

Anna Zielińska

The Multilingualism
of the Old Believers
Living in Poland



MONOGRAPHS



Institute of Slavic Studies,
Polish Academy of Sciences

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Translated by
Joanna Modzelewska-Jankowiak



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A WORD FROM THE AUTHOR

The book entitled *Wielojęzyczność staroobrzędowców mieszkających w Polsce* [Zielińska 1996] was published in 1996 in the Institute of Slavic Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. The research that became the basis for writing this book was carried out in the years 1987–1994.¹ Therefore the work presents the state of the Polish-Russian bilingualism of the Old Believers in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres and the German-Polish-Russian trilingualism in the Masurian centre twenty years ago.² Since that time the methods of research on multilingualism have developed considerably, and other studies on the Old Believers living in Poland have also been elaborated. My book has been frequently cited in these works, becoming the point of reference for subsequent researchers.

During my research done twenty years ago I was convinced that the groups of the Polish Old Believers were in decline and that I was describing the situation of language variants which were to become extinct. I thought that the processes of replacement of the Russian and German languages in favour of the Polish language were well advanced and that the multilingualism of the Old Believers would soon become history. Poland is a homogeneous country as regards culture, denomination and language, where the Polish language and the Catholic religion firmly prevail. The preservation of a minority language and religion by groups and individuals involves high personal and social costs. I mean the negative stereotyping of national, religious and linguistic minorities, and the social stigma towards their members [I elaborate upon this issue in my recent book, cf. Zielińska 2013].

¹ I began the research already as a student of the Faculty of Polish Studies at the University of Warsaw, inspired to do so by Professor Elżbieta Smułkowa. Under her direction I prepared my doctoral dissertation, defended at the Institute of Slavic Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences in 1995, which was the basis for the book entitled *Wielojęzyczność staroobrzędowców mieszkających w Polsce*, now presented to the readers in English translation.

² I apply here the division of the Old Believers into three groups (centres), which is traditional in Polish research on the Old Believers: the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres (these are bilingual: Polish-Russian) and the Masurian centre (this is trilingual: German-Polish-Russian) – cf. chapter 2, section 2.1 below.

It seemed that the processes of cultural, linguistic and religious assimilation would lead to the disappearance of small groups of the Old Believers in Poland. Nevertheless, this has not occurred. In 2011 a book by Michał Głuszkowski came out, entitled *Socjologiczne i psychologiczne uwarunkowania dwujęzyczności staroobrzędowców regionu suwalsko-augustowskiego* (*Sociological and Psychological Aspects of the Bilingualism of the Old Believers in the Suwałki-Augustów Region*),³ published by Nicolaus Copernicus University Press in Toruń, followed in 2015 by the book by Anna Jorroch, entitled *Die deutsche Sprache der dreisprachigen Altgläubigen in Masuren* (*The German Language of the Trilingual Old Believers in Masuria*), published by the Institute of German Studies of the University of Warsaw. These works document the current state of the multilingualism of the Old Believers living in Poland. Contrary to my expectations, the religious, linguistic and cultural distinctiveness of the Old Believers has been preserved, despite the small sizes of groups and the unfavourable conditions of their functioning. The bilingualism in the Suwałki-Sejny region and the trilingualism in the Masurian region have turned out to be stable.

1. The Old Believers in Poland at the Beginning of the 21st Century

The groups of the Old Believers are found in the Podlaskie Voivodeship (the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres) and the Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship (the Masurian centre). Michał Głuszkowski states that they form four religious communities: Suwałki, Gabowe Grądy, Wodziłki (these communities are located in the contemporary Podlaskie Voivodeship) and Wojnowo (the Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship). In the Podlaskie Voivodeship the Old Believers live in many places, namely: Białystok, Białobrzegi, Blizne, Buda Ruska, Hołny Wolmera, Leszczewo, Nowinka, Płociczno. Most of the Old Believers live in the villages of Gabowe Grądy, Bór (next to Augustów), Wodziłki (near Suwałki), and in the cities of Augustów and Suwałki [Głuszkowski 2011: 25].

Michał Głuszkowski analyses various data so as to establish the number of the Old Believers in Poland. According to the data of the Council of the Pomorian Old-Orthodox Church in the Republic of Poland, the population amounts to approximately 2,000 people, of which 50 people inhabit the Masurian region, the community in Suwałki has got 1,100 people, Gabowe Grądy – 780, and Wodziłki – 45 persons. The calculations of the Central Statistical Office of Poland for the year 2007 showed much smaller numbers:

³ The author carried out the research in two traditionally distinguished centres: Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów, combining them into one Suwałki-Augustów centre.

in the Podlasie Voivodeship – 457 persons of the Old Believer denomination. Michał Głuszkowski estimates that at the beginning of the 21st century approximately 1,000 persons of the Old Believer denomination live in Poland [Głuszkowski 2011: 24–26]. It follows that the total number of the Old Believers has not changed since my book was published [see the quoted number of 952 persons, cf. chapter 2, section 2.1 below].

2. The Current Research on the Multilingualism of the Old Believers

The research on the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers and the Polish-Russian bilingualism in the Suwałki-Sejny centre are conducted in the Department of Slavic Philology of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń by the team of specialists in Russian studies under the direction of Professor Stefan Grzybowski. It is a longitudinal study, consisting in a diachronic approach to the examined community in order to explain the changes in specific phenomena in a temporal perspective [more about the research, cf. Głuszkowski 2011: 68]. In addition to the doctoral dissertations and articles, which I am not going to discuss here, two fundamental works have been written there. The first one, the aforementioned monograph by Michał Głuszkowski [2011], and the other one – the Internet database “Dokumentacja rosyjskiej gwary staroobrzędowców w północno-wschodniej Polsce – internetowa baza danych” (Documentation of the Russian Subdialect of the Old Believers in North-Eastern Poland – Online Database).⁴ The database contains the subdialectal texts recorded by the team from the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń during the eleven field expeditions in recent years and the previous texts recorded by Professor Iryda Grek-Pabisowa and Professor Irena Maryniakowa from the Institute of Slavic Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences in the years 1950–1970. Also available on the website of the project are publications of the members of the Toruń team.

The aim of the book by Michał Głuszkowski [2011] was to explain the phenomena related to the bilingualism of the Old Believers of the Suwałki-Augustów region through referring to the non-linguistic phenomena. It presents the transformations of the Russian subdialect over three generations depending on the changing linguistic situation. The author proved the hypothesis of the mutual relation between strong group identity and the preservation of the language of a minority. The Old Believers belonging to the oldest and middle generations are characterised by strong emotional ties with the faith and tradition of their ancestors, and they show positive

⁴ <http://www.starover.umk.pl/index.html> (accessed: 1.04.2017).

attitude to the Russian subdialect. This favours the preservation of the Russian subdialect and the durability of the Polish-Russian bilingualism. The author also presents another tendency, leading to the variantivity of the language and the loosening of the norm of the Russian subdialect, which causes a linguistic change. The processes of linguistic change are in a transitional phase. The Russian subdialect of the Old Believers still prevails in the domains of family and neighbourhood. In the younger generation there are some persons affected by an inferiority complex caused by the use of the subdialect; however, this phenomenon is far from common [Głuszkowski 2011: 270]. What does threaten the stability of the group are demographic phenomena such as the negative birth rate, a lack of marriages, and migrations [Głuszkowski 2011: 271].

The Old Believers in the Masurian centre differ from their co-religionists in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres. Before 1945 they were German citizens. Only after the change of borders following World War II was the territory of Masuria incorporated into Poland. On account of this, the oldest generation acquired the German language. After 1945 the Old Believers – similarly to other citizens of the Third Reich – were affected by persecution, exile and resettlement, as well as emigration to Germany in later years. Relatives of the Old Believers coming from this centre live in many German cities and towns, including Hamburg. In 1999, as a grant holder of the *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst*, I carried out two-month-long research on the families of the Old Believers in Hamburg [Zielińska 1999].

The research in the Masurian centre was undertaken by the Germanist from the University of Warsaw Anna Jorroch [cf. Jorroch 2015]. The Masurian Old Believers are a transnational community today. Its members live in Poland in Masuria, and in Germany. Most of them have houses in both countries [Jorroch 2015: 15]. They speak German and Polish in everyday life. The Russian subdialect is used to a limited extent. The main objective of the researcher was a systemic description of the German language of the older generation on the basis of texts recorded in Masuria (23 persons aged 50 to 98 years were interviewed). An extensive chapter is devoted also to the language contacts and interferences from the Polish and Russian languages into the German language of the Old Believers. The author also deals with the question of the identity of the Masurian Old Believers, which differs from the identity of the Old Believers of the Suwałki-Augustów region. While retaining their traditional religion, they express strong emotional relations and ties with the German culture. They keep their distance from the Russian identity or they even reject it firmly [cf. Jorroch 2015: 82–91].

A study of the German language of the Masurian Old Believers, written by Anna Jorroch, together with the description of the history of the group

and the linguistic situation are also available on the website: <http://www.inne-jezyki.amu.edu.pl/Frontend/Language/Details/28>.

The authors of the presented works, Anna Jorroch and Michał Głuszkowski, see the need to continue the research on the multilingualism of the Old Believers in Poland.

I do hope that the research on this group, which is unique on a European scale, is continued by subsequent researchers.

1 May 2016, Warsaw

PREFACE

The Old Believers, also known as the Old Ritualists, the faithful of the Pomorian Old-Orthodox Church are of Russian descent, but they live in many countries outside Russia, mainly in Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia, Germany, in the USA, and in Canada. The followers of this church invariably preserve the tradition and ceremony of the Russian Orthodox Church since the times preceding the reforms of Patriarch Nikon, introduced in the mid-17th century. These changes regarded elements of rituals to which the believers attach the greatest importance: *inter alia*, reviews were made to the translations of the Holy Bible and the liturgical texts, crossing oneself with two fingers was prohibited and crossing with three fingers was commanded, the existing rite of baptising through three full immersions in water was exchanged for pouring water. The number of obeisances was also reduced and their manner was altered (obeisances to the ground were replaced by deep obeisances), and the eight-pointed cross (the traditional Russian Orthodox three-bar cross) was exchanged for the four-pointed cross or the six-pointed cross. These reforms, which were to bring the Russian Orthodox Church closer to the Greek Orthodox Church, were construed by the common people as blasphemy against God, and as a threat to faith as well as to the Russian national culture. However, the faithful were forced to accept the changes, and the disobedient ones were even sentenced to death. Those who did not want to disavow the old faith had to hide away in remote places, deep in Russia or abroad. In the minds of the defendants of the old rituals, the elements of Russian traditional culture and the Christian religion intertwine in one system of values. The successive generations of the Old Believers living outside Russia, who care for the Old-Orthodox religious rituals and preserve faithfulness to the pre-Nikon texts and symbolism, also pay attention to maintaining their national identity, which they express particularly by wearing traditional Russian clothing, a particular hairstyle and unshaven beards, preserving a particular manner of eating, and speaking the Russian language.

The language, culture and history of the Old Believers are the object of interest of scholars in many countries, which is evidenced by five international conferences on this subject matter.¹ In Poland the research on the Old Believers was commenced in the 1950s with the article by I. Grek-Pabisowa entitled "Niektóre wiadomości o starowiercach zamieszkających na terenie Polski" [Grek-Pabisowa 1958]. In the same year the article by L. Szwengrub [1958] also appeared, in which the author considered the history and customs of the Old Believers living in Masuria. This subject was then developed by E. Sukertowa-Biedrawina [1961] and W. Jakubowski [1961]. The first monograph containing precise details about the history and customs of the Polish Old Believers was written by E. Iwaniec [1977], who is also the author of numerous articles and studies on the history of the Old Believers. Research on the Old Believers books located in Poland is being conducted by Z. Jaroszewicz-Pieresaławcew [1995].

The research on the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers led by I. Grek-Pabisowa and I. Maryniakowa since the end of the 1950s² has resulted in the comprehensive description of this subdialect. The Polish language of the Old Believers has, on the contrary, never been researched. M. Brzezina writes about the need to do research on the Polish language of national minorities:

Znaczny odsetek ludności dawnej Polski stanowiły mniejszości narodowe. Używały one w codziennej praktyce swych języków macierzystych, wchodząc jednakże we wspólnoty komunikatywne i językowe z polskim otoczeniem. Stała dwujęzyczność, zwłaszcza w warunkach analfabetyzmu, doprowadziła do wytworzenia się specyficznych mniejszościowych odmian polszczyzny. Powinna je w porę uchwycić dialektologia dwujęzyczna. Niestety przeprowadzono u nas tylko fragmentaryczne badania. [...] dzieje języka polskiego, to również w pewnej mierze dzieje zamieszkających w Polsce cudzoziemców. W przyszłej nowoczesnej historii języka polskiego musi znaleźć się więcej miejsca dla zagadnień socjolingwistycznych [Brzezina 1986: 7–8].

(National minorities constituted a significant share of the population of old Poland. They spoke their native languages in everyday life, yet they were in constant contact with the Polish communicative and linguistic environment. The continuous bilingualism, especially in the circumstances of illiteracy, led to the creation of specific variants of the Polish language. Bilingual dialectology should have recognised this in due time. Unfortunately, only fragmentary research was conducted here. [...] the history of the Polish language is also, to a certain extent, the history of foreigners living in Poland. The future modern history of the Polish language should pay more attention to sociolinguistic issues.)

¹ The first conference took place in Heidelberg in 1986, the subsequent ones – Zagreb in 1988, Novosibirsk in 1990, Ciechanowiec in 1992 and Moscow in 1995. The conference organised in Ciechanowiec brought a collection of articles written by scholars from different countries who deal with the history, the tradition, the culture and the language of the Old Believers: Grek-Pabisowa, Maryniakowa, Morris (eds.) 1994.

² There are three articles on the Polish Old Believers by I. Grek-Pabisowa, concerning the Polish Old Believers [Grek-Pabisowa 1981, 1989, 1995].

Two examples of descriptions of the Polish language spoken by national minorities are monographs by M. Brzezina, one on the Polish language of Jews [Brzezina 1986], and the other one on the Polish language of Germans [Brzezina 1989]. These studies use the linguistic material taken from various literary texts. However, there are still very few studies on this topic based on the spoken language material.³

The Polish language is one of the languages used by the Old Believers and its realisation depends on non-linguistic factors, therefore its description needs a comprehensive sociolinguistic commentary. The Old Believers as a multilingual group and an ethnic and religious minority in Poland constitute an ideal object of sociolinguistic research on language contact, as due to their religion and tradition, this community was isolated from foreign influences for a long time. Thanks to its insularity they have preserved their mother tongue – a Russian subdialect. Their language and religion are factors that integrate this group even today. On the other hand, this group is diverse in terms of age, profession, place of residence (contrast between rural areas and towns), linguistic environment. Thus, several sociological variables that affect various linguistic behaviours can be demonstrated.

Sociolinguistic research based on the subdialectal linguistic material is a natural consequence of the development of Slavic studies. As E. Smułkowa puts it,

Kiedy zbadane już zostały poszczególne systemy językowe bytujące na polsko-białorusko-litewskim pograniczu językowym, kiedy znacznie zaawansowane są prace dotyczące rezultatów ich wzajemnego oddziaływania, pora na przystąpienie do trzeciego etapu badań, do zajęcia się funkcjonowaniem współistniejących systemów [...]. Chodziłoby tu o przeprowadzenie wnikliwych badań terenowych, na podstawie których można by obiektywnie odpowiedzieć na wiele pytań natury psycho- i socjolingwistycznej, a przede wszystkim przedstawić aktualny zakres funkcjonowania gwar polskich i innojęzycznych na terenie ziem północno-wschodniej Polski oraz stwierdzić, jakie funkcje w tych warunkach pełni wariant regionalny języka polskiego. Podczas badań pragmatycznych uwzględnione powinny być, pomijane w studiach czysto gwaroznawczych, wszystkie czynniki, które decydują o zachowaniu językowym ludzi [...]. Sądzę, że jesteśmy już na takim etapie badawczym, kiedy z klasycznej dialektologii trzeba rozszerzyć badania regionalne na zagadnienia socjolingwistyki i pragmatyki, a zwłaszcza pragmatyki [Smułkowa 1990: 162–163].

(Now that various linguistic systems existing on the Polish-Belarusian-Lithuanian linguistic borderland have been examined, and the research on their mutual interaction is considerably advanced, it is high time to start the third stage of the research – to look into the functioning of the coexisting systems [...]. It would include carrying out thorough fieldwork, on the basis of which it would be possible to give objective answers to many questions of psycho- and sociolinguistic

³ Worth noticing in this regard are articles on the Polish language of Lithuanians living in the vicinity of Puńsk: Kolis 1991; Smułkowa, Kolis 1992.

nature, and, above all, to present the current range of the functioning of the Polish and other subdialects in the territory of north-eastern Poland and to state which functions are performed in these circumstances by the regional variant of Polish. During the pragmatic studies all the factors which influence the linguistic behaviour of people should be taken into consideration, and these factors are usually omitted in purely subdialectal studies [...]. I think that we are already at such a research stage when research needs to be extended to cover not only traditional dialectology, but also the issues of sociolinguistics and pragmatics, and particularly the latter.)

The subject matter of language contact and multilingualism has been of interest, as an important issue, to many eminent linguists. Before isolating sociolinguistics as a separate field of knowledge, a number of significant studies had been written, e.g. "Sposoby powstawania słowiańskich gwar przejściowych" by Z. Stieber [1974]. Language contact became an inspiration for such linguists as, e.g., U. Weinreich [1953], E. Haugen [1958, 1972], and V. Rozencvejg [1972]. In Poland substantial contributions to the study of language contact were made by researchers of languages of the Polish diaspora, including S. Dubisz [1994], E. Sękowska [1992], W. Morawski [1992], and others. The interest in this subject matter shown by the Polish linguists is proved by numerous conferences and publications, e.g. the volume *Kontakty języka polskiego z innymi językami na tle kontaktów kulturowych* prepared as a part of the seminar "Język a Kultura," edited by J. Maćkiewicz, J. Siatkowski [1992], as well as *Granice i Pogranicza. Język i historia*, edited by S. Dubisz, A. Nagórko [1994], or *Słowiańskie pogranicza językowe*, edited by K. Handke [1992a]. As a matter of fact, all the researchers working on, generally speaking, the languages of borderlands present in their studies various problems connected with language contact and bi- or multilingualism. The subject matter of language contact appears in works regarding various regions, e.g., Lusatia [Rzetelska-Feleszko 1992], Silesia [Żydek-Bednarczuk 1992], former Eastern Borderlands of Poland [Rieger 1996]. With reference to the territory of north-eastern Poland, the issues of language contact are researched by E. Smułkowa [1984, 1988, 1990], who also inspires others to write master's and doctoral theses on the Polish-Belarusian, Polish-Lithuanian and Polish-Russian language contacts. These theses discuss primarily the issues of description of the Polish language spoken by multilingual ethnic groups living in north-eastern Poland, cf. articles by N. Kolis [1991] and A. Zielińska [1991]. The multilingual dialectal nomenclature in north-eastern Poland was worked out in *Słownik nazw terenowych północno-wschodniej Polski* by N. Barszczewska, J. Głuszkowska, T. Jasińska, E. Smułkowa [1992]. N. Barszczewska and J. Głuszkowska analyse the onomastics of the Polish-Belarusian-Lithuanian linguistic borderland also in their other studies [Barszczewska, Głuszkowska 1993; Głuszkowska 1989, 1992].

I started my research on the Polish language of the Old Believers and their multilingualism as a student of the Faculty of Polish Studies of the

University of Warsaw, on initiative of Professor Elżbieta Smułkowa. My book is one of a few studies inspired by Professor Smułkowa concerning the bilingualism of the national minorities in north-eastern Poland, e.g. a study on bilingual Lithuanians living in Poland is being prepared by Nijola Kolis.⁴

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⁴ Cf. Birgiel 2002 [editor's note].

1

THE AIM AND METHOD OF THE STUDY

1.1. The Method

The aim of the work is to present the sociolinguistic situation of the multilingual community of the Old Believers living in Poland and to describe the Polish language used by them, as well as to interpret this language, considering the linguistic and non-linguistic factors.

The structure of the study is subordinated to these objectives. In Chapter 2, "The Community of the Old Believers in Poland" I discussed the social and linguistic situation of the researched group. In Chapter 3, "The Polish Language of the Old Believers" I presented the features of the Polish language of this group, resulting from language contact. The linguistic material was presented in the subsequent sections: 3.1, "Phonology," 3.2, "Inflection," 3.3, "Elements of Syntax," 3.4, "Russian and German Lexical Elements in the Polish Language of the Old Believers." In section 3.5, "Linguistic Interference" I made an attempt to interpret the presented material, taking into account the linguistic factors. Chapter 4, "The Sociolinguistic Aspects of Research on the Polish Language of the Old Believers" is based on the material and conclusions included in two preceding chapters. It presents the interpretation of the Polish language of the Old Believers applying sociolinguistic methods.

The fundamental problem while describing the Polish language of the Old Believers was the selection of the basis for comparison. It had to be settled whether to describe the Polish language of the Old Believers in comparison with the general Polish language,¹ as it is usually the case when describing subdialects, in comparison with the language of the region where the Old Believers reside, or in comparison with the subdialects in the nearby Polish villages. I decided that the subdialectal context would be most ap-

¹ I understand the general Polish language or the all-Poland language as "spoken colloquial literary language" [Furdal 1973: 14–17, 56–58].

appropriate: the Polish subdialects of Suwałki and Sejny for the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres, and the subdialect of Masuria for the Masurian centre, although some reference to the general Polish language was necessary because of various sources of acquiring the Polish language by the informants. I chose the subdialectal plane of comparison also because of the fact that the greatest number of the features of the Old Believers Polish language can be found in the language of the older informants living in the countryside and therefore having contact mainly with the dialectal variant of Polish. The language these people use is most interesting. My objective is to show the difference between their Polish language and the local subdialects. In my opinion it is superfluous to make comparisons between the subdialects and the language of young people and inhabitants of towns, since these informants will strive for integration with their neighbourhood and speak the general Polish language. In fact, there are few examples of interference of the primary language in the Polish language spoken by them. I decided that the method of comparison applicable for this group should not be applied to the description of the whole phenomenon.

The description of the language of bilingual people is not an easy task because it is not a uniform and closed system. Language contact takes place at the very moment of speaking and determines the dynamics of this language. The non-native language (the secondary language), which for the Old Believers is Polish, has various realisations and variantivity even within the particular idiolects. This Polish language should not be treated simply as a subdialect.² The Polish language of the Old Believers should be considered as a completely new quality. It is created on an ongoing basis while it is spoken and it is a result of the contact of the subdialectal and general Polish languages with the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers, and in the case of the Masurian centre also with the literary German language affected by regional influences.³ In this description I consider all the linguistic features, even those occasional, that I noted in the speech of the Old Believers which

² E. Smułkowa, reviewing the language systems of the Polish language of north-eastern Poland, notes that

“polszczyzna ludowa ludności dwujęzycznej nie może być traktowana na równi z innymi rodzimymi gwarami polskimi. Ma inną genezę i na czymś innym polega jej różnica z językiem ogólnopolskim” [Smułkowa 1990: 160].

(“the folk Polish language of the bilingual population cannot be treated equally as other Polish subdialects. It is of different origin and its dissimilarity from the all-Poland language consists in something different.”)

The author of the quoted article works primarily on the Polish language of the population speaking Belarusian and Ukrainian subdialects, and, to a small extent, Lithuanian subdialects. But this remark can also be applied to the Polish language of the Old Believers speaking a Russian subdialect.

³ I refer here an article by J. Siatkowski, where the author presents the linguistic situation in Masuria of the 1950s:

are caused by interferences. The individual linguistic facts of the Polish language of the Old Believers will be compared with the relevant characteristics of the local Polish subdialects, the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers and the German language.

I have already mentioned that the Polish language of the Old Believers is strongly diversified in terms of idiolects. The Old Believers from the Suwałki and Augustów centres can assimilate the linguistic elements (intentionally or unintentionally) from three sources: the general Polish language, the subdialectal Polish language, and a Russian subdialect. In the Masurian centre another source is the German language in its colloquial literary variant. I am interested in the factors which determine whether an informant chooses one or another linguistic feature. How is linguistic competence shaped in conditions of multilingualism?

I intend to demonstrate how the social factors affect the linguistic competence of individual informants. I will use two sociolinguistic methods: the domain method – determination of the spheres of functioning of different languages, and the network method – determination of the number and frequency of interactions. I assume that informants shape their linguistic competence depending on their personal participation in social life. Each idiolect is a reflection of the reality in which the speaker participates, and that is why I decided to describe some of the idiolects separately.

The domain method in the sociolinguistic research was first introduced by Joshua Fishman [1964, 1965]; I report it following A. M. Mioni [1987: 170]. The concept of domain is usually used to describe the issues connected with language choice, code switching and diglossia. Domain is a theoretical construct which contains several variables characterising the situational context of interactions. The list of these variables is virtually endless. The key variables are place, partner, and topic. The domain components, i.e. the spheres of reality, cannot be in conflict with one another and are grouped around the same area of life:

“W czasie prowadzonych przez nas badań wszyscy autochtoni byli dwujęzyczni. Mówili po polsku – gwarą i po niemiecku – językiem literackim z pewnymi właściwościami regionalnymi, zupełnie wyjątkowo na Mazurach wschodnich też dialektem dolnoniemieckim” [Siatkowski 1983: 104].

(“During our field studies, all the autochthons were bilingual. They spoke a Polish subdialect and the literary German language with some local features, and, very exceptionally, in eastern Masuria, also a Low German dialect.”)

I. Grek-Pabisowa assumes, following statements of E. Rieman [1974] that:

“na terenach, gdzie znajdują się osiedla staroobrzędowców, mówiono ogólnoniemiecką niemczyzną potoczną. E. Rieman określa ją jako ‘Hochdeutsche Umgangssprache’” [Grek-Pabisowa 1985a: 163].

(“in the areas where there are settlements of the Old Believers, a colloquial general German language was spoken. E. Rieman defines it as ‘Hochdeutsche Umgangssprache.’”)

Domain of language behaviour (or of language choice) is a theoretical construct that designates a cluster of interaction situations, grouped around the same field of experience, and tied together by a shared range of goals and obligations; e.g. family, neighbourhood, religion, work, etc. The domains which are relevant in a given community classify speech acts and events into classes of sociolinguistic situations whose components are congruent between them and are usually accompanied by the appropriate language/variety [Mioni 1987: 170].

The following domains are distinguished: family, neighbourhood, education, work, religion [Fishman, Cooper, Ma 1971]; I report it following A. M. Mioni [1987: 175], but the list can be extended. The concept complementary to domain is network, which applies sociometric techniques. This method shows how language differentiation or choice depends on the types and number of links between the participants of the interaction [Preston 1987: 693–695]. It is also useful while describing processes connected with the preservation and alteration of a language:

In solchen Netzwerken entsteht soziale Kohäsion, konstituieren sich kultur- und gruppenspezifische Wertvorstellungen, Wissenssysteme, Einstellungen und Verhaltensmuster – die sich ihrerseits wiederum sprachlich manifestieren. Dieses Konzept ist damit von zentraler Wichtigkeit für empirische Untersuchungen zum Sprachverhalten und zu sprachlichen Wandelprozessen [Bußmann 1990: 521].

(In networks social cohesion is generated, and culture- and group-specific systems of values and knowledge as well as attitude and behaviour patterns are established, which are manifested through the language. Therefore this concept is essential for the empirical research on linguistic behaviour and linguistic change.)

1.2. The Theory of Language Contact – the Terminology

This work will apply notions of language contact theory. Since various researchers of this field construe them in different ways, below I describe some of these notions and present their application in this study.⁴

1.2.1. Language Contact

The term “language contact” was introduced into the scientific literature in 1953 by Uriel Weinreich in his book *Languages in Contact* [Weinreich 1953] to replace the previously used term “language mixing,” applied by Hugo Schardt in the polemics concerning the organic nature of language [Rozencvejg 1972: 5]. The subject matter of “language mixing” was popular among

⁴ I also refer the Readers to the Polish studies on the terminology of language contact, e.g., Morawski 1992: 15–21; Mindak 1983; Michalewska 1991: 17–25.

eminent linguists, e.g. J. Baudouin de Courtenay in his work *O smežannom xaraktere vses jazykov* [Boduen de Kurtene 1963]. As regards Polish authors, Z. Stieber should also be mentioned, who in his work "Sposoby powstawania słowiańskich gwar przejściowych" [Stieber 1974] uses the methods which would today be called sociolinguistic to discuss the genesis of the Slavic sub-dialects created as a result of the contact of various languages and dialects.

According to U. Weinreich, languages are in contact when they are used alternately by the same persons. A point of contact is the individual use of language by a bilingual or multilingual person: "two or more languages will be said to be in contact if they are used alternately by the same persons. The language-using individuals are thus the locus of the contact" [Weinreich 1974: 1]. The contact may involve two unrelated languages, dialects of the same language as well as variants of one dialect. According to U. Weinreich, a degree of relationship between the language codes in contact is of no significance – the results of the contact are always the same [Weinreich 1974: 1–2]. Such understanding of language contact had many followers, including E. Haugen [1958: 771] and L. Zawadowski: "We call contact of languages the situation when somebody uses, actively or passively, two or more languages" [Zawadowski 1961: 9].

The issues of language contact in north-eastern Poland are discussed by E. Smułkowa in the article "Zagadnienia polsko-białorusko-litewskiej interferencji językowej na ziemiach północno-wschodniej Polski" [Smułkowa 1988]. The author notes that the terms: "language contact" and "languages in contact" are used in two senses. In accordance with the definition by U. Weinreich, a type of language contact resulting from bilingualism can be distinguished [Weinreich 1974: 1] which is not related to any territorial contact; this type of contact is referred to by E. Smułkowa as "individual" ("osobniczy"). The other understanding of the term refers to territorial contact – i.e. any contact arising from the geographical adjacency of individual linguistic systems [Smułkowa 1988: 396]. The author also thinks that contact between the dialects of the same language should be considered in a different manner than contact between different linguistic systems [Smułkowa 1988: 401]. On the basis of the literature, various types of language contact can be distinguished:

1. Language contact determined by bilingualism:
 - between related systems: the variants of one language (subdialects, dialects) or different but closely related languages, e.g., the bilingualism of the Belarusian rural population in the Białystok voivodeship;
 - between distantly related systems, e.g., the bilingualism of the Lithuanian population in the area of Puńsk, or even more distantly related systems, e.g., in the bilingualism of the indigenous population in Masuria.
2. Language contact non-determined by bilingualism:
 - territorial, resulting from mutual contact of the language systems. It can occur between variants of one language (subdialects, dialects) or

variants of different languages of different degree of relationship, e.g., the contact between the north-eastern Polish subdialects and the Belarusian, Ukrainian and Lithuanian subdialects;

- non-territorial, which occurs on the cultural-civilizational level between literary languages, e.g., the borrowing of the computer terminology from English to Polish.

In the case of the group of the Old Believers being described here, we are dealing with language contact determined by bilingualism: between closely related (Slavic) languages: the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers and the Polish language in the subdialectal and general variants in the centres of Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów; as well as between two Slavic languages: the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers and the Polish language in the subdialectal and general variants, and one distantly related language: the German language of the spoken literary variant with regional influences. This contact takes place at the moment of speaking, on the communicative level. The point of contact is the entire communicative community, which stands out from other language communities as regards using two languages in the centres of Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów and three languages in the Masurian centre.⁵

1.2.2. The Linguistic Results of Language Contact

The territorial language contact in north-eastern Poland has brought numerous functional features common to the eastern Slavic subdialects⁶ existing in the closed system of the local subdialects (interference understood as a result [Smułkowa 1988: 400]). In the closed system of the Masurian subdialect there are also characteristics arising from the impact of the German language of the general and dialectal variants.

The contact determined by bilingualism (“individual contact” – “kontakt osobniczy”) has resulted in the features existing in a variant manner in the open linguistic system (interference understood both as a process and a result [Smułkowa 1988: 400]). This latter type of language contact will be seen in:

- code switching – changing the language of the whole text units depending on the situational context;
- inconsistent penetration of elements of one language into the other.

1.2.3. Linguistic Interference

Interferences are usually understood as elements of the primary language appearing inconsistently in the secondary language and vice versa. The phe-

⁵ A communicative community is “any human aggregate characterized by regular and frequent interaction by means of a shared body of verbal signs and set off from similar aggregates by significant differences in language usage” [Gumperz 1972: 219].

⁶ I refer the Readers to the articles by E. Smułkowa [1984] and Z. Turonek [1984].

nomenon of interference is associated with the concept of transfer – conveying the skills and habits acquired in a process of learning to other similar skills and habits. The transfer of habits may have both positive and negative consequences. In foreign languages teaching, a negative transfer is usually called a linguistic interference [Szulc 1984].

An observation that seems promising is that interference may cause enrichment as well as impoverishment of language:

Interferenz: Das System einer Sprache wird von Elementen überlagert, die aus dem System einer andern Sprache stammen, oder es gehen umgekehrt in der einen Sprache Elemente verloren, weil sie in der andern Sprache nicht existieren [Lüdi, Py 1984: 86].

(Interference: The system of one language is overlapped with elements of the system of another language, or conversely, some elements of the system of one language disappear because they do not exist in another language.)

E. Haugen treats interference as a continuum ranging from code switching to integration, or language blending [Haugen 1972: 69]. He also points out that interference does not remain outside the linguistic norm forever: in his opinion, it may become a norm when frequently repeated [Haugen 1972: 69].

In another work E. Haugen construes interference as a linguistic combination (overlap), where a linguistic unit is simultaneously the element of two systems [Haugen 1956: 12, 50, reported following Kość 1989].

In this work I am going to demonstrate that linguistic interference is visible not only in the interfering of elements of the primary language into the secondary one and vice versa, but that it also has an impact – on the one hand – on supporting some tendencies and enhancement of phenomena in both languages, and – on the other hand – on hindering and, to some extent, eliminating them. Interference construed in this manner includes the actions of not only negative but also positive transfer.

1.2.4. Bilingualism and Multilingualism

Originally, the term “bilingualism” meant using two languages at the same level of fluency [Mackey 1987: 700]. In the 1940s, E. Haugen started research among the communities of Norwegian immigrants in the USA. In the context of his research he found himself in need to extend the existing meaning of the term of bilingualism to mean: “the ability to produce complete meaningful utterances in the other language” [Mackey 1987: 700]. The definition by A. R. Diebold is equally broad: “contact with possible models in a second language and the ability to use these in the environment of the native language” [Diebold 1961: 111, quoted after: Mackey

1987: 700]. Afterwards, as increasingly diverse cases of language contact were described, the definition of bilingualism was broadened to such an extent that in the 1980s one could say that half of the world's population was bilingual [Mackey 1987: 700].

G. Lüdi and B. Py also draw attention to the universality of the phenomenon of bilingualism:

Mehr als die Hälfte der Menschheit ist mehrsprachig. Mehrsprachigkeit ist keine Ausnahme, nichts Exotisches und Geheimnisvolles, sondern ein möglicher Normalfall [Lüdi, Py 1984: 1].

(More than half of the world population is multilingual. Multilingualism is not an exception, something exotic or secret, but a normal situation.)

The authors give a functional and broad definition of multilingualism as the ability to switch between one code to another depending on the situation:

Mehrsprachigkeit definiere ich funktional. Sie setzt voraus, daß der Mehrsprachige in den meisten Situationen ohne weiteres von der einen Sprache zur andern umschalten kann, wenn es nötig ist. Das Verhältnis der Sprachen kann dabei durchaus verschieden sein – in der einen kann, je nach der Struktur des kommunikativen Aktes, u.a. Situationen und Themen, ein wenig eloquenter Kode, in der andern ein mehr eloquenter Kode verwendet werden [Oksaar 1980: 43, quoted after: Lüdi, Py 1984: 8].

(I define multilingualism functionally. It consist in a situation whereby a multilingual person can with no difficulty switch from one language to another when necessary. Relations between languages may be different. One may have the function of the code better mastered, depending on the structure of a communication act, namely the situation and topic of a conversation, and another may be learned to a lesser extent.)

They note, however, the weaknesses of this definition; it does not allow for a distinguishing between two, in their opinion, different phenomena – multilingualism and the knowledge of a foreign language:

Diese Definition wird es uns freilich nicht erlauben, in Grenzfällen zwischen Mehrsprachigkeit und »Einsprachigkeit mit Fremdsprachenkenntnissen« sauber zu trennen [Lüdi, Py 1984: 8]

(This definition, however, in particular cases does not allow to explicitly distinguish multilingualism from “monolingualism with foreign language skills.”)

