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# IMPERSONAL  FORMS  IN  STANDARD  VEPS

**Abstract.** The article examines the use of impersonal forms in Modern Standard Veps. In modern Veps dialects, there is a contamination of impersonal forms and 3PL forms: impersonal forms are used in 3PL contexts or, vice versa, 3PL forms are used in impersonal contexts. The current Standard Veps grammar proposes distinguishing impersonal from personal forms, i.e. to use impersonal forms exclusively in impersonal contexts and personal forms in personal contexts. As a result, in the Veps texts, that are supposed to follow the standard rules, the phenomenon from dialects also occurs. The situation where an impersonal form displaces a personal form and is used in the context of 3PL occurs 2.3 times more often than the opposite situation where a personal form appears in an impersonal context. Negative forms are twice as likely to be deviant than affirmative forms.

**Keywords**: Veps language, Veps dialects, Finnic languages, impersonal, language standartization.

## 1. Introduction

This article examines the use of impersonal forms in the Standard Veps language, which is one of the minor Finnic languages. In these languages, impersonal verb forms have a special grammatical marker and express impersonal meaning (i.e. describe an action performed by an indefinite agent) in sentences without a syntactic subject. For example, in the following Estonian sentences, the 3PL form with the ending *-vad* is used in a sentence with the subject *lapsed* 'children' (1a), while the impersonal verbal form *-takse* appears in a sentence without a subject (1b).

(1) Estonian:
    a. *Lapse-d    õ p i-v a d   kooli-s*
       child-NOM.PL study-3PL.PRS school-IN
       'Children study at school'

    b. *Kooli-s   õ p i-t a k s e*
       school-IN study-IPS.PRS
       'One studies at school'

Diachronically, impersonal forms with special markers can be found in all Finnic languages. Nowadays, they still exist in some languages as morpho-logically-independent forms (for example, in Estonian and Finnish), while in others, such as Karelian, they tend to be used instead of 3PL forms (see Зайков 1999 : 80—99).

However, Veps cannot be categorised with either of these groups, as the evolution of Veps impersonal forms has differed depending on the dialect. There are three dialects in modern Veps: Northern, Central, and Southern. In the Northern dialect (which is close to the Karelian language), 3PL forms have been largely replaced with impersonal forms (2). In the Southern dialect, on the contrary, 3PL personal forms are currently used instead of impersonal ones in both contexts (3). In the Central dialect, a mixed situation occurs: both impersonal and 3PL forms can appear in both types of sentences regardless of whether they have a subject or not (4). In the forms below, the affix *-taze* (or *-tas/-das*) is originally an impersonal, while the affix *-ba* is a 3PL marker.

(2) Veps (Northern dialect)
    a. *Lapse-d    m a g a-t a z e* (Зайцева 2002 : 63)
       child-NOM.PL sleep-IPS.PRS[1]
       'Children are sleeping' (3PL context)

    b. *Kevade-l  k ü n t-t a z e* (Зайцева 2002 : 162)
       spring-AD plough-IPS.PRS
       'One plough in the spring' (Impersonal context)

(3) Veps (Southern dialect)
    a. *Lehma-d    j o h t a-b a  järve-st i    mest*
       cow-NOM.PL drink-3PL    lake-EL   and again
       *s ö h t a-b a* (Зайцева 2002 : 61)
       eat-3PL
       'The cows will drink from the lake and eat again' (3PL context)

    b. *Meiden derena-s  p a š t a-b a  muga* (Зайцева 2002 : 68)
       our      village-IN oven-3PL     so
       'This is how (they) bake in our village' (Impersonal context)

(4) Veps (Central dialect)
    a. *Hiinantegou-pai rahvaz  t u l o-b a* (Зайцева 2002 : 61)
       haymaking-EL    people  come-3PL
       'People will come from the hayfield' (3PL context)

    b. *Kirves-t  p l a k u t a-b a  kuriko-l* (Grünthal 2015 : 259)
       axe-PART  beat-3PL        mallet-AD
       'The axe is beaten with a mallet' (Impersonal context)

    c. *Tat    da  mam    p a g i š-t a*s: *ženih  čoma* (Grünthal 2015 : 259)
       father and mother talk-IPS.PRS    groom good
       'A father and a mother talk: a groom is good' (3PL context)

    d. *T u u-d a s lapso-d    kodi-he* (Зайцева 2002 : 63)
       come-IPS.PRS child-NOM.PL home-ILL
       'Children will be brought home' (Impersonal context)

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[1] I use the gloss IPS for the historical impersonal marker and 3PL for the personal marker irrespective of whether the corresponding verb forms function as impersonal or personal forms in a sentence.

The variation between personal and impersonal forms is found in Veps dialects as early as the 19th century. Lönnrot (1853 : 27) and Ahlqvist (1861 : 63) mention several examples in Veps, in which the impersonal marker *-tas* is used instead of the personal 3PL affix. A detailed quantitative analysis of forms in various Veps dialects was carried out by R. E. Nirvi (1947), in which he analysed Veps texts — published in the 1930s but collected in the late 19th to early 20th century — and studied the divergence among dialects in the use of the personal and impersonal forms discussed earlier. On 43 pages of the Northern dialect texts, an originally impersonal form was used in the 3Pl contexts 155 times, compared with only 5 cases of personal form in these contexts. On 24 pages of the Central dialect texts, 41 impersonal forms were found and 81 personal (ratio 1 : 2). On 55 pages of Southern dialect texts, 163 cases of personal forms use were recorded and only 50 cases of impersonal form use were recorded (ratio 1 : 3) (Nirvi 1947 : 12).

A similar study by Savijärvi (1990) confirmed Nirvi's description. Savijärvi used all available Veps text collections, including those used by Nirvi and the later ones (for example, Зайцева & Муллонен 1969) to collect the data. The research material includes 6934 impersonal or 3Pl present or imperfect forms collected from all three dialects of Veps (2271 forms from the Northern dialect, 2879 forms from the Central dialect and 1784 forms from the Southern dialect). Present forms are on average 40—45%, imperfect forms are 55—60%. The ratio between 3Pl and impersonal forms was 8 : 92 in Northern Veps, 49 : 51 in Central dialect and 79 : 21 in Southern Veps (Savijärvi 1990 : 159).

The Veps grammar (Зайцева 1981), based on data from the Central Veps dialect, argues that 3PL forms could also be used in impersonal contexts (this study does not include comments on the other dialects). The impersonal forms are described in depth in N. Zajceva's monograph (Зайцева 2002) on the Veps verb where, referring to earlier studies by Nirvi and Savijärvi, the author confirms that the situation regarding impersonal and 3PL forms, has also been preserved in the modern Veps language; however, exact data and calculations are not given in the book. The same is briefly noted (without reference to dialects) in Grünthal's (2015) grammar.

