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Borrowing morphology: The influence of Russian on the Veps system of indefinite pronouns

Abstract Veps is a Finnic minority language that has long been influenced by Russian, the prestige language in the speech area. The influence of Russian can be perceived in all subsystems of the Veps language, but hardly any research has been done on its impact on morphology. The current paper focuses on the influence of Russian on the Veps indefinite pronouns and their restructuring. The contemporary Veps indefinite pronoun system is based on the use of different affixes and particles, i.e., indefiniteness markers, which are attached to interrogative stems. This article describes the various Veps indefiniteness markers, which have been acquired via morpheme transfer (MAT) and morphological pattern transfer (PAT) from Russian. The borrowing of indefiniteness markers is typical for languages under the very strong influence of another language. According to contemporary studies, the motivation for borrowing should primarily be attributed to sociolinguistic factors and less to structural-typological similarities of the languages in question. In the Veps language community, such sociolinguistic factors are the minority status of the Veps language and the bilingualism of its speakers.

Keywords Veps, Russian, morphology, indefiniteness markers, morpheme transfer, morphological pattern transfer

1. Borrowing morphology as a typological phenomenon

This study explores the different ways Russian has influenced the Veps indefinite pronoun system from a typological viewpoint. The oldest stratum of Finnic indefinite-interrogative pronouns was based on bare interrogatives, therefore ambiguity could not always be avoided. At present, the Veps indefinite pronouns are usually based on interrogative pronouns with different indefiniteness markers, most of which are borrowed from Russian. The Russian pronominal elements are attested in all the eastern Finnic languages as well as in some other Finno-Ugric languages (van Alsenoy & van der Auwera 2015: 533; Alvre 1982: 45, 2002: 161). The question of the degree of semantic and functional matching between the indefiniteness markers in the recipient language Veps and the source language Russian is discussed in more detail in Hienonen (2010). In the following, I argue that both morpheme transfer and morphological pattern transfer influence the system.

Below, borrowing is used as “a cover-term for the adoption of a structural feature into a language as a result of some level of bilingualism in the history of the relevant speech community” following Matras & Sakel (2007: 1). There is a main distinction between two types of borrowing which are labelled: morpheme transfer (MAT) and morphological pattern transfer (PAT) (for different definitions, see Sakel 2007). MAT refers to the replication of linguistic matter consisting of actual phonological segments, whereas PAT refers to the replication of functional or semantic patterns of the other language. In PAT, the form itself is not borrowed. (Matras & Sakel 2007; Sakel 2007.)

In the following I apply Haspelmath’s (2004 [1997]: 10–22) definitions of certain key concepts. Indefinite pronouns express indefinite reference, the main functional characteristic of this subgroup of pronouns. Furthermore, there are four types of expressions, which in the Western grammatical tradition belong to the category of indefinite pronouns but which are excluded here. These are mid-scalar quantifiers, generic pronouns, universal quantifiers, and identity pronouns or determiners. The concept of a pronoun is understood in its broader sense, in which not only pro-nouns but also other pro-words such as pro-adjectives and pro-adverbs are covered by this term. Affixes and

particles, which are attached to the interrogative stem and make up an indefinite pronoun, are called indefiniteness markers.

It is commonly assumed that not all areas of morphology show the same degree of propensity for borrowing. Derivation is perceived as more borrowable than inflection and inherent inflection more borrowable than contextual inflection. (Gardani et al. 2015.) According to contemporary typological studies and contrary to earlier claims, morphological borrowing is surprisingly frequent in the languages of the world. Overall, it is known to happen in languages under very strong influence from another language. (Haspelmath 2004 [1997]: 184–185.)

Traditionally, it has been argued that pronouns, pronoun paradigms, and pronominal affixes are not susceptible to borrowing (Dixon 1997: 22; Greenberg & Ruhlen 1992), but this view has lately been questioned (see Campbell 1997). Thomason & Everett (2001) have found proof of numerous cases of borrowed pronouns in the languages of the world. As they state, pronoun borrowing is “nowhere near as rare as one would suppose from reading the literature” (ibid. 301). Under certain social circumstances, pronouns or sets of pronouns are easily borrowed. Sometimes borrowing occurs when there is a perceived gap in the pronominal paradigm (ibid. 304).

As regards indefinite pronouns, there have not been any cases attested in the languages of the world in which a complete indefinite pronoun has been borrowed. Nevertheless, there is a considerable number of documented cases where languages, which have interrogative-based indefinites, have adopted indefiniteness markers from another language, via either MAT or PAT. This change takes place mainly under heavy foreign interference. (Haspelmath 2004 [1997]: 184.)

Some studies on language contact claim that structural and typological similarity between the source and the recipient language promote borrowability or is a precondition for it. Some more recent studies claim that the borrowability of structural categories is not dependent on the structural similarity of the languages but primarily on the sociolinguistic factors, such as speakers’ deliberate choices, the intensity of the contact situation, and the level of bilingualism in the speech community (see, e.g., Thomason & Everett 2001; Thomason 1999).

Yaron Matras (2015) emphasises the usage-based model of borrowing and argues that the true locus of borrowing is the individual,

not the linguistic system. According to him, bilinguals do not organise their communication in the form of two “languages” or “linguistic systems”. Instead, they have an enriched and extended repertoire of linguistic structures among which they learn to select. (Ibid. 50.) Not every element exists in each language; therefore, some elements might be shared. In certain contexts, the “native” language of a speaker does not constitute a fully adequate means of communication. Therefore, bilingual speakers are motivated to draw on material from another language. Using fusion or uniformity of form-function representations in both languages seems to be the most beneficial strategy in different interaction settings. As Matras points out, borrowing is not always deliberate or conscious, but it surely is purposeful and function-driven. (Ibid. 51–53.)

Frank Seifart’s (2015; see also 2013) quantitative study questions the assumption that the borrowability of linguistic forms is constrained by structural properties. Seifart compares the extent of affix borrowing with structural similarity scores for the languages. The affixes included both inflectional and derivational affixes. (Seifart 2015: 93–95.) The structural similarity scores were counted with the help of morphosyntactic features presented in the World Atlas of Language Structures (Dryer & Haspelmath 2011). Seifart (ibid. 97–98) concludes that structural similarity between the donor and recipient language does not play a major role in determining the borrowability of affixes. Statistically, heavy affix borrowing is just as commonly attested between structurally dissimilar as well as structurally similar languages. Therefore, structural factors do not constrain the bilingual speakers’ creation of mixed varieties and borrowing.

