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Variation in the non-dominant variety of Russian in Ukraine: extralinguistic and intralinguistic perspectives

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Introduction

Since Michael CLYNE in 1992 defined Russian as a *monocentric* language, sociopolitical re-organization in post-Soviet countries has brought about visible changes in its use, spread and internal evolution.

Even if diatopic and diastratic regional variation in the various non-Russian republics had always existed, in some of the successor states, e.g. Belarus', Ukraine or Kazakhstan, there is an ongoing debate about the status and the classification criteria to be assigned to Russian¹. In these countries, the awareness of educated speakers about the existence of their own varieties is growing. Additionally, external factors, e.g. the official use of national languages, the lack of language institutions regulating the use of Russian, etc., favour the process of divergence from standard Russian and the gradual acquisition of national features. Thus, today one may with reason speak about *pluricentricity in formation*.

At present, it is not yet clear, which national research institutions should be responsible for the assessment and the study of Russian in post-Soviet countries. This is particularly true for all those latent sociolinguistic and language-ideological processes that could lead to a future acknowledgment of 'national varieties' – outside Russia.

If we consider the pluricentricity of Russian in the three above-mentioned countries, the case of Ukraine is particularly interesting. This is due to a series of sociolinguistic factors: the permanent socio-political instability; the competition between Ukrainian and Russian to cover some of the main functional domains and, the historical problem of a large-scale contact between the two languages.

Crucial to the issues already expressed is the role played by the Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism. Therefore, when examining the intralinguistic² development of Russian in Ukraine, one should also consider the influence exerted by the Ukrainian language.

Even though phonetic and lexical variation in Ukrainian Russian (U-Russian hereafter) is the most evident part of its 'national' characterization, morphological and syntactic variation may also occur. The latter can also be interpreted as a consequence of lexical interference. The close genetic relationship between these languages determines a high level of common features in their grammatical systems. This renders an even more complex study of the fluctuating variation in their

¹ Cf. DEL GAUDIO (2013: 343-363); IVANOVA (2013b: 363-376).

² By 'intralinguistic' are meant strictly linguistic aspects pertaining to the internal evolution of the language system (phonetic, morphological, lexical-semantic and syntactic).

morphological and syntactic structures. In derivation and morphosyntax, for instance, Ukrainian may easily influence the structure of the Russian spoken in Ukraine.

In this paper, we are going to present the preliminary results of our research on variation in U-Russian. We will also argue about how the current sociolinguistic situation in Ukraine characterized by continuous language contact, primarily defined by Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism with diglossic or even triglossic traits³, not only affects the lexical domain of U-Russian, but, less evidently, also its grammar.

1. An Outline of the Language Situation in Ukraine

The language situation in Ukraine has been object of several studies in the last two decades. Among relatively recent works one can mention: the collective volume edited by BESTERS-DILGER *Language Policy and Language Situation in Ukraine* (2009); the collection of studies edited by KULYK in a special issue of the *International Journal of Sociology of Language* (2010); VYŠNIAK'S book on the sociology of language situation in Ukraine (2009); PAVLENKO'S work with focus on linguistic landscape (2010; 2012) and language functionality (2008); BILANIUK'S studies on language, correctness and identity in post-Soviet Ukraine (2005), just to mention some.

One of the most important issues among specialists remains the study of Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism. The latter has significantly changed in spread and type since its origin (IVANOVA, 2013a). Scholars writing on this topic tend to emphasize the diatopic stratification of the Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism⁴ which implies geographical differences in its distribution, intensity and acceptance. It is a well-known fact that Russian, because of historical circumstances⁵, is much more intensively used in the East and South of the country rather than in the West or in the center. In some of the easternmost and southernmost Ukrainian regions, particularly in major industrial towns, Russian remains the main language of everyday communication.

The Ukrainian language policy, along with the constitutional modifications of the 1990s and the early 2000s strengthened the status of Ukrainian as the only state language of the country. The reinforced language attitude towards Ukrainian has influenced many citizens to switch over to this language, despite having low or even no proficiency in Ukrainian. In addition, the sociolinguistic situation has been affected by an attitudinal divergence described by KULYK: "(...) both post-Soviet change and Soviet ambivalence of policies and discourses have led to a

³ Cf. DEL GAUDIO (2010a: 258-264).

⁴ Cf. BILANIUK & MELNYK, (2008); MASENKO (2009); VYŠNIAK (2009). etc.