Active work on the development of a Standard Veps language (in Russian *младописьменный вепсский язык*) began in the second half of the 20th century, when enthusiasts and language activists started issuing literary works in Veps, publishing a Veps newspaper and developing Veps textbooks for schools. The rules of the Veps standard grammar have been codified by a group of linguists at the Karelian Research Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences. In terms of vocabulary, the standard language tries to compile the lexical data from all three dialects to preserve it as much as possible. The grammatical system of Standard Veps is based on the Central Veps dialect, but in some cases, it includes elements from other dialects following the basic principle to preserve the old phenomena that exist in dialects (Зайцева 2006). In particular, a few grammatical studies written by N. Zajceva proposed to restore the original distinction of forms with impersonal and personal markers (as in Finnish and Estonian). According to the rules of the standard grammar, forms with impersonal grammatical markers should be used in contexts without a subject, while forms with personal 3PL grammatical markers should appear strictly in contexts with a subject. Both impersonal and 3PL grammatical markers were loaned from the Central dialect (Зайцева 2002 : 165—168; 2000 : 175—181).

The suggested system differs from any of the three systems occurring in the Veps dialects. When standard language prescriptions diverge from actual language use in dialects, one can assume that dialect forms would appear in the speech of standard language users. In this article, I intend to examine this hypothesis, and to analyse the influence of dialects on Standard Veps from the point of view of impersonal forms.

This article consists of 5 sections. Section 2 describes the system of impersonal forms in Standard Veps contrasted with the situation in each dialect. Section 3 presents the data and the methodology for collecting material for the current study. Section 4 examines the obtained data and presents the results of this analysis. Section 5 summarises the research and draws conclusions.

## 2. Basic grammatical characteristics of Veps impersonal forms (dialects vs standard language)

In Veps dialects, there are forms with impersonal markers (marked by *-taze/ -tas/-tihe*, etc.) and forms with 3PL markers (marked by *-ba*). These are discussed in detail below.

The impersonal affix *-taze/-daze* is used to express the present indicative tense in the Northern Veps dialect, whereas in the Central Veps and Southern Veps dialects, the affix *-tas/-das* is used.[2] The affix *-tas* historically goes back to the initially reflexive marker \*-*ta* and the middle voice marker \*-*sen*. In some dialects of Finnic dialects, the latter has also formed the 3Sg marker (Laanest 1975 : 157). Note that reflexive conjugation still exists in modern Veps along with the impersonal forms. The 3Sg reflexive marker *-se* also derives from \*-*sen* (Зайцева 2002 : 182).

The historically impersonal affix *-tihe/-dihe* is used in the indicative past tense in all dialects; however, variants with the affixes *-t'he/-d'he* do occasionally occur.

Historically, the 3PL affix *-ba* was only used in personal forms (Зайцева 2002 : 162—163); it is found in present tense forms, while in past tense forms, it is preceded by the past tense marker *-i-*. The variant *-bad* (or *-i-bad*) can occasionally occur in all dialects.

All of the aforementioned forms can be used in impersonal contexts in contemporary Veps. The distribution of the forms depends on the dialect, because in each dialect the distribution of forms is currently different. In Central Veps, the present tense impersonal affix *-tas/-das* is more common than *-ba* in impersonal contexts, while in Southern Veps, by contrast, forms with *-ba* have largely replaced all the forms with *-tas* (Grünthal 2015 : 259). In Northern Veps, the affix *-taze* is used in both impersonal and 3PL contexts, while the affix *-ba* is not used at all anymore. In the past tense, in all of the dialects, forms with the affix *-tihe/-dihe* are mostly used in impersonal contexts; however, occasionally, the 3PL affix *-iba* is used instead of impersonal affixes (Зайцева 2002 : 163—165).[3] In Table 1a and 1b below, all of the affirmative affixes are listed.

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[2] The phonetic variants *-tas/-taze* are used after any vowel stem or consonant stem ending in a voiceless consonant (*paime-tas* 'pasture-IPS.PRS', *ot-tas* 'take-IPS.PRS'), *-das/ -daze* follow a consonant stem ending in a voiced consonant (*män-das* 'go.IPS.PRS') (Зайцева 2002 : 64—65).

[3] The forms with the impersonal marker *-tihe/-dihe* also replaced 3PL past forms in Northern Veps.

**Present affirmative forms with an impersonal meaning in Veps dialects**

| Dialect | Origin | Marker | Example |
|---------|--------|--------|---------|
| Northern | IPS | *-taze/* <br> *-daze* | *lämbite**taze*** 'one heats' (Зайцева 2002 : 162) <br> *zvon**daze*** 'one rings' (Зайцева 2002 : 162) |
| Central | IPS <br> or <br> 3PL | *-tas/-das* <br> or <br> *-ba(d)* | *liza**tas*** 'one adds' (Зайцева 2002 : 162) <br> *pan**das*** 'one puts' (Зайцева 2002 : 162) <br> *veda**ba*** 'one brings' (Зайцева 2002 : 61) <br> *savo**bad*** 'one builds a house' (Зайцева 2002 : 61) |
| Southern | 3PL <br><br> (occasionally <br> IPS) | *-ba(d)* <br><br> (occasionally <br> *-tas/-das*) | *pašta**ba*** 'one bakes' (Зайцева 2002 : 68) <br> *toivota**bad*** 'one offers' (Зайцева 2002 : 164) <br> *ant**tas*** 'one gives' (Зайцева 2002 : 163) <br> *sa**das*** 'one brings' (Зайцева 2002 : 163) |

**Past affirmative forms with an impersonal meaning in Veps dialects**

| Dialect | Origin | Marker | Example |
|---------|--------|--------|---------|
| Northern | IPS | *-tihe/-dihe/* <br> *-ťhe/-ďhe* | *pide**tihe*** 'one held' (Зайцева 2002 : 163) <br> *pajate**ťhe*** 'one sang' (Зайцева 2002 : 163) |
| Central | IPS <br><br><br> (or 3PL) | *-tihe/-dihe/* <br> *-ťhe/-ďhe* <br> or <br> *-i-ba(d)* | *teh**tihe*** 'one did' (Зайцева 2002 : 164) <br> *pajata**dihe*** 'one sang' (Зайцева 2002 : 164) <br><br> *ot**iba*** 'one took' (Зайцева 2002 : 94) |
| Southern | 3PL <br><br> (occasionally <br> IPS) | *-i-ba(d)* <br> or <br> *-tihe/-dihe/* <br> *-ťhe/-ďhe* | *praznu**ibad*** 'one celebrated' (Grünthal 2015 : 259) <br><br><br> *ande**ťhe*** 'one gave' (Зайцева 2002 : 164) |

In Veps, negative verbal forms consist of the negative verb *ei ~ ii* and the connegative or participle of the lexical verb. In the present tense in all dialects, the main verb is expressed using a connegative form *-koi/-goi* (*ei paime-koi* 'do not graze', *ei ot-koi* 'do not take'). Sometimes (but less often) there is also a connegative consisting of a vowel stem with a negative particle *eba* (*eba paime* 'do not graze', *eba ota* 'do not take'). The form *-koi/-goi* originally was used only in personal contexts, but now it is also used for impersonal contexts. A present negative form with an originally impersonal marker has not been preserved in Veps (Зайцева 2002 : 164). The anonymous reviewer suggested that it could be explained by the fact that diachronically the impersonal forms are close to the reflexive forms, which paradigm includes the negative present forms with markers *-te/-de*, e.g. *ei peste* 'he/she doesn't wash' (Зайцева 2002 : 190—191). However, the origin of the markers *-te/-de* in reflexive forms is still under discussion (for details see Зайцева 2002 : 188).