Typological distance between Veps and Russian is significant by several criteria. Since typological congruence does not play a major role in affix borrowing, a more plausible explanation for the motivation of borrowing is achieved by adopting a more user-oriented theory and by taking a glance at the sociolinguistic reality of the Veps speech community. In the Veps speech community, bilingualism is unidirectional and Veps is used mainly in informal or private or domestic settings (Puura et al. 2013). According to Matras (2015: 52–53), this represents a typical situation in which the community is inclined to have a more lax attitude toward borrowing. Map 1 shows the Veps language area.



Map 1. The Veps language area in the years 1900 and 2000 according to Grünthal (2011: 269). The language boundaries in the year 1900 based on the appendix of Tunkelo (1946) with place names in Finnish. Map by Arttu Paarlahti.

2. The data

The data of this article consist of 2 483 phrases with indefinite pronouns. The older part of the data consist of published text samples (Kettunen 1920; Kettunen 1925; Kettunen & Siro 1935; Lönnrot 2002 [1853]; Setälä & Kala 1951; Sovijärvi & Peltola 1982; Zaiceva & Mullonen 1969), which represent spoken Veps from approximately the late 19th century until the mid-20th century. These data encompass all main dialect areas of Veps. For the sake of clarity, the transcription of old dialect data has been simplified.

Furthermore, the contemporary data represent the language situation today and consist of both written and spoken language samples. I have collected the contemporary written language samples from the Veps language corpus (<http://vepsian.krc.karelia.ru/text/>). The usability of the corpus is unfortunately limited, since the lemmatisation is occasionally imprecise. Certain original affixes may be missing, while in some instances the order of the morphemes has been rearranged, arguably for the sake of the new literary standards. Nonetheless, despite these incidental flaws, the corpus has been of great benefit for this study. The corpus samples consist of texts mainly from the New Testament (*Uz' Zavet*) and from the Veps newspaper *Kodima*. It should be noted that the *Uz' Zavet* texts are translations and therefore differ from the rest of the language samples. As the number of contemporary written Veps language texts is not particularly vast, the presence of the *Uz' Zavet* texts in this study can be justified. In this article, the translations of the Veps *Uz' Zavet* phrases are word-for-word translations and do not follow any official English Bible translations, because they do not include indefinite pronouns.

The contemporary spoken language samples consist of recordings made by me during field trips to the Northern and Central Veps villages in 2009, 2011, and 2014. The first interviews were recorded in 2009 in the Central Veps dialect area in the region of *Oyat'* in Leninograd Oblast. The recordings from 2011 were made in the city of Petrozavodsk and in the Northern Veps villages of *Šoutar'v* and *Kaleig* as part of the ELDIA research project (<https://www.eldia-project.org/>). The material from 2014 was recorded in the Central Veps villages of

Päžar' and *Pondal* in the Vologda Oblast and in the village of *Ladv* in Leningrad oblast.

In addition to the described data, the study has taken advantage of an elicitation test, which I carried out during fieldwork in 2014. For the test, I produced 55 sample phrases, each of which represents a different context and function where indefinite pronouns could be used. The grammar and the accuracy of the sample phrases were checked by Olga Žukova, the lector of Veps language at the Petrozavodsk State University. I chose a total of seven informants for the test. They were from the villages of *Päžar'* and *Pondal* in the Vologda oblast and from the village of *Ladv* in the Leningrad oblast. I requested that they comment on the test phrases I read aloud for them, as not all informants were literate in Veps. The informants' main task was to fill in the empty gaps in the phrases with one interrogative stem and with varying affixes and particles. In most cases, there was also a bare interrogative available. The informants were allowed to choose multiple variants or forms and even to propose new ones, as in practice, the functions of pronoun series are often overlapping. The experiment proved to be fruitful but laborious, since for each informant, it took from one to two hours to go through the sample phrases. As a result, the variation and multifunctionality of the pronoun series were clearly lower, as far as the informants familiar with Standard Veps were concerned. The speakers influenced by Standard Veps generally have a more normative attitude towards the language. On the other hand, speakers who do not use literary Veps at all, might be unaccustomed to examining one's language on an abstract level.

3. MAT in the Veps indefinite pronoun system

The Veps indefinite pronoun system displays three clear cases of MAT from Russian. There are three actual indefiniteness markers, which have been adapted from Russian: *koje- ~ kojo-*, *ni-*, and *-ni ~ -nibud'*. In Russian, these markers are not deeply embedded morphemes, thus in this regard, borrowing such units is not difficult to carry out.

3.1. The marker *koje-* ~ *kojo-*

The Russian indefiniteness marker *koe-* is represented in Veps as *kojo-* ~ *koje-* (see also Alvre 2002: 163; Blokland 2012: 4). In Russian, the *koe-* series is used when the referent is specific and the speaker knows its identity (Haspelmath 2004 [1997]: 275). Furthermore, the Russian *koe-kto* and *koe-čto* may also refer to a referent whose identity the speaker does not know (Bronnikov 2006: 5). Less commonly, the Russian pronoun *koe-kak* may be interpreted in a depreciative sense as ‘by whatever means, with great difficulty’ (Haspelmath 2004 [1997]: 190; Bronnikov 2006: 6).

In the Veps data, the marker *koje-* ~ *kojo-* is attested in both old and more recent data. The marker *koje-* ~ *kojo-* is attested in all main dialect areas: in Northern, Central, and Southern Veps. The use in Southern Veps is illustrated in example (1). However, *koje-* ~ *kojo-* is not attested in Standard Veps, as no examples are found in the corpus data containing the New Testament (*Uz' Zavet*) and the newspaper *Kodima*.

(1) VeS (Kettunen 1920: 13)

nece-n tauve-n kaike-n sa-l-ii-n, sa-l-ii-n
 that-GEN winter-GEN all-GEN get-FREQ-IMPF-1SG get-FREQ-IMPF-1SG
kojo-mi-da-gi gol'u laps-ii-mu
 INDEF-what-PTV-PTCL poor.PL.GEN child-PL-PRCOM
 ‘For the whole winter I scraped, scraped up
 something with the poor children.’

According to the main data and excluding the pronoun test findings, the *koje-* ~ *kojo-* series is a marginal and not fully productive indefinite pronoun series. In most cases, the prefixal marker *koje-* ~ *kojo-* is combined with the stem *kut* ‘where’, but it may also combine with the stems *mitte* ‘which’ (example 2), *mi* ‘what’, and *miš* ‘where’.

