Multiple Language Contact in Tallinn: Transfer $B_2 > A_1$ or $B_1 > A_2$?

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This paper describes multiple Estonian–Russian language contacts in Estonia. For synchronic microsociolinguistic research it is usual to concentrate on the impact of a sociolinguistically dominant language $A$ on an immigrant/minority language $B$. In the Soviet setting, the dominant language was usually Russian (despite Russians being a minority). The situation in Estonia differs from both the above-mentioned cases. In bilingual Tallinn, speakers of Russian as $L_2$ ($R_2$) are still present, while more and more Russians are acquiring Estonian as $L_2$ ($E_2$), which has an impact on the local varieties of Russian. Due to sociohistorical and attitudinal reasons, the impact of Russian on Estonian was negligible in the Soviet era. On the whole, the situation is that of unidirectional convergence toward Estonian. The central claim of the paper is that copying $E_2 > R_1$ and $E_1 > R_2$ are both relevant for the spread of innovations in the local Russian. Certain convergent forms characteristic of both $E_2 > R_1$ and $E_1 > R_2$ are analysed. The ‘pool of non-monolingual utterances’ is therefore bigger than in a situation where only one community is bilingual. Multilingual communication, both written and oral, is crucial for the further spread and habitualisation of innovations.

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Introduction

As a rule, microsociolinguistic research on language contacts is focused on the impact of a sociolinguistically dominant language on immigrant/minority languages. Usually, it is assumed that speakers of a minority language $A$ acquire a majority language $B$. As the degree of $L_2$ acquisition, motivation, speakers’ attitudes and exposure to $B$ may differ a lot across the speech community, the impact of $B$ on $A$ is not always accurately predictable and unambiguous. The direction of transfer central to synchronic language contact research is usually from a sociolinguistically dominant language $B$ as $L_2$ to a sociolinguistically dominated language $A$ as $L_1$ (hereafter $B_2$ and $A_1$ respectively). In second language acquisition (SLA) research the main concern is transfer from $A_1$ to $B_2$, that is, transfer from a speaker’s first language (however, see Pavlenko & Jarvis (2002) on bidirectionality of transfer in SLA).

Recent studies, such as Auer and Dirim (2003), Hinnenkamp (2003) and Rampton (1995), have pointed out that the acquisition of an immigrant/minority language $A$ by the mainstream $B$-native speakers does occur as well, although the mainstream society does not expect this.
The sociolinguistic situation in the post-Soviet countries and the character of language contact differs considerably from case studies on minorities/immigrants in Western Europe. In the post-Soviet setting, local majorities have often become minorities on their own territory, and are bilingual, while Russian speakers remain monolingual (in terms of Skutnabb-Kangas (1992), Russians are ‘majoritised minorities’). For instance, studies such as Wertheim (in press) demonstrate how Russian pragmatic particles have become an integral part of several colloquial varieties of Tatar. At the same time, if any speakers of Tatar as L2 exist among ethnic Russians, they remain marginal.1

In this respect, the nature and scope of bilingualism and directions of transfer in the Baltic countries are distinct both from what we observe in Western Europe on the one hand and elsewhere in the post-Soviet space on the other. Due to different political history (experience of own statehood, well developed tradition of language planning), high prestige of the native language, and overt and covert resistance to Russification, the sociolinguistics of native-Russian bilingualism in the Baltic region turns out to be a special case within the Soviet context. Following the restoration of the independence in 1991 the number of Russians who have at least a working command of Estonian and use their language in their daily life has been increasing. It means that, in certain localities, speakers of Russian as L2 and speakers of Estonian as L2 interact on an everyday basis. Up to now, only the impact of the acquisition of Estonian (multilingual communication, codeswitching, convergence) on Estonia’s Russian has been discussed (Verschik, 2004a, 2004b, 2005), that is, the direction of transfer under consideration was from Estonian as L2 into Russian as L1, i.e. E2 > R1. This is in accordance with Thomason (1997, 2001), who emphasises that even a passive knowledge of L2 should not be ignored when speaking of transfer L2 > L1, for it is one of contact-induced language change mechanisms.

In order to shed some light on the complexity of the contact setting, we have also to take into account the speakers of Estonian as L1 who know some Russian. Here the direction of transfer relevant for the current paper is from Estonian (L1) to Russian (L2), or E1 > R2. I am going to demonstrate that the same items, such as certain convergent forms and pragmatic particles, are present both in E2 > R1 and E1 > R2 transfer, and it is hardly possible to find the ultimate source of these items (i.e. either E2 > R1 or E1 > R2, or both).

The existence of two different groups of speakers that tend to produce the same forms presents a methodologically interesting case. As a reconstruction of past contact situations is difficult or even impossible (Thomason, 2000), the dynamics of contacts that take place here and now, i.e. synchronically, may contribute to a better understanding of complexity in contact processes.

This paper is organised as follows. First, a short description of the current sociolinguistic situation in Estonia will be presented. Then I will discuss the features common to ‘Estonian-influenced’ Russian and Russian as L2 of Estonians (as transfer R1 > E2 and R2 > E1 remains outside the scope of the present paper). After that I will consider the role of multilingual communication between speakers of R1 and E1/R2. In the last section, the reasons for transfer in both sets of speakers will be discussed and conclusions will be drawn.
The data come from bilingual TV broadcasts recorded in 2001–2005, as well as from everyday interactions in the public sphere in Tallinn (market places, shops, banks) and Russian-language advertisement leaflets issued by banks, supermarkets, companies, etc. I am going to base the discussion on a code-copying framework (Johanson, 1993, 1999, 2002, 2005) and the notion of pragmatically dominant language (Matras, 1998, 2000), as well as several ideas concerning contact-induced language change expressed by Backus (2004, 2005).

**Sociolinguistic Situation in Estonia**

The languages in question have a long history of contacts. For instance, early Russian lexical borrowings in Estonian originate from the 14th century, and the impact of Estonian on rural varieties of Russian spoken on the West coast of Lake Peipus has been described in the literature (see for instance Heiter, 1977). However, at different periods the contacts between the languages in question occurred in different localities and in different sociocultural circumstances (i.e. arrival of Russian Old-Believers to Estonia in the 17th century, contacts during the Russian imperial rule in urban and rural areas, period of Estonia’s independence, the situation of the Soviet era, etc.). Although the languages are the same, the contact results may differ as far as the sociolinguistic situation is concerned. To put it in a metaphorical way (Jacobs, 2005: 271), the components of the ‘sociolinguistic soup’ remain the same but the ‘recipe’ changes.

