East Slavic Dialectology: Achievements and Perspectives of Areal Linguistics

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1. Introductory remarks

The aim of this introductory chapter is to provide up-to-date insights into East Slavic dialectological tradition against a background of dialectological traditions and areal linguistics in Western Europe. We have also tried to take insights from areal typology and theorizing on language contact into account. Because of this perspective, we have tried to keep sight of the chronology of approaches and goals in dialectological research since the nineteenth century, and we focus in particular on the evolution of dialect geography, as we consider it to be a kind of linkage between dialectology and areal linguistics (and typology). The main idea behind this paper and the volume in general is to foster the integration of dialectology into other linguistic sub-disciplines. We will argue below that (areal) typology, theory of language contact, historical linguistics and various approaches to grammar may considerably benefit from dialectology and, of course, vice versa.

The structure of this introduction is as follows. We start with a sketch of the main lines along which dialectology in Western Europe (1.1–1.2) and in East Slavic countries (1.3) has been developing. This sketch is also meant to highlight the ideological orientations and more global research endeavours within which dialectology has been embedded. The first section ends with a critical assessment of one of the most neglected fields of dialectology, namely dialectal syntax (1.4), emphasizing the importance of annotated dialectal corpora for progress in contemporary dialectological research.

In section 2 we continue with a survey of research into East Slavic dialects. We focus particularly on those approaches that bear a closer relation to issues of areality (2.1), in particular, rarely performed quantifying, aggregational methods (2.2). Providing an example of areally interesting research, we then focus on the Northwest Russian-Belarusian dialect continuum, but split it into two salient sub-areas (2.3–2.4), before asking which structural features encountered in the dialects of this continuum can be considered to demonstrate some areal and/or typological significance (2.5). We want to stress that the discussion of such features is selective, although we hope that it is representative in reflecting the current state of this research area.[1] In section 3 we supply a digest of the contributions to this volume.

The locations of places and regions mentioned in the text below have been indicated on the map in section 2.

1.1. On the history of dialectology in Western Europe

The history of dialectology in Western Europe began in the nineteenth century in close parallel with historical-comparative linguistics.[2] Dialect data—understood as data from oral non-standard speech in rural settings—were, for a long period, regarded as an auxiliary means for the purpose of describing how divergence gradually emerged from the geographic expansion of "sister" idioms of one family or of one language with an established standard (cf. Krefeld 2008: 91–97; Anderwald & Szmrecsanyi 2009: 1126f.; also Lüdtke & Mattheier 2005: 18 on Romance or Schrambke 2010: 87 on German). Thus, roughly speaking, special interest in rural vernaculars appears to have been triggered by two circumstances. On the one hand, it arose from an (often still pre-scientific) endeavour to link national and ethnic history with linguistic variation in space. To a considerable extent, diatopic variation was seen as being

1 We thank Benedikt Szmrecsanyi (Leuven) and Igor' Isaev (Moscow) for some valuable comments they made on a pre-final version of this article. It goes without saying that the opinion and vantage point expounded here, as well as any remaining shortcomings, are exclusively our responsibility.

2 Of course, the ultimate roots might be more ancient (cf. Knoop 1982 for German dialectology). But the first methodologies were certainly developed after romanticism and the rise of historical-comparative linguistics. Thus, for instance, Jacob Grimm considered dialects to reflect the results of the historical development of more homogeneous ancestor languages (Knoop 1982: 18).

under the auspices of some national (or ethnic) language, and dialects attracted attention as manifestations of "pure" oral speech, largely unaffected by codification and testifying to the richness of a people's culture and traditions. Against this background, the conscious preference for non-mobile old rural males as informants (NORMS) is understandable (cf. Szmrecsanyi, this volume). On the other hand, the onset of a systematic empirical approach toward diatopic variation was stimulated by the Neogrammarian Hypothesis (NGH), claiming that sound change is "within a given community, and within a given phonetic environment, entirely regular, i.e. it admits no exceptions. Any form that does not conform to the sound law must be due either to internal analogy or to borrowing from other dialects/languages" (De Vogelaer & Seiler 2012: 2f., with further references). Early dialectologists tried either to gather sustaining evidence in favour of the NGH or to disprove it. This was the first line of research.

Another line of development in early dialectology was the endeavour to establish isoglosses (isogloss bundles); one of its pioneers was Georg Wenker (cf. Moraxovskaja 1959: 126; Knoop 1982). These two lines of orientation contrasted with the aforementioned folk interest in unembellished rural speech for ethnographic and historical-political reasons, insofar as these first steps toward a scientific study of diatopic variation (though restricted to rural vernaculars conceived of as belonging to one 'ethnolanguage') betrayed a genuine interest in the description of linguistic structure unbiased by prescriptive norms (cf. De Vogelaer & Seiler 2012: 3). Actually, these two lines complemented one another from the start: the first perspective was directed toward (or against) the NGH, the latter displayed a primary interest in the geographical segmentation of an accepted ethnolanguage on the basis of structural (mostly phonetic) features. Both perspectives rested on tacit implications, namely that the latter perspective was set to establish the boundaries for communities speaking "a common language" within which diatopic variation occurred, and the challenge here has been to set up and agree upon the features which form the basis of this roof language ('ethnolanguage') and from which its internal variation could be delineated. The question has always remained as to what extent the establishment of such features has remained implicit (and partially unconscious), and what its linguistic basis should be; more often than not, this endeavour has proved to be

quite arbitrary and driven by external (political, societal) factors. In contrast, the former perspective already presupposes that there were speech communities for and within which the NGH could be tested. Of course, this raises questions about the basis from which different diatopic varieties can be delineated, and this problem has been tackled in different ways in different periods of dialectological research.[3] But whatever solution (or technique) has been envisaged, the question itself is fundamental (and, in a sense, comparable to the segmentation of chunks of utterances into sounds and meaningful units, known as morphemes, words, phrases, etc.). For instance, Schuchardt's (1885) dismissal of the NGH as well as any later hypothesis (and its falsification or corroboration) would have been impossible without this (seemingly trivial) mutual relationship: structural features (or purported "laws"), analogy, and contact (as the source of borrowings) can be assumed as "antagonists" of change and variation only if we imply 'systems' that are somehow correlated to (groups of) speakers.[4]

From this point of view it does not come as a surprise that, later on, structuralist reasoning began to become prevalent in the study of dialects. Although Weinreich as late as in 1954 had to ask "Is a structural dialectology possible?," in order to give it an explicit positive answer, the germs of system-oriented thinking in dialectology had developed much earlier, not only in Western Europe, but also in some Slavic-speaking countries (see 1.3). In some respects, the fact that dialectology also evolved as a subsidiary discipline of historical-comparative linguistics had retarded this development.[5]

In connection with structuralist dialectology and early variationist work, above all by Labov (1994; 2001), it was in Anglo-Saxon countries that research began to combine traditional, "rural" dialectology with "urban" sociolinguistics. For instance, Chambers & Trudgill (1980) defined

3 For some short remarks concerning German dialectology cf. Schmidt (2005: 63f.).

4 This implication does not essentially change in later variationist framework. If we abandon simplistic views of clear-cut associations between 'systems' and 'speakers/speaker groups', the connections between both just become (much) more complicated. The more dynamic the migration, the more diversified social networks etc. get, the less transparent and stable such associations become. Assumptions about systems are transferred to stochastic models, but they remain there in principle as a precondition of description.

5 Cf. De Vogelaer & Seiler (2012: 5f.) on Germanic and Romance dialectology. As concerns Slavic languages, see 1.3.

'dialectology' as the study of socially conditioned variation in a language in general, i.e. geography (diatopic variation) is no longer conceived of as an independent or the most important parameter (cf. De Vogelaer & Seiler 2012: 8). This sort of research, and indeed sociolinguistics in general, has not found any principled footing in East Slavic (or other Slavic-speaking) countries until today; diastratically conditioned variation (or "mixing" of varieties) has hardly been considered at all. This has recently been duly criticized by Hentschel (2013: 63–68); see also 2.1 and Wiemer (2003a: 214).

1.2. Dialect geography and areal linguistics (*typology*)

Still, Chambers & Trudgill (1998: 15) continued to deplore the neglect of dialectological research not just for general issues of linguistic theory but even for sub-disciplines that are more tightly concerned with variation of speech in diatopic and diastratic dimensions. Chambers and Trudgill had in mind, first and foremost, Anglo-Saxon dialectology. However, the situation in Romance or German dialectology appears to have been not much better (see below). Originally arising from efforts to disclose how diatopic variation evolved from the ancient (pre-literary) stages of an ancestor language, dialectology existed as a kind of auxiliary to supply data for scientific disciplines, not always linguistic ones (see 1.1). Thus, as recently as in the 1990s, "dialectology remained largely innocent with regard to advances of modern theoretical linguistics (and vice-versa)" (Bucheli Berger et al. 2012: 93).

The "vice versa" parenthesized here is essential. Dialects provide an excellent playground for investigating language change since they are normally not codified. Like other non-standard varieties, dialects are not subject to formal instruction in schools, they are normally not even written, so that the possible spread of innovations is not hampered by codification and the conservative force of writing conventions.[6] Therefore, provided dialectology is equipped with a coherent methodology and theory of linguistic variation, it allows for clear formulations of issues with a valuable impact for theoretical and historical linguistics. Moreover, it has a well-defined, solid empirical basis, and

6 For this reason, generative syntacticians have been especially interested in dialectal variation (Weiß 1981).

> [a]s compared to most cross-linguistic and diachronic data, dialect data are unusually high in resolution. (…) By a careful study of subtle dialect differences in space we might therefore expect to uncover the minimal differences of implementational steps that have taken place in the course of linguistic history. (De Vogelaer & Seiler 2012: 1f.)

Similar insights have quite often been provided by specialists in the field, also on the basis of East Slavic dialects since the end of the nineteenth century. It is all the more astonishing, then, that, until very recently, dialectology did not become an influential field of empirical cutting-edge research into the mechanisms and manifestations of language variation and change.[7]

Indeed, it is a paradox of dialectology that, while interested from the outset in diatopic variation evolving through time, it hesitated so long over taking up impulses from other camps dealing with variation in space and time. An internal reason for its long-lasting auxiliary status might have been its primary interest in divergence, i.e. in the differences of speech between speakers, villages and small areas. Convergence, and a more cohesive areal picture behind it, had been rather out of view. With only a few exceptions, the dialectology of Germanic, Romance, let alone Slavic and Baltic languages has often neglected issues of language (or dialect) contact beyond the respective family (see 1.3, 2.1). Additionally, it has not taken into account areal clines and similar questions transcending that boundary. Sophisticated variationist accounts capable of measuring feature aggregates across dialect continua have been developed for Germanic and Romance dialects; but, to our knowledge, even they have stopped short of the border with areally contiguous (or overlapping) dialect continua of other languages (of different genealogical closeness), i.e. they have almost never "looked farther" than continua within the territory of one Germanic or Romance language; cf., for instance, Heeringa & Nerbonne (2001), Spruit et al. (2009), Rumpf et al. (2010), or Szmrecsanyi (2013). In general, this desideratum also applies to the Eastern part of the Circum-Baltic Area, which encompasses the East Slavic dialects in which we are interested, although there are some noticeable exceptions

7 On reasons external to science that adversely affected possible progress in dialectology and, in general, socially conditioned linguistic variation in East Slavic cf. the account in Kasatkin (1999: 35–39) and the brief comments in Berger (1999: 554f.).

(see 2.4). It seems that this has to do with a more general problem with various traditional national dialectologies: they are still typically considered as philological sub-disciplines pertaining to particular genealogical boundaries, often without an appeal to a more consistent theoretical level of research into diatopic variation (on different levels of genealogical closeness or distance).

Finally, systematic research in dialectal syntax is likewise recent (Szmrecsanyi, this volume); cf., for instance, investigations into dialectal syntax of German (Seiler 2005; Glaser 2008; Bucheli Berger et al. 2012) or focuses on English (Kortmann 2002). This is despite the fact that there is no evidence for syntactic structures being less apt to dialectal variation than phonetic-phonological features or the lexicon.

Neglect, however, was not one-sided. Typology and areal linguistics did not take much notice of one another, let alone of the insights that could be gained from dialectological issues. Barely a decade ago, Anderwald & Kortmann (2002: 160) still complained:

> So far dialects have been included in typological accounts only sporadically and, if so, unsystematically. Modern typology is largely oriented towards the standard variety of a language, often out of sheer necessity.

When it comes to grammatical categories or syntactic patterns, this approach might be especially misleading, since dialectal variation may be rooted quite deeply in the structure and considerable deviations from the standard system may be found, including such major parameters as variation in alignment. An important exception in our area is Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wächli (2001). They account for a number of the Circum-Baltic features selected on the "micro-level", involving a "nuanced analysis", "much in the spirit of dialectology, linguistic geography, historical linguistics", and on the "macro-level", i.e. against a broader typological background (Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wächli 2001: 615).