(2) VeS (Zaiceva & Mullonen 1969: 251)

suks-i-l ajel-ii-ba poikpoliž-i-d sa-m-ha, da da
 ski-PL-ADE drive-IMPF-3PL willow-PL-PTV get-INF-ILL and and
koje-mičč-i-d-gi.
 INDEF-which-PL-PTV-PTCL
 ‘They were skiing to get some willow
 (for a sleigh), and and something.’

As seen in the previous examples, the pronoun is usually accompanied by an enclitic particle *-gi*. Occasionally, the particle may be attached to the prefix *koje-* instead of the pronominal stem (example 3).

- (3) VeC (Zaiceva & Mullonen 1969: 94)

Tul' *kodi-he i ost-i* *koje-gi*
come.IMPF.3SG home-ILL and buy-IMPF.3SG INDEF-PTCL

mi-dü *vähä-izē-n.*
what-PTV little-DIM-GEN

‘He/she came home and bought a little bit of something.’

In a few cases, the pronoun occurs without the particle (example 4).

- (4) VeC (Zaiceva & Mullonen 1969: 11)

jälgmäi *koje-kut* *uspokoi-moi*
afterwards INDEF-how calm.IMPF-1PL

‘Afterwards we calmed down somehow.’

The meaning of the resulting indefinite pronoun is usually specific and either known or unknown (as in example 5) to the speaker. Another typical meaning is a depreciative one, just as in Russian.

- (5) Ve (Pronoun test 2014: Q4)

Minä kul-i-n *koje-mi-dü,* *no e-n* *el'genda-nd,*
I hear-IMPF-1SG INDEF-what-PTV but NEG-1SG understand-PTCP

kene-n än' nece ol-i.
who-GEN voice this be-IMPF.3SG

‘I heard something, but I didn’t understand, whose/what voice it was.’

However, on the basis of the pronoun test, there are stems other than *kut* ‘how’, *mi* ‘what’, *mitte* ‘which’, and *miš* ‘where’, which can be combined with the prefix *koje-* ~ *kojo-*. The informants approved of attaching *koje-* ~ *kojo-* to the stems *konz* ‘when’ (example 6), *ken* ‘who’ (example 7), and *kus* ‘where’ (example 8). In contradiction with the main data, the *koje-* ~ *kojo-* series might not be as marginal and non-productive as first predicted (cf. Hienonen 2010). In this respect it resembles the Russian *koe-* series: in Russian the series has pronouns representing all basic ontological categories except for amount, *skol'ko* ‘how much’ (see Haspelmath 2004 [1997]: 273). The difference is that

the Veps *koje-* ~ *kojo-* series is used only in the spoken register, not in the literary language. This must be due to the fact that in language planning the Russian marker has been dispreferred in favour of the indefinite pronoun *eraz*, which is of Finnic origin (see also SSA s.v. *eräs*; Ojansuu 1922: 105).

- (6) *Ve* (Pronoun test 2014: Q2)

Koje-konz *näg-i-n* *mei-den randa-l* *vedehiže-n,* *no*
 INDEF-when see-IMPF-1SG we-GEN shore-ADE water_sprite-GEN but
nece amu ol-i jo.
 that long_ago be-IMPF.3SG already
 ‘I once saw the Water sprite on our shore,
 but that was long ago already.’

- (7) *Ve* (Pronoun test 2014: Q6)

Koje-ken *kolkota-b ikna-ha,* *no e-n näge,*
 INDEF-who knock-3SG window-ILL but NEG-1SG see.CNG
ken sigä om.
 who there be.3SG
 ‘Somebody is knocking on the window, but I don’t see, who is there.’

- (8) *Ve* (Pronoun test 2014: Q7)

Minä jo *kul-i-n nene sana-d koje-kus.*
 I already hear-IMPF-1SG those word-PL INDEF-where
 ‘I already heard those words somewhere.’

3.2. The marker *ni-*

The most firmly rooted indefiniteness marker in the Veps indefinite pronoun system is clearly the Russian prefix *ni-*. The same marker *ni-* is attested in various other Uralic languages (see, e.g., van Alsenoy & van der Auwera 2015; Alvre 2002: 163; Blokland 2012: 4). According to van Alsenoy & van der Auwera (*ibid.*), the large number of borrowed negative markers in Uralic languages shows the heavy influence of Slavic. By using the negative indefiniteness marker together with the negative word, the Veps language, much as certain other Uralic languages, displays negative concord. Typological studies have shown negative concord to be an areal phenomenon found mostly

in European languages, for example in Russian, Polish, Lithuanian, Spanish, and non-standard English. (Ibid. 541.)

The Veps indefiniteness marker *ni-* is well-attested both in the old (example 9) and the new data (example 10).

- (9) Ve (Lönnrot 2002 [1853]: 24)¹

Ei ni-ken rodt'e kirves käde-s.
 NEG.3SG INDEF-who born.CNG axe hand-INE
 'No one is born with an axe in his hand.'

- (10) VeSt (Corpus: 489. *Uz' Zavet* 2006, Gospel of Luke 10: 42)

Maria valič-i hüvä-n oza-n, si-dä häne-l
 Mary choose-IMPF.3SG good-GEN part-GEN, this-PTV she-ADE
ni-ken ei anasta.
 INDEF-who NEG.3SG steal.CNG
 'Mary chose the good part, which no one will take away from her.'

The marker *ni-* can be combined with any of the interrogative stems: *ken* 'who', *mi* 'what', *mitte* 'which', *kus* 'where', *kuna* 'where', *miš* 'where', *konz* 'when' (example 11), *kut* 'how', *mit* 'how', and *kuverz'* 'how much'.

- (11) VeN (Sovijärvi & Peltola 1982: 10)

Ei voi-nu män-da sluuž-ma-ha cerkva-ha viina-ta
 NEG.3SG can-PTCP go-INF worship-INF-ILL church-ILL spirit-ABE
ni-konz.
 INDEF-when

'(He) could never go to the church to worship without spirits.'

Much as in Russian, the Veps prefix *ni-* might precede not only a pronoun but every negated coordinated element. In (12), the negative prefix *ni-* has been glossed as NEG, except for the indefiniteness markers before the pronoun.

1. Lönnrot does not specify the dialects.

(12) VeC (Setälä & Kala 1951: 244)

Si-hesai mužik nece el-i, miše ni sö-da, ni
 this-TERM man this live-IMPF.3SG that NEG eat-INF NEG
g'o-da, ni pä-le, ni g'aug-ha ni-kus
 drink-INF NEG ON-ALL NEG foot-ILL IND-where
ni-mi-da ei-le.
 IND-what-PTV NEG.3SG²-be.CNG

‘Until then the man lived, so that (he had) nothing to eat, nothing to drink, no clothes or shoes to wear, there isn’t anything anywhere.’