Defining bilingualism, apart from the degree of knowledge of languages, one is also confronted with the issue of affinity of languages. In the work of U. Weinreich the term “bilingualism” concerns not only two languages

separated from each other systemically, but also subsystems of the same language [Weinreich 1974: 1–2]. Not all the researchers agree with this approach, some exclude the cases of coexistence of dialects or variants of the same language from the notion of bilingualism. For such situations the proposed term is “bidialectalism” [Mackey 1987: 699]. The broader term is bicodality, applied in the case of using two codes, understood generally [Mackey 1987: 699].

While writing about the linguistic situation in north-eastern Poland, E. Smułkowa notes:

W przypadku używania dialektów tego samego języka nie można mówić o bilingwizmie, ponieważ obydwie znajdujące się w kontakcie dialekty, będąc różnymi systemami, równocześnie realizują ogólny system języka, do którego należą. Ażeby mówiący dialektem A rozumiał dialekt B, nie musi opanować całkiem nowego systemu semiotycznego [Smułkowa 1988: 401].

(In the event of using dialects of the same language we cannot talk about bilingualism because the dialects being in contact and being two different systems, simultaneously realise the general system of the language to which they both belong. That is, persons speaking dialect A are able to understand dialect B without the need to learn a completely new semiotic system.)

The author of the present work agrees with the opinion of V. Rozencvejg, that the issues concerning the degree of mastery of languages and the determination of the relationship and differences between languages go beyond the theory of language contact [Rozencvejg 1980: 230].

For a description of the multilingualism of the Old Believers the definition emphasising in particular the social aspect of the phenomenon is more appropriate. Multilingualism is the feature that distinguishes the group being researched by me, and this feature grants a status of a separate communicative community to this group. The reason for the multilingualism of the Old Believers was their emigration – arriving to the foreign-language area – and, in the case of the Masurian centre, historical events – the change of borders after World War II. Being a member of this group, or to be more precise, being born as one of the Old Believers, “condemns” a person to multilingualism. The sociological aspect of the phenomenon of bilingualism is taken into account in the definition by L. B. Nikolskij:

[...] мы будем рассматривать явления двуязычия и многоязычия лишь как результат либо естественно проходящего процесса усвоения второго и третьего языков в условиях социального взаимодействия, либо как результат обучения в школе, но только при условии, если язык, изученный в стенах учебного заведения, применяется индивидом в практическом общении [Nikolskij 1976: 89].

([...] we are going to examine the phenomena of bilingualism and multilingualism exclusively as a result of either a continuous process of learning the second or third language in the circumstances of social interactions, or of school education, but only when the languages acquired in a classroom setting are used in communication practice.)

1.2.5. Diglossia

The term “diglossia” was introduced by Ch. A. Ferguson in 1959:

diglossia is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation [Ferguson 1959: 336].

Although Ch. Ferguson writes about the registers of the same language, other linguists have extended his definition, so that it could also be applied to different languages, even unrelated ones. The condition of affinity of languages while describing diglossia was rejected by J. Fishman [1967], who only retained the necessity of hierarchical relationship between the languages. In this work diglossia is treated as a hierarchical form of bilingualism, where the various linguistic systems, regardless of their affinity, are in socially determined functional relations. Such understanding of diglossia, close to the concept presented by J. Fishman, is useful in the case of the group being described by me, which uses two or three languages of different degree of affinity and being related in a socially determined way.

1.2.6. Primary Language and Secondary Language

The criteria of a primary language were proposed by L. Zawadowski [1961: 13–14]. A primary language has the following features:

- it is used while speaking about everyday topics: “primary language is that one which he [an individual – A. Z.] uses for the basic range of subjects defined above (everyday talk)” [Zawadowski 1961: 14];
- its sphere (domain) of functioning is family life: “[...] it is the language used for home and family intercourse” [Zawadowski 1961: 14];
- it is transferred to children without the use of another language: “[...] it is also the language which is transmitted to the children directly (without the medium of another language)” [Zawadowski 1961: p. 14].

The group which uses the same primary language constitutes a communicative community, and other languages used by this group are secondary [Zawadowski 1961: 14].

Applying only the criteria of using the language in everyday talk in family life and transmitting it to children, it is difficult to establish the primary and secondary languages for the whole community of the Polish Old Believers. Some young Old Believer families, residing in towns, and mixed families have already abandoned their mother tongue and in everyday situations speak Polish. They speak the Russian subdialect only when they visit their parents and during contacts with the representatives of the older generation. In their case it is the Polish language that has the primary language function. In the Masurian centre the German language is also used at home. Thus two languages coexist there, and, paradoxically, we can call them both primary languages: the Russian subdialect and the German language. Therefore, alongside the above very important criteria proposed by L. Zawadowski, which concern the present position of a language, it seems appropriate – while describing the multilingualism of the entire studied group – to introduce a historical criterion, taking into account the group's linguistic history. For the community of the Old Believers the primary language is the Russian subdialect, because this is their mother tongue, with which they settled in the Polish lands. The Polish language – and in the Masurian centre, the German language – were acquired later, after settling in the foreign-language environment; therefore they are secondary.

1.3. Sources

The work has been carried out on the basis of the linguistic material collected on my own and the literature on this subject. My direct observations of linguistic behaviours shown by the members of the presented group as well as the interviews concerning their linguistic situation were also of great significance.

1.3.1. The Linguistic Material

I collected the linguistic material during the field studies which I carried out in the centres of the Old Believers in the years 1987–1994. The material collection was conducted by means of traditional methods of dialectological research:

- recording of continuous texts on audio cassettes;
- filling in the lexical questionnaire [based on Glinka, Obrębska-Jabłońska, Siatkowski (eds.) 1980].

I made the recordings in an official setting, i.e. one where the interviewer and the informant come from different environments [Michalewska 1991: 8]. However, I tried to neutralise this situation as much as possible, to become friends with the informants, so as they would not experience too harshly the environmental differences between us and, at least to a certain extent, could accept me as one of them. The purpose of such an approach was to obtain spontaneous and free utterances, with limited self-control. The Old Believers' environment, despite their great hospitality and warmth, is quite mistrustful of strangers. At the initial stage of research I felt it strongly and it was an obstacle in preparing the recordings.⁷ I faced particular difficulties in gathering the material in the Masurian centre, where the Old Believers, not numerous today, rejected to talk to me straight out, not to mention recording the talks on tape. I would justify this to be the consequence of the mentality of these people, shaped by complex social and historical relations in the territory of former East Prussia. My informants from Masuria experienced so many tragic events in their lives that their mistrust is nothing surprising. The majority of recordings in the Masurian centre I made during the field studies carried out jointly with Professor Klaus Steinke from the Institute of Slavic Studies of the University of Erlangen (Germany),⁸ whose participation greatly facilitated establishing contacts with the Old Believers.

The topics of interviews were intended to be attractive and interesting to the informants. In particular, the topics focused around the following issues:

- languages: selection of language, assessment of correctness of the languages used, emotional ties with languages;
- traditional countryside activities: baking bread, weaving, food preparation, farm work;
- tradition, custom, religion of the Old Believers: churches, objects of worship, marriage, funeral, fasting, clothing;
- contemporary life: politics, the state's economy, school, offices, work, trade;
- history: wartime experiences, emigration to the West;
- neighbourhood and family life: relations with neighbours, children and relatives, diseases.

The material collected comprises 50 audio cassettes in Polish, Russian and German. Its core are recordings of the language of 36 adults from 16 places of residence:

⁷ Especially in the villages of the Suwałki centre the informants at first strongly disagreed to recording their words on tape. As I did not want to record in secret, I had to spend a lot of time so as to persuade them to agree.

⁸ The field studies were organised by the Institute of Slavic Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences in March 1993. Two articles are the results of these studies: Steinke, Zielińska 1994 and Steinke, Zielińska 1995.

- 20 people from the villages in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres (Gabowe Grądy, Bór, Wodziłki, Ruska Buda, Sztabinki, Łopuchowo, Nowinka), including 10 informants of the age of over 60;
- 10 people from towns and cities (Suwałki, Augustów, Białystok, Sejny);
- 5 people from the Masurian centre (Wojnowo, Gałkowo, Osiniak, Ukta);
- 1 person from Mrągowo.

The material obtained from the individual persons is quantitatively different, i.e. some persons gave me more interviews, and other fewer. This depended mainly on my relations with the informants, their attitude to the research and various problems and difficulties, which every researcher faces during field studies.

In addition, thanks to the courtesy and assistance of the teachers from the primary school in Gabowe Grądy, I managed to record short interviews with 15 children aged 7–14 and I was allowed to listen to children during lessons and look through their notebooks. I was also afforded the opportunity to look through the pupils' notebooks in the primary school in Wodziłki. This material, however, was only used to a small extent. The research on the bilingual children requires application of different methodology, and is actually a subject for another work. The experience gained during conversations with children enabled me to better understand the linguistic and social situation of the Old Believers.

I filled in the lexical questionnaire simultaneously in Polish and in Russian. The Old Believers eagerly gave me names from the Russian subdialect, but they were amazed when I asked them for Polish equivalents. "Dlaczego nie pójdziesz do wsi obok, tam lepiej wiedzą" ("Why don't you go to next village, they know better") – this was the most common response to my questions about the Polish language. Filling in the questionnaire allowed me to make several interesting observations of a sociolinguistic nature concerning the linguistic awareness of the interviewed individuals.

1.3.2. The Literature

A significant source used in the work, especially when comparing the Polish language of the Old Believers and the Russian subdialect, is the literature on the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers. It should be stressed here that this book would not have been written without scientific studies on this subject matter, because almost all the material on the Russian subdialect comes directly from the literature.

The research on the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers began in the 1950s on the initiative of Professor A. Mirowicz, the director of the Russian Philology Department of the University of Warsaw [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 9]. Starting from 1961, the research was carried out by the Division of the Russian Language of the Institute of Slavic Studies (Instytut Słowianoznawstwa,

today Instytut Slawistyki) of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The collected material was used by I. Grek-Pabisowa and I. Maryniakowa in many publications. The most comprehensive study concerning the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers is the monograph by I. Grek-Pabisowa, entitled *Rosyjska gwara starowierców w województwach olsztyńskim i białostockim* [Grek-Pabisowa 1968]. The monograph contains the systemic description of the phonetics, inflection and syntax of this subdialect. On the basis of the linguistic facts, the author localised the linguistic homeland of the Polish Old Believers [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 167]. The lexis of the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers was described in another book by I. Grek-Pabisowa, entitled *Słownictwo rosyjskiej wyspy gwarowej staroobrzędowców mieszkających w Polsce* [Grek-Pabisowa 1983a]. Moreover, the dictionary entitled *Słownik gwary starowierców mieszkających w Polsce* was also worked out [Grek-Pabisowa, Maryniakowa 1980]. The verb forms in the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers were described by I. Maryniakowa. She is the author of the monograph describing the participle forms from the perspective of morphology, syntax and semantics, entitled: *Imiesłowy w rosyjskiej gwarze starowierców* [Maryniakowa 1976]. Both authors published many other works on various aspects of the research on the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers. The bibliography all of the studies concerning the Polish Old Believers is being prepared by I. Grek-Pabisowa and will be published in *Rozprawy Slawistyczne*, vol. XII.⁹

⁹ Cf. Grek-Pabisowa 1997 [editor's note].

2

THE COMMUNITY OF THE OLD BELIEVERS IN POLAND

In this chapter I present the information on the size and geographical location of the researched group and I characterise the social background of the functioning of the languages spoken by the Old Believers. This seems indispensable in order to understand the complexities of the distribution of particular languages used by the Old Believers in Poland.

2.1. The Size and Geographical Distribution of the Old Believers Community

In linguistic research, the division into three Old Believers groups is applied: the Sejny, Augustów and Masurian centres [Grek-Pabisowa, Maryniakowa 1980: IV].

The total number of people of the Old Believers denomination is 2,560 persons (data according to the statistical yearbook for the year 1993).

The sizes of the population according to the list of Old Believers communities prepared for the Second All-Poland Synod in 1988¹ are as follows:

The Suwałki-Sejny centre:

- Suwałki community (parish) – 854 persons, including 427 adults;
- Wodziłki community (parish) – 138 persons, including 65 adults;
- The Augustów centre:
- Gabowe Grądy community (parish) – 1,207 persons, including 603 adults;
- The Masurian centre:

Wojnowo community (parish) – 428 persons, including 214 adults.

The most current census of the Old Believers, drawn up in 1994, is presented by Z. Jaroszewicz-Pieresaławcew [1995]. The author points out, however, that this is not a complete list. It does not include persons who, for

¹ I received the list of communities of 1988 from Mr Waław Fiedotow, member of the Supreme Council of the Old Believers.

example, married persons of different denomination. Below I present the list of places, and the number of population of the Old Believer denomination following this author [Jaroszewicz-Pieresławcew 1995: 56]:²

Place	Voivodeship	Number of families	Number of followers
Augustów	Suwałki	103	206
Białobrzegi	Suwałki	4	11
Białystok	Białystok	4	9
Blizna	Suwałki	3	6
Bór	Suwałki	20	60
Buda Ruska	Suwałki	5	13
Ełk	Suwałki	16	37
Gabowe Grądy	Suwałki	32	81
Gałkowo	Suwałki	8	22
Gdańsk Oliwa	Gdańsk	3	5
Głęboki Bród	Suwałki	1	6
Głuszyn	Suwałki	2	9
Gołdap	Suwałki	1	3
Grajewo	Suwałki	2	6
Hołny Wolmera	Suwałki	1	6
Huta	Suwałki	1	1
Karczewo	Łomża	3	7
Krasnopol	Suwałki	1	1
Leszczewo	Suwałki	4	12
Lipina	Suwałki	2	3
Lipsk n. Biebrzą	Białystok	1	4
Łomża	Łomża	1	4
Mrągowo	Olsztyn	4	8
Nowinka	Suwałki	1	7
Olecko	Suwałki	6	19
Olsztyn	Olsztyn	2	2
Osiniak	Suwałki	6	18
Psiaki Onufryjewo	Suwałki	3	8
Płociczno	Suwałki	3	4

² The "Voivodeship" column assigns towns and villages to the voivodeships to which they belonged before the 1999 administration reform, which reduced the number of voivodeships from 49 to 16 [editor's note].

Radomsko	Piotrków Trybunalski	1	2
Rajgród	Łomża	1	4
Romanowce	Suwałki	1	2
Rosochaty Róg	Suwałki	1	4
Ruciane Nida	Suwałki	6	15
Sejny	Suwałki	8	17
Słupsk	Słupsk	1	4
Sokołowo	Suwałki	1	5
Suwałki	Suwałki	66	239
Szczebra	Suwałki	2	8
Sztabinki	Suwałki	2	4
Szury	Suwałki	3	6
Śwignajno	Suwałki	3	6
Ukta	Suwałki	4	7
Warszawa	Warszawa	1	2
Włocławek	Włocławek	1	3
Wodziłki	Suwałki	8	22
Wojnowo	Suwałki	8	22
Wrocław	Wrocław	1	2
TOTAL		362	952

In Suwałki there is the head office of the Supreme Council of the Pomo-rian Old-Orthodox Church in the Republic of Poland, a parish house and a molenna (prayer house). In the Suwałki-Sejny centre, apart from towns (i.e. Suwałki and Sejny), the Old Believers live in small villages, usually together with the Catholic population. Only in Wodziłki do they constitute the majority of population. There is a molenna there, and until 1990 there was a primary school of four classes, which was shuttered because of insufficient number of pupils. In the rest of villages there are no schools. The vil-lages in this centre are usually located away from the highway. They have got low-density housing and poor infrastructure. The number of population decreases there, as young people move to the towns or cities.

In the Augustów centre there are the two biggest villages of the Old Be-lievers: Gabowe Grądy and Bór. They are adjacent to each other, and located 12 km from Augustów. They jointly represent the largest population of the Old Believers in Poland. According to the Old Believers, there are no entirely Catholic families in these villages. But some mixed families live there. The greatest number of mixed marriages were entered into at the beginning of the 1980s, when many young Old Believers took work in Augustów. In both villages all the generations live, and the families are often very numerous.

In the close vicinity there are smaller Polish (Catholic) villages: Białobrzegi, Promiski, Świderek. The villages of Gabowe Grądy and Bór are located along the highway and their inhabitants have very convenient access to the town. Therefore many of them learn and work in Augustów.³ In Gabowe Grądy there is a molenna, a parish house, a primary school, and in Bór there is a day-care room, a library, and the female vocal group "Riabina" sings traditional Russian songs. In 1992 the library had 41 regular readers – especially women, children and young people. In the primary school in Gabowe Grądy in June 1992 there were 55 pupils, including 40 children of the Old Believers. The remaining pupils were Catholics from the neighbouring villages. 7 teachers from outside the Old Believers environment worked there at that time. Both the Old Believers and the Catholic religions were taught.

The rest of the villages: Blizna, Szczebra, Nowinka are home to few Old Believer families, living in the Polish environment.

In the Masurian centre very few Old Believers remain, the majority of them emigrated to Germany, like autochthonous inhabitants of former East Prussia. Apart from the Old Believers, there are also members of the Orthodox Church, descendants of Edinovertsy, i.e. of those who converted to Edinoverie. The Old Believers live in the Polish environment; it is primarily the population from Mazovia, the Vilnius Region and Volhynia, settled after 1945 [Sakson 1990: 76, 79]. In Wojnowo there is a molenna, an Old Believers convent,⁴ an Orthodox church and a primary school with only one pupil of the Old Believer denomination.

2.2. The Social Situation

On the one hand, I describe the social situation taking into consideration the ties⁵ which are the basis of integration of the Old Believers group, and, on the other hand, I intend to explain the reasons for its disintegration. In spite of the geographical distribution of the group and various fates of the Old Believers, in the individual centres there are still strong intra-group bonds,

³ Unfortunately, in recent years they have received unemployment benefits rather than worked.

⁴ Earlier monastery [translator's note].

⁵ „Wzajemne oddziaływania, stosunki, zależności tworzą się na określonej płaszczyźnie, to znaczy, że istnieje coś, co powoduje, że ludzie są połączeni, potrzebują się wzajemnie, mają poczucie wspólnoty. Charakter tych związków jest zróżnicowany, możemy jednak wyodrębnić pewne typy więzi. Więzy będziemy charakteryzować przede wszystkim ze względu na to, co ludzi łączy” [Krawczyk, Morawski (eds.) 1991: 59].

(“Interactions, relations, dependencies are created on a specific plane, i.e., there is something that causes that people are connected, they need one another, have a sense of community. The nature of these relations is varied; however, we can isolate certain types of bonds. We are going to characterise these bonds in terms of the features which link people.”)

which allow to regard all the Old Believers in Poland as members of one community. The fundamental ties integrating this group are: religion, the Russian subdialect, ethnicity. Moreover, the Old Believers have their own organisation for the religious issues.

2.2.1. The Aspect of the Internal Integration of the Old Believers Community

2.2.1.1. The Bonds

– The religious bond

The Old Believers living in Poland are the faithful of the Pomorian Old-Orthodox Church in the Republic of Poland (Staroprawosławna Pomorska Cerkiew w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej). This name was adopted at the Third Council in July 1993 [Jaroszewicz-Pieresaławcew 1995: 5]. Before that time the valid name was: the Eastern Old Believers' Church with no clerical hierarchy (Wschodni Kościół Staroobrzędowy nieposiadający hierarchii duchownej). They are descendants of the Old Believers who had separated from the Orthodox Church because they had not approved of the reforms of Patriarch Nikon. The year 1667 is considered in Russia to be the official date of the schism in the Orthodox Church, when the Council accepted the decisions taken by Nikon, concerning the introduction of "revised" books and changes to the Liturgy. The Old Believers, cruelly persecuted for keeping to the old rituals, had to seek refuge abroad. The historical factors of the Old Believers' emigration from Russia are described by E. Iwaniec in his monograph [Iwaniec 1977] and by Z. Jaroszewicz-Pieresaławcew [1995].

The religious bond is the main factor integrating the Old Believers, granting them the status of a separate community with their own cultural identity. The religion is the most important institution for this group, it constitutes the social norms and determines the behaviour patterns. It defines the most essential values in the lives of its followers. To protect these values, both in the spiritual dimension and in the sphere of rituals, the Old Believers decided to bear great sacrifices, and sometimes they even sacrificed their lives.

– The ethnic bond

The ancestors of the Old Believers living in Poland today came from the Pskov region, a fact which was established by I. Grek-Pabisowa on the basis of the research on their Russian subdialect [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 12]. In the Suwałki and Sejny regions the Old Believers appeared before 1789 as settlers by virtue of the rent law. The Old Believers were settled on the royal property, in so-called "newly-cultured" (novokulturnye), i.e. new villages. The following villages came into existence successively: Głębokki Rów

– 1787, Wodziłki – 1788, Łopuchowo – 1789, Rasztabol – 1789, Zaleszczewo – 1789, Wysoka Góra – 1789, Biała Góra – 1789, Pogorzelec Biały – 1792, Białorzeczka – 1791 [Iwaniec 1977: 80–81]. According to the First General Census in Poland in 1921, in the interwar period there were still 3,705 Old Believers in the Suwałki and Sejny regions [Iwaniec 1977: 96]. According to the data of 1968, there were only 220 persons in the Suwałki powiat, and 139 persons in the Sejny powiat [Iwaniec 1977: 98].

There were two Old Believers migration waves to the Augustów centre. The first settlers arrived there together with those who established themselves in the Suwałki and Sejny regions, and the next settlers came only in the 1870s. The oldest settlement in this area was the village of Pijawne Ruskie, in which today there are no Old Believers. In 1921 in the Augustów powiat there were 932 Old Believers, in 1968 – 623 [Iwaniec 1977: 99, 100]. The inhabitants of the Gabowe Grądy and Bór villages inform that their ancestors came here from the village of Pilczyn in the Łuków powiat (today the Garwolin powiat), which is confirmed by the historical documents [Iwaniec 1977: 100]. In the minds of the Old Believers from the Augustów centre the legend of “Biełomory” exists. According to this legend, before their ancestors came to the former Republic of Poland (Rzeczpospolita), they had crossed a long way from the northern territory of Russia through the White Sea, the Scandinavian Peninsula and the Baltic Sea. They also argue that in the initial period – as soon as they settled in the Augustów powiat – they were different from the Old Believers from Sejny and Suwałki in religious terms [Iwaniec 1977: 100]. There is also a possibility that the Old Believers had lived temporarily in the Augustów powiat or in the Suwałki and Sejny regions before they settled in Pilczyn [Iwaniec 1977: 100].

Around 1830 a part of the Old Believers from the Suwałki and Augustów regions emigrated to East Prussia. The Old Believers had lived under the rule of Prussia even earlier, after the third partition of Poland, from 1795 to 1807, and then they had enjoyed great religious freedom and good economic conditions. By November 1830, 226 migrants arrived in Prussia [Jakubowski 1961: 85]. Some territories offered to settlers were located near the Bełdany lake, and the majority near the Krutynia river, in the area of Ukta. In 1831 the village of Wojnowo (Eckertsdorf) was founded, and later the following villages came into existence: Zameczek (Schlösschen) – 1831, Gałkowo (Galkowen) – 1831, Mościszki (Nikolaihorst) – 1831, Śwignajno (Schönfeld) – 1832, Piaski (Piasken) – 1832, Kadzidłowo (Kadzidlowen) – 1832, Piotrowo (Peterhain) – 1832, Osiniak (Fedorwalde) – 1832, Iwanowo (Iwanowen) – 1840. According to the Prussian data, in 1832 the colonies of the Old Believers had 300 inhabitants [Jakubowski 1961: 85]. In 1833 the government made equal the rights of the Old Believers and other Prussian subjects [Jakubowski 1961: 86]. In 1839 the registration procedure in the villages of the Old Believers was carried out, and on the basis of its results W. Jakubowski drew the conclusion that since the first years of settling in

this country the Old Believers had lived together with the local Masurian population [Jakubowski 1961: 90]. According to that census, at that time 790 Old Believers lived there. Around 1870 Wojnowo became an important centre of religious life. The councils took place here quite often, and monks would appear in the Old Believers settlements. First *nastavniks*, i.e. clergymen of the Old Believers, were brought by the community from Russia. In 1847 the building of the Old Believer monastery dedicated to the Saviour and the Trinity (Spas-Troicki) was completed in Wojnowo. Wojnowo became a centre of the Fedoseevtsy movement. A print shop of liturgical and theological books for the Old Believers opened in Pisz. After Paweł Pruski – the first Father Superior in the monastery of the Masurian Old Believers – left the monastery, the Orthodox missionaries, who promoted *Edinoverie*, started to work among the Old Believers. The people who converted to *Edinoverie* went to Russia, for example all of the approximately 50 inhabitants of the village of Zameczek left [Jakubowski 1961: 98]. In 1885 the monastery in Wojnowo was purchased by a nun from Russia and became a convent, which also accepted Russian women.

Regardless of the migration time and routes followed by the subsequent groups of the Old Believers, it is proved that the majority of the Old Believers living in Poland came from the same territory, because the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers used in all the centres and settlements is the same [Grek-Pabisowa 1980: VI].⁶

– The language bond

Even today the Old Believers living in Poland in all the centres still use the Russian subdialect, which they brought, like religion, from their homeland. Cultivating the language tradition produces as strong a tie as the preservation of the religion of their ancestors. The Russian subdialect of the Old Believers has not only a communicative but also a symbolic function – it is a sign of cultural identity [Bartol-Jarosińska 1994: 149].

The Russian subdialect of the Old Believers was thoroughly described in numerous works by Iryda Grek-Pabisowa and Irena Maryniakowa.⁷ The dialect which the Old Believers brought from their homeland belongs to the western group of the Central Russian (mid-Great Russian) dialects of *akan-ye* type, the so-called Pskov group subdialects [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 167]. This subdialect, having no contact with the Russian linguistic area for a long time, has preserved many archaic features. At the same time, it has been affected by the surrounding languages: in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres – by the Polish subdialects and the general Polish language, and in

⁶ The diagram of the migrations of the Old Believer settled in Poland is presented in: Grek-Pabisowa 1985a: 66.

⁷ See subsection 1.3.2.

the Masurian centre – additionally by the German language [Grek-Pabisowa 1983b, 1985a].

The phonetics of the subdialect is characterised by *akanye*, strong *yakan-*ye, alternate pronunciation of *ʏ* and *u*, alternate pronunciation of *r'* and *r*, *č* and *č'*, the prosthetic consonants *j* and *v*, and in the inflection – the syncretism of endings of the genitive, the dative and the locative case of the singular of the feminine gender and the syncretism of the dative and the instrumental case forms of the plural in all names. The comparative and superlative degrees of adjectives and adverbs are created in a different way in comparison to the literary language.⁸

The liturgical language of the Old Believers is the Church Slavonic language. Many Old Believers, especially those of the older generation, regularly read religious books. Children learn reading during the religion education lessons.⁹ Faithfulness to the language of the Sacred,¹⁰ avoiding any changes in the religious texts is the fundamental religious principle of the Old Believers. Making even minor changes is considered a profanation.

2.2.1.2. The Organisation

The community of the Old Believers has its own organisation which is concerned primarily with religious matters.¹¹

– The Supreme Council of the Pomorian

Old-Orthodox Church in the Republic of Poland

The Supreme Council of the Old Believers (Naczelna Rada Staroobrzędowców) with its head office in Suwałki was established on 4 June 1983 by the First All-Poland Synod. In 1993 the name was changed to the Supreme

⁸ I refer the reader to the monograph by I. Grek-Pabisowa [1968].

⁹ The Old Church Slavonic borrowings in the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers are described by I. Grek-Pabisowa [1988a]. The books of the Old Believers are described by Z. Jaroszewicz-Pieresławcew [1995].

¹⁰ The language of the holy, as Leszek Kołakowski writes, “jest językiem kultu, co oznacza, że jego składniki stają się sensowne w aktach interpretowanych przez wiernych jako kontakt z Bogiem: w rytuale, w modlitwie, w mistycznym spotkaniu” [Kołakowski 1991: 53].

(“[...] the language of the Sacred is the language of worship and this means that its elements become meaningful in acts which believers interpret as communication with God: in ritual, in Prayer, in mystical encounter” [Kołakowski 1982: 164-165]).

¹¹ I refer the reader to the book by Z. Jaroszewicz-Pieresławcew [1995: 55–62]. I collected information on the workings the Old Believers through interviewing the following persons: *nastavniks* Miron Filipow from Gabowe Gądy and Fiedosiej Nowiczenko from Suwałki, the latter being the present chairman of the Supreme Council, and also the religious education teachers Ms Tatiana Górńska and Ms Luba Jefimow, the members of the Supreme Council – Tymoteusz Filipow from Augustów, Wacław Fiedotow from Mrągowo, Zygfryd Krasowski from Wojnowo, Dymitr Jonik from Białystok, Józef Jonik from Gabowe Grądy, Matryona Fiodorow from Suwałki.

Council of the Pomorian Old-Orthodox Church in the Republic of Poland (Naczelna Rada Staroprawosławnej Pomorskiej Cerkwi w Rzeczypospolitej). The Council is the representative of the Old Believers as a distinct religious group in relations with the state authorities. Before World War II the head office of the Supreme Council of the Old Believers was in Vilnius. In the post-war years, until the establishment of the Supreme Council of the Old Believers, the followers of this religion were represented only by the parish committees (councils). The establishment of the Supreme Council was caused by fears about the future fate of this small community. In March 1984 the Statute of the Eastern Old Believers Church was approved, which defines the legal basis for the functioning of the Old Believers community in Poland. The Statute was updated and adapted to political changes in October 1993 at the meeting of the Supreme Council of the Old Believers with the authorisation of the Third All-Poland Synod.¹² The Supreme Council is elected by the All-Poland Synod. Since the first years of its activity the main and most necessary objectives were of administrative and managerial nature, e.g., in Suwałki a new parish house had to be built, and the molenna had to be renovated, etc. The Old Believers in Poland also hoped to establish contacts with the Old Believers in Lithuania and Latvia. The Supreme Council's aim is to prevent further disintegration of the group, to counteract the abandoning of the faith by young people, through, inter alia, efficient organisation of religious education. But the Council is not authorised to affect the religious and spiritual life, i.e., to implement changes in rituals, for all the rules of the Old Believers faith are sacred and inviolable, and are contained in the Kormchaya Book.¹³

– The Synod

The supreme authority in the Pomorian Old-Orthodox Church is exercised by the All-Poland Synod of the followers. The Synod decides on matters of faith and morals and the internal management of the Old-Orthodox Church, and submits the needs and motions of the followers to the state authorities. The Synod establishes the principles of financing the Supreme Council and elects its members. The Synod gathers every 5 years. In Poland in the post-war period there were 3 synods held in the years: 1983, 1988, 1993. The place of synods is Suwałki.

– The Old Believers communities

The religious communities are created by the Old Believers living in the particular territory so as to satisfy their needs in terms of religion, religious education and morals. In Poland there are 4 parishes with active molennas:

¹² From the letter written by Wacław Fiedotow, a member of the Supreme Council of the Old Believers, to the author, of 2 November 1993.

¹³ The Kormchaya Book – the translation of Byzantine Nomocanon – is a collection of church legislation and relevant provisions of national law [Jaroszewicz-Pieresławcew 1989: 17].

Suwałki, Gabowe Grądy, Wodziłki and Wojnowo. They are served by 3 *nastavniks*: Fiedosiej Nowiczenko – the Suwałki and Wodziłki parishes, Miron Filipow – the Gabowe Grądy parish, Wilhelm Malinka – the Wojnowo parish. In each community there are Community Councils, which have the right to convene the General Meeting of Community. The Community Council is obliged to take care of churches, cemeteries and other sacred establishments. The communities have the right to choose clergymen – *nastavniks*, and representatives for the All-Poland Synod.

– *Nastavnik*

A *nastavnik* is elected by the community, but his candidature needs to be accepted by the Supreme Council. The *nastavnik* has to comply with certain requirements, which include: being over 35 years of age, having a Polish citizenship and speaking fluent Polish.¹⁴ In clergy and religious issues, the *nastavnik* has no superior because in the Old-Orthodox Church there is no hierarchy. The *nastavnik* conducts church services, he is the only person authorised to read out excerpts from the Gospel.

– The Pimonov Family Foundation¹⁵

Professor Leonid Pimonov is a descendant of the Vilnius Old Believers. After the war he settled in France, where he is the director of the French National Centre for Scientific Research. In 1984 he established a foundation in Poland, which finances a large number of undertakings of the Polish Old Believers. Thanks to the Pimonov Family Foundation, a modern and spacious parish house was built in Suwałki, which is simultaneously the head office of the Supreme Council of the Pomorian Old-Orthodox Church. A parish house in Gabowe Grądy was also built, and the molenna in Wojnowo was renovated. The Foundation also supports religious education, e.g., it financed the publication of two handbooks – *Azbuka dla načalnogo učenija* and *Staroobriadčeskij učebnik po zakonu Božiju*. Professor Leonid Pimonov is a honorary member of the Supreme Council.

– Cooperation with the Old Believer environments in Vilnius and Riga

Before World War II the centre of spiritual life of the Polish Old Believers was in Vilnius. It was there that the Supreme Council of the Old Believers was situated and the synods took place. In Riga a seminary and the print shop are still active. The Old Believers in Poland are a small group and they are afraid of further disintegration. Therefore, the contacts with the Supreme Council of the Old Believers in Vilnius and Riga are of paramount importance. The contacts with the Old Believers from abroad are crucial for strengthening the group and enhancing the prestige of its religion. The

¹⁴ These conditions are set out in the Statute of the Eastern Old Believers Church.

¹⁵ I refer the reader to the work by Z. Jaroszewicz-Pierśławcew 1995: 58.

creation of the Supreme Council of the Old Believers in Poland made it feasible to establish official contacts. The Polish Old Believers receive calendars and books from Vilnius and Riga. 500 copies of "azbuka" (primary handbook) were sent from Poland to Vilnius, the costs were covered by the Pimonov Family Foundation. Nastavniks from Vilnius and Klaipeda were invited to the Third All-Poland Synod in Suwałki in July 1993. During the Synod, the nastavnik from Vilnius, who simultaneously performs the function of the chairman of the Supreme Council of the Old Believers in Vilnius, proposed to extend the cooperation between the centres in Suwałki and Vilnius. It was decided, inter alia, that a representative of the Polish Old Believers would become a member of the Supreme Council of the Old Believers in Lithuania.¹⁶ The Supreme Council in Suwałki is entirely independent from the Council in Vilnius; however, the Vilnius Old Believers community is an authority in religious and social issues. At the Supreme Council meeting in September 1993 the decision was made about incorporation into the International Council of the Pomorian Old-Orthodox Church [Jaroszewicz-Pieresławcew 1995: 58–59].

– Religious education¹⁷

Before 1925, i.e. before the First All-Poland Convention of the Old Believers in Vilnius, religious education was organised in various manners:

Kiedyś niegramatnoj starowierca był rzadkością. Dzieci przyuczano już od najmłodszych lat. Jeden ze starowierców z Suwałk opowiadał, że pamięta, jak we wsi Pogorzelec uczył dzieci nauczyciel wędrujący od domu do domu. Robił to za wyżywienie, nocleg i drobną kwotę [...]. Uczono też w klasztorze wojnowskim za czasów przeora Pawła, przełożonej Jewpraksiji oraz w żeńskim klasztorze na Majdanie. Sytuacja zmieniała się od czasu, gdy Naczelna Rada Staroobrzędowców na I Ogólnopolskim Zjeździe Staroobrzędowców w Wilnie w 1925 roku podjęła rezolucję o wprowadzeniu nauki religii staroobrzędowej do szkół i nauki języka rosyjskiego [Jaroszewicz-Pieresławcew 1989: 11].

(Once a niegramatnoj [illiterate] Old Believer was rare. Children were taught at the youngest age possible. One of the Old Believers from Suwałki said that he remembered that in the village of Pogorzelec there had been a teacher going from house to house. He did it in exchange for food, accommodation and small sums of money [...]. Education was also carried out in the monastery in Wojnowo at the time of Prior Paweł, Prioress Jewpraksija and in the convent in Majdan. The situation changed when at the First All-Poland Convention in Vilnius in 1925 the Supreme Council of the Old Believers adopted the resolution to introduce the Old Believers religion and the Russian language to schools.)

¹⁶ From the letter written by Wacław Fiedotow, a member of the Supreme Council of the Old Believers, to the author, of 2 November 1993.

¹⁷ The Old Believer religion teaching is also described by Z. Jaroszewicz-Pieresławcew 1995: 61.

