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# PERCEPTION OF CONVERGENT FORMS IN ESTONIA'S RUSSIAN*

**Abstract.** The topic of the current article is convergence in Estonia's Russian (copying of Estonian directional/static/separative verbal government) and its perception by two different sets of Russian speakers. The convergent forms in question are viewed in the terms of code-copying framework. There are clear rules of verbal government defining which Estonian verb requires which case (separative, static or directional). The verbs like *jätma* 'to leave', *jääma* 'to stay, to remain' are directional, whilst *lugema* 'to read', *leidma* 'to find' are separative, the verb *käima* 'to go, to walk' is static. Spatial relations in Russian are expressed by prepositional phrases that exhibit more syncretism (the same prepositions for directional and static cases, the same cases for interior and exterior spatial relations). Russian verbs require mostly prepositional phrases with static cases (prepositional or genitive) that correspond to Estonian directional or separative cases: *купить в магазин-е* 'to buy in a store' (prepositional), cf. Estonian *ostma poe-st* 'to buy in a store' (elative). Thirty-seven Russian-speaking informants from Tallinn and thirty-seven informants from Kohtla-Järve have been asked to assess the grammaticality of nine real and nine constructed utterances with the convergent forms in question by giving points from 0 to 5 to each utterance. All utterances deviate from monolingual Russian. No difference in the treatment of real vs. constructed utterances was found. The informants from Tallinn tend to grant more points, since Estonian is more available there. However, individual preferences and awareness of Standard Russian may overweigh macro-sociolinguistic factors (high proficiency in and frequent use of Estonian). Difference in assessment cannot be explained by structural properties, because habitualization and subsequent conventionalisation of certain collocations (for instance, in advertisements) increases the probability of acceptance.

Keywords: Russian, Estonian, convergence, code-copying, verbal government.

## 1. Introduction

The impact of Estonian on local Russian has been addressed by several scholars (Külmoja 1999; Кюльмоя 2000; Kostandi 2004) as well as the general tendencies of regionalization in post-Soviet Russian (Мечковская 2005). However, the current author has chosen a different approach,

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grounding the discussion in the terms of modern contact linguistics (especially code-copying framework). The aim of the present article is to show how two different sets of Russian-speakers in Estonia perceive Russian utterances where verbal government patterns have converged toward Estonian. Estonian has a developed system of local cases, three exterior and three interior ones. Each set has a directional, a separative and a static case. There exist precise rules of verbal government defining which verb requires which case (separative, static or directional). Verbs like *jätma* 'to leave', *jääma* 'to stay, to remain' are directional, whilst *lugema* 'to read', *leidma* 'to find' are separative. The verb *käima* 'to go, to walk' is static. In Russian, inflexional morphology and case system are not as developed as those in Estonian. The rules of verbal government differ as well: while the majority of Estonian verbs governing the local cases are separative or directional, their Russian counterparts are static. Various instances of copying from Estonian (including verbal government) do occur in Estonia's Russian. Of course, code-copied patterns are at odds with monolingual Russian. It will be shown to what extent the perception of the convergent forms by speakers from bilingual Tallinn and Russian-dominant Kohtla-Järve is similar or different and to what extent various factors (micro- and macrosociolinguistic, language awareness and speakers' attitudes) affect the perception.

## 2. Terms and models

I will concentrate on two models: transference/convergence by M. Clyne (2003) and code-copying (Johanson 1993, 1999, 2002).

According to M. Clyne (2003 : 79), convergence is a general term to denote languages becoming more similar (including by transference). He emphasizes that becoming similar does not necessarily mean that both languages are converging. Unidirectional changes, i.e., changes in one language only, that increase the similarities between the two languages, are also to be viewed under the notion of convergence. M. Clyne (2003 : 79—80) attempts to distinguish between transference and convergence. He presents a pair of syntactical examples from Australian German.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1a) | *Wir* | *haben* | *zu* | *Schule* | *gegangen* | | *in* | *Tarrington* |
| | we | have: AUX | to | school | go-PAST PART | | in | Tarrington |
| (1b) | *Wir* | *haben* | *gegangen* | | *zu* | *Schule* | *in* | *Tarrington* |
| | we | have: AUX | go-PAST PART | | to | school | in | Tarrington |
| (1c) | *We* | *have* | *gone* | | *to* | *school* | *in* | *Tarrington* |

As (1a) does not have a morpheme-to-morpheme correspondence with the English utterance (1c), it is a case of convergence (the use of auxiliary *haben* instead of *sind*), while (1b) is a case of transference. M. Clyne also mentions that phonological and prosodic compromise forms are instances of convergence.

However, the distinction between transference and convergence remains somewhat unclear. The examples given by M. Clyne (2003 : 79—80) belong to genetically related languages. It remains to be seen whether such a clear-cut difference between the two kinds of contact phenomena exists in languages that are not related at all (like Estonian and Russian in our case).

Since the difference between transference and convergence is not very clear in typologically different / genetically non-related languages, the term 'convergence' will be used in a further description of changes in Estonia's Russian.

M. Clyne (2003) proposes a typology of transference. The cover term 'transference' is applicable to syntactic, semantic, prosodic and other types of transference and combinations thereof (for instance, lexicosyntactic transference). In language contact literature the very same labels are used to describe convergence, for instance, morphosyntactic, semantic, etc (Weinreich 1953 : 41—42). The main advantage of M. Clyne's approach is its flexibility: the terms are clear and may be combined when needed. M. Clyne (2003 : 76—80) discusses the following types of transference: lexical, multiple, morphemic, semantic, syntactic, lexicosyntactic, semanticosyntactic, phonological, phonic, graphemic, prosodic, tonemic, and pragmatic.

The combinability of the terms is relevant for a process-oriented approach to language contacts. The flexibility of M. Clyne's model may be demonstrated by the following examples. What M. Clyne (2003 : 79) labels as pragmatic transference (use of informal forms of address when more former ones are required, use of indirect request patterns, discourse markers like *well*), in fact includes at least two different instances.