Some characteristics of the present language situation in Estonia were mentioned in the introduction (for a more detailed account see Rannut, 2004; Verschik, 2005). It has to be added that there are considerable regional differences: the predominantly Russian-speaking North East, bilingual Tallinn and predominantly Estonian-speaking rest of the country. It would be too simplistic to assume that all Estonians used to have an equally good command of Russian, even in the worst period of Russification. First, motivation for the acquisition of the language was rather instrumental (i.e. meeting the needs of everyday life) than integrative (genuine interest in the Russian language and culture). Two separate language communities led their parallel lives, interacting minimally with each other. Second, the need to acquire Russian was certainly linked to regional differences. It was vital in the North East and, for certain sectors of the population, in Tallinn, but not necessarily so in the rest of the country. The capital Tallinn presents an interesting in-between case.

It would be erroneous to refer to the Russian-speaking community as something homogenous (Vihalemm, 2002 and references therein). Differences in the degree of acquisition and use of Estonian may be explained partly with generational factors (elderly people are less likely to learn and use Estonian), partly with regional and demographic peculiarities (North East versus the rest of the country), and partly with a variety of attitudes to the language, individual needs and preferences, etc.

According to the census of 2000, out of a total population of 1,370,052, Estonians constitute 67.9% (930,219) and Russians 25.6% (351,178). Proficiency in Estonian among non-Estonians (i.e. mostly ethnic Russians) has
significantly increased since the last Soviet census of 1989, that is, 44.5% of Russians claimed that they know Estonian (as opposed to 15% in 1989). As proficiency was not defined in the census, in reality the ability to communicate in Estonian may significantly vary within this group. Sixty-eight percent of Estonians claimed to have proficiency in Russian.

In Tallinn the population is 400,378, among whom Estonians constitute slightly over 50%. From this it follows that Tallinn is the place where the patterns of multilingual communication are most diverse. Speakers of R2 are still present there, while the number of speakers of E2 is constantly increasing. In the North East and in Tallinn some speakers of R2 tend to follow communication patterns that were typical of an earlier sociolinguistic setting, and here one can speak about the phenomenon of attitudinal delay that affects the sociolinguistic environment (Rannut, 2004).

All in all, the emergence of bilingual speakers with E2 during recent decades contributes to the complexity of sociolinguistic situation. The possibilities of interaction are as in Figure 1. R1/E2 designates a speaker with dominant Russian and Estonian as L2 etc. E and R stand respectively for monolingual speakers of Estonian and Russian.

Of course it is possible to lead a completely monolingual life in one’s respective language community (see Rannut, 2005 on four different language environments in Estonia) but, compared to the Soviet era, more and more Russian speakers in Tallinn use Estonian as L2, and more interaction between the two communities is likely to take place. On the basis of the statistics, Tallinn appears to be a scene of a multiple contact situation where both transfer E2 → R1 and E1 → R2 are easily attestable. In the next section I will briefly describe the linguistic items that have been attested in R1 as well as in R2 but are a result of different kinds of transfer.

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**Figure 1** Patterns of mono- and multilingual communication in Tallinn
Features Common to E2 > R1 and E1 > R2

The common features under discussion can be found in various subsystems of the Russian language. In terms of Clyne’s (2003) taxonomy of transference, we deal mostly with syntactic, semantico-syntactic and semantic transference, but also with lexical and pragmatic transference. Semantic transference is especially visible in verbs where the meaning of a Russian verb is broadened on the model of its Estonian equivalent. Syntactic transference is to be found in verbal government (for instance, Russian genitive as an equivalent of Estonian partitive as opposed to monolingual Russian accusative) and, sometimes, in word order in constructions N Gen + N Nom (as in Estonian where noun in the genitive precedes noun in the nominative, see Verschik, 2004a). There even are indications that aspectual opposition is blurred in some speakers of R1 who are also fluent speakers of E2 (Ku ö lmoja, 2000: 89). Of course, the list is not complete, and it is impossible to give the same attention to all relevant features in a short paper. For the sake of brevity, I have chosen four cases for the further discussion. These are:

- morphologically unintegrated or only partly integrated Estonian nouns within the Russian matrix;
- copying of Estonian verbal government (directional and separative versus static verbs);
- emerging equivalents of Estonian analytic verbs; and
- copying of Estonian utterance modifiers.

Morphologically unintegrated/partially integrated Estonian nouns

There exists a solid body of literature on morphological integration of single-item switches and hypothetical distinctions between these and lexical borrowings. Authors who choose a formal approach believe that morphologically integrated items are borrowings, while non-integrated items are single-word switches (Poplack & Meechan, 1998). Still, some adherents of a strictly formal approach (Myers-Scotton, 1993) believe in the existence of a continuum between borrowings and one-word switches. Quite naturally, those researchers who prefer a flexible approach to contact phenomena share the idea of a continuum (for instance, Angermeyer, 2002: 163; Lauttamus, 1991; Sarhimaa, 1999; Thomason, 1997).

In my view, distinction of borrowings versus single-item switches based on the degree of morphological integration is problematic for several reasons. First, a number of studies describe situations where either both languages or at least a sociolinguistically dominant language have little inflectional morphology (see, for instance, Lauttamus (1991) and Halmari (1997) on immigrant Finnish in America, Kovács (2001) on immigrant Finnish and Hungarian in Australia), or a language with a more developed inflectional morphology is a minority language (Sarhimaa (1999) on Karelian–Russian contacts). The case of Russian in Estonia is different in this respect: both languages have a rich inflectional morphology, whereas it is even more developed in Estonian, a language that regained its official status in 1989.
Second, in certain syntactic positions nouns do not require any integration, for instance, as a subject in the nominative singular (in Russian also an object in the accusative case in certain noun classes). In such instances there is no way to decide judging on the degree of integration, whether the item is a borrowing or a single-word codeswitching.

Third, there always exists a great variation across idiolects. Any speech community consists of various microcommunities, whereas certain members participate in several speech communities. Partial or complete morphological integration or lack thereof may depend on the speaker’s pragmatic goals, i.e. whether he or she wishes to stress the otherness of a certain lexical item, or to demonstrate an excellent command of the language of insertions, or to create distance etc. This is in accordance with Auer (1984) who claims that motivations for insertions are to be sought in conversational structure (see also discussion in Angermeyer, 2002).