As in Russian, Veps negated sentences always display negative concord. In other words, the Veps indefinite pronouns are always marked with the indefiniteness marker *ni-* in negated sentences (cf. Savijärvi 1986: 58–59). The few exceptions to the rule are the modal existential and possessive constructions, which do not contain a prefix *ni-* in Russian, either (see Karjalainen 2016). In those constructions, the use of bare interrogatives is preferred, and *ei-* should be analysed instead as a prefix and not as a negative verb, just like the prefix *ne-* in equivalent constructions in Russian. This can be briefly illustrated by the modal existential construction (example 13).

(13) VeC (Setälä & Kala 1951: 278)

Uko-le teh-ta ei mi-da.
 man-ALL do-INF INDEF what-PTV

‘There is nothing the man can do.’

The prefixal nature of *ei-* can also be observed in (14) (see also Karjalainen 2016). The resulting construction refers to a function Haspelmath (2004 [1997]: 4) calls specific known, rather than a negative one as one would expect. Therefore, it is similar in its function to one of the functions of the Russian prefix *ne-*: *v nektorom gorode* ‘in one city’.

2. According to Kettunen (1943: 436), the negative verb and the verb *olda* ‘be’ are merged in present and imperfect tense.

(14) Ve (Lönnrot 2002 [1853]: 7)

Ei kudamo-s lidna-s ol-i car' nime-l Pirras.
 INDEF which-INE city-INE be-IMPF.3SG tsar name-ADE Pirras
 ‘In one city there was a tsar called Pirras.’

Examining the vast data, after excluding all modal existential and possessive constructions, there occurred very few negative phrases without negative concord (example 15). Such deviations are indeed very rare.

(15) VeN (Sovijärvi & Peltola 1982: 8)

Tö, sanu-b, e-t kuna kado-gii.
 you.PL say-3SG NEG-2PL where disappear-PTCL
 ‘You, he says, won’t disappear anywhere.’

These findings could also be supported by the pronoun test replies. As in the other data, the pronoun test informants were overwhelmingly of one mind: no one accepted any marker in negative sentences other than *ni-* (example 16).

(16) Ve (Pronoun test 2014: Q44)

Ei-le-nd leibä-d, ei-le-nd ni-mi-dä.
 NEG-be-PTCP bread-PTV NEG-be-PTCP INDEF-what-PTV
 ‘There wasn’t bread, there wasn’t anything.’

Again, only the modal existential and possessive constructions appear as exceptions to the rule (example 17).

(17) Ve (Pronoun test 2014: Q45)

Perti-š om vilu, lämbita-da ei mi-l.
 house-INE be.3SG cold heat_up-INF INDEF what-ADE
 ‘It is cold in the house, there is nothing to heat up with.’

Therefore, as a conclusion, the use of negative concord in Veps negated sentences should be considered just as compulsory as it is in Russian (cf. Savijärvi 1986: 58–59).

3.3. The marker *-ni ~ -nibud'*

As already discussed in Hienonen 2010, the Veps indefiniteness marker *-ni ~ -nibud'* can be related to the Russian suffix *-nibud'* (see also van Alsenoy & van der Auwera 2015). Alvre (2002), by contrast, propounds a view that suffixal *-ni* is the same affix as prefixal *ni-*. Alvre's argument is based on an idea that in strongly suffixing agglutinative languages a prefix might occasionally turn into a suffix. However, as van Alsenoy & van der Auwera (ibid.) point out in their study on indefinite pronouns in Uralic languages, there are no documented cases of indefinites with prefixed *ni-*, which would have lost their negative meaning. With respect to the borrowed negative indefiniteness marker, there is always an inherited negative concord pattern enclosed. Accordingly, in this study the affixes *ni-* and *-ni ~ -nibud'* are considered to be unique affixes.

The Veps *-ni ~ -nibud'* pronoun series is used in several functions defined by Haspelmath (2004 [1997]: 4): specific unknown, irrealis non-specific, question and conditional protasis (see Hienonen 2010: 286–287). The marker can be combined with any of the interrogative stems that are: *ken* 'who', *mi* 'what', *mitte* 'which', *kus* 'where', *kuna* 'where', *miš* 'where', *konz* 'when', *kut* 'how', *mit* 'how', and *kuverz'* 'how much' (example 18).

(18) VeS (Kettunen 1920: 114)

Ka ii-k putuu-ž mei-le sigaa jauho-d
 well NEG.3SG-Q fall-COND we-ALL there flour-PTV

kuverda-d-ni.

how_much-PTV-INDEF

'Well, wouldn't some flour fall there for us.'

In my data, the form *-ni* is, generally speaking, far more common than *-nibud'*, but both forms do exist. The marker *-nibud'* occurs in the Northern and Central Veps data, whereas in Southern Veps data there were no matches. The use in Central Veps is illustrated in (19).

(19) VeC (Setälä & Kala 1951: 466)

Sido min-dai ak kuna-nibud' lujo-mba, a
tie.IMP.2SG I-PTV woman where-INDEF tight-ADV.COMP but
ei ka mina lenda-n.
NEG.3SG and I fly-1SG

‘Tie me up, woman, tighter somewhere, if not, I will fly.’

Both *-ni* and *-nibud'* were attested in the pronoun test. The indefiniteness marker *-ni* was approved by all seven informants, whereas only five accepted the marker *-nibud'* (example 20). In Standard Veps, the normative form of this marker is *-ni*. However, it must be noted that both of the informants who did not approve any of the *-nibud'*-cases were frequent users of Standard Veps. Contrary to this, all five informants accepting *-nibud'* lived in a village and clearly had less contact with the literary register.

(20) Ve (Pronoun test 2014: Q17)

Konz-ni ~ konz-nibud' näge-moiš vól.
when-INDEF see-REFL.1PL again

‘We will see each other some time again.’

As the example (21) from the Central Veps dialect reveals, *-ni* and *-nibud'* might occur in the same sentence. The informant uses the marker *-nibud'* in the first clause, where the pronoun is used independently. In the second clause, the pronoun is a determiner of a noun, and it seems that in such cases the informant finds the shorter marker *-ni* more convenient.

(21) VeC (Zaiceva & Mullonen 1969: 19)

Dengo-i-d e-le ost-te-s, män-da kuna-nibud'
money-PL-PTV NEG-be.CNG buy-INF-INE go-INF where-INDEF
da mičče-he-ni bohata-ha mužika-ha ö-ks.
and which-ILL-INDEF rich-ILL man-ILL night-TRA

‘There is no money for buying [anything], one should go somewhere and to some rich man’s place for the night.’

