NORTH RUSSIAN ROMANI DIALECT: INTERFERENCE IN CASE SYSTEM

0.1. The goal of the present article is to discuss some interference processes affecting the nominal system of North Russian Romani dialect (NRRD), a typical example of the heavily interfered inflected Romani dialect.

0.2. The NRRD belongs, as is well known, to the Baltic dialectal group, and is spoken mainly in the Northern part of modern Russia. The materials are based on the fieldwork (syntactic questionnaire and texts of different genres) conducted in Vyrica and Mikhailovka villages near St. Petersburg, 1984–88 (in collaboration with F. Yeloyeva, E. Perekhvalskaia, see Yeloyeva/Rusakov 1990) and 1996.

The phonological system of NRRD is practically identical to that of Russian. The interference in the grammatical system is manifested by the following: a) changes in meaning of forms of already existing morphological categories; b) structural reshaping of the forms of already existing morphological categories according to the Russian models; c) borrowing of Russian grammatical markers. Such borrowings sometimes are and sometimes are not accompanied by change in the system of grammatical categories.

0.3. The dialect shows a very high degree both of code switching and of code-mixing phenomena. We have cases, when the one-to-another language switch appears on the boundaries of sentences or of syntactically independent parts of one sentence – the situation typical of classic C-S cases (Russian elements are in bold).

(1) *Orti to obn’alijejo i nachali plakaf* : so tusa kerd’ape, mri chajori ‘They embraced her and began to cry: what happened to you, our daughter’.

However, more numerous are the situations, when Romani lexical elements, Russian adapted lexical elements and Russian unadapted lexical elements are mixed without any apparent order.

(2) *Da nat, me prosto na dumind’om, so me tut date vstrecu* ‘No, I didn’t just think, that I would meet you here’.

Some scholars distinguish such cases from pure code switching cases as well as from the lexical borrowings. The most convenient term for these phenomena is "code-mixing" (Bokamba 1988; Hock 1986). Unlike the code switching cases, here we have the speaking processes in the same language, that is the same language code. However, the great number of elements from another code may be included.
The NRRD presents an interesting difference in interpretation of Russian nouns on the one hand and of Russian verbs on the other hand. It is well known that very strong mechanisms of adapting the borrowed words work in all Gypsy dialects.

Usage of some special morphemes, inserted between the stem and the flexion of a borrowed lexeme, makes these lexemes a particular component of the lexicon, quite different in comparison with the inherited words.

The Russian nouns as well as the adjectives are usually used in the NRRD in the adapted form as well as in the other Romani dialects.

(3) **drug-o** (< Russ. *drug*) 'friend'

**strashn-o** (< Russ. *strashnyj*) 'terrible'

Joj dzhala de foro peskire (peskirenca) *podrug-en-ca* 'She goes to the town with her girl-friends'.

On the contrary, the Russian verbs are used mostly in the unadapted forms and are conjugated according to the Russian model.

(4) **Me tas’a pojedu de foro** 'Tomorrow I'll go (by the train) to the town'.

The question arises, in what manner we should interpret the differences between the usage of Russian verbs, where we see a typical case of code mixing, and of adapted nouns and adjectives. Most probably, in both cases one and the same mechanism permitting NRRD native speakers to use almost any Russian word in their Romani speech is used. But in the case of the nouns the NRRD native speaker grammar has an additional rule, which acts probably on the level of the sentence, and not on the level of lexicon. In the case of verb grammar this rule is not applied however. Another question is that of the cause of such difference. It is possible that the reason of it is more primitive nature of noun adaptation mechanism, than that of the verbs (on this problem see also Rusakov, in print).

Thus, not only the possibility of the usage of an unadapted word but rather the very possibility of unrestricted usage of alien language lexicon in speech processing is very important.

1.0. Nominal system of NRRD is quite consistent in preserving its "common-Romani" features: Both set of grammatical categories and the way they are expressed can be found in other Romani dialects as well. A noun in NRRD is characterized by the categories of number (singular and plural), gender (masculine and feminine), animate/inanimate opposition and a case. The typical for Romani dialects "New Indo-Arian" "two-level" character of the structure of the nominal form is well preserved. This kind of construction is very well described in modern literature (cf. Matras 1997; Elšík 1997). Not mentioning various theoretical approaches to these phenomena we may distinguish seven cases in NRRD: Nominative, Accu-
sative, Genitive, Dative, Instrumental, Ablative, and Locative.\textsuperscript{1} The only nominal grammatical category, which was typical, as it seems, for common-Romani language and which was drastically reduced in NRRD is the category of definiteness/indefiniteness.\textsuperscript{2} Moreover, NRRD can be called rather conservative, when we speak about preservation of Romani noun structure. It shares this quality with the other dialects of the Northern dialect group – both Baltic dialects and Sinti dialects (cf. Matras 1997). This conservative character is of a special interest if the high level of interference in NRRD is taken in consideration (it is very well in accordance with what Matras wrote about nominal system of Sinti, cf. Matras 1996: 405).

This conservativeness is demonstrated, first of all, in the very fact that all the noun cases are used quite regularly, which is typical not for all Romani dialects (cf. Matras 1997). Besides this, NRRD demonstrates a consistent opposition between animate and inanimate nouns. Among these two kind of nouns we can find a distribution, characteristic for "classical" Romani dialects: animate nouns in accusative (common Romani feature) and in locative (a feature which can be observed only in a few Romani dialects) have special endings, while inanimate nouns have the form which is homonymic or identical to the nominative form.