(2a) lexicopragmatic transference (transference of Estonian discourse markers):
*Tere-tere, милая*!
'hello-hello, dear'

This is a rather clear example where an Estonian discourse marker (greeting) is transferred into Russian. It is safe to claim that this particular lexical item has already become an established borrowing in monolingual Russian and is used even in Russian-to-Russian communication. Similarly, other Estonian discourse markers gain currency in Estonia's Russian, such as *selge* 'clear', *hästi* 'fine'.

(2b) syntacticopragmatic (syntactically transferred fixed expressions):
*я прошу* 'please' (lit. 'I ask'), cf. Estonian *palun* 'please'

In both languages it is an example of lexicalized first person singular present tense form of Estonian *paluma* 'to ask' and Russian *просить* 'to ask'. In monolingual Russian such a lexicalized form *прошу* (the pronoun is usually omitted) does exist; however, it is used in a narrower sense than its counterpart *palun* 'please' in Estonian. While the Estonian *palun* means 'please' in any context, monolingual Russian *прошу* is used when someone is asked to enter the room, to sit down, etc. Russian *пожалуйста* 'please' is a pragmatically neutral equivalent of Estonian *palun*.

The examples (2a) and (2b) demonstrate how M. Clyne's terms are combinable and applicable to different instances. However, this model is not very convenient when a researcher chooses as a point of departure a particular class of items with certain characteristics: compound nouns (Verschik 2004), analytic verbs, etc. For instance, there is evidence that in the Russian speech of at least some proficient bilinguals an equivalent of Estonian analytical verbs (*ühend- ja väljendverb*), so-called particle verbs and phrasal verbs, is gradually emerging (for English-language terms see Viitso 2003 : 101—102). It appears that in the terms of M. Clyne's model

there are two different types of transference to describe emerging Russian equivalents of Estonian analytical verbs. Consider example (3a).

(3a) *и* *ребенка* *остави-л-и* *в* *сторон-у*
and child-ACC leave-PAST-PL in side-ACC
'and the child was disregarded'

Compare with Estonian in (3b):

(3b) *ja* *laps* *jäe-t-i* *kõrva-le*
and child leave-IMPS PAST side-ALL
'and the child was disregarded'

The example (3a) is at odds with Russian monolingual grammar. First, the verb *оставить* 'to leave' governs a noun in the prepositional case (*в сторон-е*), which roughly corresponds to Estonian internal static case adessive, not allative as in (3b). However, Estonian verbal government has been copied and the accusative, a usual equivalent of the directional local case allative was used. Second, the verbal phrase in question is not recognized as a fixed expression in Russian and it remains unclear to monolingual speakers. The verb phrase *оставили в сторону* has been copied from Estonian, although it does not contain any Estonian morphemes. Thus, in M. Clyne's terms this would be a case of semanticosyntactic transference.

Still, some local Russian equivalents of Estonian analytic verbs may contain Estonian lexical items: a particle or a noun/adjective comes from Estonian and the main verb from Russian, as in (3c):

(3c) *вчера* *välja-s* *ходи-л-а*
yesterday out-IN go-PAST-FEM SG
'I went out yesterday'

Compare this with monolingual Estonian (3d):

(3d) *käi-si-n* *eile* *välja-s*
go-PAST-1 SG yesterday out-IN

A similar example with Estonian phrasal verb *välja minema* 'to go out' is (3e):

(3e) *с-ход-им* *куда-нибудь* *välja*
PREF-go-2 PL anywhere out: ILL
'let's go out somewhere'

Examples (3c) and (3e) should be viewed as lexicosyntactic transference, while previous instances of analytic verbs are instances of semanticosyntactic transference. So, if one wishes to describe all cases of, say, lexicosyntactic transference in Estonia's Russian, then rather different instances will be placed under this heading: the already mentioned phrasal verbs and the following utterance where some lexical items and word order in NP have been transferred from Estonian, as in (4):

(4) *твоим* *eesti* *keele* *уровнем* *довольны*?
your-INS Estonian language-GEN level-INS satisfied
'are they satisfied with your proficiency level in Estonian?'

Although this is also a case of lexicosyntactic transference, it has nothing in common with phrasal verbs. The analysis of emerging Russian equivalents of Estonian compound nouns (Verschik 2004) has demonstrated that one unit of analysis (i.e., compound nouns) may trigger different types of transference depending on various factors. This means that when the point of departure is a particular type of items (phrasal verb, compound nouns) where convergence/transference takes place, one has to be careful because a certain item in language B may evoke different types of transference in language A, and different factors may facilitate convergence in this particular case.

M. Clyne's model concentrates on structural matters. This is understandable because every model has its focus and its limitations. Code-copying framework, suggested by L. Johanson (1993) combines simple terminology and flexibility (as in M. Clyne's model) on the one hand, and sociolinguistic factors on the other. This framework is not useful for formal grammar-oriented research on contact phenomena but rather for general understanding and analyses of various contact processes and their results. L. Johanson (1993 : 199) criticizes some basic concepts of traditional contact linguistics, for instance, borrowing. This metaphor, he argues, gives an idea that one language gains something while the other is deprived of something, which is clearly erroneous. He also expresses scepticism concerning various constraints on contact phenomena proposed in the literature (see also Thomason 2001; Clyne 1987 : 2003).

Instead of metaphors of borrowing, transfer/transference, substitution, switching, etc L. Johanson proposes the notion of code-copying. In a contact situation, a weak code and a strong code (sociolinguistically dominant variety) are distinguished. Any language item has material, semantic, combinational, and frequential properties. One may copy all the properties (global copying) or just some of them (selective copying). The degree of copying (global vs. selective) is particularly important in this framework. An unbalanced dominance situation leads to unidirectional convergence (Johanson 1993 : 203).

