

**Univerzita Karlova**

**Filozofická fakulta**

**Ústav germánských studií**

# **Bakalářská práce**

Katarína Boldižarová

**The contemporary Norwegians' understanding of  
Russenorsk**

**Jak současní Norové chápou Russenorsk**

Nejprve bych ráda poděkovala svému vedoucímu, dr. Pavlu Dubcovi, za cenné rady ohledně obsahu a formy práce. Chtěla bych také poděkovat profesorovi Ernstu Jahrovi, jehož odborné znalosti byly neocenitelné při formulování výzkumných otázek a metodiky. Kromě toho bych ráda poděkovala Mariánu Sidlárovi a Blance Galikové za technickou podporu.

I would first like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Pavel Dubec, for valuable advice on the content and form of the thesis. I also want to thank Professor Ernst Jahr, whose expertise was invaluable in formulating the research questions and methodology. In addition, I would like to thank Marián Sidlár and Blanka Galiková for their technical support.

Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci vypracovala samostatně, že jsem řádně citovala všechny použité prameny a literaturu a že práce nebyla využita v rámci jiného vysokoškolského studia či k získání jiného nebo stejného titulu.

V Praze 20.3.2021      Katarína Boldižarová

## **Abstrakt**

Práce se zabývá srovnáním pidginu russenorsk se současnou norštinou (konkrétně její dominantní formou zvanou bokmål). Jejím cílem je jednak popsat podobnosti obou jazyků a jednak zjistit, do jaké míry je jazyk russenorsk srozumitelný pro současné Nory. Hlavní část práce porovnává pidžin russenorsk s norským jazykem na morfologické, syntaktické a lexikální rovině. Primárně se věnuje větným členům, slovtvorbě a struktuře vět. Práce se důkladněji věnuje zmíněnému pidžinu, z norské gramatiky jsou zmíněny pouze relevantní aspekty. Russenorsk má mnoho společných rysů s norštinou, avšak je to pidžin složený ze dvou jazyků a ruština v něm také hraje určitou roli. Od norštiny se liší rozlišnými morfologickými pravidly, syntaxí, limitovanou slovní zásobou s paralelními výrazy (ruského i norského původu). Druhou částí práce je krátká analýza dotazníku, ve kterém se nacházejí různé věty z russenorsk. Dotazník byl vyplněn anonymně Nory, kteří odpověděli na otázky a řešili úkoly týkající se překladu, porozumění a určování větných členů. Poznatky získané porovnáním russenorsk s norštinou a cílený dotazník nám pomohly odpovědět na otázku, zda Norové rozumějí russenorsk a do jaké míry.

**Klíčová slova:** russenorsk, norština, jazyk, lingvistika, jazykověda, pidžin

## **Abstract**

This bachelor thesis aims to compare the Russenorsk pidgin with the Norwegian language, specifically Bokmål, to find out if they are very similar and to answer the question of whether the contemporary Norwegians understand Russenorsk. The main part of the work compares Russenorsk with the Norwegian language on the morphological, syntactic, and lexical levels. It focuses primarily on clause elements, word formation processes, and sentence structure in Russenorsk and Norwegian. The work deals more thoroughly with the mentioned pidgin, while only the most relevant aspects of the Norwegian grammar are mentioned. Russenorsk has a lot of similarities with Norwegian, but it is a pidgin composed of two languages and Russian also plays a role in it. It differs from Norwegian by different morphological rules, its sentence structure, limited vocabulary with parallel expressions (both of Russian and Norwegian origin). The second part of the work is a short analysis of the questionnaire, which contains various sentences in Russenorsk. The questionnaire was filled in anonymously by Norwegians, who answered the questions and solved tasks related to the translation, understanding, and identification of clause elements in Russenorsk. The results of the comparison of Russenorsk with Norwegian and a targeted questionnaire helped us answer the question of whether and to what extent Norwegians understand Russenorsk.

**Key words:** Russenorsk, Norwegian, language, linguistics, philology, pidgin

## Contents

1	INTRODUCTION .....	8
1.1	The subject matter .....	8
1.2	Russenorsk .....	8
2	METHODOLOGY .....	11
3	COMPARISON OF RUSSEORSK AND NORWEGIAN IN TERMS OF LANGUAGE	
	12	
3.1	Morphology .....	12
3.1.1	Part of speech .....	12
3.1.1.1	Nouns .....	12
3.1.1.2	Adjectives in Russenorsk and Norwegian .....	14
3.1.1.3	Determinatives: numerals, quantifiers, articles, demonstrative determiners .....	14
3.1.1.4	Pronouns .....	16
3.1.1.5	Verbs .....	18
3.1.1.6	Adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions .....	21
3.2	Lexicology .....	23
3.2.1	Word formation processes in Russenorsk and Norwegian .....	23
3.2.1.1	Compounding .....	23
3.2.1.2	Derivation .....	23
3.2.1.3	Reduplication .....	24
3.2.1.4	Borrowing .....	24
3.2.2	Paraphrasing .....	25
3.2.3	Parallel forms in Russenorsk .....	25
3.2.4	Bilingual homonyms in Russenorsk and Norwegian .....	26
3.3	Syntax .....	26
3.3.1	Sentence structure .....	26
3.3.1.1	Hypotaxis, parataxis .....	26
3.3.1.2	Word order structure .....	27
3.3.2	Clause types and their structure .....	28
3.3.2.1	Main clauses .....	28
3.3.2.2	Subordinate clauses .....	31
4	THE QUESTIONNAIRE .....	32
5	CONCLUSION .....	39
6	BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	41
7	ANNEXES .....	43

## **List of abbreviations**

RN *Russenorsk*

NOR *Norwegian language*

SG *Singular*

PL *Plural*

S *Subject*

V *Predicate*

O *Object*

A *Adverbial*

# **1 Introduction**

## **1.1 The subject matter**

This bachelor thesis deals with the pidgin Russenorsk. The first part is a detailed comparison of Russenorsk and Norwegian on the morphological, lexical, and syntactic levels. The second part includes an analysis of a questionnaire that attempts to find out whether or not contemporary Norwegians can understand Russenorsk.

## **1.2 Russenorsk**

In the 19th century, a new way of communication emerged in the Arctic region of Europe between fishers and fish traders from Norway and Russia. Although the Russian and Norwegian languages were genealogically and typologically different, their speakers could invent a new way how to communicate with each other. The new pidgin was based on words and phrases from both languages and is referred to as Russenorsk.

Russenorsk is traditionally regarded as a type of pidgin. A pidgin, in general, is created as a result of a contact between two languages, for example, in mutual relations. In the case of Russenorsk, the purpose of the contact was trading. In their book about Russenorsk, authors Jahr and Broch quote the language specialist Loreto Todd that divides pidgins into two groups. According to her, a local pidgin is used only for a limited purpose and disappears together with the purpose. An extended pidgin, on the other hand, tends to be used beyond its original purpose. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 15) According to this division, being a seasonal language used only during the fishing season and spoken mainly for trading fish between Russian and Norwegian fishers and traders in the 19th century makes Russenorsk a local pidgin. (Kortland, 2000)

The trade between Russians and Norwegians has a long tradition. In the 17th century, trade was suspended; however, there was evidence of Russian goods in Finnmark. In the 18th century, illegal criminal trade took place in the area. At the end of the 18th century, Russians got permission to legally trade goods, however, only by using trade stands. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 25-27) From 1796, the Russians began to communicate directly with the Norwegian population and trade with them. After 1818, the trade expanded, and the Northern-Norway fishing industry was gradually developing. Russians came to Northern Norway not only because of the trade but also to find a job. They were meeting Norwegian traders and fishers



but also Norwegian wives and children. This might influence the pidgin vocabulary. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 29)

In 1905, Russians were prohibited from trading directly with the population of Finnmark. They were again only allowed to use trade stands. Gradually, the trade between Norwegians and Russians stopped after the First World War. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 32)

As early as 1862, there was a short dictionary *Norsk-Russisk Ordbog og Parleur* containing 300 terms illustrating conversations between the Russians and the Norwegians. At the end of the 19th century, a 500-word expression book *Kortfattet norsk-russisk Haandbog samt Tabel til Udregning af Melkvantum ved Russehandel* was published to help Norwegians if they would have come into contact with Russian fish traders. It is worth mentioning that newspapers in Russian were published in Vardø every summer. On the contrary, the more extensive dictionary *Russko-Norvezskij slovar* with 27 5000 Norwegian terms was published in Russia. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 30-32)

Russenorsk was first described linguistically by Olaf Broch in 1927. He focused on the morphological and lexical aspects of Russenorsk, and he mentioned the syntactic part only marginally. Unlike Broch, Gunter Neumann compared Russenorsk with other pidgins and defined their standard features. He concluded that pidgins generally do not have copula verbs, and this phenomenon is not taken from Russian. He also came up with two theories. In the first theory, he argued that it was possible that the Norwegians were Sami and Kven people and that the influence of their languages had not been sufficiently demonstrated. The second theory pointed out that Russenorsk was not created from Norwegian but a common language of Northern Europe. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 34-35) Siri Svedrup Lunden, on the other hand, came with a theory that the Russenorsk words - *moja* and *tvoja* were borrowed from a Russian-Chinese pidgin by Russian traders. Another exciting research connected to Russenorsk was done by D. I. Slobin, who compared Russenorsk with young children's communication and claimed that the grammar of Russenorsk has the minimum of criteria of a functional language. (Broch, Jahr, 1984,36- 37)

It is also important to mention that Vladimir Belikov from The Institute of Russian Language, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow draws attention to the fact that most of the knowledge we have from Russenorsk is written by Norwegian authors. It cannot be guaranteed that this is an error-free determination of the origin of certain words. In addition, Russian merchants always tried to imitate Norwegian so they would sound more

authentic. That is why some words that look as if they were derived from Norwegian may have Russian origin. (Belikov, n.d.)