In the past tense, negative forms in impersonal contexts are presented quite differently with several different types of suffixes used: a singular form of the active past participle *-nd*, a plural form of the active past participle *-nugoi/-nukoi* and passive past participle *-tud/-dud*, which in some dialects has also been reduced to *-t*. The latter form is impersonal in origin and has been preserved only in the Northern Veps dialect, the other forms are characteristic

of the Central Veps and Southern Veps dialects. All of these forms appear not only in impersonal but also in personal contexts (Зайцева 2002 : 164—165). The full list of negative affixes is presented in Table 2 below.

**Negative forms in impersonal contexts**

| Grammatical meaning | Dialect | Origin | Form | Marker | Example |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Present | Northern Central Southern | PERS | PRS.CNG. | *ii ~ ei -koi/-goi* | *ii kiitkoi* 'one doesn't boil' (Зайцева 2002 : 164) |
| Past | Northern | IPS | IPS.PST.NEG | *ii ~ ei -tud/-dud* *ii ~ ei -t* | *ii kiitud* 'one didn't boil' (Зайцева 2002 : 164) |
| | Central Southern | PERS | IPS.PST.NEG | *ii ~ ei -nukoi/-nugoi* *ii ~ ei -nd* | *ii paštnugoi* 'one didn't bake' (Зайцева 2002 : 164) |

The full paradigm of impersonal forms includes the analytical forms of the indicative perfect and pluperfect tenses. Historically, it also included forms in the conditional, jussive, and potential moods. At present, the jussive and potential mood forms are almost no longer used (the rare forms found in the data are used in personal contexts), conditional forms could be found in corpus texts, but were extremely rare (Зайцева 2002 : 165).

Veps dialects show mixing of impersonal and 3PL forms. The original markers of the impersonal are found not only in impersonal forms, but also in personal forms, likewise, 3PL markers appear in forms with an impersonal meaning. In Standard Veps, the original distribution of these forms was restored, that is using impersonal forms exclusively in impersonal contexts and personal forms exclusively in personal contexts: "Among the different variants of affixes that express 3PL the affix *-ba* was chosen to be more preferable [---]. The forms with *-ba* are the most logical and understandable, since both singular and plural forms are made from the same stem of the verb [---]. It is also important that such a solution to the problem allows us to distinguish formally between active and passive[4] forms, which also plays a significant role in teaching a language." (Зайцева 2002 : 76—77). "When expressing the grammatical passive meaning, it is recommended to use the historical passive [---]. All these forms are alive in the dialects of the Veps language; they are not borrowed. The rules of the new standard language are supposed to distinguish the use of original active and passive forms." (Зайцева 2002 : 169).

In Standard Veps, the present tense form of the impersonal indicative uses the markers *-tas/-das* (the markers are taken from the Central Veps dialect). In the past impersonal, the markers *-tihe* or *-dihe* are used, the choice of the marker follows the same rules as for the markers in the present tense (*paime-tihe* 'they pastured', *ot-tihe* 'they took', *män-dihe* 'they walked').

Impersonal negative forms in Standard Veps are not discussed in Зайцева 2002; Бродский 2008. However, some sample of verb paradigms including

[4] Here and later in the quotation N. Zajceva uses the term *passive* to refer to impersonal forms. She points out that there is no established terminology for these forms and prefers to use *passive* as a more traditional term (Зайцева 2002 : 60).

negative forms are presented in the Veps language textbook (Зайцева 2000). In the dialects, the negative form of the present tense impersonal has not been preserved; therefore, in Standard Veps, the same form is used as for the negative form of present 3PL, i.e., the negative verb *ei* and the markers *-goi/-koi*. As for the past negative form, it has been proposed to use the passive participle form *ei* + *-tud/-dud*, which corresponds to the form actually used in the Northern Veps dialect.

With respect to 3PL forms in Standard Veps, the affix *-ba* is used in the present tense. These forms are derived by attaching the *-ba* to the vowel stem (*hö ota-ba* 'they take-3PL'), in the past tense *-ba* is preceded by the past tense suffix *-i-* (*hö ot-i-ba* 'they take-PST-3PL').

The Standard Veps impersonal markers are presented in Table 3.

**Markers of impersonal forms in Standard Veps**

|  | Present tense | | Past tense | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Affirmative | Negative | Affirmative | Negative |
| IPS | *-das/-tas* | *ei -goi/-koi* | *-tihe/-dihe* | *ei -tud/-dud* |
| 3PL | *-ba* | | *-iba* | *ei -nugoi/-nukoi* |

The research data are based on texts written in Standard Veps, therefore, the forms below corresponding to the grammatical description above are referred to as normative, while those that do not are called deviant.

## 3. Data and methodology

The main data for this study were taken from the Open Corpus of the Veps and Karelian languages (VepKar, available online here http://dictorpus.krc.kare-lia.ru/en). This corpus contains 1733 Veps texts (50 9910 tokens), of which 723 texts form a subcorpus of Standard Veps. Among these, 613 are journalistic texts with the vast majority published in the newspaper "Kodima" ('Motherland') or almanac "Verez tullei" ('Fresh wind'). The rest are primarily fiction texts.

For the main analysis, I use texts from the Standard Veps subcorpus. However, this does not mean that all texts are written or edited in accordance with the rules of standard grammar. The main criterion for texts to be included in this category was a publication in a newspaper or book. However, newspapers can publish texts in dialect. For example, the text "Voinal polttud lapsteaig (pala novellaspäi pohjoižvepsän paginal)", published in 2014 in the almanac "Verez tullei", refers directly to the dialect in the title: "Childhood burned by war (an excerpt from a novel in the Northern Veps dialect)". Additionally, there are other situations in which non-standard forms are used, which will be discussed below.

Due to its extensive scope, the subcorpus was analysed in two stages. In the first stage, my goal was to estimate the frequency of the forms under discussion in the corpus. For this goal, a random sample of texts was analysed. In the second stage, I selected texts where probability of such deviations was higher.

The random sample includes 95 texts. This sample is dominated by journalistic texts (82 texts), although it also contains a few fiction texts (13

texts). The sample contains 49 787 word forms, 1812 of which are verbal forms that I examine.

Each text of the sample was analysed in order to find the impersonal forms and 3PL present and past tense indicative personal forms. Forms in other moods are either absent from the examined texts or occur much less frequently (for example, the present conditional impersonal form was found only once), therefore, these are not analysed. Also, I do not consider perfect and pluperfect forms, as there are no reliable criteria for distinguishing between these and passive forms.[5]

I analyse both forms with suffixes accepted as normative in Standard Veps (*-tas*, *-ba*, *-tihe*, *-iba*, etc., see Table 2) and forms with dialectal variants of markers (*-taze*, *-t'he* etc.).

Impersonal and personal markers can both appear in impersonal contexts (i.e., in a sentence without a subject) and in 3PL personal contexts (i.e., in sentences with a subject).