Studies like Leisio (2001) have shown that there is a considerable difference between first and non-first generation speakers. Apparently, a full integration is not necessary for proficient bilinguals. Sarhimaa (1999) gives an excellent overview of the literature on the problem and concludes that monolingual speech should not be considered as a model for the interpretation of multilingual speech features.

The situation of indigenous Russians in Finland described by Leisio (2001) is the closest approximation to that of Russians in Estonia, although the focus of the present paper is not the indigenous Russians but rather the Soviet-time newcomers and their descendants. Leisio (2001) concentrates on gender assignment of Finnish insertions. This study is especially relevant here because Finnish and Estonian are closely related, structurally rather similar and genderless languages.

There are two patterns in gender assignment in Russian: semantic (based either on biological criteria or on the gender of the Russian equivalent/hyperonym) and morphological (fitting into the existing declension types). If a noun ends with a consonant, it is masculine and fits to the second declension; if it ends with -a, it is likely to be feminine and belongs to the first declension. If there are no agreeing adjectives, relative pronouns, or verbs in the past tense in singular, or the noun is in plural, the establishment of the gender becomes impossible.

Russian has also a class of indeclinable nouns — lexical borrowings that do not fit into Russian declension classes: kofe ‘coffee’, kol’rabi ‘kohlrabi’, metro ‘metro’, inter’ju ‘interview’. Comrie et al. (1996: 117–118) note that it was characteristic of upper classes to avoid declension of foreign nouns, while in informal uneducated register (so-called prostorečije) the tendency was the opposite (see also Leisio, 2001). During the Soviet period the number of indeclinable nouns increased, which is a manifestation of growing analyticity in Russian (Comrie et al., 1996: 117–118). However, if a shape of a foreign lexical item allows classification into Russian declension types, the noun is declinable: for instance, brifing ‘briefing’ ends with a consonant and is interpreted as a masculine noun of the second declension, thus, genitive brifing-a, dative brifing-u etc. The rules for gender assignment in the indeclinable nouns are the same — semantic and morphological, although
there are some fluctuations in gender assignment of recent indeclinable borrowings (Mäkilä, 2000).

Even if the gender of Estonian insertions may be unambiguously assigned, this does not guarantee a full morphological integration, i.e. appropriate case endings. Unlike in Leisiö’s study, my concern here is the presence or the lack of Russian inflectional morphology rather than gender assignment. In my data, there are instances when the gender can be easily established, and the insertion can be easily interpreted in terms of Russian declension classes, nevertheless, inflectional morphology is missing. Therefore, I assume that the application of Russian inflectional morphology to Estonian insertions does not exclusively depend on whether the insertion fits into one of Russian declension classes. Consider example (1) where the noun *käibemaks* > *kjaibemaks* ‘value added tax’ is fully integrated, and example (2a) where full integration is not the case, although the noun *ainekava* ‘syllabus’ fits neatly into the first declension. Estonian-language items are in bold.

(1) *éto budet bez kjaibemaks-a*
this be FUT 3 SG without value added tax GEN SG 2nd DECL
‘this will be without value-added tax’

(a young Russian female, proficient in Estonian, in a travel agency, June 2002)

(2a) *éto go v ainekava ne napisano*
this: GEN in syllabus not written
‘this is not written in the syllabus’

(a young Russian female student at Tallinn University, 2004)

Compare with a possible integration of *ainekava* in (2b) where the noun receives the Russian prepositional case ending:

(2b) *éto go v ainekav-e ne napisano*
this: GEN in syllabus-PREP not written
‘ibid’

As it follows from (1) and (2b), both Estonian nouns *käibemaks* ‘value added tax’ and *ainekava* ‘syllabus’ can be easily integrated into Russian. As *käibemaks* ends with a consonant, it is treated as Russian second declension masculine nouns (like *raps* ‘rape’), thus, the genitive form ends with -a, as in (1). Using the same logic, as *ainekava* ends with -a, and fits into the first declension (like *lava* ‘lava’, *trava* ‘grass’), one would expect the prepositional ending -e (like *v trav-e* ‘in the grass’). However, this is not the case in (2).

Consider also (3) where the speakers, two Russian women (W1 and W2) at the market place, are not very proficient in Estonian. The noun *kanel’* ‘cinnamon’ (stress on the second syllable) < Estonian *kaneel* ‘ibid’ fits either in the second declension (masculine consonant-ending nouns like *aprel’* ‘April’) or in the third declension (feminine palatalised consonant-ending nouns like *karamel’* ‘caramel’). Under *kanel’* ‘cinnamon’ W1 means ‘cinnamon rolls’ (Estonian *kaneelisai*, monolingual Russian *buločka s koricej*, lit. ‘roll with cinnamon’).
If kanel’ is to be treated as a second declension noun, then the instrumental case ending required after the preposition s ‘with’ would be -em, that is s kanel’-em (cf. s aprēl’-em ‘with April’). If it is to be interpreted as a third declension noun, the instrumental ending would be -ju: s kanel’-ju (cf. s karamel’-ju ‘with caramel’). Thus, full morphological integration is not necessarily expectable even when the speakers do not know Estonian sufficiently well and are far from being fluent bilinguals.

However, this is but one possible reason for non-integration of Estonian nouns into the Russian matrix. In a situation where the number of bilingual speakers is increasing, the speakers’ intuition and perception differs from those of monolingual speakers in Russia.

All above-mentioned examples represent the speech of Russian-dominant speakers. Now we shall see that non-integration also occurs in the Russian speech of Estonian-dominant bilinguals. This is especially visible in the names of institutions, companies, stores, but also in common nouns. One may argue that proper names have a special status both on the semantic and on the cognitive level and, therefore, are treated differently. However, quite often such proper names are derived from common nouns, for instance, Estonian Maksuamet ‘inland revenue office’ < maksu ‘tax’ (genitive) + amet ‘office’, Kinoliit ‘cinematography union’ < kino ‘cinema’ + liit ‘union. It is also important that numerous concepts that are used in Estonianised domains, such as public administration, university education, banking, finances, and so on, do not often have an established ‘official’ Russian equivalent in Estonia. Consider example (4) where a young Estonian woman explains in Russian on the phone that the caller has dialled a wrong number:

(4) No éto nomer Kinoliit-Ø, ne posol’stv-a
   ‘but this number cinematography union-GEN, not embassy-GEN
   ‘but this is the number of the cinematography union, not of the embassy’
   (October 2005)

Again, the noun in question ends with a consonant and fits into the second declension class (expected genitive ending is -a). The position after the head in the nominative (nomer ‘number’) follows the Russian pattern (in Estonian it would be reverse, N Gen + N Nom) and allows understanding even without morphological integration.
In (5) an Estonian-dominant female assistant explains to a student at Tallinn University something about the syllabus. Here the noun in question, ainekava ‘syllabus’, is the same as in (2a) and (2b). Note that if the speaker had have decided to integrate the noun, the prepositional ending in the appropriate declension class would be -e: v ainekav-e (cf. nominative trav-a ‘grass’: accusative v trav-e ‘in the grass’).