L. Johanson acknowledges the fact that it is methodologically inappropriate to view languages as well-defined discrete entities (see similar views in Backus 1999; Muysken 2000 : 41—46). In reality, a lot of research in contact linguistics has a monolingual bias, i.e., two monolingual varieties serve as a point of departure. Therefore, in a contact situation one must be aware of a possible complex input: in addition to a weak code A and a strong code B (as spoken by monolingual native speakers), non-first generation speakers may be exposed to varieties of B spoken by other bilinguals, both B-dominant and A-dominant bilingual speakers (Johanson 1993 : 202—203). A range of varieties of A and B is called Alpha lects and Beta lects respectively. Alpha and Beta lects may exhibit different degrees of code-copying, depending on various factors. Low language proficiency does not hinder code-copying, and the degree of copying does not reflect proficiency.

The code-copying framework, initially designed for analysis of immigrant languages in Europe, is also applicable in the case of Estonia's Russian that differs from a classical immigrant setting. The issue of a possible (full) crystallization and/or codification of a new local standard of Russian is

not relevant here. What is relevant is the multilingualization of Russian speakers in Estonia, application of various strategies of bilingual communication, and, as a result, changes in language awareness. In addition to fairly visible copying of lexical items that have become conventionalized even in monolingual use (*tere* 'hello', *maksuamet* 'inland revenue office', *kohvik* 'café'), also 'invisible' characteristics are being copied from Estonian (word order, government patterns, semantics, etc). Note that a clause may consist of A-code morphemes and yet be heavily B-coded. As the framework is process-oriented, it distinguishes between different degrees of use frequency (as mentioned above, each item has frequential properties). While it is hard or even impossible to say how frequent is 'frequent' (Thomason 1997), it is still possible to register habitualization (increase in frequency) and, subsequently, even conventionalization of an item (emergence of a new norm) (see discussion in Johanson 2002 : 298—300).

In the following section it will be shown how government in Estonian VP with verbs like *jätma* 'to leave', *unustama* 'to forget', *käima* 'to go', *leidma* 'to find', *võtma* 'to take', *ostma* 'to buy' is being copied by bilingual speakers with different degrees of proficiency in Estonian. These Estonian verbs govern a noun in one of the local cases (illative, allative, inessive, adessive, elative, and ablative). Such verbs normally require one of the directional or separative cases in Estonian, while in Russian, on the contrary, the corresponding verbs *забывать* 'to forget, to leave behind', *находить* 'to find', *брать* 'to take', etc are static or ambivalent.

All the cases to be considered below belong to syntactic or semantico-syntactic transference in M. Clyne's framework, yet they display a different degree of acceptance, habitualization and conventionalization. It will be demonstrated that complex input is also relevant.

## 3. The system of directional/static/separative cases in Estonian and its Russian equivalents

Below we shall briefly view the Estonian local cases and their Russian correspondences. Estonian local cases are usually subdivided into interior (illative, inessive, elative) and exterior (allative, adessive, ablative). On the other hand, both interior and exterior local cases form triads, each of them consisting of a directional, a static and a separative case (terms adopted from Viitso 2003 : 33, 206). In the current article, verbs governing nouns in directional, static and separative cases, will be labelled as directional, static and separative verbs respectively.

*Table 1*

**Estonian local cases**

| **Group of local cases** | **Directional** | **Static** | **Separative** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Interior** | **Illative Inessive** | **Elative** | |
| | *raamatu-sse*<br>'into a/the book' | *raamatu-s*<br>'in a/the book' | *raamatu-st*<br>'from a/the book' |
| **Exterior** | **Allative Adessive** | **Ablative** | |
| | *põranda-le*<br>'onto the floor' | *põranda-l*<br>'on the floor' | *põranda-lt*<br>'off the floor' |

Russian case system does not have a special subgroup of local cases. Spatial relations are expressed by prepositional phrases. As the distinction between directional, static and separative cases and verbs is important for the code-copying and subsequent convergence in question, the interpretation of corresponding Russian cases and verbs in terms of directional vs. static vs. separative appears logical (Table 2).

*Table 2*

**Russian prepositional phrase expressing spatial relations**

| | Preposition and Case | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Directional** | **Static** | **Separative** |
| **Interior** | *в* + accusative | *в* + prepositional | *из* + genitive |
| **Exterior** | *на* + accusative<br>*к* + dative | *на* + prepositional<br>*у* + genitive | *с* (*со*) + genitive<br>*от* + genitive |

It is clear from Table 2 that in Russian the difference between interior and exterior spatial relations is less pronounced than in Estonian. The same preposition is used to express interior directional and static relations, and of exterior directional and static relations. The same case, genitive, characterizes all prepositional phrases with separative meaning. The accusative and the prepositional case express directional and static meanings respectively (*к* + dative and *у* + genitive constitute a marginal pattern). Therefore, compared to Estonian with clear distinctions (interior vs. exterior, directional vs. static vs. separative), Russian displays a greater degree of syncretism.

Local adverbs in Russian, however, form a distinct system that bears more similarities to the Estonian one. In both languages there are triads of directional, static and separative adverbs: Estonian *siia* 'hither' (directional): *siin* 'here' (static): *siit* 'from here' (separative), cf. Russian *сюда* 'hither' (directional): *здесь* 'here' (static): *отсюда* 'from here' (separative). Analogically, Estonian *sinna* 'thither' and Russian *туда* 'thither' (directional): Estonian *seal* 'there' and Russian *там* 'there' (static): Estonian *sealt* 'from there' and Russian *оттуда* 'from there' (separative).

As far as the choice of directional vs. static vs. separative case is concerned, there exists a group of verbs in which government rules are different in the two languages. In most instances, Estonian has one of directional or separative cases corresponding to the Russian static one. In EKG I (Erelt, Kasik, Metslang, Rajandi, Ross, Saari, Tael, Vare 1995 : 51) is stressed that the use of directional cases with verbs like *unustama* 'to forget', *jätma* 'to leave' is a feature that distinguishes Estonian from Indo-European languages. In a comparative grammar of Estonian and Russian (Пялль, Тотсель, Тукумцев 1962 : 343—344) is presented a comparative list of verbs. Some verbs from the list are given below. There are two main patterns: Estonian directional vs. Russian static verb (5a) and Estonian separative vs. Russian static verb (5b).

