Negative concord in heritage Russian in Germany

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Negative Concord (NC; Labov 1972) is common in Slavic languages, including Russian (cf. Haspelmath 2005). It is used to coordinate negative indefinites such as *nikto* 'nobody' with the negation particle *ne* 'not' attached to the predicate. In this manner, sentences with two and even more negation elements are grammatically correct in NC-languages as Russian, as opposed to non-NC language as German (cf. Penka & Zeijlstra 2010). However, the use of NC is not always mandatory. Predicates expressing negation only by means of the negation particle *ne* (and e.g. accompanied with personal pronoun) are fully grammatical. In contrast, the use of negative indefinites without the negation particle on the predicate is not grammatical in monolingual Russian (cf. Padučeva 2007). This restriction seems to be optional in heritage Russian in Germany, as results of our experimental study suggest.

In this study we committed an audio-visual experiment on 24 young adult heritage speakers of Russian in Germany and 24 age-matched monolingual speakers of Russian. The participants of the study were exposed to audio stimuli related to a short story they have watched on the screen of a laptop several minutes before that. Participants were asked to negate the stimulus phrases, in order to correct them according to the original story, using a token that was shown on the screen immediately after each audio stimulus. Half of the tokens shown on the screen were negative indefinites. In monolingual Russian, the expectation for a grammatically correct utterance would be that participants used the negation particle *ne* attached to the predicate. The other half of the tokens were fillers. All tokens were additionally subdivided into two equal groups according to their syntactic role of either subject or object. The following example illustrates a stimulus phrase, a token in the subject role and the expected response of the participant, respectively:

Stimuli phrase:	*Mal'čik exal na velosipede*	'The boy was riding a bike'
Token:	*nikto*$_{subject}$	'nobody'
Expected response:	*Nikto*$_{subject}$ *ne*$_{neg.particle}$ *exal na velosipede*	'Nobody was riding a bike'

In this talk we will discuss the results of the study from the perspective of contact linguistic and multilingual language acquisition phenomena such as transfer effects from majority language, attrition and incomplete acquisition in opposition to reorganization of grammatical patterns and the emergence of new varieties. Statistical modelling should help to adequately describe the data and to reveal the interplay of multiple factors in order to measure the effect of one variable on other variables.

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