As a rule, the marker *-nibud'* co-occurs in phrases with disjunctive conjunctions such as *libo* ‘or’ (example 22) and *ili* ‘or’ (example 23). In addition to *-nibud'*, bare interrogatives and indefinite pronouns with other markers (*-ni*, *-se*, *naku*) are also permitted in such phrases (Karjalainen 2016).

(22) VeN (Sovijärvi & Peltola 1982: 144)

mina si-li žäri-n mi-da-ni liha-d libo
 I you-ALL fry-1SG what-PTV-INDEF meat-PTV or
mi-da-nibud' siga.
 what-PTV-INDEF there
 ‘I will fry you some meat or something there.’

(23) VeC (Setälä & Kala 1951: 341)

Nece-n sunduga-n avai-tas aka-d lähiže-d, sizare-d
 this-GEN trunk-GEN open-3PL woman-PL close-PL sister-PL
ili ken-nibud' nevesta-n pole-späi ak.
 or who-INDEF bride-GEN side-ELA woman
 ‘This trunk is opened by close women, by the sisters,
 or by some woman from the bride’s family.’

As in any other context, only *-ni* is used in the older Southern Veps data (example 24).

(24) VeS (Kettunen 1920: 79)

A laps-kuluuže-d mi-š-ni ikna-n aa
 But child-poor-PL what-INE-INDEF window-GEN under.ADE
maga-tas, libo ke-he-ni män-hed raffaz-he
 sleep-PASS or who-ILL-INDEF go-PTCP people-ILL
magada-m-ha
 sleep-INF-ILL
 ‘But poor children are sleeping somewhere outside,
 or have gone to some people’s (house) to sleep.’

4. The rearrangement of morphemes

I proceed by analysing the rearrangement of morphemes encoding indefiniteness in the Veps indefinite pronoun system. Usually, all the Veps affixal indefiniteness markers are extrafixes, either prefixes or suffixes. In light of the findings of recent typological studies, extrafixal indefiniteness markers, however, just like all other extrafixes, have a tendency to be rearranged (Haspelmath 2004 [1997]: 23). Indefiniteness markers tend towards having the narrowest possible syntactic scope and therefore end up as close to the pronominal stem as possible. That is to say, when an indefiniteness marker becomes an affix, it may give rise to a process in which suffixal indefiniteness markers switch places with suffixal case markers.

The rearrangement of the morphemes applies to the Veps suffixal indefiniteness marker *-ni*, which in certain cases tends to move closer to its pronominal stem. In the data, this tendency occurs only when the pronominal stems *mitte* ‘which’ and *kuverz’* ‘how much’ are concerned. Since the singular nominative case has no ending in Veps, it is natural that in the nominative case no rearrangement of the morphemes can be observed. Therefore, only cases other than nominative are provided next.

In the instances of rearranged morphemes, the affix *-ni* may either have a form *-ni-* or *-nija-*. In (25), *mitte* has the stem *mičče-*. The affix is represented as *-nija-* and followed by a genitive case ending.

(25) VeC (Zaiceva & Mullonen 1969: 127)

<i>mičče-nija-n</i>	<i>grivennika-n</i>	<i>päiva-ks</i>	<i>tači-b</i>
which-INDEF-GEN	dime-GEN	day-TRA	toss-3SG

‘Tosses a few dimes for the day.’

In (26), the stem *kuverz’* is in the nominative. The affix is represented as *-nija-* and followed by a genitive case ending.

(26) VeC (Zaiceva & Mullonen 1969: 127)

<i>kuverz’-nija-n</i>	<i>surustoita-b</i>	<i>da</i>	<i>užina-u</i>	<i>möst</i>
how_much-INDEF-GEN	feed-3SG	and	supper-ADE	again

gõ sōta-b
already feed-3SG

‘Feeds a little bit, and during supper feeds again.’

In (27), both the stem and the suffix have the partitive case ending.

(27) VeN (Sovijärvi & Peltola 1982: 152)

E-d-ik *näh-nu* (*mi*) ***mittuš-t-nija-d*** *aka-d*
 NEG-2SG-Q see-PTCP (what) which-PTV-INDEF-PTV woman-PTV
proit-te-s
 pass-INF-INE

‘Didn’t you see (that) any woman passing?’

Before the illative case ending, both forms *-ni-* and *-nija-* occurred in the data. After *-nija-* the illative case ending *-ha* is used (example 28), whereas after *-ni-* the case ending is *-he* (example 29). This results from the fact that in the instances of rearranged morphemes, *-nija-* and *-ni-* are understood as belonging to the stem. According to the phonological rules of Veps, the illative case ending depends on the last vowel of the stem (Zaiceva 1995: 43). When the last vowel is *-a-*, the illative case ending is *-ha*, and when the vowel is *-i-*, the ending is *-he* (ibid.).

(28) VeC (Zaiceva & Mullonen 1969: 183)

nu i *nece-n* *sageda-n* *maido-iže-n* *amunda-n* *taga-ze*
 well and this-GEN thick-GEN milk-DIM-GEN ladle-1SG back-ILL
mičče-nija-ha *astka-iže-he* *i* *sõ-m.*
 which-INDEF-ILL pot-DIM-ILL and eat-1PL

‘Well, and I ladle this thick milk (= farm cheese)
 back into some pot and we eat (it).’

(29) VeC (Zaiceva & Mullonen 1969: 56)

pida-b ***mičče-ni-he*** *luht-ha* *ligota-da*
 must-3SG which-INDEF-ILL puddle-ILL soak-INF

‘One must soak (it) in some puddle.’

In the following pronoun test sentence (30), completed by one of the informants, *mitte* again has the stem *mičče-*. It is followed by an infix *-ni-*, the plural marker *-i-*, and the partitive case ending *-d*.

(30) Ve (Pronoun test 2014: Q8)

Kacu-hta, *tat to-i* *lidna-späi*
 look-MOM.IMP.2SG dad bring-IMP.3SG town-ELA
mičče-ni-i-d *tavaro-i-d.*
 which-INDEF-PL-PTV ware-PL-PTV

‘Look, dad brought some wares from the town.’

The survey of the data revealed some areal tendencies in the phenomenon of the rearranging of *-ni-* ~ *-nija-* and other morphemes. All reported cases were attested in the Central and Northern Veps dialects. In the old Southern Veps data, no such cases were found.