(5a) Estonian directional vs. Russian static verbs

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *ehitama* | *строить* | 'to build' |
| *ilmuma* | *появляться* | 'to appear' |
| *jätma* | *оставлять* | 'to leave' (transitive) |
| *jääma* | *оставаться* | 'to remain, to stay' |
| ***k**aduma* | *исчезать* | 'to disappear' |
| ***k**aevama* | *копать* | 'to dig' |
| ***k**irjutama* | *писать* | 'to write' |
| ***k**ogunema* | *собираться* | 'to gather' (intransitive) |
| *matma* | *хоронить* | 'to bury' |
| *märk**i**ma* | *отмечать* | 'to note' |
| *unustama* | *забывать* | 'to forget' |
| *uppuma* | *тонуть* | 'to drown, to sink' (intransitive) |
| *uputama* | *топить* | 'to drown, to sink' (transitive) |

(5b) Estonian separative vs. Russian static verbs

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *avastama* | *обнаруживать* | 'to discover' |
| *hank**i**ma* | *приобретать* | 'to procure' |
| *lugema* | *читать* | 'to read' |
| ***k**orjama* | *собирать* | 'to gather, to pick' |
| ***k**üsima* | *спрашивать* | 'to ask' |
| *leidma* | *находить* | 'to find' |
| *ostma* | *покупать* | 'to buy' |
| *otsima* | *искать* | 'to look for' |
| *saama* | *получать* | 'to get, to obtain' |

There is one exception where Estonian has a static verb ***k**äima* 'to go, to walk, to attend' that corresponds to a directional verb in Russian *ходить* 'to go, to walk, to attend'. However, the verb *ходить* in Russian may be both directional and static, depending on the context. Consider (6a) and (6b):

(6a) *ходить* directional 'to frequent, to attend'

*он ходит в университет-Ø*
he goes in university-ACC
'he attends university'

(6b) ходить static 'to walk around, to go back and forth'

*что ты ходишь здесь?*
what you go here: ST
'why are you going back and forth here?'

This leads to the following consideration that was ignored by the comparative grammar of Estonian and Russian (Пялль, Тотсель, Тукумцев 1962), namely, that there are some verbs in Russian like *ходить*. These verbs will be further referred to as ambivalent verbs. In the case of the verb *брать ~ взять* 'to take' it appears that when local exterior meaning is expressed, the verb is separative (preposition *с ~ со* + genitive). However, when the meaning is interior or abstract, the verb is static (preposition *в* + prepositional). Consider (7a), (7b) and (7c):

(7a) *брать ~ взять* + exterior meaning = separative

не бери книг-у со стол-а
not take book-ACC from table-GEN
'don't take a/the book from the table'

(7b) *брать ~ взять* + interior meaning = static

возьми книг-у в шкафу
take book-ACC in bookcase-PREP
'take a/the book form the bookcase'

(7c) *брать ~ взять* + abstract meaning = static

он брал ссуд-у в банк-е
he took loan-ACC in bank-PREP
'he took a bank-loan'

Probably, the blurring of the separative meaning in this example is a gradual process. There are no purely grammatical restrictions why a separative case could not be used in (7c); rather, it is a matter of convention.

In Estonian, verbs for purchasing, obtaining, possessing, etc. may also be ambivalent, i.e. both separative and static, depending on the semantics (EKG I 51). Consider (8a) and (8b):

(8a) separative

*kuul-si-n* *ülikooli-st* *uudise-i-d*
hear-PAST-1 SG university-EL news-PL-PRTV
'I heard news from the university'

(8b) static

*kuul-si-n* *ülikooli-s* *uudise-i-d*
hear-PAST-1 SG university-IN news-PRTV-PL
'In the university I heard (some) news'

Thus, verbs like *ostma* 'to buy', *otsima* 'to look for', *kuulma* 'to hear', *hankima* 'to procure' are usually separative, but if their modifier expresses the place where the action happens, the modifier is in one of the static cases.

In general, the Estonian directional verbs like *jääma* 'to remain', *matma* 'to bury', and separative verbs like *leidma* 'to find', *hankima* 'to procure', correspond to Russian static verbs. Only the Estonian static verb *käima* 'to go, to attend, to walk' has both a static and a directional equivalent in Russian, since, depending on the context, the corresponding Russian verb is ambivalent. Also, some Estonian separative verbs may be static in certain contexts. In the following section I will describe how various native speakers of Russian in Tallinn and Kohtla-Järve have assessed utterances with directional/separational/static verbal government copied from Estonian. All the utterances deviate from monolingual Russian.

## 4. The perception experiment: background information

The current experiment was inspired by a test conducted by A. J. Toribio (2001) where bilingual speakers were offered a text with Spanish-English code-switching and were asked to assess the grammaticality of particular

code-switching instances. However, the current test is different from Toribio 2001 in that respect that a half of the utterances given for assessment were real and had previously been registered in the course of research on multilingual communication. The methodological aspects of this approach will be discussed below.

Eighteen Russian utterances with directional/static/separative verbal government copied from Estonian were presented to two sets of Russian-speakers: 37 informants from Tallinn and 37 from Kohtla-Järve. Tallinn is a city where Russian- and Estonian-speaking communities are approximately equal in size. On the other hand, Kohtla-Järve with its eighty percent of Russian-speakers belongs to an area that has become russified during the Soviet occupation. As mentioned above, nine utterances originate from real life, while the remaining nine were constructed by the present author.

There are three relevant points to be addressed. First, it is reasonable to assume that a different sociolinguistic situation in the two localities (demographic situation, opportunities and/or need to use Estonian), would have a different impact on perception. Second, it is important, whether informant-related sociolinguistic factors (degree of proficiency in Estonian, frequency of use, opinions on the distinct character of the local Russian variety) affect the answers. Third, it is significant from a general methodological point of view, whether similarities and/or differences in perception may be explained by structural factors. The working hypothesis is that the assessment will definitely display some different characteristics in Tallinn and Kohtla-Järve, and this cannot be explained exclusively by structural or macro-sociolinguistic factors, but rather by the interplay of objective and subjective factors.

