Polar Interrogatives in Uralic Languages. A Typological Perspective

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Summary/Abstract: The paper surveys the domain of polar interrogation in the Uralic language family in a typological perspective. An overview of the ways in which polar interrogation is marked in the world's languages is presented and the encoding of the domain in Uralic languages is examined against this background. All the major types of polar interrogative marking are found in the family. Polar interrogatives are then examined more holistically, paying attention to structural differences – asymmetries –
between interrogatives and declaratives. The structural asymmetries found in Uralic languages include effects on the marking of focus and loss of TAM distinctions. The functional motivations of these asymmetries are also briefly discussed.