⁵ Ukrainian-Russian language contacts, and consequently, societal bilingualism in large parts of Ukrainian territories can be dated back to the second half of the 18th century with a gradually increase in the course of the 19th century and in some periods of the 20th century.

considerable mismatch between language beliefs and practices. 'That is, people do not always prefer to speak those varieties which they value' (2010a: 1).

These factors allow us to define a number of crucial components of current Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism which favour the intensification of internal variation in both languages. Aspects of this variation, as we shall see in the next section, were already object of research during the Soviet era. Among the factors conditioning internal variation in U-Russian one can mention:

(1) *The Ukrainian - Russian bilingualism in the light of the current language policy and planning.* Since 1991, the Ukrainian government has supported the promotion of the Ukrainian language in the public media, including education. National-oriented monolingual school and university instruction has been applied in all Ukraine despite its heterogeneous geographical language distribution and individual preference⁶. During the last 20 years, young Ukrainians have had a more limited access to the study of Russian, although many of them have continued to use it in their everyday communication. As a consequence, the lack of instruction in Russian and the absence of norm-setting institutions regulating its use, e.g. academies etc., have set off new transferences from one language to another, especially from Ukrainian to Russian.

(2) *The geographical variation of Ukrainian - Russian bilingualism.* The presence of Russian considerably differs from one Ukrainian region to another. In order to simplify the varying language landscape of the country, one can say that some regions are almost completely Ukrainian-speaking, while others are prevalently Russian-speaking. There are, of course, regions where speakers are predominantly bilingual. Within each region, however, one ought to always consider social and territorial variation, since language distribution also varies from the urban to the rural areas.

(3) *Attitudes towards the Ukrainian - Russian bilingualism.* Tendencies and shifts in attitudes towards Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism are highly varied socially and individually. According to IVANOVA (2011), a prestigious valorization of Russian by many (Russian) monolingual citizens or asymmetrical bilinguals was one of the sociolinguistic trends – at least, until the recent sociopolitical upheavals. As a consequence, many speakers use Russian in public media in order to give, according to their opinion, a more positive social image of themselves.

On the other hand, inadequate competence in standard Russian and a continuous exposure of symmetrically-bilingual speakers to everyday spoken Russian contribute to the rooting of new U-Russian 'varieties'.

⁶ Language policy and the subsequent political regulation in the language of education as well as in other domains of language use have significantly changed after 2012. The general framework of this paper refers to the sociolinguistic and socio-political context preceding the above-mentioned modifications (2010-2012). For a more detailed account on the most recent trends in the always changing Ukrainian linguistic landscape (2012-2014) and the lively socio-political debates on the status of Russian as a regional/minority language along with other minority languages of the country, see: the miscellaneous volume "Movni prava v sučasnomu sviti" (2014); KULYK (2013: 280-307); DEL GAUDIO & IVANOVA (forthcoming).

The intensification and/or the appearance of new features in the Russian of Ukraine as result of the contact with Ukrainian is one of the premises underlying the formation of the pluricentricity of Russian. At present, there is an ongoing debate among scholars whether or not it is appropriate to speak about the pluricentricity of Russian and the existence of well-defined ‘national’ varieties. A discussion that is typical for all pluricentric languages in their early stages.

From a language ideological point of view, one can observe a tendency in some circles of educated Russian speakers and linguists to support the idea of the ‘uniqueness’ and ‘distinctiveness’ of U-Russian. The ideological reasons behind such efforts aim at creating a national Russian language ‘identity’. The latter should be equidistant between specific Ukrainian cultural-linguistic individuality, on the one side, and a typical Russian-Russian identity, on the other (DEL GAUDIO 2012: 222).

2. Sociolinguistic approach to the study of U-Russian

Our approach to the sociolinguistic study of variation in U-Russian partially relies on a relatively old though not obsolete work dating back to the end of the Soviet period. This work, authored by a group of sociolinguists under the supervision of T. ČERTORIŽSKAJA (1988), offers a rather detailed overview of the various degrees of interference in U-Russian according to clearly defined social parameters. The aim of the authors of this survey (*Ukrainsko-russkoe dvujazyčie. Sociologičeskij aspekt*), was to study the degree of interference in the Russian spoken in Ukraine.

Some suggestions and conclusions contained in this study, essentially concerned with the development and use of Russian in bilingual speakers, are still of topical interest today. This is particularly true for the description of the main phonetic characteristics of U-Russian and for the sociolinguistic parameters adopted in the undergone research.

One of the important contributions of this volume is the classification of the speakers in accordance to the mother tongue in addition to other classical sociolinguistic parameters. This classification stresses on the necessity to distinguish among the following research parameters:

- Russians who permanently live in Ukraine;
- Ukrainians whose native language is Russian;
- Ukrainians whose native language is Ukrainian.