The Norwegian origin could be directly connected to the northern dialect. In this region, *ikke* is still used as a negative adverb, *vi* is used as a pronoun of the first person in the plural. The set of letters *hv* is changed to *k* in interrogative words, for example, *kor*, *kordan*, *korfor*. RN: *Kor ju stan om paa gammel ras?* More information about Russenorsk in terms of language is presented in the following chapter devoted to the comparison of Russenorsk and Norwegian.

## 2 Methodology

Even though Russenorsk was created by combining two languages - Russian and Norwegian, we focused only on the relevant Norwegian part. Since Russenorsk is an extinct pidgin, we had to use Ingvild Broch and Ernst Håkon Jahr's sources. All the used Russenorsk examples in this thesis are taken from their publication about Russenorsk. (Broch, Jahr, 1984) It is essential to mention that we analyze only the available Russenorsk sources, which means the studied corpus is rather limited. The Russenorsk pidgin was principally a spoken language, it is, therefore, highly probable that only a part of it was recorded in a written form.

To achieve the aim of the thesis most reliably, the research is divided into the theoretical and the practical part. The theoretical part was primarily based on Broch and Jahr's book. As mentioned, Russenorsk has a simplified grammatical system and limited vocabulary. Therefore, only the most relevant aspects of the Norwegian grammar are discussed to emphasize the biggest differences and similarities. We used our knowledge and the books *Norske referansegrammatikk* (Faarlund, Lie, Vannebo, 1997) and *Norsk grammatikk* (Mac Donald, 2009) to present Norwegian language examples. A literal English translation followed both the Russenorsk and Norwegian examples in square brackets to highlight their structures.

To verify the theoretical knowledge, we chose a questionnaire in the practical part. We sent out more than a hundred questionnaire online copies, one hundred of which were returned with answers in three months. The questionnaire was utterly anonymous as we did not ask the respondents about their background, dialect, area of origin, or age and gender. We asked the respondents only about their Russian language skills to determine whether Russian knowledge dramatically facilitates understanding of Russenorsk. The other questions concerned the grammar and the vocabulary of Russenorsk. We created various linguistic and translation exercises to examine understanding. Three of the questions were formulated as open and the remaining eleven had a form of a multiple-choice. Almost all the Russenorsk examples used in the questionnaire were also used in the theoretical part. The translation exercise included also examples of words and expressions of Russian origin to find out whether the Norwegian language was enough for a group of respondents who did not speak Russian. The questionnaire data were analyzed in Excel, and the results are summarized in graphs.

### 3 Comparison of Russenorsk and Norwegian in terms of language

The following theoretical part of the thesis will focus on the morphology, lexicology, and syntax of Norwegian and Russenorsk. The analysis will observe similarities and differences between Norwegian and Russenorsk and will focus only on the linguistic phenomena that are mainly found in Russenorsk.

#### 3.1 Morphology

Unlike the Norwegian morphology, the morphology of Russenorsk is said to be simple. Morphological categories of Russenorsk such as genus, cases, and tense, are very restricted compared to the languages this pidgin was derived from.

A more extensive part of Russenorsk morphology is part of speech discussed in more detail in the following section.

##### 3.1.1 Part of speech

###### 3.1.1.1 Nouns

Both the Norwegian and the Russenorsk nouns can be divided into *common nouns* and *proper nouns*. Names of cities and people start with a capital letter.

RN: *paa Troms* [ in Troms]

NOR: *i Troms*

RN: *paa Gammerfest* [ in Hammerfest]

NOR: *i Hammerfest*

RN: *Kak ju vina trinke, Kristus grot vre.* [If you drink wine, Jesus Christ very angry.]

NOR: *Hvis du drikker vin, blir Jesus Kristus sint.*

The most significant difference between Russenorsk and Norwegian is that nouns in Russenorsk are generally inflexible. They cannot be divided as Norwegian nouns according to gender (*masculine, feminine, neutral*). Russenorsk nouns have only one form in comparison to the *indefinite* and *definite form* of Norwegian nouns. Since the use of Russenorsk is limited to situations where people were facing each other, the use of definite articles might seem redundant as the situation itself is sufficient to identify the nouns unequivocally. However, there are several one-syllable nouns in Russenorsk that are

of Norwegian origin and end with the vowel -a, which might be a remnant of the definite article. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 44)

RN: *fisk, fisk-a* [fish]

The system of cases is simplified in Norwegian, and it is only the genitive that has a distinctive form (the ending -s). However, it is very common to express the genitive with prepositions, especially *på* and *til*. In Russenorsk the genitive case is expressed only with the preposition *på*.

NOR: *Karens jul, Pers hus* [Karen's Christmas, Per's house]

NOR: *takket på huset* [the roof of the house]

RN: *pris på tvoja* [price of you]

In Norwegian, we distinguish between nouns and another part of speech according to various grammatical suffixes. (Mac Donald, 2009, 8) Typical endings indicating nouns also occur in Russenorsk.

Words that end with morphemes *-a* and *-ka* are usually identified as nouns.

RN: *klæba* [bread]

RN: *mokka* [wheat]

RN: *penga* [money]

Nouns that have their origin in Russian also tend to end with *-i*.

RN: *spitski* [match]

RN: *djengi* [money]

RN: *treski* [dried fish esp. cod]

Originally Norwegian one-syllable nouns were borrowed to Russenorsk in the same form. If this type of word appears in the text, it is highly probable that the Norwegians will understand them.

RN: *skip* [ship]

RN: *ven* [friend]

RN: *mann* [man]

RN: *pris* [price]

RN: *glass* [glass]

### 3.1.1.2 Adjectives in Russenorsk and Norwegian

Adjectives in Norwegian are inflected according to the noun, which comes after the adjective. On the contrary, adjectives in Russenorsk are inflexible, and they are always used in the same form. The adjectives which are ending with the vowel *-a* are usually derived from the Russian language. Many of the nouns in Russenorsk end with the vowel *-a*, which might indicate the feminine gender to some extent. However, it is hard to say the reason for most of the adjectives ending with *-a*. Adjectives ending with *-a* are also the most common adjectives used in the example conversations about the trading market and can be classified as elementary adjectives.

In some cases, two variants, one derived from Norwegian and the other from Russian, are used. This will be further explained in the lexicology part. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 45)

RN: *bjela* [white]

RN: *bolsa* [big]

RN: *mala* [small]

RN: *stara/gammel* [old]

Adjectives in Norwegian are inflected in comparative and superlative form, but there is only a remnant of this phenomenon in Russenorsk. However, we would expect that trading concerned situations that involved more detailed comparison of goods.

NOR: *god/ bra, bedre, best* [good, better, best]

RN: *den mere brå* [the more good]

### 3.1.1.3 Determinatives: numerals, quantifiers, articles, demonstrative determiners

#### o Numerals

Speaking of numerals, only the cardinal numbers and the expression *ander* are used in Russenorsk to express time or amount. Cardinal numbers have a form almost identical to Norwegian. There are no words to express order in Russenorsk as numerals were used mainly to refer to measurement together. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 49)

RN: ***Fir pud*** [four poods]

RN: ***Én voga mokka*** [one piece wheat]

RN: *På moja kona, tri junka, to piga.* [I have a wife, three sons, two daughters.]

RN: *Paa ander ras* [at second time]

- Quantifiers

As in Norwegian, quantity words (quantifiers) are also used to specify the amount or quantity of something in Russenorsk, especially with nouns denoting a mass, a substance, or something uncountable. Both quantifiers in Russenorsk and Norwegian are very similar on several occasions.

RN: <i>lita klæba</i> [some bread]	NOR: <i>litt brød</i> [some bread]
RN: <i>Venta lit!</i> [Wait, little!]	NOR: <i>Vente lit!</i> [Wait, little!]
RN: <i>nåkka vin</i> [some wine]	NOR: <i>litt vin</i> [some wine]

RN: <i>Mangoli år...?</i>	[How many year...?]
NOR: <i>Hvor mange år...?</i>	[How many years?]

RN: <i>Mangeli kosta..?</i>	[How much cost...?]
NOR: <i>Hvor mye koster det?</i>	[How much does it cost?]

RN: <i>Nogoli dag...?</i>	[How many day...?]
NOR: <i>Hvor mange dager...?</i>	[How many days?]

- Demonstrative determiners

Demonstrative determiners in Norwegian are inflected according to the noun's gender and number. Demonstrative determiners are proximal or distal, and they distinguish between nearby and faraway objects.

Masculine gender SG: <i>denne bilen x den bilen</i>	[ this car x that car]
Feminine gender SG: <i>denne jenta x den jenta</i>	[this girl x that girl]
Neutral gender SG: <i>dette huset x det huset</i>	[this house x that house]
Nouns in PL: <i>disse vinduene x de vinduene</i>	[these windows x those windows]

On the other hand, demonstrative determiners in Russenorsk are limited, and there are only examples of the demonstrative determiner *den*. Nouns and adjectives following the demonstrative determiners are usually not in the definite form, as we discussed while comparing the nouns.

RN: *På den dag ikke russefolk arbei.* [On that day not Russians work.]

NOR: *På den dagen arbeider russere ikke.* [On that day work Russians not.]

RN: *Den pris moja ikke betalom.* [That price I not pay.]

NOR: *Jeg betaler ikke **den prisen**.* [I pay not that price.]

There are also demonstrative determiners in Russenorsk derived from the Russian language.

RN: *Moja **ette** ort perevoj ras på Norge stannom.*

[I this year first time in Norway to be.]

NOR: *Jeg er i Norge for første gang i år.*

[I am in Norway for the first time this year.]

