

# Russian influence on the Ižma Komi dialect

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## Abstract

The article deals with the results of the language contacts between Russian and Komi (Komi-Zyrian), especially one of its dialects, that of Ižma, in the north-eastern corner of European Russia. The long-term contacts are discussed in a socio-historical context, which explains how the present minority status of Komi has occurred. The structural, lexical, and pragmatic unilateral convergence of Komi with Russian is explored. A case study with material from a TV interview – a semi-official speech of an Ižma speaker – illustrates the introduction of Russian lexemes and constructions into Komi via codeswitching and borrowing.

## Key words

*borrowing*

*convergence*

*Komi*

*Russian*

## 1 Introduction

Within the Russian-speaking world, some minority languages (the majority of their speakers) have been in frequent contact with Russian for centuries. This article is concerned with the influence of Russian on one of them, Komi (Komi-Zyrian), a Finno-Ugrian language of the Permian branch, more specifically the dialect spoken in Ižma in the northern part of the Republic of Komi. While the literary language and other dialects offer rich material as well, the Ižma dialect has been traditionally more in contact with Russian than the others.

After a long tradition of Soviet research on linguistic interference, which aimed to point out reasons for insufficient learning of Russian at school, national republics have, since the 1990s and the introduction of the new language laws, concentrated on language planning. Reintroducing norms for the literary language understandably takes first precedence, as they were neglected during the previous decades. Russian hardly plays a part in this planning; for some, its 'enriching role' has now an opposite value, and calquing from Russian is noted with disapproval. In research, the traditional dialect expeditions and descriptive work continues. As a result, the efforts in Komi have produced a great number of new dictionaries, grammars, and textbooks, and much linguistic research pertaining to the language system. New terms are devised by a terminological commission and applied in translations of official documents. A phenomenon so obvious as the presence and influence of Russian, not to mention codeswitching, has not attracted much

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interest, except sociological: language choice is studied on the basis of questionnaires concerned with self-evaluations by the speakers.

Except for a couple of conference papers published in Syktyvkar in the 1990s, and an article by the author of this article in the 2000s, the effects of the Russian–Komi contact have not been researched after 1991. This article presents an overview of the findings of the field of research up to the present, and describes the language situation in Komi, illustrated by a case study: spontaneous speech as represented by a television interview of a functionary from Ižma, shown by the *Komi gor* television channel in 1998. The choice of the material is due to a lucky coincidence: I saw the program in Syktyvkar, and later on, received a videotaped copy from the television company. The video was transcribed by a native speaker of Komi, and submitted to two Komi folklorists for evaluation. The questions posed were: (1) was the language different from what they were used to hearing in other parts of Komi, and (2) which items or constructions were Russian? The main conclusion was that the linguistic situation is in a constant flux because of new concepts entering the (bilingual) speakers' experience. Despite this, a certain strategy became apparent by which the speakers may define code-mixing and borrowing, which is not unlike the classifications suggested in contact linguistics in the western world.

## 2 The territory and population of Komi

The Republic of Komi is situated in the north-eastern corner of European Russia, bordering the Ural mountains to the east, with the tundra to the north, the taiga of the Arkhangel *oblast* to the west, and the watershed of the Kama and the Vychegda rivers to the south. The area is sparsely populated, with 416,800 sq km, and 968,164 inhabitants in 2008 ([komi.gks.ru](http://komi.gks.ru), 2009). In 2006, over 59 per cent were Russians, and over 25 per cent Komi ([ru.wikipedia.org](http://ru.wikipedia.org), 2009). Though the percentage of Komi rose from 23.3 per cent in 1989 to 25.2 per cent in 2002 due to the emigration of the mainly Russian work force, in absolute figures the Komi population decreased from 336,300 in 1989 to 293,400 (Lallukka, 2005: 45). The 2002 census questionnaires did not include a question about the mother/native tongue, but asked whether the inhabitants spoke, in addition to Russian, the language of their nationality and other languages. Just over 72 per cent (72.1%) of the Komi reported that they spoke Komi, which means a decrease from the 1989 percentage of 79.5 per cent (Konjuhov, 2008: 152–153).<sup>1</sup>

The trend is common among the Finno-Ugrian peoples in European Russia. There were 2,763,123 Finno-Ugrian inhabitants in Russia in 2002, which meant a decrease of 14.3 per cent from the previous census of 1989. They make up 1.9 per cent of the population of Russia (Konjuhov, 2008: 21). In most of the Finno-Ugrian republics the majority of the titular population speaks the language: 84.6 per cent of Mordvins in Mordovia; 84.2 per cent of Mari in Mari El, and 71.8 per cent of Udmurts in Udmurtia. These three republics, unlike Komi, also had retained the language as a school medium up to

<sup>1</sup> The census has been criticized not only because of the language question, but also because of its realization. For example, in Moscow, 34 per cent of the population were questioned in person, and information on the rest was based on secondary sources: housing offices, neighbors, and acquaintances. Since everyone with a Russian surname was counted as a Russian, there were no Komi, Mari, Chuvash, Karelians, Mordvins, and others in Moscow (Konjuhov, 2008: 12).

the era of *perestroika* and after. In other administrative units, the native languages are retained to a lesser degree. In absolute figures, the numbers of certain small indigenous northern peoples (Finno-Ugrian are Enets, Khanti, Mansi, Nenets, Saami, Selkup) have risen, together with a loss of speakers. Apparently, descendants of Russians and natives have identified themselves with other markers of ethnicity, and registered as natives in a larger proportion than before (Konjuhov, 2008: 33, 141, 146, 153).

In Komi, as elsewhere in the Finno-Ugrian republics, minority language maintenance is weakening. For generations, in mixed marriages (40.7%) the children have mostly grown up speaking Russian. Since the ethnic revival and the language laws of the 1990s, with programs for language revitalization, teaching of the language has increased, but only as a separate subject (Konjuhov, 2008: 134, 150). A positive development is that the language is taught to non-Komi children as well, and according to the 2002 census, there are some 15,000 non-ethnic Komi who indicate that they speak the language (Konjuhov, 2008: 150, 226). Still, a certain 'linguistic nihilism' prevails: the younger and better educated people are, the more negative their attitude towards their mother tongue. Komi is essentially a language of the villages, few among which remain monolingual. In urban surroundings the language of communication is Russian.<sup>2</sup>

## 2.1

### ***Contacts between the Komi and the Russians***

The contacts between speakers of Russian (East Slavic or North Russian dialect) and Komi (Old Permian, later Komi-Zyrian dialects) go back some 1,000 years, as evidenced by remnants of material culture. The oldest texts in Old Permian, translations connected with the missionary work of St Stephen of Perm, appeared at the end of the 14th century. Subsequent centuries saw the gradual spreading of Russian settlers to the north and that of the Komi to the north and north-east. The semi-nomadic way of life of the Komi – partly agriculture, partly hunting, fishing and trading – took them to Siberia, to the Barents Sea coast, to the tundra, forests, rivers, and mines in northern Russia. New words arrived at the home villages with the returning men. Orthodox Christianity tied the population strongly to Mother Russia and the fathers of the church. Bishops as regents changed into princes of Moscow, who ruled by local proxies. Administratively the area was divided into different *gubernijas*, but linguistically it remained rather monolithically Komi even after it received the status of an autonomous *oblast* (1921) and republic (1937).