Prior to the grammaticality judgement test some background information was asked: date of birth, sex, occupation, proficiency in Estonian, and frequency of using the Estonian language. As it is empirically known that some segment of Russian-speaking community believes in the distinct character of the local Russian as opposed to Russia's Russian, the informants were asked to evaluate the following claim on a four point scale: "Some people believe that Russian as spoken in Estonia is different from that in Russia. What is your attitude to this claim?". The options were: strongly disagree, rather disagree, rather agree, strongly agree.

The Tallinn set of informants consists of 3 males and 34 females, the Kohtla-Järve set consists of 12 males and 25 females. All informants are native speakers of Russian, while some have acquired Russian and Estonian simultaneously in their childhood. The two groups are different as far as the average age (average year of birth in Tallinn is 1973, and 1965 in Kohtla-Järve), their proficiency in Estonian, and frequency of using it, are concerned. All Tallinn informants use Estonian at least several times a week or daily, while in Kohtla-Järve 2 informants practically never use Estonian, 9 read occasionally public information, 8 speak the language seldom, 1 uses it weekly and 15 speak Estonian on daily basis. Most informants in the Tallinn set are students of Tallinn University, some are secondary school teachers as well as Russian students in Estonian-medium schools.

Probably, it is impossible to find a sample of informants in Kohtla-Järve exactly corresponding to that of Tallinn in a sociocultural sense: the category of so-called young Russian city-dwellers (Vihalemm 2002) (i.e.

upward mobile Russian-speakers who identify themselves with Estonia and are more inclined to learn Estonian and to spend more time in the Estonian-language environment) is a phenomenon characteristic of Tallinn, not of Kohtla-Järve. However, the analysis of particular judgements given by particular speakers shows that some people are more aware about the norms of standard Russian than others. Proficient bilingualism seems to have little impact on the assessment.

Opinions concerning the distinct/non-distinct character of Estonia's Russian are presented in table 3.

*Table 3*

**Do you agree that Russian in Estonia differs from that in Russia?**

| | Tallinn | Kohtla-Järve |
|---|---|---|
| unanswered | 1 | – |
| totally disagree | – | 6 |
| rather disagree | 6 | 3 |
| rather agree | 14 | 21 |
| totally agree | 16 | 7 |

The six informants from Kohtla-Järve not agreeing with the claim were all born between 1944 and 1958. Their knowledge of Estonian is passive or limited. However, agreement or disagreement with the claim seems to have little impact on the assessment of particular utterances.

The respondents were not given information whether a particular utterance was real or constructed. Each utterance was to be assessed on the following scale; the options were:

(9) 0 — nobody speaks like that;
1 — in Estonia people speak that way;
2 — I know some Russians speak that way, though I have not heard it;
3 — I have heard some Russians speak that way;
4 — my Russian friends and acquaintances speak that way;
5 — sometimes I speak that way.

As there were eighteen utterances to be assessed, the minimum possible number of points was zero and the maximum was 90 (18 multiplied by 5). In both sets of informants, the correlation was rather low (less than 0.3) between proficiency in Estonian/ frequency of use/ opinion on the character of the local variety of Russian on the one hand, and grammaticality judgements on the other hand. However, there is a considerable difference between Tallinn and Kohtla-Järve as far as the sum of points given to each utterance by each informant is concerned. In Kohtla-Järve this sum oscillates between 3 and 60 points, while the respective numbers for Tallinn are 0 and 86. In Kohtla-Järve, younger speakers tended to give the highest total number of points (including a professional teacher of Estonian as a foreign/second language, and Estonian was not her mother tongue).

In Tallinn, Russian students in an Estonian-medium secondary school (born between 1986 and 1988) gave a relatively high number of points (55—68); however, slightly older informants, students from Tallinn University (majoring in Estonian as a second language) and one teacher of Estonian in a Russian-medium gymnasium gave even more points (70—86). It might

very well be that professionals who deal with the teaching of Estonian tend to give more points; however, the reverse claim is not true.

Significantly, more informants gave four points ("my Russian friends and acquaintances speak that way", see (9)) in Tallinn than in Kohtla-Järve. In Tallinn, four points was given in 10.51 % of instances to real utterances and in 10.21 % of instances to constructed ones. For Kohtla-Järve, the respective figures are 3.3 and 1.8 %.

In some cases it is clear that a high awareness of the norms of standard Russian and, possibly, linguistic insecurity that some highly proficient bilinguals may experience in the predominantly Estonian-language environment, have caused some informants from Tallinn to give very few points, for instance, a teacher of Russian in an Estonian-medium school, a student of Tallinn University, etc.

## 5. The analysis of utterances

The utterances suggested to the informants for the grammaticality judgement are presented in Table 4. The real utterances are marked with (*). Monolingual Russian equivalents and their glosses are given in angular brackets. For the sake of brevity, monolingual equivalents are limited to relevant Russian VP. This is enough to demonstrate the contrast between code-copied and monolingual utterances. In some instances more than one equivalent is possible. For example, utterance (16) in the table may be interpreted in at least two different ways, depending on the context. The utterance in question was analyzed above (consider 3a) and is particularly ambiguous because of the copied phrasal verb *kõrvale jätma* 'to leave aside, to ignore, to disregard'. The evaluation of this utterance by the informants has proved to be insightful in several respects. It will be discussed later.