After the war, religious education in Poland was of unofficial character and it was organised as far as possible in individual parishes. The *nastavnik* was usually the religious education teacher, but a lay teacher, who was in contact with the *nastavnik*, was also allowed to teach religion. After the Supreme Council of the Old Believers has been established, a teacher has to be accepted also by the Committee. In Suwałki and Augustów religious education was not conducted on a continuous basis. However, it was taught systematically in Gabowe Grądy. In the Masurian centre religious education has not been conducted for a long time, and, as a matter of fact, at the moment there are hardly any Old Believer children there. In 1990 religious education became official in Poland. Religious education (or ethics) is a school subject. The introduction of religion to the school curriculum has resulted in the introduction of new requirements towards a catechist – a religion teacher needs to have at least secondary education. The *nastavniks* do not meet this condition. In Poland there are two Old Believer religious education teachers, albeit religious instruction is also planned in Augustów. Both teachers – Ms Tatiana Górka in Suwałki, and Ms Luba Jefimow in Gabowe Grądy – are young and have secondary education. They learned the Old Believers religion by themselves, drawing a lot of information from their upbringing. They consult the curricula with the *nastavniks* of their parishes and use the *nastavniks'* help to broaden their knowledge. They are very involved in their work and spend much time with pupils even after lessons.

In Suwałki the lessons are held in the parish house in the afternoon, so that the children from the nearby villages could also arrive. In 1993 there were 39 children participating in the lessons – much more than at times when religious education was not a school subject. All the pupils learn in one group, regardless of their age. In the teacher's opinion it does not matter because religious education in Suwałki was not carried out systematically and actually all the children have to begin learning from scratch.

In Gabowe Grądy religion is taught in the school building. Lessons are included in the school timetable and carried out in all classes, and thus on different levels. When religion was being introduced to the school programme, the level of knowledge on this subject represented by the pupils was diverse because in this parish religion has been taught on a continuous basis since the post-war years. 40 pupils learned the Old Believers religion at the school in Gabowe Grądy in 1993.

Religious education is taught in Russian. It has to be the Russian language of the subdialectal variant, because the teachers speak the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers. First the children begin to learn the Old Church alphabet. They begin by writing the prayers using the Latin letters and transliterating the Old Church words. No wonder that it takes a long time to learn to read and write. They learn the *Psaltyr* and *Chasovnik* – collection of prayers for each day of the year and they find the meaning of ba-

sic objects of the rites (e.g., *lestovka*, incense, icon). They learn to sing only by ear – “po napiewkie.”

– Chronicle

Wacław Fiedotow, an Old Believer residing in Mrągowo, has been keeping the Chronicle of the Old Believers Parish in Wojnowo since 1986. The Chronicle primarily concerns the parish in Wojnowo, but also contains reports on significant events from the life of the community of the Polish Old Believers: information about the synods, meetings of the Supreme Council of the Old Believers, meetings of the parish councils, mutual visits, foreign relations, celebration of church holidays, etc. The author also includes cuttings from newspaper articles and some scientific articles concerning this religious group. The Chronicle is an interesting and very valuable source of information about the problems of the Old Believers environment. It is kept in three languages:

Nadmieniam, że większość materiału jest zamieszczona w języku polskim, część natomiast w rosyjskim i niemieckim, takim jakim w obecnej chwili posługuje się ta społeczność. 27.XI.1989, Fiedotow [Chronicle of the Old Believers Parish in Wojnowo].

(I would like to mention that the majority of the material is published in Polish, and some in Russian and German, as the community speaks these languages at present. 27 November 1989, Fiedotow.)

The establishment of the Supreme Council of the Old Believers, the Pimonov Family Foundation, building the modern and comfortable parish house in Suwałki and the second smaller in Gabowe Grądy, establishing contacts with the foreign Old Believers for the first time since World War II and the introduction of systematic religious education were of great significance for the Old Believers' integration and the increase of importance of their religion. Thanks to the above-mentioned actions, the processes of disintegration of the Old Believers community, caused by the abandoning of the faith by young people, have been stopped to some extent. The efficient organisation of this social group helps to preserve the national identity of its members. While talking to the young Old Believers from Suwałki, I have learned that just in recent years they have started to feel proud of their religion, which earlier they found outdated. The new Supreme Council of the Old Believers elected at the Third Synod for the first time includes also young and educated Old Believers.¹⁸

¹⁸ From the letter written by Wacław Fiedotow, a member of the Supreme Council of the Old Believers, to the author, of 2 November 1993.

2.2.2. The Process of Disintegration of the Old Believers Community

The most important factor causing disintegration of the Old Believers community living in Poland is its geographical dispersion and falling number of members. This is due to historical and social reasons.

2.2.2.1. The Historical and Social Reasons for Disintegration of the Old Believers Community

The emigration of a part of this community to Prussia during the first half of the 19th century caused first serious split in the group, as the emigrants became subject to influences of the German culture. A particularly strong dispersion of the Old Believers population and decrease in its size took place during World War II and in the post-war period.

In September 1939, the Old Believers of the Suwałki region went under the German occupation, and those of the Augustów region – under the Soviet occupation. In March 1941, the Old Believers of the Suwałki-Sejny region moved to Lithuania, which was annexed by the Soviet Union and called at that time the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic. This happened as a result of an agreement on population exchange between Germany and the Soviet Union.¹⁹ After the German attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941, a group of the Old Believers was taken away to Germany for forced labour. Many of them, however, stayed in the territory of Lithuania, and after the war they settled in Klaipėda, where they live until now. The resettlement action in March 1941 caused a substantial decrease in the population of the Old Believers villages in the Suwałki-Sejny region. For example, in Wodзилki there were 500 inhabitants before the war, and after the resettlement only 4 families remained; in 1968 as few as 61 persons lived there [Iwaniec 1977: 97].

The villages of the Augustów centre went under the German occupation in 1941. The Old Believers were suspected of giving shelter to partisans, and therefore the villages of Gabowe Gądy and Bór were pacified. On the night of 17 to 18 March 1943 the entire population was relocated for forced labour, mainly to East Prussia [Iwaniec 1977: 104]. The deserted villages were dismantled and burned, including the molenna and cemetery. After the war a majority of the Old Believers returned, and the molenna and cemetery were reconstructed.

Many Old Believers living in East Prussia fought in the ranks of the Wehrmacht. East Prussia was peaceful until the front arrived in late 1944 [Sakson 1990: 65]. At the end of 1944 the Red Army reached this territory and treated the autochthonous people with enormous cruelty, regardless

¹⁹ This information is being confirmed by all the Old Believers who were resettled and after the war returned to Poland.

of whether they were Germans, Masurians – or Old Believer Russians. The paradox was that the Old Believers were suspected by the Soviet soldiers of espionage or belonging to “Vlasovtsy,” because they spoke Russian. Many of them were killed then, or exiled to Siberia. The German civilian population fled the approaching Red Army on a large scale as part the forced evacuation ordered by Nazi authorities [Sakson 1990: 65]. The Old Believers ran away together with other refugees. Some of them went to Germany then. The farms they abandoned were taken by the newly-settled population from central Poland and from across the Bug river. The Masurian Old Believers shared other autochthonous people’s fate. They were treated with hostility by the Polish authorities and settlers, who took revenge on them for the harms suffered during the war. It is fair to say that these adverse political, social and economic conditions resulted in mass and long-lasting emigration of the indigenous Masurian population, and also the Old Believers, to Germany.²⁰ Nowadays, the majority of the members of this once numerous community live in Germany, mainly in Hamburg. Those who stayed usually have war-time experience in the German army, they draw German pensions, go for treatment to Germany and use financial help offered by the families who emigrated. Some have dual citizenships – Polish and German. Almost all consider themselves Germans, as evidenced by such statements:

– *Było was więcej tutaj.*

– *No chiba, cała wioska była Niemców, a teraz nie ma, już tylko parę rodzin [zostało], a wszystko są Polaki* [Wojnowo, woman, born 1927].

(– *There were more of you here.*

– *Sure, the whole village was full of Germans, and now it isn’t, only a few families [have remained], and the majority are Polish.*)

They recall the times of East Prussia as the age of prosperity. We can say that at present the Masurian group has almost entirely disintegrated.

Today, there is neither *nastavnik* nor *molenna* in Hamburg. The services are held in the flat of one of the women and only a small group of followers takes part. Many Old Believers come from Germany to Wojnowo to celebrate Easter. Some of them come especially to baptise children in the Duś lake, on which the Wojnowo monastery lies. When a follower dies in Hamburg, two funeral services are celebrated – in Hamburg and in Wojnowo.

The Old Believers from the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres keep close family contacts and are often related by blood. But private contacts of the inhabitants of these two centres with the inhabitants of Masuria hardly exist. Only in the post-war times were there some officially arranged

²⁰ Problems associated with the national identity of the Masurians, the emigration and the functioning of other indigenous inhabitants of Masuria in the Polish society are described in the very interesting book by A. Sakson [1990].

meetings, for example, in 1959 a group of women from Gabowe Grądy learned weaving in Wojnowo. In 1960 a 50-person excursion from the Gabowe Grądy community visited Wojnowo. The *nastavnik* of Gabowe Grądy celebrated a service in the *molenna* in Wojnowo. The Old Believers from all the centres maintain official contacts. The representatives elected by the community take part in the synods in Suwałki and in the meetings of the Supreme Council of the Old Believers.

The Old Believer community is composed of several local communities. Up until the post-war period, their characteristic features were isolation from the outside world and personal contacts of the group members on the bases of neighbourhood and kinship. Members of tight-knit and hermetic local communities have to be guided in all their actions by internal norms of behaviour recognised in the group. In the Old Believers community the social code is very strict and nowadays difficult to observe. For example, the Old Believers must not smoke, drink alcohol, drink tea, men cannot shave their beards, women cannot cut their hair, and it is prohibited to consume meals with people of another denomination, and even use the same dishes. Marriages with persons of other faith are forbidden, too. However, in the post-war years the norms of behaviour were loosening uncontrollably and the traditional authorities were collapsing (e.g. that of *nastavnik* or old people familiar with religion).

The typical occupation of the Old Believers is farming, as well as clearing the forest, and in Masuria – fishery. The lands on which they work are extremely infertile, and farms are usually small and run quite primitively. In the current hard economic situation throughout the country, many Old Believers in the Augustów and Suwałki-Sejny centres live in poverty. Therefore many parents want to ensure their children the opportunity to live in a city or town. As a consequence, this religious community is increasingly dispersed geographically.

The Old Believers residing in cities and towns live literally outside their own community. They are not subject to the neighbourhood control by the Old Believers community, and they are not threatened with any sanctions for overstepping the social, religious or language norms. This helps them to settle into the Polish culture. The preservation of the cultural identity of the Old Believers in towns depends exclusively on their individual attitudes towards their own cultural heritage.

Many Old Believers living in the villages work or learn in the towns or cities. Regular contacts with people of other religions have a significant influence on weakening the traditional values and changing the lifestyle of young people. We should also remember that the educational system in the Polish People's Republic was focused on the promotion of atheism within society. The Old Believers educated in that system were affected by atheisation as well. Therefore, the Old Believer community is generationally stratified between in terms of cultivating the tradition of ancestors and religious

rituals. I had a chance to meet several Old Believers aged over 70 years who, respecting religious prohibitions, did not want to eat with me at one table. The majority of the older generation does not smoke and men do not shave their beards, but everyone drinks tea, and the ban on drinking alcohol is usually mitigated. Young people consider these prohibitions anachronistic and onerous. In the post-war period, particularly in the 1980s, many mixed marriages were entered into. The Sunday services are most frequently attended by elderly people. Only during Easter and Christmas are the molennas overcrowded. The principle that women and men stand separately in the temple, women on the left side and men on the right side, is still obeyed. All the women, and even little girls, wear headscarves in the molenna. They also care about appropriate and modest clothing. While talking to the young Old Believers from Gabowe Gądy (18–25 years of age), I noticed that sometimes they had a downright dismissive attitude to the religious practice: participation in services, observance of fasting and compliance with traditional norms. This does not apply, of course, to all the young people. The attitude of disregard is rather typical of unmarried people. When children are born, parents need to choose the value system in which the children are to be brought up. Many parents of the 30- and 40-year-olds generation do not know their own religion, but almost everyone wants their children to know it. Perhaps it is the women's sense of responsibility for the fate of future generations which explains why they constitute the majority of religiously active people. This can be seen e.g. during religious services, since women constitute an overwhelming majority in the molenna. That is why they are granted new rights in religious life, e.g., they are admitted onto the *kr'yłas'*,²¹ although in principle only men are allowed to stand there. In recent years, a problem has arisen whether children of mixed marriages can be baptised. This issue is still under discussion. One of the proposed (but not adopted) solutions is the principle that only children whose mother is the Old Believer can be baptised. If only the father is the Old Believer, the child should not be baptised. This is explained by greater parental influence of a mother than of a father.

2.2.2.2. The Linguistic Determinants of Disintegration of the Old Believers Community

Learning majority languages is a sign of adapting to the majority groups.

The Old Believers came to the Polish lands speaking a Russian subdialect. To this day they use their mother tongue, but they also enter into communicative communities with the Polish environment. Speaking Polish helps them to adjust to the majority group and to gradually settle into the Polish culture.

²¹ A place for choir in the molenna.

The Polish language of the Old Believers is diversified as regards idiolects. The Polish language of the oldest generation is close to the subdialectal variant. In the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres these are the Polish north-eastern subdialects, including the old Polish folk subdialects: the Suwałki mazuration (Mazovianised) subdialects (Pl: *mazurzenie*, *mazurzące*); and the newer Polish folk subdialects derived from the East-Slavic languages: the Suwałki-Sejny non-mazuration subdialects [Smułkowa 1990: 159; Zdancewicz 1980, 1966]. In the Masurian centre it is the Masurian subdialect. The Polish language of the young generation is similar to the general variant of the Polish language defined by A. Furdal as “język potoczny literacki mówiony” (“the colloquial-literary spoken language”) [Furdal 1973: 14–17, 56–58]. The Polish language of the Old Believers is characterised by the presence of Russian elements at all the language levels, and in the Masurian centre both Russian and German elements. The Polish language of the Old Believers is a consequence of continuous language contact between the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers and the Polish systems which the Old Believers have encountered. In the Masurian centre this also includes the German language of a variant close to the literary language.

The Masurian Old Believers, who until 1945 lived within the German state, learned the German language. The knowledge and usage of this language reflect also today an aspiration of this group to integrate with the German culture.

The current linguistic situation in the Old Believers community will be described in section 2.3. However, before I present the current situation, it might be useful to review the history of the Polish and German languages acquisition and evolution of the relationship between these two languages, starting from the time when the Old Believers settled in the Polish territory and ending today.

After settling in the Polish lands, the Old Believers were in contact with the local rural population, land administrators, and forest service. The influence of the Polish language on their Russian subdialect began then. In the Suwałki-Sejny region in the 19th century they spoke Polish while contacting the Lithuanian population [Grek-Pabisowa 1985b: 69, 70].

In the period of the Duchy of Warsaw the Old Believers refused to send their children to the schools which Stanisław Staszic wanted to establish for them [Grek-Pabisowa 1985b: 69]. In the second half of the 19th century intense Polish cultural life started in this territory and the Polish language began to have overwhelming impact on the local dialects. The Old Believers not only cultivated fields, cut down trees and did fishing, but also were involved in trade. They worked with the Polish people, so they had to learn the Polish language. A proof of it is, for example, the fact that one of the informants of Professor Knut Olof Falk, the author of the work on the

hydronymy of the Suwałki lakes [Falk 1941], was an Old Believer fisherman from the village of Rosochaty Róg [Grek-Pabisowa 1988b: 23]. After World War I, when Poland regained independence, the educational system was organised and henceforth the Old Believer children started to learn the literary Polish language. At the same time there was continuous contact with the local Polish population and its Suwałki and Sejny subdialects. After World War II the Russian language was taught at school, apart from Polish, which gave children an opportunity to have contact with the literary Russian language. In the school in Gabowe Grądy for many years the children began to learn Russian as early as in the second form (according to the educational programme teaching Russian started in the fifth form of the primary school).

Historical documents show that the Old Believers who arrived to East Prussia in 1830 knew Polish and used it in contacts with the Prussian authorities:

... maja 1832 roku w Mikołajkach treść niemieckiego aktu przed podpisaniem odczytał filiponom w polskim tłumaczeniu przysięgły tłumacz Skopnik. Dnia 15 maja tegoż roku w obecności Eckerta w Mikołajkach podsygnowali trzema krzyżykami mieszkańcy Ukty: Piotr Jakoblew, Piotr Prokofiejew, Piotr Jarafiejew i Siemion Jakoblew dokument, w którym zaznaczono: "obgleich Emigranten nur Polnisch sprechen, so begeben sie sich dennoch der Führung des polnischen Nebenprotokolls" [Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1961: 50].

(On ... May 1832 in Mikołajki the German act [deed] was read out for Fillipians [Fillipovtsy] in the Polish translation by sworn translator Skopnik. On 15 May of the same year in the presence of Eckert in Mikołajki the document was signed by three crosses by the following inhabitants of Ukta: Piotr Jakoblew, Piotr Prokofiejew, Piotr Jarafiejew and Siemion Jakoblew, in the document it was noted that: [in German:] "although the emigrants speak only Polish, they nevertheless oppose keeping an additional protocol in the Polish language.")

In 1834 the Royal Commission interviewed 12 oldest Old Believers. The members of the Commission also talked to the inhabitants of the Old Believers villages. The interviews were held in Polish [Jakubowski 1961: 87]. Knowledge of the Polish language among the Masurian Old Believers was supported by contacts with the population of Masuria (subdialectal Polish) and thanks to school education (literary Polish):

Wkrótce po osiedleniu się Rosjan na Mazurach zostało zorganizowane nauczanie dzieci, początkowo chłopców, później również dziewcząt. Czytać uczono na księgach cerkiewnych drukowanych cyrylicą. [...] obowiązkowym przedmiotem był w owym czasie język polski. Dopiero w 1872 roku w szkole starowerskiej na Mazurach zastąpiono język polski niemieckim. W końcu XIX w. wszystkie dzieci starowerskie wstępujące do szkoły posługiwały się biegle gwarą mazurską, a około 20% także językiem niemieckim [Jakubowski 1961: 99].

(Shortly after Russians settled in Masuria, the teaching of children was organised – first boys, later girls as well. Reading was taught using Orthodox books printed in Cyrillic. [...] the Polish language was an obligatory subject then. Only in 1872 in the Old Believers school in Masuria was the Polish language replaced with German. At the end of the 19th century, all the Old Believer children entering school spoke the Masurian subdialect fluently, and about 20% of them – also the German language.)

After World War I the expansion of the German language was particularly strong, via the military service, schools, newspapers, and books. At that time the Old Believers, as well as the Masurians, started to lean towards the German culture.²² A transition period followed from the Russian-Polish bilingualism to the Russian-German-Polish trilingualism [Grek-Pabisowa 1988b: 32]. Some of my informants from Masuria did not know the Polish language before World War II, since they did not have contacts with the Masurian population. At home they spoke Russian and German. They admit, however, that their grandparents knew Polish. Since 1945 their children have been learning the literary Polish language at school. After 1945 the German language lost the status of the official language in Masuria in favour of the Polish language. Because of the exchange of the population in this area – emigration of the Masurian people and immigration of the Mazovian people and the settlers coming from across the Bug river – the linguistic environment of the Old Believers changed.

2.2.3. The Old Believers as a Minority Group²³

The Old Believers living in Poland are a minority group, distinguished from others by the religious, ethnic and language ties typical for them. It appears, however, that the ties uniting this group are not all equivalent, i.e. they are not equally significant from the point of view of the Old Believers themselves.

The Old believers constitute a type of minority focused on religion and language. They found themselves in Poland as a result of emigration from the ethnically Russian territory, thus they are also an ethnic minority. While, however, they are fully aware of their religious and linguistic identity, the ethnic identity is not important for them. Their historical knowledge concerning their origin is extremely poor. Apart from the legend of “Biełomory” handed down in the Augustów centre, there are no other popular oral traditions concerning the emigration and the homeland of the Polish Old Believers. The more numerous and better organised Old Believers communities of

²² Before World War II the Germanisation of Masuria was already an accomplished fact [Sakson 1990: 53].

²³ The problems concerning defining minorities are discussed by K. Kwaśniewski [1992: 9–61].

Lithuania and Latvia, and not Russia or the Russian nation, are the external reference group²⁴ for the Old Believers.

To determine the type of minority of the Old Believers community in the Masurian centre is a complex task. Before World War II this group was a Russian-language religious minority living in Germany. In post-war times, after the incorporation of East Prussia to Poland, the Old Believers – like other former German citizens – gained a status of the German minority in Poland. The Old Believers speak German at home and in the neighbourhood even today.

Thus, they constitute a minority concentrated around two languages: Russian and German. The Old Believers in Masuria are still a religious minority, like before the war. As opposed to the Old Believers from the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres, however, they have their national reference group with which they identify. This group is the German nation. Hence they are an interesting type of ethnic, religious and linguistic minority which as a result of changing state borders has been incorporated in another national minority – more numerous and speaking a completely different language. This group has a strong awareness of belonging to Germany whereas its ethnic awareness of Russian origin is very weak.

2.3. The Linguistic Situation

A distinctive feature which allows to define the Old Believers as a communicative community is their use of two languages in the Augustów and Suwałki-Sejny centres, and three languages in the Masurian centre. This is a community which is the locus of language contact. The frequency of use and degree of mastering of particular languages by the members of this community depend on the role of a given language and its rank in hierarchy. In order to properly describe the Polish language of the Old Believers, it is essential to thoroughly examine the linguistic situation of this group.

2.3.1. The Bilingual Centres: Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów

The Russian subdialect is spoken in everyday talk by all the members of the Old Believers community living in the countryside and by the major-

²⁴ “[...] mniejszość, zwłaszcza narodowa, bądź przeciwstawia się większości jako odrębna tożsamość, bądź orientuje się na zewnętrzną w stosunku do zamieszkiwanej całości państwowej, narodową grupę odniesienia i w tym wypadku znajduje się pod presją polityczną, kulturalno-informacyjną i gospodarczą zarówno ‘własnej’ większości, jak i owej grupy odniesienia” [Kwaśniewski 1992: 20].

(“[...] a minority, in particular a national minority, either opposes the majority as a distinct identity, or orientates towards a national reference group that is external in relation to the minority inhabits, and in the latter situation it finds itself under political, cultural-informative and economic pressure imposed by both ‘their own’ majority and the majority of the said reference group.”)

ity of those living in the towns. This is the language used in the family and handed down to children. Therefore it meets the requirements of a primary language, whose basic function is to serve as a medium of communication in everyday situations. Other messages are conveyed in the Polish language. The Polish language enables the Old Believers to communicate with members of other communicative communities. It is also the language of official and public settings as well as of school instruction, so mastering it constitutes a basic condition to gain higher social status.

In the Sejny-Suwałki and Augustów centres there are two languages spoken; one of them – the Russian subdialect – has a colloquial private function, and the other – the Polish language (in the subdialectal or general variant) – has an official and public function. As regards the social status and prestige, the Polish language is the higher language, and Russian – the lower one. We thus have a widely understood diglossia situation here.

The Old Believers use the Russian subdialect on the territory of their community. This principle is observed primarily by young people. In their village they speak Russian without embarrassment, but when they leave Gabowe Grądy for Augustów, they switch the code to Polish already at the bus stop. This is one of the signs of a sense of higher prestige of the Polish language. It is this diglossia situation that probably affects the change in code distribution in various environments and causes progressive limitation in the spheres of usage of the Russian code. In the cities and towns (Suwałki, Augustów) the Old Believers intentionally renounce the usage of the Russian subdialect or they do not admit that they speak it. This is usually explained by their concern for their children's education.

Mówię po polsku i po rosyjsku, z tym że częściej po polsku [...], bo jak dzieci do szkoły [chodziły] i lekcje odrabiałam z nimi, tak że ja po polsku rozmawiałam, a mąż rozmawiał po rusku [Suwałki, woman, born 1964].

(I speak Polish and Russian, but more frequently Polish [...], because when children [went] to school and I helped them do homework, I spoke Polish and my husband spoke Russian.)

My female informants of younger and middle-aged generations, raising children, even those living in rural areas, often used this argument: we talk to children in Polish so as it is easier for them at school.

A sense of lower prestige of the Russian code is, apart from the concern for children, another reason for abandoning this language by young families of the Old Believers living in the towns and cities:

v g'orad'e ja d'umaju, što bolše fševo gavar'ičša po polsk'i, patam'u što st'aršyje pa ruski, no mažad'yje ańi ščeśń'aiučša [...] ańi d'aže ščeśń'aiučša saš'ed'ef i gavar'at f balšynstf'e po polsku [Suwałki, woman, born 1964].

(In the town, I think, people mainly speak Polish, because the older people speak Russian, but the young are ashamed [...] they are even ashamed of neighbours and the majority of them speak Polish.)

Bardzo mało mówią po rosyjsku, bo mieszkają tak, no między sobą czasem rozmawiają, ale teraz wszystko [zanika], taki pospolity jest język katolicki, bo mieszkamy między sądziedzi [Suwałki, woman, born 1928].

(They speak Russian very little because they live like that, they talk among themselves sometimes, but now everything [vanishes], the Catholic language is so common because we live among neighbours.)

Some of the Old Believers from the towns speak Russian only in the countryside, while visiting their families:

Jak do babki pojedziemy do Grądów, to po rusku staram się rozmawiać [Suwałki, woman, born 1964].

(When we visit our grandmother in Grądy, I try to speak Russian then.)

The linguistic behaviour of parents certainly affects the behaviour of children. The fundamental problem which the teacher of Old-Orthodox religion in Suwałki has faced is the fact that not all the pupils know the Russian subdialect:

Są dzieci w różnym wieku i z różnych okolic, są takie, co nie rozmawiają po rusku [Suwałki, woman, age 35, religion teacher].

(There are children in different ages, from different places, there are children who don't speak Russian.)

Dzieci moim zdaniem mówią po polsku, dla nich to nawet ciężko, ja sama widziałam, byłam świadkiem, że jak te dzieci, które mówiły bardziej po polsku, to płakali, oni nie wiedzieli, jak będą się posługiwać [językiem rosyjskim] [Suwałki, woman, born 1928].

(In my opinion, children speak Polish, for them it is even hard, I saw it myself, I witnessed it that those children who spoke better Polish, they cried because they did not know how they would use [Russian].)

In rural areas, in which speaking the Russian subdialect is natural, children do not have language problems with learning religion.

The abandoning of the Russian subdialect is also a natural consequence of the higher number of mixed marriages. The teachers from the primary school in Gabowe Gądy also notice that the Russian language has been increasingly displaced by Polish over the last dozen or so years. This is the school where the Polish language is the only language of instruction. Nowadays only the youngest children speak Russian during breaks and when playing in the sports field. The older children, in turn, control themselves and they speak Polish even during breaks. The situation is very different at home and in the

backyards, where the Russian subdialect dominates. According to the Polish language teacher, children who started learning in the first form 10 years ago, did not understand Polish. The graduates of this school confirm this:

Wtedy w Gabowych Grądach, to wszystkie dzieci nie umieli po polsku. Musiała pani się ćwiczyć, słowo tak, słowo tak, po rusku rozumieć [Nowinka, woman, aged 40].

(At that time, in Gabowe Grądy none of children could speak Polish. You had to practise, every single word, to understand in Russian.)

In the school in Gabowe Grądy the Old Believer children have always outnumbered the Polish children. Formerly it happened that, when playing at school, the Polish children spoke Russian, assumed catchphrases and rude names from the Old Believer children. This has changed. The teacher of the reception form (6-year-old children) claims that the Old Believer children starting their school education understand Polish well, even if some of them speak it rather poorly. Mothers believe that television has a great impact on broadening the Polish language knowledge spoken by their offspring:

Telewizor nasze dzieci przygotowuje do szkoły [Nowinka, woman, aged 40].

(The TV prepares our children for school.)

Nowadays children do not face such problem as their peers 10 or 15 years ago. They quickly get used to the fact that the Russian subdialect should be left outside the school.

The analysis of the functional distribution of the Russian and Polish codes among various generations and environments of the Old Believers demonstrates that there is a tendency to replace the Russian code with the Polish one. This process is already very advanced among the younger generation of the Old Believers residing in cities and towns, since the low prestige of the Russian subdialect is perceived particularly strongly there. In the countryside the Russian subdialect is still alive among all the generations, especially in Gabowe Grądy and Bór, where the number of the Old Believers is quite high. However, even there some mothers try to speak Polish to their children at home, to make it easier for them to start at the school. This does not mean, however, that the Russian subdialect is not important to the Old Believers. In fact, the relationship between the two languages that are used by them is more complex than it seems. Linguistic prestige is not a clear-cut concept and it requires additional clarifications. In terms of education and economic status, the Polish language has higher prestige, and when it comes to spiritual values, higher prestige belongs to the Russian subdialect. Cultivating the linguistic traditions produces just as a strong tie as preserving the faith of the ancestors. As regards emotions, the Old Believers are strongly attached to their subdialect. They know that it is their subdialect that, apart from religion, determines their integrity

and gives them a sense of identity. Religion is for them more important than ethnicity, and than awareness of a Russian origin. It is perceived as a constant and universal value:

jak ja żył, była car'izma, Pol'sha, sav'ety, demokraty, a t'ep'er i ja nie znam kto, p'at' vlast'uf, a relig'ja 'adna / my m'ajém svaji knigi i ustavy i n'ikto nam nie b'ud'et g'av'arit', što kak d'ełat' [Gabowe Grądy, man, age about 80].

(During my lifetime, there was tsarism, Poland, the Soviets, democrats, and now, I don't even know. There have been five regimes and just one religion. We have our own books an regulations, and nobody will tell us what we should do.)

The religion of the Old Believers favours the maintenance of the language continuum:

Zawsze rozmawialiśmy po rusku, bo jesteśmy innej wiary [Gabowe Grądy, man, aged ca. 80].

(We have always spoken Russian because we are of different faith.)

The representatives of the older generation living in the towns do not feel embarrassed to speak the Russian subdialect at home, because they are aware of its connection with the traditional culture and religion:

Ja z mamą w domu się posługuję rosyjskim i w bloku wszyscy [o tym] wiedzą i się przyzwyczaili [Suwałki, woman, born 1928].

(I speak Russian with my mom at home and in our block of flats everyone knows [about it] and everyone got used to it.)

The religious education teachers think that speaking the Russian subdialect helps to preserve the faith:

Ja po prostu postanowiłam tak, będę uczyła [po rosyjsku], nie będę po polsku rozmawiała, po prostu nasz kult ginie, można powiedzieć [Religious education teacher from Suwałki].

(I just decided that I would teach [in Russian], I would not speak Polish, because we can say that our cult is simply disappearing.)

Both teachers cannot imagine that they could teach the Old Believers religion in Polish.

Among the young generation, apart from the tendency to abandon the Russian subdialect, there is another tendency appearing, an opposite one: the tendency to rescue this language. It is the Old Believers of young age, raising children, who distinctly feel the problem of choosing the language. How to talk to children: in Polish, so as to give them opportunity of social advancement, good education, but at the cost of at least partial assimilation;

or in Russian, so as they could be religious people, aware of their identity, but worse prepared for school and career. Some parents try to reconcile these and they bring up children in two languages, adopting various tactics, for example, speaking Polish at home, and Russian at their parents' home:

Staram się, żeby po prostu chociaż ta mowa się zachowała w nich, no już mała córeczka to mało, mało [zna rosyjski]. Ona rozumieć, to rozumie, bo czasami, jak do babki pojedziemy na wieś, to już po rusku staram się, żeby rozmawiać do niej, żeby ona jednak chociaż rozumiała [Suwałki, woman, born 1964].

(I strive to preserve at least this speech in them, but my little daughter [knows] very, very little [Russian]. Well, she understands, because sometimes when we visit her grandmother in the country, I try to talk to her in Russian so as she could understand at least.)

There is no doubt that the establishment of the Supreme Council of the Old Believers in 1983, the Pimonov Family Foundation and introduction of systematic religion teaching as a part of compulsory education were very important for the integration of the Old Believers environment. Because the Old Believer religion is taught in Russian, a need appeared for the children to learn this language. All of these factors, as well as more and more intensive contact with the Old Believers from abroad, have had a positive impact on the self-esteem of this group, and thus on the increase in prestige of its culture, religion and of the Russian subdialect. In the parish house in Suwałki, the women waiting for their children, even those who admitted speaking Polish at home, spoke only Russian with one another; they were in the territory of their linguistic community there. Yet their children, after the religion lesson was over, preferred to speak Polish.

2.3.2. The Trilingual Centre: Masuria

In the Masurian community apart from Russian and Polish the German language is used, which was the official language until 1945. There is no generational differentiation here, because only a handful of people aged from approximately 50 to 85 remain (see section 2.1). The primary (home) language is probably selected based on individual and family considerations and personal experiences. The informants' statements show that in their opinion the Russian subdialect has a very low prestige. Almost no one admits that they speak Russian at home:

po rusku, to kiedy to było, sto lat temu [Wojnowo, woman, born ca. 1930].
([speaking] Russian, when was it? A hundred years ago.)

Nie umiem po rosyjsku, nie wychodzi [Gałkowo, woman, born 1915].
(I can't speak Russian, I fail.)

Nie gadali my po rosyjsku tam, nie gadali ludzie po rosyjsku, nie, tak nie umieli [po rosyjsku], tak richtig ['poprawnie'] nie mogli po rosyjsku [Gałkowo, woman, born 1915].

(We didn't speak Russian there, people didn't speak Russian, they couldn't speak [Russian], they couldn't speak Russian richtig ['correctly'].)

– *Po niemiecku Laken ['prześcieradło'], po rusku ja nie wiem.*

– *W domu rozmawialiście po niemiecku?*

– *To wszystkie po niemiecku [Wojnowo, woman, born 1927].*

(– In German it's Laken ['bedsheet'], in Russian I don't know.

– Did you speak German at home?

– Everybody [spoke] German.)

Sometimes the informants admitted that their parents had spoken Russian at home:

– *Jak mówili pani rodzice w domu?*

– *Po niemiecku i po rosyjsku, jakby kto przyszedł, to po niemiecku.*

– *Jak ojciec się zwracał do matki?*

– *No, to po rosyjsku [Ukta, woman, born 1941].*

(– What language did your parents speak at home?

– German and Russian, when somebody visited us, they spoke German.

– In what language did your father address your mother?

– Well, in Russian.)

– *Jak mówili pana rodzice w domu?*

– *Po niemiecku, przecież ojciec był w pierwszej wojnie na froncie.*

– *A po rosyjsku?*

– *Czasem po rosyjsku [Ukta, man, born 1935].*

(– What language did your parents speak at home?

– German, my father was at the front during the First [World] War after all.

– And Russian?

– Sometimes Russian.)

The interviews with the Old Believers show that the Russian language functions only in the sphere of religious life. Also in the Masurian centre religion helps to maintain the language continuum of the Russian subdialect. We can hear it, for example, when the Old Believers leave the molenna after the Sunday service. The Old Believers themselves think that:

Russisch sprechen wir meistens in der Kirche [Wojnowo, woman, born ca. 1930].

(We speak Russian mainly in church.)

Po rusku to tylko była nasza wiara, [...] tak tylko w modleniu [Wojnowo, woman, born 1927].

(Russian it was our faith only, [...] only while praying.)

The fact that they do not admit to speaking Russian at home does not mean that the Old Believers in Masuria do not use this language. It only confirms that its prestige is low. A teacher from the primary school in Wojnowo (coming from the Kurpie region) said that even in the 1970s the Russian language was frequently heard in the Old Believers' homes:

Mówili w trzech językach, rosyjski przede wszystkim, niemiecki na drugim miejscu i trzeci to był język polski.

(They spoke three languages, first of all Russian, German in second place and third – it was Polish.)

However, according to his account, in the post-war years the Russian language gradually gave way to the German language:

już raczej niemiecki wchodził, już wypierał rosyjski [...] już niemiecki, rosyjski odchodził na bok.

(it was more like German was beginning to enter, it was replacing Russian [...] it was more German, Russian was abandoned.)

The informants admitted that they spoke Polish in everyday talk in the families, especially when the spouse did not know German:

Mój mąż spod Suwałk, nie zna niemieckiego, to mówimy po polsku [Ukta, woman, born 1941].²⁵

(My husband comes from near Suwałki, he doesn't speak German, so we speak Polish.)

Żona moja jest pochodzenia polskiego, bo spod Suwałk, ale też staroobrzędówka, po polsku rozmawiamy, czasem rzadko po rosyjsku, a po niemiecku ona nie umie [Ukta, man, born 1935].

(My wife is of Polish descent, namely from near Suwałki, but she is an Old Believer as well, we speak Polish, sometimes, rarely, Russian, and she can't speak German.)

