

Preface

Saami languages have been taught and studied as an academic subject at Uppsala University since the late 19th century. Given this longstanding and celebrated tradition of research on Saami linguistics, we were especially honoured and pleased to host the SAALS 4 conference as a contribution to contemporary research on the Saami languages.

‘SAALS 4’ refers to the fourth conference in a series of international conferences on Saami linguistics. Tromsø hosted the inaugural conference in 2006 as well as the second one in 2009. The following conference took place in Freiburg in 2017 with the 2019 Uppsala conference resulting in the present volume. The last two took place in Tartu in 2022 and Helsinki in 2024. The next conference is planned for 2026 and will be organized by Nord University/Noerhte universitete/Nuortta universitietta in Norway.

Availing itself of the same name as the first two events, a third SAALS conference evolved into the current conference series after almost a decade. At the time, Michael Rießler and Joshua Wilbur founded a small working group in Saami linguistics at the Department of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Freiburg in Germany. Their intent was to re-establish the conference under its original name with a similar concept. The original organisers in Tromsø were glad to “hand over” the established name and gave their blessings to the new event. Since that time, it has become a tradition to decide the next location at the present conference, so organisers can begin preparations.

Another tradition involves inviting international guest and keynote speakers. This custom began at SAALS 1 and SAALS 2 in Tromsø, where Anna-Riitta Lindgren and Trond Trosterud from Norway gave keynote addresses as well as Zita McRobbie-Utasi and Ida Toivonen from Canada, and Pekka Sammallahti from Finland. The speakers covered broad perspectives ranging from the sociology of language to formal approaches of language description.

To further enrich the next conference, organisers invited a keynote speaker from outside of Saami studies to explore topics in general linguistics with potential Saami relevance. With this new tradition, Matthew Baerman of the University of Surrey delivered a talk on three-way length alternations in

morphology at the SAALS 3 Freiburg conference, and Johanna Nichols of the University of California, Berkeley, discussed morphological complexity in Saami at the 2019 SAALS 4 Uppsala conference. Maria Polinsky of the University of Maryland presented a keynote address on structural parallels between endangered and heritage languages at the 2022 SAALS 5 Tartu conference.

SAALS 6 returned to the original format with more than one invited speaker: Jussi Ylikoski of the University of Turku and Minerva Piha of Nord University. A recent and visible change in the SAALS 6 program features papers presented in various Saami languages alongside English.

Simultaneously, as traditions evolved, each SAALS conference came with innovations; SAALS 4 became the first to publish conference proceedings. Resulting from a long delay due to unforeseen (and foreseen) circumstances the decision was made to list only the authors' current affiliations in the present volume.

At present, academic research and pedagogy in Saami studies are relatively small; consequently, meetings are generally restricted to centres of Uralic studies overlapping with only a few universities worldwide. As such, the working atmosphere is small and collegial with participants already familiar on both personal and professional terms. Thus, the *Saami Linguistics Symposium* has never been formally constituted as an institution with members and a board.

Since the first meeting of SAALS, the purpose is to grant researchers the opportunity to present current findings to their colleagues, participate in formal and informal discussions on relevant topics, and explore potential opportunities for collaborative work. As always, the call for papers encourages younger researchers to present their work at the conference.

Concerning the present volume: each paper has been reviewed by two anonymous peer-reviewers, and with regard to language names we let each author use their preferred form, so there has been no harmonization from our side with regard to spellings of Sámi, Saami, Sami, etc.

Saami Linguistics Symposia (SAALS)

The following chronicle includes a summary of all SAALS meetings up to the present date.

SAALS 1 Tromsø

Since the 1st Saami Linguistics Symposium, held on 23–24 November 2006 at the University of Tromsø, already included an ordinal number in its official

title¹, the organisers Patrik Bye, Kjell Kemi, and Ove Lorentz seem to have planned this symposium as the initiation of a series of meetings.

This meeting had three invited speakers: Pekka Sammallahti ('How to describe quantity in North Saami'), Ida Toivonen ('A phonetic study of consonant length in Inari Saami'), and Trond Trosterud ('Language technology for endangered languages: Sámi as a case study').

SAALS 2 Tromsø

The second conference was held on 19–21 November 2009, again at the University of Tromsø. Organisers: Kjell Kemi, Ove Lorentz, Bruce Morén-Duolljá, Laila S. Oskarsson, Mikael Svonni and Trond Trosterud.

This meeting had three invited speakers: Anna-Riitta Lindgren ('Urban Saamis and Use of Saami language'), Zita McRobbie-Utasi ('An experimental phonetic approach to the analysis of the Skolt Saami vowel system'), and Pekka Sammallahti ('How to describe quantity in North Saami').²

SAALS 3 Freiburg

The conference was held on 19–20 October 2017 at the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies (University of Freiburg). Organisers: Michael Rießler, Joshua Wilbur, Tim Feist, and Flore Picard.

The conference invited Matthew Baerman as keynote speaker ('Inflectional morphology in a cross-linguistic perspective').

SAALS 4 Uppsala

The conference was held on 14–15 November 2019 at Uppsala University. Organisers: Rogier Blokland, Olle Kejonen, Richard Kowalik, Michael Rießler, Torbjörn Söder, and Riitta-Liisa Valijärvi.

The conference invited Joanna Nichols as keynote speaker ('Grammatical complexity in Saami: A historical-typological view').

SAALS 5 Tartu

The conference was held on 22–23 September 2022 at the University of Tartu. Organisers: Joshua Wilbur, Helen Türk, and Merit Niinemägi.

The conference invited Maria Polinsky as keynote speaker ('Structural parallels between endangered and heritage languages').

¹ A version of the original webpage (archived on 29 May 2010), including the call for papers, can be found under <https://web.archive.org/web/20100529174317/https://www.hum.uit.no/lapponic/> (7.1.2023). However, the complete conference program could not be reconstructed.

² Similarly to SAALS 1 we were not able to reconstruct the complete program.

SAALS 6 Helsinki

The conference was held on 6–7 November 2024 at the University of Helsinki. Organisers: Ilona Kivinen, Ulla-Maija Forsberg, Riho Grünthal, Sampsa Holopainen, Mariann Bernhard, Rigina Ajanki, Pirjo Virtanen, Juha Kuokkala and Hanna Guttorm.

The conference invited Jussi Ylikoski (‘Sámegielaideid sajádat urálalaš giellabearrašis ja -dutkanis’) and Minerva Piha (‘Saami language history then and now: research historical perspectives’) as keynote speakers.

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Rogier Blokland, Michael Rießler and Torbjörn Söder

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