### 3.1.1.4 Pronouns

Norwegian pronouns are divided into *personal nouns*, *indefinite pronouns*, *interrogative pronouns*. Personal pronouns are also used as a substitute for proper nouns. Each of them shows grammatical person, gender, and a case of the nouns it substitutes. *Jeg* is used as the first person singular, *du* as the second person singular. *Hun*, the feminine form, and *han*, the third person singular's masculine form, are primarily used to denote people. *Det*, *den* is used for things, phenomena, and animals in general. There are also plural subjective forms of personal pronouns in Norwegian - *vi*, *dere*, *de*. The most specific interrogative pronouns are *hvem*, *hvilken*, *hva*. For more Norwegian pronouns, see Mac Donald, 2009, p. 23.

In Russenorsk personal pronouns cannot be divided similarly into subjective, objective, or reflexive pronouns. Pronouns in Russenorsk cannot be declined. There is only evidence of the first, second, and third person singular pronouns from available written materials in Russenorsk. The examples in Russenorsk show that the conversation participants were usually only two people. That could be the reason why there is no evidence of plural pronoun forms. There are two variations of the word for the first person singular: *moja* and *ja*. The same applies to the second person singular: *tvoja* and *ju*. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 46)

RN: *Moja smotrom ju kralom.* [I saw you steal.]

NOR: *Jeg så deg stjele.* [I saw you steal.]

RN: *Ja grot sterk.* [I very strong.]

NOR: *Jeg er svært sterk.* [I am very strong.]

RN: *Mera better paa moja.* [More better for me.]

NOR: *Det er bedre for meg.* [That is better for me.]

RN: ***Tvoja** fisk kopom?* [You fish buy?]



RN: *Vil ju på moja stova på morradag skajfom?* [Will you at my place tomorrow eat?]

Norwegians should understand Russenorsk and determine the subject of the Russenorsk sentences in our questionnaire correctly if we use the more reminiscent forms of Norwegian, namely *ju* [you] and *ja* [I]. Nevertheless, it is unclear which forms were used by Norwegians when Russenorsk was used. It would be assumably more logical to use, for example, the expression *ju* [you] that is also similar to *du* [you]. However, Russians were also trying to adapt to Norwegian when speaking Russenorsk, according to the Belikov's theory. (Belik, n.d.) Therefore, more consistent evidence is needed to determine the origin of these two variations and their influence on the contemporary Norwegians' understanding of Russenorsk.

The most significant difference between Norwegian and Russenorsk adverbs is in their function. Broch and Jahr mention the different functions of Russenorsk personal pronouns *moja*, *tvoja* and *ju* called possessiveness. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 46) On the other hand, we have to use possessive pronouns instead of personal pronouns to express possessiveness in Norwegian. (Mac Donald, 2009, 47)

RN: *på moja stova* [at my place/house]      NOR: *på mitt hus* [at my place/house]

There are also several examples of the third person singular in Russenorsk derived from the Russian language *-eta*, *etta*, and *ette*. Derivation from Norwegian appears in materials too. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 46)

RN: *Etta njet dobra.*      [This not good.]

NOR: *Dette er ikke bra.*      [This is not good.]

RN: *Kak den?*      [What it?]      NOR: *Hva er det?*      [What is it?]

In addition to the personal pronouns, we can also find interrogative pronouns in Russenorsk. The interrogative pronoun *kak* is the most used in Russenorsk. However, it is also a type of adverb.

RN: *Kak pris på tvoja?*      [What price of you?]

NOR: *Hva er din pris?*      [What is your price?]

RN: *Kor ju fare leve?*      [How you father live?]

NOR: *Hvorledes lever din far?*      [How lives your father?]

### 3.1.1.5 Verbs

Russenorsk has a limited inventory of verbs, mainly composed of the words essential to fishing and trade. It does not notably include verbs referring to arts, education, or other similar fields. There are several differences and similarities between Russenorsk and Norwegian:

#### a) base form

Norwegian and Russenorsk verbs in the base form are distinguished from each other by a formal appearance. The infinitive form of Norwegian verbs ends in most cases with *-e*. It can also end with different vowels, for example, *-o*, *-å*, *i*. Such verbs are usually very short. The infinitive is easily recognized due to the infinitive mark *å*. (Mac Donald, 2009, 57)

*å bruke* [to use], *å elske* [to love], *å få* [to get], *å gi* [to give]

On the contrary, many of the verbs in Russenorsk are marked with the suffix *-om*. The suffix *-om* is added to the stem of a word. Both derivations, from Russian and Norwegian verbs, are used. Verbs with the suffix *-om* are the most used verbs in Russenorsk, and they cannot be conjugated. Most of these verbs come from the Norwegian language, and only a minimum of them has the Russian origin. However, the most used Russenorsk verbs ending with the suffix *-om* are of the Russian origin. This is also the reason why the verbs with the suffix *-om* may seem Russian to us. The second reason is that the suffix *-om* used to be pronounced as [um]. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 47)

RN: <i>betalom</i>	[to pay]	NOR: <i>å betale</i>
RN: <i>drikkom</i>	[to drink]	NOR: <i>å drikke</i>
RN: <i>robotom</i>	[to work]	RUS: <i>работать- rabotat</i>
RN: <i>reisom</i>	[to travel, go]	NOR: <i>å reise, gå</i>
RN: <i>kralom</i>	[to steal]	RUS: <i>красть – krast</i>
RN: <i>smotrom</i>	[to see]	RUS: <i>smatrit</i>

b) verb types

Both Norwegian and Russian divide verbs semantically into the action and the stative verbs. Most of the verbs in Russenorsk are action verbs. However, there are also examples of stative verbs used instead of the verb to be. Russenorsk verbs such as *ligene* [to lay], *slipom* [to sleep], *stannom*, or *stannop* [to lay, to sleep] have existential meaning and can represent the verb *to be*. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 60)

RN: *Ja på madam Klerch tri daga ligene.* [I at madam Klerch three days laying.]

There is also a variety of auxiliary verbs in Norwegian, but these verbs do not occur in Russenorsk. Relations such as possessiveness are formulated with the help of the preposition *på*.

RN: *På tvoja kona.* [At you wife. You have wife.]

NOR: *Jeg har ei kone.* [I have a wife.]

Another distinctive feature between Russenorsk and Norwegian is the absence of copulative verbs in Russenorsk. That means that Russenorsk verbs do not link a subject with a subject complement, but they stand independently in the sentence next to each other. This is a typical pidgin feature in general. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 57)

RN: *Tvoja vred.* [You angry.]

RN: *Tvoja net bra man.* [You not good man.]

NOR: *Jeg er skeptisk.* [ I am skeptical.]

Modal verbs in Norwegian are used as the main verb or as the auxiliary verb in a sentence. As the main verb, we use *skal*, *vil*, *må*, and *bør* with place expressions. *Skal* expresses a plan, *vil* expresses a wish, *må* refers to something necessary, and *bør* refers to something recommended. *Kan* expresses the ability to do something. (Mac Donald, 2009, 68)

NOR: *Jeg skal hjem.* [ I will home.]

NOR: *Hun kan spansk.* [She can Spanish.]

If the modal verbs stand in a sentence as auxiliary verbs, the main verb follows them. They are used to express the future form, a duty, or some knowledge and ability to do

something. They can also be used to ask others for something or come with offers or suggestions. (Mac Donald, 2009, 68)

NOR: *Han kan skrive.* [He can write.]

NOR: *Jeg må gå.* [I have to go.]

NOR: *Kan du gjøre det?* [Can you do it?]

The past form of modal verbs followed by an infinitive refers to the past, but they can also express possibility or recommendation. (Mac Donald, 2009, 68)

NOR: *Jeg kunne ikke komme i går.* [I could not come yesterday.]

NOR: *De måtte gå.* [They had to go.]

NOR: *Det kunne være sant.* [That could be true.]

NOR: *Du skulle/burde ikke dra dit!* [You should have not gone there.]

On the other hand, we can find only two examples of modal verbs in Russenorsk. Both adopted from the Norwegian language. There are sentences in Russenorsk which include modal verbs *skulle* and *ville* to express future or a desire. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 59) Modal verbs can not replace main verbs in Russenorsk and there is no past form of Russenorsk modal verbs.

RN: *Vil ju på moja stova på morrada skaffom?* [Will you at my place tomorrow eat?]

NOR: *Vil du spise hjemme hos meg i morgen?* [Will you eat at my place tomorrow?]

RN: *Tvoja skal bli kammerat på moja på anner år.*

[You will be friend of me in next year.]

NOR: *Du skal være kameraten min neste år.*

[You will be the friend of mine next year.]

### c) Grammatical categories

Norwegian verbs are conjugated, and the grammatical categories of Norwegian verbs are *tense, aspect, mood, and voice*. Norwegian has a more complicated verb system than Russenorsk, and the Norwegian verbs are divided into finite and non-finite verb forms.

Non-finite verb forms are the infinitive and the participles. The finite verb forms in Norwegian are represented by various tenses. (Faarlund, Lie, Vannebo, 1997, 540-542)

Russenorsk has limited grammatical categories, and there are only a few verbs that can be partly conjugated. There is, however, evidence of verbs in the infinitive form, present form, future, and the past form.

RN: *pisat* [to write] - an infinitive form

RN: *bestil* [order]- imperative or present tense

RN: *plati* [pay] - an imperative form (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 47)

Unlike in Norwegian, only the singular form appears in Russenorsk, and there is no evidence of plural form. However, some Russian origin verbs are inflected according to the speaker, the addressee, and the other participants. This means that there is evidence of the grammatical category of person in Russenorsk.

*stoit* [costs] - 3. person, sg., present simple

*propal* [sunken] - 3. person, sg., preterite of the verb (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 47)

Unlike Norwegian, we can analyze mood only in the imperative sentences in Russenorsk. There are three moods in Norwegian – indicative, imperative and subjunctive. In Russenorsk, imperative sentences can express a command, encouragement, request, and other emotions.

NOR: *Gå hjem! Vær så snill å gjøre det!* [Go home! Be so kind to do it!]

RN: *Jes paa Skip kom!* [ Yes, to the ship come!]

RN: *Værsego paa minder prodaj!* [Please, for lower sell!]

RN: *Davaj paa moja kopom!* [Come on, buy from me!]