In our view, these criteria are a decisive starting point for further field work on the Russian spoken in Ukraine.

It was already discussed⁷ that a certain number of Russian speakers in Ukraine simply follow the norm of standard Russian. Such Russian speakers are ethnic Russians with Ukrainian citizenship on the one hand, and representatives of the older (Soviet) generation and people with a high level of education level, e.g. scientists, scholars, journalists, high rank officers and some politicians on the other

⁷ Cf. DEL GAUDIO (2011a: 31; 2012: 222).

hand. As to this latter point, it seems important to study the language behavior of these speakers in informal situations.

As it can be concluded from the picture described above, any further field research of the Russian spoken in Ukraine would need not only to seriously consider the already mentioned parameters but also to enhance the corpus of language data with large-scale interview samples across various population strata, especially in the “Russian-speaking” regions and major towns. Furthermore, in such a sociolinguistic survey, it would be essential to distinguish between a conscious or deliberate use of Ukrainian elements when speaking Russian from occasional norm deviations caused by interference.

A deliberate use of Ukrainian words or expressions may usually occur because of particular mental association, stylistic or idiolectal purposes. Since the two language systems co-exist within a bilingual speaker as “two automatized programs which in some points juxtapose” (ŽLUKTENKO, 1974: 72), language consciousness may act as a necessary device in order to trace a clear demarcation line between these points. Expert bilinguals are normally provided with such consciousness thanks to the language training they receive; however, there are many bilingual speakers characterized by language “inexperience” and unable to display the required skills when necessary (*ibid.*).

For the above mentioned reasons, the methods of the present research can only account for generalized tendencies of Ukrainian society. Our material originates from participant observation, elicitation tests and the comparison of former studies on this topic. To complete the research basis, we also included a small corpus of samples extrapolated from the Russian online press of Ukraine, and mainly collected for the purpose to analyze the morphosyntactic variation in U-Russian.

Finally, it is worth remarking that notwithstanding the renewed interest in Russian studies for variation in Russian, both within the Russian speaking countries and in the world, a far reaching sociolinguistic field research, as it was done in the Soviet period, has not been started yet. It must be underlined, however, that Soviet sociolinguistic studies had a latent purist objectives: ‘They aimed at the improvement of the Russian speakers’ linguistic consciousness and enhancement of the language standards (cf. Russian *kul’tura reči*/language acculturation).

3. Ukrainian Russian as a ND-variety

The spontaneous observation of Russian colloquial speech (cf. Russian: *russskaja rozgovornaja rečʹ*) of average Ukrainian speakers show evident divergences from the Russian norm of the ‘main language area’⁸ or Russian-Russian (R-Russian hereafter)⁹. The concept and the criteria of what needs to be understood by ‘non-

⁸ Cf. Russian “russkij literaturnyj jazyk osnovnogo areala”. Terminology used in one of the first sociolinguistic study on the Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism (*Ukrainsko-russkoe dvujazyčie* 1988).

⁹ The use of this term presupposes that the Russian language in different post-soviet countries undergoes a more or less accepted degree of variation in relation to the set norm – that is, the

dominant variety' was amply discussed during the 1st International Conference on "Non-Dominant Varieties of Pluricentric Languages", also held in memory of Michael Clyne (Graz, Austria 11th – 13th July 2011) and therefore it will not be directly addressed in this paper¹⁰.

The average (primarily spoken) U-Russian¹¹ is characterized by a series of idiosyncrasies affecting all language levels: phonetic-phonology, prosody, lexis, morphology and syntax.

The most evident specificity of the Russian spoken in Ukraine can be found at the phonetic-phonological level, for example, the prosodic elements (rhythm, stress, intonation of speech). These features demonstrate a clear divergence from R-Russian¹². Among the most widespread phonetic markers of U-Russian pronunciation one can mention:

- The fricative realization, more exactly the use of a voiced velar fricative [ɣ]¹³, instead of the standard Russian voiced velar stop [g]; the grapheme that indicates both phonemes is < r >; e.g. <го́д> (year) *god*/t – *bod*;
- The standard Russian, graphically <ч> (< č >), has a slightly different realization than the Ukrainian corresponding consonant. In Ukrainian this is a voiceless palatoalveolar affricate [tʃ], whereas in Russian it is a voiceless alveolo-palatal affricate /tɕ/. Moreover these phonemes have a different palatal correlation. In standard Ukraine it keeps the trait 'non-palatalized' ('hard'), and in Russian it is basically a palatalized ('soft') phoneme. In average Ukrainian Russian it is closer to the Ukrainian features, e.g.: <человек> (person, human being) *čelovjek* with 'hard' [tʃ].
- Lack or limited vowel reduction in opposition to standard Russian and different word stress, e.g. *pònjala* – *ponjalà* < поняла> (I understood-fem.)¹⁴ etc.