Some Old Believers, especially those who worked not only on the farm but also in forest logging before the war, knew the Masurian subdialect even in the German times:

Polacy tu nie mieszkali na naszych wioskach, ale byli Mazurzy, no Niemcy, ale po niemiecku ci starsi nie mogli, tylko po polsku, to znaczy po mazursku mogli, i my między nimi nauczyli się [Ukta, man, born 1935].

²⁵ The husband of this woman is the Old Believer coming from Wodziłki near Suwałki and he knows the Russian subdialect.

(Polish people didn't live in our villages, but there were Masurians, well, Germans, but those older couldn't [speak] German, only Polish, that is they could [speak] the Masurian language, and we learned among them.)

Even before the war the contact with the Masurian population determined the situation whereby the Masurian subdialect became the Polish language of the Old Believers. This was also noted by B. Falińska, who recorded the Polish language of the Masurian Old Believers back in the 1950s, when this group was much larger [Falińska 1994].

After World War II the German language lost the position of the official language. This function was assumed by the Polish language. From that moment on, as a result of the mass emigration of the Masurian population to Germany, the Masurian subdialects, treated as a separate linguistic area, gradually and, eventually, entirely disintegrated. In turn, the population from the Kurpie region (the area of Przasnysz, Maków, Myszyniec, Kolno and Mława), and also from the Vilnius Region and Volhynia started to immigrate. Smaller groups of displaced persons arrived also from the following voivodeships: Białystok, Lublin, Bydgoszcz and Kielce [Sakson 1990: 76, 79]. In those years for the first time the Old Believers had a chance to hear the general variant of the Polish language, and those (few) of them who did not know the Masurian subdialect, encountered the Polish language for the first time:

Polskiego nauczyła się z ludziami. Jak Polacy przyszli pierwsi, jeden mówi: "jak ta wioska nazywa się?". Ja tam wiem: co to wioska? Potem nauczyłam się polskiego, tylko pisać i czytać nie umiem [Gałkowo, woman, born 1920].

(I learned Polish among people. When Polish people came first, one asked: "What is the name of this village?" And I didn't know what "village" meant. Later I learned Polish but I can't read or write.)

– W czterdziestym siódmym roku poszłam do szkoły.

– Umiiała pani po polsku?

– Naturalnie że nie, ani słówkiem, tu były Prusy Wschodnie [Ukta, woman, born 1941].

(– In 1947 I went to school.

– Did you know Polish?

– Of course not, not a single word, it was East Prussia here.)

With the passing of time the situation forced everyone to use at least spoken Polish:

– Nie umiem czytać i pisać po polsku.

– Tylko mówić?

– Mówić to jo ['tak']. Tutaj teraz wszystkie Polaki sq, to co ja z Polakiem po niemiecki mówić. Trzeba po polsku [Gałkowo, woman, born 1915].

(– *I can't read or write in Polish*

– *Only speak?*

– *Speak, jo ['yes']. Now everyone is Polish here so there's no use speaking German with Polish people. We have to speak Polish.)*

The Old Believers remember the German language of the literary variant from school, from the pre-war period. Knowledge of this language is still subject to verification through frequent trips to Germany and contacts with their relatives which settled there. The German language has a very high prestige among the Old Believers. Everyone gladly uses it,²⁶ they admit to using German in the families, both before the war and nowadays:

– *Skąd pani zna niemiecki?*

– *Ja z pochodzenia stąd. W domu mówiliśmy po niemiecku* [Ukta, woman, born 1941].

(– *How do you know German?*

– *I come from here. We spoke German at home.)*

– *W domu po niemiecku rozmawialiście?*

– *To wszystkie po niemiecku* [Wojnowo, woman, born 1927].

(– *Did you speak German at home?*

– *All [spoke] German.)*

The German language is close to the Old Believers' hearts. Probably because it is the language of their childhood.

A taki najbliższy język to chyba jednak niemiecki, dlatego że uczyłam [się go] do siedmiu lat i w szkole, i w domu [Ukta, woman, born 1941].

(So the closest language is German, I think, because I learned [it] until I was seven, both at school and at home.)

Najlepiej mówię po niemiecku. Jak mówię po polsku, to wszystko jeden ten język mnie ściągnie [Gałkowo, man, born 1908].

(I speak German best. When I speak Polish, I always switch to this language.)

They preserved knowledge of the German language despite the persecution and harassment which they suffered after the war.

– *“To Niemcy, te szwabki,” jo ['tak'], to strasznie było gadać po niemiecku. Tak to sami sobie, to nikt by nie pisał. Jak do pekaesu jechało, po niemiecku, to tak patrzali te Polaki, tak strasznie było. Tak patrzeli.*

– *Jak to się stało, że nie zapomnieliście języka?*

²⁶ I was able to witness this thanks to the participation in the field studies led by Professor Klaus Steinke from the Institute of Slavic Studies of the University of Erlangen (Germany).

– *Nie zapomnieli, bo jak uczyli się w szkole i wszystko, to już co masz zapamiętać. Jak od dziecka uczył się, to nie zapomni, nie zapomnisz już* [Gałkowo, woman, born 1915].

(–[They called us names:] *they are Germans, Krauts, jo* ['yes'], *it was terrible to speak German. [We spoke German] among ourselves, we wouldn't say a word* [outside]. *When we went by pekaes* [bus, an acronym of PKS – Państwowa Komunikacja Samochodowa – National Motor Transport] *[and spoke] German, these Polish looked at us so terribly.*

– How did it happen that you did not forget the language?

– *We didn't forget because we learned it at school and everywhere so you won't forget it. When you learned something as a child, you will never forget it.)*

The accounts of neighbours coming from the immigrant population confirm that the Old Believers speak German at home:

Jak ktoś przyjdzie, to mówią po polsku, a tak sami po niemiecku [teacher from Wojnowo, coming from the Kurpie region, aged ca. 60].

(when someone comes, they speak Polish, and when they are alone, they speak German.)

Bo te stare mówili po niemiecku, po swojemu, a potem jak tu więcej Polaków mieszkali, to się wprawili [Wojnowo, woman, aged ca. 60, coming from the Kurpie region].

(Those old spoke German – their own language, and later, when more Polish people lived here, they improved [their Polish].)

Przy okazji będąc u jednej czy drugiej rodziny, to się nauczyłem po niemiecku; na strychach leżało dużo książek niemieckich, rosyjskich się nie spotykało, a niemieckie były [teacher from Wojnowo, coming from the Kurpie region].

(When I visited one or another family, I just learned German; there were plenty of German books in the attics – no Russian ones, but there were German books.)

I noticed that the Old Believers are usually perceived by the immigrants as autochthons, that is Germans:

Niektórzy Niemcy chodzą do czerwonego kościoła, a niektórzy do Ukty [Wojnowo, woman, aged ca. 40, comes from Mazovia].²⁷

(Some Germans go to the red church, and some to Ukta.)

Some external signs, such as visiting families in Germany, but first of all the awareness of their autochthonous status and their using of the German language are considered as indications of their “German character.” The Old Believers religious otherness is also recognised:

²⁷ The molenna of the Old Believers is built of red brick; the church in Ukta is Evangelical.

Z ciekawości chodzili do czerwonego kościoła [...] nie, oni Polakami nie są, święta mają swoje, posty swoje [Wojnowo, woman, age ca. 60, coming from Mazovia].

(They went to the red church out of curiosity [...] no, they are not Polish, they have their own holidays, their own fast days.)

and using the Russian language in the molenna was noticed:

Mszę odprawia po rosyjsku [Wojnowo, woman, age ca. 60, coming from Mazovia].

(He celebrates the Mass in Russian.)

That is why, apart from the opinion that the Old Believers were Germans, there are statements that they are “mixed”:

To jest pół Ruska i pół Niemca; to taki mieszaniec, krzyżak, bo skrzyżowany; to taka mieszanka [teacher from the school in Wojnowo, coming from the Kurpie region].

(He is half-Russian and half-German; he is mixed, cross-type – because he is crossed; it is a sort of mixture.)

The relationships between the three languages used there are as complex as the history and present social situation in these lands. It is even difficult to determine which language is primary for them. An important criterion of a primary status disappears here, namely handing the language down to children. There are no young people, there are no children. Those who remained, experienced enough so as not to speak honestly about their language habits. The Masurian Old Believers do not consider themselves to be a part of a greater community attached to Russia in terms of culture and language. Some of them know nothing about their origin. Thus they have no cultural support on this account, and that is why, perhaps, they do not feel a need to preserve the Russian language despite respecting the religious tradition. After the war they shared the fate of other indigenous inhabitants of these lands. It is known that the felonious policy of the Polish authorities resulted in emigration of many Masurians and many of them turned back on the Polish identity. The Old Believers, who constituted a tight religious and linguistic Russian minority before the war and later for some period of time, had no reasons – in the post-war historical and social context – for seeking bonds with the Polish culture. In addition, the economic factor causes them to feel attached to Germany, hence such a high prestige of the German language in their community. The linguistic situation of the Old Believers was aptly expressed by the chronicler from Mrągowo:

mówią po rosyjsku i po niemiecku. Na przykład taki [nazwisko], on był w wojsku niemieckim, pod Stalingradem, potem do Rosji wywieziony. Tam siedem lat pracował. Nawet Rosjanie podejrzewali, mówili: “no ty przecież jesteś robotnik, po co tobie trzy języki, ty umiesz po niemiecku, po rosyjsku, po polsku.” On mówi:

“w Niemczech żyłem, wszyscy mówiliśmy po niemiecku, na ulicy, szkoła i w domu, po rosyjsku to matka w domu nieraz mówiła i to wszystko. Po polsku to Mazurzy, po polsku rozmawiali i człowiek się nauczył. I po wojnie też po polsku, bo mieszkaliśmy już w Polsce i życie nas zmusiło do tego, żeby po polsku mówić. Wszyscy w trzech językach mówimy.”

(For example this [name], he was in the German army at Stalingrad, then he was deported to Russia. He worked seven years there. Even Russians suspected, they said: “well, you are a labourer, so what do you need three languages for, you speak German, Russian, Polish.” He says: “I lived in Germany, we all spoke German, in the street, at school and at home, it was my mother who spoke Russian sometimes at home, that’s all. The Masurians, they spoke Polish and I learned it. And after the war also Polish, because we already lived in Poland and life forced us to speak Polish. We all speak three languages.”)

3

THE POLISH LANGUAGE OF THE OLD BELIEVERS

In this chapter I would like to present the features of the language of the Old Believers that differentiate it from the literary Polish language, while also juxtaposing it with the following subdialects: Suwałki and Sejny subdialects (for the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres) and Masurian subdialects (for the Masurian centre), the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers and the literary German language (only for the Masurian centre). The material concerning the Polish language of the Old Believers is collected by me. The material on the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers used in juxtapositions comes from the monograph by I. Grek-Pabisowa [1968], the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects – mainly from the works by T. Zdancewicz [1966, 1980], and the Masurian subdialects – from the works by A. Basara, J. Basara [A. Basara 1987; A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959] and K. Nitsch [1954a, 1954b, 1954c, 1954d] as well as other dialectological studies, e.g. by K. Dejna [1973], and the articles listed in the References at the end of the book. The information regarding the system of the German language is presented following the work by J. Czochralski [1994]. Some of the described Polish subdialectal features also exist in larger territories, in other subdialects and the regional language. However, in order to present the subject matter that I am interested in, the specific context of the Suwałki, Sejny and Masurian subdialects is needed because the Old Believers encounter these variants of the Polish language. In this chapter I made an attempt to separate the descriptive (material) part from the interpretation, and therefore sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 contain the descriptive part only, which will be interpreted from the perspective of the linguistic interference theory in section 3.5.

3.1. Phonology

3.1.1. Vocalism

Language contact between subdialects characterised by realisation variability of vocalic phonemes (the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers with the Suwałki subdialects in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres; the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers with the Masurian subdialect in the Masurian centre) and the general Polish language, and in Masuria also the literary German language with regional interferences – has produced a vocalic system with numerous variants and complex distribution of sounds. The results of the contact may be observed both on the paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes of the phonological system.

The oppositions as regards vertical and horizontal movements of the tongue are relevant in all three languages being in contact. The opposition that is typical only for the Polish language is: nasal ~ oral, which differentiates sounds according to the resonator. In the German language there are the oppositions as regards the width of passage through the oral resonator: narrow (tense) ~ wide (lax) and as regards the round and forward position of the lips: rounded ~ unrounded. These oppositions are unknown in the Polish and Russian languages [Czochralski 1994: 41]. The short ~ long opposition in the German vocalism is secondary to the narrow ~ wide opposition because it is limited to the variants of narrow phonemes. Wide phonemes have only a short variant (according to the description by J. Czochralski [1994]).

The oppositions that are phonological in the Polish language of the Old Believers are those that regard the vertical and horizontal movements of the tongue and the type of the resonator.

Stress in the Russian subdialect is dynamic, free, and shifting; in the German language – dynamic, relatively free, and fixed (stable), and in the Polish north-eastern subdialects – dynamic, and stable. In the Russian and German languages the stresses have a semantic role. However, stress is not a distinctive feature of a phoneme but is a suprasegmental element. In the languages in contact the stress influences the realisation of the vocalic system, but in a different manner. In the Russian subdialect unstressed vowels are subject to akanye, yakanye and reduction, and in the German language the vowels in unstressed syllables are shortened, even to their full disappearance [Czochralski 1994: 72]. In the Polish subdialects of Suwałki and Sejny the mid vowels in unstressed syllables are reduced, which does not, however, constitute a systemic feature. In the Masurian subdialect stress is not as strong and does not affect the realisation of phonemes in the unstressed position.

In the Polish language of the Old Believers the distribution of vocalic phonemes depends on the position as regards the stress. The positions of neutralisation are most frequently unstressed syllables. The place of the stress

is usually fixed (stable) – on the penultimate syllable, and only in some grammatical forms the stress may fall on the ultima, e.g. in the imperative forms: *dav'aj*, in adverbs: *lep'ej*. This characteristic is known in the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects.

I describe vowel phonemes according to the opposition as regards the vertical movements of the tongue (degree of stricture), since this opposition is most frequently neutralised in the Polish language of the Old Believers. In the range of this opposition I also include the important opposition as regards the tongue's horizontal movements (place of articulation). The oppositions as regards the type of the resonator are presented separately. As in the juxtaposed vocalic systems the realisations of phonemes depend on their place in relation to the stressed syllable, we should distinguish two basic positions: stressed and unstressed. Thus the stress is the most important element of a phoneme's position in a word. I also take into account other elements of the position: the neighbouring phonemes (soft/hard consonant), the sequence (onset, nucleus, coda).

I mark sounds with italics, use slash brackets / / for phonemes, parentheses () for variants, square brackets [] for archiphonemes.

3.1.1.1. The Paradigmatic Axis. The Inventory of Vowel Phonemes and Their Variants

– The Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres

Table 1. Chart of the vocalic system of the Polish language of the Old Believers in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres

	Front	Central	Back
High	/i/	y	/u/
Middle	è e ^ν /e/ /ɛ/	ə	ó /o/ /ɔ/
Low		/a/	

The vocalic system of the Polish language of the Old Believers from the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres consists of 5 oral and 2 nasal phonemes and their variants:

- /a/ – {a}, {ə};
- /e/ – {e}, {è}, {e^ν}, {ə};
- /o/ – {o}, {ó}, {ə};
- /u/ – {u};
- /i/ – {i}, {y};
- /ɔ/ – {ɔ};
- /ɛ/ – {ɛ}.

Table 2. Chart of the vocalic system of the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers¹

	Front	Central	Back
High	/i/	y	/u/
Middle	è /e/	ə ə Λ	/o/
Low		/a/	

Table 3. Chart of the vocalic system of the Polish subdialects of Suwałki and Sejny²

	Front	Central	Back
High	/i/	y	/u/
Middle	è /e/ /ɛ/		ò /o/ /ɔ/
Low		/a/	

– The Masurian centre

Table 4. Chart of the vocalic system of the Polish language of the Old Believers in the Masurian centre

	Front	Central	Back
High	/i/ Y y ⁱ	y	/u/
Middle	è e ^v /e/ /ɛ/	ə	ò /o/ /ɔ/
Low	a ^e	/a/	ą

The vocalic system of the Polish language of the Old Believers from the Masurian centre consists of 5 oral and 2 nasal phonemes and their variants.

- /a/ – (a), (ǣ), (a^e), (ə);
- /e/ – (e), (è), (e^v), (ə);
- /o/ – (o), (ò), (ə);
- /u/ – (u);
- /i/ – (i), (y), (yⁱ), (Y);
- /ɔ/ – (ɔ);
- /ɛ/ – (ɛ).

The vocalic system of the Russian subdialect is presented above (Table 2).

¹ Based on the table presenting the vocalic system of the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers in the monograph by I. Grek-Pabisowa [1968: 26].
² Based on the description of these subdialects by T. Zdancewicz [1966, 1980].

Table 5. The vocalic system of the German language [Czochralski 1994: 52]

i	y				u
I	Y				U
e	φ	ə	α		o
ε	æ			ə	
	a			a	

Table 6. Chart of the vocalic system of the Masurian subdialects³

	Front	Central	Back
High	/i/ y ⁱ	y	/u/
Middle	è e ^v /e/ /ɛ/		ò /o/ /ɔ/
Low	a ^e	/a/	ǎ

3.1.1.2. The Syntagmatic Axis. The Realisations of Vowel Phonemes

low central /a/

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in all the centres the phoneme /a/ is almost always realised as (a). In polysyllabic words, (ə) may also appear in the second syllable before the stress, e.g., *sməɾavaɲa*, and in shorter words – before the stress: *zəɾab'a*, as well as after the stress: *byɲə*, *šviŋakəm*, *matkə*. Examples of such reduction are rare in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres, they are more frequent in the Masurian centre. These reductions lead to the neutralisation /a/ : /o/ : /e/ – [ə]. The phoneme /a/ has smaller frequency of occurrence in favour of /e/ in the examples with the transition of groups: *ja>je* in the onset; *ra>re* in the onset and the nucleus; *aj>ej* in the coda: *jemark*, *jek*, *jepko*, *reži*, *teres*, *greńica*, *tutej*, *žišej*, *fčorej*, *dej*. In the Masurian centre we can rarely hear the more back ǎ, similar to *o*: *prăcovaľi*, *gădali*, *măm*, *prăvžifk'i*, *aborău*, *plăcone*, *făbryk'i*, and a more front a^e, after velar consonants, but only in the speech of one informant in isolated examples: *jax'a^eli*, *ka^em'eñi*.

In the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers⁴ /a/ has the full realisation of (a) in the onset regardless of the place of the word stress, and in the

³ Based on studies on the Masurian subdialects by A. and J. Basara [A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959; A. Basara 1987].

⁴ While presenting the facts regarding the Russian subdialect in section 3.1, I use the description of the phonetics of the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers written by I. Grek-Pabisowa [1968: 24–69]. I also take the examples of the Russian subdialect from this work and I present them in the Professor Grek-Pabisowa's original transcription.

nucleus and the coda in the stressed syllables. In other positions the realisation of /a/ is determined by the stress and differs depending on the distance from the stressed syllable. In the syllable located directly before the stress, after hard consonants, except *ž, š, c*, and after palatal consonants; as well as in the third syllable before the stress after the hard consonants; and in indirectly post-stress syllables (more often in the Masurian centre) – the central sound *Λ* is pronounced, whose articulation is only slightly raised in comparison to the sound *a*, e.g., *kArt'oška, mΛatr'ona, zArəbΛt'ał, zAgəvAr'il'i, m'al'en'kΛjΛ, rəzgΛv'aryvΛ'i*. In this position the neutralisation /a/ : /o/ : /e/ – [Λ] appears. The sound *Λ* may be also pronounced in the second pre-stress syllable as variant (alternation) of *ə*, which is the result of the influence of the Polish language on the subdialect, e.g., *nΛbłud'at'*. In the second syllable before the stress; and in post-stress syllables after non-palatal consonants, except *ž, š, c*; and after palatal consonants before a hard consonant, the sound *ə* of the central series of the middle level is pronounced, raised in comparison with *a*, e.g., *səmAg'onu, sətAn'a, gr'əznΛnv'atyj, m'ixkΛv'atyj, f k'omnəty, sl'osər'u, rAsk'azyvəłə*. The neutralisation /a/ : /o/ – [ə] takes place here. In the indirectly post-stress position there appears the *Λ* / *ə* alternation. After *ž, š, c* in the unstressed syllables *ə* is pronounced, that is to say the neutralisation /o/ : /a/ : /e/ – [ə] takes place, e.g., *žər'a, šəg'at', cər'u, šəgΛm'er, cəpcər'ap, s'ažəłkə, r'yžəja*. After palatal consonants in pre-stress syllables – but very rarely directly before the stress – front middle vowels are produced with the raised articulation of *é* in comparison to *e*, we thus have /a/ : /e/ – [ê] or /a/ : /i/ – [i] (alternating with *ə* before hard consonants): *m'ixkΛv'atyj, m'əxkΛv'atyj, p'it'ikłAs'ofkə*. In the directly post-stress syllable between palatal consonants there is optionally /a/ : /i/ – [i]: *t'ys'ič'u, tr'et'ijə*. Different realisations are possible in the open and closed ultimate syllable. This is the weakest position. The following neutralisations are possible: /a/ : /o/ – [ə]; /a/ : /o/ : /e/ – [ə], after *ž, š, c*; /a/ : /o/ : /e/ – [Λ], e.g., *b'abəm, agAr'ošəłt, d'etłAt', t'Al'egə, s'ažə, m'al'en'kΛjΛ*.

In the German language there are two low phonemes: the front, unrounded, narrow /a/, which has one short variant (*a*), e.g., *machen, Lampe*; and the back, unrounded, wide /a:/, e.g., *haltbar, biegsam*.

In the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects /a/ in most cases is realised by (*a*). Narrow *ă* was noted as a continuant of *o* only in rare examples, such as: *siodaj, zgodnoć* [Zdancewicz 1980: 32]. The presence of narrow *ă* is not, as a matter of fact, typical for these subdialects [Klemensiewicz, Lehr-Spławiński, Urbańczyk 1981: 93]. Narrow *ă* and its continuant *o* were, in contrast, noted in the Masurian subdialect, albeit less frequently in the eastern territory, e.g., *znă, kiźłok, gospodoš* [A. Basara 1987: 27; Dejna 1973: map 33]. In the Masurian subdialect /a/ also has a more front variant *a^e*, a continuant of short *a* [A. Basara 1987: 27]. Both these variants, *ă* and *a^e*, were noted by K. Nitsch: *dobră travă*, after the velar consonants: *k'a^enyń, matk'a^e, dalekă drog'a^e* [Nitsch 1954b: 260]. The characteristic features of

the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects, as well as the Masurian subdialects, are transitions of the groups *ja>je* and *ra>re* in the onset, e.g., *jebłonk'i*, *jegody*, *reno*, *redło* [Zdancewicz 1980: 27, 29; Nitsch 1954b: 258; Dejna 1973: maps 28, 29]. The phoneme /a/ has therefore a smaller range of occurrence than in the general Polish language, in favour of /e/.

front middle /e/

In the Polish language of the Old Believers /e/ is most frequently realised as (e). I also noted other realisations:

– in the stressed syllables: in the Suwałki-Sejny centre only 2 examples of neutralisation /e/ : /a/ – [a] were noted: *co zaxceš**,⁵ *to tam jest*; /e/ : /o/ – [o]: *vźola* jo za renk'i*. In the Masurian centre there is a tendency whereby the distribution of /e/ is reduced in favour of /i/, e.g., *tlin*, *ńe odyjże*, *podyjże*, *cmyntaš**, *v'incej*, *miska* ('mieszka', 's/he lives', as opposed to general Polish: *miska* 'bowl'), *ńimcy*, *vźili*, *tyn*, *tygo*, *pryntko*, *p'ikli*, *vygarnyli*, *jigo*. In the Suwałki-Sejny centre I noticed only two such examples: *tlin*, *odyjże*.

– in the unstressed syllables: in all the centres, but more frequently in the Masurian centre, many examples of reduction of *e* were noted, namely /e/ – (ê), (e') and /e/ : /i/ – [i], [y], e.g., *dla čekavości*, *p'ínienzy*, *cymentove**, *po ńim'ecku*, *ńédobže'*, *dobže'*, *tute'j*, *puźńij*, *puźńej*, *potym*, *vyrzalk'i* ('wersalki'), *po novyj tyj*, *l'oduvyk*, *ve'kovali* ('wekowali'), *śńidańa*. Particularly many examples were noted in the coda:

puxńé, *pracuji*, *pracujé*, *bendo otvarty sklepy*, *m'alam operacji*, *pam'eńc ma dobry**, *vłosk'i to ma dobre tak'e tutaj krencony**, *jak ona tak xoży to f suk'enečk'i*, *syn na gospodark'i*, *ma gospodark'i*, *byy v moży*, *nakryje še i kuxaży na bl'ax'i pševažńé*, *dva tygodńé*, *dva tygodńi*, *gžejé*, *tak'i byli drevńiane'*, *m'eli specyjalny tako šeroko*, *tak'è tr'udnyjé l'ato*, *sob'i*, *trox'i*.

In proclitics: *ńi ma*, *ńi majo*.

The realisations /e/ : /a/ : /o/ – [a] were noted in all the centres, frequently in the coda:

ony pojexali gžęści tam fpol'a; *to tak'ix jest po para tam*, *za Sejnam'i aš to požucana para*; *para mešoncy manestja* ('amnestia'); *dobra m'asta* f K'ijov'e*; *šli cała lata**; *taka dobra m'ensa**; *tak fš'isto zńiščona biya*, *spal'ona biya*, *porob'jona biya*; *zabrońjona biya* (mówić po niemiecku); *żyli puxoxa**; *tagże żyvut dobra**; *jak fajna**; *b'edny luży i bogaty żyli*, *ale fšystko skromna**.

Only two examples were notes in the nucleus in the Masurian centre: *pakarńik*, *l'ap'ej*, and in proclitics in the Suwałki-Sejny centre: *va vtorek*, *za šp'itala*.

⁵ The examples which have not only a phonological explanation are marked with an asterisk (*).

In the Masurian centre, more frequently than in the Suwałki and Augustów centres, there occurs an inconsistent reduction of *e* to *ə* in unstressed syllables. Since *ə* in this position realises also phonemes /a/ and /o/, we note the neutralisation /a/ : /o/ : /e/ – [ə]: *potəm*, *tutaj*, *kaŋ'eńə*, *jezdəm*; and an alternative neutralisation to 0: *potm*, *zars*. In the Suwałki and Augustów centres the variant (ə) was rare, only after *ž* and *š*: *prošə*, *možə*.

In the Russian subdialect /e/ in its basic variant is realised in the stressed syllables. In the unstressed syllables the realisation of /e/ is determined by its position in relation to the stressed syllable. In the syllable directly before the stress the neutralisation of /a/ : /o/ : /e/ – [Λ] takes place. The subdialect is characterised by strong yakanye, e.g., *s'Λstr'a*, *z'Λrn'o*, *p'Λ'sok*, *d'Λt'ej*, *nə z'Λm'l'i*, *v'Λrst'u*. The neutralisation may also occur after formerly palatal *ž*, *š*, *c* and after non-palatal *č*, e.g., *žΛg'avə*, *pšΛn'ica*, *cΛn'a*, *čΛtyr'i*. The yakanye is not carried out consistently, because also in this position /e/ may be realised by (e) or (è), which remain in a mutually complementary distribution: *e* is pronounced before a hard consonant, and *è* – before a soft consonant, e.g., *d'ef'aty*, *b'ér'ozə*. The realisation /e/ : /i/ – [i] occurs rarely: *n'i ma*, *s'ivodn'i*. In the examples, where there is no yakanye after *ž*, *š*, *c* and non-palatal *č*, we note /a/ : /o/ : /e/ – [ə], e.g., *šəst'ox*, *čərv'ak*, *cərk'ovnajə*. In more distant syllables before and after the stress, there is /e/ – (è) or /e/ : /i/ – [i]. Both realisations are carried out optionally, e.g., *d'iv'Λn'ostə*, *d'ér'ev'en'*.

In the German language: front, unrounded, narrow /e/ – (e:), e.g., *leben*, *beten*, occurs in the stressed syllable, the short variant (e) exists in the weak syllables; front, unrounded, wide /ε/ is also present, e.g., *wessen*, *messen*.

The front, unrounded, wide ε, e.g., *wählen*, *Väter*, is a vowel of unidentified phonological status [Czochralski 1994: 44]. In the unstressed syllables *ə* – central, unrounded, wide vowel – is pronounced. There is a tendency towards the full reduction of this vowel [Czochralski 1994: 45]. The group of middle phonemes also includes two front rounded ones: the narrow /φ/, which has the variants (φ:), (φ), e.g., *mögen*, *hören*, and the wide /œ/: *können*.

In the Polish subdialects of Suwałki, Sejny and the Masurian subdialects /e/ is mainly pronounced as (e). In rare examples the narrow *é* and its continuants *i*, *y* also occur, e.g., *jěš*, *xl'ép*, *f cypecku* [Zdancewicz 1966: 29; 1980: 35]; *kolěpka*, *xlyf*, *śńik* [A. Basara 1987: 25, 26]. In the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects a similar pronunciation, but limited in terms of distribution to the unstressed syllables, is caused by the tendency – characteristic of the eastern Polish subdialects – to raise the articulation of *e* to *é*, *i* and *y*, e.g., *b' idujé*, *ćilica*, *šćyćina*, *žifčyny*, *na kanap'i*, *tob'i*, *dostańi*, *nabeży* [Zdancewicz 1966: 29, 30; 1980: 39]. Regardless of the stress, the narrowing of the vowels takes place in the proximity of the sonorants. This leads to the neutralisation of /e/ : /i/ – [i], [y]. Therefore, the phoneme /e/ has a narrower distribution than in the general Polish language, in favour of /i/, it also has the optional variant of (è) apart from the basic variant. A vanishing tendency in the Sejny subdialects, noted only in a small number of examples, usually shared with

the Belarusian language or constituting Belarusian relics, is pronouncing /e/ as *a* in the unstressed syllables, i.e., /e/ : /a/ – [a], e.g., *lakarstfa, vasela, ta pola** [Zdancewicz 1966: 26].

back middle /o/

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in all the centres the phoneme /o/ is most frequently realised as (o), but other realisations were also noted:

- in the stressed syllable in the Masurian centre I noted /o/ – (ò), e.g., *póśćel, čšy kòńi, óńi, na csónku* and the tendency towards the neutralisation of /o/ in favour of /u/, e.g., *želune, cuś, puśćel, uńi, pušli, sūuvo*;

- in the unstressed syllable in all the centres the neutralisation of /o/ : /a/ – [a] is quite frequent, e.g., *staradavńi, razžućili, pagnali, ardynator, aperacje, advenżiū, rap'eli, razum'ał, zvalńili, umażyli, nač'uj, razb'ito, bųagosųav'enstvo*, raspalili, dakumenty, pamarančove, kamary, razmav'ajo, agurk'i*. Especially large numbers of examples were noted in the coda. In this position /o/ : /a/ : /e/ – [a], e.g., *spora jest gżybuř, šli cała l'ata, tyl'e była narodu k'edyś, tak'e żyto vyrośła, teres te,x para została, v'encej luży še rozmnożyła, naboženstva benže, čšeba byųa še oščegać, zapal'eńe pośųa*, in proclitics: *da Smolńik*.

I noted the neutralisation /o/ : /a/ : /e/ – [a] in the examples: *v dakumentax, v l'ata, vyv' idiała, była, koła, čensta, xorovał v l'ata, ja mała nie płakał, byųa, niska, tylka, da lasu*. This realisation is more often encountered in the idioms of informants of the Masurian centre. In the Masurian centre the narrow variant of /o/ – (ò) occurs frequently as well, e.g., *koćóų, óšemżeśont, óxrońių, m'otųò, pòųożyli, ótxovali*.

In the Masurian centre I noted very numerous cases of the neutralisation of /o/ : /u/ – [u], e.g., *upłaćili, bųugosųav'ili, subota, koćuų, grumady, maluvaųa, gutovać, puųożyli, ušemżeśont, buxeneček, vyčungneli, sulony*.

In the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres this feature occurs only occasionally: *upłaćili, užeńių*.

In the Russian subdialect /o/ is realised as (o) only when stressed. In the unstressed syllables the neutralisation⁶ /o/ : /a/ occurs, and as a result reduced vowels appear which in the same positions are also the variants of /a/.

⁶ “pod przyciskiem po spółgłoskach miękkich o, e mogą się wymieniać w zależności od twardości lub miękkości następującej spółgłoski [...] powstaje zatem kwestia, czy w odpowiednich zgłoskach nie akcentowanych należy mówić o redukcji samogłoski o czy też e. Niezależnie od tego, czy redukcji ulega o czy e, wynik jest zawsze identyczny. [...] nie próbując rozstrzygać tej kwestii, notuję je wszystkie pod e” [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 46].

(“As a result of the stress, after soft consonants, o, e may alternate depending on the hardness or softness of the following consonant [...] therefore the question arises if, in the relevant unstressed syllables, we should speak about the reduction of the vowel o or e. Regardless of whether o or e is reduced, the result is always identical. [...] I do not try to resolve this issue and I note all of them under e.”)

The subdialect is characterised by strong akanye. In the first syllable before the stress: /o/ : /a/ : /e/ – [Λ], e.g., *mΛt'ot'ut*, *nΛg'am*. In the unstressed onset: /o/ : /a/ – [a], e.g., *ab'orə*. In the second syllable before the stress and in the syllables after the stress: /o/ : /a/ – [ə], e.g., *kəmΛr'y*, *kəl'Λs'o*, *p'arəčku*, while in the third syllable before the stress /a/ : /o/ – [Λ], e.g., *pΛnəkryš'at'.*

In the German language there are two front back phonemes: the unrounded, narrow /o/ has two variants: in stressed syllables (o:), in unstressed syllables (o), e.g., *Obst*, *Mod'ell*; the back, unrounded, wide /ə/ has one basic variant, e.g., *toll*.

In the mazuration Suwałki-Sejny and Masurian subdialects the phoneme /o/ may be realised by (o) regardless of the position of the stress. In the Suwałki and Masurian subdialects the narrow ó occurs: *głófk'i*, *góp*, *skóra*, *dróska* [Zdancewicz 1980: 34; A. Basara 1987: 27]. In the Sejny subdialects the continuant of ó is most frequently pronounced as u [Zdancewicz 1966: 40]. The phoneme /o/ has a wider range of occurrence in the subdialects, as it may occur in the position of the general Polish /u/ derived from /ó/. In the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects, as was the case with *e*, in the unstressed syllables and in the proximity of sonorants there is a phonetic tendency to reduce *o*, which leads to the neutralisation of /o/ : /u/ – [u], e.g., *buberek*, *dulina*, *pugoda* [Zdancewicz 1980: 39; 1966: 26]. In the Sejny subdialects rare examples of /o/ : /a/ – [a] were noted, mostly in the Belarusian relics and the Russian borrowings, rarely in the Polish words, e.g., *bałbotać*, *kamanda* [Zdancewicz 1966: 26].

high front /i/

In the Polish language of the Old Believers the phoneme /i/ is most frequently realised by its basic variant. In the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres widenings are rare. Only occasional examples were noted: *ńe p'eł*, *śv'eronek*. In the Masurian centre /i/ is realised as (i) even after hard consonants, e.g., *biya*, *tilko*, *vič's'imali*, *visok'i*, *vijexali*. The middle variant (y') also occurs there, e.g., *by'ili*, *roby'ili*. I occasionally noted *Y* – the German rounded vowel, only in the word *bYli*.

In the Russian subdialect the phoneme /i/ is realised by (i) after soft consonants and by (y) after hard consonants.

In the German language: the front, unrounded, narrow /i/ has the following variants: in the syllable with strong and medium stress: (i:), e.g., *Bier*; in syllables with weak stress: (i), or nonsyllabic (ĩ), e.g., *Linie*; there is also the front, unrounded, wide /I/, as in the words: *nicht*, *Tinte*. The front rounded vowels are: the narrow /y/ – with the following variants: in the stressed syllable (y:), in the weak syllable (y), e.g., *Tür*, *für* – and the wide /Y/, as in the word *würde*.

In the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects *i* in the groups *-ir-*, *-yr-* may have a widened pronunciation, like *e*, which leads to the neutralisation in this

position in the phonological system: /i/ : /e/ – [e], e.g., *śf'eronek*, *žver* [Zdancewicz 1980: 37]. In these subdialects, as well as in the Masurian subdialects, as a result of the occurrence of the narrow *e* and its development which differs from that in the general Polish language, /i/ has a wider range of occurrence at the expense of /e/.