In the 1930s the massive industrialization of the north began, first by way of bringing in prisoners and deportees. The Komi became a minority in the area, though the villages still remained monolingual for a long time. From the 1950s onwards, labor from elsewhere in the USSR was recruited with the incentive of higher pay. Increasingly, the language of education in the area was Russian, and by 1975 there were no more schools with Komi as the language of education, though it could be taught as a separate subject

<sup>2</sup> A Report to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on the Situation of Finno-Ugrian and Samoyed Peoples (Saks, 2006), stated in its summary that the measures it had encouraged the Russian Federation to take have generally not been implemented, leading to further deterioration of the cultural situation of these peoples. While in some areas legislation exists, it is very often not implemented, mainly for financial reasons. Further negative trends are that the populations are in decline, the native languages have low status, and are less and less used by the young people (Saks, 2006).

(Popov, 1996: 213). As a result, there are now no monolingual speakers left, and even for those who speak it as their mother tongue, writing and reading may pose difficulties.

## 2.2

### **Contacts between the Ižmians and the Russians**

The dialectal and ethnic group of the Ižmians (*Iž'vatas*) lives in the northern part of Komi, by the river Ižma (*Iž'va* in Komi), a tributary of the Pechora river. In the 16th century the river banks of the Ižma were settled by Komi from the Vym' basin, and in the 17th century, Russians from Ust'-Cil'ma down the Pechora river joined them (Žerebcov, 2007: 76–79). The multiethnic situation, with the admixture of reindeer-herding Nenets, produced a mixed lexicon, and by the end of the 18th century, the Ižma dialect with its phonological and morphological features was formed (Saharova & Sel'kov, 1976: 4–5). As agriculture was not viable in the area, the Ižmians adopted reindeer herding from the Nenets, and developed it into a large-scale economy. They became known as traders all over northern Russia, competing with the Russians.

The Ižmians developed a specific local identity, even a stereotype of the 'the sly Ižmians', 'the Jews of the North' (Kotov, Rogačev, & Sabaev, 1996: 98–110). A governor of the Arkhangel province wrote:

the Pechora Zirians [= Ižmians] are a particular type by themselves – vivacious and purely commercial ... the Ishmians are enterprising and anything but indolent in matters of business, most of them, indeed, being quick to appropriate any new idea, provided only that it be practical and profitable, striving, thus, in every way to add to their incomes, to discover new markets for their wares, and in general, to better their position in life. (Engelhardt, 1899: 260)

A traveler-ethnographer of the 19th century, S. Maksimov, noted that the Ižmians spoke fluent Russian, though with an accent and grammatical mistakes in word stress. To him, their speech sounded like the speech of the gypsies. In spite of this, they seemed to be greatly attached to their own language (Maksimov, 1859: 142–143).

With a growing population forcing them to seek more pasture for their reindeer herds, the Ižmians settled elsewhere in the north: across the Ural mountains to the Ob' river, and further to Siberia. In the 1880s, some families took their reindeer herds to the Kola Peninsula (Smetanin, 2004: 388–389). There they became a strong group, developed a thriving reindeer economy and retained their language and culture. The migration to Kola from Ižma continued up to the 1920s (Lallukka, 1990: 131–135; Kaneva, 2008).

The Civil War, which dragged on for years in the north, and the collectivization of the 1930s evidently put a stop to the trade, exploitation of the Nenets, material abundance and traveling. At a point in the 1960s, there were complaints that the knowledge of Russian among the Ižmians had diminished, because under the collective farming system they had become less mobile (Kotov et al., 1996: 75). By the 1970s, the number of the Ižmians in the USSR was 54,780. Out of them, 39,000 lived within the Komi ASSR. Outside the republic, practically all the Komi inhabiting the north are originally Ižmians. In Komi, around 1980, in the Ižma *raion* there were approximately 20,300 Ižmians; the rest lived in Usinsk, Pechora and Sosnogorsk, in Ukhta and Inta (Lallukka, 1990: 131–135).

Since the 1990s, the population of the Ižma *raion* has decreased, as everywhere in Komi. In 1998, it was 23,500, and in the census of 1989, 86.5 per cent of the inhabitants were Komi, 10.7 per cent were Russians, 1.2 per cent Ukrainians, and 1.9 per cent Belorussians, Tatars and others (Respublika Komi Enciklopedija, 1999: 14). In the 2002 census, the population of the *raion* was 20,100, out of which 90.4 per cent were Komi, 7.9 per cent Russians and the rest Ukrainians, Byelorussians and others (fi.wikipedia.org, 2009; in 2008 there were 20,000 inhabitants according to State Statistics [komi.gks.ru, 2009]).

At the moment, the percentage of Komi speakers in the Ižma area is reportedly higher than elsewhere – over 75 per cent (rkomi.ru/obshestvo, n.d.) – and the dialect is used in everyday life.<sup>3</sup> The self-identity of the Ižmians seems to persist. Based for the greatest part on economy and traditions, it has led to the emergence of a local regionalism. For instance, the attempts to re-establish the written literary language in certain official contexts in the 1990s met with resistance in Ižma, as the *ižemcy* preferred their own linguistic traditions – a repetition of the feelings in the area in the 1920s when the literary language was being devised (Smetanin, 2004: 361; Popov, 2007: 87–90).

Literature or writing in the dialect hardly exists, although in the 19th century, attempts were made to adapt the dialect to writing (RIKJA, 2007: 67, 192–193). At the beginning of the ethnic revival in the 1990s, a dialect vocabulary for elementary schools was published (Anufrieva, 1992), and in the Khanty-Mansi autonomous district, Komi is taught to schoolchildren with material reflecting the Ižma dialect morphology and lexicon (Sambinladova, 1996). In the Iamalo-Nenets autonomous district, a ‘Russian-Zyrian’ (= Ižma Komi) vocabulary and *parleur* is being assembled (Laptander, 2007).

In the 2002 census, one of the new ethnic labels was Komi Ižmians (*komi-ižemcy*). Activists of the local movement had appealed to their kinsmen to initiate the process of receiving the status of a small indigenous ‘ethnic group’ of the north, Siberia and Far East, a status that would give them special favorable treatment in the federal legislation (see e.g. the website izvatas.ru, 2007). It was noted that 15,607 people registered themselves as *komi-ižemcy*: 12,689 in Komi, 1127 in the Murman oblast (Kola Peninsula) and 1002 in the Iamalo-Nenets autonomous district. In the Nenets and Khanty-Mansi autonomous districts nobody used this designation (Konjuhov, 2008: 24).