Complete formal description of NRRD noun system can be found in scientific literature (Sergiyevsky 1931; Ventzel 1964). But when a researcher looks at this system at function, he faces very serious questions. To answer these question is important for understanding the nature and the character of interference processes, which take place in the dialect:
1. To which extent peculiarities of the usage of certain inflected forms of nouns can be explained by Russian influence?
2. In which way NRRD is influenced by Russian language? Is this influence reflected in the borrowing of certain lexical models (government schemes of certain words – verbs, etc.) or it acts on a more abstract level?
3. Is there any difference between use of inflected forms of inherited and borrowed nouns?
4. The most difficult question is what is the relationship between interference processes which take place right in the moment of speech production and those interference processes which have already penetrated the language system of the dialect?

To answer these questions, we will try to analyse the material on the noun forms in NRRD.

\textsuperscript{1} There is a special vocative form in NRRD as well.
\textsuperscript{2} As it was many for times mentioned in the scientific literature, an article is preserved in NRRD as a relic, and it is virtually impossible to define the grammatical conditions in which it appears (cf. Ventzel 1964: 95). Masculine forms are, as it seems, used with the article o (singular and plural), feminine ones with the article e, though our very limited material does not allow us to consider this distribution to be trustworthy. We can suppose that presence/absence of the article is determined by stylistic reasons, in particular it is determined by genre and rhythmical properties of the sentence. However, once again we do not have enough material to verify this assertion. The original distribution of forms with an article, when they are agglutinated to a preposition, is very obscure (see below).
1.1.1. Accusative case

The lexical material we have obtained confirms the importance of opposition between animate and inanimate nouns in NRRD. All the occurrences of animate nouns are characterized by special form of Accusative, while inanimate nouns have a form which is homonymous to Nominative. The pronouns are always characterized by the accusative ending. It seems that our examples do not allow us to construct a consistent gradual distributive hierarchy of the nouns depending on the character of the ending (cf. the different situation in some other Romani dialects: Matras 1997: 72–78). For example, the names of animals behave as animate nouns:

(5) **zapr’ók e gré-s**
    he harnessed  DEF horse-ACC
    'he harnessed the horse'

The names of organizations, public establishments and parts of a body behave as inanimate ones:

(6) **ga$én-ge že čéjna útrom bánza otkryváť**
    Russians-DAT but should in.the.morning shop.NOM=ACC to.open
    'Russians must open the shop in the morning'

(7) **Ták na číne man-ge vastá**
    so no cut me-DAT hands.NOM=ACC
    'don't cut off my hands'

However, we don't have enough material to answer this question in a more definite way.

In the existing grammatical descriptions of NRRD the authors note, that the forms of Accusative are used in the negative constructions of possession; these Accusative forms correspond to Russian Genitive forms used in such a construction. In this case animate nouns and pronouns are used with the special Accusative endings, and inanimate nouns are used in the form which is homonymous to Nominative.

(8) **iš’ó rakl-és na sýs adal-és**
    yet  man-ACC no was this-ACC
    'this man was not here yet'

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3 Matras (1997) treats these cases as an direct use of Nominative forms. We prefer to view this form as a special form of Accusative, homonymous to the Nominative form. Our preference is determined by several reasons. First of all, it is more expedient to proceed from a conjecture that the principal function of the Accusative is that of the marking a direct object. Second, it is supported by a certain parallelism with Russian nominal system, which is also characterized by homonymy of some case forms. This homonymy, as we will see below, has rather strongly influenced the function of NRRD nominal system. However, we should admit that the use of the terms in this case (as in every linguistic research, which is not based on an experiment) is absolutely conventional.
There can be no doubt, that in this case we deal with a very good example of an interference influence of Russian. This interference is manifested in two different ways. On the one hand, the very use of non-Nominative forms in these constructions can be considered as a result of Russian influence. On the other hand, the choice of a definite case form in NRRD is most probably also determined by Russian influence. As we know, it is typical for Russian language, that the forms of Genitive and Accusative are homonymous in many noun classes: animate nouns of the second declension type (the vast majority of masculine nouns) in the singular and all the animate nouns in the plural. It seems, that because of the Russian influence, in NRRD the Accusative form of animate nouns is identified with the Russian Genitive form. This identification was then transferred onto inanimate nouns, where the Accusative form homonymous to the Nominative one, also was also identified with Russian Genitive.

This hypothesis is also supported by a very peculiar construction, the examples of which can be encountered in our materials. An Accusative form identical to that of Nominative of inanimate nouns is used to express the meaning of partitive, the latter being expressed by Genitive in Russian.

If one observes the material of other Romani dialects, he would expect to find Genitive or Ablative rather than Accusative construction in above mentioned examples. In principle, this construction could be considered as an example of apposition and then be described as a relic Balkan form (cf. several similar constructions which are widely used in Albanian). However, taking in account the examples of negative possession construction mentioned above, we can suppose, that in this case we deal again with interlingual identification of Russian Genitive and NRRD Accusative and, thus, the shift of the use of NRRD Accusative is caused by the influence of Russian Genitive. In this connection some other points could be mentioned:

The NRRD Genitive forms do not participate in this identification. As it will be discussed below the NRRD Genitive forms drift slowly to the adjectives; this fact can be explained, in its turn, by the influence of possessive adjectives frequently used in Russian.
We deal with the case of "unprecise identification", the phenomenon quite typical for the situation of language contacts (cf. Boretzky 1986: 373-374; Sobolev 1990). Indeed, homonymy in the system of Russian nouns was "misapprehended" (from the point of view of a formal grammatical description!) by the NRRD speakers, which led to the identification with a "wrong" noun form.  