In the Masurian subdialects the variants of phoneme /i/: (i), (y), (y') have not got the positional complementary distribution, since frequently even after hard phonemes /i/ is realised by (i), (y') [A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959: 7].

high back /u/

In the Polish language of the Old Believers the phoneme /u/ is usually pronounced as (u). In the Suwałki-Sejny, Augustów and Masurian centres the examples of /u/ : /v/ – [v] were quite frequently noted in the preposition *u*, e.g.,

*v'ńevo te duže m'eškańe, to v'ńego to by mogli (mieszkać); mał końcik v'ojcu**; *v'jej matk'i; byu v'ojca; v'žatka zapalić broń boże; v'Alošk'e byu; to v'Alošk'i paliu; ja v'jego bende ležau; v'p'ivńicy v'jednej sonšatk'i šeželi.*

A narrower range of occurrence of /u/ in favour of /o/ were noted in rare examples from all the centres, e.g., *mov'i, fpšot, znof*, vdol, cerkfof*, doktorof*, Grondof*, psof**.

In the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers in each position /u/ is realised as (u). It may, however, be pronounced as *v, f* in the place of unstressed *u* in the onset, e.g., *vb'ir'at', vm'ir'at'*, in the preposition *u*, e.g., *v nas n'i dAŋ'ut s'v'atA* and in the particle *uže* [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 51].

In the German language the back, unrounded, narrow /u/ is realised in the stressed syllable as (u:), in a weak syllable in the shortened variant (u), e.g., *suchen, nur*; there also appears the back, unrounded, wide /U/, e.g., *und, dumm*.

In the Polish subdialects of Suwałki and Sejny, in the vicinity of sonorants, a widening of the pronunciation of *u* and the neutralisation /u/ : /o/ – [o] may take place, e.g., *žorav'iny, bečołka, koropatfy* [Zdancewicz 1980: 36].

Nasal phonemes⁷

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in all the centres an asynchronous pronunciation of nasal vowels in the nucleus predominates (biphonematic

⁷ Following Z. Stieber [1966], I assume the existence of two nasal phonemes, although I realise that in more recent works their existence is questioned, since the modern phonetic studies have shown that, to a certain extent, the nasals are always pronounced in a polysegmental manner [Tambor, Ostaszewska 1993: 36]. The pronunciation which is traditionally called synchronous or vocalic is clearly distinguishable “by ear” from the asynchronous, consonantal pronunciation, and in the positions before fricatives it differentiates the subdialectal pronunciation from the literary one, which is of paramount importance for the presented description.

realisation), even before fricatives, e.g., *monš, genśi, vons, jenzyk*. Sometimes, however, in the speech of the young people, a synchronous pronunciation before fricatives occurs, e.g., *mǫš, język, ćęško*. In the nucleus, only in the Masurian centre, two examples of the pronunciation of *u* instead of *o* were noted: *zefšut, zasnuł*. In the coda the denasalised pronunciation prevails, e.g., *našo v'are, ma źefčynke, s fašysto, źimovo poro, šeži z babo*, but there were also noted rare cases of the asynchronous realisation of the back nasal sound: *lekaš jom doglonda, nie rob'om kutja, sum*, and of the synchronous realisation of both nasals: *zostaće mnie jednǫ źefčynkę*. I noted the neutralisation /ɛ/ : /e/ : /a/ – [a]* in the coda in a few examples only: *cała naša kuxńa by zajeli, monka teš čšeba, m'eli gospodarka*.

In the Russian language there are no nasals. In words etymologically common for both languages, the Polish *ę* after a soft consonant usually corresponds to Russian *a*, also after the soft consonant, and the Polish *o* corresponds to Russian *u* after a hard consonant [Dulewiczowa 1993: 38].

In the German language there are no nasal vowels, either. However, P. Smoczyński observes that

połączenia ustnych samogłosek i nosowych spółgłosek w położeniu przed spółgłoskami zwartymi i zwartoszczelinowymi nie są obce językowi niemieckiemu i dlatego w istocie nie przyczyniają też Niemcom trudności. Rzecz jasna pod warunkiem, że nie będą oni stosunków polskich traktować literowo i na sposób francuski, czyli wymówią rozbitą nosówkę [...] jednak w niezgodzie z wymogami języka polskiego pozostaje uogólnienie opisanej tendencji także na pozycje przed spółgłoskami szczelinowymi: chodzi o wymowę [e o + nS] lub nawet o specyficznie niemiecki wariant z *η* tylnojęzykowym, czyli [e o + ηS]. Wariant ten, z uwagi na niemieckie niezależne *η* tylnojęzykowe, jest tam szczególnie narzucający się, daje się słyszeć nierzadko nawet jako [g]. [...] Wskazane oba rodzaje wymowy trafiają się w praktyce często [Smoczyński 1965: 25].

(combinations of oral vowels and nasal consonants in the position before stop consonants and affricates are not alien to the German language and, therefore, they are not really difficult for German people. Obviously provided that they do not treat Polish patterns literally and in a French manner, namely that they pronounce a split nasal consonant [...] however, the application of the said tendency also to the positions before fricative consonants remains incompatible with the rules of the Polish language: I mean pronunciation of [e o + nS] or even specifically German variant with velar *η*, namely [e o + ηS]. This variant, because of the German independent velar *η*, is very popular there, it is quite frequently heard even as [g]. [...] In practice, both presented types of pronunciation occur frequently.)

In the Polish subdialects in the analysed territory, nasal phonemes /o/ and /ɛ/ may be realised in two manners: synchronous and denasalised. The asynchronous pronunciation consists in combining two phonemes: /o/ + /n/, /m/. In the literary Polish language the synchronous pronuncia-

tion in the nucleus is possible only before fricatives. In the Suwałki, Sejny and Masurian subdialects nasal vowels before fricatives may be realised both in synchronous and asynchronous manners [Zdancewicz 1980: 45; 1966: 47; A. Basara 1987: 29]. In all the said subdialects denasalisation predominates in the coda [Zdancewicz 1966: 37; A. Basara 1987: 29]. Denasalisation may also occur in the nucleus, not only before *t* and *l* [Zdancewicz 1980: 44; 1966: 48; A. Basara 1987: 29]. In the Sejny subdialects, in the coda, as a result of *akanye*, the neutralisation of /ɛ/ : /e/ : /a/ – [a]* in the accusative occurs, e.g., *za belka* [Zdancewicz 1966: 37–38]. In the Masurian subdialects /ɔ/ : /o/ : /u/ – [u], [ɔ] was noted, e.g., *zómp*, *żeśuntý* [A. Basara 1987: 28].

3.1.2. Consonantism

The oppositions relevant to the three languages in contact regard the place of articulation and the degree of opening of the vocal organs. The German language does not know the Polish and Russian oppositions of soft vs hard and voiced vs voiceless consonants. On the other hand, in the German language there is the phonological opposition, unknown in Polish and Russian, as regards the strength of tension of the vocal organs (strength of articulation), which divides consonants into tense and lax. This opposition occurs in the Polish language as irrelevant and overlaps with the phonological opposition of voice in such a manner that the voiceless consonants are always tense and voiced consonants are always lax. In the German language lax voiceless consonants and voiced consonants (which are always lax) remain in complementary distribution [Laskowski 1993: 508].

I take into account those oppositions which are the source of interference, namely: Hard / Soft and Voiced / Voiceless. I treat as secondary the oppositions as regards the degree of opening of the vocal organs and the place of articulation. I focus on the characteristics of the subdialects which are of interest to me, and which are signs of interference in the Polish language of the Old Believers. Therefore, while describing the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers, I will not consider the realisation of consonant phonemes present also in the literary Russian language, nor will I do so for phonemes present in the literary Polish language during the description of the Polish subdialects and the Polish language of the Old Believers.⁸

⁸ The comparison of the distribution of soft and hard consonants in literary Russian and literary Polish can be found in grammars of the Russian language [cf. Grzybowski, Olechnowicz, Wawrzyńczak 1986]. The persons interested in the detailed studies on the phonology of the Polish language can refer to Stieber 1958, 1966; Ostaszewska, Tambor 1993, and as regards the phonology of Russian – the book by M. Panov [1979].

3.1.2.1. The Correlation of Softness

3.1.2.1.1. The Paradigmatic Axis

In the Polish language of the Old Believers the following phonemes remain in the correlation of softness:

– labial

/b/ – /b'/, /p/ – /p'/, /m/ – /m'/, /v/ – /v'/, /f/ – /f'/;

– lingual (coronal, palatal and velar)

In the Suwałki-Sejny centre:

/s/, /c/, /z/, /ʒ/ – /ś/, /ć/, /ź/, /ʒ'/

or /s/, /c/, /z/, /ʒ/ – /s'/, /c'/, /z'/, /ʒ'/.

In the Augustów centre the series of semi-palatal dental coronal does not exist, only: /s/, /c/, /z/, /ʒ/ – /ś/, /ć/, /ź/, /ʒ'/.

In the Masurian centre: /s/, /c/, /z/, /ʒ/ – /š'/, /č'/, /ž'/, /ʒ'/ or /s/, /c/, /z/, /ʒ/ – /ś/, /ć/, /ź/, /ʒ'/. In all the centres: /n/ – /ń/.

Remaining outside the correlation are: /d/, /t/, /l/, /r/, /ł/, /š/, /č/, /ž/, /ʒ'/, /k/, /g/, /x/.

In the Russian subdialect the following phonemes are in the correlation of softness:⁹

– labial

/p/ – /p'/, /b/ – /b'/, /m/ – /m'/, /f/ – /f'/, /v/ – /v'/;

– coronal

/t/ – /t'/, /d/ – /d'/, /s/ – /s'/, /z/ – /z'/, /n/ – /ń/, /l/ – /l'/, /r/ – /r'/.

In the Augustów centre and in some idiolects of the Suwałki-Sejny centre there is a series of palatal consonants /ś/, /ć/, /ź/, /ʒ'/, which replaced /t'/, /d'/, /s'/, /z'/. Outside the opposition are /š/, /ž/, /č'/.

– palatal and velar

Remaining outside the opposition are /j/, /k/, /g/, /x/. In the Russian subdialect, like in the literary Russian language,¹⁰ I assume, following the grammar by M. V. Panov [1979: 144] that the softness of *k'*, *g'*, *x'* is not a phonological feature, because these soft consonants appear only in the position before the front vowels *e* and *i*. At the same time, the right-side adjacency of these vowels excludes the occurrence of hard velar consonants. Therefore it should be concluded that *k'*, *g'*, *x'* are positional variants of /k/, /g/, /x/.

⁹ The presented elements of a description of the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers were prepared by myself on the basis of the work by I. Grek-Pabisowa [1968: 56–70] and a grammar of the Russian language [Grzybowski, Olechnowicz, Wawrzyńczak 1986: 133–134].

¹⁰ In the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers there are no differences as regards the realisation of velar consonants and their soft counterparts in comparison with the literary language [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 63].

In the Suwałki, Sejny and Masurian subdialects of Polish the following phonemes are in the correlation of softness:

– labial¹¹

/b/ – /b'/, /p/ – /p'/, /m/ – /m'/, /v/ – /v'/, /f/ – /f'/;

There is no correlation of labial consonants in the Masurian subdialect in idiolects which feature only the asynchronous pronunciation of labial consonants. However, in practice there are essentially no idiolects with consistent asynchronous pronunciation.¹²

– coronal and velar

/n/ – /ń/ – in correlation; outside correlation: /d/, /t/, /l/, /r/, /ł/, /ś/, /ć/, /ż/, /ź/, in the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects also /k/, /g/, /x/. In the Polish subdialects the opposition of softness in velar phonemes may occur in the position before front vowels. This opposition first appeared in the Greater Polish and Lesser Polish subdialects, then in the literary language, but it did not appear in the Masovian subdialects and in the related subdialects of Suwałki, Sejny and Masuria [Dejna 1973: 124–129]. As K. Dejna observes

Ten wielkopolsko-małopolski system z miękkimi fonemami tylnojęzykowymi – poparty autorytetem języka ogólnopolskiego – oddziaływał na gwary, które nie miały warunków do samodzielnego wytworzenia opozycji *k'e, g'e* : *ke, ge*. Nie zawsze jednak to oddziaływanie doprowadziło do zmiany systemu. Naśladowanie bowiem uważanej za lepszą wymowy *k', g'* przez ludzi wymawiających dotąd twarde lub niedostrzegalnie zmiękczone *k'e, g'e, x'e* może doprowadzić do przyswojenia typów: *polsk'i, polsk'e, drog'i, drog'e, k'edy, cuk'erek, k'elišek*, ale bardzo często temu przyswojeniu towarzyszy hiperpoprawne wprowadzenie miękkości do grup *ke, ge* < *k'e, g'e*: *f Polsk'e, na drog'e, t'uk'e, mog'e, reńk'e, nog'e, k'empa, g'emba, g'ęs* itp. Nawet tak obfite, ale przesadne i bezładne wprowadzenie wymowy miękkich *k'e, g'e*, nie zmienia systemu fonologicznego gwar, w których pary wyrazów *drog'e* i *na droge, polsk'e* i *f Polske* nie mogą stać się podstawą wytworzenia opozycji fonologicznej w zakresie tylnojęzykowych fonemów [Dejna 1973: 128].

(This Greater Polish and Lesser Polish system with soft velar phonemes – supported by the authority of the general Polish language – had an impact on the subdialects, which did not have opportunities to individually create the opposition *k'e, g'e* : *ke, ge*. However, this impact not always resulted in the change of the system. For the imitating of the pronunciation *k', g'* – considered to be superior – by people pronouncing so far hard or indiscernibly softened *k'e, g'e, x'e* may lead to acquisition of the types: *polsk'i, polsk'e, drog'i, drog'e, k'edy, cuk'erek, k'elišek*,

¹¹ Since I have assumed that /i/ has got the positional variants (i), (y), I recognise the phonologicality of soft labial consonants, based on the description by Z. Stieber [1966].

¹² This is proved by research conducted in the 1950s. Even then the researchers noticed the impact of the literary language on the subdialects and the variantivity of the pronunciation of labial consonants, even within one idiolect [A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959: 20–24, 72].

but this acquisition is very often accompanied by the hypercorrect introduction of softness to the groups: *ke, ge < kę, gę*: *f Polsk'e, na drog'e, tłu'k'e, mog'e, reń'k'e, nog'e, k'empa, g'emba, g'ęś*, etc. Even such frequent but exaggerated and chaotic introduction of pronunciation of the soft *k'e, g'e* does not change the phonological system of the subdialects, in which the pairs of words *drog'e* and *na droge, polsk'e* and *f Polske* cannot become the basis of creation of the phonological opposition as regards velar phonemes.)

The following phonemes are in correlation: /s/, /c/, /z/, /ʒ/ – /ś/, /ć/, /ź/, /ż/; this correlation is in line with the general Polish norm and occurs in the Suwałki and Sejny subdialectal systems. In some idiolects in these subdialects, coronal dental – semi-palatal consonants are more frequent: /s/, /c/, /z/, /ʒ/ – /s'/, /c'/, /z'/, /ʒ'/. In the Masurian subdialects the correlation is as follows: /s/, /c/, /z/, /ʒ/ – /š', /č', /ž', /ž'/.¹³ The oppositions /k/ – /k'/, /g/ – /g'/, /x/ – /x'/ are present only in the eastern Masurian subdialects, where the phonemes /k'/, /g'/, /x'/ were created in the position before *a^e*, being the continuant of short *a*: *matka^e, curka^e* [Dejna 1973: 128–129; A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959: 199–202]. The distribution of soft and hard velar phonemes before *a^e* was infringed by the influences of the general Polish language even in the 1950s [A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959: 199–202].

3.1.2.1.2. The Syntagmatic Axis

– Labial phonemes

In the Polish language of the Old Believers soft labial phonemes are realised in a synchronous manner in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres. The phenomena connected with the asynchronous pronunciation, namely the pronunciation of the type *śfat*, were noted by me in only two examples: *śfata, śfadectfe* and the examples *roveramy**, *samy**, in which the morphologised phenomenon of reducing the consonantal group of *m'* by omitting its soft component had already occurred.¹⁴ In turn, in the Masurian centre the synchronous pronunciation occurs along with the asynchronous pronunciation with the isolation of the palatal element, e.g., *pśić, zabźili, bźały, bjały, px'ekli*.

In the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers, like in the literary language, soft labial phonemes are realised synchronously.¹⁵ In the position at the end of a word, labial consonants become voiceless and lose their palatal nature, e.g., *prorup, krof* [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 57].

¹³ The series /š', /č', /ž', /ž'/ appeared in place of two series: alveolar and palatal. It is connected with phonemes /s/, /c/, /z/, /ʒ/ as regards the correlation of softness, although its realisation occurred through alveopalatal variants [Dejna 1973: 107].

¹⁴ Cf. Dejna 1973: 123.

¹⁵ The phonetic differences between soft consonants in Polish and Russian are described in the grammar of the Russian language by Grzybowski, Olechnowicz and Wawrzyńczak [1986: 29].

In the Suwałki mazuration subdialects and in the Sejny subdialects, soft labial phonemes are realised synchronously by their basic variants in accordance with the literary norm. In the Masurian subdialects the synchronous pronunciation occurs together with the asynchronous pronunciation, which predominates there [A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959: 20–24]. The asynchronous pronunciation of consonants characteristic of the Masurian subdialect leads to the removal of the soft labial phonemes from the phonological system and to replacing them with biphonematic combinations of a relevant hard phoneme with a spirant phoneme, e.g., /p/ + /j/ or /p/ + /ś/ or /p/ + /x/.¹⁶

The two-phoneme groups created as a result of dividing soft labial phonemes may be subject to simplifications through omitting one phoneme. In this situation the pronunciation of the following type takes place: *ośara, źilk* [Dejna 1973: 122; A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959: 17, 18]. When the reduction of the consonantal group results from the omission of the spirant, the following pronunciation occurs: *śfat, ćfortka* [Dejna 1973: 122]. Also encountered in the Masurian subdialects are rare examples of the depalatalisation of soft labial consonants: *penta, peśń* [A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959: 20]. Although in the Suwałki subdialects the asynchronous pronunciation of soft labial consonants does not occur, examples related to this pronunciation were noted there: the omission of the spirant phoneme, that is the pronunciation of the following type: *śfat, źvyr, ćfeki, meźv'ec* [Zdancewicz 1980: 57] and the hypercorrect replacement of etymological *ń* with *m*: *mitka* [Zdancewicz 1980: 57].

– Coronal and palatal phonemes

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in the Suwałki-Sejny centre, apart from the general Polish opposition coronal : palatal /s/, /c/, /z/, /z/ : /ś/, /ć/, /ź/, /ź/, realised by basic variants only, other cases are also possible: /s/, /c/, /z/, /z/ : /ś/, /ć/, /ź/, /ź/ (s'), (c'), (z'), (z') or /s/, /c/, /z/, /z/ : /s'/, /c'/, /z'/, /z'/ (ś), (ć), (ź), (ź). These variants are in complementary distribution with the basic variants. In rare examples of the Suwałki-Sejny centre I noted the variants /ź/ (d'), /ć/ (t'), e.g., *d'et'ak, nud'ita še, na fundam'ent'e, v'id'ała, t'el'ev'izor, d'efčynka*. In the Augustów centre I only noted the general Polish realisation of the opposition coronal : palatal /s/, /c/, /z/, /z/ : /ś/, /ć/, /ź/, /ź/. In the Masurian centre the general Polish opposition occurs – coronal : palatal /s/, /c/, /z/, /z/ : /ś/, /ć/, /ź/, /ź/, realised by basic variants, as well as the opposition coronal : soft alveolar /s/, /c/, /z/, /z/ : /š', /č', /ž', /ž'.

In the Russian subdialect, like in the literary Russian language, in the group of coronal and velar consonants the correlation of softness is

¹⁶ The phenomenon of asynchronous pronunciation of labial consonants in the Polish subdialects, taking into account all the spirants, is thoroughly discussed in studies on dialectology, e.g., by K. Dejna [1973: 119] and those concerning the Masurian subdialects [A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959: 16–33].

developed better than in the Polish language, because phonemes /t/, /d/, /r/ have phonological soft oppositions. This subdialect differs from the literary Russian language in that it features the additional variants /tʲ/, /dʲ/, similar to the affricates (cʲ), (zʲ), e.g., *buʒʲišʲ, cʲomnyj* [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 58]. These variants were noted in the 1950s, mainly in the spoken language of children of the Augustów centre [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 58]. I observed that this tendency had developed in the Russian subdialect very quickly. Nowadays the variants (cʲ), (zʲ) are found in the majority of the idiolects of the Old Believers from the Suwałki-Sejny and Masurian centres. In turn, the Augustów centre has seen the full palatalisation of the whole series so that the subdialect of that area has got the palatal phonemes /ś/, /ć/, /ź/, /ʒ/, which are almost always expressed by their basic variants, e.g., *pajʒʲoće, pəglʲaʒʲiće*. In the Russian subdialect the phoneme /čʲ/, being outside the phonological correlation of softness, has got its optional non-palatal variant (č), e.g., *pʲeč, čʲornyj* [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 61–62].

In the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects, the following palatal phonemes are in opposition to /s/, /c/, /z/, /ʒ/ as regards softness: /ś/, /ć/, /ź/, /ʒ/; those – except for basic variants – have their optional semi-palatal variants (sʲ), (cʲ), (zʲ), (ʒʲ). The Masurian subdialect has undergone the neutralisation of alveolar with palatal series /ś/, /ć/, /ź/, /ʒ/ : /ś/, /ć/, /ź/, /ʒ/ – [šʲ], [čʲ], [ʒʲ], [ʒʲ], and the alveopalatal /šʲ/, /čʲ/, /ʒʲ/, /ʒʲ/ are now in opposition to /s/, /c/, /z/, /ʒ/ [Dejna 1973: 107].¹⁷

– Sonorant phonemes

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres I usually noted hard /n/ before /č/, /c/, /s/, e.g., *panstvo, naboženstvo, tančyli, tance*. In the Masurian centre a tendency towards the depalatalisation of *ń* takes place: *ostatny, na ojcyżne* (zostali), *kone, konskʲi, studna, konečńe, nebeskʲe*. The phoneme /r/ in all the centres is rarely pronounced in a palatal manner, therefore it has the optional variant (rʲ): *dojarʲke, kuxarʲke, čarʲny, čterʲi, kurʲki, garʲki, ogurʲki*. The phoneme /l/ in all the centres has got the palatalised variant (lʲ). This variant most frequently occurs before vowels of the front series, but it also sometimes appears in other positions, so it is optional: *lʲas, lʲepšy, lʲežy, tylʲko, naučyčelʲka*. The phoneme /ɫ/ is not represented only by its main variant in any idiolect. The optional variant (ɫ̞) occurs apart from the basic one. In some idiolects an /ɫ̞/ occurs which is only occasionally, or never, realised by (ɫ), e.g., *maɫa : maɫa; mɫody : młody*. In the Masurian centre rare cases of mixing /ɫ/ and /l/ take place: *mala, mlućić, młyn, młody, plaćić*.

Both in the literary Russian language and in the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers, the hard phoneme /n/ appears before the consonants /č/, /c/, /s/. In the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers the phonemes /r/ and /rʲ/

¹⁷ I elaborate on this topic in the description of the next correlation: S-Ś-Š.

have a distribution that is different than in the literary language. Palatal and non-palatal *r* occurring in the positions in which in the literary Russian language only palatal *r*' occurs is a feature of the Pskov subdialects [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 59–61]. The soft : hard opposition between the phonemes /l'/ : /ł/, which is present in the literary language, in many idiolects is infirmed, because /ł/ is replaced with /ɹ/.¹⁸

In the German language trilled /r/ occurs in two optional variants: (R) and (r).¹⁹ Lateral /l/ is only hard, there is no /ł/. Apart from alveolar /n/, velar /ŋ/ appears [Czochralski 1994: 59–60].

In the Suwałki, Sejny and Masurian subdialects the phoneme /r/ has not got its soft variant, while /l/ may be realised as soft (l'). In the Sejny and Suwałki subdialects, before the phonemes /č/, /c/, /s/, instead of the general Polish /ń/, the hard phoneme /n/ occurs [Zdancewicz 1966: 57]. In the Masurian subdialect the depalatalisations of *ń* take place irrespective of the neighbouring sounds [A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959: 80].

– Velar phonemes

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in all the centres examples have been noted when *k', g' or x'* is pronounced in place of the general Polish *k* before *e* originating from denasalised *ę*: *saži tabak'e, dostaja žayk'e, jedne žonk'e m'ay, x'iba, trox'e, nog'e*. In the Masurian centre also: *g'ensty, k'empty*. In the Polish language of the Old Believers soft velar consonants are not phonemes but variants of hard velar phonemes. In the Masurian centre in one example I noted soft *x'* also before *a*: *pojax'ali*. In the Polish language of the Old Believers in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres there is *ɣ*, noted in sporadic examples: *ɣudovali, ɣanća* (in name of the river Czarna Hańcza).

In the Russian subdialect the phoneme /g/ has also its voiced fricative variant (ɣ), but it occurs optionally in a small number of words: *d'en'ɣ'i, dAr'oyə* [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 63].

In the Suwałki subdialects many examples have been noted with soft *k', g', x'* in comparison to the general Polish hard *k, g, x*: *ńe mog'e, čapk'e zder*

¹⁸ While conducting the research at the turn of the 1960s, I. Grek-Pabisowa noticed:

“Spółgłoska *ł* w ośrodku białostockim bardzo często wymawiana jest jako *ɹ*. Taka wymowa charakteryzuje całą młodszą generację wszystkich wsi starowierskich ośrodka białostockiego oraz całą ludność wsi Bór w powiecie augustowskim. Natomiast graniczącej z Borem wsi Gabowe Grądy w mowie starszej generacji *ɹ* niezgłoskotwórczego się nie słyszy. Na Mazurach *ɹ* zanotowałam tylko kilkakrotnie. [...]. Niezgłoskotwórcze *ɹ* wymawiane jest w ośrodku białostockim pod wpływem języka polskiego” [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 59].

(“In the Białystok centre the consonant *ł* is very often pronounced as *ɹ*. Such pronunciation is characteristic of the entire younger generation of all the Old Believer villages of the Białystok centre and all the inhabitants of the village Bór in the Augustów powiat. In turn, in the village Gabowe Grądy, which is located next to Bór, in the speech of the older generation non-syllabic *ɹ* is not heard. In Masuria I noted *ɹ* only a few times. [...]. Non-syllabic *ɹ* is pronounced in the Białystok centre under the influence of the Polish language.”)

¹⁹ The phonetic realisation of these variants is discussed by J. Czochralski [1994: 61–62].

[Zdanciewicz 1980: 77–79] and with soft *x'* in comparison to the general Polish *x* in the Sejny subdialects: *x'ity* [Zdanciewicz 1966: 61]. A great instability of the realisation of hard velar phonemes in the position before front vowels, but with the predominance of palatalisation, was also noted in the Masurian subdialects [A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959: 195–199].

3.1.2.2. The Correlation of Dental : Palatal : Alveolar /S/ : /Š/ : /Ź/²⁰

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres I have never noted the mazuration (Pl: *mazurzenie*) of /S/ : /Š/ – [S] or the mixing of series of /S/ : /Š/ : /Ź/ – [Š]. In the Suwałki-Sejny centre, instead of consonants of the palatal series Š, in some idiolects consonants of the semi-palatal series S' inconsistently occur. The frequency of their usage determines whether one or the other of these consonants serves as the phoneme or the variant, e.g., *ž'ec'i*, *pov'ež'ał*, *c'eb'e*, *s'ay*, *z'em'a*. In the Masurian centre I noted the inconsistent – even within one idiolect – mazuration /S/ : /Š/ – [S]: *jesce*, *m'iska* ('mieszka,' '[s/he] lives,' as opposed to general Polish: *miska* 'bowl'), *sedli*, *capka*, *žnivo*, *carny*, *ruzove*. The characteristic feature of the Polish language in the Masurian centre is the occurrence of alveolar palatal sounds of the series Š', e.g., *fš'istko*, *pš'eč'imali*, *pš'iš'et*, *zabž'ic*, *č'asto*, *č'es'k'i*. Consonants of the alveopalatal series are the result (archiphoneme) of the neutralisation /Š/ : /Ź/ – [Š']. Their phonological status may be two-fold and depends on the frequency of occurrence in the particular idiolect. Consonants of the series Š' are the common optional variants of phonemes of the series /Š/ and /Ź/, when they are relatively rare or, when they are more frequent, they are phonemes usually represented by their basic variants and, less frequently, by the optional variants (Š), (Ź). The characteristic feature of the Polish language of the Old Believers in the Masurian centre is replacing consonants of the series /Š/ with consonants of the series /Ź/, e.g., *pšeščeradyo*, *ošemžešont*, *dvažešča*, *žymno*, *rožyce*, *časny*, *často*.

In the Russian subdialect there is the correlation between dental : semi-palatal : alveolar /S/ : /S' / : /Š/ or /S/ : /Š/ : /Ź/ (except for *ž*, *ž*).

The German language in its consonantal system has no palatal series š, č, ž, ž and no alveolar ž, č, either.

In the Polish Suwałki subdialects of the mazuration type the system of this correlation has become simplified by elimination the alveolar consonants. Thus, in the phonological system of these subdialects the neutralisation /S/ : /Š/ – [S] developed [Zdanciewicz 1980: 61–67; Dejna 1973: 103–105]. In numerous examples from the described territory the mixing of the dental, palatal and alveolar series was noted. Instead of alveolar Š and dental S resulting from the mazuration, palatal Š occur, e.g., *košula* [Zdanciewicz 1980: 68–69]. In these examples the neutralisation /S/ : /Š/ : /Ź/ – [Š] took

²⁰ The capitalised /S/ stand for the whole series of /s/, /z/, /c/, /ʒ/.

place. Obviously the mazuration today is seriously infringed by the influence of the literary language [Zdancewicz 1980: 67].

In the Masurian subdialects the system of the described correlation underwent a simplification by the neutralisation of the alveolar and palatal series, and the result of this process is the alveopalatal series /ś/ : /š/ – [š'] [Dejna 1973: 106–107; A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959: 104–133]. In addition to this, the correlation is being simplified in the similar manner as in the Suwałki subdialects. The researchers of the Masurian subdialects' phonetics emphasise the significant instability of the system of this correlation even within the particular idiolects [A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959: 129].

3.1.2.3. The Correlation of Voice

3.1.2.3.1. The Paradigmatic Axis

The inventory of phonemes being in the voiced : voiceless opposition in the discussed subdialects does not differ from the literary languages. Therefore I can refer the reader to the grammar studies: the Russian language – by M. V. Panov [1979: 124–126], the Polish language – by D. Ostaszewska and J. Tambor [1993: table 11]. In the German language, the relevant opposition is tense : lax [Czochralski 1994: 54–63]. In the Polish language of the Old Believers the correlation of voice in the paradigmatic axis is compatible with the general Polish correlation.

3.1.2.3.2. The Syntagmatic Axis

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in all the centres I very often noted combinations of /k/, /t/, /s/, /ś/, /s'/ with /v/, /v'/: *kv'at*, *svuj*, *tvuj*, *kv'itno*, *moskva*, *s'v'ento*, *lekarstvo*, *panstvo*, *roztvožyć*, *švaby*.

The particularity of the Polish language of the Masurian centre are the cases of not distinguishing between voiced and voiceless consonants. Of course, it does not mean that in the Polish language of the Old Believers there is no opposition of voice at all. The noted examples, which are evident examples of the impact of the German language, occurred variantively and are not very numerous, although they occur in all the idiolects: *delev'izor*, *vypux*, *zala**, *zažić* ('sadzić'), *f'il'ki* ('wilki'), *posak'i* ('posagi'), *totaṁ vody* ('dodał'), *prat* ('brat'), *f pratax* ('u braci'), *vežli* ('weszli'), *fšexa* ('wzięła'), *f'oska* ('wioska'), *to* ('do').

Both in the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers and in the literary Russian language the phonemes /v/ and /v'/ may occur after both voiceless and voiced phonemes. Only in the Masurian centre in the Russian subdialect the combinations/clusters *sf*, *tf* were noted, e.g., *f tfaj'im sAd'u*, *pə sfAj'im głAz'am* [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 64].

The combinations/clusters *kv*, *tv*, *sv* are characteristic of the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects.

In the German language voiceless consonants are tense, pronounced with the strong tension of vocal organs. Plosive consonants have a strong aspiration and fricative consonants are articulated with a distinctive noise. In turn, lax consonants are characterised by a lower tension of the vocal organs and, in addition, they are voiced. However, the degree of voice is not relevant and is subject to fluctuations [Czochralski 1994: 54–63; Morciniec, Prędoła 1994: 43].

3.2. Inflection

The paradigms in the Polish language of the Old Believers are characterised by higher variantivity of endings of particular case forms compared to the general Polish language, and other syncretisms. The examples I present here primarily derive from texts recorded on cassette tapes. I intentionally avoided asking about the grammatical forms because I am more interested in the presence and functioning of individual forms in spoken texts. However, I had no examples in some paradigms and, for example, I had to specifically ask informants to present the inflection of nouns of the neuter gender. Similar problems occurred with establishing the full paradigm of the adjective. I present the paradigms which are different from the inflection in the general Polish language. The described inflectional features appeared in a variant manner besides the features of the general Polish language.

3.2.1. The Noun
3.2.1.1. The Feminine Singular

Table 7. Comparative list of the inflectional endings in the singular of the hard-stem and soft-stem nouns of the feminine gender which end with a vowel in N sg

The Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres²¹

Case	Polish language of the Old Believers	Suwałki and Sejny subdialects	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
N	-a <i>baba</i> , <i>żem'a</i> ,	-a <i>baba</i>	-a (-ə) <i>d'uša</i> , <i>b'abə</i>
G	=D=L -i (-y) <i>żem'i</i> , <i>baby</i>	-i (-y)	=D=L -i (-y) <i>z'Am'i</i> , <i>b'aby</i>

²¹ The examples included in the tables which concern the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers are taken from the study by I. Grek-Pabisowa [1968: 71–156]. The inflectional endings for the Suwałki subdialects are established by me on the basis of the study by Zdanciewicz [n.d.]. I present only the examples different from the general Polish norm in the semi-literary transcription of the author.

D	= G =L or -e <i>žonk'i, baby, vnučk'e, žem'i</i>	-e, -i	=G=L <i>b'aby</i>
A	-e, -i<e, -a<ę, -u <i>babe, gospodark'i, žonka, sutanu</i>	-e<ę	-u <i>b'abu, z'Amł'iu</i>
I	o (-om) < ę, a < ę, -oj (-aj) <i>pot stodoło, pot stodoła, kapustoj</i>	-o<ę	-oj (-aj) <i>vAd'oj, b'abaj</i>
L	=G=D or -e <i>knajpy, žonk'e, žem'i</i>	-i, -e	=G=D <i>b'aby</i>

Table 8. Comparative list of the inflectional endings in the singular of the hard-stem and soft-stem nouns of the feminine gender which end with a vowel in N sg

The Masurian centre²²

Case	Polish language of the Old Believers	Masurian dialect	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
N	-a <i>b'eda, žem'a, matka</i>	-a <i>bzitfa, podešfa</i>	-a (-ə) <i>duš'a, b'abə</i>
G	=D=L <i>b'edy, žem'i, gospodark'i</i>	-i <i>studńi, grańic'i</i>	=D=L -i (-y) <i>z'Amł'i, b'aby</i>
D	= G=L or -e <i>matk'e, matk'i, mamy</i>	-e, -i	=G=L <i>b'aby</i>
A	-e, -i<e, -a<ę, -u, -o <i>mońk'e, gospodark'i, pšeńica (śeli), mońku, na (oficersku) škoła</i>	-e, -u, -o <i>trave, studńu, studńo</i>	-u <i>b'abu, z'Amł'iu</i>
I	-o (-om)<o, -a<o, -oi (-ai) <i>pšed vojno, pšed vojnoj, pot škoła</i>	-o<ę	-oj (-aj) <i>vAd'oj, b'abaj</i>
L	=G=D or -e <i>na v'osk'e, o matk'i</i>	-i, -e	=G=D <i>b'aby</i>

²² The examples of the Masurian subdialect are taken from the work by K. Nitsch [1954b: 287–303].

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in the three centres in the paradigm of hard-stem nouns of the feminine gender (apart from endings consistent with the general Polish norm – the syncretism D=L), there occurs the syncretism of G=D=L forms, which is unknown in the Polish language:

- *nie było mamy; nie było b'edy* (G);
- *daj mamy loda; pov'ežat mamy; na co on baby, žećaka nie ma* (D);²³
- *o matk'i muv'i; m'eška na Litvy; po tej vojny; v modlenny; f xaty; za tak'ej pšervy jest kavaŋek* (L).

