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Cross-Linguistic Syntactic Parallels and Contact-Induced Change

1. Introduction

It is not uncommon in language contact studies to come across cases in which two or more languages share a syntactic feature with similar structural and maybe also semantic and functional properties. The contact linguist is then faced with the challenge of trying to explain the origins of these kind of parallelisms and of trying to account for their shared characteristics.

In principle there are two possible explanations: *independent growth* in both (or all, in case there are more than two languages/varieties involved) or *contact-induced change*, i.e. influence of one language upon another. If the presence of a feature is due to contact influence, there is a further possible distinction between *unicausal* vs. *multicausal* explanations. According to the former, the feature at issue is accountable in terms of one single factor, e.g. it may originate in just one of the languages or dialects in contact, or it is due to the operation of some universal tendencies or principles only. According to multicausal explanations, more than one factor contribute to the emergence of a cross-linguistic parallel. For example, it may arise as a result of converging influences from some source language *and* universals (or system-internal pressures).

From the methodological point of view, establishing contact-induced change always requires 'extra effort'. It is not always straightforward even in those cases in which it appears clear that some feature of language A must be the source of a similar feature of B, because B demonstrably had no such feature in its earlier stages. It is notoriously difficult when a structural parallel is known to have always existed between the two languages/ dialects. Particularly problematic are *early* contacts between languages which have little or no written records from the

relevant period. Furthermore, there are certain types of syntactic parallels which seem to pose even more problems than others. Such are, for example, features which are only *partially* similar in the languages in question.

It is our intention to discuss these methodological problems in the light of data drawn from two rather different contact situations, one fairly well-known and much studied, the other so far little investigated:

1) interface between Irish and English in Ireland, with special reference to some distinctive features of 'Hiberno-English' syntax which have parallels either in Irish or English or in both;

2) contacts between Russian, Karelian and other Finno-Ugric languages in Karelia and the neighbouring areas, again with special reference to a certain type of syntactic construction met in all of these languages.

There are some important differences between these situations which make their comparison methodologically interesting. To begin with, the Irish situation is rather a unique example of language contact and shift in circumstances where there is one fairly clearly identifiable substrate and one superstrate, viz. Irish and English — despite such complicating factors as differences between the various regional dialects of Irish or those between the Early Modern varieties of English brought to Ireland in the seventeenth century and later. In our usage, the terms 'substrate' and 'superstrate' are associated with the outcomes of the two types of transfer which take place in a language shift situation: the former refers to those elements in the ensuing contact variety which originate in the indigenous language of the population shifting to another language; the latter represents the input from the target language, which is very often (though not necessarily) in a prestigious and socially superior position in the speech community.

The Karelian situation is, by contrast, far more intricate: the number of languages or dialects involved is greater, and instead of a straightforward superstrate-substrate relationship, as is the

case in most contexts in Ireland, one has to reckon with the possibility of *adstratal* influences. By these we mean convergent influences which affect two or more languages in such a way that it is impossible to identify conclusively the source or direction of the influence.

The complexity of the Karelian situation becomes understandable when one considers some historical and areal facts: the geographical areas where various Finno-Ugric languages and Russian have been in contact over the centuries are fairly ‘open’, i.e. without too many natural boundaries which would have obstructed contacts between the peoples inhabiting these regions. Following the suggestion of Raukko and Östman (1994), one could say that these lands are part of the historical *Baltic area*, comprising all areas around the Baltic Sea and sharing a lot of socio-cultural and also linguistic features. Ireland, by contrast, forms rather a small and geographically confined area, which also explains some characteristics of the linguistic situation there (see the discussion further below).

Yet another external factor differentiating between the two contact situations is the relationships of *dominance* between the languages or dialects involved. In Ireland, the general course of development over the last few centuries has gradually led to language shift on the part of almost all of the originally Irish-speaking population, and today the Irish language is faced with imminent death. There has been no question of the social dominance of English ever since the aggressive language and social policies were introduced and implemented by the Cromwellian conquest of Ireland, and since the subsequent massive plantations of English-speakers in Ireland gradually brought the English language to all parts of the country. In Karelia and the neighbouring areas, by comparison, the dominance of Russian has not been such a straightforward matter until our own century; for centuries before that, the various languages spoken in these areas coexisted side by side, with varying fortunes (see the discussion below).

There is a further difference in the degree of *documentation* of the languages in question. There are plenty of written and also spoken records from Irish dialects past and present (though not so much from the early varieties of English in Ireland), but very little if anything at all from some relevant varieties in the Karelian case, especially from their earlier stages.

From the linguistic point of view, both cases involve *typologically* different languages. In the Irish situation, the languages have the same genetic background (i.e., both are Indo-European), but they are structurally different, e.g. with respect to basic (surface) word order. In the Karelian case, the languages at issue are not even cognates, and they are also structurally very different: the Finno-Ugric languages are usually considered to belong to 'agglutinative' languages, whereas Russian could be classified as an 'inflective' one.

In the following we shall first discuss some methodological principles and criteria proposed in the literature for deciding when we can justifiably speak of contact-induced change in languages in general and, more particularly, in the domain of syntax. This will be followed by a more detailed examination of the two contact situations, which should provide a good testing-ground for the suggested principles.

2. Earlier studies and suggested methodological principles

Up till quite recent times, contact-induced change in all domains of language except perhaps the lexicon was regarded as something of a 'last resort'; it entered the picture only if explanations in terms of 'language-internal' factors failed to yield satisfactory results. As Gerritsen and Stein (1992: 5-6) point out, this was largely due to the structuralist credo according to which language is a system *où tout se tient*, and only system-internal factors may play a role in language change. The same underlying assumption was adopted by the various generativist schools of thought. Although there have been exceptions such as Weinreich's classic book on language contacts, written in the early fifties (Weinreich

1953), it was not until the last two or three decades that 'language-external' factors began to receive serious attention.

Despite the revival of external considerations, much of the literature on contact-induced change still reflects the old ideas about the primacy of language-internal factors. Thus, Hock, writing on the possibility of early contact influences between Indo-Aryan and Dravidian, suggests some rather stringent criteria for contact-induced change:

> ...any case made for a specific scenario of early contact- and for specific consequence of that contact — must needs be circumstantial. Circumstantial cases of this sort, however, should be established in the same manner as circumstantial cases in a court of justice. They ought to be established *beyond a reasonable doubt.* That is, in each case it ought to be established that the nature of the evidence is such that it precludes any interpretation other than the one advocated. (Hock 1984: 90.)

Lass (1990: 148) emphasises the more 'parsimonious', economical nature of explanations relying on non-contact-induced change. Writing on the possible substratal influence of Irish phonology on Hiberno-English, he notes that whenever a feature of Hiberno-English has a parallel in English, there is no need to consider the substratal source, even if a parallel also exists in Irish. An explanation in terms of the superstrate must be given preference because it is the more economical (for a more detailed discussion of the same methodological principle, see Lass and Wright 1986).

In the most recent literature there have been attempts to redress the balance between language-internal and external factors. Most notably, Thomason and Kaufman (1988) put forward a proposal which endeavours to incorporate both types of factors in a comprehensive and predictive model of contact-induced change. A central element in their model is a distinction between two basic types of language-contact situations: *language maintenance* and *language shift*. This distinction rests on socio-historical, i.e. language-external, factors. The linguistic outcomes in each case are vastly different, as Thomason and Kaufman seek

to demonstrate. They discuss a wealth of evidence from contact situations all over the world which shows that, in conditions of language contact and shift, language-external factors are capable of overriding the language-internal ones (for further discussion, see Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 35). They also argue that a weak internal motivation for a change is less convincing than a strong external one, but at the same time they emphasise the (often very likely) *interplay* of both external and internal factors (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 61).

Dorian (1993) is another writer who stresses the complexity of the relationship between externally vs. internally motivated change. Her discussion rests primarily on data drawn from two different contact situations: first, the contacts between (various dialects of) Scottish Gaelic, Scots, and English in Scotland; secondly, the contacts between the German dialects spoken in the United States and English. In both cases no single factor, whether external or internal, can explain the observed changes, and caution should also be exercised when assessing the *source* of the putative contact influence. For example, the tendency in East Sutherland Gaelic to make extensive use of diminutive suffixes with nouns could, on the face of it, be attributed to a 'pan-Gaelic' tendency, but on closer examination it turns out to derive from the north-east varieties of Scots, i.e. the variety of English with which the Gaelic speakers of that area had the most direct and most long-standing contact (Dorian 1993: 133 ff.).