RN: *Njet go væn!* [ No, good friend!]

### 3.1.1.6 Adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions

#### ○ Adverbs

Norwegian adverbs can be divided according to time, place, and manner. There are also modal, interrogative adverbs, and negative adverbs. The negative adverb *ikke* also appears in Russenorsk.

*No davaj drinkom, vær så go, ikke skade.*

RN: *Ikke skade.* [Not hurt.]

NOR: *Det skader ikke. Det er ikke farlig.* [It hurts not. It is not dangerous]

Adverbs in Russenorsk are very limited. The most used adverbs in Russenorsk are interrogative ones. Interrogative adverbs are, for example, *kak*, *kor*. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 45)

- Interrogative adverb *kor* [where]:  
RUS: *Kor ju stova?* [Where you house/place]  
NOR: *Hvor er ditt hus?* [Where is your house?]
- Interrogative adverb *kak* [how]:  
RUS: *Kak posjivat tvoja madam?* [How lives you wife?]  
NOR: *Hvordan har kona di det?* [How has wife yours that?]

The negative Russenorsk adverbs *njet* [no, not] or positive *da* [yes] have their origin in the Russian language. Despite this, Norwegians should understand these words because of the similar pronunciation of *nei* [no]. Moreover, we can expect Norwegians to understand Russenorsk conjunctions derived from Russian due to some general knowledge and multicultural environment.

RN: *Etta **njet** dobra.* [This not good.]

#### ○ Prepositions

It is straightforward to distinguish the prepositions in Russenorsk from a Norwegian perspective. The most frequent prepositions are *på*, *hos*, and *na*. The first two mentioned are written the same way as in Norwegian even though their meaning is simpler in Russenorsk than in Norwegian. The most common preposition is the preposition *på* which expresses several relations between words. As mentioned in the chapter about verbs, the preposition *på* can express possessive relation, for example, *pris **på** tvoja* [price of you]. This preposition's function is the locative function *mala penga **på** lomma* [little money in the pocket], temporal function ***på** gammel ras* [last year]. It can also refer to the direction. *Vil ju **på** moja stova?* [Will you to my place?]. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 48, 58)

#### ○ Conjunctions

Compared to Norwegian, the vocabulary of conjunctions is minimal. The most typical conjunctions in Russenorsk are *ja*, *og*, *i*, *jes*. The conjunctions *ja* and *og* are also used in Norwegian. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 48)

RN: *Ja.* [Yes.]      NOR: *Ja.* [Yes.]

RN: *Jes, moja kopom.* [Yes, I buy.] NOR: *Ja, jeg kjøper.* [Yes, I buy.]

## 3.2 Lexicology

Russenorsk is composed of two lexifier languages. A lexifier is a language that provides the basis for the majority of a pidgin vocabulary. Nevertheless, we observe the vocabulary of other languages in Russenorsk. In the following section, we will discuss word-formation processes and several lexical relations typical for Russenorsk.

### 3.2.1 Word formation processes in Russenorsk and Norwegian

#### 3.2.1.1 Compounding

Compounding is the dominant process in Norwegian, which leads to the existence of relatively long words in this language. Compounding is also one of the dominant word formation processes. While we recognize four semantic types of compounding in Norwegian (*determinative, copulative, exocentric, imperative*), there are only two types in Russenorsk (*determinative, exocentric*).

The most typical Norwegian semantic type of compounding is *determinative compounding* or *endocentric compound*. The first element determines the second one. However, this compounding is very simple in Russenorsk, and words are made at a maximum of two original words. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 49)

NOR: *undertøy* [underwear] *under + tøy*

RN: *Rusmanjunka* [Russian guy] *Rusman+junka*

*Exocentric compounding* is a type of compounding in Norwegian that determines a referent by specifying a particular property or quality that the referent has. Russenorsk exocentric compounding is based on paraphrasing and describes the function of the word in a rudimental way. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 49)

NOR: *tusenbein* [centipede], *tusen + bein* [thousand + legs]

RN: *kuasjorta* [skin], *kua+ sjorta* [cow + shirt]

#### 3.2.1.2 Derivation

Another dominant and very productive word formation process is derivation. Derivations in Norwegian are formed with both prefixes and derivational suffixes. Unlike Russenorsk, conversion (zero derivation) is also typical for Norwegian. The most productive affixes are, for example, *-ing* or *-het*. (Faarlund, Lie, Vannebo, 1997, 91 – 129) There are also

examples of derivation in Russenorsk. The typical example is the use of the suffix *-mann* (used as the suffix *-mand* in the 18th century). The suffix is used to denote people of different nationalities or different ethnic or social groups. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 49) The most significant difference is that using derivation in Russenorsk does not change part of speech.

RN: <i>russ+mann</i>	[Russian]
RN: <i>kuk+mann</i>	[grocer]
RN: <i>rein+mann</i>	[Sámi person]

Some of the Norwegian derivations are a part of the Russenorsk vocabulary.

RN: <i>på selskap spaserom</i>	[at company walking]
--------------------------------	----------------------

### 3.2.1.3 Reduplication

Reduplication, i.e., a repetition of a word or its parts, is a common feature of pidgin languages. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 49) We are using this process in Norwegian to emphasize something or make new childish terms or onomatopoeic words. The difference between Norwegian and Russenorsk reduplication is that the reduplication in Russenorsk produces new words that became part of everyday language and used regardless of speakers' or addressees' age. However, it is also used to make new childish terms. Speakers of Russenorsk could use this word formation process to make the expressions easier to understand. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 49)

RN: <i>Morramorradag</i>	[tomorrow tomorrow day]
NOR: <i>nøff nøff</i>	the sound that pigs make

### 3.2.1.4 Borrowing

Unlike Russenorsk, Norwegian has undergone development due to language reforms, the influence of English terms for new inventions, and immigrants' languages. Contemporary Norwegian contains many new borrowings due to new technologies, inventions, and foreign words from everyday language adopted by younger language users. Interestingly, a few words from Russenorsk appear in the northern Norwegian dialect too. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 89-90)

<i>klæba</i> [bread]	<i>spræke</i> [talk]
<i>kråle</i> [steal]	<i>prénnek</i> [cake, cookie]
<i>propal</i> [sunken]	



There are also various other language influences in Russenorsk in addition to Russian and Norwegian. Many of the loan words adopted by the Norwegian and Russian languages are also used in Russenorsk. However, new words originate from other languages in Russenorsk, and some of them appear in examples only once. The influence is from Finnish - *pojka* [boy], German - *krank* [sick], Sámi languages - *tyksa* [haddock fish], Dutch - *vater* [water], *sprek* [language], *junka* [boy], English - *jes* [yes], *better* [better], *verrigod* [very good], Swedish - *kukman* [grocer] and French - *trokkom trokk* [goods for goods]. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 61-62)

### 3.2.2 Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is generally the expression of ideas by reformulating the original idea in our own words. Paraphrasing is very common for pidgin languages, and it was used to replace unknown or difficult expressions derived from lexifiers. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 61) We can find examples of this phenomenon in the Russenorsk compounding. There are also examples of verb phrases with a meaning expressed by only one word in Norwegian.

In Norwegian, paraphrasing only serves as a stylistic device. On the contrary, it has both functions in Russenorsk as shown by the examples below. Word *church* can be expressed by one-word *kjerka* but also by paraphrasing.

RN: <i>lille junka på kjerka vaskom</i> [little boy in church wash]	NOR: <i>å døpe</i> [to baptize]
RN: <i>kjerka</i> [church]	NOR: <i>ei kirke</i> [a church]
RN: <i>stova på Kristus spræk</i> [house with Jesus language]	NOR: <i>ei kirke</i> [a church]

### 3.2.3 Parallel forms in Russenorsk

Parallel forms of expressions are another feature of Russenorsk. It means that more than one term may be used for one thing or a phenomenon, but this does not apply to all words in Russenorsk. There are, for example, several goods used for exchange with only one form according to where they come from.

As mentioned before, Russian and Norwegian were the most important sources when Russenorsk was created. This is the reason why Norwegian and Russian parallel forms are the most common in this pidgin. However, there are also parallels between one of these languages and the languages mentioned in the previous section about the process of borrowing words. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 62)

RN: *stara* [old] (Russian origin) - *gammel* [old] (Norwegian origin)

RN: *bolsa* [big] (Russian origin) – *grot* [big] (Dutch origin)

RN: *mala* – *malenka* [small] (Russian origin) - *lite* - *lita* [small] (Norwegian origin)

RN: *bra* [good] (Norwegian origin) – *good* [good] (English origin) – *korosjo* [good] (Russian origin)

RN: *mangeli* (*mange* + *li*) [how many] (Norwegian origin) [how many] - *nogoli* (*многие* + *ли*, *mnogie* + *li*) [how many] (Russian origin)

### 3.2.4 Bilingual homonyms in Russenorsk and Norwegian

Homonyms can usually be found in one language. However, two bilingual homonyms are words in two or more languages that look similar but have a different meaning. They are also called false friends. False friends can also be found in Russenorsk and Norwegian despite the limited vocabulary of Russenorsk.

RN: *dobra musik* [good people] x NOR: *bra musikk* [good music]

RN: *treski* [codfish] x NOR: *treski* [wooden ski]

Many Russenorsk words are not entirely spelled the same way, but they are very similar to Norwegian. This phenomenon is also being discussed in the survey analysis.

RN: *djengi* [money]

NOR: *den gir* [that gives]

RN: *kanske* [ maybe, quite], expressing the question

NOR: *kanskje* [maybe]

NOR: *ganske* [quite]

## 3.3 Syntax

### 3.3.1 Sentence structure

#### 3.3.1.1 Hypotaxis, parataxis

*Hypotaxis* is a grammatical and rhetorical term used to describe an arrangement of phrases or clauses in a dependent or subordinate relationship. On the other hand, the grammatical and rhetorical term *parataxis* is used to describe an arrangement of phrases or clauses in an independent relationship. (Nordquist, 2019)

The materials in Russenorsk confirm that both hypotaxis and parataxis are present appearing in this pidgin. However, compared to Norwegian, the hypotactic arrangement in Russenorsk is very restricted. Hypotaxis can be found only in the sentences

expressing a condition or an explanation in Russenorsk. Usually, we talk about complex sentences with the subordinating conjunction *kak*.