(5) Éto možno naj-ti v ainekava-Ø
this may find-INF in syllabus-PREP
‘one may find it in the syllabus’

The reasons of non-integration in R1 and R2 speakers differ to some extent. I assume that the analyticity tendency in Russia is not a factor that would influence Russian as L2. I will return to this point in the discussion.

Directional and separative verbs versus static verbs

Estonian has a developed system of local cases that are usually classified into internal (illative, inessive, elative) and external (allative, adessive, ablative). Each triad contains a directional case (where to?), a static case (where?) and a separative case (from where?). Thus, there is a pair of directional (illative and allative), static (inessive and adessive) and separative cases (elative and ablative) (for terms and more detailed description of Estonian local cases see Viitso, 2003). In Estonian, verbs like unustama ‘to forget, to leave’, jätma ‘to leave’ (transitive) and matma ‘to bury’ require one of the directional cases: jät-si-n koju leave-PAST-1 SG home: ILL ‘I left (it) at home’ (lit. ‘to home’). These verbs will be called directional. Verbs like küsima ‘to ask’, kuulma ‘to hear’, leidma ‘to find’, otsima ‘to look for’ and korjama ‘to gather’ (transitive) require a separative case (elative and ablative): leid-is riidi-li shelf-ABL ‘he/she found on a shelf’ (lit. ‘from a shelf’). Such verbs will be further called separative.

In Standard Russian, the equivalents of Estonian directional and separative verbs are static, i.e. the noun is in the prepositional case (where?) with the prepositions v ‘in’ or na ‘on’, or in the genitive case preceded by the preposition u ‘at’: zaby-l v škol-e left-PAST-MASC in school-PREP ‘I/ you/ he left (it) at school’; ja naše-l na ulic-e I found-PAST-MASC on street-PREP ‘I found (it) in the street’; sprosi-t’ u drug-a ask-INF at friend-GEN ‘to ask a friend’. Use of any other case or prepositions violates the rules of Standard Russian and sounds ungrammatical.


Recently, the copying of Estonian directional and separative government has found its way into the speech of some Russians. Consider (6a) where the verb vosstanovit’sja ‘to get readmitted’ is treated as directional and the accusative (where to?) is used instead of Standard Russian prepositional case (where?), Standard Russian in (6b) and Estonian in (6c):
In (7a), the verb *učit’* ‘to study’ that requires a prepositional phrase or an adverb that answers the question *where?* in Standard Russian is treated like a separative verb (*where from?*), cf. (7b) and (7c):

(7a) **otkuda**  
    from where  
    you 2 PL  
    studied  
    language  
    ‘where have you studied the language?’  
    (ETV, 10.02.2005, Russian-speaking reporter)

(7b) **gde**  
    where  
    you 2PL  
    studied  
    language  
    ‘ibid’

(7c) **ku-st**  
    where-EL  
    you 2 PL  
    studied  
    language  
    ‘ibid’

The same pattern of use is frequently attestable in Estonians who speak Russian as L2. Even very proficient speakers tend to copy Estonian separative and directional verbs onto their Russian. The following utterance (8a) belongs to a well known art historian who talks in Russian about the architecture of Tallinn in the Russian-language television broadcast called *Estica*. The use of the preposition *ot* ‘from’ instead of *u* ‘at’ conveys the separative meaning.²

(8a) **oni pokupali ot naš-ix kupc-ov različnyje**  
    they bought from our-GEN merchant-GEN PL various  
    tovary  
    goods  
    ‘they used to buy various goods from our merchants’  
    (ETV, Estica, 13.07.2005)
Compare with (8b) and (8c):

(8b) Standard Russian

oni pokupali u naš-ix kupč-ov različnyje
tovary
goods
‘ibid’

(8c) Estonian

nad otsid meie kaupmees-te-lt erinevaid kaupu
they bought our merchant-PL-ABL various goods
‘ibid’

Instances of this kind are rather numerous. Until recently, native Russian speakers would have unconditionally dismissed utterances like (6a), (7a) and (8a) as non-grammatical or non-native. Copying of the directional and separative government is considered as a ‘typical error’ of Estonians who learn Russian. It was made clear in the present section that such copying is now attributable to both sets of speakers. The previous set of examples discussed in the first part of this section where Estonian nouns do not receive Russian case endings in the Russian matrix may be interpreted in several ways because of growing analyticity in Russian and because of the obvious foreignness of at least some Estonian lexical items: however, the current set of examples is unambiguously at odds with the Russian (monolingual) grammar.

**Emerging equivalents of Estonian analytic verbs**

Estonian has a productive group of analytic verbs that are a grammaticalised combination of a noun/adjective/pronoun/adverb and a verb. Analytic, or phrasal verbs are traditionally classified as follows: composite or particle verbs (auxiliary adverb + verb) and so-called expression verbs (noun, adjective or pronoun + verb) (Viiitso, 2003: 86). Examples of particle verbs and expression verbs are given respectively in (9a) and (9b):

(9a) Particle verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ärä</td>
<td>away go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>läbi</td>
<td>through look</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tagasi</td>
<td>back call</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(9b) Expression verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pea-st</td>
<td>head-ELATIVE know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paha-ks</td>
<td>bad-TRANSLATIVE put</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oma-ks</td>
<td>own-TRANSLATIVE take</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This type of verb is absent in Standard Russian. The meaning of the main verb is usually modified by a prefix, as in (10a). Russian also has grammaticalised verbal phrases, as in (10b), however, they are not as productive as in Estonian. Sometimes a Russian verb corresponding to an Estonian analytic verb does not have any prefixes, as in (10c):
It has to be stressed that certain collocations of a verb and an adverb in Russian do not have the same meaning as the corresponding collocations in Estonian. Thus, it is possible to say in Standard Russian *smotret’ svercxu ‘to look from above’, while the meaning of the VP is a sum of the meanings of the components. The phrase is not grammaticalised in Russian. The collocation of the same components in Estonian *pea-lt vaatama (above-ABL to look) has a different meaning ‘to observe (from a side)’, whereas the meaning is not a sum of the meanings of the components.