I often noted examples with the locative case. The G=D=L syncretism of the singular of the feminine hard-stem and soft-stem nouns is a characteristic of the inflection of the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 92].

Also, in the three centres in the Polish language of the Old Believers there is the optional syncretism of forms D=A=L in the nouns in which the stem ends with the consonant *-k-*:

- *dali matk'e; zap'isať vnučk'e* (D);
- *dostała žatk'e; saži tabak'e; p'erše žonk'e m'ať; op'isaŋ v'osk'e* (A);
- *na v'osk'e zostali; pracujo na gospodark'e* (L).

This syncretism appeared as a result of the phonological neutralisation /e/ : /e/ – [e] and a lack of morphonological alternation *k* : *c* of the stem. A lack of soft velar phonemes contributed to this. In the Russian code there is no morphonological alternation *k* : *c*, either, but the D=A=L syncretism does not occur, because the inflectional endings are not neutralised. In the north-eastern Polish subdialects a lack of morphonological alternations may also occur.

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in the three centres a lack of morphonological alternation *k* : *c* and the phonological neutralisation /e/ : /i/ – [i] as well as the syncretism of G=D endings lead to the often noted syncretism of the G=D=A=L forms of the nouns with stems ending with *-k-*:

- *nie m'eli gospodark'i; nie m'eli vnučk'i; nie m'ať žonk'i* (G);
- *pov'ežat žonk'i; dam matk'i* (D);
- *jeden tu s Šurp'iť xcaŋ naučycelk'i* (za żonę); *ma gospodark'i; vz'ota jo za renk'i; svoje tyšk'i b'eže* (A);
- *pracuje na gospodark'i; xoži f suk'enečk'i; opov'adaŋ o naučycelk'i* (L).

In all the centres in the Polish language of the Old Believers in A there are as many as 4 alternate endings: *-e*, *-i*, *-a*, *-u*, the repartition of which is optional; of them, only the ending *-i* noted in the nouns with the stem ended with *-k-* is phonologically justified, as a result of neutralisation of /e/. The

²³ There are rather few examples with the dativus in my material. I notice that the form of dativus of all nouns is rarely used. It is frequently replaced with prepositional construction *dla* (Gen).

ending *-e* is a result of the phonological neutralisation /ɛ/ : /e/ – [e], while *-a* is a result of the neutralisation /ɛ/ : /e/ : /a/ – [a], for example,

mońke rob'ili; xćał xųop naučycelk'e; ubrańi na ńeżele; ma gospodark'i; xćau naučycelk'i; pošli na szkoła; p'ekli na ńeżela; p'seńica śeli; poųova sob'e, poųova jemu daų; svoju mońku m'eli; m'eli p'seńicu; rob'i dobru śm'etanu; p'acıć jak za rożinu; pasxu p'eke; m'eli tako fajno jaųowečku; p'ekli pasxu.

In the Masurian centre I noted, only once, the ending *-o*: *na of'icersku szkoło pošli*. In the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects in the nouns of the feminine gender in A there is *-a*, apart from *-e* [Zdancewicz, n.d.; 1966: 38]. In the Masurian subdialects, apart from the ending *-e*, the endings *-u* and *-o* appear. In the Russian subdialect, as well as in the literary Russian language, there is only one ending: *-u*, e.g., *b'abu, z'Amł'u*.

In all the centres in the Polish language of the Old Believers I noted several instances of the ending *-oj* (–əj) in I: *košili kosoј; śli p'exotəј; p'sed modlennoj*;²⁴ *s kapustoj jak'e rosoły; my tak z matkəј čymali śe*.

The ending *-oj* in I appears in the Russian subdialect (also in the literary language), e.g., *vAd'oj*.

3.2.1.2. The Masculine Singular

Table 9. Comparative list of the inflectional endings in the singular of the hard-stem and soft-stem nouns of the masculine gender

The Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres

Case	Polish language of the Old Believers	Suwałki and Sejny subdialects	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
N	(=A) -Ø <i>syn, koń</i>	(=A) -Ø	(=A) -Ø <i>dom, koń</i>
G	(=A) -a, -u <i>końa, murka, murku</i>	(=A) -a, -u <i>doma, ofsu</i>	(=A) -a (–ə), -u <i>s'ynə, kv'asu, kAń'a</i>
D	-u <i>bratu, końu</i>	-owi <i>panowi, koniowi</i>	-u <i>s'ynu, kAń'u</i>
A	=G or =N <i>syna, końa, dom</i>	=G or =N	=G or =N <i>s'ynə, k'or'eń</i>
I	-em (–am) <i>synem, doktoram, końem</i>	-em	-om (–əm), -ém (–im) <i>stər'ik'om, s'ynəm, k'or'n'ém, k'or'n'im</i>
L	-e, -u <i>synu, syńe, końe, końu</i>	-e, -u <i>powrozu, zbozie</i>	-e (–é), -u <i>s'ynu, s'yn'è, stər'ik'e</i>

²⁴ 'modlenna' – by inserting d, the Old Believers adapt the subdialectal Russian word *mal'enna* to the Polish language.

Table 10. Comparative list of the inflectional endings in the singular of the hard-stem and soft-stem nouns of the masculine gender

The Masurian centre

Case	Polish language of the Old Believers	Masurian subdialect	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
N	(=A) -Ø <i>sonśat, koń</i>	(=A) -Ø	(=A) -Ø <i>dom, koń</i>
G	(=A) -a, -u <i>domu, klaštora, końa</i>	(=A) -a, -u <i>lasa, ogrodu, roka, roku</i>	(=A) -a (-ə), -u <i>s'ynə, kv'asu, kΛń'a</i>
D	-u <i>bratu, końu</i>	-u, -oźi, -oźu <i>psu, psoźi, ojcoźu, kuńoźu</i>	-u <i>s'ynu, kΛń'u</i>
A	=G or =N <i>brata, końa, dom</i>	=G or =N	=G or =N <i>s'ynə, k'or'eń</i>
I	-em <i>autobusem</i>	-em (-ym)	-om (-əm), -ēm (-im) <i>stər'ik'om, s'ynəm, k'or'n'im</i>
L	-e, -u <i>v leśe, v laśe, v lazaretu</i>	-e, -u <i>o vuju, pśe, v boru</i>	-e (-ė), -u <i>s'yn'ė, s'ynu, star'ik'e</i>

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in all the centres, the ending *-u* strongly prevails in D: *dam p'esku, pov'jeżał sołtysu, daj Arturu, daj kotku, daj końu, pomuc čtov'eku*. I noted *-ov'i* only once, in Sztabinki (the Sejny centre): *ńe v'ežyć temu ańoťov'i*. In the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects the ending *-owi* is more widespread: *panowi, koniowi* [Zdancewicz n.d.], in the Masurian subdialects, in their turn, instead of *-u* the following endings were noted more often: *-oźi, -oźu: psoźi, ojcoźu, kunoźu* [Nitsch 1954b: 288]. The ending *-u* occurs in the Russian subdialect: *s'ynu, kΛń'u*.

In G the repartition of variant endings *-a, -u* in the Polish language of the Old Believers may be different than in the general Polish language or in the Polish subdialects, e.g., *koło doma, koło klaštora, vrućit do pegeera, gatunek venglu*.

In the Masurian centre I noted an example of a lack of the vocalic alternation in L *v laśe*, and in the Suwałki-Sejny centre I noted the consonantal alternation instead of the morphonological alternation: *na fundam'ent'e*.

3.2.1.3. The Neuter Singular

Table 11. Comparative list of the inflectional endings in the singular of the neuter gender

The Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres

Case	Polish language of the Old Believers	Suwałki and Sejny subdialects	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
N	=A -e, -o <i>okno, pol'e</i>	=A -e, -o	=A -o (-ə), -e <i>Λkn'o, m'estə, p'ol'e</i>
G	-a <i>pol'a, okna</i>	-a <i>syrca, pola</i>	-o (-ə) <i>Λkn'a, m'estə, p'ol'ə</i>
D	-u <i>żecku, pol'u</i>	-owi <i>ziarkowi</i>	-u <i>Λkn'u, p'ol'u</i>
A	=N <i>pol'e, okno</i>	=N	=N <i>Λkn'o, m'estə, p'ol'e</i>
I	-em <i>z żeck'em, oknem</i>	-em	-om (-əm), -ëm (-im) <i>Λkn'om, m'estəm, p'ol'ëm, p'ol'im</i>
L	-e, -u <i>v okńe, fpolu</i>	-u, -e	-u, -e (-ë) <i>Λkn'u, Λkn'e, m'est'ë</i>

Table 12. Comparative list of the inflectional endings in the singular of the neuter gender

The Masurian centre

Case	Polish language of the Old Believers	Masurian subdialect	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
N	(=A) -e, -o <i>okno, serce, pole</i>	=A -e, -o <i>oko, uxo, lico, syrco, syrce</i>	=A -o (-ə), -e <i>Λkn'o, m'estə, p'ol'e</i>
G	(=A) -a <i>pola, serca</i>	-a <i>syrca, pola</i>	-a (-ə) <i>Λkn'a, m'estə</i>
D	-u <i>żecku</i>	-u	-u <i>Λkn'u, p'ol'u</i>
A	=N or =G (v'idać) <i>pole, na serca (xory)</i>	=N	=N <i>Λkn'o, m'estə, p'ol'e</i>
I	-em <i>z żeck'em, polem</i>	-em (-ym)	-om (-əm), -ëm (-im) <i>Λkn'om, m'estəm, p'ol'ëm, p'ol'im</i>
L	-e, -u <i>v okńe, fpolu</i>	-u <i>na dworzu</i>	-u, -e (-ë) <i>Λkn'u, Λkn'e, m'est'ë</i>

In all the centres in the Polish language of the Old Believers in D there is only the ending *-u*, while in the Suwałki subdialects the ending *-owi* rather occurs [Zdancewicz n.d.]: *pšyglondam še polu, oknu, źecku*.

3.2.1.4. Nouns of All Genders in the Plural

Table 13. Comparative list of the inflectional endings in the plural of the hard-stem and soft-stem nouns of the feminine gender which end with a vowel

The Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres

Case	Polish language of the Old Believers	Suwałki and Sejny subdialects	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
N	(=A) <i>-i (-y), -e</i> <i>śv'ini, baby, śv'ine</i>	<i>-i (-y)</i> <i>wišni</i>	(=A) <i>-i (-y)</i> <i>z'Am'l'i, v'ody</i>
G	(=A) <i>-uf, -of, -ø</i> <i>babof, babuf, bap</i>	(=A) <i>-of</i> <i>dziefczynof</i>	(=A) <i>-of, -ej, -ø</i> <i>b'abəf, z'Am'l'ei, bap</i>
D	<i>-om, -am</i> <i>bobom, babam, śv'iam</i>	<i>-am</i> <i>świām</i>	=I <i>-am (-əm)</i> <i>z'Am'l'am</i>
A	=N or =G <i>baby, babof</i>	=N or =G <i>świām</i>	=N or =G <i>z'Am'l'i, v'ody, kAb'et</i>
I	<i>-am'i</i> <i>babam'i, śv'iam'i</i>	<i>-am'i, -amy, -oma</i> <i>renkam'i, renkamy, renkoma</i>	D <i>z'Am'l'am</i>
L	<i>-ax</i> <i>babax</i>	<i>-ax</i>	<i>-ax (-əx)</i> <i>b'abəx</i>

Table 14. Comparative list of the inflectional endings in the plural of the hard-stem and soft-stem nouns of the feminine gender which end with a vowel

The Masurian centre

Case	Polish language of the Old Believers	Masurian subdialect	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
N	(=A) <i>-i (-y), -e</i> <i>śv'ine, kob'ety, kob'eti</i>	<i>-i (-y), -e</i>	(=A) <i>-i, (-y)</i> <i>z'Am'l'i, v'ody</i>
G	(=A) <i>-uf, -ø, -ek</i> <i>rožinuf, rožin, sonšadek</i>	(=A) <i>-uf, -ek, -ø</i> <i>kruf, krovuf, sonšadek</i>	(=A) <i>-of, -ej, -ø</i> <i>b'abəf, z'Am'l'ej, bap</i>
D	<i>-om, -am</i> <i>babom, babam, śv'iam</i>	<i>-am</i> <i>śviām</i>	=I <i>-am (-əm)</i> <i>z'Am'l'am</i>

A	=N or =G (m'eli) <i>gospodarek</i> , (m'eli) <i>gospodark'i</i>	=N or =G <i>sonśadek</i>	=N or =G <i>z'Λm'l'i</i> , <i>v'ody</i> , <i>kΛb'et</i>
I	-am'i <i>babam'i</i> , <i>śv'ińam'i</i>	-ami, -ańi, -uma <i>rencuma</i>	=D <i>z'Λm'l'am</i>
L	-ax <i>babax</i>	-ax <i>v ryncax</i>	-ax (-əx) <i>b'abəx</i>

Table 15. Comparative list of the inflectional endings in the plural of the hard-stem and soft-stem nouns of the masculine gender which end with a consonant

The Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres

Case	Polish language of the Old Believers	Suwałki and Sejny subdialects	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
N	(=A) -e, -i (-y) <i>syny, końi, gości</i> , <i>goście</i>	(=A) -i (-y) <i>kszy, uli</i>	(=A) -i (-y) <i>s'yny, k'or'n'i</i>
G	(=A) -uf, -of <i>popuf, popof, końuf</i> , <i>końof</i>	(=A) -of <i>gżybof, końof</i>	(=A) -of, -ej <i>syn'of, kΛn''ej</i>
D	-om, -am <i>synam, synom</i> , <i>końom, końam</i>	-am <i>bratam, lużam</i>	=I -am (-əm) <i>dΛm'am, p'al'cəm</i>
A	=G or =N <i>domof, domy</i> , <i>końof, końi</i>	=G or =N <i>gżybof, liści</i>	=G or =N <i>syn'of, p'al'cy</i>
I	-am'i <i>gżybam'i</i> , <i>końam'i</i>	-ami, -amy <i>gżybamy, synami</i> ,	=D or -am'i <i>gr'ib'am, gr'ib'am'i</i>
L	-ax <i>synax, końax</i>	-ax	-ax (-əx) <i>syn'ax, p'al'cəx</i>

Table 16. Comparative list of the inflectional endings in the plural of the hard-stem and soft-stem nouns of the masculine gender which end with a consonant

The Masurian centre

Case	Polish language of the Old Believers	Masurian subdialect	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
N	(=A) -e, -i (-y) <i>mebli, śleži</i> , <i>pracovník'i</i> , <i>braty</i> , <i>rożice, ojce</i>	(=A) -i, -e <i>ogrodnik'i, Polak'i</i> , <i>kšynze, krafce</i>	(=A) -i (-y) <i>s'yny, k'or'ni</i>

G	(=A) -uf <i>mebluf, bratuf, końuf</i>	(=A) -uf, -i <i>końuf, braćuf, końi, luži, braći</i>	(=A) -of, -ej <i>syn'of, kAn'ej</i>
D	-om, -am <i>lužom, lužam</i>	-am <i>bratam, lužam</i>	(=I) -am (-əm) <i>dAm'am, p'al' cəm</i>
A	=G or =N <i>domuf, domy, końuf, pracovńikuf</i>	=G or =N <i>psuf</i>	=G or =N <i>syn'of, p'al' cy</i>
I	-ami, -am <i>z rožicam'i, z rožynkam</i>	-am'i, -uma <i>bratam'i, końam'i, lužuma</i>	=D or -am'i <i>gr'ib'am, gr'ib'am'i</i>
L	-ax <i>v lasax</i>	-ax	-ax (-əx) <i>syn'ax, p'al' cəx</i>

Table 17. Comparative list of the inflectional endings in the plural of the hard-stem and soft-stem nouns of the neuter gender

The Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres

Case	Polish language of the Old Believers	Suwałki and Sejny subdialects	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
N	(=A) -a, -i (-y) <i>okna, okny, nazv'isk'i</i>	(=A) -a	(=A) -a (-ə), -i (-y) <i>pAl'a, v'okny</i>
G	(=A) -uf, -of, -ø <i>v'adrof, v'adruf, nazv'iskuf, nazv'isk</i>	(=A) -uf, -of <i>ziotof</i>	(=A) -of, -éf (-if), -ø, -ej <i>m'estof, p'at'jéf, m'est, pAl'ej</i>
D	-om, -am <i>žećam, žećom</i>	-am <i>dzieciam</i>	=I -am (-əm) <i>pAl'am, p'at'jəm</i>
A	=G or N <i>japkuf, japka</i>	=G or =N	=G or =N <i>pol'e</i>
I	-am'i <i>z'ećam'i</i>	-ami, -amy, -oma <i>dzieciamy</i>	=D <i>pAl'am</i>
L	-ax <i>oknax</i>	-ax	-ax (-əx) <i>v Akn'ax</i>

Table 18. Comparative list of the inflectional endings in the plural of the hard-stem and soft-stem nouns of the neuter gender

The Masurian centre

Case	Polish language of the Old Believers	Masurian subdialect	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
N	(=A) -a, -i (-y) <i>pola, jajka, jajk'i</i>	(=A) -a, -i <i>pola, oći</i>	(=A) -a (-ə), -i (-y) <i>pAl'a, v'okny</i>

G	(=A) -uf, -ø <i>jajkuf, poluf, pul</i>	(=A) -uf, -ø <i>poluf, jajk</i>	(=A) -of, -ěf (-if), -ø, -ej <i>m'est'of, p'tat'jéf, m'est,</i> <i>pAl'ej</i>
D	-om <i>žećom</i>	-om	=I -am (-əmə) <i>pAl'am, p'tat'jəm</i>
A	=G or =N <i>japkuf, japka</i>	=G or =N	=G or =N <i>pol'e</i>
I	-am'i, <i>žećam'i</i>	-am'i, -ańi, -uma <i>latam'i, latańi,</i> <i>latuma</i>	(=D) <i>pAl'am</i>
L	-ax <i>oknax</i>	-ax	-ax (-əx) <i>v'Λkn'ax</i>

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in N pl the range of occurrence of the non-masculine plural ending *-i* (-y) is extended to masculine-personal and neuter genders as well as to non-masculine-personal soft-stem nouns. Thus the syncretism of N forms of nouns of all genders occurs, e.g.,

to jušńe sonš'ady; bratyńe zajente; doktoryńe pomogli; tam naučyceli; klučy zostali uńego; tońe kuzyny; po pravej menščyzny; čšy końi to dobre końi; gošći pšyjejali; v'adry stojo; majońem'eck'i nazv'isk'i; japk'i; lišći; mebli; šleži; luži; šv'ińi.

In the nouns of the masculine gender of the type: *pracovník'i, robotník'i, Polak'i*, which were noted in the Masurian centre, no morphonological alternation occurred. The spread of the ending *-i* (-y) in N pl to all nouns is characteristic of the Russian subdialect [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 77, 86], and also of the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects [Zdancewicz n.d.; 1966: 112–113]. In all the subdialects being the subject matter here the masculine-personal gender is not distinguished in N pl.

In all the centres in the Polish language of the Old Believers, in the plural A may have syncretic forms with N, e.g., *zobačył kob'ety, m'a'a syny, daje jajk'i* or with G: *m'eli gospodarkuf, cuk'erkuf žadek ma, mamy kruvek, majo žećuf*. Such syncretisms are characteristic of the Suwałki, Sejny and Masurian Polish subdialects [Zdancewicz n.d.; Nitsch 1954b: 288]. In the Russian subdialect the inanimate nouns of the feminine gender have the syncretic endings with N, while the animate nouns may have variant forms with N or G, e.g., *v'ižu kAb'ety // kAb'et* [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 97]. In other animate nouns A=G, inanimate nouns A=N.

In G in the Polish language of the Old Believers the prevailing ending in all the centres is *-uf*: *popuf, tajnuf, mebluf, bratuf, końuf, žećuf, lužuf, jajkuf*. In the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres examples with the ending *-of* were noted: *pačkof, końof, domof, žećof, psuf, cerkfof, starov'erof, doktorof*. The ending *-of* appears besides *-uf* in the Suwałki subdialects: *gžybof, końof* [Zdancewicz n.d.] and it is an ending also in the Russian subdialect: *syn'of, m'est'of, b'abaf* [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 78, 79, 87, 95].

In all the centres in the Polish language of the Old Believers I noted the examples with the ending *-am* in D of the nouns of all the genders: *synam, babam, żećam*. This ending occurs in the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects: *bydlakam, ludziam, dzieciom, świniam* [Zdancewicz n.d.] and in Masurian subdialects: *bratam* [Nitsch 1954b: 289, 291] as well as in the Russian subdialect (also in the literary language): *syn'am, płł'am, duś'am* [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 79, 87, 96].

In the Masurian centre I noted one example of *-am* in I: *z rożynkam*. This ending also occurs in the Russian subdialect: *ar'ut pług'am* [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 80].

3.2.1.5. Inflection of Toponyms

A noteworthy feature of the Polish language of the Old Believers in the Masurian centre is the indeclinableness of toponyms, which may be explained by the influence of the German language, for example: *v Voinovo teš maŷo jest, teras Polak'i fšystk'e v Mościšk'i, curka v Rućane Nida, v Mrongovo jest k'ilka* (osób).

3.2.2. Adjectives and Parts of Speech Inflectable as Adjectives

The establishment of the adjective paradigms was difficult, as there were few adjectives in the texts I recorded. I noticed that the Old Believers rarely use qualifiers while speaking the Polish language. Most frequently they use the word *taki* ('such'), which may be the only attribute: *tak'i dom m'eli, ojćec był tak'i* or may appear together with an adjective: *ma tak'e izdepk'e ŷadne, tak'i tŷusty byli żecak'i*. In the inflection of the adjectives of the masculine and neuter genders of the singular I did not notice any deviations from the general Polish norm; however, the inflection of the adjectives of the feminine gender in the singular and the adjectives of all genders in the plural is interesting.

3.2.2.1. Feminine Plural Adjectives

Table 19. Comparative list of the inflectional endings of the adjectives of the feminine gender in the singular

The Suwałki-Sejny, Augustów and Masurian centres

Case	Polish language of the Old Believers	Suwałki and Sejny subdialects	Maurian subdialect	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
N	-a <i>dobra</i>	-a	-a	-aŷə (-əŷə) <i>dłłg'aŷə</i>
G	=D=L -ej <i>dobrej</i>	=D=L -ej	=D=L -yj <i>dobryj</i>	=D=I=L <i>dłłg'oŷ</i>

D	=G=L <i>dobrej</i>	=G=L	=G=L	=G=L=L <i>dłtg'oj</i>
A	=I or -e -i (-y) < e, -a < e, -u <i>dobro, ładne,</i> <i>krutk'i (suk'enečk'e),</i> <i>dobra, dobru</i>	-e, -a <i>b'edne, ładna</i>	=I -u <i>dobru</i>	-uju <i>d'obruju</i>
I	(=A) -o (-om) < q <i>dobro</i>	-o < q	=A	=G=D=L <i>dłtg'oj</i>
L	=G=D <i>ładnej</i>	=G=D	=G=D	=G=D=I <i>dłtg'oj</i>

A sg of the nouns of the feminine gender deserves attention, as in the Polish language of the Old Believers it has three variant endings, and as many as five, if we include the phonologically justified variants: -o, because /q/ : /o/ – [o]; -e, -i (-y), because /e/ : /i/ – [i], [y]; -a, because /e/ : /a/ – [a]; -u. Examples from all the centres: *mam dobro curk'e; gotuje smačno zupe; ma tak'e izdepk'e ładne; f tamte vojne ješče; nie uznaje nikogo tylko jedne v'are; p'erše žonk'e m'ał, teres i drug'e ma; ma šostra rozony; gotuje zupa ščav'ova; rob'i dobru šm'etanu*. In the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects in A sg the ending -e prevails, but the ending -a is also possible, as a result of akanye [Zdancewicz n.d.], while in the Masurian subdialects there are the endings -e, -u: *te* or *tu dobru* [Nitsch 1954b: 295].

3.2.2.2. The Plural of Adjectives of All Genders

Table 20. Comparative list of the inflectional endings in the plural of adjectives of all genders

The Suwałki-Sejny, Augustów and Masurian centres

Case	Polish language of the Old Believers	Suwałki and Sejny subdialects	Masurian subdialect	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
N	(=A) -e, -i (-y) < e, -i (-y) <i>čarne, curk'i,</i> <i>žonaty</i>	(=A) -e, -i (-y)	(=A) -e, <i>dobre</i>	(=A) -yij, -ije <i>d'obryij, kAr'otk'ije</i>
G	(=A)=L -ix (-yx) <i>staršyx</i>	(=A)=L -ex <i>czarnex</i>	(=A)=L -ix (-yx) <i>dobryx</i>	(=A)=L -ix (-yx) <i>dłtg'ix</i>
D	-im (-ym) <i>staršym</i>	-im (-ym)	-im (-ym)	=I -im (-ym) <i>dłtg'im</i>

A	=N or =G=L <i>čarne, čarnyx</i>	=N or =G=L	=N or =G=L	=N or =G=L <i>d'obryj, dAłg'ix</i>
I	<i>-im'ĭ (-ym'ĭ), -em'ĭ starym'ĭ, starem'ĭ</i>	<i>-emi drewnianemi</i>	<i>-imi (-ymi) dobrymi</i>	=D <i>dAłg'im</i>
L	=G(=A) <i>staryx</i>	=G(=A) <i>mysiech</i>	=G(=A) <i>dobryx</i>	=G(=A) <i>dAłg'ix</i>

In N pl in the Polish language of the Old Believers from all the centres in many examples we observe the loss the masculine-personal gender. The adjectives of all genders have syncretic forms of N pl ending with *-e*, *-i* (*-y*), because /*e/* : /*i/* – [i], [y]: *b'edny luži i bogaty żyli; bendo otvarty skl'epy; tak'ĭ tųusty byli żećak'ĭ; co my v'inne; ońi zakopcne; rożice tak'e relig'ijne byli; te starše luže to gadali; a to naše rożice*. However, I did not note the ending *-a*, which might be expected in view of the neutralisation /*e/* : /*a/* – [a]. The loss of the masculine-personal gender is the characteristic phenomenon in the Polish subdialects [Zdanciewicz n.d.; Nitsch 1954b: 295]. The masculine-personal gender is not distinguished in the Russian language.

3.2.3. The Verb

3.2.3.1. The Present Tense

Table 21. Comparative list of the inflectional endings of the verb in the present tense
The Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres

Person	Polish language of the Old Believers	Suwałki and Sejny subdialects	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
1 sg	<i>-e<-ę, -Vm, -u</i>	<i>-e, -a<-ę, -Vm</i>	<i>-u</i>
2 sg	<i>-Vš</i>	<i>-Vš</i>	<i>-Vš</i>
3 sg	<i>-V, -Vt</i>	<i>-V</i>	<i>-Vt</i>
1 pl	<i>-Vmy, -Vm</i>	<i>-Vmy, -Vm, -Vma, -Vva</i>	<i>-Vm</i>
2 pl	<i>-Vće</i>	<i>-Vće, -Vta</i>	<i>-Vt'e</i>
3 pl	<i>-o (-om)<-g, -Vt</i>	<i>-o<-g</i>	<i>-Vt</i>

Table 22. Comparative list of the inflectional endings of the verb in the present tense
The Masurian centre

Person	Polish language of the Old Believers	Masurian subdialect	Russian subdialect of the Old Believers
1 sg	<i>-e<-ę, -Vm</i>	<i>-e<-ę, -Vm</i>	<i>-u</i>
2 sg	<i>-Vš</i>	<i>-Vš</i>	<i>-Vš</i>

3 sg	-V	-V	-Vt
1 pl	-Vmy, -Vm	-Vmy, -Vm, -Vma, -Vva	-Vm
2 pl	-Vće, -Vta	-Vće, -Vta	-Vt'e
3 pl	-o (-om)<-g	-o<-g	-Vt

In the Suwałki-Sejny centre in the Polish language of the Old Believers I noted occasional examples of the verb *móc* ('can') in 1st person sg with ending -u, e.g., *ja nie m'ogu*, and in the forms of 3rd person sg and pl of the present tense of verbs of 1st and 2nd conjugation I noted the Russian endings -Vt: *kv'atk'i kv'itnut, on doit, myjet*.

In all the centres in the forms of 1st person plural of the present tense in the verbs of the 1st conjugation the ending -Vm occurs frequently, which is also characteristic of the Polish subdialects, e.g., *iżem, pośćim, jeżem*.

In the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres I did not find the forms of the dual number in the present tense with endings -Vma, -Vva, -Vta, which appear in the Polish subdialects in these territories, while in the Masurian centre I noted these forms in the imperative mood: *vešta i zab'ešta* and in the indicative mood in the present tense: *o teras to roboty mata, o xożita, zarob'ita, pracujeta, co myślita, źle rob'ita, zab'ijeta*.

The verb *być* ('to be') in the present tense has the syncretic forms for 3 person sg and pl, e.g., *tam pokoik'i jest, ftedy te targ'i jest*.

In an example noted in the Masurian centre (Gałkowo), in the forms of the present tense of 3rd person of the feminine gender of the verb *móc* ('can') the morphonological alternation *g : ż* did not appear, which caused the neutralisation of the category of person: – *do polsk'ej szkoły ta curka już xożyła*, – *Ale zna niemiecki? – i pisać mogə i gadać moża, i p'isać listy mogə i czytać moża*. A lack of alternation of velar consonants in the present tense is a subdialectal feature that exists in the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers, e.g., *mAg'u – m'og'iś* [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 140].

3.2.3.2. The Past Tense

In all the centres in the past tense of verbs, apart from the forms compliant with the general Polish norm, unification of all the personal endings occurred. In the singular all verbs of the masculine gender have the ending -∅ and of the feminine gender, the ending -a. Verbs of the neuter gender may also have the ending -a in the 3rd person, which is a consequence of the phonological neutralisation /o/ : /a/ – [a], e.g., *żyto wyrośła, żecko pob'egła*.

The masculine-personal and non-masculine-personal plural verbs in all persons often have take the ending -i: *żeŋčynk'i pšyšli, varunk'i nie pozvalali, budynk'i byli*. The exponents of the category of person have been neutralised,

therefore the personal pronouns have taken over the functional weight of the category of person:

tej p'eršej to ja znaŭa; i ja byŭ, ja roverem byŭ, ja zjat to śńadańe i za vam'i pojexaŭ; ty m'au čšynaśće lat, ty vojovaŭ, ile ty m'au, to gže ty valčyŭ; vy jak pšyšli, to gže to znaležli; my voŭali ot śv'itŭf [lekarza]; my brali ot tego doktora; ješče byli małe my.

In the Polish subdialects, similarly to the Russian language, there are also syncretisms of the exponents of the category of person in the singular as well as of the category of person and gender in the plural. The personal pronouns are indispensable to forming the past tense in Russian and German.

3.2.3.3. The Past Perfect

The form of the past perfect tense was noted only once in an example in the Suwałki-Sejny centre (Sztabinki): *xl'eba maŭo byli m'eli*.

3.2.3.4. The Future Tense

The future tense of the imperfective verbs is created by adding the form of the infinitive or the participle ending with *-l* to the personal form of the verb *być* ('to be'). The perfective verbs may have the ending *-Vm* in 1 person pl: *zapomńim, zašejem*.

3.2.4. The Perfect Adverbial Participle

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in the three centres the perfect adverbial participle may appear as a predicate in the meaning of perfectum: *s'ostra i brat tylko ostaŭšy, ańi jedno žecko ot tej vody nie zmaršy, kury razvl'okšy, on najefšy, baba mu fkoŭovafšy* and plusquamperfectum: *u mńe pojexafšy čšy braty było, braty ostaŭšy byli na Litvy*. This function is performed by the perfect adverbial participles in the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers [Maryniakowa 1976: 85–89]. This phenomenon is also known in the Suwałki subdialects. In turn, in the Masurian subdialect perfect adverbial participles do not occur at all [Nitsch 1954b: 298].

3.2.5. The Adverb

In all the centres the adjectival adverb may end with *-a*: *žyjo dobra, byŭo faj-na, fšystko skromna, sŭaba rosńe* or *-i* in prepositional phrases: *po ěem'eck'i muv'iu, po rosyjsk'i*.

In the Russian language the adjectival adverbs have suffixes *-o*, *-e* and *-i* [Maryniakowa 1993: 216].

3.3. Elements of Syntax

The description of the syntax of the Polish language of the Old Believers will be limited to the presentation of the morphological and prepositional accommodations.²⁵ The material comes from continuous texts recorded on tapes. Some examples of syntax collocations I also took from the notebooks of pupils (the Old Believers) from the primary schools in Wodзилki and Gabowe Grady.

3.3.1. The Issues Related to Agreement

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in all the centres, the phonological neutralisation in the coda of a word often leads to the neutralisation of the oppositions of grammatical categories. This happens when the morphological exponents are expressed by the phonemes /e/ or /o/. Of course, this does not mean that the Polish language of the Old Believers does not recognise agree-

²⁵ The conceptual apparatus for this section comes from the book on contemporary Polish syntax by Zygmunt Saloni and Marek Świdziński [1987]. The grammatical influence of one syntactic unit on another is referred to as syntactic accommodation. The word accommodation, deriving from the Latin *accommodare* 'to fit one thing into another, to adapt,' is used, inter alia, in philology. The linguistic analogy is clear enough: like accommodation of the eye comprises in adapting the shape of its lens to the distance to the observed object in order to see it sharply, so syntactic accommodation is the adaption of one syntactic unit to the requirements of another. The requiring unit is called the accommodating element, whereas the adapting unit is termed the accommodated element. The mechanism of syntactic accommodation can be presented as follows: A given syntactic unit with a set accommodational requirement runs through a list of other units in search of that whose syntactic disposition meets this requirement. The former unit adapts to itself the latter, which results in a correct syntactic construction [Saloni, Świdziński 1987: 102]. Syntactic accommodation is the correspondence between the value of the selective category of the accommodating element and the value of the respective modulating category of the accommodated unit, so that, for example, the selective category of the number of the noun corresponds with the modulating category of the number of the adjective.

"Skróty rozpoczynające się małą literą oznaczają wartości kategorii modulujących, skróty rozpoczynające się wielką literą – wartości kategorii selektywnych. Tak więc zapis *mama* (*nom, sg*) oznacza formę wyrazową mianownika liczby pojedynczej, zapis *kupiła* (*ter, sg, f, praet, ind*) – formę 3 osoby liczby pojedynczej rodzaju żeńskiego czasu przeszłego trybu oznajmującego itp. Zapis *mama* (*Nom, Sg*) oznacza znów formę wyrazową o łączliwości z formami wyrazowymi mającymi wartość mianownika liczby pojedynczej, zapis *kupiła* (*Acc*) – formę wyrazową o łączliwości z formami wyrazowymi w bierniku [...]" [Saloni, Świdziński 1987: 107–108].

("Abbreviations beginning with a small letter mean the values of the modulating categories, abbreviations beginning with a capital letter – the values of the selective categories. Thus, the notation *mama* (*nom, sg*) means the nominative case of the singular, *kupiła* (*ter, sg, f, praet, ind*) denotes 3rd person of the singular, feminine gender, past tense, indicative, etc. The notation *mama* (*Nom, Sg*), on the other hand, means a word form which collocates with word forms of the nominative case of the singular, and the notation *kupiła* (*Acc*) – a word form which collocates with word forms in the accusative case [...].")

ment. The examples of such neutralisations occurred as variants, mainly in the speech of the older generation living in the countryside. These neutralisations are phonologically conditioned, but they manifest themselves also on the level of syntax, therefore I think that it is worth to describe them here.

First I will present examples of the noun-adjective collocations (and the collocations of nouns and other parts of speech occurring in the function of adjective) with phonologically conditioned neutralisation of the grammatical categories of number and gender, which leads to a lack of agreement:

– *duży te m'eškańa zajeli.*

It is only when we know the wider context of this statement that we can realise that the speaker talks about one flat. The inflectional ending *-e* is neutralised here, and this ending is the exponent of the value of the categories modulating the number, the gender and the case of this word form. The ending *-a*, which is the result of the phonological neutralisation /e/ : (a) – [a], suggests the neuter plural, A=N or the feminine singular, A=N. The ending *-y* in the adjective *duży* is a result of the neutralisation /e/ : /i/– [y] and suggests the masculine singular gender, A=N. The agreement is broken formally. Other examples:

- *tak'i* (nom, sg, m) *tuusty* (nom, sg, m) *żeći* (Nom, Pl, N) *byli* (Nom);
- *b'edny* (nom, sg, m) *luži* (Nom, Pl, P-1) *i bogaty* (nom, sg, m) *żyli* (Nom); (P-1: non-masculine-personal plural gender, in compliance with the subdialectal norm);
- *bendo otvarty* (nom, sg, m) *sk'epy* (Nom, Pl);
- *pam'eńć* (Acc, Sg, F) *ma* (Acc) *dobry* (acc, sg, m).