### 2.3

#### **Contact phenomena in the literary Komi language**

Early on, word lists and *parleurs* of Komi (or Zyrian, as it was called earlier) show Russian lexical items, and from the 18th century even clausal constructions in Komi: in a list of around 100 lexemes and phrases collected by Academician I. I. Lepelin, one has the word *pōra* ‘time’ (< *pora*)<sup>4</sup> in the appropriate syntactic frame: *pora tenyd mun-ny* (time you-Dat go-Inf) ‘it is time for you to go’ (Lytkin, 1952: 158). At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, visitors to the largest town Ust’-Sysol’sk (now Syktyvkar), reported on the

<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately I have no information on the daily life of Komi in Ižma. Sociological surveys conducted elsewhere in Komi in 1994 showed that 39.9 per cent spoke Komi at home or outside in daily life, 24 per cent at pre-school or an educational establishment, and 25.4 per cent at work (Konjuhov, 2008: 143). A sociological investigation in 1987–1988 showed that Russian was the basic language in official situations for 81.6 per cent of the rural population and for 93.1 per cent of the urban dwellers (Kotov et al., 1996: 73).

<sup>4</sup> An angle bracket, <, means that the word comes from another word, by etymology or borrowing, in this case from the Russian word form ‘pora’.

advancing Russification. The revolution of 1917 provided the nationally minded educated Komi with the possibility of standardizing the language – up to then, mainly religious texts existed, based on different dialects. As the purist tendencies of the 1920s were abruptly crushed and the Marrist doctrine of the amalgamation of languages encouraged ('languages change by mixing'), the introduction of Russian loans, calques and constructions intensified. After the fall of Marrism, the 'national-Russian' bilingualism became the educational aim, with the result that the teaching of Russian in the autonomous republics was most intensive in Komi (Denisenko & Kal'janova, 1994: 48–50).

The language contact was facilitated by the similarity of the phonemic systems:

- both languages have a distinction of palatalization for dentals (in Russian it extends further to labials and velars)
- both have voiced and voiceless plosives and sibilants (the only affricate common to both Russian and Komi is /čʃ/, Komi has additionally /tšʃ/, /džʃ/, /dzʃ/)
- neither language has diphthongs, or distinction of length for either consonants or vowels (in most of the dialects)
- both languages have the central vowel /y/.

Changes in the phonemic system arrived together with a host of Russian loan-words:

- new phonemes /f/, /x/, /c/ have entered the language
- new phonotactic structures similar to those of Russian, e.g. word-initial consonant clusters, have appeared; cf. old loans *döva* < *vdova* 'widow', *kyl'čö* < *kryl'co* 'porch', *las't* < *vlast'* 'power', and later loans *vlas't* ('power'), *kl'uč* < *kl'uč* 'spring'
- in recent loans, the Russian word stress is retained, while in older loans the stress adapted to the Komi system, where the stress was free or on the first syllable: *ból'niča* < *bol'nica* 'hospital'. (SKJa, 1955: 60–61)

As to the number of loan words, in the Komi–Russian dictionary of 1961 about 25 per cent of the lexemes are of Russian origin, often as synonyms for existing indigenous words (Ajbabina, 1990), e.g. *spasibö* < *spasibo* 'thank you'; Komi *att'ö*.<sup>5</sup>

Language contact has brought new morphemes into Komi. There are:

- productive derivational Russian suffixes for adjectives: *-öj* < *-oj*, *-övöj* < *-ovoj*, *privodn-öj* < *privodn-oj*<sup>6</sup> 'natural'; a suffix with an attenuating force *-at* < *-at*, joined to an indigenous suffix *-ov* with the same meaning: *görd-ov-at* (red-ish-ish) 'reddish'
- hypochoristic suffixes for nouns: *-uška* < *-uška*, *kon'ör-uška* (poor-Dim) 'poor thing', *-čik* < *-čik*, *-öčka* < *-očka* etc., and neutral suffixes *-šik*, *-n'iča*, *-n'a*, *-ka*, *-či* (for examples see KJaE, 1998: 133, 478)

<sup>5</sup> A comparison of excerpts from literary journals in 1992–1993 showed that Erzya Mordvin had the highest number of Russian loans, 23.6 per cent; Komi came second with 23.4 per cent, next were Moksha Mordvin (18.6%), Udmurt (11.7%) and Mari (14.2%). A basic vocabulary containing 546 concepts in the dialects of these languages has been collected in the Atlas Linguarum Europae, showing that the number of non-Russian words (i.e. indigenous or Turkic loans) is highest in Mari (67–78%); next comes Udmurt (65–70%), then Komi with 56–60 per cent. The lowest figures, that is those with the greatest number of Russian loans, are found in Moksha Mordvin (42–47%) and Erzya Mordvin (38–42%) (Saarinen, 1994: 214–218).

<sup>6</sup> The older Russian loans were taken from the northern dialects, which retained certain older forms, e.g. the adjectival ending *-oj* in all stress positions. The correspondence of the old Russian low /o/ was a semi-central mid non-rounded vowel, /ö/ in the Komi orthography.

- a verbal derivational suffix expressing momentarous actions *-n'it < -nut'*: *grym-n'it-ny* (bang-Mom-Inf) 'rumble'
- the Russian negative particle-prefix *n'e-*, *n'i-* < *n'e*, *n'i*, is used in all negated and indefinite pronouns: *n'e-kod* 'no-one, a certain someone', *n'i-nöm* 'nothing' (Sidorov, 1992 [1951]: 109–112).

Otherwise, the morphology is intact, but with Russian as a model, the use of those morphological categories that lack an equivalent form in Russian, for example, of the four gerundials and the four analytic past tense forms, is diminishing. What tends to remain is the simple past, as in Russian. Calques are common: a construction modeled on Russian may be used instead of the indigenous Komi, for instance when the inessive case is used instead of the elative ('finding somewhere' instead of 'finding from somewhere'). A construction with a case form and a postposition may be used instead of the case form alone: *Vetla-m kino vylö* (go-1Pl.Pr movies upon-Illat), cf. Russian *Pojdem v kino* (go-1Pl.Fut to movies) – *Vetlam kino-ö* (go-Pl.Pr movies-Illat) 'we (shall) go to the movies'. Following the adjectival model with *-öj*, the frequency of an indigenous derivational suffix *-sa* has increased.

In syntax, certain developments have been noted. For example, Russian clausal structures are being copied into Komi, and subordinate clauses with Russian conjunctions are replacing the original non-finite verbal constructions. Furthermore, the possessive suffixes take on functions of the Russian postpositive particle *-to*, or they are simply left out. An agentive, passive construction, modeled on the Russian passive construction, is used, based on the reflexive suffix *-s'* and the instrumental case.