*Table 4*

**Utterances used for grammaticality judgement**

| | Russian | Estonian | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.* | *Я забыл конспект домой* left home: DIR [*забыл дома* left there: ST] | *Unustasin konspekti koju*. left home: DIR | 'I left my notes at home' |
| 2. | *Я забыл туда сумку* left there: DIR [*забыл там* left there: ST] | *Unustasin sinna koti*. left there: DIR | 'I left the bag there' |
| 3. | *Она оставила сумку в магазин* left in store-ACC [*оставила в магазине* left in store-PREP] | *Ta jättis koti poodi*. left store: IN | 'He left the bag in the store' |
| 4.* | *Это можно купить только из аптеки* to buy from drugstore-GEN [*купить в аптеке* to buy out drugstore-PREP] | *Seda võib osta vaid apteegist*. to buy drugstore-EL | 'This may be bought only at the drugstore' |
| 5.* | *Спроси это от него* ask from he-GEN [*Спроси у него* ask at he-GEN] | *Küsi seda temalt*. ask he-ABL | 'Ask him about it' |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6.* | *Три с половиной года хожу там* go there: ST [*хожу туда* go there: DIR] | *Kolm ja pool aastat käin seal*. go there: ST | 'I've been going there for 3.5 years' |
| 7.* | *Разговор в любую сеть стоит всего 80 сентов* talk in network-ACC [*разговор в сети* talk in network-PREP] [*звонок в сеть* call into network-ACC] | *Kõne igasse võrku maksab vaid 80 senti*. call network: ILL | 'Calls in any network cost only 80 cents' |
| 8.* | *Я хочу строить сюда дом* build here: DIR [*строить здесь* build here: ST] | *Tahan sinna maja ehitada*. there: ILL build | 'I want to build a house there' |
| 9. | *Он нашел из сумки кошелек* found out bag-GEN [*нашел в сумке* found in bag-PREP] | *Ta leidis kotist rahakoti*. found bag-EL | 'He found the wallet in his bag' |
| 10. | *Она нашла оттуда свой старый конспект* found there: SEP [*нашла там* found there: ST] | *Ta leidis sealt oma vana konspekti*. found there: SEP | 'She found her old notebook there' |
| 11. | *Он опять появился на кафедру* appeared at department-ACC [*появился на кафедре* appeared at department-PREP] | *Ta ilmus jälle õppetooli*. appeared department: ILL | 'Again he appeared in the department' |
| 12. | *Он снова появился на семинар* appeared at seminar-ACC [*появился на семинаре* appeared at seminar-PREP] | *Ta ilmus uuesti seminarile*. appeared seminar-ALL | 'Again he appeared at the seminar' |
| 13. | *Не копай туда яму*! don't dig there: DIR [*Не копай там* don't dig there: ST] | *Ära kaeva sinna auku*! don't dig there: DIR | 'Don't dig a hole there!' |
| 14. | *Он искал из библиотеки эту книгу* was looking for out library-GEN [*искал в библиотеке* was looking for in the library-PREP] | *Ta otsis raamatukogust seda raamatut*. looked for library-EL | 'He was looking for this book in the library' |
| 15. | *Он отыскал оттуда этот журнал* found there: SEP [*отыскал там* found there: ST] | *Ta leidis sealt selle ajakirja*. found there: SEP | 'He found this magazine there' |
| 16.* | *Ребенка оставили в сторону* left in side-ACC [*оставили в стороне* left in side-PREP] [*игнорировали* ignored] | *Laps jäeti kõrvale*. left side-ALL | 'The child was ignored' |
| 17.* | *Этот полководец был похоронен сюда* burried here: DIR [*похоронен здесь* burried here: ST] | *See väejuht maeti siia*. burried here: DIR | 'This commander was buried here' |
| 18.* | *Я часто здесь ходила* went here: ST [*сюда ходила* went here: DIR] [*здесь бывала* frequented here: ST] | *Käisin siin tihti*. went here: ST | 'I used to come here frequently' |

The average number of points that each utterance gained was calculated. There exists a strong correlation (0.85) between the averages in both sets of informants. In both localities, the same real utterance (no. 16 in Table 4) turned out to receive the lowest number of points. In the same vein, another real utterance (no. 18 in Table 4) received the highest average both in Tallinn and in Kohtla-Järve. Nevertheless, the logic of assessment is not identical, and some utterances have been evaluated rather differently by the two sets of speakers. First, the values are higher in Tallinn than in Kohtla-Järve, that is, each sentence has received more points in Tallinn. Table 5 shows the average number of points for each utterance in ascending order.

*Table 5*

**Evaluation of utterances in Tallinn and Kohtla-Järve (average)**

| **Tallinn** | | **Kohtla-Järve** | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 16.* *оставили в сторону* left in side-ACC | 1.4 | 16.* *оставили в сторону* left in side-ACC | 0.21 |
| 10. *нашла оттуда* found there: SEP | 1.59 | 10. *нашла оттуда* found there: SEP | 0.43 |
| 5.* *спроси от него* ask from he: GEN | 1.77 | 12. *появился на кафедру* appeared at deparment-ACC | 0.48 |
| 12. *появился на кафедру* appeared at deparment-ACC | 1.83 | 9. *нашел из сумки* found out bag-GEN | 0.75 |
| 3. *оставила в магазин* left in store-ACC | 1.86 | 3. *оставила в магазин* left in store-ACC | 0.78 |
| 9. *нашел из сумки* found out bag-GEN | 2.0 | 2. *забыл туда* left there: DIR | 0.94 |
| 6.* *три года хожу там* three yeras go there: ST | 2.13 | 17.* *похоронен сюда* buried here: DIR | 1.02 |
| 14. *искал из библиотеки* looked for out library-GEN | 2.18 | 1.* *забыл домой* left home: DIR | 1.05 |
| 17.* *похоронен сюда* burried here: DIR | 2.24 | 13. *не копай туда* don't dig there: DIR | 1.16 |
| 8.* *строить сюда* build here: DIR | 2.32 | 8.* *строить сюда* build here: DIR | 1.18 |
| 2. *забыл туда* left there: DIR | 2.33 | 11. *появился на семинар* appeared at seminar-ACC | 1.22 |
| 1.* *забыл домой* left home: DIR | 2.34 | 6.* *три года хожу там* three years go there: ST | 1.32 |
| 13. *не копай туда* don't dig there: DIR | 2.4 | 5.* *спроси от него* ask from he: GEN | 1.59 |
| 4.* *купить из аптеки* buy out drugstore-GEN | 2.41 | 15. *отыскал оттуда* found there: SEP | 1.7 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 15. *отыскал оттуда* found there: SEP | 2.45 | 14. *искал из библиотеки* looked for out library-GEN | 1.89 |
| 11. *появился на семинар* appeared at seminar-ACC | 2.54 | 4.* *купить из аптеки* buy out drugstore-GEN | 2.27 |
| 7.* *разговор в сеть* talk in network-ACC | 3.48 | 7.* *разговор в сеть* talk in network-ACC | 2.89 |
| 18.* *часто здесь ходила* often here: ST went | 4.24 | 18.* *часто здесь ходила* often here: ST went | 3.16 |