Odlin (1992), another writer on the contacts between the Celtic languages and English, and problems of language transfer in general, provides one of the latest and most systematic efforts to formulate criteria for establishing contact-induced change. He proposes the following three criteria for telling apart substratal influences from superstratal ones in so-called contact varieties, i.e. varieties which have evolved as a result of contact between two languages or dialects:

> I. If a structure is transferable, much if not all of its distributional range in the substrate should be evident in the interlanguage 're-creation' of the superstrate.
>
> II. If a structure is transferable in one language contact situation, it should be, *ceteris paribus*, transferable in another.
>
> III. If a structure is transferable, it should be especially likely in 'border regions' between two linguistic areas. (Odlin 1992: 180.)

In the following we shall try to approach our two contact situations against the backdrop of the methodological principles discussed above. We shall try to demonstrate that the most economical explanations based on independent language-internal developments do not always accord with data drawn from actual contact situations; similarly, the principle which requires the evidence to preclude any other possible interpretation may well remain an ideal target which is scarcely achievable in actual practice: in many, if not in most, actual cases we have to be content with 'reasonable likelihoods' based on circumstantial evidence. Furthermore, it is our aim to show that criteria such as those proposed by Odlin, in particular, provide a fruitful starting-point for establishing contact-induced change, and that they can be successfully used to shed new light on certain controversial questions of language contact and historical syntax.

We also wish to bring into general discussion some hitherto little-known example cases which lend support to the idea that a proper understanding of language contact phenomena presupposes consideration of both linguistic and extra-linguistic evidence. It seems to us that both types of evidence are needed, especially if there is very little or virtually no diachronic evidence available from the languages or dialects concerned (cf. Thomason and Kaufman 1988, Dorian 1993 for a similar general approach).

3. Cross-linguistic parallels and contact influences in Hiberno-English

3.1. General characteristics of Hiberno-English and of the language-contact situation in Ireland

Most scholars consider the English of the Irish — usually referred to by the term Hiberno-English (henceforth HE) — as an example of so-called 'contact languages' or 'contact vernaculars' or 'varieties'. These are languages (or varieties of languages) which have evolved as second-language varieties as a result of intensive contact between two or more languages and in conditions which typically involve a fairly rapid process of language shift; the speech community may (still) be bilingual to some extent, but this need not be the case, as contact languages are often well-established. In the early stages of the contact, of course, bilingualism is usually wide-spread, and indeed, a prerequisite for the emergence of the contact variety. Some writers emphasise the *manner of language transmission* as a criterion of contact languages. Thus Thomason (1993) speaks of an 'abnormal' mode of transmission as the chief characteristic of what she terms 'mixed languages'. 'Abnormal' refers here to a disruption in the process of transmitting a language from one generation to the next. In Thomason's words, "no single entire language is learned by a younger generation from an older one" (Thomason 1993: 2). The result is a language which contains elements from more than one source language (ibid.).

A product of the process of large-scale language shift which was initiated in the seventeenth century, HE dialects even today display numerous features which have been borrowed from Irish, the indigenous language of the Irish people. This is largely explained by the manner of transmission of the English language in Ireland: instead of being passed on from the older generations to the younger ones, the Irish-speakers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries learnt their English mainly from their compatriots, who had already acquired some English, better or

(as must have often been the case) worse. The 'imperfect' nature of the English thus handed down from one generation to another guaranteed a hefty input of Irish features to the emerging new vernacular, Hiberno-English (see, e.g. Bliss 1972).

By virtue of its many Irish-derived features, HE has often been described as a 'contact-English' and compared to English-based creoles, which can be considered more extreme examples of contact languages. There are, however, major differences between HE and creoles: as was mentioned above, the Irish situation is characterised by the existence of one clearly identifiable substrate language (with its many dialects, though), whereas this is hardly ever the case with creoles, which most often develop in linguistically very heterogeneous environments (cf. Thomason 1993: 2). Another obvious difference is in the nature and amount of input from the substrate language(s): in creoles phonology and syntax are, especially in their basilectal forms, shot through with substrate influences, while the lexicon is based on the superstrate, 'lexifier' language. HE phonology and syntax exhibit many traces of Irish influence, but these influences have probably never been so pervasive as those affecting creole grammars. From the little we know of the earliest stages of HE it can be gathered that at least the 'core grammar' was built on the Early Modern English (EModE) superstrate rather than the Irish substrate (see, however, the discussion below). Furthermore, Thomason (1993) makes a distinction between mixed languages which have developed "in the absence of full bilingualism (or multilingualism)" and those which have evolved "in two-language contact situations under conditions of full, or at least extensive, bilingualism" (Thomason 1993: 2). Pidgins and creoles belong to the first group, whereas HE is a good example of the latter type.

3.2. Hiberno-English and contact-induced change

The status of HE as a contact variety and the degree of Irish influence on it are by no means an uncontroversial issue. The

traditional view according to which HE phonology, syntax, and (to a less extent) lexicon crucially depend on the Irish language has in recent years come under severe criticism. There has been a noticeable shift of emphasis to Early Modern English and its varieties as the most likely source of a number of phonological, syntactic and other features which were formerly explained in terms of the corresponding features of Irish.

Works which have emphasised the role of dialect diffusion instead of contact-influences include, e.g. Harris (1983) and (1986). Harris has sought to trace the origins of some features of the HE tense and aspect systems back to (dialectal) varieties of EModE. A similar attempt has been made by Kallen (1986) with respect to certain features of the aspect system. As for HE phonology, Harris (1990) and Lass (1990) have adduced evidence which similarly suggests Early Modern sources for some of the distinctive features which had earlier been attributed to direct Irish influence. Lass carries the 'retentionist' programme farthest, and in fact denies that HE is a contact-English at all. This becomes evident from the following quotation; although his discussion is confined to some phonological features of HE, the statement is clearly intended to apply to the other domains of language as well:

> Given the choice between (demonstrable) residue [of earlier forms of English] and (putative) contact-influence, the former is the more parsimonious and hence preferred account.
>
> If we take this methodological principle as applicable to all the other features of SHE [Southern Hiberno-English] discussed here, we can define it, not as a 'contact-English' in any important sense (regardless of the fact that it began as a second-language variety), but as a perfectly normal first-language, internally evolved variety, with only marginal contact effects. And, as it happens, a phonologically very conservative one, whose particular archaisms form a clearly recognisable subset of the most salient features of seventeenth-century southern Mainland English. (Lass 1990: 148.)

Although the retentionist stand has in the most recent research gained popularity at the expense of the traditional, 'substratist', position, the situation is still very much open. From the point of

view of cross-linguistic parallels and contact-induced change, HE presents special problems which delay passing any final judgments on especially the syntactic issues. To begin with, there are very few records from the early contact periods from both HE and the superstratal varieties of EModE, which means that research has to rely on indirect, circumstantial, evidence. As for HE, another handicap is the questionable authenticity of the few written sources which are available from the relevant periods. For EModE, there are plenty of written records and also some which come fairly close to the spoken language of the period, but a major problem is caused by the paucity of evidence from those regional and 'substandard' varieties which the early planters, administrators, soldiers and other groups of English-speakers brought to Ireland.

We shall next consider in greater detail a few example cases which are intended to illustrate some of the methodological problems encountered in trying to track down the sources of cross-linguistic syntactic parallels attested in HE. The nature of the problems depends largely on the *type* of parallel, and in a two-language contact situation like the Irish one we have found it useful to distinguish between at least three different types.

The first kind of parallel is one for which it is possible to point out *both* a substrate *and* a superstrate source. In the Irish situation, this type is represented by those HE syntactic constructions for which a similar construction has been indisputably attested in both Irish and (English) English. One such case is the so-called *cleft construction*, illustrated by (1) below. There is a parallel construction in Irish, which has in the Irish grammatical tradition been termed the '*copula construction*'. As can be seen from (2) (quoted from Stenson 1981: 117), the Irish construction is almost identical in form to the English cleft construction except for the lack of an introductory pronoun. In both languages, these constructions serve the function of assigning some constituent special prominence by putting it in the focus position

(with some important differences, though; for further details, see Filppula 1986).

(1) It's tomorrow that Donal will come.

(2) Is amárach a thiocfaidh Dónall ('is tomorrow that will-come D.') 'it's TOMORROW that Donal will come' (Stenson 1981: 117).

If we were to follow the principle of economy suggested by Lass, the question of substratal influence on HE should not arise at all since the construction is also documented in EModE. On this account, the only role left for the Irish substrate would be one of *reinforcing* an already existing pattern rather than providing a direct input to the HE cleft construction.[1]

The matter is not so straightforward, however. The HE cleft construction displays some *qualitative* features which are not found in the superstratal varieties but have parallels in Irish. Consider the following examples taken from a corpus of present-day HE vernacular collected by M. Filppula[2] and from some other studies:

(3) It's looking for more land a lot of them are (Wicklow: J.N.).