Likewise, typological research only started to abandon its avoidance of areal biases (cf. Wiemer & Wälchli 2012: 6–9 for an overview) from the end of the 1980s onwards, and only thereafter could it be shown that many structural features of typological interest betray areal (apart from genealogical) biases. Such biases can be made visible if the areas investi-

gated are of considerable (minimum continental) size and changes can be traced back over large time spans (at least for approx. 2,000 years).[8] Now, the natural question that arises is whether methods employed for macro-areas can be sensibly applied to smaller areas as well (cf. Wiemer 2004). The question of whether such an application is meaningful remains open. We may assume that, if it is to make sense, one should approach structural features at a much more granular level of data resolution, as is usually the case (and feasible) in typological research. One also wonders whether it is not dialectal data that would supply almost ideal material to deal with in order to show contact-conditioned biases on a micro-scale—"micro" both in terms of geography and in terms of structural variation (down to idiolects).[9] For it is in everyday encounters between individuals that the moments of innovation take place and where the mechanisms and conditions favouring or prohibiting their spread in social settings can best be observed.

To sum up so far, in contrast to historical comparative linguistics, typology, areal and contact linguistics and dialect geography have only fairly recently begun to realize systematically the advantages they can gain from their interdisciplinary exchange. More deliberate cross-fertilization between typology and dialectology only started at the turn of the third millennium (cf., e.g., Anderwald & Kortmann 2002: 160; Kortmann (ed.) 2004; Anderwald & Szmrecsanyi 2009). Likewise, the rather recent interest of typologists in areal and, thus, contact-conditioned variation of grammatical phenomena has, only recently, been mirrored by more serious attempts to renew dialect geography; admittedly, these attempts have already yielded some methodological stimuli for areal typology (Goebl 2001; Campbell 2006: 11f.; Glaser 2008; 2013). In general, however, the neglect of dialectological research not only for general linguistic issues (Chambers & Trudgill 1998: 15),[10] but also for other disciplines concerned

8 Cf. Dryer (1989), Nichols (1992).

9 Curiously, such a question has arisen in particular from the perspective of generative approaches to micro-variation in dialects. In fact, dialects can provide almost ideal conditions for the investigation of the smallest possible contrasts between closely related, and thus structurally very similar, varieties (cf. Bucheli Berger 2012: 94f.; De Vogelaer & Seiler 2012: 9f.).

10 This is not to deny that, even before the turn of the twentieth century, dialect geography and historical-comparative linguistics took notice of each other. However, as mentioned in 1.1, for a long period the former was rather treated as an auxiliary means that helped the latter to reconstruct ancient (pre-literary) stages of common

with "raumzeitlich verankerter Sprachverschiedenheit" (Oesterreicher 2007: 54), has changed only very recently.

1.3. East Slavic dialectology

Dialectology in the territory of Slavic languages, in particular East Slavic languages, evolved out of close connections with ethnography, ethnology and historical-comparative linguistics, too (cf. Durnovo 1917/18; Avanesov 1963: 293; Bernštejn 1986: 4f., and many others). For many of its representatives, it has remained a discipline whose procedures and aims are still largely framed through concepts inherited from nineteenth-century thinking about language and its significance for ethnicity (see 1.1). That is, for many, the study of rural speech[11] still pertains to an allegedly theory-free description of isolated features in a small territory, or only in a few villages, and with primary concern for the documentation of conservative, or otherwise "noticeable", phenomena.[12] Such observations remain atomistic and display no attempt to relate observations, or "facts", to some more comprehensive theoretical framework that makes the observations and analyses comparable to data of other dialects and/or other varieties of other languages, either closely associated or not associated at all (in terms of relatedness to some common "ancestor" or of areal contiguity).

Fortunately, East Slavic dialectology in Russia and the former Soviet Union has produced schools and directions of research that appeal to comparative concepts and an empirical study of dialectal speech based on falsifiable claims. Among dialectologists in East Slavic who do make theoretically relevant claims and strive for generalizations beyond particular varieties, structuralist thinking has remained a dominant char-

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ancestor languages (e.g., post-classical Latin for Romance) and to describe gradually emerging patterns of divergence in the course of the spatial expansion of diatopically defined "sister" idioms of *one* family or one *language* with an established standard (cf. Krefeld 2008: 91–97; Anderwald & Szmrecsanyi 2009: 1126f.; also Lüdtke & Mattheier 2005: 18 on Romance, Schrambke 2010: 87 on German). Moreover, the "historicist agenda" of traditional dialectology seems to have extended "every bit as keen[ly]" into later variationist frameworks (Britain 2010: 144).

11 Until recently, there was not as much interest in the diatopic variation of the urban substandard speech in Russia as there was in many other countries; one of the few exceptions here is Sergeeva & Gerd (eds.) 1998.

12 For this reason, the main informants of traditional dialectologists are people of the oldest possible generation (see the NORM-principle mentioned in 1.1).

acteristic virtually until the present day. Dialects are primarily conceived of as systems, and this pertains to dialect geography as well. In this sense, Weinreich's (1954) positive answer to the question "Is a structural dialectology possible?" has been taken seriously (cf., for instance, Ivič [Ivić] 1965 from a "pan-Slavic" perspective). In fact, it was even preceded by Avanesov and had begun to be applied before Weinreich's article appeared. From this viewpoint, however, the unavoidable problem arose as for how to apply such an approach across dialect boundaries and dialect continua (see below). It has been acknowledged that a particular (micro) system of a sub-dialect is rather a theoretical concept used for taxonomies of varieties captured diatopically. In practice, such a geographically oriented taxonomy has proved to be very useful for the planning of dialectological fieldwork, as it provides the fieldworker with valuable information about overall patterns on structural levels that have hitherto attracted dialectologists' attention (I. Isaev, p.c.). Nonetheless, in reality, various systems—determined by such factors as diachronically conditioned variation, interdialectal convergence effects, stylistic variation, impact of the standard language—interact, a fact which challenges the traditional monodimensional model of dialectal variation[13] (cf., for instance, Avanesov 1963: 295–6). Thus Moraxovskaja (1973: 13f.) says that we should take into account the type of synchronic variation that is determined by ongoing processes of change, and not exclusively the more conservative patterns, when modelling dialectal variation.

Mainly on the basis of structural dialectology, the convenient principle of subdividing varieties of rural communities, embraced by some national roof language, has been a step-by-step breakdown from geographically larger to smaller units: *narečija* 'dialects' or 'macrodialect' or 'dialect complex' (Timberlake 1993) split into *gruppy govorov* 'groups of subdialects' and, finally, *govory* 'subdialect' (compare Germ. *Mundart*), all of them translating as 'dialects' (Berger 1999: 553). There is no really good Russian equivalent to the term 'vernacular'. It has been admitted that such varieties began to vanish rapidly in the twentieth century (Kolesov et al. 1998: 5f., among others). Nonetheless, one of the consequences of

13 Here we leave aside the effect of migration on dialect mixing. Regardless, the number of investigations dealing more systematically with this kind of phenomena in East Slavic appears to be sparse; see, however, the notable monograph by Manaenkova (1978) on a Russian "island" in Belarus.

a predominantly mechanic understanding of system-based assumptions formulated by structuralism has been a clearly conceivable neglect of less traditional (and allegedly "pure") forms of dialects, such as "mixed" varieties that have arisen as a result of diatopically and diastratically complex layerings. As noted above, this concerns not only variation in rural settings, but also the otherwise fairly well-known *gorodskoe prostorečie* (≈ urban nonstandard of uneducated people without sufficient command over the standard language) or the Belarusian *trasjanka*. These varieties have been treated like outcasts (cf. Hentschel 2013 for a principled account of these shortcomings).

The influential Moscow school of dialectology, founded by R.I. Avanesov, was oriented toward a general Slavic background, but among the primary stimuli of a study of Russian dialects was the question of to what extent the diatopic division of the Russian speaking territory of the twentieth century corresponds to the history of their formation (Moraxovskaja 1973), in particular on the basis of former East Slavic tribes (cf. also Meščerskij (ed.) 1972: 6). Thus, in addition to diachronic considerations, the selection of the more salient features of a dialect is conducted with regard to extralinguistic factors, such as features that correlate with significant facts in the history and culture in their areal distribution (Avanesov 1963: 305–308; Gorškova 1968: 8; Xaburgaev 1973: 11; Bromlej 1985). This is to say, Russian, or more broadly, East Slavic dialect geography (called in the Russian literature 'linguistic', *lingvističeskaja geografija*), took a clear diachronic perspective and, in this respect, was reminiscent of Wenker's original goal concerning diatopic variation within one preconceived ethnolanguage (see 1.1). As mentioned above, this goal was interlaced with a structuralist description in which Russian, as an ethnolect (Russ. *obščenarodnyj jazyk* in Meščerskij, ed., 1972: 5), is understood as a hierarchically organized system consisting of smaller, locally restricted systems of a taxonomically branching hyper-system; cf., first of all, Avanesov's (1963) programmatic considerations, but also Avanesov (1949: 291–96; 1965) and his introduction into ARNG (1957: 14–26). The structure of such hyper-systems is explained by diachronic processes of different layers (Avanesov (ed.) 1962: 21ff.).

Beyond Slavic dialectology, a more general, principled appraisal of linguistic (including dialect) geography and its relation to areal linguistics was presented by Desnickaja (1977). She took the latter to include the

former and, thus, defined areal linguistics very broadly. She also stressed that any research in linguistic areas has, by necessity, to assess diachronic development. Although she did not formulate this explicitly, this turn *eo ipso* implied a focus on processes of convergence. Regardless, no distinct borderline between synchronic and diachronic description can be maintained, all the more so if areal convergence has somehow to be explained. Making these commitments, Desnickaja contrasted herself with Ėdel'man (1968), who distinguished dialect geography as a discipline dealing with the distribution of linguistic phenomena in geographic space against areal linguistics as a discipline trying to reconstruct ancient linguistic areas on the basis of the contemporary spread of linguistic features.

Gerd, in turn, has been concerned more with the relation of linguistic areas (on a small scale) to their ethnographic and political history. The latter may be even more important, or diachronically primary, than the former; but for him both unite under the heading of 'linguistic geography' (Gerd 1997). Each area singled out on the basis of isogloss bundles that correlate with some extra-linguistic historical background can be given a profile ('linguistic landscape'). Gerd (2001) characterizes such a profile in a way that clarifies the relationship between dialect geography and areal linguistics:

> Лингвистический ландшафт—это представленная в той или иной форме (карта, словарь, описание) география языков, диалектов и их особенностей; в случае языков генетически родственных—это география их диалектов.[14]

Here dialects of one language, or of closely related languages (practically, from a former, or still existing, dialect continuum), are seen as possible parts of an area which is more comprehensive, either territorially (measured in square kilometres) or in terms of internal genealogical differentiation. Gerd also clearly pointed out that an interest in areal convergence of dialects with a different historical background and genealogical prov-

14 "A linguistic landscape is the geography of languages, or of dialects, and their peculiarities presented in some form or other (map, lexicon, description); if the case is about a group of genealogically close languages, this will be the geography of their dialects." (Gerd 2001: 3).

enance had only recently begun to attract attention; it can be considered as a late by-product of historical linguistics and dialectology. He stressed that a focus on areas, instead of the history of single varieties, cannot consist merely of a sum of structural phenomena described for each of them (2001: 4). In a sense, Gerd argued from a circumstantialist's position (in Campbell's 2006 terms), since it may be less important (or impossible) to establish the genesis of singular phenomena and the direction of diffusion within a dedicated area.[15]

Gerd's approach resembles the sub-discipline of historical dialect geography (Russ. *istoričeskaja lingvogeografija*), which has been established for a division of labour between synchronic and diachronic dialectological accounts (cf. Gorškova 1972: 6f. on the rise of this subdiscipline). The main representatives of this approach for the area treated in this volume are, *inter alia*, Šaxmatov (1885–95) and Gorškova (1968), cf. furthermore Zaliznjak (1995; 2004) and case studies in Galinskaja (2003; this volume).

Now, a diachronic perspective is, to some extent, unavoidable in explaining variation within the same genealogical continuum, even within the same assumed (micro)system. Dialectology does well to acknowledge this old insight, which at some point disappeared from most of the current linguistic frameworks. At the same time, a reasonable equilibrium between synchronic variation and its diachronic background has been aimed for in modern East Slavic, in particular Russian dialectology,[16] and historical-comparative considerations are no longer the proper goal of dialectological research. Thus Požarickaja (2005: 4) defines the goal of dialect geography as representing the dialectal variation by means of correlates (*sootvetstvennye javlenija*). The latter ones are defined as phenomena that assume the same or, more properly, comparable functions across the dialect systems with no requirement for them to be etymologically related (Požarickaja 2005: 4, 9; cf. also Moraxovskaja 1973: 13–14), very

15 Some pioneering work in the description of different types of convergence areas was carried out by Borodina back in the 1960s. Her primary interest, however, was Romance, above all French dialects (cf. Borodina 1966), and no attention was paid to the areas that form the focus of this volume.

16 Cf. Rastorguev (1960) as a specimen, but also less known works like Jaškin (1980). More often than not, interest in transitory dialects—as a presumably specific type of dialect formation—has been evoked by research combining diachronic and synchronic viewpoints (cf. Wiemer & Erker 2012/13).

much in the sense of areal typology. Similar considerations can be found in Bromlej (1986b: 14) and Berger (1999: 553, 560–63).

