Department of Slavonic Philology of TPU has preferred not be evaluated at this point of time.

The research of the Department of the Estonian Dialects and Cognate Languages at the Institute of Estonian Language (IEL) was evaluated as *excellent to good* and its overall capability as *good*.

The research of the Department of Literary Estonian Grammar at the IEL was evaluated as *good* and its overall capability as *good*.

The research of the Department of Literary Estonian Vocabulary at the IEL was evaluated as *good* and its overall capability as *good*.

The research of the Language Technology (Virtual) Workgroup at the IEL was evaluated as *good to satisfactory* and its overall capability as *satisfactory*.

The research of the Under and Tuglas Literature Centre was evaluated as *excellent to good* and its overall capability as *good*.

The research of the Võru Institute was evaluated as *good* and its overall capability as *good*.

Part V

Recommendations

In order to promote the scholarly activities of the Estonian language and linguistics departments the Evaluators would like to propose the following recommendations.

1. Internationalization of the Estonian Linguistic Community

A major feature of the units evaluated is that their members should be active agents in the *universitas*, i.e., they – or at least the main actors of each sub-field or discipline -- should be closely integrated in and be constantly associated with the global academic community. Basing our major recommendation on this premise, we suggest that Estonian linguists in the future receive better possibilities and/or they are more firmly encouraged (a) to study/work brief periods abroad, (b) to participate in international research projects, (c) to publish their research reports in international forums. (d) As another means to obtain increasing international contacts, it is also recommended that the system of visiting professors be more developed as it appears to be the case in today's Estonia.

2. Clarification of Division of Labor

During the evaluation process it was not uncommon that the Team encountered duplication of activities both within individual institutions and between universities and other research institutions. This state of affairs is understandable, since the development of these units has generally taken place within the last few years after the liberation of Estonia. However, in the long run the most striking instances of scholarly overlap should be more thoroughly (and centrally) analyzed and eventually re-organized in a manner that would serve better the Estonian scholarly community, students, and taxpayers.

3. Increase of Scholarly Versatility

A repercussion of the same causal elements which most probably are also behind the state of affairs discussed in chapter 2 above is the fact that the language departments ("Philologies") in Estonia fall in a narrow range of languages, most prominently – but understandably – represented by Finno-Ugrian languages (especially Estonian and Finnish) as well as by English and German. Acknowledging the need to have experts, including, e.g., language teachers and interpreters, of a larger variety of languages, and at the same time stressing the future membership of Estonia in the European Union, the universities should offer full-length language programs (MA's) in more languages than they now offer. Moreover, the EU membership brings along with itself a huge need of Estonian interpreters and translators, and the Team's opinion is that with the present resources there will be a lack of high-quality interpreters and translators with Estonian as one of their language(s).

Part VI

Acknowledgements

During the time of our evaluation activity we enjoyed the hospitality of the institutions we visited, their informative reports and the lively discussions we had with them. We acknowledge their willingness to cooperate with us as well as the intensive administrative support we obtained from the staff of the Estonian Higher Education Accreditation Centre.

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