Clearly, this approach permits the inclusion of sentences with omitted subjects into the set of impersonal sentences (cf. *Velled o t t i h e*, *verajiń k ä t t i h e*, *habi a v a i t i h e. M ä ń d i h e pert'he.* 'The brothers t u r n e d the door handle, barely *o p e n e d* it. (They) e n t e r e d into the house'). However, such sentences are extremely rare in written texts (the particular example above was taken from a folklore source not from one of the samples used in this study) and practically do not affect the final results.

In the corpus, almost all texts are given without translation. Since the corpus does not have grammatical markup and there is no way to search by forms, each text was examined manually, and the forms were searched by markers presented in Table 4.

The selection of forms for the study was carried out according to the following scheme : 1) query search (see Table 4), 2) identifying and deleting random occurrences, 3) identifying and deleting homonymous verb forms (see below), 4) control context analysis for classifying the results.

To search for historically impersonal present tense forms, I used 4 queries — *das*, *tas*, *daze*, *taze*. Apart from words which do not end in such letter combinations, it is also quite common for such queries to find infinitive forms of reflexive verbs (ending: *-das/-tas*) and 3PL present forms of reflexive verbs (*-dase/-tase*).

Impersonal past tense markers in all Veps dialects and in the standard language are *-dihe/-tihe*; however, the variants *-d'he/-t'he* are also sometimes found in the data, therefore, the query *he* was used to search for all four options. The results also contained words in the illative (*he* is a marker of the illative case: *kodihe* '(to) home') as well as Pst.3Pl forms of reflexive verbs (*Vajehtihe pätoimitajad* 'Chief editors were changed', source: ""Oma Muale" — 30 vot!").

Present and past tense 3PL forms have the endings *-ba*, *-bad*, *-iba*, *-ibad* (for more details, see Table 4), respectively. The query *ba* was used to find

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[5] There is a discussion whether Finnic languages have two separate paradigms of impersonal and passive forms. Although some forms in both paradigms coincide, their different syntactic behaviour in some contexts gives rise to distinguishing two paradigms. In other contexts, however, it can be difficult if not impossible to distinguish impersonal forms from passive ones, which is the most problematic point of discussion. This issue has been studied in Estonian (Torn-Leesik 2016) and Finnish (Heinat & Manninen 2013).

all the forms and then the present tense forms were manually separated from past tense forms.

Negative forms occur infrequently in the texts. The negative verb — *ei* in Standard Veps with *ii* occurring as a dialect variant — was used to search for these forms.

*Table 4*

**List of search forms**

| | Search query | Grammatical form | Standard Veps | Dialect form | Possible homonymy of forms |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | "das" "tas" "daze" "taze" | IPS.PRS | *-das/-tas* | *-daze/-taze/ -dase/-tase* | Infinitive of reflexive forms 3SG of reflexive forms |
| 2. | "he" | IPS.PST | *-dihe/-tihe* | *-d'he/-t'he* | Pst.3PL of reflexive forms |
| 3. | "ba" | PRS.3PL | *-ba* | *-bad* | — |
| 4. | "ba" | PST.3PL | *-iba* | *-ibad* | — |
| 5. | "ei" "ii" | NEG | *ei* | *ii* | — |
| 6. | "dud" "tud" | PASS.PRTC | *-dud/-tud* | *-du/-tu* | — |

The second sample was collected from texts showing deviations of impersonal and 3PL forms from the standard. This sample was used to analyse the ratio of normative and deviant forms found in texts.

In the random sample, only 12 texts of 95 had deviations, which is not a sufficiently large sample. To increase the sample size, it was necessary to find a criterion for selecting texts in the corpus. It was noted that 15 of 37 instances of deviant forms in the study appear in direct speech, for example, when the Veps speakers answer the questions of the journalist (other situations which cause deviant forms will be discussed in Section 4). It was assumed that direct speech in the text correlates with a probability for the appearance of deviant forms, and the sample can be expanded by searching for texts with direct speech.

Since it is impossible to search for direct speech in the corpus, two search queries were used — quotation marks and the verb form *sanui* 'said'. The search results contained 100 texts (some of the texts coincided with the texts from the random sample).

The second query searched for the endings *-daze* and *-taze*, which are found in Standard Veps texts. These endings are specific to the Northern Veps dialect and are not likely to be found in Standard Veps. However, the search results also included texts with forms that were not related to those being analysed, for example, the form *ičtaze* (a partitive form of the reflexive pronoun). Texts with such forms were eliminated from the sample.

Finally, 37 texts (38 599 tokens) were found with deviant impersonal and 3PL forms. The texts of the second sample were analysed using the same search queries as the texts of the random sample.

## 4. Results and discussion

The results of the search for the forms within the random sample are given in Table 5.[6]

<div style="text-align: right">*Table 5*</div>

**Active and impersonal forms in Veps (random sample)**

|  | Affirmative | | | | Negative | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Impersonal | | 3PL | | Impersonal | 3PL | | |
|  | PRS | PST | PRS | PST | PST | PRS | PST | |
|  | *-tas* | *-ti* | *-ba* | *-iba* | *ei -tud* | *ei -goi* | *ei -nugoi* | |
| 3PL context | **14** | **6** | 423 | 821 | **1** | 49 | 24 | 1338 |
|  | **7.7%** | **2.2%** | 98.6% | 99.0% | **14.3%** | 86.0% | 96.0% | |
| Impersonal context | 168 | 276 | **6** | **9** | 6 | 8 | **1** | 474 |
|  | 92.3% | 97.8% | **1.4%** | **1.0%** | 85.7% | 14.0% | **4.0%** | |
| Total | 182 | 282 | 429 | 830 | 7 | 57 | 25 | 1812 |

The bolded numbers in Tables 5 and 6 indicate the number of deviant forms (both for personal and impersonal forms), that is, 3PL forms used in impersonal contexts and impersonal forms used in 3PL contexts.

The number of deviations (37) is only 2% of all other forms found in the random sample, that is, it can be assumed that this phenomenon is relatively rare in standard language texts. Nevertheless, deviant forms exist, thus, at the next stage of this study, I attempted to determine the reasons that these forms appear in literary texts.

Table 6 shows the results of the analysis of the second sample which contained only texts where at least one deviant form was found. In total, there are 37 texts in the sample.

<div style="text-align: right">*Table 6*</div>

**Active and impersonal forms in texts with deviant forms**

|  | Impersonal forms (AFF) | | 3PL forms (AFF) | | Impersonal forms (NEG) | 3PL forms (NEG) | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | PRS | PST | PRS | PST | PST | PRS | PST | |
|  | *-tas* | *-tihe* | *-ba* | *-iba* | *ei -tud* | *ei -goi* | *ei -nugoi* | |
| 3PL contexts | **58** | **145** | 237 | 434 | **10** | 26 | 13 | 923 |
|  | **41%** | **36%** | 98% | 96% | **43%** | 67% | 87% | |
| Impersonal contexts | 82 | 256 | **6** | **16** | 13 | 13 | **2** | 388 |
|  | 59% | 64% | **2%** | **4%** | 57% | 33% | **13%** | |
| Total | 140 | 401 | 243 | 450 | 23 | 39 | 15 | 1311 |

The analysis of this sample noted the frequency of deviant forms based on three factors: the meaning of the context (impersonal/personal), negation (affirmative/negative), and verb tense (present/past).