In this vein, Pšeničnova (2008: 9–32) provides a more comprehensive overview of dialect geography in Russia. First of all, however, she carried out methodologically pioneering work; cf., inter alia, Pšeničnova (1996a). Using the standard method, the whole array of dialectal features is divided with regard to (i) those features that are significant for, or capable of, division into dialects due to their concise and dense co-occurrence with bundles of other features in particular sub-areas; and (ii) those that are less so because their isoglosses crosscut the alleged major dialectal division suggested by the feature bundles of the first type. The traditional school since Durnovo (1917/18) was mostly interested in the first type of features, while the other features were assigned a secondary role. Pšeničnova provides an "all-inclusive" model, as it were, that also takes features of the second type into account as equally important. Her primary goal is not to map dialectal differences on the geographical map but rather to find sets of subdialects (*sovokupnosti govorov*) that are typologically more homogenous than others, regardless of whether they are geographically close to each other or not. In her approach, a feature is only less significant if it is commonplace (Pšeničnova 1996a: 25; see further in 2.2). Unfortunately, traditional dialectology has often remained sceptical about Pšeničnova's approach; cf. Kasatkin (2002), but also the response in Pšeničnova (2003).

Avanesov's conception has made its mark on standard ways of representing the goals and interests of dialectology, as we can deduce, for instance, from Požarickaja's introduction into her textbook from 1997:

> […] специфика диалектологии как особой научной дисциплины состоит в том, что речевой факт рассматривается как факт территориальной дифференциации общенационального языка в перспективе сопоставления с другими территориальными разновидностями языка, и выявлении различий на фоне того общего, что объединяет диалекты в один национальный язык. Диалектологическое изучение требует системного подхода, при котором каждый факт языка анализируется в координатах частной диалектной системы с взаимосвязанными компонентами, и предполагает территориально-сопостави-

тельный аспект, когда этот факт получает интерпретацию уже в масштабе территориальной дифференциации национального языка.[17]

Here dialectology is clearly defined as (i) dealing with the geographic differentiation (ii) of a national language. Each geographic variety called *a particular dialectal system* (*častnaja dialektnaja sistema*) (iii) is conceived of as a relatively closed linguistic system and, as such, it is (iv) studied in comparison to other such varieties (having their own systems), but also (v) with respect to features allowing all these varieties to unite under a common roof of that national language. According to Požarickaja, dialect geography arises when the investigation of dialect systems intersects with their comparison oriented toward the national language (ibid.). The subject of comparison may cover any aspects of linguistic structure (phonetics, morphosyntax) or of the lexicon.

A new viewpoint has been formulated by Gerd (2001). According to him, synchronic dialectology includes regional roof varieties and even varieties typical of some professional branches (*regiolekty, professional'nye jazyki i žargony*), while, from the diachronic point of view, dialectology also deals with urban koinés (*kojne torgovyx gorodov srednevekov'ja*; 2001: 3). Interestingly, similar thoughts had already been uttered by Durnovo (1917/18) when—in connection with the *Opyt* (see 2.1)—he highlighted the occasionally prominent role played in combination with diastratic factors (urban agglomerations as centres of diffusion) and the role of administrative (governmental etc.) boundaries.

With but one salient exception, there have been no attempts to apply quantificational methods to the description and assessment of dialect data (see 2.2), although quite a few dialectologists and historical-comparative Slavicists have paid more and more attention to an assessment

17 "[…] the specifics of dialectology as a special scientific discipline consists in the examination of facts of speech as facts of the territorial differentiation of an all-embracing national language compared to other territorial varieties of the (same) language. It also consists in the revelation of differences on the background of something general that unites the dialects into one national language. Dialectological examination requires a systemic approach under which each fact of the language is analysed within the coordinates of a specific dialect system with mutually connected components; and it assumes this analysis from a territorially comparative perspective, by which this fact gets interpreted from the global point of view of the territorial differentiation of the national language." (Požarickaja 1997: 4f.).

of dialect geographical phenomena in terms of areal linguistics since the 1970s. Remarkably, as early as in the 1920s, some dialectologists uttered claims that the variation of features (in phonetics or the lexicon) should be subjected to quantifying analyses (cf., for instance, Buzuk 1928b).

1.4. Inquiries into the dialectal syntax of East Slavic

The main focus of traditional approaches to dialectology in general (Szmrecsanyj, this volume) and to East Slavic dialectology in particular lies within the realm of phonetics and phonology, as well as that of lexicography. Morphological variation has also been taken into account (cf., *inter alia,* Bromlej & Bulatova 1972), whereas syntax has been little investigated, whether through description or theorizing. In this sense, Šapiro's (1953) impressive monograph on dialectal syntax has continued to have little impact on East Slavic dialectology.[18] Thus, only 12 maps on syntactic features have been compiled within the large-scale project of DARJa, written mainly by I.B. Kuz'mina, E.V. Nemčenko and S.V. Bromlej. Since then, they (together with V.I. Trubinskij, see below) have become the main specialists in Russian dialectal syntax, although calls to explore and describe dialectal syntax have also been voiced, for instance, by Gorškova (1968: 3). Here, dialectology inherits the make-up of historical-comparative linguistics that once initiated dialectological research (see 1.1, 1.3). Phonology and phonetics have been considered primary factors not only within historical-comparative linguistics, but also in dialectology, because they have been assumed to be the most crucial for categorizing and describing dialectal space (Gorškova 1968: 5).

To date, the most substantial and probably enduring contributions have been made by Kuz'mina and Nemčenko (from the positions of Avanesov's school, Moscow) and by Trubinskij (Leningrad/St Petersburg). However, their contributions have effectively been restricted to Russian; cf. Kuz'mina & Nemčenko (1961 and many other articles, as well as their monograph from 1971), Kuz'mina (1993) and Trubinskij (1984), apart from many articles (cf., for instance Trubinskij in Meščerskij (ed.) 1972, and 1979), that are valuable, first and foremost,

18 It concentrates mainly on clause combining, in particular on connectives ("particles", conjunctions), and on a stock-taking of patterns of simple clauses framed on structuralist models (basically identical frames were used as a basis in the syntax chapters of the three post-war academy grammars of standard Russian).

for the study of NW-Russian dialects, in particular of resultative and passive constructions (cf. the monograph Trubinskij 1984, among lots of articles). As Trubinskij (1984: 5–7) clarified, his methodology was based predominantly on fieldwork conducted by himself, albeit within a much more restricted territory (namely the one relevant to the present volume). At the same time, Kuz'mina & Nemčenko's investigations were produced on the basis of extensive surveys carried out by local and student assistants in virtually the entire European part of Russia (i.e. up to 62° north, 48° east, 50° south and 30° west); excepted are the territories to the far north settled only after the end of the 15th century. However, some atlases and monographic investigations based on these have extended this central Russian territory in different directions, among them the ARNG (1957) and the DARJa (cf. Bromlej 1986a: 5f. and Berger 1999: 562f. for concise overviews).

Proxorova was another of those few researchers who, at a relatively early stage, asserted the need to investigate areal aspects of dialectal syntax. Her object of interest was East Slavic dialects in the border zone of Russia and Belarus, with an account of possible Baltic substrate phenomena (Proxorova 1991). She was an adherent of Schmidt's wave theory, and in this respect implicitly set herself in opposition to the authors of the *Opyt* (see 2.1). Apart from that, Proxorova's method did not seem very well-designed. She based her investigations on some vaguely preconceived syntactic fields (*sintaksičeskie polja*) built on notions of predicates, argument and adjunct positions,[19] which then, in the course of fieldwork and in comparison with East Slavic standard languages, were supposed to be made more precise. In this (probably heuristic) process, however, one can hardly get the *tertia comparationis*. Moreover, it is difficult to assess whether her findings[20] can really be restricted to the aforementioned small area; we do not find a "check" of these features against a larger areal background (cf. also Proxorova 1998; 1999). This drawback, however, is rather common in all research devoted to East Slavic dialects, something that has, in fact, been criticized by Trubinskij (1984) and Kuz'mina & Nemčenko (1987).

19 She explicitly related her method to the conception of Bondarko's 'functional-semantic fields' (cf. Bondarko 1985, and subsequent publications); cf. Proxorova (1991: 7).

20 They concerned, among other things, characteristics of verbal government (choice of prepositions etc.), case assignment of arguments, animacy distinctions in the object, comparative constructions and specific ways of expressing temporal relations.

Thus dialectological research has accounted for functional as well as syntactic categories to a tiny extent. Often, when they are discussed in dialectological work, no syntactic and/or functional analysis is provided that employs the tools of modern linguistics. Alternatively, the analysis of the respective correlate in the standard language is assumed. This (often implicit) gauge of standard Russian easily leads to inadequate or downright false conclusions. To give an example, consider two superficially parallel constructions from North and Standard Russian:

(1) Ustjanskij r., North Russian

u	*Very*	*nalit*	*polsamovara*
at	Vera.GEN	pour.PARTC.PST.PASS.INVAR	half-samovar.GEN.SG

'Vera has filled half of the samovar'.
(cited from Požarickaja, this volume)

(2) Spoken Standard Russian

U	*Very*	*nalito*	*pol*	*samovara*
at	Vera.GEN	pour.PARTC.PST.PASS.N	half	samovar.GEN.SG

'Vera has filled half of the samovar'. (constructed example)

Although both constructions look quite similar, they differ crucially in their underlying syntactic structure: while in Standard Russian the NP *pol samovara* 'half of the samowar' must be analysed as the subject of the clause and the PP *u Very* (lit. 'at Vera') as adjunct, in the North Russian counterpart the syntactic functions are assigned differently. Here, the PP *u Very* patterns like a subject according to all available syntactic subjecthood tests for Russian, lacking only the respective coding, i.e. nominative case and verbal agreement (Timberlake 1975; Jung 2007; Seržant 2012), while *polsamovara* represents an example of a less canonical (direct) object. Furthermore, both constructions differ considerably in their semantics (cf. Trubinskij 1988; Tommola 2000).

Another case in point is the different syntactic status of uninflected participles ending in -(*v*)*ši* (or its dialectal allomorphs) in East Slavic (and local Polish): in standard Russian, this participle functions as a converb, i.e. it cannot become the nucleus of an independent clause. By contrast, in the Slavic dialects discussed in 2.3 and, above all, 2.4, this kind of par-

ticiple forms the basis of a particular resultative-perfect construction in which it serves as the nucleus of independent clauses (see 2.5.4).

Needless to say, functional and syntactic categories constitute an important part of the language and should, therefore, be described for every particular dialect independently of the standard variety. This is also the main focus of the present volume (see section 3). Methodologically, this can only be done on the basis of dialectal corpora coherently transcribed and correctly annotated. We would like to emphasize that the creation and development of such corpora are an absolute must for any contemporary dialectology. In this respect, three corpora should be mentioned here: the Dialectal Subcorpus of the Russian National Corpus (RNC)[21], the Ustja Corpus (2013) (North Russian dialectal texts from the area of Ustjanskij region)and the TriMCo Dialectal Corpus (TriMCo DC), the last of which is in the process of being set up. Despite their overall scientific value, we note that such corpora are still not sufficiently representative; in particular, they are still too small and fragmentary for statistically significant observations. This is despite the fact that great amounts of field recordings and notes have been compiled in several places. In many cases, these data are either of bad sound quality, or they are only based on questionnaires or written field notes that do not supply any context. In other cases, dialectal records represent written records made by students during their obligatory fieldwork practice. This is, of course, not to deny that a huge amount of highly valuable data collected by professional dialectologists during several decades is stored in (private or institutional) dialectological archives. However, these data very often remain inaccessible, and texts from fieldwork have very rarely been published without serious adaptation to the standard language, for example in the representative collection by Eremin & Falëv (1928). We emphasize that a great deal of work needs to be done here to sort out the records and create annotated corpora.

Therefore, some "external" reasons have hampered cooperation in data exchange and very much hampered any real progress in a quantifiable and aggregate investigation of the real usage of rural speech. In fact, the lack of exchange has caused much damage because many data—recorded on non-digital carriers until the beginning of the third millen-

21 For a report and illustrations of the usability of the dialectal subcorpus cf. Letuchiy (2009).

nium—have been lost or are decaying in the archives, and because lack of access to larger amounts of data unified in corpora is preventing specialists in different linguistic fields from complementing each other in their shared work.

2. Areally interested research in East Slavic dialects: a survey

This section concentrates on the area between Lake Ladoga in the NE and the border region of Belarusian with Baltic (East and South Lithuanian as well as Latgalian dialects), with the Pskov region forming, in a sense, its centre. However, even here we will concentrate on East Slavic and not particularly take contact with Baltic and Finnic into account; nor will we consider the southwesternmost part of this contact region located in Poland (Podlasie and Mazowsze).[22] Including all these regions and languages outside East Slavic in a systematic survey would go considerably beyond the limits of this article. As such, we will mention only the most prominent and relevant work on some selected phenomena. We will, however, dedicate one subsection each to the region of Russian dialects around Pskov and Novgorod (2.3) and to its SW-prolongation, the Baltic-Slavic contact zone (2.4). Therefore, our survey splits into two more or less equal geographical halves, whose separation approximately coincides with the contemporary border between Russia and Belarus (in the region between Sebež in Russia, Rēzekne in Latvia and Miory in Belarus; see the map), although in many respects the whole stretch from the triangle Poland-Lithuania-Belarus in the SW up to Lake Ladoga in the NE proves to be outstanding for some structural properties, which we will dwell upon in 2.5.