Until the last decade, the copying of collocations and their meaning from Estonian has been attributed to ‘Russian as spoken by Estonians’, that is, E1 > R2. However, equivalents of Estonian analytic verbs are emerging in the local Russian as spoken by Russians. Collocations that are in principle acceptable in Standard Russian, such as *smotret’ svercxu ‘to look from above’, have acquired a completely new meaning, which is a copy of the meaning of Estonian grammaticalised collocation *pea-lt vaatama (above-ABL to look) ‘to observe’. Also, collocations impossible in monolingual Russian have been attested, such as *stavit’ v golor-u (to put into head-ACC) ‘to put on (a hat, a kerchief, etc.)’ < *pihe panema (head: ILL to put) ‘ibid’. For a monolingual speaker of Standard Russian, the meaning of the latter analytic verb remains opaque. I will not consider mixed copies where the modifier is a global copy from Estonian and the verb is Russian, such as *xodit’ vælja-s ‘to go out’ (Russian to go + Estonian outside-INES), as I have not encountered such instances in R2.

The emergence of an equivalent of the Estonian analytic verb *endale saama ‘(finally) to acquire, to end up with’ (lit. ‘to get to oneself’) is illustrated in (11a). In monolingual Russian, the equivalent is just *polučit’ ‘to get, to receive’. A Russian-dominant reporter refers to the Estonian–Russian state border problems:

(11a) Tak Rossiya *poluči-l-a sebe preslovytj-O
so Russia get-PAST-FEM oneself: DAT notorious-ACC
sapožok-O Saatse-Ø
boot-ACC Saatse-GEN

‘thus Russia ended up with the notorious Saatse boot’ (a boot-shaped piece of land)

(ETV, Dilemma, 23.03.2005)
Compare with Standard Russian in (11b) and Estonian in (11c):

(11b) Standard Russian

Tak Rossiya *poluči-l-a preslovytj-O sapozok-O
so Russia get-PAST-FEM notorious-ACC boot-ACC
In (12a) the very same collocation *polucit’ sebe* ‘to acquire, to end up with’ < *endale saama* is produced by an Estonian-dominant speaker who addresses an audience of Russian-speaking students:

(12a) ... čtoby ne *polucˇi-t’* sebe *neprijatnost-i*

in order not get-INF oneself: DAT trouble-ACC PL

‘in order not to get into trouble’

(Autumn 2001)

Compare with Standard Russian in (12b), where another verb and another construction is chosen to convey the meaning:

(12b) čtoby *u* *vas* *ne* *by-l-o*

in order at you: GEN PL not be-PAST-NEUT

*neprijatnost’-ej*

trouble-ACC PL

‘in order that you would not have troubles’

Up to now, about a dozen Russian new analytic verbs have been attested in the local Russian speech. Estonian speakers of R2 tend to produce the same constructions in their Russian and often the very verbs are the same, as in (11a) and (12a). Apparently, this is somehow linked to the frequency of use, as the analytic verbs in question are very productive in Estonian and often belong to the basic vocabulary. The conclusion drawn in the previous section concerning the increasing acceptance of convergent forms that violate the rules of Standard Russian applies here, too.

Transfer of discourse markers

During the past decade a number of studies on transfer of discourse markers in various bilingual communities has appeared: Maschler (1998, 2000), Matras (1998, 2000), Salmons (1990) and Savic (1995), to name just a few. Various explanations of discourse marker transfer have been proposed; rather frequently the explanations are of a macrosociolinguistic (prestige) or pragmatic nature (‘metalanguage’, see Maschler, 1998). Matras (1998) proposed a different reasoning for discourse marker transfer: he explains this with cognitive reasons. According to him, a bilingual speaker experiences a considerable cognitive pressure and, therefore, utterance modifiers (discourse markers, discourse-regulating elements, focus particles) are likely to come from a pragmatically dominant language. This term ‘pertains to the role of a
given language in regulation mental processing activities’ (Matras, 1998: 286 ff). The approach chosen by Matras does not reject sociolinguistic explanation, for it is clear that a language of a higher sociolinguistic status has more chances to become pragmatically dominant.

During the Soviet era, a small number of Russian pragmatic particles were borrowed into colloquial Estonian: laadna ‘fine’ < Russian ladno, paka < Russian poka ‘so long’, davai ‘let’s go for it, OK’. However, these borrowings were not accepted in the Standard Estonian, and Estonian original particles were not replaced by the Russian equivalents (a possible reason for this lies in speakers’ attitudes towards Russian and Russification; see the section on the sociolinguistic situation in Estonia). Rather, the two sets of utterance modifiers allowed for stylistic variation, as Russian equivalents were less formal and somewhat ironic. Today all of them except davai have become obsolete.

It is safe to claim that, until recently, Estonian utterance modifiers were not a part of local Russian, maybe except occasional use of tere ‘hello’. However, during the past 10 years, Estonian utterance modifiers like selge ‘clear’, aitah ‘thank you’, palun ‘please’, klapib ‘it suits fine’, oot-oot ‘wait a minute’, jah ~ jaa ‘yes’ and ei ‘no’ have become elements of both Russian-to-Estonian and Russian-to-Russian communication.

The studies mentioned in the beginning of this section consider L2 pragmatic particles in L1. However, the opposite situation is also possible when a speaker of L2 uses L1 pragmatic particles. I believe that at least partly the reasons for this are of cognitive nature. Matras (1998, 2000) discusses fusion as a way to reduce the cognitive pressure. Although I do not think the notion of fusion (i.e. two systems merged in one) is applicable to what happens in R2, still, the cognitive load on a bilingual speaker should not be ignored. The use of L1 pragmatic items in L2 also can help to reduce the cognitive pressure. L1 utterance modifiers in L2 illustrate, among other things, the usefulness of the concept ‘pragmatically dominant language’: apparently, for speakers of R2 Estonian remains pragmatically dominant, i.e. their usual language, preferred language or the language they identify with, and utterance modifiers, as well as means of discourse organisation come from that language.

In addition to the cognitive reasons for utterance modifier transfer, there are sociopragmatic reasons specific to the language situation in Estonia. Many Russians in Tallinn only have a passive command of Estonian, or they do not feel very confident speaking the language. However, they wish to manifest their appreciation of Estonian as a symbolic value (Vihalem, 2002) or just to facilitate communication with E1 speakers. A possible strategy to do this is to start a conversation in Estonian or to insert some Estonian lexical items, such as conversation starters. Discourse makers are one of the best candidates to achieve these goals.