Fisher's exact test was used to check these dependencies. Contingency tables were compiled. The detailed results are presented below.

Table 7 demonstrates how often standard and deviant forms occur in impersonal and personal contexts. In impersonal contexts, 90% (351) of the

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[6] In Tables 5 and 6, there is no column for the negative form of the impersonal present, since this form is not preserved in the modern Veps language. In impersonal as well as personal contexts, the active form (*ei -goi*/*-koi*) is used to express negation in the present tense. In the past tense, both polarity forms have been preserved.

forms are standard and only 10% (37) are deviant. In personal contexts, the ratio is less: 77% (710) standard vs 23% (213) deviant.

*Table 7*

**The frequency of standard and deviant forms in personal and impersonal contexts**

|  | Standard | Deviant | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3PL contexts | 710 (77%) | 213 (23%) | 923 (100%) |
| Impersonal contexts | 351 (90%) | 37 (10%) | 388 (100%) |
| Total | 1061 | 250 | 1311 |

Fisher's exact test p = 3.362e-09 < 0.05, which means that the frequency of occurrence of normative and deviant forms in personal and impersonal forms is significantly different.

Table 8 demonstrates the frequency of standard/deviant forms depending on polarity of the sentence. In affirmative sentences, 82% (1009) of the forms are standard and 18% (225) are deviant. In negative sentences, 68% (52) are standard vs 32% (25) that are deviant.

*Table 8*

**The frequency of standard and deviant forms in affirmative and negative contexts**

|  | Standard | Deviant | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Affirmative | 1009 (82%) | 225 (18%) | 1234 (100%) |
| Negative | 52 (68%) | 25 (32%) | 77 (100%) |
| Total | 1061 | 250 | 1311 |

Fisher's exact test p = 0.004014 < 0.05, which indicates the presence of statistically significant differences in the frequency of deviant forms depending on the affirmative/negative forms.

Table 9 demonstrates the frequency of standard/deviant forms depending on the tense. In sentences with present tense forms, 82% (345) of the forms are standard and 18% (77) are deviant. In sentences with past tense forms, 81% (716) are standard vs 19% (173) that are deviant.

*Table 9*

**The frequency of standard and deviant forms in present and past tense forms**

|  | Standard | Deviant | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Present | 345 (82%) | 77 (18%) | 422 (100%) |
| Past | 716 (81%) | 173 (19%) | 889 (100%) |
| Total | 1061 | 250 | 1311 |

Fisher's exact test p = 0.6518 > 0.05, which indicates the absence of statistically significant differences in the frequency of deviant forms depending on the tense of the verb form.

Among the results obtained, the most significant correlations are the first two. It is notable that deviant forms appear in 3PL contexts (213 out of 250, 85%) 5.6 times more often than in impersonal contexts (25 out of 250, 15%). In

other words, impersonal forms appear more often in 3PL contexts than in the reverse situation where 3PL forms appear in impersonal contexts.

As a possible interpretation I can draw a parallel with the dialects: the first situation corresponds to the Northern dialect, the second one to the Central and Southern dialect (see Section 1, in particular the results of studies by Nirvi (1947) and Savijärvi (1990), and Section 2). The texts contain phrases with dialectal forms. Of the 37 texts in the sample, 6 texts contained samples in the Central Veps dialect, 31 texts contained samples in Northern Veps. This obvious leaning to the Northern dialect can be explained by the fact that the main source of texts is the newspaper "Kodima", which is published in Petrozavodsk, the capital of the Republic of Karelia, and as a result, most of the materials are, of course, dedicated to the Vepsians of the Republic of Karelia who speak the Northern Veps dialect. There are significantly fewer texts about Central and Southern Vepsians not only in my sample but generally in the corpus.

It is worth noting that despite the fact that the Standard Veps language is a relatively new phenomenon (for the authors of the texts who are Vepsians and native speakers of one of the dialects, it is more of an acquired language than a mother tongue), deviant forms rarely occur in the texts of the newspaper (less than 2% as it was noted earlier). The situations in which these forms appear will be discussed below in this section.

The current structure of the negative paradigm differs significantly from the affirmative paradigm. Negative forms occur less frequently in texts, and they do not develop in the same way as affirmative forms. It is hard to find information on these forms in grammatical descriptions, as not all of them describe the full paradigm and include negative forms. Apparently, negative forms are not preserved to the same extent as affirmative ones.

It is notable that the proportion of deviant negative forms (32%) is approximately twice as high as the proportion of affirmative forms (18%).

This can be explained by a disproportion in the grammatical system. The present tense negative impersonal form has not been preserved in Veps, nowadays both in dialects and in the literary language, the historical present tense personal connegative is used both in impersonal and 3PL contexts (see Table 10).

*Table 10*

**Indicative present and past tense markers in Standard Veps (impersonal vs 3PL forms)**

|  |  | Affirmative | Negative |
|---|---|---|---|
| Impersonal contexts | PRS | *-tas* | ***ei -goi*** |
|  | PST | *-tihe* | *ei -tud* |
| 3PL contexts | PRS | *-ba* | ***ei -goi*** |
|  | PST | *-iba* | *-nugoi* |

In Veps dialects, however, negative forms show more variation than affirmative forms. This means that any negative context permits forms with either impersonal or 3Pl markers with a free distribution, while in affirmative contexts, there appears to be a tendency to use one of these forms in both contexts (Зайцева 2002 : 166—167).

However, negative forms occur quite rarely in the sample, which makes a deeper analysis difficult. It is notable that in all of the dialects, both past tense

negative forms are attested, which means that in each dialect the impersonal marker (-*tud*) and 3PL marker (-*nugoi*) are both possible. In one of the Standard Veps texts, I found two examples of a negative form which has not been previously described.

(5) a. *Openika-d      t u l′-d′ h e  škol-ha,  i i  m a h -t′ h e*
    student-NOM.PL come-IPS    school-ILL NEG can-IPS
    *luge-da  da  kird′uta-da*  (VepKar 3)
    read-INF and write-INF
    'The students came to school, (they) could not read or write'

  b. *nece oli    voź  1976, klassa-d      i i  o l′-d′ h e  d′o*
    this  be.PST year 1976 class-NOM.PL NEG be-IPS    already
    *mugoiže-d sure-d,    läz        15 openika-d*    (VepKar 3)
    so-NOM.PL big-NOM.PL approximately 15 student-NOM.PL
    'It was 1976, classes were already so big, approximately 15 students'

This form is constructed using the 3PL negative verb *ii* (dialect variant of *ei*) and the impersonal affirmative form *-tihe*. In these examples, the forms are used in 3PL contexts.

Most of texts written in Standard Veps follow normative grammar rules. Why do deviations still appear in some texts? The texts published in a newspaper, as a rule, contain information about the life of the Veps region, the events in the region, and the local people from Veps villages. In this case, a native speaker's vernacular language leaks into a literary text. There are three types of situations of this sort: the direct speech of native speakers, fiction texts containing dialectal features, and articles written by speakers of a dialect.