We will give priority to work in which areal (dialect geographical) phenomena were especially highlighted. Finally, the otherwise important field of interaction between varieties of different diastratic status (standard language vs. dialects, 'trasjanka' and other Russian influence in Belarusian, etc.) will be left out. Furthermore, there is a plethora of articles and works of monograph length dealing with the dialect spread of parts of the lexicon (from either an onomasiological or a semasiologi-

22 A collection of studies with minute remarks on contact between Polish, Belarusian and/or Lithuanian, conducted in the vein of traditional structuralist dialectology (see the remarks in 1.3), was presented in Smułkowa (2002). See also Jankowiak, this volume, Żebrowska, this volume.

cal point of view), among others in connection with the *Obščeslavjanskij lingvističeskij atlas* (cf. Vendina 1998b). Ivić (Ivič 1965: 17f.) and Vendina (e.g., Vendina 2009) have been dealing with derivational morphology from a "pan-Slavic" areal perspective. The areal significance of such approaches remains to be clarified. Here we will not deal anymore with dialectal lexicology and lexicography or with derivational morphology from an areal perspective.

Map 1: The area of NW-Russian and Belarusian dialects

2.1. The history and development of dialect geography in East Slavic

As early as in the nineteenth century, some of the leading specialists betrayed their interest in the areal distribution of structural features and lexical units of East Slavic. A first dialectal dictionary appeared in 1852 & 1853 under the name *Opyt oblastnogo velikorusskogo slovarja*, edited by Sreznevskij & Vostokov (cf. Avanesov 1949: 297; Berger 1999: 554). This interest was mainly associated with a historical-ethnographic background, and efforts were not combined within any more systematic programme (Bromlej 1986a: 3). The first researcher said to have applied linguistic geography in Slavic dialectology is K.P. Mixal'čuk. He created a map on Ukrainian ("*malorusskie*") dialects in connection with his work "Južnorusskie narečija i govory," which appeared in 1872 (Mixal'čuk

1872); cf. Kalnyn' (1998a: 10), Vendina (1998a: 320), Gricenko (2013: 12).[23] E.F. Karskij was among the pioneers concerned with dialectological divisions of Belarusian based predominantly or solely on linguistic (structural) criteria (cf. his reply to Sobolevskij in Karskij 1905 [2006]), although he did systematically account for ethnographic and similar backgrounds. This is reflected in his book *Belarussy* (cf. Karskij 1903 [2006]).[24]

However, systematic research in East Slavic dialects began with the work on and publication of *Opyt dialektologičeskoj karty russkogo jazyka v Evrope* (henceforth *Opyt*) in 1915 (Durnovo et al. 1915).[25] The map embraced the entire East Slavic territory (despite the term "Russian" in the title, which was due to tsarist language policy). The authors of the *Opyt* advocated a new vision regarding the description of dialects and the classification of their types; first of all, Durnovo exposed his theoretical considerations on transitional vs. mixed dialects (Russ. *perexodnye* vs. *smešannye govory*; cf. also Durnovo 1917/18). However, after his arrest (and death) in the 1930s, his reasoning was not really continued (see also f. 7 for references on the political background). Strikingly, there have been no similar attempts in Romance or Germanic dialectology, at least not explicitly.[26]

The *Opyt* and the conception behind it stimulated the investigation of dialects as *areal* units, or as a dialect continuum within which specific subgroups could be established. Ironically, the notion of transitory dialects emerged rather by accident, as it followed from a mismatch with

23 According to Kalnyn' (1998a: 10), Mixal'čuk preceded Wenker's "Sprachatlas der Rheinprovinz" (1876) by four years. Unfortunately, the article by Mixal'čuk (1872) proves extremely difficult to access, and we have not been able to locate it ourselves (instead, we cite it here after Gricenko 2013: 12).

24 For a detailed survey of the history of Belarusian dialectological research cf. Barszczewska & Jankowiak (2012: ch. 3).

25 This map was accompanied by an elaborate commentary ("Očerk russkoj dialektologii"). Its authors were members of the "Moskovskaja Dialektologičeskaja Kommissija" (The Moscow Dialectal Committee), founded on the initiative of Šaxmatov. For the history of this commission cf. Avanesov (1949: 297f.), Moraxovskaja (1992), Berger (1999: 554).

26 For the history of this term and a critical revision of its usefulness, cf. Wiemer & Erker (2012/2013). Wenker (1877 [1915]) was well aware of transitional zones ("Übergangsgebiete"). He mentioned them in passing when presenting the dialectal diversification of the Rhenish Fan (on the basis of phonetic features), but he did not coin this expression as a term and used it promiscuously with mixed dialects ("Mischungsmundarten" etc.).

one of Durnovo's initial assumptions, namely that he first postulated that there were distinct boundaries between diatopically definable units (i.e. dialects).[27] Since he was often unable to establish such boundaries, transition zones had to be introduced in order to do justice to (socio) linguistic reality. Thus areal continua arose as rather unexpected by-products of the initial programme. Apart from that, although Durnovo and his colleagues, at that time, could work only with isolated isoglosses (Moraxovskaja 1964: 66f.), their thoughts undoubtedly had some influence on dialect geography, which started developing immediately after World War II, mostly thanks to Avanesov (see 1.3).

The authors of the *Opyt* criticized Schmidt's wave theory (Schmidt 1872) and searched for discontinuities, but did not always succeed in establishing them (see above).[28] After World War II the *Opyt* stimulated work on dialect geography, which corroborated the assumption that East Slavic ("Russian") dialects (and not just agglomerations of rather chaotic isoglosses) exist. At least this became clear in the most influential work by Avanesov & Orlova (1965), who produced another map; cf. also Avanesov (ed., 1962), Orlova (ed., 1970) and Zaxarova & Orlova (1970). Among other things, systematic cartography of dialectal features brought to light a much higher degree of structural closeness between NE-Belarusian and North Russian dialects than had been observed beforehand (Orlova 1964: 78).

The necessity of investigating East Slavic dialects from the point of view of linguistic geography was already stressed in Avanesov & Bernštejn (1958: 3, quoted in Popova 2000: 96). This spirit was upheld (or renewed) by Tolstoj (1977), who pointed out that the wave-theory-based assumption of innovations arising in the centre and archaisms usually being retained on the peripheries requires revision.

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27 This was criticized immediately after the appearance of the *Opyt*, for instance, by Buzuk (1926; 1928a); cf. also the comment in Avanesov (1949: 299).

28 Wave theory was also assessed critically by Karskij (1905 [2006: 582f.]) with respect to an internal division of Belarusian dialects and their delimitation from neighbouring (or overlapping) areas of other Slavic and Baltic languages. Wave theory was also criticized by Šaxmatov in his lectures on Russian (more properly: East Slavic) dialectology (delivered in 1909–1915 and 1919). Remarkably, as a case in point to disprove the validity of Schmidt's basic claims, Šaxmatov used deviations from the common East (and South) Slavic sound law **dl*, **tl* > *l* in Pskov dialects (where we find *gl*, *kl* instead); cf. Šaxmatov (2010: 50–56). For a discussion of this feature see 2.3.

Research into dialect geography has predominantly been based on atlases that, in turn, were worked out from primary data gathered by systematic and unified questionnaires (not on the basis of coherent texts). Dialect geography has been pursuing two main goals: (i) to establish internally homogeneous subdialectal zones that are outstanding, and thus discrete ('kompaktnye'), on the basis of their (typically phonetic) features against a wider genealogical background, and (ii) to divide the whole Russian territory into major dialectal groups or dialects. In this vein, the programme for atlases of East Slavic was developed by Avanesov (see 1.3); these are the DARJa and the DABM. They yielded other publication series like *Vostočnoslavjanskie izoglossy* (published since 1995; cf. Popova 1995), and they can be seen as parts of an even larger long-term project, the *Obščeslavjanskij lingvističeskij atlas* (OLA, published since 1988) and, already since 1965, the series *Obščeslavjanskij lingvističeskij atlas* (*Materialy i issledovanija*), in which materials used for the OLA have been used for more specific issues. Many articles published in *Issledovanija po slavjanskoj dialektologii* (published since 1992) and other series are based on material assembled in these atlases, cf., for instance, Kalnyn' (1998a; 2002) on diachronic phonetics and syllable structure (e.g., the development of **TorT*, **TolT*), Popova (1998; 2000) and Bukrinskaja et al. (2008) on morphonological features; Popova (2002) gave a concise survey of areas within the East Slavic continuum. The *Atlas russkix govorov* served as the basis of Bromlej's (1959) article on the distribution of comparative forms of adjectives across Russian dialects and of the monograph Bromlej & Bulatova (1972) on the inflectional morphology of all major parts of speech. A list of East Slavic dialect atlases and series can be found in Kalnyn' (2002: 11), general overviews of methods in dialect geography and cartography in Nazarova (1974) and Lizanec (1988). The work on the Belarusian dialect atlas (DABM 1963), which was supervised in the 1950s by J.F. Mackevič and R.I. Avanesov, as well as on several lexica devoted to Belarusian dialects, was subsumed in Kuncėvič (2007). Some critical assessment of the advantages and limits of dialect atlases (which are by necessity based on already assumed isoglosses and/or features) was presented in Kalnyn' (1998a); cf. also Moraxovskaja (1959: 132–138) and Žigo (2013). Bromlej (1981) discussed the advantages of data from atlases for the study of diachronic dialectology, as did Kuz'mina (1985) for diachronic dialectal syntax. Bromlej (2010) contains a reprint of her works,

quite a few of which dwell upon East Slavic dialect geography. Dialect geography has also been considered as an important discipline for the establishment of assumptions about the epicentres and hotbeds of divergence processes (cf., inter alia, Trubinskij 2002).

Azarx (2000) attempted to give a cartographic representation of derivatives and the lexical fields of their bases in nouns of Russian dialects (cf. also Azarx 1992). Šabrova (2008) provided a very informative survey of morphonemics as a possible basis for the classification of Russian dialects. But, to our knowledge, no specific insights have been claimed with respect to the dialect zones that are of immediate interest in this volume.

The third volume of DARJa (DARJa III 1996) contains 12 maps depicting 16 features. Among them, many are of immediate interest for East Slavic's contact points with Baltic and West Finnic (see 2.5): constructions with predicative participles (also of transitive verbs and with ACC-marked object-NPs), nominatival object, indefinitely quantified NPs in the GEN with the copula *byt'* or *byvat'*, postpositive demonstrative clitics (called "particles", see 2.5.3). Altogether, however, syntax was accounted for rather unsystematically. This owes its origins to the history of the questionnaire which, from the end of the 1940s, laid the basis for data elicitation (cf. Bromlej 1986a: 4). In their review, Kuz'mina & Nemčenko (1987) also offered the criticism that, in the process of data gathering, only those syntactic features that distinguish dialects from the standard language were assembled systematically; more often than not, no reliable information was gathered for features that are coincidental with the standard language. As a consequence, the maps do not satisfyingly reflect the areal distribution of syntactic oppositions and variants in the dialects. For the same basic criticism cf. Trubinskij (1984, in particular pp. 16–30).[29] Furthermore, the maps hardly provide information suitable

29 This raises another fundamental issue (which we cannot go into in more detail here): should the description of a dialect system or subsystem comprise the entirety of its structural and functional distinctions (often called "monographic approach") or only those features which are identified as being different from the respective standard (or roof) language (so-called "differential approach")? As far as we can judge, many (most?) dialect descriptions have followed the latter principle, even if, strikingly, the investigator assumed a dialect to be a system in and of itself. As we see, the differential approach has been characteristic of work on dialect atlases, too, and it is inherently more appropriate to the endeavour of capturing (groups of) features in their areal distribution. Nonetheless, attempts at monographic accounts of dialect systems are quite old. For instance, as early as in 1929, R.I. Avanesov and V.N. Sidorov presented their proposal to describe the dialect of Povetluž'e (near Nižnij Novgorod) in

for either a functional description of the features represented or of their syntactic behaviour, frequency, input restrictions, etc. This is why they are of rather limited interest to a more generally interested researcher.

In turn, the long-term project OLA has been designed as a kind of "pan-Slavic" dialect geography on the basis of historical-comparative linguistics (Vendina 1998b). It also included syntactic features, among which we encounter particularly interesting ones for North(West) Russian and its prolongation to the Southwest into Belarusian territory: several contexts of use "sensitive" for the genitive (e.g., the genitive of temporal transfer, as in *odolžit' noža* 'to borrow a/the knife for a while'—cf. Seržant, this volume—or negated existential constructions like *samovary*.NOM.PL *zdes' ne byli* lit. 'samowars were not here'), the functional conflation of the comitative with the instrumental marking pattern (e.g., *kot carapaet s nogtjami* 'the cat scratches with its nails'; *kopaem s soxoj* 'we dig/plough? with a wooden plough'), the encoding of the inalienable possessor with dative instead of the standard PP *u*+GEN (e.g., *a gde papa im*.DAT*?* 'where is their dad?' vs. standard Russian *u nix* 'at them.GEN'). Unfortunately, from among 100 syntactic features only 13 were densely elicited (Kuz'mina 1987).

In her OLA-based survey on a certain group of lexical archaisms and the inner-Slavic areal spread of phonologically relevant oppositions based on continuations of Proto-Slavic *ě and *ě:, Vendina (1997: 74) remarked that insular archaisms related to these features tend to form a "belt" extending from the southern part of North Russian via Middle Russian, Belarusian and North Ukrainian dialects down to West Galician ("*malopol'skie*") dialects in contemporary Poland (cf. also Vendina 1998c: 70–79). In other words: there seems to be a tendency for conservative dialectal islands to cluster, and some of them become particularly obvious in the East Slavic dialect region to which the contributions of this volume are devoted.