According to some linguists, the Russian verbal aspect has entered Komi together with verbs borrowed in both aspectual forms. However, it is unclear whether the systematic distinction of the Russian category is transferred along with the two aspectual forms. It has been documented that impersonal/monopersonal sentence models have been copied from Russian. The word order, basically head-final but predominantly SVO, shows variants for which Russian gives support; the SOV order, presumably representing an older order, predominates with indefinite objects (Sidorov, 1992 [1951]; KJaE, 1997, Leinonen, 2002: 235–248).

The introduction of foreign items into constructions is greatly facilitated by the suffixal system of Komi. The morphemes are invariable except for some morphophonemic alternations that only apply to a small group of lexemes.

In western theories of language contact, the five-level scale of implications suggested by S. Thomason and T. Kaufman (1988) and S. Thomason (2001: 70), indicates that the following changes are relevant for a degree of 'moderate structural borrowing':

1. function words and derivational affixes have been copied from Russian
2. Komi has acquired structural changes, new phonemes, new stress rules and syllable-structure rules
3. a change towards a dominant SVO constituent order, compared to the closest relatives with SOV order, has taken place, and
4. a new syntax of coordination and subordination has developed.

Thus, all the levels of the language have been penetrated by Russian, except inflection. The suffixing morphology without prepositions is also intact. There is no influence

of Komi on Russian, except perhaps in the surrounding dialects. In other words, the development can be characterized as a unilateral convergence.<sup>7</sup>

## 2.4

### **Contact phenomena in the Ižma Komi dialect**

The effects of the language contact on the Ižma dialect are practically the same as on the literary language; possibly, they appeared at an earlier stage. This is the case with the Russian phonemes /x/, /f/, /c/. There is no research on any specifically Russian–Ižmian morphological or syntactic contact phenomena. Instead, the rich layer of Russian-origin words is – together with some Nenets terminology pertaining to reindeer-herding – presented as the distinctive property of the dialect, and in fact as the distinctive marker of the ethnic group (‘a mixed group’). According to some opinions, it results in difficulties in understanding the literary language. However, a Komi–Ižmian–Russian vocabulary for schoolchildren (Anufrieva, 1992) containing 2335 words (including synonyms) shows that only some 46 lexemes, 0.02 per cent, stem in Komi and Ižmian from different Russian origin,<sup>8</sup> while the common recognizable Russian origin accounts for some 229 lexemes – 10 per cent (e.g. Komi *l’ekarstvo*, Ižma *l’ekarsve*, Russian *l’ekarstvo* ‘medicine’) – as the lexemes pertain to everyday life, terminology is absent (and naturally, the list does not include such common correspondences as *škola* – *škola* ‘school’). Instead, 865 lexemes are slight phonological (or derivational) variants of literary Komi words, that is, 37 per cent (e.g. Komi *lydd’öm* = Ižma *lyddem* ‘reading, reading matter’; *lydtöm* = *lydtem* ‘countless’; *lyjlöm* = *lyjlem* ‘shooting, shot’; *s’öktavny* = *s’öktooni* ‘feel bad’ and so on). What may produce difficulties is the number of lexemes from different Komi roots, 37 per cent (e.g. Komi *kyndz’i* = Ižma *s’öddor* ‘except’). The difficulty may disappear in practice, if it turns out that similar lexemes exist in other dialects – there hardly are ‘native speakers of the literary language’, for every speaker’s background is in the countryside. The Russian-origin Ižma lexemes with Komi-origin correspondences are few, 6 per cent (*čer’in’an’* = *kul’ebaka* < *kul’ebaka* ‘fish-pie’, *udž* = *röbeta* < *robota* ‘work’), and the opposite situation, an indigenous Ižma lexeme with a Russian-origin literary Komi word, counts for even less, ca 0.05 per cent (*pötölök* < *potolok* = *jirt* ‘log roof’). A few Nenets words are common to both variants.

## 3 A case study: Ižma Komi speech on TV

The influence of Russian on spontaneous speech, and the role of the dialect in communication, are best seen in the strategies chosen by an individual speaker, not in statistics. The empirical linguistic material for this study is based on a TV interview of a functionary from Ižma on 5 June 1998. The interviewee, a middle-aged man, was born and grew up in Ižma, and speaks the dialect. He was educated in Russian and became a teacher. In 1998, he was the administrative head of the *raion*. The 40-minute interview was part of a Komi-language program series ‘Vidzödlas’, and it was probably intended to portray

<sup>7</sup> In Komi-Permiak, a literary language but practically a dialect of Komi-Zyrian, the development has gone even further.

<sup>8</sup> In the judgment, I have oriented myself on the linguistic intuitions of a speaker familiar with Russian, i.e. myself, without going into diachronic research. This is no doubt the situation of the native speaker in Komi as well.

a kinsman who had reached an important post. It was conducted entirely in Komi, both at the interviewee's office and home, by a native Komi journalist. In scenes where the interviewee was holding a meeting or talking to workers in the forest only Russian was spoken. Presumably, the linguistic situation in the area is that of diglossia. Official meetings are generally held in Russian, and the presence of Russian-speaking workers dictates the use of Russian at work.

Not being a native speaker of either Komi or Russian, I submitted the transcript (2128 words of running text) of the video taped interview to two native speakers of Komi with a dialect background in Upper Vychegda and a wide experience in field-work, folklore and dialects. Given the large proportion of Russian-origin items and constructions both in Komi and in this material, it was impossible to decide based on formal features alone which item was Russian, which Komi. I asked them to define how conventionalized the items were in spoken Komi, and whether they were limited to Ižma Komi.<sup>9</sup> This experimentation in 'folk linguistics' was dictated by the circumstances – it was not possible to organize an expedition to Ižma, and records of spoken spontaneous speech are not immediately accessible. The results are far from conclusive, but they show that the perception of what is of Russian origin but entrenched in Komi, and what is 'foreign Russian', is motivated both by structure and frequency of usage. The theoretical constructs of contact linguistics, codeswitching and borrowing (loans), are suitable tools for this occasion. Despite the many uses of the term codeswitching (see Backus, 2005), I shall use it here to signify sequences that were considered to be entirely Russian. Loans are sequences provided with Komi morphology, or entrenched as such. When Russian morphology is used in a Komi construction, the result is a mixed construction. When Russian constructions are clear models for word order, these are calqued. In the rather specific Komi-Russian situation, in which Russian-origin items and constructions are constantly increasing, additional material will undoubtedly lead to a more differentiated classification.

### 3.1

#### **Dialect features**

The dialectal features typical for Ižma were retained, but in some cases they varied with literary forms:

- in phonology:
  - phonemes /f/, /x/, /c/, as in the literary language: *asfal't* 'asphalt', also *asval't*, *höt'a* 'although, even', but also *köt'alhöt'a*, *lhot'a*, *köt' ilhot'a i* (< *hot'a*, *hot' i*), *centr* 'center';
  - /ɛ/ in non-initial syllables instead of the central-back middle vowel (/ö/ in the literary Komi orthography): *setɛn* (lit. *setön*) 'here' (henceforth, for ease of reading, /ɛ/ will be used instead of /ɛ/);
  - long vowels instead of vowel + /L/C.): *vis'too-ny* 'tell-Inf' (lit. *vis'tav-ny*) or two adjacent short vowels; after front vowels the final /L/ is replaced by /j/: *zej* (lit. *zev*)

<sup>9</sup> One of the folklorists suggested that the speaker's knowledge of Komi was insufficient, and offered Komi equivalents wherever possible. The second folklorist testified more willingly to having often heard the Russian-origin items used in Komi speech situations.