(4) It's flat it was (Henry 1957: 193).

(5) It's badly she'd do it, now (Henry 1957: 193).

While English does not allow (parts of) the verb phrase, adjectives and certain types of adverbs (especially those of manner) in

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[1] As Sarah G. Thomason remarks (personal communication), even reinforcing influence has to be considered one type of contact-induced change, a point somewhat played down by Lass.

[2] This is a corpus which was collected in the late 1970s and early 1980s from four broad dialect areas: Kerry and Clare in the west of Ireland, Wicklow and Dublin in the east. The corpus consists of over 150,000 words of transcribed interviews with local informants (for further details, see Filppula 1986). The provenance and initials of the informants are given in brackets after each example.

the focus position of clefts, the Irish copula construction has no such syntactic constraints (see, e.g. Stenson 1981 for details and examples). In the absence of other possible sources, it is safe to conclude that HE has borrowed these features directly from Irish (see Filppula 1986 for a discussion of some other qualitative features of cleft sentences which have parallels in Irish).

Apart from qualitative evidence, there are other considerations which seem to confirm the influence of the Irish substrate on HE clefting. Thus, a comparison of the *frequencies of use* of clefting in different *regional* varieties of HE shows that this construction is most frequently used in those areas of Ireland where Irish is still 'within living memory', that is, in localities close to, or immediately adjoining, the Irish-speaking 'Gaeltacht' areas (see Filppula 1986 for further details). This is exactly what could be predicted on the basis of Odlin's criterion III discussed above, according to which transferable features are more likely to occur in linguistic border regions.

The lesson to be learnt from the case of HE clefting is as follows: the existence of syntactic parallels in both the substrate and the superstrate does not automatically exclude substratal (or superstratal) influence upon the contact variety. On the other hand, a mere noting of structural similarities between languages or varieties does not suffice to confirm contact-induced change. It is necessary to take into consideration the full range of the syntactic and functional features of the construction at issue, and language-external factors such as regional variation and other socio-historical aspects of the contact situation. In the light of our findings on the HE cleft construction, Lass's principle for distinguishing between endogeny and language contact turns out to be unduly rigid: what is more parsimonious does not necessarily provide an exhaustive enough account of the feature at issue.

The second type of parallel is one for which *only* a substrate or a superstrate source is attested. Let us here consider an example of the former, drawn again from HE vernacular. It involves the preposition *with*, used in the context of a verb

phrase either in the present or past tense but with a *perfective aspect* meaning; this construction has nothing to do with the 'standard' instrumental meanings of *with*. The following examples from the corpus of HE speech illustrate this feature:

(6) Hugh Curtin *is buried with years*, but his grandchildren are there now 'Hugh Curtin has been buried for years,...' (Clare: C.O'B.).

(7) He's working over there, in some building he *is working with a couple o' weeks* '...he has been working for a couple o'weeks' (Kerry: J.F.).

(8) I *wasn't* at a dance *with a long time* 'I haven't been ... for a long time' (Clare: C.O'B.).

There can be no question that the temporal meaning of *with* in these patterns derives from the corresponding Irish construction: the Irish preposition *le* appears in exactly the same type of construction with the same meanings 'for the duration of' or 'since'. Irish has no equivalent of the English perfect, but as Ó Sé (1992: 55) notes, it uses the pattern with *le* to refer to "persistent situations", i.e. to indicate a state or an activity which continues up to the moment of utterance. An example is (9):

(9) Táim anseo le bliain ('I-am here since a year') 'I have been here for a year' (Ó Sé 1992: 55).

What evidently explains the transfer of this Irish feature to HE is the fact that the Irish *le*, besides its temporal use, can also have the instrumental meaning 'with'. Irish influence is further supported by the regional distribution of the HE construction involving temporal *with*: just as in the case of clefting, it shows the same tendency towards more frequent use in the western HE dialects than in the eastern ones (for further details, see Filppula, *in press*).

From the methodological point of view, the second type of parallel is of course easier to handle than the first, and contact influences can be established with a reasonable likelihood — if

not "beyond a reasonal doubt" even, as required by Hock (1984). Of course, a necessary precondition is that the feature at issue is sufficiently well documented in the proposed donor language.

Distinguishing between the first and the second type of parallel can sometimes be hard because of inconclusive or doubtful documentation of a parallel in one or the other possible source language. This situation is particularly common when we are dealing with early contacts between languages. The HE example here is a pattern involving the conjunction *and*, used in a *sub*ordinating instead of the usual co-ordinating meaning. Again, the examples are from the HE corpus:

(10) I only thought of him there *and I cooking my dinner* '...while I was cooking my dinner' (Dublin: P.L.).

(11) I heard the hens cacklin', I went over to see what it was, and here it was a fox *and he with a hen* (Wicklow: J.F.).

(12) [I have] seen farms selling *and I young lad* (Wicklow: J.F.).

Up till quite recently, HE scholars agreed that this construction derives from the corresponding Irish structure involving the conjunction *agus* 'and' followed by the subject of the nonfinite clause; the nonfinite VP in Irish assumes the form of a prepositional phrase *ag* 'at' + verbal noun. Harris (1984: 305) points out the parallelism between Irish and HE by means of the following pair of examples:

(13) HE: He fell *and him crossing the bridge* '...while he was crossing the bridge'.

Ir.:Thit sé *agus é ag dul thar an droichead* 'fall+PAST he *and he (him) at go over the bridge*'.

Ó Siadhail (1984), though fully aware of the existence of this parallelism, argues that Irish cannot be the only, or even primary, source of the HE subordinating *and* construction. On the basis of examples drawn from written English sources he suggests that the same pattern already existed in English *before* English and

Irish came into contact in Ireland, and that a pattern similar to the HE one is also used in at least some present-day British English dialects.

However, the data on which Ó Siadhail's argument rests do not stand up to a closer examination. To begin with, the existence of the pattern in BrE dialects today is less than sufficiently documented: Ó Siadhail uses *fiction* as his primary source, and especially, the prose of George Eliot. As Filppula (1991: 620) points out, Eliot is not the best possible source in this matter, because in her childhood she was for years under the supervision of two *Irish* governesses, one of whom is said to have exercised a particularly important influence on her.

In the interest of obtaining a more reliable database, an attempt is made in Filppula (1991) to investigate the possible superstratal background of subordinating *and* using the collection of dialectal and historical texts contained in the so-called *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts*. A search through the dialectal part, which in this case consisted of 120,000 words of authentic speech recorded from four conservative BrE dialects (Somerset, Devon, Cambridgeshire, and Yorkshire) did not yield anything comparable to the HE construction. This can be taken to mean that subordinating uses of *and* do not occur in BE dialects, or at least they are extremely rare.

The historical parts of the Helsinki Corpus investigated in this connection covered all the different text-types from the year 1500 up to 1710, i.e. the Early Modern English period. The size of this part of the Corpus is about 550,000 words. Again, the documentation of the pattern remains insufficient: very few apparently similar examples were found, which do not, however, share all the characteristics of the HE pattern. In Klemola and Filppula (1992), the investigation was continued as far back into history as the beginning of the Middle English period. The results were essentially similar: there were only a few scattered examples, which did not cover the whole semantic and functional range of the HE construction. Furthermore, they became extreme-

ly scarce by the beginning of the EModE period, which has been considered crucial from the point of view of the emergence of HE dialects. Thus it is doubtful at best whether subordinating uses of *and* were sufficiently represented in EModE to make the pattern *accessible* to the Irish learners of English.

Factors supporting Irish origin for the HE subordinating *and* again include some qualitative features of the HE construction which are not attested in either the earlier stages of EngE or in the conservative BrE dialects. Most notably, the HE construction allows the nonfinite *and*-clause to *begin* the sentence, as is seen in (14) cited by Odlin (1992: 187); this example has been recorded from a speaker in Co. Galway in the west of Ireland:

(14) The sergeant ran for his life. *And he going out over the wall*, he hit against a tomb.

Irish allows both orders, which means that the syntactic distribution there is the same as in HE (Odlin 1992: 186; see also Boyle 1973 for further details about the Irish construction).

Besides the linguistic evidence, there are again some language-external factors which also confirm the likelihood of direct Irish influence on the HE subordinating *and*. The *regional* distribution repeats more or less the same tendency as was observed in the case of the cleft construction and of the perfective aspect accompanied by temporal *with*: subordinating uses of *and* are particularly favoured in the rural dialects, this time including also the eastern rural dialect of Co. Wicklow.