Besides phonology and prosody, lexis is the other language segment of U-Russian most evidently affected¹⁵. The U-Russian vocabulary tendentially includes both lexical units referring to traditional Ukrainian realia, e.g. *xata* (typical Ukrainian small hut/cottage), *rada* (council/board) etc., and words pertaining to the legal and administrative spheres. This gives rise to Russian sentences in which the

centre of the dominant-variety – just the same way as for other pluricentric languages: English, Spanish, Arabic or German.

¹⁰ See: volume on Non-Dominant Varieties edited by MUHR (2012).

¹¹ By 'average' U-Russian speaker is meant an informant who is basically associated with the typical linguistic features which induce to speak about a Russian variety of Ukraine (or Ukrainian Russian).

¹² Also see: *Ukrainsko-russkoe dvujazyčie* (1988: 37ff.).

¹³ It should be added that this sound also exists in Southern Russian varieties and it may occur in interjections, some religious (Old Church Slavonic) words. This is explainable with the influence that Middle Ukrainian (in Shevelov's terminology) exerted over the Muscovy in the 17th century and in terms of dialect continua.

¹⁴ Cf. DEL GAUDIO (2011a: 33-34).

¹⁵ For a more detailed account of U-Russian lexemes, see: DEL GAUDIO (2011a: 34-35; 2011b: 395-396; 2012: 218).

word referring to administrative positions, objects, documents etc., may be often expressed in Ukrainian, e.g. *покажіть, будь ласка, посвідчення* / please, show your identification document, where one has the Ukrainian *posvidčennja* instead of the Russian *udostoverenie*; *пишіть ще раз «заяву»* / write once again the application/statement, in which one has the Ukrainian *zajava* instead of the Russian *zajavlenie*; Ukrainian *klopotannja* (клопотання) tends to replace its Russian equivalent *xodamaïstvo*, meaning *petition; application* etc.

This tendency can be easily explained if one considers that many Russian speaking civil servants and employees have to constantly deal with monolingual Ukrainian official documents and with bilingual users who may turn to them in either of the two languages. Therefore, they do not always have the time nor the psycholinguistic inclination to find the equivalent Russian terms, thus creating the premises for a *fossilization* of these lexical items in U-Russian. Phraseology is undoubtedly affected as well. Nevertheless we have no material available on this aspect of variation.

4. Approaching morphosyntactic variation in average U-Russian

Studies on morphosyntactic variation of U-Russian are still limited in linguistic literature. Among the few contributions touching upon aspects of syntactic variation in U-Russian media, we can mention NIKOLENKO (2003).

A predictable degree of variation characterizes the average spoken U-Russian¹⁶ morphosyntax.

Prepositional governing seems to be the most evidently affected part of U-Russian. Such deviations from the ‘literary Russian language’ (cf. “*ruskij literaturnyj jazyk*” = standard Russian) have already been noticed by a few generations of linguists.

It is worth remarking that similar discrepancies in prepositional governing show also parallels in the R-Russian *prostorečie*¹⁷. This mainly spoken variety of Russian is generally associated with speakers having a low education level and poor social extraction.

Some forms of Russian non-standard speech, e.g. *prostorečie*, slang, jargon etc. can frequently find their way into different Russian “national” varieties through literary fiction and mass-media. The web and Internet communication also play a significant role in the diffusion of non-standard forms of Russian.

¹⁶ In our opinion it is more appropriate to speak of ‘average spoken U-Russian’ since the definition of Ukrainian Russian as a non-dominant variety implies a series of yet unsolved issues. The crucial problem concerns the attempt at classifying U-Russian as a ‘national’ variety. Cf. DEL GAUDIO (2010b: 69-74; 2012: 207-226). This can also be justified by the unclear political situation and the war in the Eastern parts of the country and the fact that the variety is in the stage of formation.

¹⁷ By *prostorečie* is meant a kind of popular / colloquial speech or language (also common parlance), typical of the Russian urban periphery and socially stigmatized (cf. BELIKOV & KRYSIN, 2001: 34).

