

Name: Elena Kazakova

Affiliation: University of Turku, Finland

Contact email: elkaza@utu.fi

Title of the Presentation: The Usage of Cases and Prepositions in an Additional Language

The present study aims to identify if Finnish multilingual learners have difficulties applying cases and prepositions in an additional language (Russian). The case system in Finnish and Russian differs significantly: 15 and 6 cases respectively. The number of prepositions in Finnish is limited, while Russian contains a variety of prepositions. Moreover, the study deals with an additional language. In this case, the influence from either L1 or an additional language may occur depending on language typology (Bardel and Falk 2007; Cenoz 2006; Rast 2010); proficiency in other languages (Cenoz 2006; Zeest Waheed 2009); and frequency of language usage (Cenoz 2003).

The participants (N=35) were advanced learners of Russian (A2-B1) as L3-L7, university students, not majoring in Russian. The language test consisted of the translation tasks and tasks where the students were asked to insert the correct preposition and use the required case form of the noun. The questionnaire about the language background was also employed.

According to the data obtained, cases and prepositions caused difficulties to Finnish learners. In addition, particular grammar structures caused more difficulties to the learners than the others. In most of these structures, the influence of L1 and an additional language was noticed. The mother tongue influenced place-related prepositions.

It is likely that the comparison between the languages (in this case Finnish, English, Swedish, and Russian) will strengthen learners' meta-linguistic awareness, and it will lead to a lower number of mistakes in the target language.

References:

- Bardel, C., & Falk, Y. (2007) The role of the second language in third language acquisition: case of Germanic syntax. *Second Language research*, 23, 4: 459-484.
- Cenoz, J. in Hufesien, B., & Jessner, U. (eds.) (2003) The multilingual lexicon, 103-116. Netherlands: Academic publishers.
- Cenoz, I. J. (2006) The third language acquisition. *Encyclopedia of Languages and Linguistics*, 686-691
- Rast, R. (2010) The use of prior linguistic knowledge in the early stages of L3 acquisition. *IRAL*, 48, 159-183.
- Zeest Waheed, M. (2009) Third and Foreign Language Teaching: Issues and Solutions. *The International Journal of Learning*, 15 (5), 23-33.