The fact that the same real utterance (16 in Table 4 and 5) got the lowest average by both sets of informants may be explained in two ways. The first explanation is structural. Figuratively speaking, the utterance has a "double load". On the one hand, verbal government violates the rules of monolingual Russian (*оставить* 'to leave' + accusative instead of prepositional). As not only Estonian verbal government has been copied, but also the collocation of the verb *jätma* 'to leave' and the adverb *kõrvale* 'aside' and the meaning of the Estonian phrasal verb as well, this is yet another incompatibility with monolingual Russian. The meaning of a phrasal verb is not necessarily the sum of the meaning of its components. Therefore, this combination of items is odd for a monolingual speaker of Russian, and the meaning of the whole utterance remains opaque.

The second explanation follows from the first. As mentioned in section 2, L. Johanson (2002) introduces concepts of habitualization and conventionalization. It is evident from Table 5 that certain utterances have a higher average than others, although all utterances violate the rules of monolingual Russian grammar. This may be an indirect indication of partial habitualization of copied government patterns. However, as Russian does not have phrasal verb, it is probably perceived as an oddity that deviates from "correct" Russian to a greater extent than just government modelled on Estonian pattern (see Эслон 2004 on correlation between Estonian phrasal verbs and Russian aspect in two monolingual varieties).

Nonetheless, there are no reasons why copied phrasal verb may not become habitualized in the future, at least in some micro-communities. It is very important that the utterance in question is real, not constructed. Therefore, acceptability judgement is not the only criterion for analysis. As mentioned above, some informants from Tallinn have demonstrated a high degree of acceptance concerning all utterances. Examples from indigenous Russian spoken on the western coast of the lake Peipus (Хейтер 1977 : 203 ff) demonstrate, that in a community with a long history of bilingualism, the copying of Estonian phrasal verb is quite common. Consider (10a), monolingual Estonian in (10b) and monolingual Russian in (10c):

(10a) *резать на-земь-Ø*
to cut onto-earth-ACC
'to cut down'

(10b) *maha lõikama*
earth: ILL to cut
'to cut down'

(10c) *с-резать*
off-cut
'to cut down'

As a conclusion to this analysis, it could be stated that instances of phrasal verb copying, although relatively infrequent, do occur in Tallinn (I have no specific information about the whole country).

The fact that utterance 7 in Table 4 and 5 has a relatively high average is definitely explicable by habitualization and conventionalization. This is a fragment from an advertisement of a mobile phone operator. Frequent use facilitates acceptance, and gradually the contrast with monolingual Russian becomes blurred.

The real utterance with the maximum average in both localities (18 in Table 4 and 5) contains the ambivalent verb ходить 'to go' that is directional in Russian but also may be static in certain contexts. There are two possible equivalents with slightly different meanings in monolingual Russian (see Table 4). Although the utterance deviates from monolingual Russian, it is probable that the use of an ambivalent verb increases acceptance.

According to the average, all utterances may be divided into three groups: the lowest average (1.4—1.86 in Tallinn and 0.21—0.78 in Kohtla-Järve); the medium (2.0—2.54 in Tallinn and 0.94—1.89 in Kohtla-Järve); the highest (higher than 3 in Tallinn and higher than 2 in Kohtla-Järve). The majority of utterances (eleven in Tallinn and ten in Kohtla-Järve) fit into the second group. Apparently, on the whole there is no substantial difference between perception of directional and separational government, although some utterances belonging to the latter group have a slightly higher average in Kohtla-Järve. As there is only one verb that is static in Estonian and ambivalent in Russian, and only two utterances contain this verb, it is hard to derive any conclusions concerning this group.

It appears that differences in assessment cannot be explained by structural factors only. Among constructed utterances, the same utterance (10 in Table 4 and 5) has the minimal average both in Tallinn and in Kohtla-Järve (1.59 and 0.43 respectively. However, utterance 15 with a similar VP structure is more acceptable (average 2.45 in Tallinn and 1.7 in Kohtla-Järve). The verbs *находить* 'to find' and *отыскать* 'to find' are synonymous. Both verbs govern a separative adverb. Compare (11a) with a lower and (11b) with a higher average:

(11a) *Она нашла оттуда свой старый конспект*
she found there: SEP own old notebook
'she found her old notebook there'

(11b) *Он отыскал оттуда этот журнал*
he found there: SEP this magazine
'he found this magazine there'

As for the maximal average in constructed utterances, the result in the two localities is different. In Tallinn it was utterance 12 (average 2.54) and in Kohtla-Järve utterance 14 (average 1.89). Also in this case the structure does not explain the fact. Consider the utterance in the Tallinn set (12a) and a structurally similar one (12b) with a significantly lower average 1.86:

(12a) *Он снова появился на семинар-Ø* (2.54)
he again appeared on seminar-ACC
'he again appeared at the seminar'

(12b) *Она оставила сумку в магазин-Ø* (1.86)
she left bag in store-ACC
'she left the bag at the store'

In both examples the deviation from monolingual Russian is in case, not in preposition (see Table 2). On the first glance, it may be supposed that the zero accusative marker required for second declension masculine nouns in singular, as in (12a), makes the utterance more acceptable than a non-zero ending (for instance, *в сумку* 'into a/the bag-ACC') in nouns belonging to other declension classes. Still, a zero or non-zero ending in the accusative seems to have no impact on grammaticality judgement, since both (12a) and (12b) contain the same preposition and a noun in the accusative with the zero ending.