It is interesting, that the use of personal pronouns in the corresponding syntactic positions always with the Accusative ending, which is actually common for Romani dialects, can be as well supported by the Russian influence. In Russian personal pronouns do not have the category of animatedness/inanimatedness, and do not demonstrate the homonymy of Nominative and Accusative.

(12) Avéna  slúg'i  l-es  kxárna
    they.come servants he-ACC they.call
    'servants come and call him'

The words borrowed from Russian, in general behave in the same way as inherited Romani words, that is the animate ones take the Romani flexion of Accusative, inanimate are used in the form, which is homonymous to Nominative.

(13) célo  n'idé'l'a  svátali
    whole week.NOM=ACC asked.to.marry
    'they tried to marry her for the whole week'

(14) tajnes  pr'íjižžáit  jóv  de  pěsk'iro  zámko  ...  i  r'ík'tíra  lés  de  tájno  záló,
    in.secret comes he to his castle and keeps he-ACC in secret hall
    da  Pétr-os,  xudózn'ik-os
    this Petra-ACC painter-ACC
    'he comes in secret to his castle ... and keeps him in a secret hall, this Petro, an artist'

It is interesting, that in the speech of a female informant Z. A. Grokhovskaya Russian animate feminine nouns in the Accusative have a special marker — last syllable is stressed.

(15) kandén tr'e  mamá
    listen mother.ACC
    'listen to the mother'

See a resembling example in the answers to the questionnaire:

Tú dólgo  pašló  sán? — Nát, tr'ín  dívés
you long.time lay.PART you.are — no three day.ACC=NOM
'Were you laid up for a long time? — No, for three days', where Russian Genitive after the numeral tri 'three' ("counting form") is interpreted as a Romani Accusative form.
(16) jów lejà znáčit slużankâ
  he he.took well maidservant.ACC
  'well, he took a maidservant'

Rare cases of the use of Russian inanimate feminine nouns with the Russian Accusative ending, can be interpreted as the examples of pure code switching. All of these noun forms directly follow unadapted Russian verb forms:

(17) podognáľi mašýn-u
    they.drove car-ACC
    'they drove a car'

(18) jój nap'ísála t'i'igrámm-u
    she wrote telegram-ACC
    'she wrote a telegram'

1.1.2. Genitive case

Genitive has a special status in NRRD case system first of all because of its ability to agree with the noun being defined.

In our material, all the Genitive forms are of animate nouns and have the function of an attribute. This fact confirms the mentioned above idea, that they are identified rather with Russian possessive adjectives than with Russian Genitive forms. It should be emphasized, that unlike Russian Genitive forms of nouns, those of Romani (which are extremely rare in our recordings) are used mainly in the preposition to the noun. This structural feature also brings them closer to the adjectives:

(19) i dobrálas' ke pšalés-k'iro kxér
    and she.reached to brother-GEN house
    'and reached the brother's house'

Moreover, these forms can be substantivized:

(20) ko?*dá jów sys máľin'ko dá rakloró, nu lét möžyt vós'im d'ès'it' lés-k'e sýs,
    when he was little this boy well years maybe eight ten he-DAT was
    adá car'ós-k'iro ...
    this king-GEN
    'when he was little, this fellow, well, he was eight or ten, this king's (son)'

It is interesting that Accusative forms of inanimate nouns with attributive meaning discussed above (see (10) – (11)) are placed in the postposition to a noun which is defined, as well as the Russian Genitive forms with attributive meaning.
There are, however, the facts which imply that the process of "adjectivization" of the Genitive forms is not completed yet. Genitive form may have, for instance, an attribute itself:

(21) adavâ p'is'mó nap'isál pšál m'ir'íá-k'iro mamá-k'iro
this letter wrote brother my-GEN mother-GEN
'My mother's brother wrote this letter'

It's interesting to note that in this example the attribute in the Genitive is in postposition⁵.

Genitive forms of 3rd person pronouns are rather frequently used in the dialect. Syntactically they are absolutely similar to the possessive pronouns of the 1st and the 2nd person. Usually, they are used in preposition:

(22) fédyr mân-ge otcingir m'iré vastoré
better me-DAT cut.off my hands
'you'd better chop my hands off'

(23) tyr'î romný b'ijan'dâ dujé ... çavor-én
your.SING wife gave.birth two boys.ACC
'your wife gave birth to twin boys'

The postpositive use may be explained by stylistic reasons:

(24) á, kodovâ sy pšál tumaró, o kák tumaró
and that is brother your.PL DEF uncle your.PL
'and, that is your brother, your uncle'

As for 3rd person possessive pronouns, here also a certain affinity with Russian may be observed. On the one hand, in Russian language as well as in the Romani dialects Genitive forms of the corresponding personal pronouns are used. On the other hand, in Russian dialects and in colloquial speech there is a strong tendency for adjectivization of these forms (Russian jevo 'his', Genitive of ja T – jevonnyj 'his', colloquial adjectivization of jevo). These adjectivized forms are, naturally, included in the system of possessive adjectives. In NRRD 3rd person possessive pronouns can be used both in preposition:

(25) i adá rakloró popyjá kak-ráž de lén-g'iro gáf
and that fellow he.got exactly to they-GEN village
'and this fellow was sent exactly to their village'

⁵ Here it is also possible to see a certain structural parallelism with Russian language. When it is necessary in Russian language to add an attribute to the word corresponding to possessor, a possessive adjective in preposition automatically is replaced by a postpositive Genitive construction:

mamin brat – brat moyey mamy
'mother's (adj.) brother – the brother of my mother'.