2.2. A quantifying approach to dialect geography

Complementary to this way of reasoning is the aim of classifying Russian dialects with the aid of a stochastic ('mathematical-taxonomic') model

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its entirety to an audience at the Institute of the Russian Language (Moscow), where it was rejected. Other such attempts followed after the Second World War (I. Isaev, p.c.; cf. also Gricenko 2013), but they seem to have remained in a clear minority.

developed and performed by Pšeničnova. She is the only East Slavic dialectologist who has hitherto applied quantificational methods. Her basic assumption has been that dialectal units (of different format) can be classified out of their territory of use if one understands them as unique and consistent systems defined via an agglomerate of interrelated features (cf. Pšeničnova 1973; 1977; 1987; 1996a,b; 2000: 134; 2002; 2008). That is, Pšeničnova starts from basic structural assumptions and relies on the results of dialect geography accepted after Avanesov (1949) (see 1.3, 2.1), in particular on the results of the questionnaire methods by which properties of dialects had been collected in a unified manner. From this database, she took 4,416 features altogether, and the end result is not dialects in the traditional sense of diatopically more or less distinct varieties, but rather as units whose relative degree of closeness is determined independently from territorial contiguity. As a result, close dialects (on different taxonomic levels) need not neighbour one another, rather they are united (and defined) by their structural similarity.[30] In this respect, Pšeničnova's procedure and results turn the diachronically oriented basis of Avanesov's hierarchical model (see 2.1) upside down, and they are comparable to the methods and goals pursued on the basis of a huge database of Dutch dialects (cf. Nerbonne 2008; Spruit et al. 2009; Levshina, this volume), or to the investigation by Szmrecsanyi (2013) based on the Freiburg Corpus of English Dialects (FRED), which itself is composed of texts from more than 30 traditional English dialects from all over Great Britain. Pšeničnova's approach allows the introduction of such notions as the degree of compactness (*kompaktnost'*) or homogeneity (*odnorodnost'*) of a group of subdialects, established statistically: the fewer deviations from the average degree of originality found across the subdialects of a group, the more homogeneous this group is (Pšeničnova 1996a: 30).

30 Cf. Pšeničnova (2000: 137): Диалект, или система диалекта, представляет собой максимальную модель описания однородной группы говоров, которая строится как комплекс признаков, каждый из которых отмечен хотя бы в одном говоре данной группы. ("A dialect, or a dialect system, is to be conceived of as a maximal descriptive model of a homogeneous group of dialects that builds on a complex of features, each of which is registered in at least one subdialect of the respective group.") On the relation to dialect geography and areal distribution cf. also Pšeničnova (1983).

This method does not allow for any claims concerning the chronology and direction of diffusion to be specified.[31] It is restricted to dialects of one language (Russian) and does not aim to (re)classify Russian dialects, as such, rather it determines the degree of closeness/relatedness between groupings of dialects on the basis of statistical assessment. Contrary to Avanesov and his followers (above all, Orlova and Zaxarova), this method does not aim to geographically "arrange" dialects and correlate with their genesis (from an ethnographic and linguistic point of view), but rather leads to a much stronger emphasis on continuous transitions between accepted dialectal divisions, i.e. dialect clines are made much more salient (Pšeničnova 2008: 172–77). Among Pšeničnova's more specific results pertinent to the dialects focused on in this volume, we may mention her finding that the border between the southern part of the Pskov dialect group (see 2.3) and the northern part of the Smolensk group appears blurred, so much so that she even united this territory, often assumed to be a border region between dialects, into one separate dialectal unit (after Bukrinskaja et al. 2008: 164). She thus confirmed the results first formulated in Zaxarova & Orlova (1964; 1970), who claimed a special status for the western dialectal group.

A further methodologically important work that has to be mentioned in this context is Tkačenko (1979). The author shows that frequencies of the pattern *žili-byli* 'there lived' (live.PST.PL-be.PST.PL) are highest in North Russian and lowest in Ukrainian, correctly assuming language contact with Finnic (Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli 2001: 627, see also Požarickaja on the Pluperfect, this volume). On this issue, though from the perspective of colloquial standard Russian, cf. also Weiss (2012).

2.3. The Russian dialects of the Pskov-Novgorod area

In speaking about the group of Russian dialects in the region of Pskov and Novgorod, we refer to the northwestern part of the East Slavic territory, situated north from Polack (Belarus), Smolensk and Vjaz'ma (Russia). From an ethnographic viewpoint it corresponds more or less to the lands that were Slavicized by the tribes of the Kriviči in the SW and the Slovenes near Lake Il'men ('il'menskie slovene') in the NE. This

31 Cf., however, Pšeničnova (1991) where she proposed a method of relating dialectal geographical data with diachronic tendencies of features to spread or shrink areally. This method relies on procedures by which features are weighed against each other.

region bordered in the west with Baltic and West Finnic tribes, which had previously been living in the then Slavicised territory. This agglomeration of Slavic dialects (either in its entirety, or in part) has been attracting attention because of a number of salient features that distinguish them from Russian dialects located closer to the centre of the East Slavic territory (and having supplied the basis for the standard language). We will discuss some of these peculiarities in section 2.5. As for the ancient Pskovian dialects, phonetic properties and their relation to palatalization (or its non-occurrence) were analysed in Vermeer (1986). A micro-analysis of their spread among different lexemes was presented by Bjørnflaten (1997), who, remarkably, was able to figure out a geographic distribution of area-specific sound changes across relevant lexemes whose pattern pretty much resembles implicational relations between lexemes affected by the High German sound rule ([t > s], [p > f], [k > x], etc.) in the so-called Rhenish Fan. Peculiarities of consonants in the Pskov region of the twentieth century were analysed in Čekmonas (1997) and Kasatkin (1997). Honselaar has presented a detailed monographic description of a sub-dialect of the Pskov region in the immediate neighbourhood of Estonia (Honselaar 2001).

As concerns the southern edge of this area, Buzuk (1926) supplied a pre-war description of the dialects around Nevel' (today in Russia, close to the northern Belarusian border). This region constitutes, as it were, the linkage between the Pskovian and the NE-Belarusian dialect area, for which it has proven very difficult to establish any sort of abrupt changes (as stresses Buzuk).

It is essential to realize that features encountered in the nineteenth–twentieth-century stage of Russian dialects around Pskov and Novgorod do not necessarily reflect ancient stages from the same region in a presumably more homogeneous East Slavic dialect continuum (up to the end of the 12th century), from which the Slavic dialects of Pskov and Novgorod already showed some deviations at that time. From the mid-19th century onwards, different scholars found reason to argue that the Pskov-Novgorod region had developed as a separate (sub)branch of Slavic and that its peculiarities, in comparison to the rest of the slowly forming East Slavic territory, were due to another ethnic and linguistic provenance connecting this region with Slavic tribes south to the Baltic Sea, i.e. to Lexitic and other sub-branches of today's West Slavic (cf. Bjørnflaten

1993: 7f. and especially Krys'ko 1997: 110–12; 1998: 368 for his brief critical surveys). Indeed, from a historical-comparative point of view, several important isoglosses make the Pskov-Novgorod region stand out (cf. Holzer 1997). However, some of the peculiarities pointed out since the nineteenth century[32] can readily be explained as the results of contact with Finnic- and/or Baltic-speaking populations. Most obviously this must have been the case with the so-called cokan'e, i.e. the neutralization of the phonological contrast between [c, c'] and [tʃ, tʃ'] in favor of [c, c'], which is most probably due to a Finnic substrate (Čekmonas 2001b: 341–46). An analogous point can be made for the weak phonological opposition of palatalized vs. non-palatalized consonants in a Russian dialect spoken in NE-Estonia (Xejter 1979). Another case in point is the use of the interrogative pronoun *kto* 'who' in the meaning of 'what' (and the lack of *čto* 'what') noted since the nineteenth century in many subdialects of the Pskov region. The lack of a lexical (or morphological) opposition between 'who' and 'what' very much resembles Baltic *kas* 'who, what'. It is not, however, very clear when this phenomenon was exhibited in the dialects of the Pskov region; cf. Sidorenskaja (1979) with further references.

The case of [kl, gl] in place of the expected [l] derived from common Slavic **dl*, **tl* appears to be much more complicated. At the start, it did not seem easy to explain the occurrence of [kl, gl] with an inner-Slavic sound rule, thus one might consider attributing it, at least partially, to analogical levelling due to contact with Baltic, insofar as Slavic **dl*, **tl* corresponds to *kl*, *gl* in some few cognate morphemes of Baltic (compare, e.g., **jedla* > Russ. *el'*, Pol. *jodła*, Lith. *eglė* 'spruce'). Such cognates, however, are very rare. Therefore, one should be careful in assuming analogical extension to etymologically unrelated cases, for instance, **četli* 'they (have) read' > standard Russ. *-čli* vs. NW-dial. *čьkli*; common Russ. *pove-lъ* vs. **pove-dlъ* < NW-dial. *pove-gle* 'he led' (compare with Lith. *ved-ė* [the same]). Zaliznjak (1995: 40f.) mentions that *kl/gl*-cases are less widespread in the eastern part of the region, in other words in those parts where less contact with Baltic could be expected. Nonetheless, since etymologically unrelated cases abound in the literature, it seems bold to build one's hypothesis mainly on analogical extension from just a few cognates. Furthermore, one should account for the fact that *tl, dl* > *kl, gl* was attested not only in various Baltic dialects, but also in Pomeranian, Slovincian and some scat-

32 Cf. Kuraszkiewicz (1963: 80f.) for a summary of the relevant features.

tered Polish dialects (e.g., *moglić się* < *modlić się* 'pray to God', *hanglować* < *handlować* < Germ. *handeln* 'trade'). Moreover, this change shows up even in Finnic, as cases with this sound change in loans from Proto-Slavic suggest (e.g., Est. *mugl* 'alkali' < Proto-Slavic **mūdla* 'soap'); cf. Holzer (1998: 43, citing Stang 1966: 107 for the Baltic and West Slavic cases, Taszycki 1961: 273 for Polish dialects). Holzer (1997: 97, with some more references) explains the *tl*, *dl* > *kl*, *gl* as an ordinary sound change in a limited region of Slavic (e.g., in Mazowsze) after 600 AD, which affected parts of East Baltic and parts of Old Prussian (a now extinct West Baltic language).[33] The aforementioned parallels with Lithuanian might thus be, on the contrary, an indication of a more general spread of a sound change that arose in Slavic and encroached into Baltic. This would turn the direction of spread upside down, and the change *tl*, *dl* > *kl*, *gl* can be taken as a good example to illustrate the primary importance of a reliable chronologization of events (both in absolute and relative periodisation).

More peculiarities were brought to light by the discovery (in 1951) of the Novgorod birch bark texts, analysed thoroughly by Andrej Zaliznjak and others (cf., first of all, Zaliznjak 1995). Findings based on these texts (mostly written in a Slavic variety that was largely uninfluenced by Church Slavonic) triggered heated debates among specialists of diachronic dialectology because some of the facts and their interpretation cast doubt on previous assumptions concerning the relative homogeneity of dialects that were spoken in the area nowadays subsumed under East Slavic.[34] The biggest bone of contention was different interpretations of the fact that texts with a low degree or no influence of Church Slavonic lack morphonological results of the second palatalization of velars (e.g., *k̲ъrky* 'church', *k̲ělъ* 'whole, intact', *x̲ěrъ* 'grey', *vъx̲ě* 'all (pl.)' instead of *c̲ъrky*, *c̲ělъ*, *s̲ěrъ*, *vъs̲ě*, respectively); cf. Gluskina (1962; 1968; 1979),[35] also

33 The fact that this isogloss runs through the Pskov-Novgorod region can then be explained as the result of a collision of two waves. Cf. Holzer (1997: 97, emphasis in the original): "Auf russischem Gebiet ist die Isoglosse 16 [continuation of *tl*, *dl*; BW/IS] nicht das Ergebnis des Stillstandes e i n e r Welle wie auf slowakischem oder slovenischem, sondern des Aufeinandertreffens z w e i e r Wellen: Hier grenzt das Gebiet, in dem der Wandel *tl*, *dl* > *l* dem Wandel *tl*, *dl*, > *kl*, *gl* den Boden entzogen hat, an das, in dem es sich umgekehrt verhält."

34 This issue was discussed based on data from atlases (mainly from the OLA) by Popova (1995).

35 For a critical survey of Gluskina's work, cf. Bjørnflaten (1997: 8–12), for its further impact on the study of the internal heterogeneity of pre-documented Slavic cf. Vermeer (1997).

Zalizjnak (1995: 37f.) and Holzer (1997: 89f.) on this and similar facts. This observation allowed the assumed belief that this morphonological process embraced the entire territory of late common Slavic to be called into question. In his painstaking reply to his opponents, Zaliznjak (1991) was able to defend the postulate that this assumption needs revision and to draw conclusions about an early dialectal differentiation of the NW-edge of nowaday's East Slavic territory (see there for further references). On the other hand, researchers of different convictions, including Zaliznjak himself, have been aware that the territory around Pskov and Novgorod, even in ancient times, must have constituted an agglomerate of partially quite disparate Slavic dialects (with the Novgorod and Pskov region being less similar to the centre of East Slavic), and that this territory had been Slavicized in different waves from different directions. Moreover, some researchers (among them, again, Zaliznjak) took the impact of contact with Finnic and/or Baltic speaking population from the earliest time onwards into consideration (cf. Seržant 2008). In turn, Krys'ko (1997: 117–27; 1998: 371–73), who himself in some respect opposed Zalizjnak's position, supplied a summary of different layers of archaisms and innovations of the Pskov-Novgorod region. This survey allows for the conclusion that at least most of the less spectacular changes (and indeed conservative features) do not distinguish this dialect group very much, if at all, from the rest of East Slavic.