In the same spirit, the most highly assessed constructed utterance in Kohla-Järve is structurally similar to utterance 9 (Table 4 and 5) with a lower average. Yet another, this time a real utterance (4 in Table 4 and 5) with a similar structure, for some reason has a disproportionally high average 2.27. Compare constructed (13a), (13b) and real (13c):

(13a) *Он искал из библиотек-и эту книгу* (1.89)
he looked for out library-GEN this book
'he was looking for this book in the library'

(13b) *Он нашел из сумк-и кошелек* (0.75)
he found out bag-GEN wallet
'he found the wallet in the bag'

(13c) *Это можно купить только из аптек-и* (2.27)
this possible to buy only out drugstore-GEN
'this can be purchased only in a drugstore'

At this stage, I can offer no explanation for a different assessment of structurally similar utterances. The reasons may be of micro- and macro-sociolinguistic nature, although I do not have a clear answer yet.

## 6. Conclusions

The use of real utterances in grammaticality/acceptability judgement tests is an important methodological tool. For a researcher this is the way to distinguish between informants' intuition and real facts of linguistic behaviour. As J. MacSwain (2005 : 2) states in his critique of Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Frame model, the fact that a certain form or structure does not occur in naturalistic data does not mean that it cannot occur. The strongest possible claim that would be methodologically correct is as follows: so far no examples of a certain kind have been registered. However, if an utterance of a kind has been produced even once, it means that such an utterance is possible. Whether it becomes acceptable for some or all speakers of a given variety is another matter altogether.

According to Functional Convergence Hypothesis (Sánchez 2004), areas of grammatical system that are susceptible to external influence are those that are similar but not identical across the two languages (the peripheral part of syntax). Although changes in core syntax should not be excluded, a solid body of research has empirically confirmed the hypothesis (Backus 2004 : 181). On the other hand, L. Johanson (2002 : 309) claims that less salient features are more resistant to change, while more salient features are perceptually more cognitively prominent. It is not always clear what belongs to core grammar and what does not, as well as what is salient in a given pair of languages (see discussion and references in Backus 2004 and Johanson 2002). The current experiment has demonstrated that copying of Estonian phrasal verb is less acceptable than mere copying of directional/static/separative verbal government. Possibly, this has to do with a greater salience of the former, as far as Russian and Estonian grammars are concerned.

The notions of habitualization and conventionalization have proved to be relevant. An increased frequency in usage (advertisements, etc.) and frequently repeated collocations facilitate acceptance.

Given the macro-sociolinguistic situation, the differences in perception between Tallinn and Kohtla-Järve are expected. Although the informants from Tallinn tended to grant more points in general, personal attitude and language awareness is definitely a factor that affects the outcome. This leads to the question, how the impact of language environment should be interpreted.

As the informants from Tallinn tended to grant four points more frequently ("my Russian friends and acquaintances speak that way"), this is an indication of their immediate environment. A bilingual may "re-invent" convergent forms independently of other speakers, but he/she may also hear them from other bilinguals (Beta lects in Johanson's terms). In addition to this, Estonians that speak Russian as L2 tend to copy Estonian verbal government into their Russian (in this case the direction is L1 > L2) and produce utterances with the same structure as Russians that copy from Estonian, their L2, into Russian. This means that speakers in Tallinn have a more complex input and convergent forms are being frequently reinforced, while speakers in Kohtla-Järve typically live in a fairly monolingual environment and have little contact with Estonians even as speakers of Russian as L2.

**Abbreviations**

**ACC** — accusative; **ALL** — allative; **DIR** — directional; **EL** — elative; **GEN** — genitive; **ILL** — illative; **IN** — inessive; **INS** — instrumental; **IMPS** — impersonal; **PREP** — prepositional; **PRTV** — partitive; **SEP** — separative; **ST** — static.

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## ВОСПРИЯТИЕ КОНВЕРГЕНТНЫХ ФОРМ В РУССКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ В ЭСТОНИИ

В статье рассматривается конвергенция в русском языке в Эстонии, а именно копирование эстонского глагольного управления в словосочетаниях с местными падежами, а также восприятие словосочетаний с конвергентными формами информантами из Таллинна и из Кохтла-Ярве. Конвергенция рассматривается в рамках модели копирования кода. В эстонском языке существуют правила управления, в зависимости от которых глагол требует лативного (иллатив, аллатив), статического (инессив, адессив) или отделительного падежа (элатив, аблатив). Глаголы *jätma* 'оставлять', *unustama* 'забывать' требуют лативных, *ostma* 'покупать', *leidma* 'находить' отделительных, а *käima* 'ходить' — статических падежей. Эстонским глаголам, требующим лативных и отделительных падежей, в русском в основном соответствуют статические конструкции (*покупать где*? а не *откуда*?). Тридцати семи русскоязычным информантам из Таллинна и стольким же из Кохтла-Ярве было предложено девять реальных предложений, где употребление местных падежей скопировано из эстонского, и девять аналогичных сконструированных предложений с просьбой оценить каждое предложение от 0 до 5 баллов. Все предложения отклоняются от нормы русского языка. Разницы в оценке реальных и сконструированных предложений не обнаружено. Информанты из Таллинна дали более высокие баллы, чем информанты из Кохтла-Ярве, что объясняется различиями социолингвистической ситуации (наличие языковой среды в Таллинне, большая степень владения эстонским). Однако индивидуальные факторы (т.н. языковая сознательность, желание придерживаться определенных норм или, наоборот, подчеркнуть связь с Эстонией) могут преобладать над макросоциолингвистическими. С другой стороны, частое употребление и последующая конвенционализация некоторых словосочетаний (в рекламе и т.д.) влияет на оценку.