The examples of collocations with verbs with a phonologically conditioned neutralisation of the exponent of the category of gender also deserve attention, as these instances also lead to the loss of agreement. The forms of 3rd person sg of the neuter gender undergo neutralisation because their inflectional ending is expressed by the phoneme /o/, which especially in the coda position, is exposed to neutralisation in favour of /a/.

- *tyle* (Ter, Sg, N) *była* (ter, sg, f) *narodu*;
- *vym'eńjono* (Ter, Sg, N) *była* (ter, sg, f);
- *żyto* (Ter, Sg, N) *vyrośła* (ter, sg, f);
- *zapaleńe* (Ter, Sg, N) *pośła* (ter, sg, f);
- *mńe čšeba* (Ter, Sg, N) *była* (ter, sg, f);
- *fšystko* (Ter, Sg, N) *zabrana* (sg, f) *była* (ter, sg, f);
- *fšystko* (Ter, Sg, N) *zniščona* (sg, f) *była* (ter, sg, f);
- *vojsko* (Ter, Sg, N) *taka* (sg, f) *była* (ter, sg, f).

In the last four examples we may notice a striving for a unification of the endings in the same sentence.

Another glaring example of breaking agreement, not only for the phonological reasons, is the sentence: *tak'ix vażyva to słaba ros'ńe*. The verb *ros'ńe* (Nom, Sg) suggests that the ending *-a* in *vażyva* might be a result of the

phonological neutralisation. There is also no agreement between the noun and the attribute: *važyva* (Nom, Pl) *tak'ix* (gen, sg). The adverb *syaba* in the coda also has the phonological neutralisation /o/ : /a/ – [a].

The examples of the collocations with the nouns which formally changed the grammatical gender also seem interesting. In the Polish language of the Old Believers some nouns of the neuter gender take the ending *-a* and thus become identical to the nouns of the feminine gender. As these examples are limited to the forms of the nominative case or the accusative case, it is difficult to treat this only as a phenomenon that is merely morphological in nature. Underlying it is probably the tendency towards the phonological neutralisation characteristic of the vocalism of this. What is interesting, however, is how these forms, which are phonologically conditioned, operate in agreement with the attributes and the verbs. I think that the tendency towards unification is also noticeable here. The examples are taken from the three centres:

- *dobra m'asta tam f K'ijov'e;*
- *dobra byya smačna m'ensa;*
- *drožžova časta;*
- *maŭa ź'ecka v vode, v vože kompajo;*
- *tam nazv'iska taka jest;*
- *ź'ecka pob'egła.*

In the given examples the nouns, which for phonological reasons changed their gender, transferred the value of the feminine gender to their attributes or predicates, remaining in agreement with them. However, in the example: *jeźora tak lixo zamarzŭo* the agreement between the subject and the predicate is not established. The variantive nature of the phenomenon of changing the gender is attested to by the whole statements, e.g., *śfontečne jajko jest [...] na v'elkanoc to muśi być malovana jajka, to śfontečne jajka jest [...] nie popsuta byya nie, śv'eža byya jajka*. The informant (the Masurian centre, Gałkowo) in such a short text treated *jajko* ('egg') as a noun of the neuter gender: *śfontečne jajko*, then as one of the feminine gender: *malovana jajka, nie popsuta byya nie, śv'eža byya jajka*, adjusting other elements of the sentence to the feminine gender. However, while saying *śfontečne jajka* she did not adjust the ending of the adjective to the feminine gender of the noun. Also, the noun *nabożeństwo* ('church service') sometimes has got the neuter gender, and sometimes the feminine gender: *naboženstva byya, ide na naboženstva*. We can notice a similar situation with the noun *mieszkanie* ('flat, dwelling'): *v m'eśće mam m'eškańa, m'eškańa jest*. In this context this form of the noun may also be understood as the plural form.

The instability of the system is probably the only explanation for the lack of agreement in the category of gender in the following collocations:

- *śostra rozony;*
- *nie żyłby tak'e źecko;*
- *xoroba jak'is';*
- *vyjontek jaka.*

3.3.2. The Issues Related to Government

3.3.2.1. Constructions with the Verb

The dependencies of the verb in the Polish language of the Old Believers are in principle the same as in the general Polish language. However, I noted some collocations where the verb takes on selective categories which are untypical of the Polish language. Unfortunately, there are few such interesting examples in the Polish language of the Old Believers.

In the speech of the Old Believers of the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres I noted the examples of the verb *pracować* ('to work') (Instr), appearing in accordance with the Russian pattern *работать кем*, e.g.,

- *pracuje pograńicznym na lotnisku*;
- *pracuje naučycelko*;
- *pracuje motorničym*.

In the Masurian centre numerous constructions with the negation which accommodate the accusativus deserve attention, e.g.,

- *ńe xćeli ostav'ić matke*;
- *ńe mamy prańe*;
- *ńe m'eliśmy wyjazdy*;
- *ńe pošli na szkoła*;
- *ńe mamy ńic, użńńa ńe mamy*.

In the given examples a characteristic principle of the Polish grammar is not applied whereby: the direct object in the accusative case has to be changed into the genitive case after the negative form of the verb. This rule is completely alien to the German language, in which the negated noun remains in the accusative.

In the Masurian centre I also noted the example *ix op'ekuje*. The verb *opiekować* ('to look after') occurred in the active voice and took the selective category of the accusative, like in the German *betreuen* (Acc).

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in the Masurian centre the constructions expressing the passive voice are overused, e.g.,

- *śp'evane beńże dužo kole tego vody* instead of *śpiewa się dužo*;
- *beńże xščone tam* instead of *chrzci się* in the text cited below, in which the informant tells me what the baptism ceremony looks like: *p'eńć šeść v'oder, čter'i v'odra vodi žimnyj i potm tego žecka čšy razy tak o tego pośf'eńćili [...] ale voda žimna, čtery v'adra žimnyj vody, a to xčšona, śp'evane beńże dužo kole tego vody, ńe tak, tylko teras bendo dužo sp'evana, sp'evana, modło še dužo, fšystko i beńże xščone potem tam i potm ten žećak tam beńże [...]*.

In the Polish language not only the passive voice proper but also the reflexive voice corresponds to the German passive voice [Czochralski 1994: 127]. The constructions used in this text are the equivalents of the German

expressions: *es wird viel gesungen; es wird getauft* ('a lot is sung [i.e., there is a lot of singing], 'one will be baptised'). These are not, however, exact translations, because in both examples *wird* is translated as *beńže* ('will be') and not as *jest* ('is'). The reason for this is probably the fact that in the German language the verb *werden* is used not only to create the passive voice of the present tense (*werden* + Partizip II), but also to create the future tenses Futur I, Futur II (*werden* + Infinitiv I or Infinitiv II).

The constructions with the verb *przyjść* ('to come') in the meaning *kłaść* ('to put, to place'), or *przynosić* ('to bring'):

- *ten gnuj ješče fšystek pšyšet na pole;*
- *na košule tedy pasek ješče na v'ešx pšyjže;*
- *i stav'ali do stodoly i tedy pšyšla mašina i mručila.*

Consider also the following statement of an informant, uttered while showing me the traditional funeral clothing:

das is ub'ur, nie v'em, czy to moje czy menža, bo ja sfoje mam to čarne te | a to jest, mi mamy poduska, a to jest pšešćerađo, to fšystko tego | a to potem pšyjže na v'esx, v'iži | o to jak fšystko na ūožu jest, to pšyjže na v'esx | [...] to ma być jesce coś, ale juš nie m'aŋam tego, to tak tylko beńže tak pōŋozone na v'esx, caŋk'em na v'esx to iže [...].

In the German language there are similar constructions with verb *kommen* ('come'): *das kommt nach oben* ('it will be put on the top')

I also noted once the construction with the verb *mieć* ('to have') and a participle which expresses the past tense: *teras co ma płacone te drog'i podatki* ('ubezpieczenie'), *a tu koło leśe, co pšyjže zv'ežyna tedy fšystko podepce*. This construction is formed in accordance with the German tense Perfekt (*haben* + Partizip II).

3.3.2.2. Constructions with the Preposition

In the Polish language of the Old Believers I noted examples of prepositional collocations different from those in the general Polish language. The examples come from the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres:

w

– *m'aŋ končík v* (Instr) *ojcu* – an example of the morphologisation of the phonologically conditioned neutralisation /v/ : /u/ – [v]; *v* created as a result of this neutralisation loses the selective categories of the preposition *u*, and takes on the selective categories of the preposition *w*.

na

- *lekaš na dom pšyježža* (na + Acc);
- *k doktoru nie v'ozo* (k + Dat).

The Russian prepositions *на* (Acc), *к* (Dat) occurring after the verb of movement correspond to Polish *do* (Gen) [Koseska-Toszeńska 1993: 24, 25]. The translation of the Russian preposition is seen in the example: *pojechać do doktoru* (from the notebook of a pupil, aged 10, Wodziłki).

koło

- *kawaler jest koło ojca* (koło + Gen);
- *koło śana* (pracowali) (koło + Gen);
- *uczę się od mał'enkości kole ks'enzy* (koło + Gen);
- *siedzi koło stoliku na krześle* (from the notebook of a pupil, aged 10, Wodziłki).

In the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers there is the preposition *koła* and it means *przy* ('by, next to').

od

- *do jednego fsaż'ili m'eškańa, jak to muv'o, vygnancuf od vojny* (od + Gen);
- *duży zarobek od niej* (od + Gen).

The construction *od* + Gen, indicating adjunction, is known in the Russian subdialect: *ad d'čk'i d'et'i* [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 16].

- *od vojska zrezygnovał pšez brode* (od + Gen).

The verb *отказаться* in the Russian language has the selective category (od (от) + Gen).

u

- *u mnie zapytał się* (u + Gen);
- *u nas vnuč'ki* (u + Gen);
- *u nas duża gospodarka* (u + Gen);
- *u mnie nie ma zeszytu*;
- *u mnie nie ma tej karteczki* (two last examples come from the notebook of a pupil, aged 12, Gabowe Grądy).

In the Russian language there is the possessive construction *у меня есть*, which is also noted in the Sejny subdialects [Zdancewicz 1966: 115].

za

The prepositional constructions creating the comparative and superlative degree of the adjectives:

- *on lepszy za fšystk'ix*;
- *najlepszy za fšystk'ix*.

In the Russian subdialect the superlative degree is created by means of the construction *za* + *v'es'* (gen pl) + a comparative adjective [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 117]. In the examples I give this construction has slightly changed its structure: *za* + *wszystko* (gen pl) + the superlative adjective. The preposition *za* is also used to make comparisons:

- *dwa lata za mnie starsza*;
- *monś starszy za mnie*;
- *śostra ładniejsza za mnie*.

dla

Also noteworthy are the very widespread constructions replacing the dative: *dla* + Gen, e.g.,

- *dla niej teras b'eda*;
- *pożenkuj dla nauczycelk'i*;
- *dla niej byuō veselej jak tutaj*;
- *čšeba dla niej juš garnušek dać*;
- *daj kv'atek dla żatka*;
- *ja juš muv'iŭa dla synečk'i 'synowej.'*

These constructions also occur frequently in the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers [Maryniakowa 1984: 99].

In the Masurian centre the clash of three prepositional systems resulted in some changes in the usage of prepositions. Sometimes prepositional collocations seem completely random and are difficult to interpret. I will provide some examples of the usage of prepositions and of prepositional accommodation that are different than in the general Polish language. All of them occurred in variants in the speech of the elderly people.

nad

- *to tam nat šoso, zaras gže pšystanek.*

This was the manner in which an informant explained to me how to get to a house located on the other side of the road. There are two possible interpretations:

- The informant used the preposition *nad* ('over'), instead of *przez* ('through, across'), because the Polish prepositions *nad* and *przez* may be expressed in the German language by means of one preposition *über*. My informant translated the German preposition directly, selecting one of its meanings.

- The informant used the preposition *nad* ('over') instead of *przy* ('at') by accident, since both German and Russian distinguish both of these prepositions: German: *über* – *neben*; Russian: *над* – *около*.

na, w

- *ješče na nas ščelaŭ (na+Acc)*;

In this example, the verb *strzelać* ('to shoot') accommodates the preposition with the selective category of the accusative, according to the German rection: *aufjdn schießen* (auf + Acc) ('to shoot at someone'); *auf* corresponds to Polish *na*.

- *polakuf davalı na prace* ('the Poles were given for work [i.e., sent to work]');

Here the informant used the preposition *na* ('for, on') instead of *do* ('to'). In the colloquial Polish language *na* has the extended scope of functioning, e.g., *iść na robotę* ('to go to work,' about hired labour). In the Russian language *на* may correspond to Polish *do* [Koseska-Toszewa 1993: 25]: *идти на*

paбomy. In colloquial German one might say: *auf Arbeit gehen* ('go to work') when talking about hired labour.

- *učyli na* (Loc) *škouy*;
- *pošli na* (Acc) *škoua*;

In these two examples the informant used the preposition *na* in the meaning of *do, w* ('to; in, into'), at the same time, however, maintaining the rule that the verbs of movement go with the accusative, and the verbs denoting a static activity go with the locative. The opposition of the selective category of the verbs expressing static and directed dynamic activity is a principle strictly applied in the Russian language [Koseska-Toszewa 1993: 24] and in the German language [Czochralski 1994: 333–336].

In the German language *in* may mean: *w, do, na* ('in,' 'to,' 'on'). Having chosen meanings that are incorrect from the point of view of the Polish grammar, the informant created the above constructions, as well as:

- *dva razy byli na Suvaŋk'i*;
- *muši v gospodark'i pracovač*, which also seems a calque of a German phrase: *in der Landwirtschaft arbeiten*;
- *v jak'i sklep pošet*, which looks like an exact calque of the German phrase: *in einen Laden gehen*;
- *f škoua muši xožić*, which may also have been translated from German: *in die Schule gehen*;

The two last examples might also be explained by the Russian influence, cf. *идти в магазин, идти в школу*.

In the sentence:

- *pačau prosto v zegarek, fšćanne tak'i* (wisiał)

the preposition *w* ('in') is used instead of *na* ('on'). This example is interesting, because the German language also requires the preposition equivalent to *na*: *auf die Uhr blicken, an der Wand hängen*, likewise the Russian language: *смотреть на часы, висит на стене*. These examples prove the instability of the usage of prepositions and broad possibilities of various usage.

od

- *ot straxu zmar*.

In the Russian language there is the expression *om cmpaxa*, like in the German language: *vor Angst*, both mean: *ze strachu* ('of fear').

- *čternašće dñi ot kv'etña*;
- *ñe mam adresa od jeho*;
- *adres od jeho žony*.

The constructions *od* + G replace the genetivus. In the colloquial variant of the German language the genetivus may be replaced by the construction: *von* + D [Czochralski 1994: 317]. In the Russian subdialect of the Old Believ-

ers similar constructions, indicating membership in family relations, are also noted: *ad dAčk'i d'et'i* [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 16].

po

– *gada po nem'eck'i, gada po polsk'i.*

In these examples the collocation of the preposition with the Russian form of the adverb is applied – *по-немецки, по-польски.*

kole (cf. the examples with adverb *kole* in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres)

- *xuopāk'i teš kole ojca* (stoją);
- *šp'evane beńže dužo kole tego vody.*

3.3.2.3. Constructions with the Numeral

In the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres I noted the following type of constructions:

- *ma čšy žecka;*
- *dva žecka;*
- *dva metra;*
- *babcia dwa dnia leżała chora;*
- *dwa konia założyli do wozu* (examples from the notebook of a pupil, aged 12, Gabowe Grądy).

The numerals *dva, čšy* ('two,' 'three') took on the selective category of Gen sg. In Russian, numerals for two, three and four in the nominativus and accusativus collocate with nouns in the form of the genetivus. In the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers, besides such constructions, which are in compliance with the Russian literary norm, there are also collocations of the numerals two, three, four with the nominativus pl, e.g., *tr'i muščyny* [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 134].

In the three centres the cardinal numerals do not distinguish the masculine-personal plural gender and they most frequently collocate with the nominativus:

- *dva braty;*
- *čtery braty;*
- *čšy braty;*
- *m'ała dva syny;*
- *(miała) žefčynke, dva xuopcy, jeden fšp'italu, [...] a drugi v domu;*
- *bratufona ma dva v Nemčex, te dva, čši to juš ne żyjo;*
- *može ze sto metry;*
- *dvanaśće k'il'ometry;*
- *p'eńžešont k'il'ometry;*
- *šedemžešont gospodaży;*
- *šejset dolary.*

The collective numerals occur very rarely, e.g., *dvoje tam do škouy xozo*. They are usually replaced with the cardinal numerals, e.g., *ze čšy teš m'aŭa* (dzieci).

The loss of the masculine-personal plural gender also takes place in the Polish subdialects in the territories of the Suwałki and Masurian subdialects, which are of interest to us [Dejna 1973: map 70]. Collocations of the numerals higher than five with the nominativus pl occur in the north-eastern Polish subdialects.

3.4. Russian and German Lexical Elements in the Polish Language of the Old Believers

3.4.1. Quotations

Quotations²⁶ are words in the foreign phonological and morphological form inserted in the Polish text [Doroszewski 1938: 47; Dubisz, Sękowska 1990: 229]. Quoting is: “najbardziej powierzchowną formą oddziaływania jednego języka na drugi” (“the most superficial form of influence of one language on another”) [Doroszewski 1938: 47]. I also recognise as quotations entire Russian or German sentences inserted in the Polish texts. Longer fragments of statements in the foreign language are in their turn discussed in the section concerning code switching (4.2).

In the Polish language of the Old Believers we can find plenty of externally justified quotations [Dubisz, Sękowska 1990: 229] – they refer to designata unknown in the Polish culture, namely those related to the religion and the tradition of the Old Believers. The occurrence of these quotations is determined by their communicative function – the natural need to name things which have not got names in Polish. The use of quotations is often accompanied by efforts to control the course of communication. At that time the informant wonders if I understand him or her or emphasises that “u nas tak nazywają” (“they call it like this here”). In all the centres there are quotations from Russian, e.g.,

- *tak'e jak'eš šf'ento, o tak tak'e skancy, jak u nas nazyvajo [...] vežm'eš o katabke raskat'ajiš i do s'rotku tvarogu zakrenčiš i skanc;*
- *fcerkovnom dom'e, fparaf'jalnym, ja muv'e fcerkovnym i zat'o ňe može zrozum'eć;*
- *u nas ňe byŭo tak'e sarafany;*
- *pasxu p'eke, to tak'i krugŭy jest;*
- *žev'eńć dńej, za čter-žešći i ročna kutja;*
- *tilko ta kutja na pəm'in'anja;*
- *m'atušk'i nazyvali;*

²⁶ The term derives from studies on the Polish language abroad [cf. Sękowska 2010].

- to jest **kryl'ec**;
- no *še modlo v modlenny i iuš to potem na koniec* **pəm'in'ajut o / tak uže pəm'in'ajut j'etavə m'ortvəvə**.

The texts concerning religion are particularly saturated with quotations, this topic itself becomes the reason for quoting, cf., e.g., the statement of the religious education teacher from Suwałki:

jak teras na sońže pare ʋosup muv'i, každy sfojo pravde muv'i, ale f tyx fšystk'ix pravže, to tylko może być **išč'inəjə adn'a, da, tak samo i v'ary fšystk'e, jedna v'ara ʋot Xrystusa at ap'ostəʋəf, kat'oryjə i pastrad'ali za 'etu v'eru, jež'inəjə ast'əʋəs v'era, a drug'e v'ery, 'etə nie v'ery**.

In the Masurian centre even in conversations on subjects concerning the culture of the Old Believers, German quotations may occur apart from the Russian ones, like in the story about the traditional bath (banya) told by 80-year-old woman from Gałkowo:

taka jak še nazyva še, m'eli tako **Besen**, *iak to še nazyva*, [her sister suggests the name] *v'eńik / v'eńik, b'er'oza, tak* **diese von Birke, von Birke diese Zweige** *i to byli zv'onzane tak'e sux'e i potem v vode pōʋożyli to ońi tak raspalili ša i potm luže tak pax pax*.

The quotations that are stylistically or psychologically justified [Dubisz, Sękowska 1990: 229] may refer to any designata and they often occur variatively apart from the Polish names. Their existence does not depend on the communicative function, it is usually redundant and unconscious. These quotations usually are not accompanied by attempts at controlling the course of communication. Added to the utterance, these quotations to a certain extent determine its style, giving it a foreign flavour. In the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres the Old Believers add to their Polish quotations from the Russian subdialect, and in the Masurian centre – quotations from the Russian subdialect and from German. Below are some examples of the Russian quotations:

- jak byli **ranše** to muv'ili, *Gurska jak žefčynka vyglonda;*
- ona zdaʋa **'etavə z'eml'u**, *žem'e;*
- barzo drogo i teras na fši **pʋoxo**;
- tam teš blisko ma, a **tut** doježžać čšeba;
- my pekaes **nazyvajem** aʋtobus;
- ja to nie ježže, **nie im'eju** k'edy;
- to juš on nie żył, **um'er**;
- o tak koło mńe stała, a **sl'ozy**, a płače;
- tylko jej **raz'žev'aj i raz'žev'aj** te spodenk'i;
- kupił vutk'i to pij, kupił **votk'i** to pij;
- u mńe **kr'est** stoi, on; *sxovaj, bo ojćec zobačy;*
- bo ješče nie bylišće na guže, to ješče **pajž'oće, paglaž'icé, kak'oja jišč'o pəm'ešč'eńja** i na guže;
- nie brakuje nič, to ja muv'e i **t'ap'er dəb'ijoms'a** do renty, *ma m'iljon dv'ešće;*

- *čėško, pańi, čėško strašńe, ɯo teras, to ja muv'e, t'ap'er ja zn'aju, što ja žyv'u;*
- *kvar'tira* byɯa ruska;
- *to jest Zameček za nas, ten jest i ten, v'e, pat'om tam do Vajnova, gž'e iz'e r'eka, gž'e jest tam za r'ek'oj;*
- *malitvy* to ja um'em čytać;
- *vyzyvali nas, što my so šfaby;*
- *pšyžem s koścoɯa to pəzdravl'ajems'ə.*

Some words are repeated particularly often, for example, *fs'o, fs'e*:

- *fs'e* jego nazyvajo fašysta;
- *a ja pšyznaje fs'ex;*
- *benžeš paliť, to v l'ampe dam, jak beńžeš paliť, dam fs'o ravno;*
- *ja fs'ex lub'e;*
- *čšeba muv'ić otvarće i fs'o;*
- *k'eɯbase rob'ili i fs'o;*
- *rob'im troške tak, iak pogoda dobra jest i fs'o tam;*
- *pšišli v nocy i zabrali, vot i fs'o.*

The word *zat'o* is cited very frequently, in the Russian subdialect it means *dlatego* ('therefore'):

- *zat'o što* upɯaćili fšystko;
- *o zat'o* ja muv'e tak, a to rop'eli jej;
- *on níc nie uznaje i innyx vyznań i innyx v'ar, zat'o* ja jego nazyvam fašysta;
- *še boi mńe, zat'o* pšyxoží do mńe;
- *a čemu p'ontek post, že pana Jezusa roskšyžyli na tego i zat'o.*

Examples of the German quotations:

- *tak fein* byɯo, taka para;
- *fčoraj fein*, ɯadna pogoda byɯa;
- *tak nog'i richtig* vypažyɯ;
- *tak richtig* nie mogli po rosyjsku;
- *v ogrože stojo te Lebensbaum, jo*, čśi koɯo domu, v ogrutku u nńx, jak to še nazyva;
- *Mazury byli te stare ješče tutej, a pam'enta v'encej ten Nachbar tutej jo, jo;*
- *to Tomaten habe ich gepflanzt*, pom'idork'i rossažíć i do ogrodu;
- *ta zupa to nazyva še Mohrrübe Suppe;*
- *ja ich mache*, smačne m'ensa gotovać;
- *k'eɯbase teš rob'ili, suxa venžili, teš venžona taka, zab'ili a potem venžili, geräuchert, gut geschmeckt.*

The characteristic feature of the texts recorded in the Masurian centre is the constant inserting of the word *ja*.

3.4.2. Adapted Russian and German Lexemes

There are few Russian lexemes adapted to the phonological and morphological systems of the Polish language of the Old Believers. I will provide several examples:

- *žėci to one neras zabyvajo*; cf. Russian *забыть*;

- kolega **zagula**, *zap'ije, na umove nie vyjže*; cf. Russian *загулять*;
- pensje **podbav'ili**; cf. Russian *подбавить*;
- **pšep'isyvali** *še listam'i*; cf. Russian *переписываться*.

In the above examples the Russian verbs have taken the Polish inflectional endings, and are stressed on the penultimate syllable.

The Russian noun *закон* ('law') has been adjusted to the Polish language as regards the place of the stress and the inflection:

- v *żydofsk'im* **zakońe** *można było zab'ić*;
- oñi *čymajo svuj* **zakon**;
- *ńe znajo swojego* **zakonu**.

In the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres the Russian word *malennā* is phonetically adapted by inserting *-dl-* and exchanging *a* for *o*. It is declined in compliance with the inflection pattern which is characteristic of the Polish language of the Old Believers:

- do **modlenny** *iżemy*;
- *tatuś był nastravńik'em f tej* **modlenny**;
- *opov'ada o* **modlenńe**;
- v **modlenńe**.

In the Masurian centre I did not hear the form *modlenna*, the adaptation of this word there consists in the exchange of the vowels only: *od źustego v'eku, roku, tam v molenny čytaŭam*.

In all the centres the subdialectal Russian word *bajńā* has been adapted to the Polish inflectional and phonetic system:

- *vykompali še f tej* **bajńi**;
- *chožili do* **bajńi**;
- *to naša* **bajńā**;
- *ńe m'eli* **bajńi**;
- *v'iželi* **bajńe**;
- *budovali* **bajńe**;
- *lubi kpać się w* **bani** (notebook of a pupil, aged 12, Gabowe Grądy).

The Russian noun *v'eńik* is declined in compliance with the Polish inflection and has got a stable stress on the penultimate syllable:

- *pob'ili* **v'eńik'em**;
- *v'onzali* **v'eńik'i**;
- *m'eli* **v'eńikuf**.

There were few lexemes adapted from the German language in the texts I recorded. They may belong to the lexical system of the Masurian subdialects,²⁷ so it is hard to say that they are unique to the Polish language of the Old Believers. In the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers

²⁷ The vocabulary of German origin in the Masurian subdialect has already been researched and described, e.g., Judycka 1954; Siatkowski 1983.

from Masuria we can also find some borrowings from the German language [Grek-Pabisowa 1985b]. Therefore we can conclude that there are some lexemes common in terms of functionality for the three codes which are used by the Old Believers in Masuria. An informant from Wojnowo, asked to present to me such common lexemes, enumerated: *ślubank* 'a kind of bed' (Ger: *Schulbank*), *mantel* 'coat (garment)' (Ger: *der Mantel*), *tomat* 'tomato' (Ger: *die Tomate*), *anzuk* 'suit (garment)' (Ger: *der Anzug*), *ronkle* 'beetroot' (Ger: (dialectal) *die Runkel*), *slejfy* 'rosettes' (Ger: *die Schleife*), *taska* 'cup' (Ger: *die Tasse*), *zoki* 'socks' (Ger: *Socken*), *blat* 'coal-burning stove' (Ger: *die Platte*), *klamoty* 'unnecessary things' (Ger: *Klamotten*). I noticed that the German language is rather cited than adapted. Below I give further examples of such adaptation.

The German noun *der Saal* was adapted to the Polish inflection as regards the categories of gender and case:

- v **zali** *prav'e jak leżajem*;
- *mnie s operacijnej zali v'inešli*.

The German noun *die Kapuze* was adapted in terms of the category of case:

- *śe założy tj kapucy*;
- *ta kapuca jest na guov'e*;
- *potem brali na drešmašine*; which means 'na młóckarkę' ('onto the threshing machine'), cf. German: *Dreschmaschine*;

Compare also:

- *mi fšystko xandom rob'ili, kob'ety fšistk'e xandom rob'ili*; which means *ręcznie* ('by hand').

We can notice the adaptation of the German noun: *die Hand*.

3.4.3. Lexemes with Altered Meanings

- The Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres
 - *ja jak to jeden śeże, [...] nie jon to śeży z babo i jon teš jeden śeży jak v'ilk: siedzieć* ('to sit') in the meaning of *mieszkać, gospodarować* ('to live, to run a farm'), cf. Russian *сидеть на земле*;
 - *ten jak tu, fam'ilji nie nazyvamy tylko po im'u i nie v'em fšystk'ix: wiedzieć* ('to know a fact') in the meaning of *znać* ('to know a person or thing'), cf. Russian *знать*;
 - *a ja pšyznaje fš'ex: przyznawać* ('to admit, to acknowledge') in the meaning of *uznawać* ('to recognise, to acknowledge'), cf. Russian *признать*;
 - *rospustna żeŋynka: rospustna* ('lecherous, wanton, debauched') in the meaning of *niegrzeczna* ('misbehaved');
 - *xvyćit rospustu i popať do v'enżeńa: chwycić rospustę* in the meaning *to become immoral*. In the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers *rospusta* 'felony, crime, a lack of politeness' (in general Polish: *rospusta* 'debauchery').

– *rozebrać fty m nie moge*: in the meaning *nie mogę się zorientować* ('I can't figure out') rather than *rozebrać* ('to undress'), cf. Russian *разобраться*;
 – *co go zastav'is, żeby s tobo gadał: zastawić* ('to cram full, to use something to block way, to pawn something') in the meaning *zmusić* ('to force'), cf. Russian *заставить*.

– The Masurian centre

- *mam čšy vnučk'i, to ony fcale nie mogo, ańi po rusku, ańi po niem'ecku, tylko po polsku*;
- *curka to gum'i po niem'ecku, ale vnučk'i to nic nie mogo*;
- *a Polak'i vyjexali [...] to fcale nie mogli po niem'ecku*.

In the German language the verb *können* has got the meanings: *móc, umieć* ('can, to be able to'), cf. *er kann Deutsch* 'On zna niemiecki' ('He knows German, He can speak German').

3.5. Linguistic Interference

While describing interference, I use the linguistic material presented in sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, therefore I limit the number of examples and I only show the linguistic phenomena, qualifying them in terms of the type of interference.

Linguistic interference manifests itself not only in the transfer of elements from the primary language to the secondary language and the other way round, but it also has an impact – on the one hand – on the stimulation understood as cooperation, supporting some tendencies and strengthening certain phenomena in both languages, and – on the other hand – on hindering tendencies and phenomena and eliminating them to a certain extent. Interference construed in this manner covers the influence of not only the negative, but also the positive transfer.²⁸

3.5.1. Manifestations of Interference in the Polish Language of the Old Believers of the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów Centres

3.5.1.1. Stimulation – Supporting the Subdialectal Tendencies and Phenomena Common for the Suwałki Subdialects and the Russian Subdialect in the Polish Language of the Old Believers

The language contact which took place in the past between the Polish language and the East Slavic languages in the territory of the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects resulted in the existence of certain functionally common lin-

²⁸ I refer to the transferring of skills and habits acquired in a learning process to other similar spheres. Such transfer may have both positive and negative effects [Szulc 1984: 244].

guistic features. They constitute the common Polish and East Slavic cultural heritage in this area. For my subject matter it is irrelevant whether these features are borrowings, features that are genetically common, or perhaps just developmental parallelisms. Only the functional aspect is important.

The Old Believers are surrounded by the Polish subdialects in the system of which a certain set of characteristics functions that are already familiar to them from their Russian subdialect. The linguistic interference which is a manifestation of the active present bilingualism of the Old Believers, understood as a process and a result at the same time, meets the linguistic interference which is the result of language contacts in the past.²⁹ This makes it easier for the Old Believers to master the Polish language in the subdialectal variant, but it may be a certain impediment to learning the general Polish language. The type of interference consisting in the mutual stimulation of the linguistic tendencies and the strengthening of the common phenomena of the codes being in contact fosters the maintenance of usage of the Suwałki subdialect in the environment of the Old Believers in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres. I will give a few examples.

– Characteristics of the phonological system

In the Polish subdialects of Sejny and Suwałki the vowels of the middle series in the unstressed position may undergo reduction, understood as the raise of articulation³⁰ which in the phonological system leads to the neu-

²⁹ I distinguish interference as a result from intereference as process following E. Smułkowa [1988].

³⁰ "Ogólny obraz etapów redukcji można zbudować w oparciu o dane analizy słuchowej. Rzecz jasna, iż pierwszym i koniecznym etapem redukcji we wszystkich wypadkach jest skrócenie długości nie akcentowanych. Początkowo może to być nieznaczne skrócenie, z zachowaniem barwy głóski. Samogłoski niskie i średnie są z zasady bardzo wrażliwe na skrócenie i zazwyczaj otrzymują odcień bardziej zamknięty. Następnie nie akcentowane samogłoski mogą zostać na tyle skrócone, że jak opisują fonetycy, stają się 'bardzo krótkie na słuch.' Na tym etapie redukcji zachodzą już wyraźne zmiany jakościowe samogłósek nie akcentowanych, spotykane w wielu językach świata. Silnie skrócone niewysokie nie akcentowane samogłoski zwięzają się jeszcze bardziej i zaczynają akustycznie upodabniać się do samogłósek wysokich skróconych, które będąc nawet bardzo krótkie, są wystarczająco różnicowane co do barwy" [Czekman 1975: 287].

("The overall picture of the stages of the reduction may be built on the basis of the particulars of the auditory analysis. It is obvious that the first and essential step of the reduction in all cases is shortening unstressed sounds. Initially this may be a slight shortening, when the tone of the sound remains unchanged. Low and middle vowels are in principle very sensitive to shortening and they typically gain a tone which is more closed. Then, unstressed vowels may be shortened to such extent that – as the phoneticians describe it – they become 'very short when heard.' At this stage of the reduction there are significant qualitative changes of unstressed vowels, which are observed in many languages of the world. Strongly shortened, low and middle unstressed vowels become narrower and they start to become acoustically similar to shortened high vowels, which – even when they are very short – are diversified enough as regards their tone.")

tralisations /o/ : /u/ – [u]; /e/ : /i/ – [i]. In the Russian subdialect a systemic feature is the reduction of the unstressed vowels, it concerns the middle vowels and *a*. The Polish subdialectal tendency to reduce the unstressed vowels is strongly supported by the Old Believers' primary language, therefore in the Polish language of the Old Believers the realisation of vocalic phonemes is also dependent on their position as regards the stress. The unstressed syllables are the positions of neutralisation. The most frequently reduced vowel is *e*, which then gains a raised articulation: *ńi ma, odyjże, dla ćikavos'c'i, puźńij, nakryji še i kłażi na blax'i pševažńi, dva tygodńi*. It is interesting that the second middle vowel *o* rarely has got the raised articulation, therefore the Polish subdialectal neutralisation /o/ : /u/ – [u], which has not got the analogy in the Russian subdialect, does not occur in the Polish language of the Old Believers.

The asynchronous realisation of the nasal phonemes, even before fricatives, and the denasalisation in the coda occur in the Polish subdialects, and in the Polish language of the Old Believers they are supported by a lack of the nasal : oral opposition in the Russian language, e.g., *monš, genši, vonsy, našo v'are, žimovo poro*.

In the Polish language of the Old Believers in the Suwałki-Sejny centre semi-palatal dental coronal consonants occur, e.g., *ž'ec'i, s'v'at*. They are phonemes or optional variants of palatal phonemes, depending on the idiolect. They have the same function in the Polish north-eastern subdialects. Semi-palatal phonemes appear also in the Russian subdialect outside the Augustów centre.

Hard /n/ before /č/, /c/ and /s/ is characteristic of the Polish north-eastern subdialects as well as of the Russian language, in comparison with soft /ń/ in this position in the general Polish language. Therefore, in the Polish language of the Old Believers the following type of pronunciation is common: *panstvo, tančyli*.

The voiced pronunciation of the phoneme /v/ after voiceless consonants present in the Polish language of the Old Believers is taken over from the Suwałki subdialects, and it is supported by the occurrence of an analogical feature in the primary language, e.g., *kv'itńe, tvuj, svuj*.

In the Polish language of the Old Believers the occurrence of the variants of the soft velar phonemes /k/, /g/, /x/ before front vowels is known from the Suwałki subdialects, and it is supported by the analogical realisation of these phonemes in the primary language, e.g., *renk'e, nog'e, x'iba, trox'e*.

– Characteristics of the inflectional and syntactic systems
A lack of the *k* : *c* morphological alternations in the stems of some paradigms, for example in D sg: *matk'e, vnučk'e*, in N pl: *Polak'i, robotńik'i*, in the Polish language of the Old Believers is supported by a lack of these alternations in the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects, and, on the other hand, also by a lack of them in the Russian language.