RN: *Moja smotrom kak ju pisat.* [I see that you write.]

NOR: *Jeg så at du skrev.* [I saw that you wrote.]

On the other hand, parataxis can be found in the Russenorsk sentences consisting of independent clause beginning with the paratactic conjunctions *så*, *i*, *ja*, or *jes*. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 50)

RN: *Moja på anner skip nåkka vin drikkom, så moja nåkka lite pjan.*

[I on another ship little wine drank, so I little bit drunk.]

NOR: *Jeg drakk noe vin på et annet skip, så ble jeg litt full.*

[I drank some wine on another ship, so became I a little bit drunk.]

### 3.3.1.2 Word order structure

The Norwegian language is generally considered as a language to which the V2 rule applies. In other words, the verb comes second in the main clauses. (Faarlund, Lie, Vannebo, 1997, 589)

SVO structure is the most dominant word order structure of the Norwegian main clauses. It is a type of structure where the subject comes first, the predicate second, and the object third. (Čermák, 1994, 171) The subordinate clauses have a slightly different structure than the main clauses. They begin most often with a subordinate conjunction, and the clause elements may have a different order in the second part. The subject comes second in the clause after the subjunction, and it is followed by the adverbial and the predicate. (Mac Donald, 2009, 130)

On the contrary, most of the Russenorsk examples show that Russenorsk clauses have SOV structure. In other words, the subject comes first, the object is second and the predicate comes third. Despite the tendencies of SOV word order structure in Russenorsk, several other word order structures can be found in Russenorsk. The subject is usually placed first in a clause. The predicate, the object, and the adverbial may be placed in a different order. The object is rarely placed first before the subject because there is no morphological difference between the object and the subject in Russenorsk due to the absence of noun inflection. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 56)

### 3.3.2 Clause types and their structure

#### 3.3.2.1 Main clauses

##### a) Declarative clauses

Declarative clauses in Norwegian have an **SVO** structure. On the contrary, there are examples of several word order structures in Russenorsk.

Similarities of declarative clauses in Norwegian and Russenorsk:

- If a clause has only two constituents and starts with a subject and ends with a predicate, it refers to **SV** structure type both in Russenorsk and Norwegian.

RN: *Moja slipom.* [I sleep.]                      NOR: *Jeg sover.* [I sleep.]

- Declarative clauses with a subject, predicate, and object usually have **SVO** structure.

RN: *Moja kopom fiska.* [I buy fish.]                      NOR: *Jeg kjøper fisk.* [I buy fish.]

Differences of declarative clauses in Russenorsk and Norwegian:

The addition of adverbials causes a change in the Russenorsk order. Adverbials tend to interfere with the order, and the position of the verb usually changes as it is placed at the end of the clause. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 55)

- Declarative clauses in Russenorsk can have **SOAV** word order structure. It is a clause structure where the subject comes first, the object comes second, the adverbial third, and there is a verb at the end.

RN: *Moja tvoja på vater kasstom.* [I you into water throw.]

NOR: *Jeg vil kaste deg til vannet.* [I will throw you into the water.]

- Other examples of other word order structures in the Russenorsk declarative clauses include a subject, object, adverbial, and verb.

**S + AOV**                      RN: *S + på moja skib kjai drikkom.* [S + on my ship tea drink.]

NOR: *S + drikker te på skipet mitt.* [S + drinks tea on my ship.]

**S + OVA**                      RN: *S + treska kopom på den dag.* [S + codfish buy that day.]

NOR: *S + kjøper torsk den dagen.* [S + buys fish that day.]

**S + AVO**                      RN: *S + på ju bresentom bånbán.* [S + to you give as a present candy.]

NOR: *S + giver deg godteri som en gave.* [S + gives you candy as a gift.]

- Unlike the Norwegian, Russenorsk declarative clauses starting with adverbial have predicate placed at the end of the clause.

RN: *På den dag ikke russefolk arbei.* [ On that day not Russians work.]

NOR: *Den dagen jobber ikke russere.* [On that day Russians are not working.]

#### b) Interrogative clauses

Interrogative clauses in Norwegian and Russenorsk have similar features. However, the word order structures are entirely different. The main difference is the placement of the predicate in a clause.

- Interrogative clauses with interrogative words

Both Norwegian and Russenorsk interrogative clauses can be formed with the help of the interrogative words placed first in the clause. Unlike in the Norwegian ones, the predicate is not placed second after the interrogative words in the Russenorsk interrogative clauses. This type of interrogative clauses has the same structure as a declarative clause, and the inversion of subject and predicate does not occur. The typical interrogative words in Russenorsk are *kak, koda, kor* [how/what, when, where] and in Norwegian are *hva, hvor, når, hvordan* [what, where, when, how]. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 51)

RN: *Kak pris pa tvoja?* [ What price of you?]

NOR: *Hva er prisen din?* [What is your price?]

The suffix *-li* can also indicate an interrogative clause in Russenorsk if a word with the suffix *-li* is placed at the beginning or used together with an interrogative word. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 52)

RN: *Mangoli ar tvoja?* [How many year you?]

RN: *Nogoli dag tvoja reisa?* [How many day you journey?]

- Yes-no questions

Some of the clauses in Russenorsk have the same structure as Norwegian declarative clauses representing questions if the exclamation mark and intonation are used. However, there is usually the inversion of subject and predicate in yes-no questions in Norwegian.

RN: *Du har kona?* [You have wife?]

NOR: *Du har kona?* [You have wife?] – Norwegian declarative clause representing the question

NOR: *Har du kona?* [Have you wife?] – Norwegian yes-no question

If we use modal verbs in this type of Russenorsk clauses, they follow the Norwegian order rules. However, the nonfinite verb is still placed at the end of a clause.

RN: *Vil ju pa moja stova pa morradag skajfom?*

ENG: *Will you eat tomorrow at my place?*

Russenorsk yes-no questions can also have the **SOV** structure.

RN: *Tvoja fisk kopom?* [You fish buy?]

Yes-no questions in Russenorsk can also involve two adverbials placed one after another. A verb is usually placed at the end of such a sentence. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 56)

RN: *Ju på morradag på moja treski njem?*

[You in morning to I codfish get?]

NOR: *Kommer du om morgenen til meg for å få fisk?*

[Will you come in the morning to me to get fish]

An interrogative clause can also be introduced by the word *kanske*.

RN: *Kanske tvoja vil glass tjai?* [You will cup tea?]

### c) Imperative clauses

The third type – imperative clauses, are used to express a command or an order. Imperative clauses have the same function both in Russenorsk and Norwegian. However, there is always a subject in this clause type. In other words, the person who is commanded to something is directly addressed in the Russenorsk clauses. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 53)

RN: *Junga grebi moja po lan'.* [Boy row me to land.]

RN: *Burman, kom fiska!* [Fisherman come fish!]

Another similarity is the use of one single word which can form a simple sentence.

RN: *Kom!* [Come!]

NOR: *Kom!* [Come!]

Some of the imperative clauses have a hortative/encouraging function. This type of imperative clauses in Russenorsk usually starts with the expressions *davaj* or *værsego*. It is not very common that the subject as the person who is encouraged to do something would be directly addressed in the hortative type of imperative clauses. However, it can still occur. While the verb was placed second in the imperative clauses expressing a command, the verb in the hortative imperative clauses is placed only at the end of the clause. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 53)

RN: *Værsågo på skib kastom!* [Please to ship throw!]

RN: *Davaj på fiska dragom!* [Come to fish pull!]

RN: *Værsego ju på moja skib vaskom!* [Please you at my ship wash!]

A verb follows the expression *værsego* in imperative. Meanwhile, its Norwegian equivalent *vær så god* [please] would be followed by an infinitive of a verb. *Davaj* has a similar function as *kom* [come!] or *la* [let's].

There are also examples of exclamations expressing emotion in both Russenorsk and Norwegian. An example is a clause: *Njet go væn!* [No, good friend!]. The buyer disagrees with the price and uses an exclamation clause.

### 3.3.2.2 Subordinate clauses

Compared to the Norwegian subordinate clauses, there are fewer examples of the subordinate clauses in Russenorsk, and only the subordinate conjunction *kak* is noted. (Broch, Jahr, 1984, 53)

- The subordinate conjunction *kak* is used in the nominal subordinate clauses with the syntactic function of an object. It has a similar function as the subordinate conjunction *at* in Norwegian.

RN: *Moja smotrom kak ju pisat.* [ I see that you write.]

NOR: *Jeg så at du skrev.* [ I saw that you wrote.]

- *Kak* can also be used in one of the subordinate clause subtypes -conditional clauses.

RN: *Kak ju vina trinke, Kristus grot vre.*

[ If you wine drink, Jesus Christ very angry.]