Regardless, Krys'ko showed (once more) why it is so important to be as clear and accurate as possible regarding the chronology of innovations (or their non-occurrence) and to be careful in tying up interpretations about the history of dialectal differentiation with archaeological findings and with observations from the properties of contemporary dialects. Relating the latter suggestions to stages like the 10th-12th century is by no means straightforward. This particularly concerns the region of Novgorod since, after Novgorod had been conquered and subdued by the Moscovitian dukes (1478–1570), it was submitted to "purifying" actions which led to considerable changes in the population and its language (Krys'ko 1994: 26). Thus a critical reconsideration of all available diachronic and dialectological facts and of their interpretations might well lead to the conclusion that the assumption of a former dialectal continuum with West Slavic is premature and may, in fact, prove to be untenable given the direct evidence. By the twentieth century, dialects of

the Pskov-Novgorod region underwent considerable changes, which have made them much unlike the stage we encounter in (or reconstruct from) the Novgorod birch bark texts (Krys'ko 1998: 369). Together with this and for a long time, East Slavic dialectology "forgot" to take contact with Baltic and especially West Finnic into consideration (cf. Krys'ko 1998 and Čekmonas 2001b for justified criticism).

2.4. The Baltic-Slavic Contact Zone (*from a Slavic perspective*)

For many reasons, the Belarusian dialects (see below) are most important for this stretch of land. Let us thus begin by recapping the basis of their traditional division.

Following Avanesov's influential thoughts, in addition to Buzuk's (1928b) fundamental conclusions from his inter-war fieldwork, the Belarusian dialectal landscape has been divided into three main dialect zones which, roughly, run in a SE-NW direction (cf. Avanesaŭ et al. 1968). They happen, therefore, to run almost orthogonally with the Belarusian-Lithuanian border region (see below). The latter in particular cuts into the so-called middle-Belarusian dialect zone (Br. 'sjarėdnebelaruskija havorki', also called 'central dialect'), a broad belt composed of purportedly[36] transitional dialects that separate the NE- from the SW-dialect.[37] In this intersecting part of both divisions, another peculiar dialect zone, the so-called northwestern dialect zone (Bel. 'paŭnočna-zaxodnjaja dyjalektnaja zona'), has been highlighted; compare map 77 in LG (1969). It is telling, however, that this region in the vicinity of the Baltic-speaking territory was pointed out mainly for the existence of l e x i c a l baltisms. Otherwise, dialectologists notice a rather unpredictable co-occurrence (Br. "цераспалосіца") of features which makes it difficult (if not impossible) to make generalizations regarding regionally stable adaptations (cf. Kryvicki 1998: 60f.; Astrėjka 2006: 27). Belarusian dialectologists further admit that salient features of this and other "regional complexes" (Russ. *zonal'nye kompleksy*) are of a "monostructural" nature: "The linguistic properties which are characteristic of this "regional complex" re-

36 At least until the course of the 1960s, when Avanesaŭ et al. (1968) and the DABM (1963) appeared. The specific transitory status of this broad belt apparently goes back to Buzuk (1928b); cf. also Kryvicki (2009: 508f.).

37 For a comprehensive survey of accepted dialect divisions and of proposals to delimit Belarusian from Russian dialects in the history of East Slavic dialectology cf. Barszczewska & Jankowiak (2012: 55–65 and ch. 4). Cf. also Hapanovič & Mackevič (1959) for an earlier elaborate survey.

fer not to all levels of linguistic structure, but only to a certain part of if" (Astrėjka 2006: 25).[38] The problem is that clines actually arise from non-salient features, but it is exactly these features that cannot be built into a coherent picture. As already mentioned (1.3), there have been no attempts to conduct a quantified analysis of feature aggregates.[39]

As concerns the contact region where East Slavic (Belarusian) and Baltic (East Lithuanian, Latgalian) dialects have been intersecting for centuries (the Baltic-Slavic contact region, henceforth BSCZ),[40] the state of research so far more or less reflects the general situation of what is still a low degree of cross-fertilization among the disciplines, as pointed out in 1.2. Cooperation has generally taken place between "traditional" dialectologists and ethnographers, which has resulted mostly in sociolinguistic descriptions with historical backgrounds and no attempts at variationist analyses.[41] Dialectologists working in this region have often been guided by some national background: at the very least they have hardly ever looked at their data from an areal perspective or properly taken contact varieties into account, with only few exceptions; cf. articles in Toporov (ed., 1972), Sudnik (ed., 1980) and Jankowiak (2009), cf. also Nevskaja & Sudnik (1978), Smułkowa (1988), Grek-Pabisowa & Maryniakowa (1993). Comprehensive accounts of features converging across family bounda-

38 The original quote in Russian: свойственные для него языковые отличия относятся не ко всем уровням языковой структуры, а только к определенной ее части.

39 Cf. Wiemer (2013: 320f.) for this line of argumentation. Moreover, one has to keep in mind that dialectologists, while drawing the main dialect divisions, were (and are still) influenced by historical-ethnographic factors. Against this background "complex zones" (or Br. 'dyjalektnyja zony') are treated as more recent layers caused by migrations and assimilatory processes, above all in contact with communities speaking Polish or Lithuanian (Kryvicki 2009: 511f.). The latter ones are only vaguely admitted, but, to our knowledge, have never been specified in a falsifiable manner.

40 The BSCZ forms part of the Circum-Baltic Area. It is defined as the overlap region between Slavic and Baltic dialects (with only few blurred edges). It runs (with an average width of 100–130 km) on both sides along the contemporary northern state border of Belarus, starting from the "triangle" between Poland, Belarus and Lithuania (around Hrodna) and protracting for some 480 km to the NE into SE-Latvia where Belarusian interferes with Latgalian. This territory cuts slightly north to the "triangle" between Latvia, Russia and Belarus (around Rēzekne, Ludza on the Latvian and Sebež on the Russian side); see the map at the beginning of section 2. For more details cf. Wiemer (2004; 2013).

41 Among the most recent pieces of work from this angle, one can name Smułkowa (2011), vol. 1 (the second volume is a dictionary of Belarusian-Polish bilinguals in the Braslaŭ district, NE-Belarus).

ries form an exception (cf. Lekomceva 1972a, b and, first and foremost, Sudnik 1975). This is also maintained for the investigation of regional Polish (Pol. *polszczyzna kresowa*), which otherwise can be considered as probably the best-studied group of varieties of the BSCZ.[42] Likewise, in the important double-volume, Dahl & Koptjevskaja-Tamm (eds., 2001), although there is a focus on areal and contact linguistic issues in the broader area, Polish varieties and Belarusian rural dialects were hardly paid attention to; it does, however, contain a valuable digest on the areally relevant properties of the Russian dialects of Old Believers in the Baltics (Čekmonas 2001a).

The areal intersection of Baltic and Slavic allows for a sharp geographic delineation, leaving aside a few (moribund or already extinct) insular dialects. Simultaneously, different studies have already shown that salient features of the BSCZ can and should be conceived of as being embedded in larger areal continua, among which the most prominent one runs in NE-SW direction, roughly from Lake Ladoga (NE) toward Mazowsze and Podlasie (SW); cf., for instance, Maryniakowa (1976); Wiemer & Giger (2005: ch. 12) regarding resultatives, Timberlake (1974), Ambrazas (2001) and Mendoza (2008) on nominative objects (with further references therein), Wiemer (2006b; 2012a; *forthcoming*-a) and Seržant (2012) on the relation between Actor-demoting participial constructions, the perfect and its evidential reinterpretation, Wälchli (2000) and Wiemer (2006a) on evidentiality, Seržant (2005; 2008; 2010) on phonetics and phonology, Seržant (*forthcoming*-a, b) on non-canonical alignment patterns, Wiemer (2012a) on object and subject marking from different vantage points as well as Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli (2001) for a general survey, partially cf. also Wiemer (2003b) and specifically Wiemer & Erker (2011) from the perspective of particular dialects.

For centuries, Belarusian rural vernaculars have been playing a key role in sociolinguistic terms, since they have served as the main and constant transmitter in communication and language shift (Wiemer 2003c: 109–119), not only during the Grand Duchy of Lithuania,[43] but also to

42 Cf., above all, Martynov (ed., 1973), the series *Studia nad polszczyzną kresową* (vol. I–XII, since 1982), numerous books and articles (cf. also Żebrowska, this volume) and the unpublished dissertation Ostrówka (2001) on Polish spoken in Latgale.

43 Cf. Bednarczuk (1994; 1999) and Ivanov (2003) for brief general overviews. Cf. also Kuraszkiewicz (1963: 85) for short remarks on features which became particularly salient in East Slavic varieties during the time of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

what was certainly no lesser a degree afterwards. This factor, together with their low social prestige, a practically absent roof variety and, thus, a low degree of "filtering" norms, has probably allowed contact phenomena that are typical for the whole BSCZ to enter into these Belarusian varieties in the most unhampered way. Generally, Belarusian dialects of the BSCZ have been subject to both inner-Slavic and Baltic influences and, in recent decades, to increasing dialect levelling and mixing with Russian (Wiemer 2003a). These mixed vernaculars have often been referred to by the Polish pseudo-term *mowa prosta* (lit. 'simple speech') or *język tutejszy* ('here-ish language'); cf. Wiemer (*forthcoming*-b).[44] Recently, Lithuanian influence seems to have receded even in phonetics (Wiemer 2006). Levelling and mixing have only recently been recognized and acknowledged (cf. Smułkowa 2010).

After all, despite their key role, Belarusian rural vernaculars have remained the worst studied type of variety in the BSCZ. For an early case study in the phonetics of one (!) speaker cf. Broch (1958), the first more detailed accounts of the variation in nominal inflection and the present tense of verbs based on two geographically distant spots of the BSCZ (around Braslaŭ and Lida) have been written by Erker (2009; 2013a–b; *forthcoming*).[45] Jankowiak (2009) contains the only systematic account of some structural features (and their sociolinguistic background) of Belarusian dialects in the northeast corner of the BSCZ (= Latgale).[46] Hardly any studies exist regarding the Belarusian spoken on either side

44 They differ in many respects from the so-called 'trasjanka', which is an urban "melange" of Belarusian with Russian that arose in post-war Soviet Union. This variety has been studied extensively from the perspective (and with the tools) of variationist linguistics in a project guided by Gerd Hentschel (Oldenburg). Cf. http://www.trasjanka.uni-oldenburg.de/. Cf., e.g., Hentschel & Tesch (2006) and most recently Hentschel (2013), but see also Stern (2013) on the impact of Russian-Belarusian mixing.

45 Cf. also her dissertation (Erker 2013b). For recent comments on morphologically conditioned realizations of allomorphs in verbal inflection of Belarusian in general, cf. Rusak (2013), regarding first insights into the allomorphic realization of 1PL.PRS-verb forms in Belarusian, cf. Černjavskij (2013).

46 He investigated word prosody, some salient properties of vocalism (akan'e) and consonantism (fricative [γ], non-palatalized [r], so-called c"ekanne-dz"ekanne, and some other features), inflection of nouns and verbs as well as some salient syntactic peculiarities (cf. also Jankowiak, this volume). Most essential is his account of akan'e, for which he supplied figures based on proportions between expected and encountered tokens (χ^2).

of the border region with Lithuania and Latgale that would inquire into the type and range of grammatical variation *sub specie* language contact and/or areal significance. Exceptions to this are Wiemer (2004), Wiemer et al. (2004) and, originally, Wiemer (2003a, b). Here, mainly on the basis of personal field records, it is shown that structural variation in the Belarusian rural vernaculars of the BSCZ does not differ in principle from known features of *polszczyzna kresowa* (cf. also Wiemer, *forthcoming*-b). The hypothesis that this Polish variety and rural Belarusian do not differ so much in the types of singular features and their variation as in their combination and the proportion of their token frequency was further developed in Wiemer & Erker (2011).

2.5. Properties pertinent to areal linguistics and typology

Parallels in structural peculiarities often shared by the dialects of the Pskov-Novgorod region and the BSCZ have been noted for quite a long time. They mostly concern phonetic or morphological features (with intermediary structural levels, see below); cf., among many others, Kuraszkiewicz (1934–35 [1985]) and standard introductions to Russian dialectology. It was only after Larin (1963) that proper attention started being paid, albeit slowly, to syntactic features.

2.5.1. Phonetic phenomena

Cokan'e: The northwest Russian dialects exhibit a phenomenon referred to in the literature as *cokan'e* (and mentioned already in 2.3). In this area, the phonological opposition between /tʃ/ and /ts/ (or /ts'/) is neutralized in favour of /ts/, /ts'/. Concomitantly, the phoneme pronounced as /ts/ elsewhere in East Slavic is, in many cases, pronounced as /k'/ here. Of course, the influence of the standard language and other dialects disturb this picture fairly considerably, since it not only adjusts the pronunciation of certain lexemes to the standard but also yields hypercorrect forms. Cokan'e is a very ancient phenomenon widely attested in Old Novgorodian (the birchbark charters as well as in the Russian Old Church Slavonic manuscripts written or copied in this area). Seržant (2007: 92, 2008) claims that Latvian *mutatis mutandis* exhibits a parallel development of its velar, diverging thereby from the more conservative Lithuanian. In Latvian, the first palatalization yields equally /ts/ ([k] > [ts]), while the secondarily palatalized /k/ yields *ķ*—an apical phoneme close to [t'], thus reminiscent

of the reflexes of the second palatalization of Old Novgorodian Russian (cf. Zaliznjak 1995; 2004).