To weaken the possibility of our construction being a mere *archaism*, best preserved in the conservative rural dialects, we can look for additional, independent, evidence from another supposedly Celtic-influenced variety of English, viz. the English language spoken in the Hebrides. Terence Odlin, who was the first to draw attention to Hebridean English in the context of HE studies, notes that it provides a valuable point of comparison with HE for the following reasons: in the Hebrides the position of the indigenous Gaelic language, which linguistically resembles

the northern dialects of Irish, was very strong until the beginning of this century (in the Inner Hebrides English did not become the dominant language until the nineteenth century, and in the Outer Hebrides Scottish Gaelic still retains fairly firm positions), and when English was eventually brought to these islands it happened primarily through formal teaching in schools. This is in sharp contrast with the Irish situation where people first came into contact with English in a relatively naturalistic setting, without the intermediary role of schools. Consequently, while dialect diffusion from earlier forms of English is a serious possibility in the Irish situation, its role has most probably been less important in the Hebridean context. Celtic-sounding features occurring in Hebridean English are thus more likely to derive from the Scottish Gaelic substrate than from, e.g, the Early Modern English superstrate. For the case at hand, Odlin is able to show that subordinating uses of *and*, quite similar to the HE examples, are indeed a feature of Hebridean English (1992: 190). This can be taken to indirectly support the role of Irish in the case of the HE subordinating *and*. From the methodological point of view, subordinating *and* illustrates particularly well the importance of combining all sorts of evidence, linguistic and other, before passing judgment on the issue of contact-induced change vs. independent growth.

After this lengthy detour we can return to our typology of syntactic parallels and discuss a third type of parallel, namely one which involves partially similar constructions in both languages in contact, but with *no exact analogue* in either.[3] In HE syntax, a good example is provided by a periphrastic construction involving the preposition *after* followed by a present participle. This is a feature of early HE texts and is exemplified by the following sentences cited from Bliss's collection of HE

[3] We are indebted to Sarah G. Thomason (personal communication) for pointing out this type to us.

texts from the period 1600-1740 (for a detailed discussion, see Bliss 1979: 299-301):

(15) I'll be after telling dee de Raison 'I'll tell you the reason' (John Michelburne, *Ireland Preserved*, 1705).

(16) Well, fat will you be after Drinking? 'what will you drink?' (John Durant Breval, *The Play is the Plot*, 1718).

As Bliss (1979: 300) notes, the construction BE + *after* + present participle is here used to refer to the future. In this respect, it differs from the so-called *after* perfect, which is a well-known feature of present-day HE vernacular, generally denoting some event or activity which has taken place in the recent or immediate *past*, as in (17):

(17) We're after having two good summers here 'we have (recently) had two good summers here' (Wicklow: D.M.).

The present-day *after* perfect has a clear parallel in Irish, but the earlier constructions cited above are unknown both in Irish and in earlier English. One possibility is that they are a product of some sort of confusion between the volitional/intentional uses of *after* in English (as in *What are you after?*) and the past uses of the Irish *tar éis* 'after', as in (18):

(18). Tá siad tar éis imeacht ('are they after leaving') 'they have just left'.

Both types of *after* construction (just as subordinating uses of *and* discussed above) are good examples of parallels which only *partially* reproduce the patterns of the donor language. Indeed, partial parallels make up yet another category of syntactic parallels, and also add considerably to the troubles experienced by the contact linguist. This kind of parallel is well in evidence in our second contact situation, i.e. the one involving Karelian and the North Russian dialects, and we now turn to some data drawn from that context.

4. Cross-linguistic parallels and contact-induced change in Karelian and North Russian dialects

4.1. The historical background of the Karelian/North Russian contacts

From ancient times down to the present day, the history of Karelia and the neighbouring areas has been one of migration and assimilation to each other of numerous different population groups and their languages. Archaeological evidence suggests that the northernmost parts of Europe were continuously inhabited since the very beginning of the post-glacial period, i.e. around the year 8 000 B.C.. Contrary to what was believed until recently, it is quite possible that in Karelia even these first inhabitants were Finno-Ugric. Around 3000 B.C. Karelia was part of the so-called Volgaic cultural area, which united the Finno-Ugric tribes inhabiting the central Volga region with those living on the southern banks of the Gulf of Finland in the west and those by the White Sea in the north. About a thousand years later the southern parts of Karelia were occupied by the ancestors of the present-day Lapps. During the following millennia the Lappish settlements moved slowly towards the north giving way to the expanding Baltic-Finnic tribes.

By the second half of the first millennium A.D., the ancestors of the Karelians and Vepsians had settled on the southern shores of the great Karelian lakes Ladoga and Onega, and the first Baltic-Finnic villages appeared among the early Lappish settlements on the Ladoga Isthmus. The next centuries witnessed a gradual expansion of the Karelians to the north and west, and of the Vepsians to the north and east. From the late 8th century onwards, the Baltic-Finns were followed by the Slavs who by the end of the 13th century occupied large areas in the southern and eastern parts of Karelia and in the neighbouring areas. (For a detailed discussion of the history of the settlement, see Sarhimaa, *forthcoming*.)

There is a wealth of socio-historical evidence which indicates that for centuries the Slavic and the Finno-Ugric inhabitants of Karelia — and of the whole of North-West Russia, for that matter — lived together under circumstances of rather equal coexistence, without any part of the population having clear dominance over the others. During the 9th-12th centuries the Ladoga Isthmus belonged to the Ladoga State, which was founded by the Vikings in the middle of the 8th century and ruled by them until the late 12th century. The Vikings formed a relatively homogenous and self-contained ruling class, and their settlements were mostly more or less temporary camps that were founded for fur-trading and collection of taxes. There is, however, some archaeological and linguistic evidence which indicates that at least some of the Scandinavian rulers settled permanently in North-West Russia and gradually assimilated to its former population (for details, see, e.g. Roesdahl 1993: 325-326, 334-335). In any case, during the Viking Age the southern parts of Karelia were united with the historical *Baltic area* comprising the lands around the Baltic Sea, and the Lappish, Baltic-Finnic and Slavic inhabitants of Karelia thereby obtained their share of the achievements of the fast developing early medieval Northern European culture.

After the Viking period, the whole of the Russian North was reduced to the status of a colonial territory belonging to the kingdom of Novgorod, and in the second half of the 12th century Karelia and its neighbouring areas were made part of the first state in North-West Russia that was ruled by the Russians. There is nothing in the historical documents to suggest that there had been any drastic changes in the relationships between the Finno-Ugric and the Slavic populations in this period. Being still relatively sparsely populated, Karelia was large enough to maintain all its inhabitants[4], and since there was no great need

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[4] The area of Karelia is about 172 000 square kilometres. Kirkinen (1970: 16-42) estimates that at the end of the Middle Ages the total of the population in Karelia and the neighbouring areas (including the Kola

to fight for the resources, serious large-scale confrontations between the different population groups were avoided.

It is undoubtedly true that in the course of the 13th-18th centuries the Russians gradually gained some authority over the others in political and economic matters. Nevertheless, it was not until the second half of the 19th century that the foundations of the present-day social dominance of the Russians were laid and any aggressive Russification policies implemented in Karelia. At the beginning of the 1860s, the Russian nationalists introduced their programme of popular education, and by the end of the century a system of public education through the medium of Russian had been established even in such a remote region of the Czarist empire as Karelia. Compulsory elementary schooling was not, however, introduced until the year 1930. After the revolution of 1917 there was a period of more liberal national and language policies. In the 1930s, the so-called "Years of Terror" inaugurated a totally new era in the development of the relationships between the peoples of Karelia, viz. a period of extremely rapid assimilation of the minority peoples to the Russians, which now threatens to soon lead to the total extinction of the Baltic-Finnic minority languages in Karelia.

4.2. General characteristics of the language contact situation in Karelia

In the broadest terms, language contact situations can be divided into two basic types: (i) the *language-maintenance* type, where both or all of the languages in contact continue their existence as

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peninsula) was still less than 100 000. The population density was highest on the Ladoga Isthmus; according to Černjakova's (1989: 141) calculations, in 1582 the total of the population there was about 26 000. Even as late as 1933, the Baltic-Finnic population formed the majority (i.e. more than 50% of the population) in most districts in the western parts of the present-day Karelian Republic, whereas the areas with a Russian majority concentrated on a relatively narrow strip of land which followed the coastline of the White Sea in the north and continued to the western banks of the Lake Onega in the south (*Tilastollinen katsaus* [Statistical Yearbook] 1933).

independent languages, and (ii) the *language-shift* type, where a significant part or all of a given population abandon their indigenous language in favour of some other language (see, e.g. Thomason & Kaufman 1988). Karelia and its neighbouring areas provide us with good examples of both basic types of contact situation: on the one hand, the East Lappish, Karelian, Vepsian, and North Russian dialects have been well maintained up until the great social and political changes of our own century; on the other hand, certain linguistic varieties, such as the East Vepsian dialects, and the early Karelian and Vepsian dialects that were once spoken in the western parts of the Arkhangel'sk area, continue their lives only in the form of numerous substratal features in the respective present-day North Russian dialects.