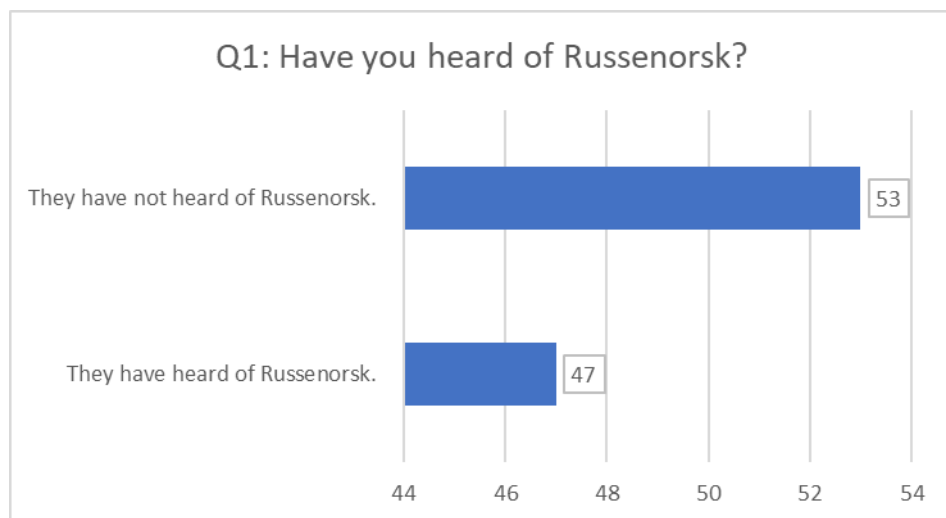
NOR: *Hvis du drikker vin, Kristus blir veldig sint.*

[If you drink wine, Jesus Christ will become angry.]

#### 4 The questionnaire

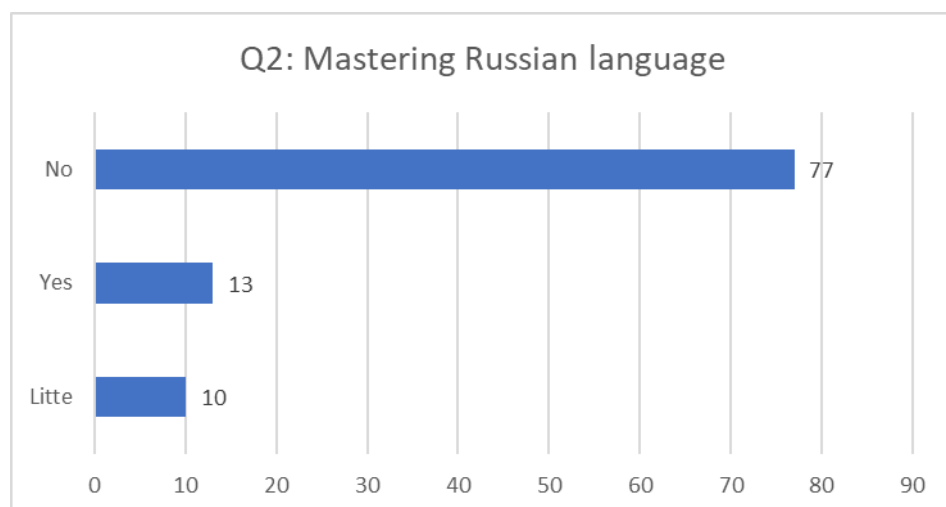
This section provides an overview and summary of the questionnaire filled out by Norwegians. In the beginning, we asked the respondents whether they had heard about Russenorsk and whether they had good Russian language skills to find out if it is necessary to master both of the lexifiers to understand this pidgin.

In the first question, we asked the respondents if they had heard of Russenorsk before. More than half of the respondents claimed that they had.



**Graph 1 – Question n. 1 results**

The second question focused on the respondent's Russian skills. The questionnaire was attended by people who claimed to have good Russian skills and people who spoke Russian only a little or not at all.



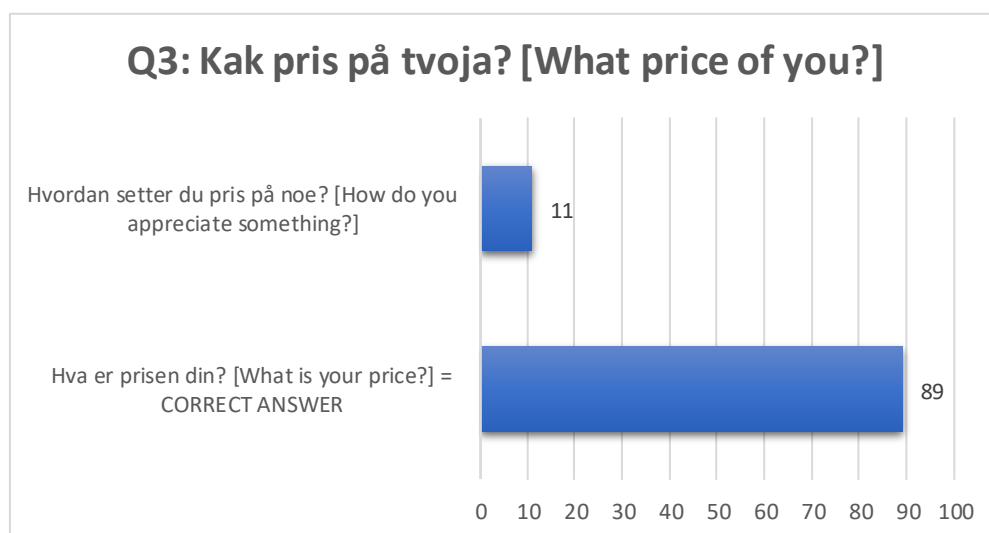
**Graph 2 – Question n. 2 results**



The following twelve questions referred to the grammar and the vocabulary of Russenorsk.

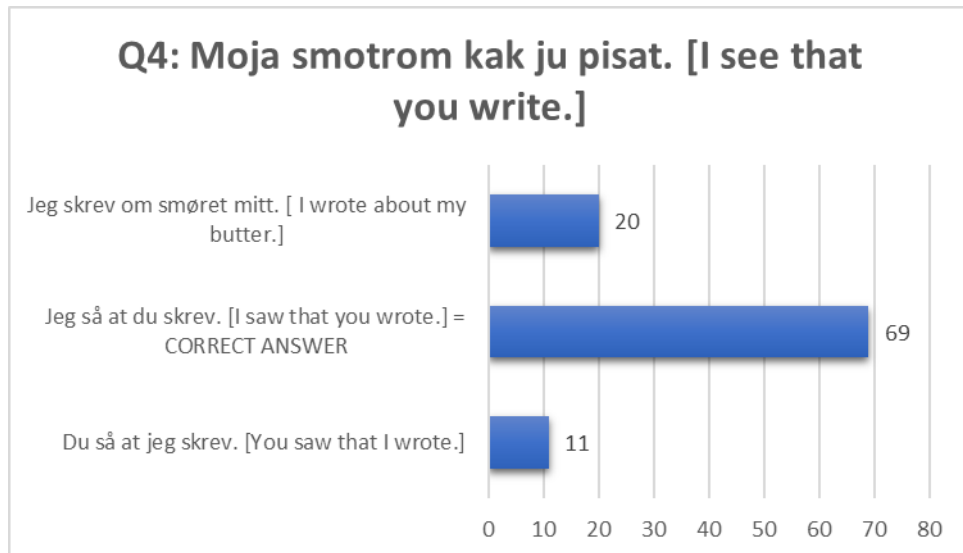
The third and fourth questions dealt with the translation. Respondents could choose the correct translation into Norwegian from more options. The most successful were respondents who spoke Russian fluently and those who had weaker Russian language skills. Surprisingly more than half of the respondents who did not speak Russian could determine the translations correctly.

The question number 3 focused on the Russenorsk question *Kak pris på tvoja?* [What price of you?]. 89% of respondents were able to determine the correct answer in Norwegian. 11% of respondents who chose the second option had no Russian language skills.



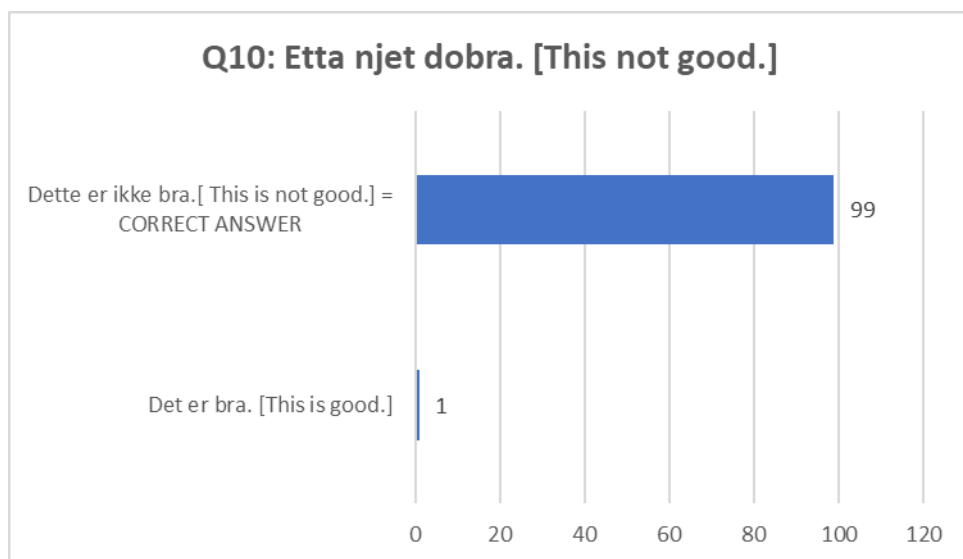
**Graph 3 – Question n. 3 results**

The question number 4 was also focused on the translation of the sentence *Moja smotrom kak ju pisat.* [I see that you write. / I saw that you write.] 69% of respondents managed to choose the correct answer. The Russian speakers and those with limited Russian skills answered the question correctly.



**Graph 4 - Question n. 4 results**

The tenth question also concerned translation. The sentence *Etta njet dobra*. It was translated correctly by up to 99% of respondents. With this question, we wanted to determine whether the respondents were able to distinguish the negative sentence.