5. PAT in the Veps indefinite pronoun system

As grammatical markers, indefiniteness markers are often not strongly grammaticalised and they can therefore be related to other elements in the grammar which enables calquing or, in other words, PAT. Thus far occurrences of PAT in indefiniteness markers have not yet been sufficiently studied. There may be many occurrences of PAT in the indefinite pronoun systems of the world's languages, but usually it is difficult to show whether the resulting marker has its origin in language contact or is an independently developed formation. Therefore, the few attested cases are thought to represent only the tip of the iceberg. (See Haspelmath 2004 [1997]: 185).

The most clear case of PAT from Russian to the Veps indefinite pronoun system is the use of the indefiniteness marker *-se*. Furthermore, the use of *naku* in the *Pondal* dialect is presented here as an example of a locally invented indefiniteness marker.

5.1. The marker *-se*

The pattern for adopting the Veps demonstrative pronoun *se* 'this' as an indefiniteness marker comes from Russian (see also Hienonen 2010: 287). There seem to be striking similarities in the use of the Veps *-se* and the Russian particle *-to*. The particle *-to* may be added to nouns, pronouns, adjectives, pronominal adjectives, adverbs, quantifiers, infinitives, and finite verb forms (Leinonen 1998: 74–77). The prototypical meaning of the postpositive *-to* is demonstrative-emphasising. It has been argued in the literature that it might also be used as a definite article, but as Leinonen (ibid. 75) points out, this use is not regular enough, and therefore the evidence does not validate this view. In Russian, *-to* serves also as an indefiniteness marker. According to Haspelmath (2004 [1997]: 273), the origin of this indefiniteness

marker is unclear, but he suggests a link between *-to* ‘now’ and the Old Russian *tŭ, ≠ to* ‘that’. Van Alsenoy & van der Auwera (2015: 45) consider the link between demonstratives and indefinites even more straightforward. Evidence of demonstratives used as indefinites in specific contexts can be found, for instance, in Germanic languages (von Heusinger 2011). The grammaticalisation of deictic words into indefiniteness markers can be seen both in Russian and Veps (see also *naku* in section 5.2.).

According to the data, the indefinite use of pronouns with the marker *-se* is a very recent grammaticalisation in Veps. In the older samples, *se* ‘this’ may be interpreted mainly as a demonstrative or indicating emphasis. In attributive use, *se* usually follows the head of the phrase, though there are also a few cases where it may precede it (Kettunen 1943: 397). When *se* follows the head, it is unstressed and, by implication, it has no clear demonstrative function (*ibid.*). The example in (31) is fairly prototypical.

(31) VeS (Kettunen 1920: 88)

<i>A</i>	<i>prihad</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>ii-le,</i>	<i>ni-ke-da</i>	<i>ii-le.</i>
but	boy-PTV	this	NEG.3SG-be.CNG	INDEF-who-PTV	NEG.3SG-be.CNG

‘But the boy isn’t (there), there is nobody.’

Lauri Kettunen has proposed a view that in suffixal cases, *-se* may even act as a definite article. However, similarly to Russian, this article use is not regular enough in Veps to support this proposition. Veps *-se* should instead be seen as a pronoun, which expresses the prominence of the referent in the discourse. This kind of use is similar to the Finnish demonstrative *se* in the 20th century (see, e.g., Leinonen 1998: 75). It has been suggested that the use of the suffixal pronoun *se* in old literary Finnish would be at least partly based on the model of Swedish (see Kiuru 1990: 289). However, as the same suffixal pronoun can be found in the eastern Finnic languages, additional studies are needed in order to develop a full picture of the suffixal *-se*.

In the older Veps dialect samples, when *-se* follows a pronoun, the meaning of the sentences is usually either interrogative (example 32) or relative (example 33) (see also Kettunen 1943: 402).

(32) VeS (Kettunen 1925: 48)

da sidbukark i basi-b: "ken-se jo ku
and dung_beetle and talk-3SG who-this already when
t'eni-n basi-b stukič?"
tonight-ESSIN talk-3SG push.IMPF.3SG

‘And the dung beetle says: Who was the one,
he says, that pushed tonight like that?’

In the oldest data, only very few pronouns with the suffix *-se* may be interpreted indefinitely. In the oldest Southern Veps samples (Kettunen 1920; Kettunen 1925) there were only three sentences where *-se*-pronouns had been used with an indefinite meaning. This is illustrated by one of these sentences in (33).

(33) VeS (Kettunen 1925: 63)

priha-kuluune joks', joks' kuna-se meca-le
boy-poor run.IMPF.3SG run.IMPF.3SG where-INDEF forest³-ADE

‘The poor boy ran, ran to some bloody place.’

Similarly to the Southern Veps data, there are very few cases of the indefinite use of *-se*-pronouns in the other old dialect samples. The few instances of such use were found in Kettunen & Siro (1935; 2 occurrences) and Setälä & Kala (1951; 12 occurrences), and only in the dialect area of Central Veps. As can be seen from these occurrences, the use of the suffix *-se* was not yet productive: it was used only with the pronominal stem *kuverz'* ‘how much’. This is presented in (34) and (35). Again, as seen before, the stem *kuverz'* may be in the genitive (example 34) as well as in the nominative case (example 35).

(34) VeC (Kettunen & Siro 1935: 46)

Kuverda-n-se *si-da aiga-d kodi-š ol-i*
how_much-GEN-INDEF this-PTV time-PTV home-INE be-IMPF.3SG
nece uk.
this man

‘The man was at home for some time.’

3. In Veps, *mānda mecale* ‘go to a forest’ is an idiom meaning approximately ‘go to some bloody place’ (see, e.g., Zaiceva & Mullonen 1972 s.v. *mec*).

- (35) VeC (Setälä & Kala 1951: 222)

Kuverz-se aiga-d proidu-i
 how_much-INDEF time-PTV pass-IMPF.3SG
 ‘Some time passed.’

However, in the data by Zaiceva & Mullonen (1969) collected just a few decades later, the indefinite use of the *-se*-pronouns is far more numerous (32 occurrences). As in the historically older data, it only occurs in Central and Southern Veps. The use of the marker *-se* has become more productive, as this data show that it can be combined with any of the interrogative stems: *ken* ‘who’, *mi* ‘what’, *mitte* ‘which’ (example 36), *kus* ‘where’, *kuna* ‘where’, *miš* ‘where’, *konz* ‘when’, *kut* ‘how’, and *kuverz* ‘how much’.

- (36) VeS (Zaiceva & Mullonen 1969: 226)

mič-ii-l-se jüv-i-l' da h'eenh-ii-l' mii-d' d'o
 what-PL-ADE-INDEF corn-PL-ADE and feather-PL-ADE we-PTV already
hloputa-ba, e-n teda mi-l'.
 scatter-3PL NEG-1SG know.CNG what-ADE
 ‘They are scattering us with some corn and
 feathers, I don’t know with which.’