As was noted above (see section 3.1.), language shift may contribute to the emergence of a totally new contact language or contact variety. This takes place in extreme cases, i.e. if the process of language shift is very rapid, and if it entails an abnormal mode of language transmission from one generation of speakers to another. In the Karelian setting, some new varieties have indeed come into existence: these include, for example, the White Lake dialects of North Russian spoken southeast of the Lake Onega, and the Olonets dialects of Karelian spoken on the Ladoga Isthmus, which have both been shown to contain a strong Vepsian substrate. Furthermore, there is Ludic, a mixed language, which contains an equal proportion of Karelian and Vepsian features, and which has traditionally been defined either as a group of transitional dialects between Karelian and Vepsian or as a distinct Baltic-Finnic language. Yet another new variety is the so-called Karelian-Pomorian group of the North Russian dialects spoken in certain parts of the White Sea coast; these have most probably emerged as late as the 19th century as a consequence of language shift on the part of a group of Karelian speakers. And finally, there is the most intriguing group of the North Russian dialects spoken on the Äänisniemi peninsula, which still reflect an early Baltic-Finnic substrate in all areas of grammar. However, at the present stage of the research into all of the newly-

evolved varieties, it is too early to say to what degree they could be considered to be contact vernaculars.

The history of the settlement of Karelia and the neighbouring areas, as well as the later fortunes of the peoples living there, have to a great extent affected the development of the present-day languages in that area. The East Lappish dialects, Karelian, Vepsian, and the North Russian dialects have gradually developed into their present form under conditions of intensive contacts with each other, and multidirectional and multidimensional interference has evidently taken place: one very clear indication of this is the thousands of loanwords attested in the Eastern Baltic-Finnic languages, East Lappish and North Russian dialects.

It is generally acknowledged that the grammatical structure of all the languages and dialects in Karelia have also undergone numerous changes triggered by their mutual contacts. In the North Russian dialects the influence of the Eastern Baltic-Finnic languages has been confirmed at the phonetic-phonological level in such features as, for example, the pronunciation of the sound *-o* as *-oa*, and *-e* as *-ia* (e.g. *poašla* vs. *pošla* 'went'; *n'iasu* vs. *n'esu* 'I-carry') (Veenker 1967: 41), certain intonation patterns (Seliščev 1933: 374), as well as certain characteristics of sentence prosody (see Lindgren 1990: 53). Several syntactic constructions, such as those including the copula *est'* 'is' (e.g. *Ona est' veps* 'she is Vepsian'; Kuz'mina and Nemčenko 1968), and certain word-formation morphemes of Baltic-Finnic origin (e.g. -*ajdat'l -andat'* (Gerd 1984: 179) and *-ksa* (Popov 1972: 13)) have become an integral part of the grammatical system of the North Russian dialects spoken in Karelia.

In Karelian itself the phonetic-phonological interference from the respective North Russian dialects has been attested, among other things, in the widespread palatalization of consonants (e.g. *t'yt't'ön'e* 'a little girl') and in the emergence of the word-initial voiced *z-* and *ž-* (e.g. *zoahhar'i* 'sugar'; *žoal'i* 'pity'; see, e.g. Turunen 1982: 77-78). In morpho-syntax Russian

influence has been shown, for example, in the syntactic distribution of certain case-forms, such as the adessive being used instead of the inessive in sentences like *D'ärvel on kaluo*, lit. 'there is fish on the lake' vs. *D'ärves on kaluo* 'there is fish in the lake', and in the use of the instructive in the expressions of measure, as in *Kaksin vunukoin jäin* 'I remained with two grandchildren' (Markianova 1991: 29-32). Under intensive Russian influence the adjectives of emotional judgment have begun to be used as predicatives without the so-called STIMULUS-component, i.e. an infinitive or a noun that would express the passive cause of the state: for example, *S'iula on abei*, lit. 'to-you is sad' vs. *S'iula on abei olla*, lit. 'to-you is sad to be'; 'you are sad' (Sarhimaa 1989: 117). Russian influence has also brought along some new construction types into the Karelian syntactic system: one of them is the so-called infinitival necessitative construction (e.g. *Miula l'äht'ie*, lit. 'to-me to go', 'I must go') (Sarhimaa 1992).

4.3. Accounts suggested for explaining cross-linguistic parallels between the languages spoken in North-West Russia

Most of the languages spoken in North-West Russia are still relatively uninvestigated, and very little has been done until quite recently to study systematically grammatical interference between them. As far as foreign influences in grammar are concerned, the researchers have mostly had to be content with explaining the attested cross-linguistic parallels at a rather general level. The accounts suggested so far for explaining cross-linguistic parallels between these languages can be divided into the following three sets.

Explanations of the first type either neglect the possibility of contact-induced changes or explicitly deny their feasibility, thus accounting for the parallels in terms of *independent growth* in each of the languages in question. In some cases the explanations entertain the idea of 'refrigeration' of some specific indigenous

feature in some geographically peripheral linguistic variety (see, e.g. V. Kiparsky 1960 on the nominative object in the North Russian dialects). Explanations of this type are especially common in certain branches of Russian dialectology. Their popularity may be, at least to some extent, due to the official view on the 'purity' and the 'self-completing nature' of the Russian language: in the early years of the Soviet power it was proclaimed that there could never arise any regional variety of Russian which would be tainted with influences from a minority language (see, e.g. *Vzaimovlijanie* 1987: 55), and this doctrine has to some extent continued to direct the interests of linguists.

Explanations of the second type are best characterized as *substrate/superstrate accounts*. According to these, the putatively Finno-Ugric features of the North Russian dialects are defined as substratal input from Finno-Ugric languages, the term 'substratal' referring here to the influence of certain already extinct languages that were once spoken in North-West Russia (see, e.g. Larin 1963; Veenker 1967; Tkačenko 1989). The Russian characteristics in the Baltic-Finnic languages, in turn, are considered to reflect superstratal influence from Russian. The term 'superstrate' implies here social prestige and linguistic superiority of Russian over the other languages of North-West Russia. Apart from certain Soviet linguists, explanations of this type seem to be favoured by many Western Slavists working on the North Russian dialects (e.g. Timberlake 1974; Vlasto 1986); they are also supported by some scholars studying the Russian/Baltic-Finnic language contacts (e.g. Barancev 1971; Ojanen 1985).

The third type of explanations pay special attention to the language-external historical and cultural factors which have demonstrably contributed to the development of the languages in Karelia and to the relationships between them. The general framework of the contacts between the languages at issue is considered to be more like a *Sprachbund* situation, in which several *adstrate languages* coexist and influence each other over a long period of time, than a straightforward superstrate-substrate

relationship between a dominant language and some extinct or socially subordinated substrate languages. The idea of the 'North-West Russian Sprachbund' consisting of the Eastern Baltic-Finnic languages and the North Russian dialects spoken in Karelia and the neighbouring areas was first expressed in the late 1970s by A.S. Gerd (1978), and it has lately been discussed and defended by Sarhimaa (1991 and *forthcoming*). The cornerstones of the Sprachbund hypothesis are bidirectionality — or, to do better justice to the actual reality of the contact situation: multidirectionality — of linguistic interference, and a large-scale cultural assimilation and blending ('hybridisation') of the cultural traits of the populations involved.

In comparison with a simple two-language contact situation, the Sprachbund situation presents certain methodological problems. The linguistic diversity of North-West Russia, for example, makes it extremely difficult to explain the origins of some of the cross-linguistic parallels exhibited by the languages spoken there: the linguistic processes have involved numerous languages, some of which are genetically related to each other, while others are not, and some of which have died out, while others have remained vital.

The more languages and the more bi/multilingualism the contact situation involves, the harder it is to track down the processes of change in individual cases, and the more difficult it may be to pass any final judgments on the ultimate causes of changes as well as on the source of a putative contact-induced change. The actual mechanisms of linguistic change are, of course, fundamentally the same in a Sprachbund situation as in two-language contact situations, i.e. either borrowing or shift-induced change, or both. However, the extreme complexity of a Sprachbund situation often raises the possibility of a very specific type of borrowing, viz. *adstratal convergence*. In the most general terms, adstratal convergence refers to a situation in which genetic heterogeneity of the languages in question is gradually replaced by typological homogeneity (see, e.g. Lehiste 1988: 59); a particularly good example is the development of the

so-called Balkanisms shared by the languages involved in the Balkan Sprachbund. In a more modest sense, which is adopted here, the term ‘adstratal convergence’ is used to refer to cases in which the source of some specific feature shared by the languages in contact is unidentifiable, and the influences have most likely travelled in both or all directions between the languages at issue.