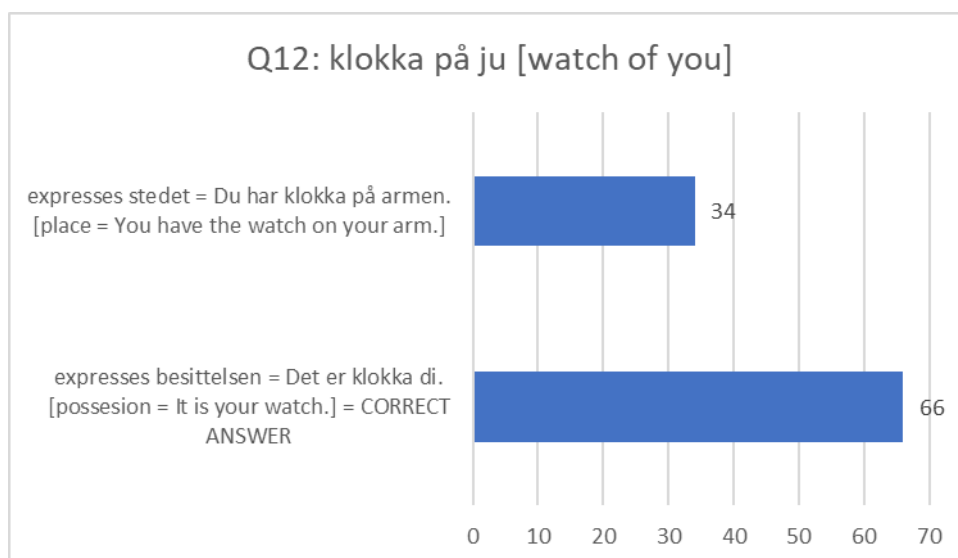
**Graph 5 - Question n. 10 results**

The questions number 5 and 7 deal with the individual translations. The assignment was to translate a sentence and verbs in Russenorsk into Norwegian without possible predetermined answers. It is not possible to give exact percentages of correct assumptions, as respondents approached these tasks individually.

In the fifth question, the sentence in Russenorsk *På den dag ikke russefolk arbei.* [Russians do not work that day.] was translated in different ways. The correct equivalents were most often repeated, only the word order was changed: *På den dagen arbeider ikke russere.* [On that day work not Russians.], *Russefolket arbeider ikke på den dagen.* [Russian people work not on that day.], *Russere jobber ikke på den dagen.* [Russians work not on that day.]. There were also examples where respondents understood that the Russians would not get a job today or no job for them. The word *arbei* [to work] became the most problematic word even though it was derived from the verb *arbeide* [to work].

There were four verbs in Russenorsk used for translation in the seventh question - *betalom* [to pay], *reisom* [to travel], *drikkom* [to drink], and *robotom* [to work]. Usually, the first three were translated to Norwegian correctly as they correspond with the Norwegian verbs *å betale*, *å reise*, *å drikke*. The last verb *robotom* was translated as *å jobbe* [to work], *å arbeid* [to work], *robåt* [rowboat], *å ro* [to row], *å automatisere* [to automate], *lyskryss* [traffic light], *maskin* [machine]. The first two options were the correct ones.

The questions number 12, 13 points to the preposition *på* and its various functions in Russenorsk. In the twelfth question, we ask the respondents about the expression *klokka på ju* [your watch]. As we said in the theoretical part, the preposition *på* has both the possessive and the local function, but in this question, it is its possessive function that is presented. One third of respondents answered incorrectly and chose the local function of *på* instead of the possessive one.

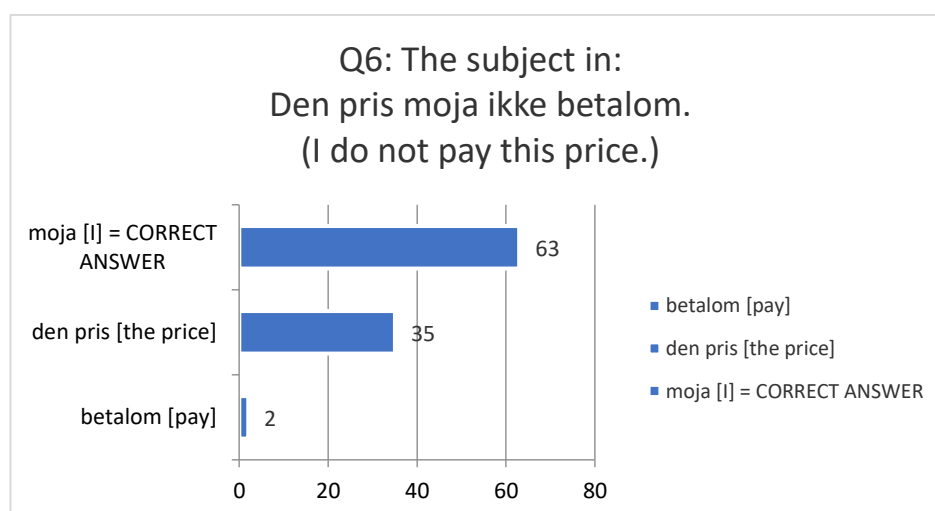


**Graph 6 - Question n. 12 results**

On the other hand, we focused on the local function of the preposition *på* in the question number 13. The respondents had to translate individually the expression *mala penga på lomma* [little money in the pocket/ to have little money in the pocket]. Almost every respondent understood parts of *penga på lomma* [money in the pocket]. The problem occurred with the word *mala* [little]. Some of the responders translated the expression correctly. Others, however, understood the expression with its opposite meaning *ha penger i lomma, legge penger i lomma* [have money in your pocket, put money in your pocket].

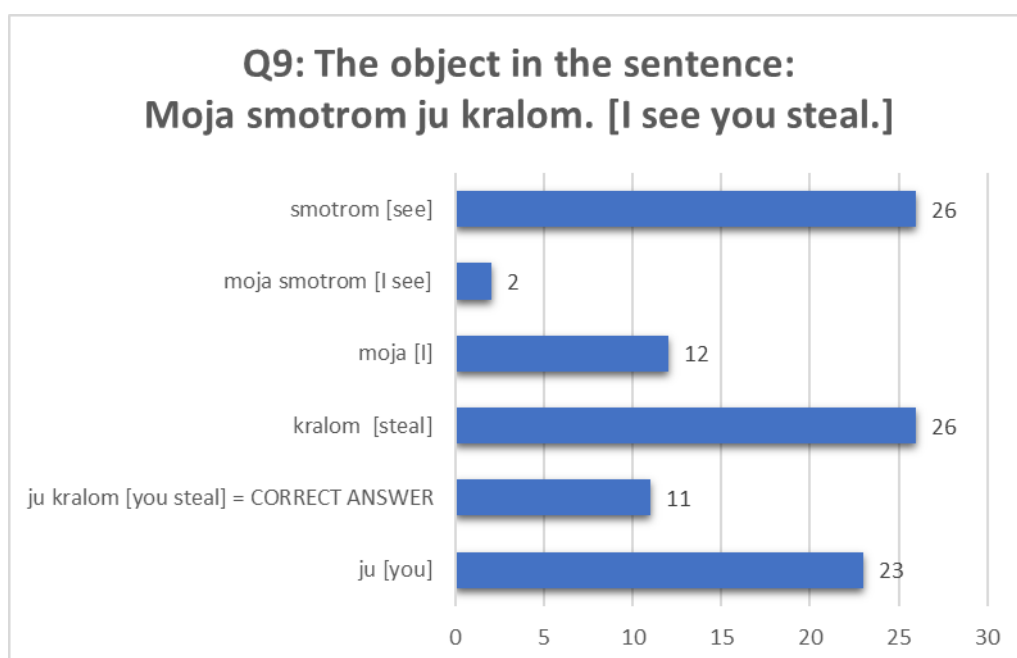
The question number 11 was also about the understanding of the sentences. It was a simple conversation in Russenorsk. Person A asked if person B would buy fish: *Tvoja fiska kopom?* [You fish buy?]. B answered with a word of English origin *jes* [yes]. We asked the respondents which one of the people bought fish. 73% were able to determine the correct answer. Russian speakers and most of the respondents who had weaker Russian language skills were able to determine the correct answer. We could assume that the reason for the higher number of correct responses was the word of English origin.

The questions number 6 and 9 were focused on syntax, specifically on determining the subject and the object. The respondents had to choose one correct answer. 63% of them identified the correct subject in the question number 4. The subject was placed second after the object in the sentence *Den pris moja ikke betalom.* [This price I not pay.] with a different word order structure than in the Norwegian language. However, more than half of the respondents managed to answer correctly. The reason could be respondents' linguistic skills or similar words used in the third question - *pris på, moja*.



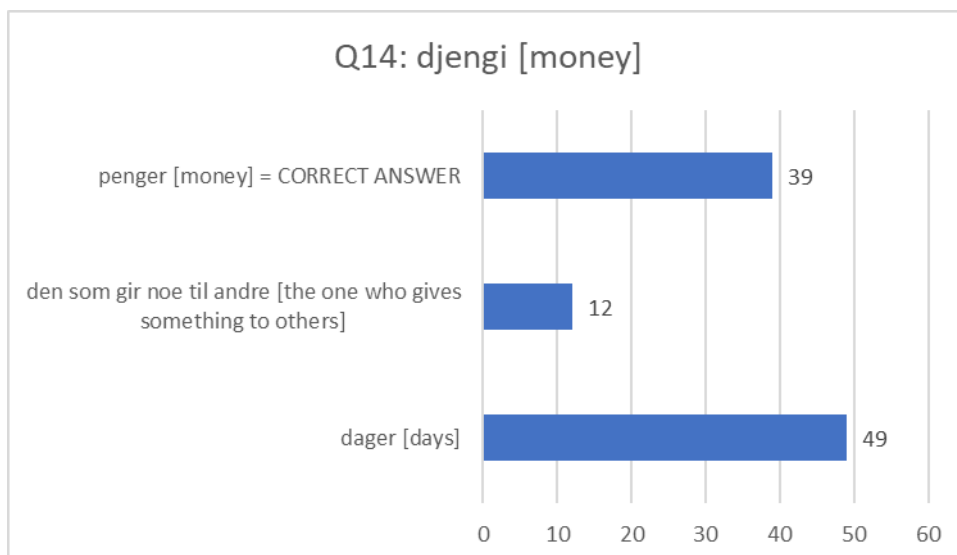
**Graph 7 - Question n. 6 results**

On the contrary, the question number 9 focused on the object. The sentence *Moja smotrom ju kralom* [I see you steal] where neither parataxis nor hypotaxis can be determined was used. The correct answer was the expression *ju kralom* [you steel]. Only 11% of respondents managed to choose the correct answer, while 26% predicted that the object is the last word in the sentence – *kralom* [to steal]. 23% probably understood the expression *ju* [you], and 28% chose the subject – *moja* [I] and the predicate of the – *smotrom* [to see] instead of the object. 8% of the respondents who chose the correct answer claimed that they did not have any Russian skills and had problems with translation tasks. This could mean that understanding this pidgin and correctly determining the clause elements are not related.