When it comes to modern literary Veps, the use of the marker *-se* is very common, and the present-day *-se*-series has a wide distribution of functions (see Hienonen 2010).

- (37) VeSt (Corpus: 455.
- Uz' Zavet*
- 2006, Gospel of Luke 6: 22)

huigenzoit-tas tei-den nimi-ki kuti mitte-se paha.
 reject-PASS you.PL-GEN name-PTCL like what-INDEF evil
 ‘And your name will be rejected like something evil.’

- (38) VeSt (Corpus: 587.
- Uz' Zavet*
- 2006, Gospel of John 7: 50)

Siloi Nikodim, kudamb konz-se ö-l ol-i
 then Nicodemus who when-INDEF night-ADE be-IMPF.3SG
kävu-nu Iisusa-nno da iče-ki ol-i farisei,
 go-PTCP Jesus-APRX and self-PTCL be-IMPF.3SG Pharisee
sanu-i he-i-le
 say-IMPF.3SG they-PL-ALL

‘Then Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus at night
 and who himself was a Pharisee, said to them.’

In the present-day spoken language, the use of *-se*-pronouns is well-attested in all dialects including the northern ones. The example phrases (39) and (40) are from two speakers of Northern Veps.

(39) VeN (Interview 2011, female)

vot kus-se anketa-s ol-i mise, nu
Well where-INDEF questionnaire-INE be-IMPF.3SG that well
ken-se ristit sanu-i
who-INDEF person say-IMPF.3SG
‘Well, it was somewhere in the questionnaire,
well, that some person said.’

(40) VeN (Interview 2011, male)

siiga-d-se ei-lä nügü-, kuna-se läht-nu
whitefish-PTV-this NEG.3SG-be.CNG nowadays where-INDEF go-PTCP
‘There aren’t any whitefish⁴ nowadays, (they have) gone somewhere.’

5.2. The marker *naku*

The second case of a PAT borrowing from Russian to Veps is presented here as an example of local borrowings and fast linguistic changes, which are especially typical for small segregated language communities. I discovered this areal peculiarity in *Pondal*, a village which is located in the eastern part of the Central Veps dialect area, and which I visited during my fieldwork in 2014. In *Pondal*, a demonstrative pronoun *naku* ‘here’ is used together with different interrogative stems. In certain cases, it seems, that *naku* may be on a pathway of grammaticalisation from an emphatic particle to an indefiniteness marker.

The *naku* + pronoun construction closely resembles the colloquial Russian construction *vot* ‘here’. In some Veps dialects other than *Pondal*, this construction is represented as *vot* + pronoun. Another equivalent in colloquial Russian, the construction *vona* ‘look’ + pronoun, has been presented by Matti Larjavaara (1986: 180).

The Russian particle *vot* may normally function as an adverb ‘here, there’, as a demonstrative, or an emphasising particle (Kuosmanen 1999: 105; Kuosmanen & Multisilta 1999: 52–53;

4. The European whitefish (*Coregonus lavaretus*) is a species of freshwater whitefish, which is widespread from central and northwest Europe to Siberia.

Padučeva 1996: 161). In contemporary spoken Russian, *vot* mainly can be connected with the same functions as the Northern Russian *-to* (Leinonen 1998: 83). The construction *vot* + pronoun is usually used referentially, cataphorically (see, e.g., Hauenschild 1982: 174–177). Unfortunately, due to space and time limits, we cannot discuss the potential indefinite function of the colloquial Russian *vot* + pronoun construction in this study. This might be an important issue for future research. Moreover, a further study with more focus on the functions and affinity between *vot* and *-to* is needed.

The example phrases presented below are produced by two of my seven informants who attended my pronoun test in 2014. Both of these informants originated from *Pondal* village. In *Pondal*, the construction *naku* + pronoun is used in various different contexts. The generated meaning of the construction seemed to be sometimes demonstrative, sometimes indefinite. The sentences (41) and (42) are examples of contexts where an indefinite reading might be more reasonable than a demonstrative one.

(41) *Ve* (Pronoun test 2014: Q6)

Naku ken kolkota-b ikna-ha, no e-n näge,
 INDEF who knock-3SG window-ILL but NEG-1SG see.CNG
ken sigä om.
 who there is.3SG

‘Someone is knocking on the window,
 but I do not see, who is there.’

(42) *Ve* (Pronoun test 2014: Q14)

Ak kul-išt-i, jälg-i-l naku mi kävele-b.
 woman hear-CAUS-IMPF.3SG track-PL-ADE INDEF what walk-3SG

‘The woman heard: something is walking on the tracks.’

Unfortunately, this topic is too broad in scope to be discussed as part of this study. There are still many unanswered questions regarding the functions of the construction *naku* ~ *vot* + pronoun. Further research should be undertaken to cast light on this issue.

6. Conclusions

This study describes the various Veps indefiniteness markers acquired from Russian via MAT (morpheme transfer) and PAT (morphological pattern transfer). The underlying assumption of this study is adopted from Frank Seifart (2015), who believes that the motivation for borrowing should primarily be traced to sociolinguistic factors and not as much to structural-typological similarities of the languages in question. The oldest stratum of Finnic indefinite-interrogative pronouns was based on bare interrogatives, so it is obvious that ambiguity could not always be avoided. Therefore, Veps speakers were motivated to transfer morphemes and morphological patterns into their pronoun system and seek uniformity between the systems. However, the Veps system is not a full copy of the Russian system. Even though the system might seem fusional, the distribution of the functions varies (see also Hienonen 2010).

The evidence in this study is based on data containing 2 483 example phrases, collected from various sources: old and new samples representing both written and spoken registers. Furthermore, some evidence has been drawn from an elicitation test. The test showed that the variation and multifunctionality of the pronoun series is clearly lower, as far as informants familiar with Standard Veps are concerned. The speakers influenced by Standard Veps tend to have a more normative attitude towards the Veps language.

Both MAT and PAT from Russian have influenced the Veps system of indefinite pronouns. The system displays three clear cases of MAT from Russian, the indefiniteness markers *koje- ~ kojo-*, *ni-*, and *-ni ~ -nibud'*. The marker *koje- ~ kojo-* occurs in all main dialect areas of Veps and in both older and more recent data. It is missing only in newer literary Veps. However, *koje- ~ kojo-* is not a fully productive indefinite pronoun series, as it is mainly combined with only a few stems. The most firmly rooted indefiniteness marker in the Veps system is the Russian prefix *ni-*. The marker *ni-* occurs in both old and new data and is fully productive. This study shows that, as in Russian, in negated sentences the Veps indefinite pronouns are always marked with the marker *ni-*. The only exceptions to the rule are the modal existential and possessive constructions, in which *ei-* should instead

be interpreted as a prefix, not a negative verb. Therefore, the use of negative concord in Veps negated sentences should be considered just as compulsory as it is in Russian.