Akan'e/Jakan'e: This phenomenon entails /o/ being phonotactically restricted to stressed syllables only. Jakan'e only occurs together with akan'e and it implies that /e/ is also restricted to stressed syllables, because unstressed /e/ turns into [ʼa] (or [ʼi/ɨ] if dissimilative jakan'e applies). Both phenomena lead to the disappearance of middle vowels in unstressed syllables. They are well known from the dialects of our area, e.g. the Pskov group of Russian and Belarusian dialects.[47] A somewhat similar phenomenon is found in the High Latvian (= Latgalian) dialect and, probably, in East Lithuanian varieties. Compare, for instance, *oíz-g**a**ld-a* 'a part of a wooden shed' and *góld-s* 'table', *pó-v**a**d-a* 'reins' and *v**ó**d-uot* 'lead' (from Alūksne (North East), cited from Brencis 1914: 111), where the underlined strings encode the etymologically identical root (Seržant 2010: 195–201; Wiemer et al. 2014: 26–29). This alternation, even though quite different in origin, superficially mirrors the reflexes of akan'e found in East Slavic. Notably, this alternation has been abandoned in some Latgalian dialects, in others it has undergone morphological levelling so as to have either /a/ or /o/ throughout for a given morpheme. Similarly, though phonetically somewhat different, instances of a short *o/å* can also be found in the Northeast Lithuanian varieties in stressed syllables only; cf. *rotai/råtai* (our spelling) in Anykščiai or Kupiškis (Zinkevičius 1966: 50; V. Kardelis, p.c.). Furthermore, there is also a strong preference for /e/ to occur mainly in stressed syllables in Latgalian, thus approaching a structural parallelism with jakan'e in East Slavic.

There are also other phonetic processes that transgress the East Slavic border into Latgalian, such as the drop of intervocalic [j] and subsequent contraction, or the depalatalization of /r'/, /ʃ'/, /ʒ'/ (Seržant 2007; 2010).

2.5.2. Case syncretisms

The most prominent case syncretism found here is the conflation of the dative and instrumental case in the plural. Mostly one finds the shortening of the instrumental ending: *rukami* > *rukam* 'with hands, manually'. This is typical for a number of Central Russian dialects, primarily those from the Pskov Group (Zaxarova & Orlova 1970: 149–50, see also

47 For a more comprehensive account of Belarusian cf. Erker (2013b: 19–27), of Pskovian dialects cf. Careva (1962).

Lönngren 1994: 52 for the Old Believers' dialects in Latgale). Apart from that, in North Russian the reverse phenomenon may also be found, presumably based on hypercorrection (cf., *inter alia*, Trubinskij 2004: 110f.). This phenomenon is quite widespread in the Russian area encompassing North Russian dialects (except for the NE part thereof) as well as central western dialects (Trubinskij 2004: 110). Notably, this phenomenon goes beyond the East Slavic dialect area. It is encountered in both Baltic languages: the former instrumental case has completely merged with the dative in the standard language and in all Latvian dialects including Latgalian; cf. Latv. *ar rokām* 'with hands/manually' and *rokām* 'to (the) hands'. While in standard Lithuanian these two cases are kept apart (cf. *rankomis*.INS.PL vs. *rankoms*.DAT.PL), in colloquial and dialectal speech these two cases usually merge into *rankom*.INS.PL=DAT.PL, pretty much in accordance with the Latvian pattern.

2.5.3. Postpositive pseudo-articles

For a comprehensive assessment cf. Wiemer & Hansen (2012: 114–116), following Panzer (1984) and Kasatkina (2008); cf. also Trubinskij (1970), Kasatkina (2007), see also Post (this volume). As early as Kuz'mina & Nemčenko (1962), maps based on extensive fieldwork were produced. Their results (and maps) showed, among other things, that the use of postpositive demonstrative "particles" increases only to the north and east of the triangle between the Belarusian-Latvian-Russian borders; and it is only south and east from the Onega Lake, i.e. far away from the contact zone of Russian, Baltic and West Finnic, that these units are used consistently (see their map № 5, 1962: 30 and subsequent comments). As Trubinskij (inter alia, 1970) and Post (this volume) claim, the main function pertains to clause linking.

2.5.4. Resultative/perfect construction

There are four points to be made here: (i) the morphological distinction between A(gent)-oriented and P(atient)-oriented resultative participles, (ii) the creation of a new perfect in NW-Russian dialects on the basis of A-oriented resultatives, (iii) the creation of a new perfect (structurally and etymologically distinct from the one in (ii)) on the basis of P-oriented resultatives, and, finally, (iv) the retention of the Common Slavic plu-

perfect construction (based on the former *l*-participles) with the specific meanings of remote past, anti-resultative and emphatic:

(i) A common feature of our area is the morphological distinction between the A(gent)-oriented and P(atient)-oriented resultative participles in all three branches: northwest Russian (cf. Pozharickaja, Resultative, this volume), Finnic (Finnish, Karelian, Votic, Estonian, etc.), Belarusian in the BSCZ (Wiemer & Giger 2005: 53–57; Wiemer & Erker 2011: 206), and Baltic (Latvian, Latgalian and Lithuanian). One might even suggest that this feature is an exclusive innovation of the BSCZ (Trubinskij 1988; Wiemer 2013: 316), leaving aside a few dialects around Tver', especially because, as Trubinskij (1988) notes, this morphological distinction is relatively infrequent cross-linguistically.

(ii) First, the NW-Russian and Belarusian dialects have created a fully-fledged perfect construction on the basis of the uninflected participle (homonymous to the anterior converb) in -(*v*)*ši* and the copula inflected for tense and mood (cf. Erker, this volume, Jung, this volume, and Pozharickaja on the Resultative, this volume).[48] Apparently, this innovation must be related to the perfects in Baltic and Finnic languages, which ultimately attest the same constructions for their perfects. After Larin (1963), Trubinskij (1969) was one of the first who claimed the existence of an areal connection between uninflected predicative participles in the resultative function observed in the Russian dialects of the Pskov-Novgorod region and the active participles used in the perfect of the Baltic languages (cf. Trubinskij 1984 and other publications). These can be shown to inscribe into a much larger area involving Baltic and West Finnic (Trubinskij 1988; Wiemer & Giger 2005: ch. 3–5). Moreover, Finnic languages show even greater correspondence with NW-Russian than Baltic, because only in the former, but not in the latter, does the respective A-oriented participle not inflect for gender, number and typically for case. One might rather assume Finnic influence on northwest Russian here than vice versa, given that no other Russian and East Slavic dialects has acquired any construction comparable to the one at hand. Moreover, the former East Slavic perfect, structurally largely parallel

48 In fact, the rather conservative dialect of Russian Old Believers settling in the Baltics—whose "homeland" was located in the southern part of the Pskov region (Velikie Luki)—also inscribes into this areal cluster (Čekmonas 2001a: 116–19). Resultatives of this morphological type have been preserved even in the dialect of Old Believers living in NE-Poland (Maryniakowa 1976).

(except for gender-number marking) to the one discussed here, lost its perfect function long ago and became just a simple past form (simultaneously, the former A-oriented resultative participle in *-l* lost its participle status entirely and was reinterpreted as a finite verb form). NW-Russian and many northern Belarusian dialects are thus outstanding in the broad East Slavic context by having a dedicated perfect construction based on former A-oriented resultatives.

(iii) Second, more typical of North Russian dialects and, therefore, rather randomly and scarcely attested, is the perfect construction based on the copula (sometimes non-agreeing with the nominative argument), uninflected (in Latvian/Latgalian—inflected) P-oriented resultative participle and a non-canonically expressed subject (cf. Karskij 1956: 320, 358; Potebnja 1899 [1968]: 339–44; Timberlake 1975; Tommola 2000; Seržant 2012; Markova, this volume). Parallel constructions are found in Latvian, Estonian, Votic and Karelian (see Seržant 2012 on the areal account).

(iv) Finally, a related phenomenon is the existence of pluperfect constructions (cf. Požarickaja 1996 and, on the Pluperfect, Pozharickaja, this volume). While pluperfects themselves do not represent an infrequent phenomenon cross-linguistically, this category has been lost with some limited exceptions in East Slavic. At the same time, Russian dialects of our area exhibit a wider range of pluperfect uses than found in East Slavic elsewhere. We refer here to Tkačenko (1979), Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli (2001: 627), cf. also Sičinava (2013) for an overview. Furthermore, neighbouring non-Slavic languages such as Latvian, Lithuanian or Estonian equally have pluperfects.

2.5.5. Nominatival object

The nominatival object (NO) is another feature that can be found in our area; cf. Kuz'mina & Nemčenko (1964) on Russian dialects with a detailed analysis (frequency under different grammatical conditions, geographic spread) and Kuz'mina (1993: ch.1). Ever since Trubinskij (1972: 242), we have known that the NO is of rather ancient origin in Baltic and East Slavic dialects, although it does not go back to an IE. period (cf. also Kiparsky 1960; 1969; Timberlake 1974; Ambrazas 2001; Mendoza 2008). As Trubinskij (1972: 243) notes, however, the retention of the nominative marking of the object in some Russian dialects—and this is

valid for Baltic (Eastern Lithuanian and archaic Latvian dialects), too—is due to the neighbouring Finnic languages (Timberlake 1974):

(3) North/Northwest Russian
Opet' bajnja nado topit'
again sauna.NOM.SG necessary.PRED heat.INF
'Again we must heat up the sauna'.
(adopted from Trubinskij 1972: 243)

(4) East High Lithuanian
Reikia krosnis kurenti
need.PRS.3 oven.NOM.SG fire.INF
'It is necessary to make (a) fire in the oven'.
(quoted from Kiparsky 1960: 333)

(5) Central Latvian
vaiga issukât galva
need.PRS turn.INF head.NOM.SG
'One has to comb out the head'. (quoted from Endzelin 1922: 409)

(6) Estonian
Nüüd on vaja tappa
now be.PRS.3SG necessary.PRED kill.INF
see draakon
this.NOM.SG dragon.NOM.SG
'Now it is necessary to kill this dragon'.
(cited from Vihman 2004: 47)

In general, the NO is restricted to contexts in which the most agentive argument cannot be expressed by the nominative case. Thus it is typical for, but not restricted to, verbal non-finite and nominal predication. To some extent in Old Russian and generally in Finnic, it also includes the imperative mood. In a very restricted region of Russian dialects around Pskov and Novgorod, it has been extended to the objects of finite predicates (with nouns of *a*-declension), cf. Filin (1972: 480) and, subsequently, reinterpreted as an accusative form in the more general context of nominative-accusative syncretism with nouns other than animate masculine *o*-stems. Timberlake (1974) was perhaps one of the first who demonstrated that NO is a feature pertinent to the whole Eastern Circum-Baltic Area.

3. Content of the volume

The volume consists of five parts. The present introduction is an attempt to give a rather concise and up-to-date overview of Russian and East Slavic Dialectology and its challenges.

In his paper "Methods and Objectives in Contemporary Dialectology," Benedikt Szmrecsanyi surveys the history of the field of dialectology, starting with the Neogrammarians' interest in the alleged exceptionlessness of sound change. Szmrecsanyi specifically shows that, while old-school dialectology is biased towards the study of phonetics, phonology, and the lexicon, recent research has increasingly focused on morphology and syntax as well. This re-orientation is in no small part due to the recent emergence of corpus-based dialectology (as opposed to atlas-based dialectology). Szmrecsanyi also discusses the advantages of aggregational dialectology (or: dialectometry), which puts "strong emphasis on quantification, cartographic visualization, and exploratory data analysis" in order to measure dialectal relations. Perceptual dialectology is another new approach that is subject to discussion in the contribution.

In her contribution "Putting Meaning on the Map: Integration of Geographic and Semantic Variation in Multivariate Models of Language Use," Natalia Levshina provides an overview of cutting-edge quantitative methods that allow for the integration of semantics and geographic variation in multifactorial models of language use. Focusing mostly on recent developments in variational analysis of English and Dutch, the author presents the main ideas behind the onomasiological and semasiological approaches to lexical and grammatical variation, which lie at the heart of the research agenda in the Leuven variationist school. She also discusses some recent achievements in dialectometry based on onomasiological profiles of lexical variation in Dutch and Portuguese. All these innovative methods can be fruitfully applied and further developed in Slavic dialectology.