‘very’). – (/L/ is an archiphoneme representing the allophonic variation of /v/ and /l/ in other dialects.) There is one case of *pomav-nys* (finish-3Pl.Prs) ‘they finish’, instead of *pomoo-nys*.

- in morphology:
  - present form of the copula is consistently *vyjim* instead of *em*: *vežlas'em-jas-yd vyjim-es'* (change-Pl-Def Cop-Pl) ‘there are changes’;
  - negated past tense verb forms with /i/ instead of /e/: *no samol'ot iz kut-o vetloo-ny* (but plane neg-Pst.3Sg begin-Connegative move-Inf) ‘but the plane would not start’;
  - Pres.3Pl is in all cases *-nys* instead of *-ny*: *jöz-ys int'eresujčče-nys* (people-Def take-interest-Prs.3Pl) ‘people take an interest’;
  - /u/ instead of /y/ in certain morphemes, e.g. *ačum* ‘I myself’ instead of *ačym*: *vobše-te me ačum kozerog* (in general-Emph I myself Capricorn) ‘In general, I am a Capricorn’. (cf. Vázsolyi-Vasse, 1999: 52–54; Bartens, 2000.)

### 3.2

#### The lexicon

The lexemes can be rather mechanically classified into four groups, depending on the dictionaries in which they first appear (Kalima, 1910; KRS, 1961; SSKZD, 1961; KKK, 2000).

Among the nouns, 22 are old loans which often show some degree of phonological adaptation to the Komi system: *okota* ‘to have a want, to want’ < *ohota* ‘want’, *tölk* < *tolk* ‘sense’, *delö* < *delo* ‘matter, thing’. They are found in the oldest dictionaries (Kalima, 1910, which covers the lists and dictionaries made during the 19th century).

Among the later loans, the largest number, 75 nouns, are more recent loans, found in the dictionaries beginning from the 1960s (KRS, 1961 and others). These are identical to the Russian items, except for *sel'sövet* < *sel'sovet* ‘village soviet’, *pöradok* < *por'adok* ‘order’ and *ströit'el'stvo* < *stroit'el'stvo*, where a slight vocalic adaptation has taken place. Most of the lexemes refer to new realia, and because of the topic of the interview, to economic concepts: *rynok* < *rynok* ‘market’, *tys'ača* < *tys'ača* ‘thousand’ (instead of Komi *s'urs*), *upravl'en'ie* < *upravl'en'ie* ‘management’.

Among the latest loans, 11 nouns are found in the latest dictionary of 2000 only, although they must have been in use for a long time: for example *asfal't* < *asfal't* ‘asphalt’, *zdan'ie* < *zdan'ie* ‘building’, *holod'iln'ik* < *holod'il'nik* ‘refrigerator’. Twenty-five nouns are absent from the dictionaries; some are common, such as *ol'en'evodstvo* < *ol'en'evodstvo* ‘reindeer-herding’ and *četv'orka* < *čtv'orka* ‘four, a school mark’, but some are, according to my informants, clearly imported by the interviewee himself from Russian and not used by others: *načman'ie* ‘undertaking’, *udovl'etvoren'ie* ‘satisfaction’, and *vozmožnost'* ‘possibility’.

Borrowed adjectives in the text are fewer than nouns. There are three old loans: *götöv* < *gotov* ‘ready’, *glavnöj* < *glavnoj* ‘main’ and *zboj* < Old Russian *zboj* ‘smart’. Those from the middle period are nine: there is a predicative adjective *dolžen* < *dolžen* ‘be obliged’; the rest are formed with the suffix *-öj*: *material'nöj* < *material'nyj* ‘material’, *pervöj* < *pervoj* ‘first’, *sredn'öj* < *sredn'ej* ‘middle’. The newest loans refer to economics and industry, but there are also two predicative adjectives *zainteresovan* < *zainteresovan* ‘interested’ and *blagodaren* < *blagodaren* ‘grateful’. These are not found in any dictionary of Komi, but they are used in speech.

As to verbs, there are eight old loans (e.g. *dumajtny* < *dumat'* 'think', *zavod'itny* < *zavod'it'* 'begin', *ströjtny* < *stroit'* 'build'), 22 from the middle period (e.g. *vez'itny* 'have luck', *zan'imajččyny* < *zan'imat'sja* 'be engaged in', *primityny* < *prin'imat'* 'accept', *sövetujtny* < *sovetovat'* 'advise') and 17 new verbs (e.g. *dobyvajtny* < *dobyvat'* 'obtain, drill', *in'icirujtny* < *iniciirovat'* 'initiate', *privl'ekitny* < *privl'ekat/lprivl'ech'* 'attract', and *vozglavl'ajtny* < *vozglavl'at'* 'head').

Some adverbs are old or from the middle period: *častö* < *často* 'often', *pravil'nöja* < *pravil'no* 'correctly'. Some are taken without any change straight from Russian: *srazu* < *srazu* 'at once', *praktičeski* 'practically'. Discourse words are numerous. Commonly used conjunctions and discourse words are, among others: *a* (< *a* 'and/but'); *by* (< *by*, irrealis marker); *da* (< *da* 'and, because'); *il'i* (< *il'i* 'or'); *ješše* (< *ješčo* 'still'); *kön'ešnö* (< *kon'ečnokön'ešno* 'of course'); *l'i* (< *l'i* 'or'); *myj l'i* 'or something' (< *što l'i*; Komi *myj* 'what, that' + *l'i*); *med by* 'let there be, in order to' (< Komi *med*, concessive particle + *by*, Russian irrealis marker); *možetlmožet byt'* (< *možetlmožet byt'* 'perhaps'); *potomu što* (< *potomu što* 'because'); *tak* 'so' (< *tak* 'so'); *tak što* (< *tak što* 'so that', 'so'); *tol'koltol'ke* (< *tol'ko* 'only'); *tožö* (< *tože* 'also'); *ved'lvedlöd* (< *ved'* 'you know'); *vot* (< *vot* – opening deictic particle); *vobšelvobše-se* ('in general'); *značit* (< *značit* 'that is'); *želžö* (< *že* – additive and focusing particle).