Naturally, none of the three types of account — independent growth, substratal/superstratal influences, or adstratal convergence — necessarily suffices in itself to explain the origins of any random feature: the point we wish to make here is that when attempting to explain the origins of the features shared by the languages spoken in Karelia, we should not be content with trying to establish merely substratal and superstratal sources of the changes but should also consider the possibility of adstratal developments. In practice, it may sometimes be very difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between adstratal and substratal/superstratal influences; with regard to lexical borrowing, however, some fairly promising findings have lately been made by Vostrikov (1991).

The shortage of data is a serious hindrance to the study of the North Russian/Karelian contacts. As regards the North Russian dialects, a major handicap is the almost total lack of tape-recorded corpora. Besides, the authenticity of some of the existing hand-written field notes which have been taken by unskilled field-workers (mostly 2nd- and 3rd-year University students) has turned out to be questionable. Therefore, the study of the present-day dialects has to depend to a great extent on indirect evidence and make the best possible use of the results of Russian historical linguistics, and of the existing studies of dialectal syntax. These studies are mostly based on the corpora collected for the Russian dialectological atlas in the 1940s to 1960s. This work was carried out under the supervision of the Soviet Academy of Sciences by using carefully planned questionnaires.

Things are not made any easier by the fact that there are virtually no records from the earlier stages of the Eastern Baltic-Finnic languages. Karelian, for example, has had no written standard of its own until the late 1980s, and there is no literature written in this language[5]. The so-called 'old documents' in Karelian mostly consist of hand-written field notes collected by Finnish dialectologists starting in the late 19th century and continuing until the first decades of the 20th century. Since the 1960s, Finnish and Soviet scholars have tape-recorded thousands of hours of interviews with Karelian informants in order to record the Karelian language of the end of the 19th century and later, and several collections of dialectal texts have been published. However, any study of Karelian or Vepsian entailing a diachronic perspective involves a great deal of work on comparative Baltic-Finnic grammar.

We shall next continue our discussion of the general validity of the methodological principles that have been proposed for explaining cross-linguistic parallels by considering in greater detail one particular case of Karelian/North Russian syntactic parallels.

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[5] In the late 1930s an attempt was made to create a literary standard for Karelian. Between 1938-1940 about 200 titles were published in Cyrillic Karelian, including translations and brochures, educational materials, readers and children's books, party and other official documents. Despite all these efforts, Standard Karelian turned out to be a complete failure: the selection of the dialectal base was so hurried and arbitrary that the language which was created did not represent any of the Karelian dialects properly; furthermore, the Cyrillic alphabet represented poorly the sounds of Karelian, the grammatical norms created were incomplete, there were no dictionaries nor unified terminology, and the forced russification of the Standard Karelian vocabulary made it impossible for the Karelians to understand their new official language.

4.4. The *'must a needle'*-pattern in Karelian and the North Russian dialects

The problem case at issue is the pattern **$N_{NomSubj}$+ $Pred_{Nec}$/ $Pred_{NecNeg}$** in Karelian and the North Russian dialects[6]. For convenience, we shall refer to this construction as the *'must a needle'*-pattern. Examples are:

(19a) Karelian: Pid'äy n'iegla ('must a needle') 'a needle is needed'; 'one needs a needle'.

(19b) North-Russian: Nado igolka ('must a needle') 'a needle is needed'; 'one needs a needle'.

From the methodological point of view, the *'must a needle'* - parallel found in Karelian and the North Russian dialects offers an extremely interesting testing-ground for the suggested principles of contact-induced change. On the one hand, this particular case is even more complicated than the HE cases discussed in the preceding sections: the parallel is attested not only in Karelian and the North Russian dialects but also in certain other Finno-Ugric languages spoken in Russia; furthermore, it is found in earlier stages of *both* of the languages in question. On the other hand, a closer examination of the *'must a needle'* -pattern reveals that, despite substantial differences between the language-contact situations in Ireland and Karelia, the methodological problems involved — such as those caused by partial syntactic parallels, or the question of the accessibility of some specific syntactic model at a certain period of time — are surprisingly

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[6] The syntactic status of the N_{Nom} component is by no means an uncontroversial issue: some of the scholars are convinçed of the *subject* status of the noun (e.g. Potebnja (1958/1889: 407); Šahmatov (1941: 140-141); Georgieva (1949: 50-51); Sabenina (1983:45) and Trubinskij (1993)), whereas others (e.g. Filin (1947: 17-18); Šapiro (1953: 141); Lapteva (1976: 148, 159) and Markova (1989: 173)) define the N_{Nom} component as an *object*, comparable with the nominative object in sentences like *nado vzjat' igolka* '[one] must take a needle'.

similar. Therefore, we assume that if it is possible to find principled solutions to the methodological problems posed by these two contact situations, it should be possible to apply them more generally to other contact situations, too.

In what follows we shall first try to establish that the pattern has a parallel both in the Baltic-Finnic protolanguage and in the earlier stages of Russian. This means that it could — at least in principle — be explained as independent growth in both of the languages in question. However, we shall discuss other evidence which suggests that the existence of the *'must a needle'* -pattern in Karelian and in the present-day North Russian dialects may equally well be explained in terms of contact-induced change. Furthermore, we shall demonstrate that the Karelian setting cannot be explained only in terms of unidirectional influence from one of the languages concerned to the other: *both* Karelian *and* the North Russian dialects exhibit traces of foreign influence to a more or less similar extent. Therefore, it is our view that the best account in this particular case is offered by the third type of explanation discussed above, i.e. that based on *adstratal convergence*.

4.3.1. Preliminary observations

As was noted above, studying Karelian or Vepsian in a diachronic perspective necessarily involves comparative Baltic-Finnic grammar. The closest cognate language of Karelian which has not been subject to extensive influence from Russian is Finnish. The syntactic systems of Standard Finnish, and of the Western Finnish dialects in particular, are generally considered to be free from Russian influence. Therefore, it is common practice to use them as a point of comparison in trying to trace indigenous features of the Eastern Baltic-Finnic languages.

The *'must a needle'*-pattern does not exist in Standard Finnish nor in any of the present-day Finnish dialects. The same meaning can be expressed by the impersonal *on tarpeen* -con-

struction consisting of a lexical verb phrase *on tarpeen* [**Cop_{3Sg}+tarpeen**] 'is a need' and a noun in the nominative specifying what is needed, e.g.:

(20) Nyt on neula tarpeen ('now is of a needle a need') 'a needle is now needed; one now needs a needle'.

Instead of the pattern in (20), personal constructions with the verb *tarvita* 'to need' are most often used: e.g. *tarvitsen neulan* 'I need a needle'. However, even certain western dialects of Finnish have patterns which *formally* resemble the Karelian/ North Russian pattern. Saukkonen (1965: 119-120) cites the following dialectal examples from the west of Finland:

(21) Mitä isännälle pittää? ('what to-the-master must') 'what does the master of the house need?'.

(22) Luut pittää rikki ('the bones must to pieces') 'the bones must be broken; one must break the bones'.

According to Saukkonen (1965: 120), necessitative sentences such as those in (21) and (22) are elliptical and in their full form require an infinitive; the $N_{Part/Nom}$-component represents here the *direct object* of the omitted infinitive. Therefore, the crucial difference between this type of Finnish sentence and the Karelian/North Russian *'must a needle'*-pattern is that the former contains either a *partitive* or a *nominative object*, whereas the latter always has a *nominative subject.*

The *'must a needle'*-pattern is not typical of Standard Russian either. It does, however, have a relatively close cognate in some colloquial varieties of present-day Russian that cannot have been influenced by the Finno-Ugric languages. In very informal speech, sentences such as (23a) and (23b) are used; note that the noun is not in the *nominative* but either in the *accusative* (in the affirmative sentences) or in the *genitive* (under negation):

(23a) Nado kuklu ('must a doll') 'one must get/buy/have a doll'.

(23b) Ne nado kukly ('not must a doll') 'one does not need a doll'.