The U-Russian idiosyncrasy in preposition governing, and more at large, in morphosyntax, has its historical and sociolinguistic causes. On the one hand, the Ukrainian substratum has always been affecting Russian and it is still latent in the average speaker's language consciousness, especially if the latter is a native speaker of Ukrainian; on the other, the wide-ranging Ukrainization process of the last twenty years also affects people's language choice. Another diachronic explanation of their specificity has to do with the historic-etymological similarities of Ukrainian and Russian prepositions. During the respective development and standardization process of Russian and Ukrainian, one language developed a different prepositional form or a semantic shift took place, thus causing an overlapping of semantic functions in prepositional constructions, whilst the other conserved the old literary form and did not undergo the same semantic shift, and vice versa¹⁸. Moreover, the formal and semantic similarity of certain prepositions in both languages increases the probability of interference.

Diverge between R-Russian and U-Russian is noted in:

- the use of the Russian preposition 'from': **iz** (из), frequently substituted by the Ukrainian preposition 'with': **s** (c/co): *odin s nas* instead of *odin iz nas* (one of us);
- the Russian composite forms 'from behind' and 'from under': **iz-za** (из-за) and **iz-pod** (из-под), frequently substituted by the Ukrainian prepositions with the same meaning: **z-za** (з-за) and **s-pod** (с-під). Here, interference is also caused by the formal grammatical similarity of these prepositions both in Russian and Ukrainian;
- Also the prepositions **do** (до) + gen., and **v** (в) – **u** (у) + acc., show, to a certain extent, divergence from R-Russian.

In this section we have only reported a few illustrative examples of divergence in U-Russian preposition governing. A more detailed and schematic analysis of prepositional usage will be dealt with in a forthcoming publication.¹⁹

5. A preliminary approach to morphosyntactic variation in U-Russian press

The Russian press of Ukraine is, probably, one of the easiest accessible sources for researching morphosyntactic variation in U-Russian. It is, at the same time, a valid support to compare data about variation both in oral discourse and in the U-Russian written texts.

From a sociolinguistic point of view, mass media are a particularly interesting domain for studying social bilingualisms. It is a passive perception domain, which communicates social benefits. The role of mass-media in determining some sociocultural aspects is, therefore, relevant. Many sociolinguists (CARREL, 1997; LEITNER, 1998; MACKEY 2000) have already underlined that mass media are responsible for the evolution of bilingualism and language vitality. In addition, it is

¹⁸ Cf. *Ukrainsko-russkoe dvujazyčie* (1988: 126).

¹⁹ Del GAUDIO & IVANOVA (forthcoming).

also important to remember that the language use in the media discourse reflects language ideologies as well (KULYK, 2010b).

It was already argued²⁰ that mass media, in a context of negotiation of identities, are subject to two agents:

- 1) the media agent;
- 2) the political agent.

In Ukraine, the actions of the political agent confirm Ukrainian as the dominant language of the Ukrainian mass media. Nevertheless Russian is highly present in the Ukrainian mass media, especially in the press, of which 35.2% is exclusively published in Russian²¹. KULYK (2010b) observes that the use of Russian in the press has increased since 1990 notwithstanding the general reaction to the limited instructions in Russian etc. This tendency is particularly characteristic of the Eastern and Southern areas, where many magazines and newspapers – both printed and electronic – are published in Russian.

Our preliminary fieldwork has primarily focused on the Russian press published in those Ukrainian regions with a high presence of Russians among the population (cf. Map 1):

- Donec'k, Charkiv (Eastern Ukraine);
- Mykolaïv, Zaporizžja (Southern Ukraine);
- Dnipropetrovs'k (Central Ukraine);
- Kyiv, Šostka and Sumy (North-Eastern Ukraine)

Our corpus of samples on U-Russian morphological and syntactic variation derives from Ukrainian online newspapers published in Russian. We have analyzed some random articles from eight newspapers published in different Ukrainian cities where, as we have previously mentioned, Russian is commonly used. The newspapers are: *Komsomol'skaja pravda v Donecke* (Комсомольская правда в Донецке), *Večernij Char'kov* (Вечерний Харьков), *Večernij Nikolaev* (Вечерний Николаев), *Zerkalo Zaporozžja* (Зеркало Запорожья), *Dnepr večernij* (Днепр вечерний), *Komsomol'skaja pravda v Ukraine* (Комсомольская правда в Украине), *Perekryjstok* (Перекрёсток) and *Vaš šans* (Ваш шанс).

The articles were selected at random date and cover the period between 2008 and 2013. As for thematic area, the corpus includes articles on political, social, cultural and daily issues, as scientific articles almost do not present examples of morphological and syntactic variation in view of their specificity.

²⁰ Cf. IVANOVA (2011; 2012).