## 4.1. Direct speech

Many newspaper articles include interviews with residents of Veps villages. In such cases, the body of the article and the questions from the journalist will be written in Standard Veps, but the answers from local people remain unchanged and can contain dialect forms.

For example, the text "Pajo ühtenzoitab" (The song can unite; VepKar 7) refers to the song festival that took place in the village of Kaskesručej (Veps *Kaskez*) in the Prionežskij district of Karelia. The entire article is written in Standard Veps, but at the end of the article one of the residents of the village, L. F. Aleksejeva, says:

"*Milei om lujas mel′he, mise mö tulim ezmäižen kerdan necile lujas čomale pühäle. Kümne vott tagaze mö olim sed′ i ozutim ičemoi mahtoid. Tänämbei olem Änižen randal i rahvast om lujas äi. T u l′ d′ h e  kollektivad Petroskoišpei, Šoutarvespei, Šokšuspei, Kaleigespei. Hö p a j a t i h e  erazvuiččid venälaižid, vepsläižid i eskai moldavskijoid pajoid. Nece om lujas hivä azj i pidab kaikuččen voden tehta mugomid pühid necil mal. Täs oma kaik ičhižed, pidab vastatas toine toiženke i sanuda, mise täga  e l ä - t a z e  vepsläižed i pidab tehta vepsläižid praznikoid kaikuččes küläs.*"
'I clearly remember the first time we came to this wonderful festival. Ten years ago we came here to demonstrate our skills. Today we are on the banks of Lake Onega and there are a lot of people. Teams a r r i v e d from Petrozavodsk, Šeltozero, Šokša, Rybreka. They s a n g various Russian, Veps, and even Moldovan songs. This is a very good deal, and every year

such festivals should be held in this region. All relatives are here, you need to meet each other and say that Vepsians l i v e here and that Veps holidays should be celebrated in all villages' (translated by me, P. O.).

(6) *T u l'-d' h e    kollektiva-d Petroskoiš-pei,    Šoutarves-pei, Šokšus-pei,*
come-IPS        team-NOM.PL Petrozavodsk-EL Šeltozero-EL    Šokša-EL
*Kaleiges-pei*
Rybreka-EL
'Teams  a r r i v e d  from Petrozavodsk, Šeltozero, Šokša, Rybreka'

(7) *Hö    p a j a - t i h e  erazvuičč-id    venälaiž-id,*
they sing-IPS        various-PART.PL Russian-PART.PL
*vepsläiž-id   i    eskai moldavskij-oid    pajo-id*
Veps-PART.PL and even Moldovan-PART.PL song-PART.PL
'They  s a n g  various Russian, Veps, and even Moldovan songs'

(8) *i    sanu-da, mise täga  e l ä - t a z e  vepsläiž-ed    i*
and say-INF   that here live-IPS        vepsian-NOM.PL and
*pida-b    teh-ta vepsläiž-id    prazniko-id    kaikučče-s külä-s*
must-3SG do-INF vepsian-PART.PL holiday-PART.PL all-IN        village-IN
'... and say that Vepsians  l i v e  here and that Veps holidays should be celebrated in all villages'

Since almost all of the examined texts include information on the interviewee's name, their village of origin, and frequently other biographical information, it is usually easy to identify the dialect. For instance, the fact that the village of Kaskeručej is located in Karelia leads us to conclude that the passage above is written in the Northern Veps dialect, which is further supported by the forms *Tul'd'he* 'come.IPS', *pajatihe* 'talk.IPS', and *elätaze* 'live.IPS' — in this dialect, the impersonal form is used instead of the personal in 3PL contexts.

In the text "Školas ištuim ühten partan taga" (VepKar 5), the journalist interviews war veterans Valentina and Valentin Lisitsyn, who talk about their memories of the war. The text consists of a story of their lives retold by a journalist and monologues from the veterans. The passage below clearly shows that in the first part (9a), all forms are consistently used according to grammar rules, while in the speech of Valentin Lisitsyn (9b), a resident of Šeltozero, Northern Veps dialect forms are clearly preserved.

(9a) *Enamb koume-d    vot        šoutjärvelaiž-ed        e l - i - b a*
more    three-PART year-PART Šeltozero.villager-NOM.PL live-PST-3PL
*suomalaiži-den valda-s*
finn-GEN.PL       authourity-IN

*Kut nügüd' j o h t u t a - b a  Valentin da  Valentina*
as   now    remember-3PL        Valentin and Valentina
*Lisicina-d,        suomalaiž-ed e i  a b i d o i č e - n u g o i  he-id*
Lisitsyn-NOM.PL finn-NOM.PL   NEG offend-PST.CNG        they-PART

*A n t - t i h e  kanzo-i-le  hebo-d,        miše        künt-ta*
give-IPS        family-PL-ALL horse-NOM.PL in.order.to plough-INF
*ma-d,    seme-ta jüv-id,    vedel-ta haugo-d,*
land-PART sow-INF grain-PART.PL get-INF   wood-PART
*heinä-d, teh-ta toiž-id        rado-id*
hay-PART do-INF other-PART.PL work-PART.PL

*A n t - t i h e  rahvaha-le  živato-id-ki*
give-IPS        people-ALL  cattle-PART.PL-PRT

*Laps-id      o p e - t i h e  škola-s   ei   vaiše  uroko-i-le,*
child-PART.PL  teach-IPS       school-IN  NEG  only  lesson-PL-ALL

*no  mugažo  kaik-i-le  käzirado-i-le*
but  also      all-PL-ALL  hand.labour-PL-ALL

*Neičukaiž-id  o p e - t i h e  rad-maha  ma-l:   teh-ta*
girl-PART.PL    teach-IPS       work-SUP  land-AD  do-INF

*gräda-d            noraiže-l,  pan-da  semn-id...  Prihaiž-id —*
seedbed-NOM.PL  rope-AD    put-INF  seed-PART.PL  boy-PART.PL

*ra-ta      malataiže-l  da  veiče-l*
work-INF  hammer-AD  and  knife-AD

'For more than three years the people of Šeltozero l i v e d  under Finnish
occupation. As Valentin and Valentina Lisitsyn now r e m e m b e r, the
Finns did not o f f e n d  them. Families w e r e  g i v e n  horses to
plough the land, sow grain, breed pike, cut wood, hay, and do other work.
They g a v e  cattle to people. Children w e r e  t a u g h t  at school not
only lessons but also physical work. Girls w e r e  t a u g h t  to work on
the ground — to make seedbeds with a rope, to plant seeds. Boys — to
work with a hammer? and a knife'

(9b) *Valentin Lisicin*: "*Finna-d       v e d e l - t i h e  mii-l  škola-s*
Valentin Lisitsyn finn-NOM.PL conduct-IPS       we-AD school-IN

*kaik uroka-d*
all    lesson-NOM.PL

*Mušta-n,       mise opendaj-ide      keskes ol-i       Oľga Naukkarinen*
remember-1SG that teacher-GEN.PL among be-PST.3SG Olga Naukkarinen

*Hän open-zi       mii-d     pajata-mha suomeks*
She teach-PST.3SG we-PART talk-SUP       in.Finnish