As Lapteva points out, an important feature of these constructions is that they are elliptical, ie. the $N_{Gen/Acc}$ is interpreted as an *object* of an infinitive which is not realized — just as in the Finnish constructions discussed earlier. Thus, the colloquial Russian constructions do not constitute an independent pattern in the syntactic system but are merely elliptical alternatives of the pattern **Pred**$_{Nec(Neg.)}$ + **Inf** + $N_{Part/GenObj}$. (For further discussion, see Lapteva 1976: 148, 158-160.)

The upshot of the discussion so far is that the North Russian and Karelian *'must a needle'*- patterns, in which the N_{Nom} represents the *subject* of the sentence, have no precise counterpart in any variety of Russian other than the North Russian dialects. Neither have they precise equivalents in Standard Finnish or in the western Finnish dialects.

4.3.2. The origins of the *'must a needle'*-pattern in Karelian and the North Russian dialects

Let us next turn to the origins of the *'must a needle'*-pattern in Karelian and the North Russian dialects. As regards Karelian, the **'must a needle'** -pattern could in theory be an indigenous feature there. Saukkonen (1965: 119-120) discusses the possibility that the present-day Finnish constructions illustrated by examples (21) and (22) (consisting of $N_{Part/NomObj}$ + **Pred**$_{Nec(Neg)}$) are in fact reflections of an original, Common Baltic-Finnic 'undifferentiated proto-form' meaning 'something must exist for some purpose'. Since the object may in this pattern be in the nominative, the hypothetical proto-form does not always differ formally from the Karelian *'must a needle'*-construction. Consequently, it might be possible to trace the Karelian *'must a needle'* -pattern

back to this proto-form in Common Baltic-Finnic or maybe even in some earlier Finnic proto-language.[7]

In the North Russian dialects, too, the *'must a needle'* -pattern can be an indigenous, i.e. a Russian or East Slavonic, feature: although it does not occur in the same precise form in any other present-day Russian dialect, it has a formal parallel in East Slavonic (Russ. *drevnerusskij*), which is the common proto-language of Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian until the 14th to 15th centuries. It also occurs in so-called Old Russian (Russ. *starorusskij*), i.e. Medieval Russian, which covers the period from the 15th century until the 18th century. Furthermore, a formally identical pattern is met to some extent in Old Byelorussian and Old Ukrainian. (For details, see, e.g. Sabenina 1983: 45-51; *Istoričeskaja grammatika* 1978: 405-406.) According to Kuz'mina and Nemčenko (1964: 171), it is occasionally still used in some Ukrainian and Byelorussian dialects.

The *'must a needle'* -pattern could thus be a relic from the period of the East Slavonic proto-language which could then have remained as an archaism in the peripheral North Russian dialects. This raises an interesting methodological problem: if we were to accept Lass's principle of the best explanation being the most parsimonious one, there would now be no reason for continuing the discussion on the origins of the *'must a needle'*-parallel of Karelian and the North Russian dialects. We could just close the case by stating that we are here dealing with a clear case of independent growth or parallel internal development in these languages.

However, the case is not that straightforward. In his 1965 dissertation, Pauli Saukkonen leaves open the question of the origins of the pattern in the Baltic-Finnic languages and suggests

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[7] In addition to Finnish and certain other Baltic-Finnic languages, similar constructions with necessive verbs and an elliptically omitted infinitive are used in some other Finno-Ugric languages, including Lappish, Zyryan and Hungarian (Saukkonen 1965: 120-121).

that, despite the evidence pointing to the hypothetical proto-form, there is still a strong possibility of a contact-induced change caused by the Russian impersonal constructions of the types *mne nado [+infinitive]* and *mne nužno [+infinitive]* 'to-me must'. This is supported by the fact that the constructions with a necessitative verb, an omitted infinitive and its partitive/nominative object are most widespread and frequent in languages or varieties which have been subject to extensive influence from Russian in other respects, i.e. the Eastern Finnish dialects, the Eastern Baltic-Finnic languages (Karelian, Vepsian, Ingrian), and Votic, which is spoken in the western part of Ingermanland and which typologically belongs to the Southern group of the Baltic-Finnic languages. (Saukkonen 1965: 120-121.)

The story does not end even here. In what follows we shall try to show that the North Russian dialects, too, may have been subject to cross-linguistic interference. Furthermore, we shall try to demonstrate how the application of Odlin's three criteria may strengthen the case for contact-induced change also in the North Russian dialects.

Let us begin with evidence speaking *for* a Russian or Eastern Slavonic source for the North Russian *'must a needle'* -pattern. First, the $\mathbf{N}_{\mathbf{Acc/Gen}}$ + $\mathbf{Pred}_{\mathbf{Nec(Neg)}}$ -construction with an object-NP (*Nado kuklu/Ne nado kukly*, as in examples 23a and 23b above), which is used in the present-day spoken language, seems to be of *later* origin than our *'must a needle'* -pattern. According to Sabenina (1983: 46), during the East Slavonic period (i.e. up till the 15th century) the *'must a needle'* -pattern was the prevailing type of necessitative construction lacking an infinitive, whereas the present-day constructions with the object either in the accusative or the genitive did not appear until the Old Russian period, i.e. in the 17th century. The formation of the North Russian dialects is usually dated at the 12th-13th centuries (Vlasto 1986: 301). Therefore, it is plausible to assume that the

'must a needle' -pattern in the North Russian dialects originates in the older, East Slavonic, ancestor.

Secondly, the syntactic properties and distributional range of the pattern are largely the same in East Slavonic, Old Russian, and the North Russian dialects. In all these varieties the N_{Nom}-component is also used in negative sentences, where the genitive would be expected (Sabenina 1983: 45; Markova 1989: 171). Furthermore, the pattern has a complete tense paradigm both in the earlier forms of Russian and in the Northern dialects: in Old Russian and East Slavonic it had all five tenses (present, imperfect, perfect, past perfect, future) (Sabenina 1983: 48-49); in the North Russian dialects the *'must a needle'*-pattern is used in the present tense as well as in the preterite and the future. Kuz'mina and Nemčenko (1964: 174) cite the following two examples to illustrate the preterite and future uses of the pattern in the present-day dialects:

(24) Čelovek *byl nado* ('a person be_{pret} must') 'a person was needed'.

(25) Ja tebe ne *nado budu* ('I to-you not must be_{fut}') 'you will not need me'.

However, at the *functional* level some striking differences between the North Russian dialects and the Old Russian/East Slavonic constructions begin to show up; these are factors which speak *against* an Old Russian or East Slavonic source for the construction. First, in the North Russian dialects the pattern does not seem to carry any particular stylistic value, whereas the Old Russian/East Slavonic **Pred + $N_{NomSubj}$** -pattern has been shown to be stylistically very restricted. Staniševa (1966: 51) notes that in Old Russian the pattern was a specific feature of *legal documents*, where it was, as is also pointed out by Sabenina (1983:

46), mostly used in negative contexts to convey that some particular person did not have to pay some particular taxes.[8]

Secondly, in addition to its functional restrictions the pattern may have been already disappearing from East Slavonic at the time when those varieties of East Slavonic that were to become the North Russian dialects entered their separate path of development. Written records show that even in the 11th and 12th centuries the pattern was rather infrequent (*Istoričeskaja grammatika* 1978: 405, 406; Filin 1972: 478), except for the very first East Slavonic documents written in North Russia, viz. *Gramota Aleksandra Jaroslaviča* (1257-1259) and *Russkaja Pravda*, a codification of laws, the first known manuscript of which is dated at the 11th century (Filin 1972: 483; Vlasto 1986: 24). In these documents the pattern is said to occur 'quite consistently' (Georgieva 1949: 49; Filin 1972: 478). During the later Old Russian period, however, the pattern seems to become extremely scarce even in the official documents written in North Russia: the nine relatively long texts from the 15th century onwards examined by Markova (1989: 172-173) do not include a single instance of this pattern.

Thirdly, in addition to the functional differences between the North Russian and the Old Russian/East Slavonic patterns, one can detect some clear *semantic dissimilarities*: in the North Russian dialects the *'must a needle'* -pattern has far fewer semantic constraints than in East Slavonic and Old Russian. At first glance, the patterns may look rather similar, since in all these varieties of Russian the subject can in principle be abstract

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[8] Besides the *'must a needle'* -pattern, the other patterns including a nominative object had strict functional limitations: e.g. the infinitive + N_{NomObj} -pattern was typical of commercial documents and was only occasionally used in any other stylistic varieties. For example, in the 12th century birch bark letters from Novgorod, which include (often fragmentary) domestic letters, there is only one example of an object of an infinitive in the nominative (Filin 1972: 480-481). Interestingly enough, in the 17th-18th centuries constructions with an infinitive and its nominative object are especially frequent in texts which have a dialectal basis (Staniševa 1966: 229).

or concrete, animate or inanimate, human or non-human (see Markova 1989: 170-172 and the examples in Sabenina 1983: 45-51). However, in the older written forms of Russian the nominative subjects of the *'must a needle'*-pattern are almost exclusively *feminine* nouns ending in *-a*, though occasionally collective nouns and the so-called *i*-stem nouns also appear in this position (for details, see Staniševa 1966: 47). Below is an example of a collective noun (cited from Sabenina 1983: 46):

(26) Emu *ratnye ljudi* nadobet' ('to-him must soldiers') 'he needs soldiers'.