The dialectal lexemes are: *mes'eč* < *mes'ac* 'month', *narod* < *narod* 'people', *pöjmitny* < *pon'at'*, imperative *pojmi!* 'understand', *röbitny* < *rabotat'* 'work', and *röd'iččyny* < *rod'it'sja* 'be born'. Dialectal discourse words are *voobšem-to* (< *v obščem-to* 'in general', cf. earlier), *ösobenne* (< *osobenno* 'especially'), *pravda* (< *pravda* 'true'), *uže* (< *uže* 'already'), and *čem* (< *čem* 'rather than').

### 3.3

#### **Codeswitch or loan?**

Next, more problematic cases are presented by phrases and lexemes with morphological markers. The evaluations of my two informants concerning the entrenchment of the Russian-origin items were in some cases different from the information one may get from the dictionaries. In principle, when judging whether a word was Komi or Russian, their decision was based on inflection. If a Russian lexeme, even such as they had never heard being used in Komi speech, was grammatically embedded with Komi suffixes in the sentence, it was deemed as an individual loan by the speaker:

The loans typically represent institutionalized concepts:

- (1) OHRANA           PRIRODY-yn  
protection           of-nature-INNESS  
'in (the sphere of) nature protection'  
cf. Russian *ohrana prirod-y* (protection nature-GEN),
  
- (2) RAJKOM-len      *d'elevej* VSTREČA-jas  
Raikom-GEN           business-ADJ      meeting-PL.NOM  
'business meetings of the raion committee'  
cf. Russian *d'elovy-e vstreč-i rajkom-a* (business-PL meeting-PL rajkom-GEN).

- (3) S'RED'NEJ      SPECIAL'NEJ      UČILIŠŠE-*jas-yn* –  
 secondary      special      school-PL-INNESS  
 'in secondary special schools'

cf. Russian *sredn'ee special'noe učilišče* (secondary special school).

These nominations have no correspondence in Komi. For instance, although there is a Komi lexeme for 'meeting', the Russian-origin word in (2) *vstreča* is tightly connected with official administrative concepts. The same goes for (1) and (3). Since the Komi verb always has a suffix, the Russian-origin verbs were taken as loans, either common or introduced for the occasion because of a lexical gap.

Uninflected adverbs were deemed as Komi if the informants had heard them in the appropriate circumstances often enough. The adverbial *v osnovnom* (= Russian *v osnovn-om* – in basic-LOC) 'basically' was difficult to categorize, but finally, owing to its Russian inflection it ended up as a Russian codeswitch. In official speeches elsewhere, a variant without the preposition, *osnovnom*, may occur.

Also treated as codeswitches were the expressions *l'ubymi sposobami* 'in every possible manner', and *v pervuju očered'* 'in the first place'.

- (4) Mošnjuga-yn      mi      pristrojka      ströit-a-m      L'UBY-MI  
 Mošnjuga-INNESS we      annex      build-PRES-1PL any-PL.INSTR  
 SPOSOB-AMI,      den'ga-yd      abu      da.  
 manner- PL.INSTR      money-DEF      Neg      because  
 'In Mošnjuga we build an additional building in any way we can, since there is no money.'

The Russian idiom *l'ubymi sposobami* (any-Pl.Instr manner-Pl.Instr 'in whichever manner') was inserted into a Komi sentence (not for lack of a Komi equivalent). The motivation here is probably emphasis, since a new and foreign item carries more weight.

- (5) [Trud akcionarnöj obščestvo –] i      sije      korl-i-m, predlagajt-i-m,  
 (Trud shareholders' company –) also      it      invite-PST-1PL suggest-PST-1PL  
 med      V PERV-UJU OČERED'-0 mijans'ynum      bos't-i-snys.  
 in-order-to      in first-ACC place-ACC      we.ABL take-3PL.PST  
 (Shareholders' company Trud –) 'we also kept inviting them, making suggestions that they would take from us in the first place.'

In the sequence, the Russian preposition *v* and the adjectival congruence, both even as phenomena alien to Komi, clearly show that the sequence is in Russian.

A hedge *vrod'el'vrod'e by* 'like, as if, sort of, kind of' (< *vrode, vrode by*) is heard in Komi speech as well, though in its place *bytt'ö* 'as if, like' (an old loan from Russian < *budto*) would be preferable to my informants. The form is a lexicalized prepositional construction in Russian, and the addition of the irrealis marker makes the hedging

effect stronger. In this case, because of its frequent use one of my informants assigned the item to Komi:

- (6) *Vrode uže povyšajčy-ny zavod' it-i-s.*  
Sort-of already rise-INF begin-PST-3SG  
'It began already a sort of rise.'
- (7) [–] kodi kok jyl-as *vrod'e by bura sulal-e.*  
(–) Who foot upon-INESS.POSS kind of well stand-PRES.3SG  
'who sort of stands properly on their feet.'

Among the discourse words, the group of textual organizers and rhetorical formulae consists of a considerable number of examples. Most of them entered the language long ago; some are common, but have old Komi equivalents. The motivation for their profusion is obviously the public style of spoken Russian used in education and the mass media. As clearly Russian codeswitches – in other words, not frequent enough in Komi speech – were deemed the following expressions: *bukval'nō* (= *bukval'no* 'literally') – a Komi word would be preferred; *vo-pervyh* (< *vo-p'ervyh* 'first, firstly') – instead of this, an older loan from Russian, *pervōj-ōn* (< *pervyj* 'first'), would be used by other speakers; *po-moemu* (= *po-moemu* 'to my mind') – the Komi construction *me nogōn* would be preferred; *poetomu* (= *poetomu* 'therefore') – elsewhere, the Komi equivalent *sidz* is common. *tak značit* 'so it means' was considered to be Russian. It has even in Russian lost its literal meaning, and is used to introduce conclusions: 'so, consequently'.

The following examples illustrate Russian codeswitches:

- (8) *Myj s'ōrti!?*      **VO-PERVYH**,    *mi*      *dumajt-i-m*,      *myj narod-yd*  
What for first                      we      think-PST-1PL      that people-DEF  
*oz*                                      *lok-0.*  
Neg-PRS.3SG come-*CONNegative*  
'What for!/? At first, we thought that the people won't come.'  
(it comes out that people do come)
- (9) **TAK ZNAČIT**,    *i*      *jöz-ys*                      *int'eresujčče-nys.*  
So mean-3SG.PRS      also      people-DEF      take-interest-PRS.3PL  
'So, people do take an interest.'

### 3.4

#### **Codeswitches and mixed constructions**

When naming concepts that are generally talked about in Russian and which in Komi are named almost identically, it is natural that the more frequent Russian expression is produced easily. For instance, titles of functionaries appear in Russian. In the following, the title for the minister of health is in Russian in the appropriate order of head + genitive modifier. In Komi, the order would be the opposite (as with the title for the head of the republic, it is *Glava* 'head' in both languages):

- (10) *Bur-tor völi ydžyd vöč-ema, myj Glava-yd*  
 Good-thing be-PST.3SG great do-2PST.SG that Head-DEF  
*podd'eržit-i-s sije načinan'ie-jas-se, kodi* MINISTR  
 support-PST-3SG that undertaking-PL-ACC which minister  
 ZDRAVOOHRANEN'I-JA *da V'ačeslav Ivanovič Hudjaev predložitl-i-snys*  
 health-care-GEN and V'ačeslav Ivanovič Hud'aev suggest-PST-3PL  
*korke una vo sajyn ströit-ny bol'niča-te.*  
 sometime many year before build-INF hospital-ACC  
 'A good thing was done that the Head supported these undertakings that Minister of Health Dzucev and Vjačeslav Ivanovič Hudjaev suggested once many years ago to build a hospital.'  
 (cf. *Russian ministr zdavoohranen'i-ja* = minister health-care-Gen, 'minister of health'.)