*En      mušta         toiž-ide      opendaj-ide*
NEG.1SG remember.CNG other-GEN.PL teacher-GEN.PL

*nim-id        da  familijo-id,     no  mušta-n,*
name-PART.PL and surname-PART.PL but remember-1SG

*mise mö  laj-i-m        hii-d*
that  we abuse-PST-1PL they-PART

*Üh-t    opendaja-d  kucu-i-m  "sova-ks": häne-l  o ľ - ď h e*
one-PART teacher-PART call-PST-1PL owl-TRANS she-AD be-IPS

*sure-d      očka-d*
big-NOM.PL glasses-NOM.PL

*Toš-t    kucu-i-m  "däniša-ks": häne-n  šapka-s*
other-PART call-PST-1PL hare-TRANS she-GEN hat-IN

*o ľ - ď h e  pene-d          korvaiže-d*
be-IPS        small-NOM.PL ear-NOM.PL

*Opendaja-d    t e - ť h e, mise mö laj-i-m*
teacher-NOM.PL know-IPS    that we abuse-PST-1PL

*hii-d        vähäižen..."*
they-PART a.little

'Valentin Lisitsyn: "The Finns  t a u g h t  all the lessons at our school. I remember that Olga Naukkarinen was one of the teachers. She taught us to speak Finnish. I do not remember the names and surnames of other teachers, but I remember that we called them insulting names. One teacher got the nickname "owl" because she  h a d  big glasses. The other we called "hare" — she  h a d  small ears on her hat. The teachers  k n e w  that we called them by nicknames a little…'

In the second part of the passage, all forms have a 3PL meaning, but impersonal forms are used instead (*vedel-tihe* 'conduct.IPS', *ol'-ďhe* 'be.IPS', *te-ťhe* 'know.IPS') due to the Northern Veps dialect of the interviewee.

## 4.2. Fiction

Newspapers sometimes publish some pieces of fiction. Some of these are translations from Russian into Veps (some Veps authors write in Russian). Usually, translated texts follow standard grammar. The same can be said about the original Veps texts. However, there are also texts that hardly could be revised, for example, pieces of poetry. In the current sample only 2 texts contained deviations (7 examples).

For example, the poem "Kurged lendaba" ('The cranes are flying') which was published in the almanac "Verez tullei" (2018, p. 93). Below is the full text of the poem (translated by me, P. O.).

(10) *L a n k - t a s   pakuiže-d     lehte-d,*          The yellow leaves are falling down,
     fall-IPS           yellow-NOM.PL leaf-NOM.PL

   *sügüz'    rušita-b  pu-id.*                            Autumn is undressing the trees,
   autumn   undress-3SG tree-PART.PL

   *Lehte-d     m u s t e - t a s   vede-s,*           The leaves  b l a c k e n  in the water,
   leaf-NOM.PL blacken-IPS          water-IN

   *Niišpäi    kado-se     kuld.*                         Gold is disappearing from them.
   those.EL   disappear-3.REFL  gold

   *Kurge-d       ülähän  l e - t a s,*                The cranes  a r e   f l y i n g  above,
   crane-NOM.PL above    fly-IPS

   *E c - t a s   erase-n       so-n,*                  S e e k i n g  for another swamp,
   seek-IPS      another-GEN swamp-GEN

   *kuna  lask-tas      voiž,       jä-das,*          They will stay there, where could they
   where descend-INF can.3COND stay-IPS                                             land,

   *ištut   lebai-tas  ö-n.*                             Sitting have a rest during the night.
   sitting rest-INF    night-GEN

   *Lapse-d        külä-n     te-l      s e i š - t a s,* Children *a r e   s t a n d i n g* on
   child-NOM.PL village-GEN road-AD stand-IPS                       the village road,

   *kaiki-l  le-tud        om     löug.*                Everyone's chin is up.
   all-AD   raise-PASS.PRTC be.3SG chin

   *Vaikna-s taivha-le  k a c - t a s,*              They are silently  w a t c h i n g  the sky,
   silence-IN sky-ALL    watch-IPS

   *K a i m - d a s  kurg-id      suŕ jouk.*       G a z i n g  at a big flock of cranes.
   gaze-IPS           crane-PART.PL big flock

Its author, the Veps poet Viktor Jeršov, speaks the Central Veps dialect. The poem contains 8 eight impersonal forms with the *-das/-tas* marker used in 3PL contexts. However, the title of the poem contains the 3PL verb form *lendaba*

which is also used in a 3PL context. In this case, the form follows standard grammar, but its use seems coincidental as the Central Veps dialect permits free variation when selecting impersonal / 3PL forms in different contexts.

## 4.3. Articles written by non-professional native speakers

The third category of texts consists of articles written by native speakers who are not journalists and, therefore, do not obligatory use Standard Veps. There are three texts in the sample which contain 41 examples of deviant forms. For example, in the text "Muzejan jubileivoden däľged" (VepKar 1), Natalia Anhimova, the curator of the museum in Šeltozero, talks about the anniversary of the museum and other museum activities. After a short introduction from the editors of the newspaper, there is a monologue. Since Šeltozero is a village in Karelia, the author is a native speaker of Northern Veps, so almost all 3PL forms are marked by impersonal markers.

(11) *Oikta-n     da    parahima-n azja-n   v ö - d′ h  e*
    right-GEN and best-GEN     job-GEN lead.away-IPS
    *Marija Filatova da   Lara Smolina*, *ii   üh-t*
    Maria  Filatova and Lara Smolina  no one-PART
    *kerd hö   o ľ - d h  e  muzeja-s,  o t′ h  e  mii-d*
    time they be-IPS       museum-IN take.IPS we-PART
    *pagina-ha*, *siiš   t u l - d′ h  e  čoma-d       vastuse-d*
    speech-ILL  then come-IPS       good-NOM.PL meeting-NOM.PL
    'Maria Filatova and Lara Smolina  d i d  a proper and good job, they
    s p e n t  many times in the museum, they  s t a r t e d  to talk to us, then
    we  h a d  some good meetings (lit. they took us for a speech and good
    meetings  c a m e)'

Despite generally consistent use of impersonal and personal forms in texts written by journalists, they sometimes make mistakes and use deviant forms instead of standard ones. In the sample, two examples were found (12—13).

(12) *Pondla-l     ei   ole     verh-id*,       *kaik  p a g i š - t a s  vaiše*
    Pondala-AD NEG be.CNG stranger-PART.PL all    speak-IPS         only
    *ičeze kele-l*       (VepKar 2014)
    own  language-AD
    'There are no strangers in the village of Pondala, everyone  s p e a k s
    only their own language'

(13) *Suima-l     e i  v a r a i - n u g o i  le-ta    rohkto-id-ki*
    meeting-AD NEG be.afraid-PST.CNG     raise-INF brave-PART.PL-PRT
    *iniciativo-id*    (VepKar 4)
    initiative-PART.PL
    'At the meeting, they  w e r e  n o t  a f r a i d  to raise challenging initiatives'

Thus, situations in which deviant forms appear in literary texts are directly related to Veps speakers. Native speakers do not follow standard grammar rules, since these are quite contrary to the use of actual forms in their dialect. This fact is proved by the following calculation.