As a result, both Russians and Estonians use Estonian pragmatic particles in their Russian. Note that use of Estonian (at least occasional insertional and alternational CS, including utterance modifiers) is gradually internalised in Russian-to-Russian communication, especially in the communication over the counter, whereas Russian was never internalised in Estonian-to-Estonian communication during the Soviet period.4
The following example (13) illustrates how an elderly Russian male with a minimal command of Estonian tries to express politeness by using Estonian utterance modifiers. We shall see that his choice of Estonian pragmatic devices is often erroneous in terms of speech etiquette, but this does not create misunderstanding or a conflict, as Estonian insertions, out of place as they are, nevertheless communicate the speaker’s intention to avoid a completely monolingual conversation between himself and the second (Estonian-dominant) participant. The encounter takes place at Tallinn Bus Station, where the man (M) speaks to a cashier, an Estonian-dominant young woman (C) who speaks some Russian but with a heavy Estonian accent. The researcher (R) is a balanced bilingual.


so then give till Kohtla-Järve. clear.

‘so, give me (a ticket) to Kohtla-Järve. Clear.’

[C nods to R and looks at her, signalling that the latter should proceed with her request]

R: [to C] *Palun, üheksa kolmikümmand Narva.*

please nine thirty to Narva

‘please, nine thirty (bus) to Narva’

M: *Ax i Narvu možno?*

ah and in Narva possible

‘ah, so it is possible to get to Narva, too?’

R: [to M] *Éto ekspress, bystro idet.*

this express fast goes

‘it is an express, it is fast’

M: [to C] *Kuule kallis, a Narvu jest’ ekspress?*

listen dear and to Narva is express

‘listen, dear, is there an express to Narva?’

C: [to M] *Da, devjat’ tridcat’.*

‘yes, nine thirty’

M: *Aitäh.*

‘thank you’

(Tallinn Bus Station, 03.04.2002)

In this conversation, M uses several Estonian utterance modifiers. The use of *selge* ‘clear’ sounds somehow out of place in this context but not impossible. This discourse marker is used frequently also in Russian-to-Russian communication. However, *kuule kallis* ‘listen, dear’ is rude in Estonian: one does not address an unfamiliar person in this way. In Estonian *kallis* ‘dear’ is rather intimate. The form *kuule* ‘listen’ is, in fact, imperative second person singular, that is, familiar and impolite, as opposed to more formal *kuul-ge* IMPER 2 PL ‘listen’. However, even the latter would be improper in a more or less formal communication over the counter. Only the use of *aitäh* ‘thank you’ does not violate any pragmatic rules. Nevertheless, M’s effort is acknowledged and appreciated. Thus, pragmatic particles are a convenient and accessible device even when one is not able to produce anything approximating a full version of
Thus, the evidence from Estonian–Russian language contacts confirms the findings of several researchers that utterance modifiers are borrowed/copied/ transferred already at an early stage of contacts (see references in Wertheim, 2005).

In (14) the particle oot (-oot) ‘wait a minute’ is used in Russian-to-Russian conversation. Both speakers are Russian-dominant bilinguals. A young female instructor (I) talks to a student (S) about what one can do in Tallinn:

I: Ty byla v Tallinne v kakom-nibud’ kinoteatre?
‘have you been to any cinema in Tallinn?’

S: V Plaze.
in Plaza
‘in Plaza’ (the name of the biggest cinema in Tallinn)

I: Čto smotrela?
‘what did you watch?’

S: Nu vsjakoje tam, nu komediju.
Well all kind there, well comedy
‘well, all kind of things, well, a comedy’

I: Kakuju?
‘which one?’

S: Ne pomnju. Davno bylo.
not remember long ago
‘I don’t remember. That was long ago’

I: A v muzeje byla?
And in museum were
‘and have you been to a museum?’

S: Oot... net.
wait... no
‘actually... no’

(December 2005, conversation in Tallinn University)

The speakers in (14) are much more proficient in Estonian that the man in (13). Both speak Estonian fluently and have a good communicative competence. Unlike in (13), the insertion of Estonian utterance modifier here is in perfect accordance with the rules of Estonian pragmatics.

Now let us consider Estonian utterance modifiers in R2. Example (15) is a fragment of a bilingual TV show, Unetus-Bessonnica (‘insomnia’), where topics of general interest are discussed between two bilingual hosts and the public in the studio. The hosts are bilingual (a Russian-dominant and an Estonian-dominant) and any member of the studio audience is entitled to communicate in both languages, as the show is subtitled. A Russian-speaking woman who understands some Estonian (W) claims that new requirements for construction business are hard to meet. One of the hosts (H), an Estonian-dominant female,
argues with her. H is reasonably fluent in Russian, but uses (probably unconsciously) the same Estonian pragmatic particle as the speaker in (14):

\[(15)\]

W: \textit{Vot seičas my stroim nočnoj klub.} \\
\textit{here now we build night club} \\
'now we are building a night-club' \\

H: \textit{Jaerelikult, teil lähed väga hästi.} \\
\textit{thus at goes very well} \\
you \\
'that means you are doing very well' \\

W: \textit{Da-da, i seičas, koğda ot nas trebujut tualet} \\
\textit{yes-yes and now when from us require toilet} \\
dlja invalidov ... Nu éto ... nu izvinite ... \\
for disabled well this well excuse \\
'yes, and now when they demand a toilet for disabled persons... well, this, you have to excuse me' \\

H: \textit{Oot-oot, počemu ja dolžna izvinjat'? Po-mojemu,} \\
[rapidly] \\
wait-wait why I obliged to excuse in my opinion \\
éto normal'no. \\
this normal \\
'wait a minute, why do I have to excuse you? I think this is normal' \\
(ETV, Unetus-Bessonitsa, 14.10.2004)

From the extract we can observe that in the beginning H was commenting in Estonian but switched to Russian in order to make a clear statement that would be understood by W, who is a Russian-speaker (during the show there was no chance to judge her command of Estonian). However, even if the reason for the switch is to avoid any ambiguities and to communicate the idea in W’s mother tongue, the Estonian particle \textit{oot-oot} ‘wait a minute’ ‘slips in’.

As in (15), utterance modifiers from L1 may appear in L2. I assume that there is no contradiction between this and the claim of easy transferability of L2 utterance modifiers: a lot depends on which language is pragmatically dominant. Estonian utterance modifiers in R2 speech, however, do not play the same role as in R1 speech, for they are not a part of a politeness strategy. Estonian utterance modifiers in R2 are a part of expectable transfer L1 > L2 when an incomplete acquisition is the case. Although it is believed that L1 basic lexicon is not transferred to L2 as a rule (see Thomason & Kaufman, 1988), nevertheless, there are exceptions to this general claim. I will turn to the reasons for L1 lexical material transfer in the discussion.