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and in postposition:

(26) bagáslav’iři la xâj o radit’iři lés-k’ire
    blessed she.ACC as.if DEF parents he-GEN
    'as if his parents blessed her'

It's interesting that there are some examples, when possessive pronouns of the 3rd person and reflexive possessive pronouns (which are actually Genitive forms of the corresponding pronominal forms) are declined according to the so-called "full" declension of adjectives, which emerged, in its turn, under Slavic influence (Boretzky 1986: 372):

(27) mé kamjóm fstr’ėticca dadavés pes-k’ir-én-ca düj drugén-ca
    I wanted to.meet today self-GEN-PL-INSTR two friend-INSTR
    'I wanted to meet two my friends today'

Genitive forms of the names of the seasons regularly used in NRRD have now adverbial character:

(28) xođine jój p’ir adá véš, pútaitca čoror’i, no lynás-k’iro že
    walks she through this forest wanders poor but summer-GEN though
    'she walks in this forest, she doesn't know the way, poor girl, but it's in the summer'

It is interesting that these forms can be formed from Russian borrowings as well: vesn’akiro
'in spring'.

1.1.3. Dative case

Most frequently Dative is used to express the meaning of the indirect object:

(29) dyjá dá-ke dor’iŋ
    gave.she mother-DAT there
    'she gave the mother [a telegram] there'

(30) pšál lá-ke n’içí na pxen’dá pxen’-áke
    brother she-DAT nothing not told this sister-DAT
    'the brother didn't tell her, the sister, anything'

Dative is also quite often used to express the meaning of subject (after the verbs of necessity etc.):

(31) gažén-ge že čéjna útrom bánza otkryvat’
    Russians-DAT but it.should in.the.morning shop.ACC=NOM to.open
    'Russians must open the shop in the morning'

All these functions of Dative can be also found in Russian, but they are widespread from typological point of view, and therefore they can scarcely be treated as the result of interference processes. It may be, that the following function of Dative was influenced by Russian:
(32) mózyt staršonés-ke sýs léd dv’náccyt
maybe elder-DAT was years eleven
‘maybe the eldest was about twelve years old’
as well as the usage of Dative in negative construction of possession, maybe with additional expressive meaning:
(33) gožonén-ge báxt nané
beautiful.PI-DAT fortune no.is
‘beautiful people have not good fortune’
The example of the same government of pronoun can be found with as well:
(34) p’ír adá véš sk’itálas’e, n’i lá-ke n’i dromoró, n’ičí na, na sýs
across this forest she.wandered neither she-DAT neither road nothing no was
‘she wandered in this forest, she had not any road, there was not anything’
In our recordings we can hardly find the examples of Dative forms of inanimate nouns. This fact can be explained, first of all, by the very meaning of the Dative (see below on the use of constructions with the preposition ke in NRRD, which can be examined in the context of Dative meanings).

Russian borrowings are regularly used in the Dative with Romani case flexion:
(35) pr’ikázyvái pr’islugényge zapr’éc zolotûju kar’étu, sâmuju n’i lûtsuju
he.ordered servants-DAT harness golden carnage most neither best
‘he ordered the servants to harness the golden carriage, the best’

1.1.4. Instrumental case
One of the most usual meanings of the Instrumental in NRRD is the sociative meaning. In the texts of 1984, 20 cases out of 33 when the Instrumental was used had the sociative meaning. In Russian sociative meaning is expressed by the following construction: preposition s + instrumental case. NRRD (unlike many other Romani dialects; cf. Matras 1997: 83–84) does not borrow the prepositions with the sociative meaning. Therefore, we have a very clear correspondence: Russian construction with preposition c + Instrumental case – NRRD instrumental case.
(36) jój źin’dá óćin’ málo lé-sa
she lived very little he-INSTR
‘she lives with him for the short time’
(37) mé xođila raklor’jén-ca uzé
I went girls-INSTR already
‘I have already walked with the girlfriends’
The examples where instrumental case is used to express the meaning of possession are very near to those mentioned above:

(38) žavljy-to vastén-ca
   woman-but hands-INSTR
   'this woman has the hands'

Among the answers to the questionnaire, several examples of Russian adverb vméste 'together' can be found, which is the first part of a compound Russian preposition vméste s 'together with'. This preposition is used to express the emphasized sociative meaning:

(39) avén vméste amén-ca
   come together we-INSTR
   'come with us'

Curiously enough, the second part of the preposition turns out to be redundant, and it is not borrowed by NRRD.

In our recordings we can also find some examples of instrumental meaning:

(40) i čudá po p'éno adá vastoré pesk'iré, i ulyjá tevéresá i čing'irdá
   and she.put on stump these hands her and he.took axe-INSTR and he.chopped.off
   saré dúj lá-ke k'is'ti, otčing'ird'á
   all two she-DAT hands chopped.off
   'and she put her hands on the stump, and he and chopped off both her hands with the axe, chopped off'

In NRRD there are numerous examples when the Instrumental is used in locative or temporal meaning, which is typical for Russian, but is also represented very well in other Romani dialects (Boretzky):

(41) it' kxélnas beľvelén-ca
   but they.had.danced evenings-INSTR
   'they had danced in the evenings'

(42) save drome-sa tu džasa po počta
   what way-INSTR you go to post
   'what way you go to the post office'

In the descriptive studies of NRRD it was often noted that "under the influence of Russian language [Instrumental] is often used as a part of compound nominal predicate." (Ventzel 1964: 53) The examples of this can be found in our records:

(43) žáva ... ke tú pastuxó-sa
   I.go to you.SING shepherd-INSTR
   'I'll work for you as a shepherd'
Somewhat similar phenomenon can be observed in the examples where Instrumental is used with several transitive verbs in the function of second object. This construction is usual in Russian language:

(44) me tût keráva bare manusësa
'I make you a great person'

Finally, several examples in NRRD are obtained when Instrumental appears, as it seems, under the influence of certain Russian constructions which govern Instrumental case. For example, Instrumental is used in the function of an "attributive object" after the adjective forms:

(45) ne rán'se ... sës fedýr dolësa, so sys ... veselo
'before it was better, because it was jolly'

Or it may appear under the influence of concrete Russian words:

(46) nát, me tú-sa n'isoglásno
'no, I don't agree with you', (cf. Russian net, ya s toboy (INSTR) ne soglasen),

(47) oné sës syr psál pxen'-ása
'they were like a brother and a sister', (cf. Russian oni byli kak brat s sestroy (INSTR))

(48) dúj pašë-sa bërš
'two years and a half' (cf. Russian dva s polovinoj(INSTR) goda)

It is interesting that in last three examples the correlation between NRRD Instrumental and Russian prepositional phrase s + Instrumental can be observed. This observation supports the idea consistent character of this interlingual correspondence, which is actualized also in the situations of loan-translating of certain lexical models.

Instrumental forms can also be encountered in Russian bound phrases, which were loan-translated:

(49) zaľivácica jasvéncia
'he dissolves into tears'.

Both animate and in inanimate nouns have Instrumental forms in NRRD. Russian borrowing are regularly used in Instrumental with Romani flexion.
1.1.5. Ablative case

The most frequent is pure ablative meaning, spatial and temporal, and then causal meaning. Thus, ablative forms in NRRD generally correspond to Russian construction with the prepositions *iz*, *ot*, *s*. The ablative can be formed both from animate and inanimate nouns as well as from pronouns.

(50) "mé v'irnúlas' forós-tyr peskr'iýá-tyr podrugá-tyr'
    I returned city-ABL my.own-ABL girlfriend-ABL
    "I returned from the city from my girlfriend'.

(51) ták áke s étava dn'á, kadá devesés-tyr
    so (RUSS) so from this day (RUSS) this day-ABL
    'thus, from this day'

(52) izdrála straxátyr
    he.trembles fright-ABL
    'he shivers with fright'

NRRD lacks prepositions, either Russian or common Romani, with ablative meaning. In this respect NRRD is close to Leshaki dialect, which is also included into the Baltic group (Matras 1997: 85). One of the most frequent contexts where ablative is used in the dialect is that with adjectives in the comparative or superlative degree.

(53) tú javésa barvaledýr më-nyndýr'
    you.SING will.be richer me-ABL
    'you'll become richer than me'

(54) mé výše sarén-dyr, stárše sarén-dyr sómas
    I taller all-ABL older all-ABL I.was
    'I was taller than all the others, older than all the others'

It is interesting that this use of Ablative corresponds to Genitive forms in Russian language. Thus, the above mentioned correlation between Russian Genitive and NRRD Accusative is violated. Presumably, semantic factors turn out to be more important than the formal correspondence (Russian Gen. – NRRD Acc.) in this case. This discrepancy may be interpreted in the other way, though. It is very probable, that in this case Romani language experienced a strong influence of Russian dialectal constructions with adjectives in the comparative and superlative degree, for example, *ona starshe za menya* 'she's older for me' or *ona starshe ot menya* 'she's older from me'.

In NRRD there are also some examples of pure attributive meaning of the Ablative, which corresponds to Russian form with the preposition *ot*:

(55) klucí syz banzá-tyr láte
    keys were shop-ABL she-LOC
    'she has the key of the shop'
1.1.6. Locative

The locative in NRRD can be formed from animate nouns and from pronouns. The principal meaning expressed by Locative forms in NRRD is the meaning of possession. The meaning of possession in this case can be positive

(56) i lēs-te sýs, raklor' i (i) rakloro
    and he-LOC were girl (and) boy
    'and he has a daughter and a son'

or negative.

(57) Dykxéla lá-te dúj vastá nané.
    he.sees she-LOC two hands not.are
    'he sees that she has not both of her hands'

It can also be the meaning of so-called "external possession":

(58) dáj lén-de jegrjíný
    mother they-LOC single
    'their mother is single'

(59) stadina naxmûr'inna lēs-te
    cap pulled he-LOC
    'he has the cap pulled over his eyes'

The locative can be also used in the meaning close to that of dativus ethicus:

(60) i tú mân-de dólžyn de saré r'igá te žás mân-ca de saré fór'ja
    and you.SING me-LOC should to all places to go me-INSTR to all cities
    'and you must go with me to all the places, to all the cities'.

All these cases are united by the fact that they correspond to the Russian prepositional construction u + the Genitive.

There are also examples when the Locative used without a preposition expresses purely locative, circumstantial, meaning.

(61) jôv lēste prosluzýl dv'ínáccyt' lēt ke da gráfo kaló
    he he-LOC served twelve years by this count black
    'he served for Black Count twelve years in his (Black Count's) place'

There are some examples when NRRD Locative correspond to the Russian construction u + Genitive and the usage of this construction is determined by the government of certain Russian words:

(62) no mân-de n'i polučílos'
    but me-LOC no it.came.out
    'but I could not do it'
The following example is very interesting:

(63) âke ačápe kadá dyvés amén-de tú-sa
   thus remained this day we-LOC you.Sing-INSTR
   'thus this day is for us (lit.: for us with you)'

Here NRRD construction Locative + Instrumental corresponds to Russian phrase u nas s toboy 'for us and you'. In the Russian phrase the combination of the personal pronoun of the 1st person plural with the preposition s followed by the other pronoun in Instrumental form is grammaticalized way to express sociative meaning. This construction is loan-translated in NRRD, but all the forms with prepositions are consistently changed to the "corresponding" forms without a preposition.