The second part "Dialect Grammar I: Perfect Constructions in North and West Russian Dialects" consists of five contributions devoted to the two types of perfect constructions found in the western and north-western Russian dialects. The first type (i) is based on the (typically) non-inflected participle forms in *-no/to* (with dialectal variants such as, e.g. *-n/-t*), found in the western part of the Russian territory. We adduce an

example with pluperfect in order for the auxiliary to appear (it is not obligatory in the present tense):

(7) *Naverno* *u* *krys* *rozbi-to*
assumedly at rat.GEN.PL break-RESULT.INVAR
bylo, *li* *što*
be.PST.N.SG PRT what
'I believe the rats have broken [it], or so'.
(Vinogr., Požarickaja, this volume)

It is often simplistically referred to as "the North Russian perfect" since it is better attested in the (geographically) northern part of the Russian territory. Dialectally, however, this isogloss covers an area that goes far beyond the western zone of the North Russian dialect (*severnorusskoe narečie*) and encompasses the Central Russian dialects in the West, such as the Pskov Group (*pskovskaja gruppa*), the Novgorod Group (*novgorodskie govory*), the Ladoga-Tixvin-Group (*ladogo-tixvinskaja gruppa*); cf. the maps in Kuz'mina & Nemčenko (1971). It even stretches partly into the eastern part (zone) of North Russian. Note that, typologically, the western dialectal zone is broader than assumed by traditional dialectology (Pšeničnova 1996a: 170), so that the area of the so-called North Russian perfect does not necessarily cross-cut subdialects with so different dialectal attributes.

In turn, the second type (ii) is formed by means of the auxiliary based on the copular verb *byt'* 'be' (in some Belarusian subdialects rarely also with the verb *have,* Erker, this volume) and the non-inflected agent-oriented (active) resultative or perfect participle (this participle is homonymous with an allomorph of the anteriority converb known from standard Russian) in -(*v*)*šy* alongside other dialectal variants such as *-ši/-dši/-ccy/-č'č'i/-ččy/-mši,* etc. (Erker, this volume, Jung, this volume, Pozharickaja, this volume). To give an example, consider the pluperfect (again, in order for the auxiliary to show up) below:

(8) *fs'a* *úlica* *bylá* *zyaré-u̯šy*
whole.NOM.SG.F street.NOM.SG.F be.PST.SG.F burn-RESULT.INVAR
'The whole street has burned down'. (Braslaŭ, Erker, this volume)

This part is opened by the dialectological overview "On the Areal Distribution of Participial Forms in Russian Dialects" by Sofija Požarickaja, which sets up the dialectological basis by discussing the intricacies of the distribution of both construction types ((i) and (ii)) and their subtypes. In addition, this paper sheds new light on the distribution of the first type (i) with the morphological variants *-no, -to, -n, -t,* and their reflexive counterparts *-nos', -tos'* in the Arxangel'sk area, which has not been included in the pioneering study of Kuz'mina & Nemčenko (1971) and, subsequently, into the DARJa. We summarize the findings of the author in the following table:[49]

Subdialects	Respective subpart	Dialect	Resultative participle
Pskov, Novgorod, Seliger-Toržok subdialects	Central West	Middle Russian	both types: (i) & (ii)
Subdialects to the East of Leningrad/St Petersburg from NE of Novgorod until exclusively Olonec (The Ladoga-Tixvin-Group)	Central West	North Russian	
SW Smolensk, East Smolensk and SW Tver' subdialects (The Upper-Dnepr-Group), Central and North Brjansk subdialects (The Upper-Desna-Group)	West	South Russian	type (ii): *-ši/(-mši)* (infrequent)
Vologodsk and Southern Arxangel'sk subdialects	North-East	North Russian	type (i): *-no/-to*, refl.: *-no-s'/-to-s'* rarely: *-n/-t*

Table 1: Dialectal distribution of type (i) and type (ii) perfects/pluperfects (according to Pozharickaja, this volume)

In her paper "Ways of Expressing the Past Tense in Belarusian Mixed Subdialects Spoken in the Baltic-Slavic Contact Zone," Aksana Erker discusses the distribution of different past related forms in two Belarusian subdialects (from the region of Lida and Braslaŭ, respectively). She also

49 Note that type (ii) may occasionally pattern syntactically as type (i) in which case the construction of type (ii) is formed by means the resultative participle of this area, namely, -(*v*)*ši* (and its dialectal variants) instead of the original *-no/-to* resultative participle (cf. Pozharickaja, this volume).

describes different perfect/resultative constructions found with the mixed Belarusian vernaculars in this area. Specifically, she scrutinizes the rules and restrictions on the distribution of both types of perfect constructions: type (i) and type (ii). Moreover, she seeks to explore the functional delineation of these two perfect types with the true 'have'-perfect based on the patient-oriented resultative participle of the lexical verb and the auxiliary *mec'* 'have' with, expectedly, nominative-accusative alignment.

The next paper "On the Problem of Syntactic Synonyms in a Local Dialect System," is contributed by Nina V. Markova. In this paper, the author discusses morphological variation found with the North Russian perfect based on the non-inflecting *-no/to*-participles, copular auxiliary whereby both core arguments are expressed non-canonically (type (i) above). Markova provides examples with the invariant participles carrying the suffix that historically is a reflexive pronoun, synchronically marking various types of middle-voice related functions. Crucially, the participial form *-no-s'* is sometimes replaced by the respective suffix for deriving deverbal abstract nouns in *-nost'*, especially if the verb carries the aforementioned suffix. While in most of the cases the respective deverbal nouns do not exist outside the perfect construction suggesting for a purely phonetically driven homonymy, the occurrence of some other deverbal nouns in similar constructions may suggest some syntactic motivation behind this.

In the article "Remarks on Object Case in the North Russian Perfect" by James Lavine, the object marking of the North Russian perfect based on the *-no/to*-participles (type (i)) is discussed within a formal approach to grammar. The author aims to account for all three of the following options: the second argument of a transitive verb can be encoded in the North Russian perfect as (i) agreeing nominative, (ii) non-agreeing nominative, and (iii) accusative. Lavine states that the non-agreeing nominative marking as well as the accusative marking are both dispreferred options on theoretical grounds, which is why—as Lavine claims—there is a clear preponderance of intransitive verbs in this construction or, alternatively, accusative object marking. The transition from nominative object marking to accusative marking must have been facilitated morphologically by those morphological NP types that do not distinguish between nominative and accusative, as well as syntactically by an independent CAUSE head (under *v*-VOICE).

In her contribution "Conditioning Factors in the Development of the *-vši* Perfect in West Russian," Hakyung Jung discusses the rise of the perfect construction based on the uninflected participle form in *-vši* (the second (ii) type) in the western dialects of Russian. She compares this construction with the competing perfect construction based on uninflected participle forms in *-no/to-* (the first (i) type). The former has a somewhat different geographical distribution from the latter: while the former occurs primarily in the southern part of West Russian, the latter is restricted to the North (with some intersections). Her claim is that the construction based on *-vši* has emerged in West Russian after the tense system reorganization across the entire Russian territory, influenced by the structurally parallel constructions in the Baltic and Finnic languages, while its morphophonemic shape has been constrained by internal phonological factors.

The third part "Dialect Grammar II: Other Categories" continues by scrutinizing grammatical phenomena found in the area in question with an attempt to provide coherent descriptions.

In her contribution "Constructions with the Verb *byt' (byl, byla, bylo, byli)* in one North Russian Dialect: On the Story of Pluperfect," Sofija Požarickaja focuses on the construction with verbal periphrasis based on the combination of the past tense form of the auxiliary *byt'* 'be' and the past tense form of the lexical verb. Her data stem from two expeditions (from 1990 and 2008) to the area of Arxangel'sk, i.e. the very North of the Russian language in Europe. This construction formally continues the Old Russian pluperfect, while its semantics have changed, especially in the modern North Russian varieties of the Arxangel'sk area. Thus, as Požarickaja shows, the original taxis function has been lost in modern Russian, both in the standard language and in the dialect. Instead, new functions have emerged. The construction may be used for discursive purposes, in which case it codes a special emphasis on a particular action in the past in a sequence of two or more clauses. This emphatic function is not restricted to North Russian only, but can also be found elsewhere, as the author argues. While the function of remote past—although typical for pluperfects in general—is not found in the dialects, the construction at hand may encode the temporal boundedness of a past event. On this reading, it signals that the event or the iteration/habituality of a series of similar events (in case of iterative/habitual verbs) has ceased after

a certain period of time. In contrast to the standard language, despite the fact that occurrences with non-agreeing copula *bylo* are attested in the dialects, there is no evidence to correlate the constructions with non-agreeing forms with the specifically antiresultative function—denoting that the result of an action is either not achieved fully or it has been immediately invalidated after its achievement. While the construction seems to be coherent across subdialects semantically, morphosyntactic variation with regard to statistical preponderancies towards lack *vs.* presence of subject-verb agreement in various subdialects can be found.

As regards morphology, there is a tendency for the auxiliary to lose its ability to inflect and, hence, to agree with its subject.

In her paper "Connectives, Subordination and Information Structure: Comments on Trubinskij's Observations on the "*-to … dak*" Model in the Pinega Dialects," Margje Post takes Trubinskij's (1971, 1984) description of the "*-to … dak*" construction in some North Russian dialects as a point of departure for a discussion of the general function of the connective *dak*. Trubinskij claims that the "*-to … dak*" structure expresses syntactic subordination in complex sentences and ascribes it a function on the level of (what was later called) information structure. In Post's account, North Russian *dak*—which may or may not be supported by *-to*—is an information-structuring pragmatic particle and procedural marker in all contexts, signalling an asymmetric relationship between the unit to which it is attached and another information unit, which can, but need not, have a linguistic expression. She concludes that the "*-to … dak*" construction can function as an *alternative* to syntactic subordination when used in complex sentences, but this is just one of several possible contexts of the information-structuring pragmatic particles *-to* and *dak*.

Finally, the paper "The Independent Partitive Genitive in North Russian" by Ilja A. Seržant describes those functions and properties of the independent "partitive" genitive that are not typical for standard Russian. He defines *partitive* very broadly, in analogy to the *partitive case* in Finnic languages which carries out a number of functions that cannot be considered semantically partitive from the synchronic perspective but which are related to the semantics of partitivity historically. He claims that the partitive genitive marks its VP as delimitative. How exactly the delimitative interpretation may be derived depends very much on the actional properties of the lexical verb. Thus, if the lexical verb is

an accomplishment, which presupposes a preparational stage before the culmination takes place, then it is this preparational stage that will be profiled by the independent partitive genitive. With verbs of transfer, which are typically achievement verbs, it is the after-stage that is profiled by the independent partitive genitive as delimited (hence, temporal transfer). Seržant also claims that the independent partitive genitive may occasionally trigger verbal agreement if in the subject position in some North Russian subdialects. Historically related genitives, namely, the genitive-under-negation as well as the animacy-driven accusative marking (etymologically genitive) are also briefly discussed in contrast to the standard language.

The next part "Historical Dialectology" contains the paper "Reflections on the Use of *Cokanje* in Russian Business Documents of the Sixteenth and the Seventeenth Centuries" by Elena Galinskaja. The author discusses the phonological phenomenon referred to as *cokan'e*, namely, the confusion of the sounds [ts] and [tʃ] in northern Russian dialects (see 2.5.1). Specifically, she addresses the issue of why Russian business documents of the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries from Russian regions where "cokan'e" is still attested today show almost no traces of this phenomenon. Moreover, the confusion of the letters *ц* <c> and *ч* <č> is found in earlier manuscripts. The solution of this mismatch may be found in the reconstruction of the orthographic rules that the scribes of the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries could have used in order to adhere to the norm and yet conceal the fact that their dialects displayed "cokan'e".

Finally, the last part "Belarusian Dialects: Sociological and Dialectological Factors" consists of two papers, both of which are based on first-hand fieldwork data conducted by the authors themselves.

The paper "Belarusian Dialects in Latvian Latgale—Transitional or Mixed?" by Mirosław Jankowiak addresses the notions of 'transitional' and 'mixed' dialects from both empirical and a theoretical or methodological perspectives. His empirical basis is Belarusian dialects spoken in the south-eastern part of Latvia (Latgale). The author primarily focuses on the lexicon, which he considers to be the least stable language layer and, hence, most suitable for investigating various shifts leading to convergence.

In her contribution "The Sociolinguistic Situation of the Myazdel Region Exemplified by the Village of Kamarova," Anna Żebrowska re-

ports on multi-linguistic variation in the region of Myazdel in the North-Western part of Belarus, specifically in the village of Kamarova, situated just 40 km from the Lithuanian border. Her aim was to analyse the usage of different codes by different generations and in different situations. Thus, while the older generation (around 80 years of age) speaks an interdialectal Polish-Belarusian variety intermingled with some Russian vocabulary, the middle generation uses Belarusian with some phonetic and lexical features borrowed from Russian depending on the particular situation. The younger generation strives to speak only Russian (except in school, where they have to speak standard Belarusian). The older generation, while speaking Belarusian, employs the local variety thereof, which they themselves define as *svoj* 'the own one', *prostoj* 'the simple one', *derevenskij* 'rural' and sometimes just as *po-kamaroŭskamu* 'Kamarovian'. The latter is characterized by a Belarusian vocabulary with some Russian and Polish words. At the same time, in church, this generation still speaks Polish.

Dialectal corpora

RNC Russian National Corpus. *http://www.ruscorpora.ru/en/index.html* with its Dialectal Subcorpus under: *http://www.ruscorpora.ru/search-dialect.html.*

TriMCo DC: TriMCo Dialectal Corpus under: *http://www.trimco.uni-mainz.de/trimco-dialectal-corpus/.* Under construction. (This corpus is being created within the project "Triangulation Approach for Modelling Convergence with a High Zoom-In Factor" at the University of Mainz.)

Ustja Corpus 2013: Michael Daniel, Nina Dobrushina, Ruprecht von Waldenfels. The language of the Ustja river basin. A corpus of North Russian dialectal speech. 2013. Bern, Moscow. Electronic resource, available at: *http://parasol.unibe.ch/Pushkin*.

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