\section*{The Role of Multilingual Communication}

It is often impossible to trace how speakers start using innovative forms. It sounds trivial that some speakers choose for some reasons a new form over the old one, and others might imitate their use. In our situation where multilingual
communication is a recent phenomenon, it is possible sometimes to actually witness how speakers of R1 accept innovations (resulting from copying) produced by speakers of E1/R2. This is a manifestation of what Thomason (1997, 2001, 2003) calls ‘negotiation’, which is a contact-induced change mechanism.

In (16a) an Estonian-dominant reporter (R) is concerned with a scheme of petty crimes, that is, how some people, alleged fortune-tellers, ask their clients to place money between the pages of an allegedly holy book (see also Verschik, 2002: 261 on this example). The reporter is fluent in Russian, however he copies the meaning of Estonian verb \textit{panema} ‘to put, to place, to insert, to lay’ onto Russian \textit{postavit’} ‘to put (vertically)’. In sum, the Estonian verb has a wider range of meaning than its Russian equivalent. Although semantic copying is not considered in this paper, it should be noted that this is now a frequent phenomenon in local Russian. As the conversation goes on, one is able to see that the other interlocutor, a Russian-speaking woman (W), accepts the choice of the verb.

(16a) R: \begin{verbatim}
I mnogo ljudi stav-jat sjuda den’g-i?
and many people put-3 PL here money-NOM PL (vertically)
‘and do people put here a lot of money?’
\end{verbatim}
W: \begin{verbatim}
Stav-jat.
put-3 PL
‘they put’
\end{verbatim}
(TV 3, Politseinädal, 04.05.2001)

Compare with Standard Russian in (16b), where the verb is different:

(16b) Standard Russian:
\begin{verbatim}
I mnogo ljudi klad-ut sjuda den-eg?
and many people lay-3 PL here money-GEN PL
‘ibid’
\end{verbatim}

The acceptance of the E1 > R2 copied form may be, of course, just a matter of this particular conversation, but on the other hand, this is one of the potential ways for innovations to spread. As for the Estonian verb \textit{panema} and other verbs that have a wider meaning in Estonian, I have examples of semantic copying also by Russian-dominant speakers in my data.

The importance of written bilingual communication should not be underestimated either. Let us consider example (17). It illustrates the same phenomenon as in (8). It is a bilingual announcement placed by somebody at a tram stop in Tallinn:

(17) Estonian:
\begin{verbatim}
Osta-n 3-4-toalise korter-i otse omaniku-lt
buy-1 SG 3-4-room: flat GEN directly owner-ABL
ADJ GEN
\end{verbatim}

Russian:
\begin{verbatim}
Kupl-ju 3-4-x komnat-n-uju kvartir-u ot
\end{verbatim}
buy-1 SG 3-4-GEN PL room-ADJ-ACC FEM flat-ACC from sobstvennik-a owner-GEN
'I wish to buy a three-four room flat (directly) from the owner' (Tallinn, Telliskivi tram stop, 10.12.2005)

This is exactly an instance of separative government copying as discussed in 'Directional and Separative verbs vs. static verbs'. The Estonian verb ostma ‘to buy’ requires a noun in the ablative (where from?), thus, in Estonian you buy from somebody, while Standard Russian kupit ‘ibid’ requires a prepositional phrase u ‘at’ + genitive, that is, you buy at somebody. In the Russian part of (17), we have ot ‘from’ + genitive, which is a copy of Estonian separative construction (with the ablative). If one saw this announcement, say, 15 years ago, one would definitely claim that the author is an Estonian-dominant bilingual, because no Russian (monolingual) native speaker would ever use such a prepositional phrase. Today, however, one cannot unambiguously establish whether the author is a speaker of E1/R2 or, vice versa, R1/E2.

Written communication is not as ephemeral as oral, and many people will have a chance to read the announcement. Linguistically aware Russian speakers would probably laugh at it, but some will not find anything deviant there. The more people see this particular announcement and other announcements of the kind, the more chances there are for the spread of the innovative form and even for its possible habitualisation (Johanson, 2002) among some Russian-dominant speakers. In sum, multilingual communication, both oral and written, is a locus for innovations to be uttered, heard and accepted. Here the role of E1/R2 speakers in Estonian-to-Russian conversation is crucial.

**Discussion and Conclusions**

In the previous sections I mentioned several times that, although many items in R1 (< E2) and R2 (< E1) look the same, the reasons why they appear are different (apart from the obvious explanation that we deal with different dominant languages and different directions of transfer). Now I will try to explain this in a greater detail.

Compared to the Soviet era, the Russian-speaking community has become more differentiated and more diffused in the terms of Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985). Monolingual communication characteristic of the previous epoch of asymmetrical bilingualism (i.e. when non-Russians were bilingual and Russians were not) is not an ideal anymore, at least not in Tallinn. Even those who do not feel very confident speaking Estonian try to modify their speech in a way that it is not completely monolingual (insertion of Estonian lexical items, including pragmatic particles). Gradually, switches to Estonian become a part of in-group (Russian-to-Russian) communication at least to some context.

It was mentioned that Estonian lexical items in R1 often fill a lexical gap (but not exclusively, cf. pragmatic particles). Many previously unknown realities and concepts appeared after independence in 1991, and Russian speakers would not know whether Russian equivalents exist, or what they are in Russia’s Russian. We have seen that the reasons for frequent non-integration
of single-item nouns into the Russian matrix are not purely structural. The increasing analyticity in Russian may be a factor but in a multilingual setting the speakers develop a different perception, and integration is not obligatory anymore, as the majority of the speakers are bilingual (see especially Leisiö, 2001). As communication between R1 and E1/R2 speakers takes place, it is also possible that R1 speakers may just replicate the same strategy (i.e. non-integration) as E1/R2 speakers.

Estonian-dominant speakers, however, have slightly different structural and pragmatic reasons for non-integration. First of all, let us discuss why Estonian lexical items appear in R2 at all. R2 is used only in Estonian-to-Russian communication. An Estonian-dominant speaker of R2 has a more or less correct idea of what Estonian-language lexical items would be understandable to R1 speakers. Items that are used frequently and/or are central to a conversation are, therefore, good candidates for insertion into the conversation where Russian is the base language. Estonian lexical items in R2 sometimes fill in a lexical gap, although this is not what is typically expected from L2 speech (Thomason & Kaufman 1988). Here the desire for fluency and smoothness of an interaction may outweigh a possible risk of unintelligibility of the insertions to the conversation partners who are speaking their L1.