The next example is a Russian phrase, *zadolžennost' po zarpla'te* (indebtedness Prep salary-DAT), inserted into a Komi sentence:

- (11) *Pečorl'eslen ydžyd völi ZADOLŽENNOST' POZARPLAT'-E.*  
 Pečorles-GEN big be-PST.3SG indebtedness Prep salary-DAT  
 'Pečorles had a big debt of unpaid salaries.'

The concept belongs to the economic sphere that the speaker usually deals with in Russian. Next, he takes it up with a construction closer to Komi, namely by adding the definiteness markers *-ys* to both nouns and replacing the Russian prepositional construction with the Komi genitive suffix *-len*. The word order remains head-initial, for in Komi, this order emphasizes the first part of the sequence as more important in the message:

- (12) *Eni addze-nys, myj bok-ad pyre-nys Iz'vales-yd*  
 Now see-PRS.3PL that side-INESS.DEF enter-PRS.3PL Iz'vales-DEF  
*i Pečorles-yd starajčč-e öd'd'e-džyk mynty-ny zarplata-te. I*  
 and Pečorles-DEF try-PRS.3SG quick-COMP pay-INF salary-ACC and  
*enija zadolžennost'-ys zarplata-ys-len kol'-i sömyn*  
 present indebtedness-DEF salary-DEF-GEN remain-PST.3SG only  
*n'in mes'ačnej.*  
 already monthly  
 'Now they see that Iz'vales is trying to get in and Pečorles is trying to pay the salaries more quickly. And the present debt in salaries is only for one month.'

The next examples show Russian lexemes in constructions that break the Komi grammatical system, and could be termed as codeswitches. Some of them are, however, 'mixed' to the extent that even that term is inappropriate, and the result is neither Russian nor Komi. In the first case, the correlative phrase 'from that' is taken from Russian,

inadvertently and possibly triggered by the preceding verb *zavis'itny*, almost identical to the Russian *zavis'et'* 'depend':

- (13) *Sija kuta-s zavis'it-ny OT TOGO kydz kuta-snyš*  
 It begin-FUT.3SG depend-INF from that howbegin-FUT.3PL *dobyvajt-ny*.  
 obtain-INF  
 'It will depend on how they begin to obtain (oil).'

In Russian: *eto budet zavis'et' ot togo kak on'i budut dobyvat'* – 'that will depend from how they will start obtaining (oil)'. Here, *ot togo* 'from that' is the equivalent of the Komi construction *syys' kydž* 'that-Elat how'.

In the next example, a Russian case ending is added to a word that is the same in both Komi and Russian; the preceding context is, however, in Komi:

- (14) *S'iz'im das vo RAION-U.*  
 seven ten year raion-DAT  
 'Seventy years to the *raion*', i.e. 'the *raion* is seventy years old'.

Here *rajon-u* (Russian *rajon-Dat*) is inserted, probably as one word from the corresponding Russian slogan coined for the celebrations that had been previously arranged. Possibly the slogans in both languages had become set phrases in the area already. The triggering effect of *raion*, nomination of an administrative unit both in Russian and in Komi, cannot be ignored.

The last example was considered to be partly translated from Russian:

- (15) *No i sess'a me NASTOL'KO as mort Ižma-yn ačym-es*  
 But also then I so-much own person Ižma-INESS self-ACClydd'a,(...)  
 count-PRS.ISG  
 'But then I also feel myself so much to belong to Ižma,. . .

The Russian phrase is *nastol'ko svoj čelovek* 'so much one's own man'. The entire clause is a calque from Russian.

### 3.5

#### **Word order**

A non-Komi order of the constituents of a clause can be seen as a calque of the Russian model. Proper nouns in Komi precede the common noun (see example (5)), while in Russian the order is the opposite. In the following, the Russian order is used, a phenomenon that is common (Ludykova, 1996: 176):

- (16) *l'esopunkt Kojju-yn*  
 forest site Kojju-INESS 'in the forest site Kojju'  
 (cf. Russian *v l'esopunkte Kojju* 'PREP forest site-LOC Kojju')

The Komi sequence would be Proper noun + common noun: *Kojju lesopunkt-yn* (Kojju lesopunkt-Iness).

In the following example, the different orders become intertwined, probably inadvertently owing to the complex nominations and the unplanned speech:

- (17) *Völ-i*            *sen*        *Zajfuddin pervoj zam*            *Ross'ever-a i departament*  
 be-PST.3SG    there    Zajfuddin first    deputy Rossever-GEN and department  
*Mins'el'hoz-a*            *Ross'i-i völ-i*                            načal'n'ik.  
 Minsel'hoz-GEN Russia-GEN                            be-3SG.PST    boss  
 'There was Zaifuddin – the first vice(-president) of Rossever and the boss of the department of Minsel'hoz of Russia.'

In Russian: *p'ervyj zam Ross'ev'era i načal'n'ik departamenta Mins'el'hoza Ross'ii*. The example is a mixed construction: it starts with the Komi basic form *pervoj zam* (*zam*, short for *zamestitel'* 'deputy', is both Russian and Komi), but with the Russian genitive modifier *Ross'evera* it forms a conventionalized unit. In Komi, genitive modifiers precede their head word. The next concept starts with the common noun *departament*, which is in Komi, because it is uninflected and precedes its head *načal'n'ik*. It is followed by two Russian genitive modifiers in the Russian order: *(departament)<sup>K</sup> (Mins'el'hoza Ross'ii)<sup>R</sup>*. The preferred Komi construction would resort to the adjectival suffix *-sa* instead of the genitives, mirroring the order of the modifiers: *Ross'ija-sa Mins'el'hoz(-sa) departament-ves'ködlys'*.

### 3.6

#### **Conjunctions**

Discourse-pragmatic words form a specific group, being between content words and grammatical morphemes. They differ from adverbs, according to a widely accepted definition, by not contributing to the truth-value of the proposition. They presuppose face-to-face contact and at least some degree of bilingualism (greetings and other elemental reactions apart).