I took a sample of 46 texts that contained direct speech and deviant forms to find the number of deviant forms in direct speech vs other contexts. Direct

speech means direct quotation of a Veps native speaker. The calculation results are presented in Table 11.

**The frequency of standard and deviant forms
in direct speech and other contexts**

|  | Standard | Deviant | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Direct speech | 551 (77%) | 163 (23%) | 714 (100%) |
| Other contexts | 1313 (99.6%) | **4 (0.4%)** | 1317 (100%) |
| Total | 1864 | 167 | 2031 |

Fisher's Exact Test: p-value 2.2e-16 < 0.05

It is quite obvious here that the vast majority of deviant forms appear in direct speech. Only four deviant forms were found in other contexts.

## 5. Conclusion

Standard Veps is a relatively new phenomenon, the development of a standard grammar for the Veps language is still ongoing. On the one hand, this standard is based on Veps dialects spoken by native speakers, on the other hand, being a normative language, it is supposed to regulate the diversity of the language system and the variability of forms that are present in different dialects.

The standardisation of the grammatical category of the impersonal is not an easy issue in Modern Veps. In all dialects, there is a competition between impersonal forms and 3PL forms, which leads either to variation (both forms can be used in both impersonal and personal contexts) or to substitution (the impersonal form displaces the 3PL form or vice versa). This phenomenon also occurs in other Finnic languages, for example, in Karelian and Votic.

The current standard grammar proposes distinguishing impersonal from personal forms, i.e., to use impersonal forms exclusively in impersonal contexts and personal forms in personal contexts.

As a result, there are currently two types of Veps speech: (1) speech of native speakers with dialect features (mostly the older ones) and (2) speech of younger (including those that obtained a higher education) native speakers who follow Standard Veps rules.

This phenomenon is clearly reflected in the texts. If the text is written by a journalist (who is often not a native speaker, but studied the Veps language at the university), then the use of impersonal and 3PL forms in the text will almost always follow grammatical rules. As soon as the speech of a native speaker appears in the text, the rules give way to dialect speech. The texts where this phenomenon occurs include interviews, fiction, and articles written by native speakers.

The distribution of impersonal and personal forms depends on factors such as context (impersonal or personal) and negation. The situation where an impersonal form displaces a personal form and is used in the context of 3PL occurs 2.3 times more often than the opposite situation where a personal form appears in an impersonal context. This apparently happens due to regional bias — most of the texts for the newspaper are created in the region where the Northern Veps dialect is widespread, and the substitution of the impersonal forms is one of its characteristics.

The second factor that influences the appearance of a deviant forms is negation. Negative forms are twice as likely to be deviant than affirmative forms. This phenomenon correlates with the more extensive variation found in dialects.

One of the results of my study was that the temporal context does not determine the appearance of deviant forms, i.e., there is no correlation between present/past tense and the use of impersonal/personal forms.

Although there is variation of impersonal and personal forms in dialects, the standard language retains a clear distribution of these. The future development of this situation remains unclear, and it is difficult to anticipate whether native speakers of dialects will acquire the standard variant of the language or if, by contrast, the native speakers who use the standard language will begin to mix impersonal and personal forms, as is currently the case in dialects.

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## Abbreviations

**1** — 1st person, **3** — 3rd person, AD — adessive, ALL — allative, CNG — connegative, COND — conditional, EL — elative, GEN — genitive, ILL — illative, IN — inessive, INF — infinitive, IPS — impersonal, NEG — negative, NOM — nominative, PART — partitive, PASS.PRTC — passive participle, PL — plural, PRS — present, PRT — particle, PST — past, REFL — reflexive conjugation, SG — singular SUP — supine, TRANS — translative.

**Data sources: VepKar** — Open Corpus of Veps and Karelian Languages. http://dictorpus.krc.karelia.ru/en; **VepKar 1** — Natalja A n h i m o v a, Muzejan jubileivoden dä ľged. — Kodima, № 1, 2018, 4. http://dictorpus.krc.karelia.ru/ru/corpus/text/1607; **VepKar 3** — Natalja A n h i m o v a, Äi om hüvid da väha om armhid. — Kodima, № 3, 2019, 6. http://dictorpus.krc.karelia.ru/ru/corpus/text/2605; **VepKar 4** — Liza M a k a r o v a, Midä minä, karjalaine, sanun teile nügüď? — Kodima, № 4, 2020, 3; **VepKar 5** — Larisa S m o l i n a, Školas ištuim ühten partan taga. — Kodima, № 5, 2015, 4—5. http://dictorpus.krc.karelia.ru/ru/corpus/text/1244; **VepKar 7** — Irina S o t n i k o v a, Pajo ühtenzoitab. — Kodima, № 7, 2019, 6. http://dictorpus.krc.karelia.ru/ru/corpus/text/2619; **VepKar 2014** — Larisa S m o l i n a, Maria F i l a t o v a, Lämäd da südäimeližed vastused Pondal-küläs. — Verez tullei 2014. http://dictorpus.krc.karelia.ru/en/corpus/text/1087.

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## ИМПЕРСОНАЛЬНЫЕ  ФОРМЫ
## В  ЛИТЕРАТУРНОМ  ВЕПССКОМ  ЯЗЫКЕ

В статье рассматривается употребление имперсональных форм в современном литературном вепсском языке. В настоящий момент в вепсских диалектах наблюдается контаминация безличных форм и форм 3 л. мн.ч.: имперсональные формы используются в контекстах 3 л. мн.ч. или, наоборот, формы 3 л. мн.ч. используются в имперсональных контекстах. Грамматика младописьменного (литературного) вепсского языка предлагает использовать имперсональные формы исключительно в имперсональных контекстах, а личные формы — в личных. Однако в вепсских текстах, которые должны следовать правилам стандартной грамматики, также встречаются девиантные формы из диалектов. Ситуация, когда имперсональная форма вытесняет личную и используется в контексте 3 л. мн. ч., встречается в 2,3 раза чаще, чем обратная ситуация, когда личная форма появляется в имперсональном контексте. Отрицательные формы в два раза чаще оказываются девиантными, чем утвердительные.

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## VEPSA  KIRJAKEELE  UMBISIKULISED  VORMID

Artiklis uuritakse vepsa kirjakeele impersonaali kasutamist. Tänapäeval esineb vepsa murretes impersonaali vormide ja mitmuse 3. isiku vormide kontaminatsiooni: impersonaali vorme kasutatakse mitmuse 3. isiku kontekstides või vastupidi, mitmuse 3. isiku vorme impersonaalsetes kontekstides. Vepsa kirjakeele reeglite järgi tuleb impersonaali vorme kasutada ainult impersonaalsetes kontekstides ja personaalseid vorme personaalsetes kontekstides. Aga tekstides, mis küll peaksid järgima kirjakeele reegleid, leidub tihti murretepärast impersonaali kasutamist. Olukorda, kus impersonaali vorm tarvitatakse mitmuse 3. isiku kontekstis, esineb 2,3 korda sagedamini kui vastupidist olukorda, kus impersonaalses kontekstis esineb personaalne vorm. Eitavas kõnes on seda kaks korda sagedamini kui jaatavas kõnes.