Several explanations for non-integration may be listed here. First, a speaker of R2 may wish to separate Estonian lexical material for reasons of clarity and intelligibility. Second, an even very proficient speaker of R2 is not necessarily sure how to treat Estonian lexical items within the Russian matrix. Of course, this cannot be learned from a textbook of Standard Russian, as Estonian is clearly not a source of lexical innovation in Russian of Russia (unlike English during the past two decades), and there are no conventions for treating such lexical items in Russian. Finally, Estonian nouns with Russian inflectional morphology may appear unnatural and clumsy to the speakers of E1.

In addition to the reasons for non-integration listed above, there is one that is common to both sets of speakers. Apparently, a complete integration into the Russian matrix is not compulsory for understanding and from the point of view of discourse and pragmatics.

On the other hand, pragmatic markers (utterance modifiers) are ‘active at the discourse level’, as Johanson (2005: 81) puts it. Johanson’s (2005: 81–82) idea that a high copiability of certain categories and items is motivated by their crucial role in discourse is akin to Matras’s notion of pragmatically dominant language.

Two cases of syntactic transfer – government in separative and directional verbs, and analytic verbs copied from Estonian – unambiguously violate the rules of Standard Russian and are considered as ungrammatical by monolingual speakers. The fact that the convergent forms in question have become a part of the linguistic repertoire for at least some R1 speakers can be explained, among other things, by sociolinguistic reasons. As Russian speakers are not completely monolingual anymore, they become in a sense more tolerant, or less careful towards the ‘deviations’: they hear the convergent forms from other bilinguals like themselves, or ‘reinvent’ them independently, or accept them from R2 speech.
As for analytic forms in general, they are usually considered as attractive for copying (Johanson, 2002, see discussion in Backus, 2005). Bilingual speakers who have acquired analytic verbs may experience a ‘systemic gap’ (Backus, 2005) in their L1. Analytic verbs are becoming more prominent in certain varieties of spoken Russian. Johanson (2002) points out that more salient features are likely to be copied first. Although salience is hard to define, analytic forms appear to be more salient than synthetic ones. Analytic verbs are both salient and attractive. This may also be one of the reasons for E1 > R2 transfer. In my view, we can expect further propagation of Russian analytic verbs – equivalents to the respective Estonian verbs. By the way, the same development was attested in the indigenous Russian minority, a group residing on the Western bank of Lake Peipus, among the Estonian-speaking majority (Heiter, 1977).

Copying of structures is usually considered as unconscious. Generally, it is so, but one should not underestimate the scope of deliberate changes introduced by the speakers (Thomason, 1997). In the situation where a lot is said about a separate identity – Estonian Russians, and where many Russian speakers believe that the varieties of Russian spoken in Estonia are already different from Russian of Russia, we have to take into account what may be called private language planning. From Russian-speaking students at Tallinn University, I have heard metalinguistic comments, such as: ‘I know that you don’t say this in Russian, but we are different here, we are in Estonia’.

As far as E1 speakers are concerned, it is essential that a full acquisition of R2 is seldom a goal. It is true that Russification is not a threat anymore and Russian is taught in Estonian-medium schools on a par with other foreign languages. A working command of Russian is desirable in some occupations in Tallinn, especially for employees in big firms, stores, banks, etc. Nevertheless, speakers of R2 rely on the fact that now many R1 speakers have at least a minimal understanding of Estonian, and do not hesitate to introduce Estonian lexical items and convergent forms into their R2. It has to be remembered here that speakers and learners of L2 are not ‘deviant’ as compared to monolinguals but are speakers in their own right who do not necessarily strive for native-like proficiency in L2 or for a complete self-identification with the target language speakers (Pavlenko, 2002).

One may ask whether R1 > E2 has any impact on Estonian as a whole. Theoretically, this is also a possible scenario (Ehala, 2000), however this is not the case in Tallinn. So far, there is evidence of unidirectional convergence (Russian > Estonian).

The idea that both E2 > R1 and E1 > R2 activities play a role in the convergence process neatly fits into Johanson’s code-copying framework. According to Johanson (1993, 1999, 2002), in a contact situation the input is more complex than just A and B. There so-called Alpha-lects (varieties of A) and Beta-lects (varieties of B) are contact varieties that differ to a smaller or a greater extent from the respective monolingual varieties. Therefore, not only A and B but also Alpha- and Beta-lects can serve as a source of copying as well. In our case, in addition to varieties of Russian influenced by Estonian as L2, also R2 varieties exist and, as we have seen, are not dismissed anymore as non-standard Russian but may be a model for copying as well. Thus, the ‘pool of
non-monolingual utterances’ is greater than in a situation where only a minority/immigrant community is bilingual. It is emphasised in contact literature that every time an innovative (copied) form is chosen over the old one, this brings about more copying and an increased degree of entrenchment (Backus, 2004, 2005 and references therein), or habitualisation and later even conventionalisation of the copied forms (Johanson, 2002). The ‘snowball effect’ in our case is greater because the (theoretical) possibility for the use of copied forms is doubled.

It is hard or impossible to trace the ultimate source of copying, i.e. whether we deal with Alpha-lects whose speakers of A have copied from B or with Alpha-lects that are influenced by native speakers of B. What occurs in this complex situation may be called multilayered copying. I believe that multilingual conversation in Tallinn is the scene where various compromise strategies are employed and where different non-monolingual varieties meet. Multilingual conversation is crucial for the further spread of innovations.

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**Notes**

1. Diachronically speaking, Russian and Tatar have a long history of contacts, and cross-linguistic influence is bidirectional. However, synchronically speaking, the sociolinguistic situation of the Soviet era has lead to unidirectional impact of Russian.
2. The verb kupit’ ‘to buy’ may be separative in a number of limited contexts, for instance, when a name of a firm or a manufacturer is mentioned: on kupil kostjum ot Valentino ‘he bought a Valentino suit’.
3. Some studies on Russian in diaspora (Andrews, 2004) discuss code-copying in different terms, namely using the concept of ‘prototype’.
4. Of course, it could happen for ironical or comical purposes but not in neutral or serious contexts.
5. I am grateful to Anastassia Zabrodskaja (Tallinn University) for this example.

**References**