In the North Russian dialects the semantic properties of the subject are not so restricted, and apart from feminine nouns, pronouns (as in example 25 above), animate masculines in the singular (example 27 below), and any animate noun in the plural (examples 28 to 29), in which the accusative differs from the nominative form, are commonly used as subject. For example:

(27) Mne *mužyk* nja nada (Georgieva 1949: 48) ('to-me not must a man') 'I do not need a man'.

(28) V kalhozu *kon'i* nada (Georgieva 1949: 48) ('in the collective farm must horses') 'the collective farm needs horses'.

(29) *Plotniki* nado (Kuz'mina and Nemčenko 1964: 171) ('carpenters must') 'carpenters are needed'.

Note that the semantic properties of the North Russian subjects of the *'must a needle'*-pattern correspond to those of the subject in similar sentences in Karelian. The above North Russian examples may be compared with the Karelian examples in (30) to (33) drawn from Sarhimaa's corpus. Just as in the North Russian dialects, there are no specific semantic constraints on the nouns which can be used as subject. The subject can be either inanimate (30) or animate (31, 32, 33), it can refer to a human (31, 33) as well as to a non-human (32) object, to a male or a female (33), and it can appear in sentences under negation (31):

(30) Viehäi pidee *airot* (413, 694/ Rja: 6) (yet must oars) 'yet a pair of oars are needed'.

(31) Ei, šanou, miula pie *l'öböjalga*, miula pid'au *kengäjalga* (263, 1727/ Duh (III, 5): 169) (not, says, to-me must 'frog-feet', to-me must 'shoe-feet') '[the man] says: I do not need a person who has feet like those of a frog, I need a person who wears shoes'.

(32) Nu opad'i *hebo* pidäw (407, 709/ Rja: 188) ('well, again the horse must') 'well, again the horse is needed'.

(33) Muamolle pid'äy *tyttö*, tuatolla *poika* (VPF, 1384/1) (to-the-mother must a daughter, to-the-father a son) 'the mother needs a daughter, the father [needs] a son'.

So far we hope to have shown that Odlin's criterion of similar distributional range in the languages in contact is fulfilled: the structural parallel between the North Russian and Karelian *'must a needle'* -patterns is accompanied by a total semantic similarity. What is more, the functional range of the patterns is the same in the North Russian dialects and in Karelian: the pattern seems to be freely used in various functional situations to express the notion of necessity.

Let us now go on and test our case against the criterion dealing with the *geographical distribution* of putative foreign loans. Odlin's criterion II states that, if a structure is transferable in one language contact situation, it can be predicted to be transferable in other similar situations as well. According to Kuz'mina's and Nemčenko, who have based their study on the material collected for the Dialectological Atlas of Russian, the *'must a needle'* -pattern is a typical feature of all North Russian dialects. Apart from the Northern dialects, it is occasionally attested in a few scattered pockets in the South Russian dialect area and in a few distinct areas of the so-called Transitional Belt between the North Russian and the South Russian dialects. (Kuz'mina and Nemčenko 1964: 170-172.) These areas appear to adjoin the old area of the Volgaic languages, including the already extinct language Merya and the still vigorous Mordvin. Very little is known about Meryan syntax, and it is not possible

to draw any conclusions about the existence (or non-existence) of the *'must a needle'* -pattern there. In Mordvin, however, the pattern is an integral part of the syntactic system. Our data thus seem to satisfy Odlin's criterion of multiple geographical occurrence under similar linguistic and other conditions.

Finally, we can test our case against Odlin's third criterion, according to which contact influences should be especially frequent in areas in which living contacts between the languages in question have provided constant support to the use of the contact-induced innovation. This seems, indeed, to be the case in the Karelian situation, since at least two distinct areas within the present-day North Russian dialects can be pointed out which display a particularly high frequency of the *'must a needle'* -pattern. First, as Markova (1989: 170) notes, the pattern is very commonly used in the Northwestern dialects spoken on the Ladoga Isthmus and in the northern parts of the Leningrad region, where the contacts between the Russians and the Eastern Baltic-Finnic peoples (including the Karelians and the Vepsians) have continued without interruption up till our days. According to Georgieva (1949: 47-48), another place where this pattern is well represented is the area of the Pskov dialects spoken at the extreme western end of the Transitional Belt. The standard assumption is that the Pskov dialects share a relatively strong (Baltic-)Finnic substratum with the Novgorod dialects but also contain a considerable Baltic component. What is, however, even more interesting is that along their western border the Pskov dialects are close neighbours of yet another vigorous Baltic-Finnic language, viz. Estonian. All in all, our pattern appears to be especially frequent in linguistic border regions and thus fulfils even the third criterion laid down by Odlin (1992).

4.3.3. Summary

In the light of the evidence discussed here it seems likely that the *'must a needle'* -pattern of the North Russian dialects is a result of contact-induced change, which has most probably been

triggered by long-standing contacts with the Finnic peoples living in the North-West of Russia. As we have pointed out earlier, the pattern is not necessarily unique to Karelian/Eastern Baltic-Finnic languages either but may well be of Russian origin there. As it seems more or less impossible to prove the *source* or the *direction* of the influence, the possibility of simple borrowing from one language to the other as well as explanations based on substratal or superstratal influence have to be rejected.

In our view, the origins of the 'must a needle' -parallel in the North Russian dialects and Karelian present a good example of adstratal convergence. Both varieties had in their early stages something that *could* have been the origin of the present-day pattern, but which is not identical with the pattern as it is found in the modern varieties. In the course of the centuries of intensive contacts between these languages, the North Russian and Karelian patterns, which evidently already in their original forms shared a number of features, became more and more similar. At some point in the history they finally reached their present-day forms and came to share all of their essential functional and semantic features.

5. Conclusion

Cross-linguistic syntactic parallels have always presented a particular challenge to the historical linguist interested in language-contact phenomena. Through our discussion of two very different contact situations we have sought to test some of the methodological principles suggested in previous research and to highlight the special nature of the problems associated with syntactic parallels.

Both the Hiberno-English examples and the one representing the Karelian-North Russian interface seem to us to provide enough evidence to show that the initially most tempting explanations, i.e. those based on economy or on a simple substrate-superstrate relationship, do not always stand the test of actual contact situations. In our example cases — as in numerous

others, we believe — it is evident that linguistic factors alone do not suffice to confirm or disconfirm contact-induced change; besides these, the possible influence of a whole host of other factors has to be thoroughly examined. The language-external aspect includes the socio-historical background of the contact situation at issue, entailing the demographic history of each area, the length and intensity of contacts, the mode of transmission of a new language in conditions of language shift, accessibility of the target language, etc. As in our Irish and Karelian settings, it is factors like these that need to be considered in order to ascertain the origins of features shared by neighbouring dialects or languages. In the Irish context, for example, regional variation between Hiberno-English dialects which represented differing degrees of recency of contact with Irish was found to be one important means of prying apart substratal influences from superstratal ones.

We also hope to have shown that the category of linguistic factors cannot be confined to a mere noting of structural similarities. It is essential to look into the whole range of meanings and functions of the putative parallels; similarities or dissimilarities in these respects may, as also suggested by Odlin (1992), provide important evidence about their sources. In our test-cases, for example, the functional range of the *must a needle* -pattern in the earlier varieties of Russian turned out to be quite different from that of the present-day North Russian dialects. This could then be used to weaken the possibility of the putatively similar pattern of the North Russian dialects being a retention from earlier stages of Russian.

Yet, the best results can be achieved by combining both linguistic and other evidence. We agree with Hock (1984), who writes that (especially early) cases of language contact are tried on the basis of circumstantial evidence. However, his requirement that they should be established beyond a reasonable doubt as in courts of law seems to us an almost impossible task. In language-contact studies, as in historical studies in general, we are dealing with varying degrees of likelihood. Achieving

something less modest than proof beyond a reasonable doubt does not make the linguist's enterprise worthless or uninteresting. Again, our discussion of the Irish and the Karelian-North Russian situations shows that a careful consideration of a wide range of evidence may take us a long way towards conclusions which can be sustained with a *reasonably high degree of likelihood.* And this is as far as we can go in most cases.

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