²¹ This data was estimated on the base of *Katalog vydan' Ukraïny* n°2 (2009): IVANOVA (2011).

Map 1. The distribution of the fieldwork data: analyzed regions²²



5.1. Overview on morphosyntactic variation in U-Russian press

U-Russian, as used in the Russian press of Ukraine, may show variation at different morphological and syntactic properties. These properties, which we summarize in Table 3, cannot be attributed in their total to stable morphosyntactic variation of U-Russian.

Table 3.

Morphological variation

(1) Affixation

(1.a.) U-Rus: **odevat'** // R-Rus: **nadevat'**

U-Rus: *Необязательно. Я советую клиенткам **ОДЕВАТЬ** то, в чем они чувствуют себя свободно и привлекательно*

Transl: *Neobjazatel'no. Ja sovetuju klientkam **odevat'** to, v čem oni čuvstvujut sebja svobodno i privlekatel'no*

Eng: *Not necessarily. I advise my clients to wear the clothes they feel comfortable and attractive in*

(1.b.) U-Rus: **vypravit'** // R-Rus: **ispravit'**

U-Rus: *Губернатор Днепропетровщины принял решение разобраться в создавшейся ситуации и **ВЫПРАВИТЬ** ее.*

²² We thank Pablo González-Delgado for the preparation of this map.

Transl: *Gubernator Dnepropetrovšiny prinjal rešenje razobrat'sja v soz'davšejsja situácii i **vypravit'** ee*

Eng: *The Governor of Dnepropetrovshina has decided to study the arisen problem and to solve it*

Syntactic variation

(2) Grammatical categories

(2.a.) U-Rus: proizošli neskol'ko avarij

R-Rus: proizošlo neskol'ko avarij

U-Rus: *Kogda gorod prazdnoval svoj den' roždenija, 11 i 12 sentjabrja, v raznyx ego rajonax **proizošli neskol'ko avarij** v elektrosetjax*

Transliteration: *Kogda gorod prazdnoval svoj den' roždenija, 11 i 12 sentjabrja, v raznyx ego rajonax **proizošli neskol'ko avarij** v elektrosetjach*

Eng: *When the city was celebrating its birthday, on September 11th and 12th, some accidents in the power supply networks occurred in different neighborhoods*

(3) Concordance

(3.a.) U-Rus: sobirajutsja prosit' ubežišča

R-Rus: sobirajutsja prosit' ubežišče

U-Rus: *Bogatye francuzy sobirajutsja prosit' **ubežišča** v Švejcarii*

Transl: *Bogatye francuzy sobirajutsja **prosit' ubežišča** v Švejcarii*

Eng: *Rich French are going to apply for asylum in Switzerland*

(4) Prepositions

(4.a.) U-Rus: priobretena **za** sredstva

R-Rus: priobretena **na** sredstva

U-Rus: *Vsego že v Nikolaevskoj oblasti učastnikami pravitel'svennoj programmy stali 6 domov, v kotoryx **za sredstva** Stabilizacionnogo fonda Ukrainy byla priobretena 291 kvartira*

Transl: *Vsego že v Nikolaevskoj oblasti učastnikami pravitel'svennoj programmy stali 6 domov, v kotoryx **za sredstva** Stabilizacionnogo fonda Ukrainy byla priobretena 291 kvartira*

Eng: *In total, 6 buildings in the region of Nikolaj participated in the governmental program, in which 291 flats were bought at the expense of the Stabilization Fund of Ukraine*

(5) Reflexivity

(5.a.) U-Rus: predstavljala konkurenta

R-Rus: predstavljala **soboj** konkurenta

U-Rus: *V ponimanii Janukoviča ona **predstavljala** polnoценного конкурента*

Transl: *V ponimanii Janukoviča ona **predstavljala** polnoценного konkurenta*

Eng: *According to Janukovič, she was a full-fledged rival*

(6) Adverb – adjective

(6.a.) U-Rus: **kak** by zagržennym

R-Rus: **kakim** by zagržennym

U-Rus: **Как бы загруженным** ни был ваш рабочий день, необходимо
устраивать себе перерыв и обедать
Transl: **Kak by zagružennym** ni byl vaš rabočij den', neobhodimo ustrajvat'
sebe pereryv i obedat'
Eng: No matter how loaded your day is – it is necessary to stop for a lunch

Some features are only supported by limited examples; in such cases, we cannot state with certainty the extent of the phenomena and its possible extrapolation. Other features, however, seem to be quite widespread; this induces us to speak about more or less stable morphosyntactic features of the NDV of U-Russian. This is the case of:

- a) *prepositions*, whose specific use prevalently characterizes the oral variety of U-Russian (cf. section 4), and
- b) *syntactic concordance*.

