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## **Transgenerational changes in the usage of word-formation by Russian heritage-speakers in Germany and Sweden**

Our study deals with transgenerational language changes in multilingual situations, namely by the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> generations of Russian-speaking immigrants in Germany and Sweden. According to Fishman 2001, we define their Russian language as a heritage language (HL) – the language derived from the family background of immigrants. However, the present study focuses on the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation of heritage language speakers and presents their specifics in the word-formation acquisition in comparison with the 1<sup>st</sup> generation.

As is well-known, the status of the heritage language (HL) in the investigation of language acquisition and didactics is quite complicated. The reason for this is that a HL is neither L1 in the classical meaning nor L2 (cf. terminological overview in Polinsky/ Kagan 2007). This unsettled point is also relevant for our formal-linguistic study due to the observed co-existence of two mental grammars and lexicons in the same heritage language speaker, whereupon these two systems are organized and hierarchized in different ways in syntax, morphology, word-formation, and lexis (cf. observations in contact and colonial linguistics in Riehl 2004; Stolz et al. (eds.) 2015).

Although there is a substantial amount of research available on the *heritage language learners'* lexis, it is not so easy to find studies related to word-formation in the Slavic heritage language acquisition (SLA). Our study is, therefore, targeted on the filling of this lacuna in the SLA research, beginning with a description and analysis of the word-formation strategies in early SLA.

In particular, we investigate the HL-acquisition of word-formation in Russian by the bilingual migrant children (2<sup>nd</sup> generation,  $\Sigma = 30$ ) at the age of 9-11. This study is based on a corpus of linguistic data obtained by the different elicitation tasks (picture and process descriptions, storytelling and interviews).

Our hypothesis runs as following: The lexical resources of HL-learners at early stages (=1<sup>st</sup> generation) are small, but the communicative situations may still place such learners in a position where they must communicate in spite of their being at a loss for words. In such situations, learners resort to a number of different strategies, some of them based on (1) their L1 knowledge (= German or Swedish), some of them based on (2) their HL knowledge (= Russian), and some of them based on (c) their own creativity. Through more frequent use, the expressions used in these situations can even become part of the learner's mental lexicon.

Our aim is to describe these strategies in our special case of the SLA (we should change this term since it stands for Second Language Acquisition). Apart from the formal description of the concrete linguistic manifestations of different strategies, the study also investigates how morphology and lexis influence each other through word-formation strategies (cf. Vanhove et al (eds.) 2012). Finally, the comparison of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> generations of Russian-speaking immigrants in Germany and Sweden might also provide evidences for language change in the multilingual settings (cf. Weinreich 1953) and shed light on such theoretical questions: How do two concurrent linguistic systems influence each other? What changes are instigated by the multilingual situation in formal grammar, lexicon, and language use?

### References:

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