Concrete research has revealed that in social situations where the pressure of the second language is strong, discourse words, including conjunctions, are copied just as easily as content words referring to realia (Matras, 1998; for languages within the Russian sphere of influence, see e.g. Leinonen, 2002, 2005; Blankenhorn, 2003; Wertheim, 2003). In Finno-Ugrian languages, those with the longest contacts with Russian have borrowed most: in Karelian, the language of probably the oldest Finno-Ugrian people who were converted to the eastern form of Christianity, there are just as many borrowed conjunctions (over 40) as in Komi (Alvre, 1983; a survey in Leinonen, 2002). In Komi, practically all the co-ordinating conjunctions and a number of subordinating conjunctions are loans from Russian.

Conjunctions were borrowed at an early stage of this particular language contact. In Komi, the very first texts, dictionaries and word-lists, beginning from the 14th century show Russian conjunctions. Apart from translations, they were adopted in the dialects as well. The strategies by which they were introduced into the spoken language have not been described. Our data, though small, may give some hints.

The Russian irrealis marker *by* is found in the texts of the 19th century, in the dialect descriptions, and is mentioned in the new grammar of Komi morphology (ÖKKM, 2000: 511). In our material, it appears once:

- (18) *No me* **BY** *ig vis'too-0, myj Iz'valy eni*  
 But I IRR Neg-1SG.PST say-CONNEGATIVE that Iz'va-DAT now  
*kokn'yd*  
 easy  
 'But I would not say that Ižma has it easy at the moment.'

The model is easily recognizable, namely the Russian cliché '*Ja by n'e skazal, čto ...*' – 'I would not say that ...'. The construction is calqued from Russian, and carries the Russian-origin irrealis marker rather than the Komi marker *es'kö*. This illustrates the process by which discourse words may enter a language: they are included in idioms, or schemes (see also Backus, 2005). In Ižma, the Russian irrealis marker had arrived early, and is possibly understood as such. Elsewhere the cliché is very common as well. However, according to my informants, some people hardly understand the meaning of *by*, and treat it as an enclitic particle, adding the Komi equivalent item *es'kö*:

- (18') *Me by es'kö eg vis'tav-0*  
 I Cond Cond Neg-1SG.PST say-CONNEGATIVE  
 = *Me es'kö by eg vis'tav*.

The conditional clause marker *kö* 'if' is an enclitic particle/conjunction. In this material it is used synonymously with a hybrid pleonastic conjunction *jesl'i ke* (<*jesl'i* 'if'):

- (19) *I perspektiva-yd myj-yn!?* **Esl'i ke** *mijan kyk tuj*  
 And perspective-DEF what-INCESS if our two road  
*voss'-a-s i ul-ε i vyl-ε, to mi sy*  
 open-FUT-3SG both down-ILLAT and up-ILLAT then we it  
*vyl-yn kut-am vors-ny.*  
 upon begin-PRS.1PL play-INF  
 'And where is the perspective!/? If our two roads are opened both down and up, then we shall play along with it.'

The conditional function and the particle are shown in the following:

- (20) *Ötik ke, esl'i ke mi ledz-a-m n'eft'an'ik-jas-εs. Vot.*  
 One if if we let-go-FUT-1PL oil worker-PL-ACC So.  
 'For one thing, if we let go the oil workers. So.'

The enclitic use of the Komi conjunction alone is illustrated by the following example:

- (21) *Zarplata-yd ke abu, i töl-k-ys abu.*  
 Salary-DEF if NEG and sense-DEF NEG  
 ‘If there is no salary, then there is no sense either.’

The expressions *jesl’i-kö, ježöli-kö < jesi’i, ježel’i* ‘if’ + Komi particle/konjunction *kölke* ‘if’) was recorded in the list of Russian loan words by Kalima (1910: 57), which testifies to its long history. It is also found in the dialect vocabularies collected around the turn of the 20th century. Nowadays, *jesl’i kö*, varying with the original enclitic conjunction *kö* ‘if’, is used in all the dialects and in urban speech as well. *Kö* may be placed anywhere in the clause, except at the beginning. In dialect samples from the 1940s, there are examples that show a ‘detachable’ hybrid conjunction:

- (22a) **Jes’I** *vaj-annyd ke*  
 if bring-PRS.2PL if  
 ‘if you bring’ (T.E. Uotila via Leinonen 2002, 277)

In a study by T. Riese *jes’l’i (...) kö* was found in one dialect only (Riese, 1984: 134–140). In a 19th century text, a Bible translation, a pleonastic construction with *kor* ‘when’ (...) *kö* showed that a clause-final *kö* could be combined with a clause-initial conjunction (Leinonen, 2002: 261–262). In the closely related Udmurt and Mari, in which the SOV order with clause-final conjunctions remains more rigid, corresponding imported conjunctions also form a frame: *jesl’i* at the beginning of the clause, an indigenous conjunction of condition at the end (for examples and sources, see Saarinen, 1997; Leinonen, 2002: 328). Several other hybrid pleonastic conjunctions are mentioned in the Komi dialect descriptions: *myjyštö < myj* Komi ‘what’ + *što* Russian ‘what’ = explicative ‘that’; *yštökö < što + kö* ‘that’, *medby < med* Komi ‘in order to’ + *by* Russian optative/irrealis marker ‘in order to’ (see an overview in Leinonen, 2002: 263–268). Our speaker uses the conjunctions *med es’kö, med by, med*:

- (22b) *Med by tol’ko ödde-džyk.*  
 OPT IRR only quick-COMP  
 ‘If it only would happen as soon as possible.’

## 4 Conclusion

The description of the macrolinguistic situation in Komi shows how the present full bilingualism of the Komi, including Ižma Komi (however balanced or not), has emerged. The analysis of the case study shows how Russian words and constructions enter the unplanned spoken language. The most common strategy is to provide the new item with Komi morphology. The parallel existence of similar idiomatic phrases leads to mixed sequences that are partly Russian, partly Komi. A Russian phrase may be intentionally used for emphasis, authority, or by the principle of the least effort, when it is entrenched as a concept belonging to the Russian-speaking world.

Discourse words originating from Russian are plentiful, and with full bilingualism of Komi speakers and Russian mass media and education, probably any Russian

discourse word will soon be used in Komi speech. At what stage it begins to belong to Komi depends on the frequency of its use and the attitudes of the hearers. An idea of the earlier strategy of their introduction to the monolingual speech community is given by the example of the irrealis marker *by*: conversational idioms. The pleonastic hybrid conjunction *jesl' i kö* carries traces of a clause-framing strategy that belongs to the past.

Another aim of the analysis was to see if my non-Ižma informants would point out anything specifically Ižmian in the speech. Nothing, except for a couple of traditional phonological-morphological features, was found. The few Ižmian lexemes used by the speaker were old Russian-origin words that anyone in Komi would understand. Naturally, the lexicon is more 'Russified' than it would be when talking about other topics, and Russian models are also constantly present owing to the tradition of speaking only Russian in meetings. The recommendations of the Terminological Committee have probably not reached Izhma. A highly pragmatic attitude seems to prevail, by which Russian material is unhesitatingly used to communicate. In a spontaneous conversation, the strategy would become even more marked – this was a case of directed monologue.

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