NRRD Prepositional constructions with Locative will be discussed below.

In general we should remark, that in our texts locative forms of pronouns are used more often than those of nouns. It is interesting, that some other dialects belonging to the Baltic group (cf. Leshaki, see Matras 1997: 87) almost lack locative forms. We can suppose that the preservation of the locative forms without a preposition can be explained by its interlingual identification with Russian prepositional construction u + Genitive.

2. PREPOSITIONAL CONSTRUCTIONS

Prepositional constructions are rather wide-spread in the dialect, though we should state that in out texts the number of nouns (and pronouns) used in prepositional constructions is less than the number of nouns used in oblique cases without a preposition. This is an evidence to the fact that synthetic declension is still being preserved in the dialect. Moreover, we should mention that the number of prepositions, actively used in NRRD, is rather limited. Some prepositions which are wide-spread in other dialects do not occur in our texts. First of all, it applies to (ka)tar, a very common preposition with an ablative meaning. Let us examine, one by one, the prepositional constructions found in our recordings.

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6 In the records of 1984 we have ca. 180 examples of prepositional phrases and ca. 340 examples of noun and pronoun in indirect cases used without a preposition.

7 Theoretically we can suppose that the degree of preservation of synthetic forms. in the nominal system can be supported by the synthetic character of declension in the language of surrounding population. We should note, that the ratio of prepositional forms to those used without prepositions in NRRD seems to be less than that of Russian. This fact is determined, most probably, by the following correspondences: Russian c + Instrumental – NRRD Instrumental; Russian iz, ot, c + Genitive – NRRD Ablative; Russian u + Genitive – NRRD Locative.
2.1. Preposition *dre/dro/de/do* 'in, to' (Common Romani *andre*)

First of all, a high degree of phonetic variability of the preposition can noticed. Moreover, there is no apparent rule determining the distribution of the variants. The following facts can be mentioned: Forms without *r* are more frequently used than (more archaic) forms with *r*. For example, one of the two informants whose texts were recorded in 1984 does not use the forms *dro/dre* at all. Another informant, Z. A. Grokhovskaya, used this form only once, in a phrase *dro věš*, which, maybe, is a bound phrase. As for the last vowel (which can be traced back to the definite article agglutinated to a preposition), it is impossible to define the grammatical context in which it appears. It seems, that forms with *e* are more widely used.

The preposition *de* has locative meaning and, in general, corresponds to the Russian preposition *v*. As in Russian, this preposition can be used to express both the meaning of the direction of the motion and the meaning of the stative location:

(64) Žin’dâm *de šátřy*
we.lived in tents
'we lived in the tents'

(65) Rak’irnas *de davá fóro, tas’a tradénas de jav’ir fóro*
had.spent.night in this city, tomorrow had.went to other city
'we had spent the night in one city, tomorrow had went to another city'

In the vast majority of cases this preposition (because of its meaning) is used with inanimate nouns. Therefore, in all these cases a noun is used in the form homonymous to the Nominative one. In our records there is no cases when this preposition is used with a pronoun. There is only one case when the preposition *de* was used with the Locative form of an animate noun:

(66) Mán-ge *sýs őcín’ n’ipr’ivýčno ... obrašťácca de gažén-de*
me-DAT was very unusual circulate in, to Russians-LOC
'it was very unusual for me to circulate among Russians'

Curiously enough, this example cannot be associated with any similar Russian construction with the preposition *v* 'in, to'. In this case we should rather use Russian preposition *sredi* 'among.' This example, however, is unique, and it is rather difficult to make any conclusions based on it.

In general we can say that the distribution of the preposition *drel/de* (in the meaning of stative location) is similar to that of Locative constructions without a preposition with purely locative meaning:

(67) I Živela *lén-de dásvo čavoró*
and lives they-LOC this boy
'and this fellow lives at their place'.
The only evident difference in these distribution is that there are a lot of examples when Locative forms of the animate nouns as well as of the corresponding pronouns are used, while the preposition *de/dre* is used only with inanimate nouns.\(^8\)

2.2. Preposition *pel/po* 'on, upon'

Like the previous preposition, this one has phonetic variants, distribution of which does not seem to be systematic. There are some examples, which allow to suppose that the original distribution might have been also determined by the form of the article:

(68) *me soglášno sóm po da zakládo i pe da igrá, so kučedýr*

*I agree am on this mortgage and on this game that more.expensive*

*po svéto sy kap’itálo*

*on world is capital*

'I bet that money is the most valuable thing in the world'

However, contrary examples also exist. In general, it seems that *po* is more frequently used. Maybe it is determined to a certain extent by the phonetic identity with Russian preposition *po*. In general, the preposition *pel/po* corresponds to Russian preposition *na*. Very different shades of meaning can be expressed by the Romani preposition, but in general the specter of the meanings corresponds to that of the Russian one.

(69) *la ulýžá po Urálu*

*her.ACC he.drove.away to Ural*

'he drove her away to Ural' (cf. Russ. *na Ural*)

(70) *jój bestá po samoľótú*

*she set.down on plane*

'she got into the plane' (cf. Russ. *na samolet*)

(71) *pr’iglašáit les moskófsko kn’ag’ín’a po bálo*

*she.invites them-ACC Moscow’s princess to party*

'the Moscow princess invites him to the party' (cf. Russ. *na bal*)

(72) *kučedýr po svéto sy kap’itálo*

*more.expensive on world is capital*

'the capital is the most valuable thing in the world' (cf. Russ. *na svete*).