Both grammatical aspects are equally important to our discussion.

5.2. Syntactic variation: the case of prepositions

The use of Russian prepositions in U-Russian according to the Ukrainian model is one of the most widespread characteristics of the NDV of Russian in Ukraine (NIKOLENKO, 2003: 302). Within this tendency, we have observed two trends:

- (1) DV – NDV variation in the use of prepositions in post-verbal position;
- (2) DV – NDV variation in the use of prepositions in non-prepositional position.

5.2.1. Prepositions in post-verbal position

The prepositional variation in post-verbal position is, probably, one of the most prominent features of U-Russian prepositional governing. Variation is observed for the most commonly used prepositions *po* (on), *na* (at), *s/so* (from) and *v* (in). Examples like (1a) and (1b) make clear how the use of these prepositions is governed according to the Ukrainian patterns of prepositional use in post-verbal positions.

(1)

28.04.2010, Headline: *Apteki vydajut narkomanam besplatnye špricy*, Večernij Char'kov

1.a.	U-Russian	<i>Zdes'</i>	<i>že</i>	<i>narkomanov</i>	<i>prokonsul'tirujut</i>
		Here (adv.)	then (conj.)	drug-addicted (acc.c)	advise (3Pl-Fut)
		<i>v</i>	<i>voprosach</i>	<i>profilaktiki</i>	<i>VICH/SPID,</i>
		in (prep.)	questions	prevention (gen.c.)	HIV/AIDS (gen.c.)

		(prep. c.)			
	a	tak <u>že</u>	po	drugim	
	but (prep.)	as	well on (prep.)	other (adj.)	
		(adv.)			
	<hr/>				
	<i>problemam.</i>				
	questions				
	(dat.c.)				
1.b.	R-Russian	<i>Zdes'</i>	<i>že</i>	<i>narkomanov</i>	<i>prokonsul'tirujut</i>
	Here (adv.)	then (conj.)	drug-addicted	advise (3Pl-Fut)	
			(acc.c)		
	<hr/>				
	<i>po</i>	<i>voprosam</i>	<i>profilaktiki</i>	<i>VICH/SPID,</i>	
	on (prep.)	questions	prevention (gen.c.)	HIV/AIDS (gen.c.)	
		(dat.c.)			
	a	tak <u>že</u>	po	drugim	
	but (prep.)	as	well on (prep.)	other (adj.)	
		(adv.)			
	<hr/>				
	<i>problemam.</i>				
	questions				
	(dat.c.)				

Eng.: Here, among other related issues, drug-addicts are advised on the issues of HIV/AIDS prevention.

As these examples show, variation in the use of prepositions may sometimes result in consequent grammatical variations in the declination. These variations are mainly the result of the continuous interaction with Ukrainian (interference process), although speakers are not always aware of similar interference processes.

5.2.2. Prepositions in non-prepositional position

Another widespread tendency in the syntactic variation of U-Russian consists in the use of prepositions in positions, which are non-prepositional in R-Russian, or their omission in prepositional positions in R-Russian. In this case, the variation is due to the interference of syntactic rules of Ukrainian over Russian, like in examples (2a) and (2b).

(2)

03.09.2008, Headline: *Počemu Raisu Bogatyrevu isključili iz partii?*, Komsomol'skaja pravda v Ukraine – Doneck

2.a.	U-Russian	Včera	«Komsomolka»	celyj	den'
		Yesterday (adv.)	“Komsomolka” (nom.c.)	all (nom.c.)	day (nom.c.)
		pytalas'	dozvonitsja	<u>sekreterju</u>	SNBO
		try (3Sg-past-imp)	call (infin.)	<u>secretary (dat.c.)</u>	SNBO (gen.c.)
2.b.	R-Russian	i	<u>ejo</u>	<u>press-službe.</u>	
		and (conj.)	<u>its (pos.pron.)</u>	<u>press (dat.c.)</u>	
		Včera	«Komsomolka»	celyj	den'
		Yesterday (adv.)	“Komsomolka” (nom.c.)	all (nom.c.)	day (nom.c.)
		pytalas'	dozvonitsja	<u>sekreterju</u>	SNBO
		try (3Sg-past-imp)	call (infin.)	<u>secretary (dat.c.)</u>	SNBO (gen.c.)
		i	v	<u>ejo</u>	<u>press-</u> <u>službu.</u>
		and (conj.)	<u>in (prep.)</u>	<u>its (pos.pron.)</u>	<u>press-</u> <u>(acc.c.)</u>

Eng. Yesterday, “Komsomolka” tried all the day long to call to the SNBO secretary and her press.