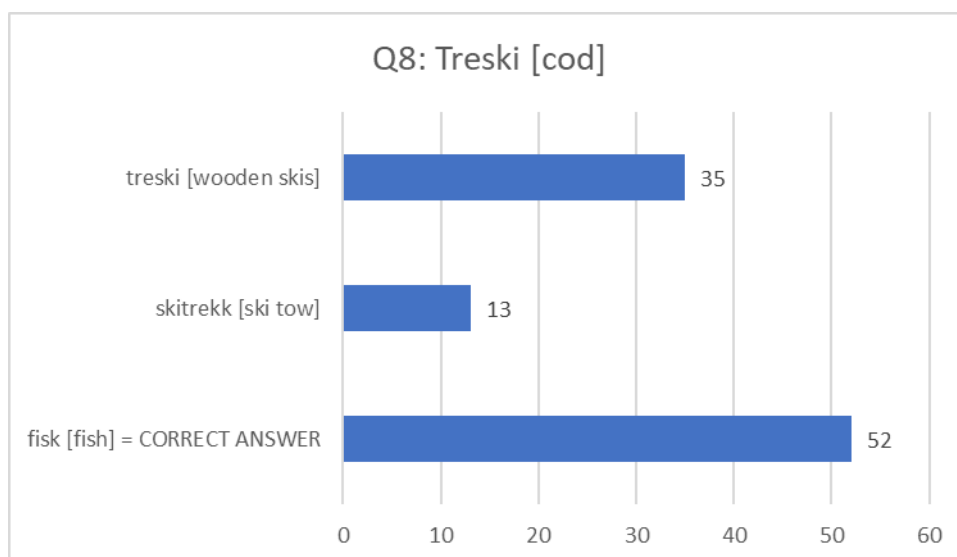
**Graph 8 - Question n. 9 results**

Russenorsk is also known for its parallel forms of expressions (both in Norwegian and Russian). There are many examples of Russenorsk words of Norwegian origin, but they also have a Russian equivalent. We asked the respondents about the translation of the word *penga* in question number 13, and we asked them again about the translation of the word *dengi* in question number 14. Both words mean the same thing - money. More than one-third of respondents answered correctly, but the most significant number of respondents chose the wrong answer.



**Graph 9 - Question n. 14 results**

In task number 8, we asked respondents about the translation of the word *treski* [cod]. However, we deliberately asked only about fish without its specific name. Half of the respondents guessed the correct answer, up to 39% determined that *treski* [cod] in Russenorsk is also *treski* [wooden skis] in Norwegian.



**Graph 10 - Question n. 8 results**

## 5 Conclusion

The subject of this bachelor thesis was to compare the pidgin Russenorsk with the Norwegian language to find out their similarities and answer the question of whether the contemporary Norwegians can understand Russenorsk. The work is divided into a theoretical and a practical part. In the first part, we focused directly on the comparison of Russenorsk with Norwegian, and we compared their morphological, lexical, and syntactic structure.

The morphological part was primarily focused on the part of speech. The most significant difference between Norwegian and Russenorsk was the inflexibility of Russenorsk, limited vocabulary with several expressions of Russian origin, and the multiple functions of the preposition *på* and the adverb *kak*.

We also determined the differences within Norwegian and Russenorsk lexicology, lexical semantics, word formation and we focused on word formation processes, parallel forms, and the phenomenon of bilingual homonyms. Processes such as compounding and derivation were very similar in both languages, however very limited in Russenorsk. On the other hand, reduplication adopted a different meaning in Russenorsk. Unlike in Norwegian, it was used to create new expressions in everyday conversation. Russenorsk also contains several parallel word forms. This means that the word of Norwegian origin also has its equivalent of Russian origin. Bilingual homonyms also appear in Russenorsk. They are the words that have the same form as in Norwegian but a different meaning in Russenorsk.

The syntactic part of Russenorsk was the most complicated to analyze. Russenorsk does not have the same syntactic rules as Norwegian, but some of the structures are very similar. Given the available materials about Russenorsk, we could assume that Russenorsk absents a large variety of subordinate clauses. The most significant difference between Russenorsk and Norwegian within the syntactic part is the word order of clause elements. The V2 rule does not apply to the verbs in Russenorsk. The most frequently used word order structure is the SOV structure. However, there are several examples of sentences with different structures. This pidgin also favours short, simple, or coordinated sentences without subordinating conjunctions.

The practical part of the thesis has consisted of an anonymous questionnaire that contained the grammar and vocabulary of Russenorsk. The tasks were focused mainly on understanding and translation the Russenorsk expressions. Of the total number

of respondents, 3% of respondents were able to answer all questions correctly. They were the ones who spoke the Russian language. Norwegians that could speak Russian were able to understand the Russenorsk texts better and translate them. The problem arose mainly in the determination of clause elements and the translation of Russian origin words. We did not expect the respondents to have linguistic education. However, we found out that determining clause elements and the ability to translate the Russenorsk expressions correctly were not related.

On the other hand, Russian speakers were able to distinguish bilingual homonyms correctly. The respondents who claimed that they spoke Russian only a little had difficulty also in this section. This group managed to translate the texts correctly. In some cases, it was not a complete translation, but they could understand the text. The results were different for respondents that did not speak Russian at all. Norwegians who had no Russian skills had significant problems with Russenorsk words of Russian origin. They can only deal with terms and sentences where the number of the words of Norwegian origin predominates.

In conclusion, to understand the Russenorsk pidgin, some knowledge of the second lexifier is needed. The Norwegian language skills are very beneficial but insufficient. The knowledge of the Russian language is beneficial in understanding this pidgin. However, it is questionable whether the knowledge of another Slavic language would not be enough, and therefore, further research is needed.



## 6 Bibliography

Berge, A. L., Rottem, Ø. (2006). *Spor: teoribok : VKI og VKII*. Cappelen

Broch, I. & Jahr, E. H. (1984). *Russenorsk: Et pidginspråk i Norge*. Novus

Čermák, F. (1994). *Jazyk a jazykověda: přehled*. Pražská imaginace

Faarlund, J. T., Lie, S., & Vannebo, K. I. (1997). *Norsk referansegrammatikk*.

Universitetsforlaget.

Kortlandt, F. (2000). On Russenorsk. *Amsterdamer Beiträge Zur Älteren Germanistik*, 54(1),

123–127. <https://www.kortlandt.nl/publications/art197e.pdf>

Mac Donald, K. (2009). *Norsk som andrespråk*, Cappelen Damm

### Internet sources

Belikov, V. *Some Fragments of Russenorsk Grammar*. Institute of Russian Language, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow.

<https://www.philol.msu.ru/~otipl/new/main/articles/belikov/vib-russenorsk.doc>

The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2007). *Mood | grammar*. Encyclopedia Britannica.

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/mood-grammar>

The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2011). *Tense | grammar*. Encyclopedia Britannica.

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/tense>

The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2016). *Voice | grammar*. Encyclopedia Britannica.

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/voice-grammar>

Nordquist, R. (2019). *Hypotaxis in English Sentence Structure*. ThoughtCo.

<https://www.thoughtco.com/hypotaxis-grammar-and-prose-style-1690948>

Nordquist, R. (2019). *Definition and Examples of Paratactic Sentence Structures*. ThoughtCo.

<https://www.thoughtco.com/parataxis-grammar-and-prose-style-1691574>

## 7 Annexes

### 1. The original questionnaire

#### Russenorsk

1 Har du hørt om russenorsk?

Ja.  Nei.

2 Snakker du russisk?

Nei.  Ja.  Bare litt.

3 Prøv å oversette: Kak pris på tvoja?

Hjelp med spørsmål: *Prøv å oversette setningen. Velg det beste alternativet.*

Hva er prisen din?  Hvordan setter du pris på noe?

---

4 Prøv å oversette: Moja smotrom kak ju pisat.

Hjelp med spørsmål: *Prøv å oversette setningen. Velg det beste alternativet.*

Jeg skrev om smøret mitt.  Jeg så at du skrev.  Du så at jeg skrev.

5 Prøv å oversette setningen til norsk: På den dag ikke russefolk arbei.

6 Hva er subjektet i denne setningen? / Den pris moja ikke betalom.

den pris  moja  ikke  betalom

7 Prøv å oversette disse verbene: betalom, reisom, drikkom, robotom

8 Hva er treski i russenorsk?

- treski  skitrekk  fisk

9 Hva er objektet i denne setningen? / Moja smotrom ju kralom.

- moja  smotrom  ju  kralom  ju kralom  moja smotrom

10 Prøv å oversette: Etta njet dobra.

Hjelp med spørsmål: *Prøv å oversette setningen. Velg det beste alternativet.*

- God natt.  Dette er ikke bra.  Det er bra.

11 Hvem kjøper fisken? A person eller B person? / SAMTALEN: A: Tvoja fiska kopom? B: Jes.

- A  B

12 Uttrykket "klokka på ju" refererer til

- stedet = Du har klokka på armen.  besittelsen = Det er klokka di.

13 Prøv å oversette til norsk: mala penga på lomma

14 Hva betyr djengi?

- penger  den som gir noe til andre  dager

Tusen takk for at du deltok i denne forskningen!