There are also the examples when the use of this prepositional phrase is determined by peculiarities of the government of certain Russian verbs:

\(^8\) It is interesting, that in NRRD as it seems there is no opposition between incorporative and non-incorporative prepositions, though this opposition exists in other Romani dialects (see Matras 1997: 62–72).
(73) ucicca jój gyjá pe prodafs’ica-te
to.study she went on shop-girl.LOC
'she went to study to be a shop-girl' (cf. Russ. poshla uchit’s’a na prodavshchicu)

or by the tendency of certain Russian nouns to be used with the Russian preposition na:

(74) jóv terdó sy po v’erándo
he sitting is at verandah
'he is at the verandah' (cf. Russ. na verande)

(75) kxelďá pe g’itára
he.played on guitar
'well, before he played the guitar' (cf. Russ. na gitare)

However, there are also several examples when the Romani preposition po/pe rather corresponds to Russian preposition po 'on, by':

(76) romá bešté po kxám
gypsies were.sitting by sun
'gypsies lived according to the sun' (cf. Russ. zhit’ po solncu)

It is quite feasible that in this case we deal with the contamination of the Romani and the Russian prepositions. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that in these cases the preposition is practically always used in po form. In some cases it is difficult to understand which preposition was used, the Romani one or the Russian one. It is especially difficult if a Russian noun has an Russian dative ending (we have the possibility, indeed, to see here a code switching):

(77) žála po g’ilz’iji
he.goes on gildia
'he behaves like a person of high society';

or the ending -u, which is a phonetic variant of the Romani ending -o, but, at the same time, it is phonetically identical to the Russian Dative ending of the second declension (which can, at least, favor the use of po form of the preposition): (70)

The preposition pel/pe is used both with animate (in Loc.) and inanimate nouns (in a form homonymous to Nominative), and sometimes (though more rare) with personal pronouns in the form of Locative:

(78) jój razdyjápe p adá raklor’játe
she grew.angry on this girl-LOC
'she grew angry with this girl'

(79) i podykxné pe léste
and looked on he-LOC
'and they looked at him'
It is interesting, that in the speech of one of our informants a noun with the preposition *pe* is governed by the verb *te rak'irâv*:

(80) *rak'îrla láke, pe pxen'âte*

he.speeks she-DAT on girl-LOC

'he speaks with her, the girl'

(81) *câr'o rak'îrla, pe, pe pësk'i romn'â-te*

king.speeks on on his.own wife-LOC

'the king speaks to his wife'

This kind of government (which is not characteristic to modern Russian colloquial speech) is widely used in texts in the Romani dialect very close to NRRD recorded by V. N. Dobrovolsy in Smolensk region in the end of the 19th century:

(82) *rak'îrla pe lés-te*

he.speeks on he-LOC

'(he) tells him' (Dobrovolsky 1908: 9)

It is interesting that in Russian texts, recorded by Dobrovolsky from Gypsies, this kind of government does not occur. Neither it can be detected in the North-Western group of Russian dialects. Possibly, this kind of government appeared under the influence of the Russian verbs *obraschat'sja k komu* 'to address someone', *pisat' k komu* 'to write to someone'.

2.3. Preposition *ke/k* 'to, at'

The *ke* form is used commonly with those words that start with a consonant, while the *k* form is used with the words, which have vocal anlaut. However, the contrary examples are also obtained.

The preposition *ke* holds a very special position among other Romani prepositions, because it governs nouns and pronouns in their direct form (Nominative). This may be explained by its history (cf Boretzky: *ke* = dat-*ke*, 1989: 371–372). These peculiarities of the preposition *ke* can be observed in our texts too.

In general the preposition corresponds to Russian preposition *k* 'to' in its locative meaning (direction). That is why it often combines with the verbs of motion:

(83) *pr'ijéxaft ke roma ... barydyrâ*

came to gypsies authorities

'local authorities came to gypsies'

There are examples when the use of *ke* is determined by governmental properties of a verb (like in Russian):
In our texts we have an interesting example (61), when the combination ke + animate noun is "synonymous" to the locative form of a pronoun in a construction with the meaning of stative location:

There are similar examples in our syntactic questionnaire:

It seems that these examples are very well in accordance with the distributive hierarchy developed by Matras: pronouns (Locative) – animate nouns {ke + Nominative). However, this hypothesis is should be proved correct on the NRRD material.

2.4. Preposition *pal* 'behind, about'

Generally the use of this preposition corresponds to the use of Russian prepositions *za* and *o*, even in rather specific lexical contexts:

The original meaning of the preposition was, most probably, locative ('behind'), while the meaning 'about' developed under Slavic influence (North-Western Russian dialects, dialect of Pskov?)

Perhaps, this meaning influenced the governmental properties of the verb *te rovés* in the following example, though, it may be just a loan translation of a Russian dialectal word *plakat’* 'to cry, to weep' with its specific government *za kem* 'for whom' (cf. Russian dialectal *plakat’ za kem, skuchat’ za kem*):

(88) **Rovéla, pál dá raklorés-te**

'she cries for the fellow'
There are examples with the meaning 'behind somebody':

(89) \textit{da bëś pal lës-te de karëta}
and sit down behind he-LOC in carriage
'and sit down behind him in the carriage'

\textit{Pal} is used with Locative in combination with animate nouns and pronouns, and with a form homonymous to Nominative when it is used with inanimate nouns.

\textit{Pale róm} is an adverbial phrase which appeared, possibly, under the influence of the Russian adverb \textit{zamuzh} '(to get) married':

(90) \textit{srëdnëe pxën vygejâ pale raklës-te pale róm}
second sister went out behind man-LOC behind man
'the second sister has married a fellow', cf.