The examples (3a) and (3b) show an additional prepositional use in the reported U-Russian journalistic source whereas in R-Russian no preposition is required (non-prepositional position):

(3)

12.02.2010, Headline: *Biznes na detjach*, Perekrestok

3.a.	U-Russian	Pojavilas'	liš'	odnaždy,	v
		(She) appear (3Sg-past-perf)	only (part.)	once (adv.)	in (prep.)
		detskoj	poliklinike,	štoby	napisat'
		children's (prep.c.)	hospital (prep.c.)	so that (conj.)	write (infin.)
		zajavlenije	o	vremennom	otkaze

	application (acc.c.)	about (prep.)	temporal (prep.c.)	refusal (prep.c.)
	ot from (prep.)	rebjonka, child (gen.c.)	<u>s</u> <u>with (prep.)</u>	<u>cel'ju</u> <u>aim (inst.c.)</u>
	<u>o</u> <u>about (prep.)</u>	<u>pomeščeni</u> <u>location</u> <u>(prep.c.)</u>	<u>ego</u> <u>it</u> (pron., <u>gen.c.)</u>	v in (prep.)
	Dom house (acc.c.)	rebjonka. child (gen.c.)		
3.b. R-Russian	Pojavilas' (She) appear (3Sg-past-perf)	liš' only (part.)	odnaždy, once (adv.)	v in (prep.)
	detskoj children's (prep.c.)	poliklinike, hospital (prep.c.)	štoby so that (conj.)	napisat' write (infin.)
	zajavlenije application (acc.c.)	o about (prep.)	vremennom temporal (prep.c.)	otkaze refusal (prep.c.)
	ot from (prep.)	rebjonka, child (gen.c.)	<u>s</u> <u>with (prep.)</u>	<u>cel'ju</u> <u>aim (inst.c.)</u>
		<u>pomestit'</u> <u>locate (infin.)</u>	<u>ego</u> <u>it</u> (pron., <u>gen.c.)</u>	v in (prep.)
	Dom house (acc.c.)	rebjonka. child (gen.c.)		

Eng. She only appeared once in the hospital, in order to apply for the placement of the baby into an orphanage.

Conclusions

Notwithstanding CLYNE'S initial definition, the independence of post-Soviet countries has caused significant changes in the development and use of Russian in the new geo-political entities. Today one can no longer speak of Russian as a monocentric language but rather as a pluricentric language in formation.

This seems to be particularly true in the case of Ukraine, where the Russian used by the average speaker shows clearly divergences from the norm used in the Russian Federation.

A series of historical, sociolinguistic and sociopolitical factors, e.g. language contact, Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism, pro-Ukrainian language policy, the new status of Russian as a regional/minority language etc., have somehow accelerated the process of divergence within U-Russian reinforcing the existence of 'national' language features. These are primarily evident at the phonetic-phonological and lexical levels. Typical markers, commonly associated with U-Russian speech, are suprasegmentalia such as rhythm, stress, intonation; phonetic realization of fricatives and affricates etc. U-Russian lexis is also characterized by the use of Ukrainian realia and administrative terminology.

In addition to these most evident idiosyncrasies, morphosyntax also presents some marks of non-dominant variation. The genetic affinity between Ukrainian and Russian can easily determine the transposition of morphosyntactic structures from one language to another.

The preliminary results of our research (which will be continued in a forthcoming contribution: cf. MUHR, MARLEY ET AL.), based on online journalistic samples showed that there are some more or less stable morphosyntactic features characterizing the Ukrainian variety of Russian, particularly manifest in prepositional governing.

The selected newspaper examples also confirmed the trends detected in the oral variety of U-Russian. Their analysis led us to differentiate two co-related tendencies:

1) the use of prepositions in post-verbal position, where we observe how the Ukrainian-expected prepositions are used instead of the Russian-expected prepositions;

2) the use of prepositions in U-Russian syntactic constructions where standard Russian (R-Russian) displays no preposition in similar contexts (i.e. non-prepositional position). This is most probably due to the influence Ukrainian exerts on U-Russian.

Finally, we are convinced that the case of U-Russian deserves particular attention among sociolinguists since many latent changes seem to be underway. Their research would imply the monitoring of an intralinguistic evolution of a non-dominant variety of U-Russian in *statu nascendi*. This should motivate the researcher to attentively follow the outcomes of different levels of the Russian language system in contact with Ukrainian, and, of course, vice versa.

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