The marker *-ni* ~ *-nibud'* is very common and fully productive. The form *-ni* is more common than *-nibud'*, which only occurs in Northern and Central Veps. Furthermore, this article discusses the rearranging of morphemes as applied to the Veps suffixal indefiniteness marker *-ni*. Typologically extrafixal indefiniteness markers tend to have the narrowest possible syntactic scope and thus typically occur as close to the pronominal stem as possible (see Haspelmath 2004 [1997]: 23). In Veps, the suffixal *-ni* may in certain cases switch places with suffixal case markers.

The indefiniteness markers, like any other grammatical markers, are usually not strongly grammaticalised, which enables morphological pattern transfer. The most clear case of PAT from Russian to the Veps indefinite pronoun system is the use of the marker *-se*. The grammaticalisation of the Veps *-se*-pronoun is a fairly recent innovation, since in the older data the indefinite use is almost non-existent and the marker is not yet fully productive. This article also discusses an example of a locally invented indefiniteness marker *naku* in the Central Veps dialect spoken in *Pondal* village.

Veps is a minority language, which has been influenced by Russian for centuries. The strong impact of Russian can be seen in Veps phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon, but the influence on morphology has not been sufficiently studied thus far. Further, this study has advanced the documentation and digitisation of the endangered Veps language. The description of basic Veps grammar found in these materials is useful for both language developers of Veps and linguists doing typological or comparative research.

Abbreviations

1	first person	INE	inessive
2	second person	MOM	momentative
3	third person	NEG	negation
ABE	abessive	PASS	passive
ADE	adessive	PL	plural
ADV	adverb	POSS	possessive
ALL	allative	PRCOM	prolative-comitative
APRX	approximative	PTCL	particle
CAUS	causative	PTCP	participle
CNG	connegative	PTV	partitive
COMP	comparative	Q	question
COND	conditional	SG	singular
DIM	diminutive	TERM	terminative
ELA	elative	TRA	translative
ESSIN	essive-instructive	Ve	Veps
GEN	genitive	VeC	Central Veps
ILL	illative	VeN	Northern Veps
IMP	imperative	VeS	Southern Veps
IMPF	imperfect tense	VeSt	Standard Veps
INDEF	indefiniteness marker		

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Morfologiaa lainaamassa: venäjän kielen vaikutus vepsän indefiniittipronominien järjestelmään

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Vepsä on itämerensuomalainen vähemmistökieli, johon sen prestiisi-kieli venäjä on vaikuttanut jo satojen vuosien ajan. Venäjän vaikutusta voidaan havaita kaikilla vepsän kielen tasoilla, mutta vaikutusta morfologiaan ei ole tutkimuksessa tähän mennessä juurikaan käsitelty. Artikkelin aiheena on venäjän kielen vaikutus vepsän indefiniittipronominien järjestelmään. Vepsän kielen tunnuksiset indefiniittipronomit muodostuvat tyypillisesti interrogatiivivartalosta ja indefiniittisyyden tunnuksesta. Vartaloon liittyvä tunnus voi olla joko affiksi tai partikkeli. Artikkelissa kuvataan erilaisia vepsän indefiniittisyyden tunnuksia, jotka on saatu kieleen niin sanottuina MAT- (*morpheme transfer*) ja PAT-lainoina (*morphological pattern transfer*). MAT tarkoittaa kielellisen aineksen toisintamista toisessa kielessä, kun on kyse todellisista fonologisista segmenteistä, PAT toisen kielen funktionaalisten tai semanttisten mallien toisintamista, jolloin muoto itsessään ei lainaudu.

Vepsän indefiniittipronominijärjestelmässä MAT-lainoja edustavat *koje-* ~ *kojo-*, *ni-* sekä *ni* ~ *nibud'*. Osin epäproduktiivinen *koje-* ~ *kojo-* esiintyy kaikilla murrealueilla sekä vanhemmassa että uudemmassa aineistossa standardoitua vepsää lukuun ottamatta. Produktiivinen *ni-* on vankimmin vepsän indefiniittipronominien järjestelmään juurtunut venäläislaina. Se esiintyy vanhoissa ja uusissa näytteissä. Tutkimuksessa osoitetaan, että *ni-* esiintyy vepsän kieltolauseissa venäjän tapaan aina fakultatiivisena kieltoaineksena (vrt. Savijärvi 1986: 58–59). Ainoan poikkeuksen muodostavat modaaliset eksistentiaali- ja possessiivirakenteet, joissa *ei*-aines on tulkittava pikemminkin prefiksiksi kuin kieltoverbiksi. Tunnus *ni* ~ *nibud'* on hyvin yleinen ja produktiivinen. Tunnuksen *ni* yhteydessä esiintyy morfeemien uudelleenjärjestäytymistä, jossa sijapäätteet vaihtavat paikkaa suffiksaalisen indefiniittisyyden tunnuksen kanssa.

Indefiniittisyyden tunnuksiset, kuten muutkaan kieliopilliset tunnuksiset, eivät ole yleensä vahvasti kieliopillistuneita, jolloin PAT-lainoaminen on mahdollista. PAT-lainoina esiintyvät tunnus *-se* sekä

tunnus *naku*. Vepsän kielessä pronominin *-se* kieliopillistuminen indefiniittisyyden tunnuksiksi on tapahtunut melko hiljattain, sillä vanhemmissa lähteissä käyttöä ei juurikaan esiinny eikä tunnus ole vielä produktiivinen. Tunnus *naku* on hyvin paikallisesti käytetty indefiniittisyyden tunnus.

Indefiniittisyyden tunnusten lainaaminen on tyypillisintä kielille, jotka ovat joutuneet toisen kielen hyvin voimakkaan vaikutuksen kohteiksi. Uusimpien tutkimusten mukaan lainaamisen motivaationa toimivat enemmän erilaiset sosiolingvistiset tekijät kuin lähde- ja kohdekielen struktuurallis-typologinen samankaltaisuus. Vepsäläisessä kieliyhteisössä tällaisia tekijöitä ovat erityisesti kielen vähemmistöasema ja sen puhujien kaksikielisyys.