(91) \textit{jój-to p'ir'ižváit pale romës-te}
she worries about man-LOC
'she worries about her husband' (Cf. Russian: \textit{za muzh} – \textit{za muzha}).

2.5. The use of other prepositions in our texts is of an occasional character.

The preposition \textit{p'ir'i/p'ir/pere} 'on, upon, across, through.'

(92) \textit{p'ir'i gáv žána}
through village they go
'they go through the village'

One of our informants Z. A. Grokhovskaya used it few times and only with the noun \textit{véš}.

(93) \textit{kar'ık me žáva p'ir adá véš}
where I go through this forest
'where can I go through this forest'

The preposition \textit{paš} 'near, next to':

(94) \textit{čuvélâ l-es paš fëns-të, adá Petr-ós}
he set him-ACC near window this Peter-ACC
'He made this Petro sit down by the window'

Both prepositions can be found in our texts in combination with inanimate nouns in the form homonymous to Nominative.

There is also only one reliable example of the preposition \textit{vaš} 'for' which is used with Dative:

(95) \textit{vaš tu-ke doj amé sunasa muzyka kxëlna}
for you.SING-DAT we hear music they play
'Is it you for whom the music that we hear play?'
In our texts there is only one example of a Russian preposition (*m'ézdu* 'between') being used:

(96) *i kaná rak'írna m'ézdu pés-te*

and now they talk between self-LOC

'and they talk between themselves'

It is worth mentioning that the reflexive pronoun was used here in the form of Locative and not Instrumental as it would be in Russian.

In the answers to the questionnaire one can encounter several more cases when Russian prepositions are used, but these prepositions are identical to those used in Russian sentences.

(97) *m'ímo amaro dvór progyjá n'eznakómo manúš*

by our yard passed unknown man

'unknown man passed by my house'

It is interesting that Russian prepositions also preserve Romani government (the form homonymous to the Nominative for inanimate nouns).

3. SOME CONCLUSIONS

Returning to the questions formulated in the beginning of the article, we can note the following:

1. There are strict correspondences between "components" of Russian case system and those of NRRD. These correspondences can be of two kinds:

   Russian case form – NRRD case form

   Russian prepositional phrase – NRRD case form

The correspondences are rather of formal than of semantic nature. For example, Russian combination of the preposition *u* + Genitive always corresponds to NRRD Locative, no matter what is the actual meaning of a certain Russian combination.

There are some cases when semantics does influence the character of the interlingual identification, but these cases are extremely rare.

The correspondences are unidirectional, namely this direction is from the dominant language (Russian) to the subdominant one (NRRD); thus, for example, a combination of Russian preposition *s* + Instrumental always corresponds to the NRRD Instrumental, while the opposite is not true.

Sometimes an identification is based on the interpretation of dominant language forms, which does not match with the formal grammatical interpretation (see above). We can suppose that NRRD native speakers do not distinguish the homonymous forms of Russian
North Russian Romani Dialect: Interference in Case System

Genitive and Accusative. As a result Russian Genitive is almost always rendered as NRRD accusative.\(^9\)

2. The above mentioned correspondences are actualized both on the "level" of prototypical case meanings and on the level of concrete words' government. Peculiarities of the government of numerous words in NRRD lead us to the supposition that governmental patterns of certain Russian words are loan-translated.

3. It is practically impossible to answer the question about the relationship between those interference processes which take place right in the moment of speech, and those which are part of language system. The very steady and constant character of the inter-lingual correspondences does not allow us to say in every concrete case, whether a NRRD native speaker is loan-translating a concrete Russian phrase right in the moment of speech, or he extracts a nuclear word with its pattern of government from a lexicon. It may be, that the high level of interference with Russian language somehow makes this problem irrelevant. NRRD native speakers, having a high degree of language competence in Russian, can borrow Russian syntactic and word-formation models directly in the moment of speech. Thus, their "Romani competence" includes not the concrete models, borrowed from Russian, but the possibility of this kind of borrowing itself (cf. Rusakov, in print).

We should note that there are examples (81)-(83) which cannot be interpreted as loan-translations in the moment of speech. Most probably, in these cases interference influence took place earlier and then became a part of the language system (cf. similar cases with prefixed verb formations, Rusakov in print).

4. We can say, that, in general, case system of NRRD (in its prepositional part) seems to be poorer than that of Russian. It is determined by general characteristics of Romani dialects'
functioning. In any case, NRRD native speaker can use in his speech any Russian preposition; this tendency is widely represented in the answers to our questionnaire.

5. We can suppose, that the regular system of inter-lingual correspondences in the sphere of noun forms can contribute to the preservation of NRRD case system. At the same time this preservation is also provided by structural affinities between Russian and NRRD case systems.

6. Russian nouns are almost always used in NRRD speech in adapted form and behave almost the same way as inherited lexics do. The exceptions are those of the nouns which are used in the idiomatic adverbial and prepositional phrases.

(98) so vremenem 'as the time passes by', rano utrom 'early in the morning', rundya golosom 'yelled, lit. cried with the voice', the use of nouns in oblique cases in the meaning of adverbs; also the cases when nouns are used with Russian numerals:

(99) jov dodzhindya do sta let 'He lived till he was one hundred years old'

It is possible that quite a complicated distribution of case forms after various numerals in Russian might have determined this way of using the numerals.

However, in these cases it is rather difficult to distinguish these phenomena from those of code-switching (cf. Rusakov 1998).

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Alexandre Rusakov
Olga Abramenko
St. Petersburg