A lack of the masculine-personal plural gender in the forms of N pl of nouns, adjectives, and numerals, e.g., *ovarty sklepy, stare sonśady, dva braty, dva syny*, in the Polish language of the Old Believers is supported by the co-occurrence of this feature in the Suwałki subdialects and the Russian language.

The syncretism of exponents of the category of person in the singular and gender in the plural of past-tense verbs is characteristic of the conjugation of verbs in the north-eastern subdialects, and the Old Believers also know it from the Russian language, e.g., *ja był, ty m'ał, źefčynk'i pšyšli, budynk'i byli*.

Some inflectional endings existing both in the Russian subdialect and in the Suwałki subdialects were also adopted by the Old Believers in their Polish language, e.g.,

- N pl of nouns of all genders: *-i, -y*, e.g., *doktory, naučyćeli, lišci, mebli, nazv'isk'i*;

- G pl of all nouns: *-of*, e.g., *psof, doktorof, łafkof, babof*;

- D pl of nouns of all genders: *-am*, e.g., *bratam, žećam, lužam, babam*.

The use of some prepositions in certain constructions, e.g., *dla + G: muv'ija dla ćeb'e*. In the Russian subdialect the prepositional system has been strongly affected by the Polish language [Maryniakowa 1984], thus there are some usages common to both codes.

In the vocabulary of the Polish language of the Old Believers there are words of East Slavic origin, adapted earlier by the Suwałki subdialects. Such lexemes as: *skovroda, kose ocy, kromysto, žešoto, ołatk'i* are also known to the Old Believers from their native Russian subdialect.

3.5.1.2. The Hinderance of Tendencies and the Elimination of the Suwałki Subdialectal Phenomena in the Polish Language of the Old Believers

I now turn to discussing the impact of the primary language – the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers – on the elimination of some phenomena characteristic of the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects. The interference consists in the non-introduction to Polish any dialectal features unknown from the primary language. From the point of view of the subdialectal norm, it is an infringement of the system, so a negative transfer occurs. On the other hand, the rejection of the subdialectal features makes the Polish language of the Old Believers similar to the general Polish language system.

The Old Believers from the Suwałki and Augustów centres consistently refrained from adapting the most important feature of the Suwałki subdialect – mazuration, even though in their closest neighbourhood there are villages the language of which displays mazuration (this does not apply to the Sejny villages as the Sejny subdialects have got no mazuration). As regards the realisation of the opposition of the series: dental /s/, /z/, /c/, /z/ : alveolar /š/, /ž/, /č/, /ž/ : palatal /ś/, /ź/, /ć/, /ź/, the Polish language of the Old

Believers becomes similar to the general variant of the language. Probably, apart from the non-linguistic reasons – a willingness to avoid a conspicuous feature – a lack of mazuration in the primary system also contributed to this.

The Polish subdialectal reduction consisting in pronouncing *o* as *u*, and the pronunciation of *ó*, has no support of a similar tendency in the primary language system, and so are only occasional in the Polish language of the Old Believers.

In the Polish language of the Old Believers I did not note the phenomena, occurring in the Suwałki subdialects, genetically related to the asynchronous pronunciation of the labial consonants, except for two examples only (pronunciation like *śfat*). Perhaps it is the impact of the Russian language, in which the pronunciation of the labial consonants is realised more synchronously than in Polish [Grzybowski, Olechnowicz, Wawrzyńczak 1986: 32–33].

Another example is a lack of adaptation of the endings of the verbs related genetically to the dual number (*-Vma*, *-Vwa*, *-Vta*), which appears in the Suwałki subdialects. Thus the Old Believers rejected this inflectional feature, alien to them as regards the primary code.

3.5.1.3. The Introduction of Russian Elements to the Polish Language of the Old Believers

Another type of interference consists in introducing, from the Russian subdialect to the Polish language, tendencies and phenomena unknown to the Suwałki subdialects. The consequence of such interference is the fact that certain linguistic features become the elements of two codes being in contact, but they may be systemic in one and not in the other one. This type of interference is the result of the negative transfer. In the Polish language of the Old Believers this is reflected variantively and inconsistently as regards the openness of the system. These are features produced by a bilingual person at the moment of speaking. Their creation is a constant process. They distinguish the Polish language of the Old Believers from the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects, and they contribute to the uniqueness of this language.

– Characteristics of the phonological system

In the Polish language of the Old Believers there are the inconsistent but quite frequent neutralisations /a/ : /o/ : /e/ – [a]: *pojexali f pola, šli cała l'ata, pamaranča, razum'ał, razmav'ali, va vtorek*. Akanye is an articulation custom being transferred from the primary language – the Russian subdialect. T. Zdancewicz noted akanye in the Sejny subdialects, but as a disappearing tendency, occurring only in the few examples common with the Belarusian system, or as Belarusian relics. However, in the Polish language

of the Old Believers this tendency is lively and encompasses the Polish lexemes as well.

A feature deriving from the Russian subdialect is also the neutralisation /u/ : /v/ – [v] in the preposition *u*. This characteristic is not systemic in the Russian subdialect, either, e.g., *v žatka palić broń boże, był v Alošk'i, m'eškať v ojca*.

Another – also Russian – element is the occurrence of the soft sounds *t'*, *d'* as variants of /ć/, /ź/ or /c'/, /ź'/, e.g., *d'et'ak, nud'ila s'e, na fundament'e* and the soft consonant *r'* as an optional variant of /r/, e.g., *car'ny, dojar'ke*.

– Characteristics of the inflectional and syntactic systems

The syncretism G=D=L sg of the hard-stem feminine nouns was transferred from the Russian subdialect to the Polish system, e.g.,

- *ńe byuō mamy* (G);
- *daj mamy loda* (D);
- *po tej vojny* (L).

Similarly, some inflectional endings which occur, albeit rarely, in the Polish language of the Old Believers, also derive from the Russian subdialect:

- the inflectional ending A sg *-u* in the nouns and the adjectives of the feminine gender, e.g., *rob'i dobru śm'etanu, puaćić jak za rożinu*;
- the ending I sg *-oj*: *košili kosoj, stali pšed modlennoj, s kapustoj rosoły*;
- the spread of the ending D sg *-u* in nouns of the masculine and neuter genders, as opposed to the ending dominating in the Suwałki subdialects, namely *-owi*: *daj Arturu, pšyglondam śe polu*;
- the ending *-V* of 3rd person sg and pl of the present tense of the verbs of 1st and 2nd conjugations: *doit, kv'itnut*;
- the ending *-u* of 1st person of the present tense of the verb *móc* ('can'): *moġu*.

The verbs which took on the Russian selective categories, while preserving the Polish inflectional form, e.g., *pracuje* (Instr) *naučyćelko*.

Examples of adverbial accommodation in accordance with the patterns of the Russian subdialect, e.g., *od vojska zrezygnovaŭ, lekaš na dom pšyježža, u mńe zapytał śe, zarobek odńej, pozdrav'a z dnem urožin*.

The constructions with the preposition *za* used in the comparison of adjectives: *dva lata za mńe starša*.

The constructions with the numerals *dwa, trzy* + Gen: *dva źecka, čšy voza*.

In the vocabulary of the Polish language of the Old Believers there are quotations and – rarely – adapted lexemes, e.g., *modlenna*.

3.5.2. Manifestations of Interference in the Polish Language of the Old Believers from the Masurian Centre

All the speakers of the Masurian subdialect in the past, and those few who have stayed in Poland, are bilingual. Apart from the subdialectal variant of the Polish language, they speak the literary German language with some regional characteristics [Siatkowski 1983]. This means that speaking German is not a factor which singles out the Old Believers from other autochthonous inhabitants of these lands. The characteristic feature is speaking the Russian subdialect. We should also remember that the Masurian subdialects as a separate linguistic area are a thing of the past because they underwent disintegration as a result of the emigration of the Masurians.

3.5.2.1. Stimulation – Supporting the Subdialectal Tendencies and Phenomena Common to the Masurian Subdialect, the German Language and the Russian Subdialect in the Polish Language of the Old Believers

In the Masurian subdialect there are certain linguistic features which are also characteristic of the Polish language being in the constant contact with the German language, for example of the Polish language of the Germans, described by M. Brzezina [1989] or of the language of the Poles of the Ruhr District, described by M. Michalewska [1991]. This does not mean, however, that all the features which I will specify below for the Masurian subdialect are Germanisms, although it is known that this subdialect contains plenty of them. For the results of this study it is important that some Masurian subdialectal tendencies and phenomena are still supported in the Polish language of the Old Believers by the interference (understood as a process) with the German language. The existence of certain characteristics can also be stimulated by the interference with the Russian subdialect.

– Characteristics of the phonological system

In the Polish language of the Old Believers I noted frequent examples of the raised articulation of the central series of vowels both in the stressed and unstressed positions. I interpret this feature as a reflection of the German phonological opposition narrow : wide. The feature of tension (narrowness), added to the vocalic phoneme in Polish, while relevant in German, becomes redundant here. The raising of middle vowels is also noted by M. Brzezina as a feature typical of the Polish language of the Germans. Since in the German articulation base the tension of vocal organs is much stronger than in Polish [Czochralski 1994: 39], theoretically the German narrow vowels should not be equated with the Polish subdialectal narrow vowels. However, the existence of narrow (tense) vowels in the Masurian subdialect allows – to a certain extent – to equate the pronunciation of German *e* with *é* and the

pronunciation of German *U* with Polish narrow *ó*. The combination of these factors causes the raising of vowels in the speech of the Old Believers in Masuria to occur much more frequently than in the Suwałki and Augustów centres (although in both centres it is carried out inconsistently).

The pronunciation of narrow *â* also occurs occasionally, which may be equated with the German back *a*, for example, *gâdali, prâvž ifk'i*.

The asynchronous pronunciation of nasal vowels before fricative consonants is acceptable in the Masurian subdialect. This type of pronunciation in the Polish language of the Old Believers is supported by a lack of nasal vowels in Russian and German, e.g., *vonsy, monš*. Asynchronous pronunciation of nasal vowels even before fricatives is characteristic of the Germans speaking Polish [Smoczyński 1965: 25].

The realisation of the variant (i) of the phoneme /i/ also after hard consonants occurs in the Masurian subdialects. In the Polish language of the Old Believers it is additionally supported by a lack of high central vowels in German, e.g., *bili* 'byli' ('were,' as opposed to general Polish: *bili* 'they beat [past tense]'), *pšisli, tilko, ti, mi* 'my' ('we,' as opposed to general Polish: *mi* 'me'). The pronunciation of *i* instead of *y* is typical for the Germans speaking Polish [Brzezina 1989: 88], as well as for the Poles living in the Ruhr District [Michalewska 1991: 58].

The occurrence of the series of palatal alveolar consonants *š'*, which is a result of the phonological simplification of the dental : palatal : alveolar correlation through the neutralisation of the palatal and alveolar series, is a feature of the Masurian subdialect. The researchers of this subdialect think that the appearance of this series may be conditioned or supported by the contact of the Polish subdialect with the German language.³¹ In the Polish language of the Old Believers the pronunciation of alveolar palatal consonants is supported by the phonological and phonetic differences between Polish and German. A lack of the series of palatal consonants in German causes the tendency to replace both the alveolar and the palatal series with one alveopalatal series, e.g., *vič'š'imali, uč'ili, ž'ito, ž'eč'i*. Such pronunciation is also noted in the Ruhr District [Michalewska 1991: 66]. The reduction of the alveolar and palatal series to the alveopalatal series is also the characteristic feature of the Polish language of the American, English and French Poles, that is to say in all places where the Polish system contacts a system without the alveolar : palatal opposition [Michalewska 1991: 67].

As regards the realisation of the correlation of softness, the Polish language of the Old Believers differs from the general Polish norm. It is characterised by variant asynchronous pronunciation of labial consonants, with the separation of the palatal element in the consonantal form, e.g., *upx'ec, bjaŋy, vjoska, zabžyć* and rare examples of depalatalisation of labial consonants and

³¹ This is one of a number of theories [Dejna, 1973: 107; A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959: 7–8].

the consonant *n*: *meli*, *penć*, *ostatny*. The Old Believers know the asynchronous pronunciation of labial consonants from the Masurian subdialect [A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959: 16–20]. The depalatalisation of soft labial consonants and *n* was also noted by the researchers of the Masurian subdialect [A. Basara, J. Basara, Wójtowicz, Zduńska 1959: 20]. In the Polish language of the Old Believers the subdialectal tendency towards changes in the scope of the correlations of softness may be supported by the lack of the hard : soft opposition in the German language. The asynchronous pronunciation of palatal consonants and the tendency to depalatalise soft labial consonants is typical of the Germans speaking Polish [Brzezina 1989: 95].

– Inflectional and syntactic characteristics

A lack of the *k* : *c* alternation in the declension of nouns, e.g., *Polak'i*, *robotník'i*, *na gospodark'i* is not alien to the Masurian subdialects. In the Polish language of the Old Believers it is supported by the lack of such alternation in Russian. Unifications of the inflectional stems may also occur under the influence of German, manifesting a striving for the simplification of the Polish declension system. Avoiding the alternations by means of the unification of the inflectional stems is characteristic of the Polish language being in long-term contact with the German language, e.g. in the Polish language in the Ruhr District [Michalewska 1991: 71].

The analytical tendency in the verb conjugation in the past tense – granting the function of person category marker to the personal pronoun, in parallel to the unification of forms of all the persons in the singular and the plural, e.g., *ja rob'iu*, *my brali*, *ty byu*, occurs in the Masurian subdialect. In the Polish language of the Old Believers it is additionally supported by the conjugation principles in Russian and German, where the pronoun is an indispensable component of personal forms.

The replacement of constructions with the reflexive voice with constructions with the passive voice, which is an evident Germanism in the Masurian subdialect, was often noted by Nitsch [Nitsch 1954b: 299]. It also occurs in the Polish language of the Old Believers: *špevane beńže* instead of *špiewa się*, *kuażone benže* instead of *kładzie się*. The existence of this Germanism is supported by the presence of an analogous construction in the German language (werden + Partizip II and werden + Infinitiv I or Infinitiv II).

In the vocabulary of the Polish language of the Old Believers there are lexical Germanisms, which are adapted in the Masurian subdialect and continuously supported by using the German language, e.g., *kapuca*, *mantel*, *klajt*.

3.5.2.2. The Masurian Subdialectal Phenomena in the Polish Language of the Old Believers

The Old Believers from the Masurian centre, while speaking Polish, accepted and adopted in their system also some linguistic features unknown to

them from the Russian and German languages, namely the mazuration and the inflectional endings of verbs related genetically to the dual number. This is in contrast to the language of the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów groups.

3.5.2.3. The Introduction of German and Russian Elements to the Polish Language of the Old Believers

– The Russian elements

– The neutralisations /o/ : /e/ : /a/ – [a],³² e.g., *fšystko zniščona byua, l'ap'ej, staradavni*.

– Voiced pronunciation of /v/ after voiceless consonants, e.g., *tvuj, švaby, martv'eña* in comparison with the Masurian voiceless pronunciation.

– Exchange of the preposition *u* for *v*: *byli v brata*.

– Syncretism of forms of hard-stem feminine nouns in the singular G=D=L: *pov'ežau matk'i, fšaty, fšavy*.

– The widespread ending *-u* in D sg of masculine and neuter nouns: *psu, kotku* in comparison with Masurian *-oži, -ožu*.

– The ending *-a* in A sg of feminine nouns (also conditioned phonologically): *pot stodoa*.

– A lack of alternation in the examples with the verb *može, moge* may be caused by their absence in the Russian subdialect [Grek-Pabisowa 1968: 140].

– Constructions with the perfect adverbial participle in the role of the predicate: *añi jedno žecko ñe zmaršy* do not occur in the Masurian subdialects [Nitsch 1954b: 298]; they were transferred to the Polish language of the Old Believers from the primary code.

– Spreading of lexical quotations from Russian to Polish texts.

– The German elements

– Neutralisation of voice: *posak'i, prat*, caused by a lack of the phonological opposition voiced : voiceless in German and the existence of the relevant tense : lax opposition.

– Pronunciation of *št* instead of *st*: *Štefan, študña*, in accordance with the German pronunciation of these groups.

– The substitutions *l* // *u*: *mlyn, mlućić*, caused by a lack of the /l/ : /u/ opposition in the German language.

– Another substitution from German is rounded *Y* instead of Polish *y*. Thus the phoneme /i/ in the Polish language of the Old Believers gains the new variant (Y), whose roundness is phonological in German, and redundant in the Polish language of the Old Believers; this variant is in optional

³² However, examples of the realisation of [o] as [a] were also noted by Michalewska [1991: 61] in the Polish language in the Ruhr District in the speech of informants who had not had any contact with the East Slavic influences. The author presents this phenomenon as a proof of instability of the phonetics due to bilingualism.

distribution with other variants: (i), (y) and rarely (y'). The feature appears very occasionally only in the words: *bYya, bYy*.

- The indeclinableness of toponyms: *byy pot Stalingrat*, because in German toponyms are always in the nominativus.

- Negative constructions with the accusativus: *ne mamy prańe*, because in German the negative collocates with the accusativus.

- Changes in the selective categories of verbs, by analogy with the German categories, e.g., *op'ekuje ix, na nas ščelaų*.

- Changes in the functioning of prepositions like: *učyli na škouy, f škoua muši xožíć*.

- Syntax constructions with the verb *przyjść* ('to come'), calqued from the analogous German constructions *es kommt*, such as *na košule tedy pasek ješče na v'ešx pšyjže*.

- Construction with the verb *mieć* ('have') and the participle expressing the past tense: *ma płacone te drog'i podatki*, in accordance with the pattern of the German past tense Perfekt (haben + Partizip I).

- Inserting of quotations from the German language in the course of speech.

The feature in the Polish language of the Old Believers which may be construed as an influence of the Russian subdialect and the German language is the tendency to differentiate stressed and unstressed vowels. In the Polish language of the Old Believers from Masuria we note frequent examples of the reduction of unstressed vowels, which consist in raising of the articulation of *e* and *o*, e.g., *ńim'eck'i, vyćungneli, koćuť, uperacja* and replacing full vowels with the reduced vowel *ə*, e.g., *potəm, matka, rożica*. These phenomena can be explained by the interference of both the Russian subdialect and the German language, because the tendency to diversify stressed and unstressed vowels occurs in the German and Russian languages, but does not occur in the Polish system. In the Russian subdialect the reduction consists in not only shorter pronunciation of a vowel but also raising its articulation, while in German vowels are shortened and even disappear in unstressed syllables [Czochralski 1994: 72]. The tendencies to differentiate stressed and unstressed vowels, although realised in both languages in different manners, probably intertwine and affect the Polish language. Traces of the German reduction of vowels in Polish are discussed by M. Brzezina [1989: 89–90]. The reduction of vowels in unstressed syllables was also noted by a researcher of Polish in the Ruhr District [Michalewska 1991: 63].

The features noted by me, which spread to Polish from German, are typical of the Polish language being in contact with the German language. They were also noted, for example, in the Polish language in the Ruhr District [Michalewska 1991].

3.5.3. Summary

The Polish language of the Old Believers is a new linguistic quality which was created as a result of the language contact of the Polish subdialects, the general Polish language, the Russian subdialect, and, in the Masurian centre, the German language. It is a spoken, lively and changeable language characterised by high creativity within the scope determined by the language contact. I decided that even the linguistic facts which had occurred occasionally – once or twice – are worth noting, as although they are occasional, they are not incidental.

In the Polish language of the Old Believers the tendencies of the Polish subdialects, the Russian subdialect and, in the Masurian centre, also the German language, support one another and intertwine. I will exemplify this by means of charts of the tendencies of neutralisations in the vocalic system of the Polish language of the Old Believers.

Table 23. Chart of the tendencies of phonological neutralisations in the vocalic system of the Polish language of the Old Believers in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres

	<i>Front</i>	<i>Central</i>	<i>Back</i>
<i>High</i>	/i/		/u/
	↑		↑
<i>Middle</i>	Polish and Russian /e/		Polish /o/
	↘		↙
<i>Low</i>	Russian	/a/	Russian

Table 24. Chart of the tendencies of phonological neutralisations in the vocalic system of the Polish language of the Old Believers in the Masurian centre

	<i>Front</i>	<i>Central</i>	<i>Back</i>
<i>High</i>	/i/		/u/
	↑		↑
<i>Middle</i>	Polish, Russian and German /e/		Polish and German /o/
	↘		↙
<i>Low</i>	Russian	/a/	Russian

In the Polish language of the Old Believers from the Suwałki-Sejny and Masurian centres some of the same linguistic features have different interpretations. For example, combinations of voiced *v* after voiceless consonants, namely groups: *kv*, *tv*, *sv* in the centres located in the area of the Suwałki and Sejny subdialects are the result of the mutual interaction of the local Polish subdialects and the primary language – the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers. They are not a feature that constitutes the uniqueness of the Polish language of the Old Believers in comparison with the closest linguistic neighbourhood. In turn, in the Masurian subdialects centre, where the voiceless pronunciation of the above mentioned combinations occurs [Nitsch 1954b: 272], the groups *kv*, *sv*, *tv* reflect the Russian pronunciation and single out the Polish language of the trilingual Old Believers from other bilingual indigenous inhabitants. Similarly, constructions with perfect participles are popular in the Polish subdialects in the neighbourhood of the Old Believers in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres, and do not single out their speech from the Polish language of their neighbours, but in the Masurian centre they are a new element, coming directly from the primary language.

The Polish language of the Old Believers from the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres, due to a lack of mazuration and of endings genetically related to the dual number, is similar to the literary Polish language. In turn, in the Masurian centre the Polish language of the Old Believers incorporates the subdialectal Masurian features – mazuration, the dual number, the features resulting from the influences of the Russian subdialect and the German language. The contact with the German language, supported by the impact of the Masurian subdialect, causes the violation of the essential oppositions of consonantism in the correlations of softness and voice, and in the dental : palatal : alveolar correlation. There are also numerous quotations and the code switching of larger parts of texts. These features cause the Polish language of the Old Believers from Masuria to differ considerably from the general Polish norm.

4

THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC ASPECTS OF RESEARCH ON THE POLISH LANGUAGE OF THE OLD BELIEVERS

4.1. The Shaping of Linguistic Competence in the Conditions of Multilingualism

The description of the Polish language presented in the previous chapters shows a range of linguistic options which may be used by the Old Believers so as to communicate in Polish. Choosing one or another element of this repertoire by individual speakers determines the strong idiolectal differentiation of their Polish language. Therefore, I decided to individually present some differing idiolects and show how they are shaped. In the previous chapters I focused on the Old Believers as a social group, and now I am going to consider individual persons, bearing in mind that: “W jednostce ludzkiej jak w soczewce skupia się i jak w zwierciadle odbija – dziejąca się wokół rzeczywistość” (“The individual, like a lens, focuses and, like a mirror, reflects the reality playing out around him.”) [Handke 1992b: 193].

My objective is to demonstrate with reasonable precision the influence of the social factor on the shaping of the linguistic competence of particular informants and on their realisation of the Polish code. I believe that an individual, who is a “member of a particular social and cultural group, learns both the principles of grammar of the mother tongue and how to control the correctness of linguistic behaviours in various communicative situations” [Piotrowski 1980: 93; cf. Hymes 1974: 272–279]. I assume, following the authors of the contemporary studies concerning bilingualism [Lüdi, Py 1984: 51–53; Steinke 1990: 71], that a multilingual person has not got a few separate competences, whose sum is the sum of the languages they speak, but one wide competence, which is a synthesis of these languages.

The competence of a multilingual person is composed of their knowledge of linguistic components and rules of combining them in accordance with the systems that they have at their disposal, as well as the ability to use this knowledge in specific social situations, when the use of one of the codes is necessary.¹ Informants – according to their competence – will choose linguistic elements from their widened paradigmatic repertoire and locate them in the syntagmatic axis of the code which they are using at the moment. They shape their linguistic competence during numerous interactions in specific social situations operated by particular languages. Therefore it is important to consider in which spheres of social life they are involved and what the frequency of their interactions with the environment is. Applying the sociolinguistic method of domain analysis,² I establish the spheres (domains) where particular languages function – in order to do so, I strictly identify elements of the situational context:

family

partner: the members of the family with whom the informant lives or meets;

place: the informant's or the partner's home;

topic: everyday matters, i.e., children, relatives, friends, food, diseases;

neighbourhood

partner: persons who live in the vicinity;

place: the informant's or the partner's home;

topic: everyday matters, i.e. children, relatives, friends, food, diseases;

religion

partner: co-religionist;

place: the informant's or the partner's home, molenna, parish house, religious education room;

topic: religious books, objects of worship, teaching and practising religion, ritual;

work

partner: co-workers;

place: workplace outside the household;

topic: professional matters;

administration

partner: official, medical doctor, vendor, workers rendering services;

place: office, clinic, hospital, shop, service point;

topic: official matters, health, shopping, services;

¹ Therefore I do not distinguish between "competence" and "performance." I adopt the sociolinguistic understanding of competence that is not limited only to the grammar, but includes the dimension of the social interaction [Piotrowski 1980: 94–95].

² It is discussed in section 1.1.

education

partner: teacher;

place: school building;

topic: determined by educational programme;

the mass media (press, television, radio)

in this sphere of reality the informants do not have direct interactions.

Message senders (journalists, politicians, actors) are not partners, because the contact is unilateral.

topic: politics, economy, culture.

Table 25. Chart of the current functional distribution of the languages used by the Old Believers in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres

Russian	domain	Polish
+	family	+
+	neighbourhood	+
+	religion	–
–	work	+
+	education	+
–	administration	+
+	mass media	+

Table 26. Chart of the current functional distribution of the languages used by the Old Believers in the Masurian centre

domain	Russian	Polish	German
family	+	+	+
neighbourhood	+	+	+
religion	+	–	–
work	–	+	–
education	+	+	+
administration	–	+	–
mass media	+	+	+

Table 27. Chart of the distribution of the languages used by the Old Believers in the Masurian centre in the period between World War I and World War II

domain	Russian	Polish	German
family	+	–	+
neighbourhood	+	+	+
religion	+	–	–
work	–	+	+
education	–	–	+
administration	–	–	+
mass media	–	–	+

The social space in which the group of the Old Believers lives has been divided into several basic domains: family, neighbourhood, religion, work, education, administration. In some spheres the specialisation in the function of one language is noticeable, for example the domain of administration is currently operated only by the literary Polish language, and before World War II in Masuria by the German language. Religion is the domain of the Russian subdialect and it fosters the preservation of its continuum. Education is in principle carried out in the Polish language, but it seems reasonable to take into account also the possibility to come into contact with the literary Russian and German languages at lessons of foreign languages at school. Similarly, the mass media are in principle operated by Polish, but the Old Believers may also read Russian, and – in Masuria – German newspapers, listen to the Russian or German radio and watch the Russian or German television. In the pre-war times and even during a few years after the war the Old Believers’ families in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres spoke only and exclusively the Russian subdialect. In the Masurian centre, another language spoken at home was German. Nowadays the domain of family life can be operated by two languages in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres, and three languages in Masuria, especially when a family is mixed or lives in the city or town. Similarly, in the domain of neighbourhood we cannot assume a strict specialisation of the function of a language.

Applying the method of the sociometric network (discussed in section 1.1), I will try to illustrate the frequency of the informant’s interactions in each domain of reality, as well as whether these interactions take place currently or happened in the past. I distinguish two types of connections, depending on the type of interactions:

- – – – rare or old interactions – weak connections;
- frequent and current interactions – strong connections.

I will use the word “network” to denote a chart of the functional distribution of such connections. Bearing in mind that the chart of a network is in itself only a very simplified graphic illustration of the informant’s contacts

with the environment, I add a description of each informant and how they acquired language competence. The type of network depends on sociological variables, the most significant of which are: age, place of residence (town or village), and gender. I will present the contrasting networks of the most typical representatives of the particular groups of informants, established on the basis of diversification of these variables, and I will elaborate on the features of the phonological systems of their idiolects.

4.1.1. The Shaping of Linguistic Competences of Informants from the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów Centres

In the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres the description of female informant W.W.21³ will serve as a point of reference; I will call her the basic informant. I will also discuss the characteristics and idiolects of the following persons:

W.S.28 – who differs from the basic informant in the place of residence;

W.S.64 – who differs in the place of residence and age;

W.G.60 – who differs in age;

M.W.12 – who differs in gender;

M.W.13 – who differs in gender;

W.G.20 – who has no social variables different in comparison with the basic informant.

W.W.21

A woman born in 1921 in Wodziłki. The family is not mixed. She lives with her husband, her son, daughter-in-law, and grandchildren. Her other sons live in Suwałki. In the family they speak only Russian. Her house is located in the centre of the village, next to the molenna. Her immediate neighbours are all Old Believers. When she was young, she met female inhabitants of the Polish villages nearby. Before the war she completed 4 years of education in the public school. She worked throughout her life on the land. She rarely travels to Suwałki, recently she has not been healthy enough. The contacts with the administration are limited to visits to the doctors. She does not read any newspapers, because reading in Polish is too difficult for her, she does not read in Russian, either. She rarely listens to the radio and watches television. The quality of her radio and TV sets allows her to receive only Polish stations.

³ Woman from Wodziłki born in 1921. Other acronyms should be read accordingly: S – Suwałki, G – Gabowe Grądy, M – man.

Table 28. The network of interactions of informant W.W.21

Russian	domain	Polish
+ —————	family	—
+ —————	neighbourhood	- - - - +
+ —————	religion	—
0	work	0
—	education	- - - - +
—	administration	- - - - +
—	mass media	- - - - +

The network of this informant is characterised by slightly greater cohesiveness within the spheres operated by Polish than by Russian (the difference of one sphere). However, in the domains of the Polish language the interactions are rare or took place in the past. In turn, in the domains of Russian the interactions take place constantly. The network illustrates that the informant uses Polish only occasionally; in her everyday life, which is almost completely filled by only three domains: family, religious rituals and meetings with neighbours living nearby, she easily makes do with the Russian subdialect.

The most important source of the Polish language for this informant is the domain of neighbourhood – although it is operated by two languages, since while her closest neighbours are Old Believers, Poles also live in the vicinity. The informant’s proficiency in speaking Polish has been acquired mainly during talks with the inhabitants of Polish villages, with whom she used to have friendly relations when young. Therefore she models her Polish on the mazurating Suwałki subdialects. In view of the fact that she attended school for a relatively short period of time and a long time ago (before the war) – and the current contacts with the administration are limited to rare visits to the doctors, the importance of these two domains of the general Polish language in shaping her linguistic competence seems to be slight.

On the basis of the analysis of the interactions of this informant it can be assumed that her linguistic competence is a synthesis of her fluent Russian subdialect and poorer knowledge of the local Polish subdialect as well as very poor knowledge of the general Polish language. Therefore, while speaking Polish, the informant will primarily choose the linguistic elements common to the Russian subdialect and the Suwałki subdialect. As regards the phonology, the features are as follows:

– /e/ : /i/ – [i], [y]: *ni ma; to duży m’eškańa; a i našy** (dzieci) *to bes cukru* *ńic; byuam f Suwałkax całe żimy; na jedne nog’i kul’eję; ma gospodark’i; ony*

(kury) *ńetrfaꞑy; b'edny luži i bogaty żyli; m'eškańa byli tańi; vode ugotuji; tak'i tꞑusty byli żećak'i, tak'i xudy še porob'ili; ńe odyjže;*

– /e/ – (ê): *lišćé, puźńéj, zdajé še, śvińé;*

– no nasal phonemes, which is due to the asynchronous or denasalised realisation of nasal vowels. In the coda the denasalised pronunciation prevails: *vyrab'ajo jo, majo, padajo, dajo, b'ore, ja daje, ꞑop'isał žem'e*, with occasional asynchronous pronunciation: *na ńom ꞑotp'isał žem'e, tavery pšyvožom*. In the nucleus, even before fricatives, nasal vowels are pronounced in an asynchronous manner: *monš, sonšady, čenška, čenstovała;*

– the phoneme /o/ has got a broader range of occurrence in comparison with general Polish, at the expense of /u/, as it continues ó: *žop, znof, fpšot, žećof*, kurof*;*

– the prostheses *j, ꞑ:* *ꞑojca, ꞑona, ꞑotp'isał, ꞑod ńei, ji, jile, jon, jona;*

– the phoneme /v/ may occur after a voiceless consonant: *panstva, śv'etlica, robactva, śv'íńe, lekarstva, tvui, svui, kv'aty;*

– the phoneme /l/ has got the facultative variant (l'): *il'e, l'ežy, l'ekaš, v l'eše, kaval'er, vyl'engarńa, tyl'ko, l'ato, pl'ac;*

– the phoneme /ꞑ/ has got the facultative variant (ɣ): *čenstovała, vyrostał;*

– velar phonemes have got soft variants before front vowels: *ꞑop'isał žałk'e, saži tabak'e, žonk'e m'aꞑ [...] teres i drug'e ma, ma tak'e izdepk'e, na jedne nog'i kul'eje, syn ma gospodark'i, x'iba;*

– the phoneme /n/ occurs before /c/ and /s/: *panstvo, na koncu*.

Since the informant acquired her linguistic competence while speaking to the users of the Suwałki subdialect, in her idiolect there are also some, albeit rare, Polish subdialectal features alien to the Russian subdialect, e.g., /o/ : /u/ – [u], in only three examples: *ꞑudouali, upłaćili, še užeńił*.

However, she did not adopt the most important Polish subdialectal feature, namely mazuration. In principle she does not mix the series S : Š : Ś, with one exception: *šm'erć*.

The competence acquired in the conditions of constant interactions in the domain of the Russian code and rare interactions in the Polish code does not allow the informant to consistently and properly distinguish the linguistic elements and the principles of combining them in both codes while speaking Polish. This is reflected in the frequent transfer of the Russian features into the course of the Polish speech. The phonological system of the Polish code of the informant has been enriched with some elements of the Russian phonological system:

on the paradigmatic axis

– /r/ has got the facultative soft variant (r'): *čter'i, Čar'ńeck'i;*

– /č/ has got the soft variant (č'): *č'i pali, č'i ńe pali;*

– reduced variant of three phonemes as a result of the neutralisation /a/ : /o/ : /e/ – [ə]: *k'iva žobəm, zarobək, v'ečorəm, pšy žećəx, səmaxody, smərouəuə*.

on the syntagmatic axis

– akanye, i.e. the neutralisation /a/ : /o/ : /e/ – [a]: *i tam m'eškańa jest; coś jej s połogu še zrobiła; xożi z domu da domu [...] to da jednei curk'i, to da drug'ej curk'i; gže panstva duży te m'eškańa zajeli; jedna (córka) pšy žecku, žecka roček; nie od razu tak była; para m'ešoncy; čšeba była še oščegać; razb'ežeš; razlončyc**; *mała xoże; za šp'itala; umażyli; zvalnili; tavery; harbate; tak'ix vażyva to słaba ros'nie; to byu na každego xłopa sać, sob'e ile tam..., tam ile vym'eńono byu; take żyto vyrosu; vantroba; ile tam m'aų, to na puų te m'eškańa;*

– the preposition *u* undergoes the neutralisation /v/ : /u/ – [v]: *tu źem'a dobra, fšystko do słonka, ona roży dobże v něgo; v jej matk'i; byu v ojca; (ma) končík v ojcu;*

– /v/ in the function of prosthesis: *vojćec*.

The broad competence, which consists in the knowledge of the systems of two codes, but without the ability to keep them separate while communicating, expresses itself in the instability and intensified variantivity of the Polish linguistic system. Apart from the Suwałki subdialectal realisations, also the general Polish realisations occur, even in the same or similar words: *tylko* – *tyl'ko*; *lekaś* – *l'ekaś*; *lekarstva* – *l'ekarstfa*; *świńe* – *śfiń*; *było* – *byu*; *upłacili* – *opłacili*; *znof* – *znuf*; *puźńej* – *puźńij*; *ni ma* – *nie ma*; *uojćec* – *ojćec*; *jon* – *on*; *teres* – *teras*. All the features that were introduced by the informant to the Polish text from the primary language also appeared as variants (alternations).

W.S.28. Informant who differs from the basic informant in the variable: place of residence – city in contrast to village

The idiolect of W.S.28 contrasts with the idiolect of W.W.21. The characteristics of these two female informants differ in one variable – place of residence. W.S.28 has been living in a town (Suwałki) for approximately 30 years. She was born in Szury, where she spent her childhood and youth. Education – 4 years of primary school. She lives with her mother in a block of flats, in a Polish environment. At home, however, they speak Russian. She is a very religious person and often partakes in religious rituals. She has never worked professionally, but recently she has been taking up various tasks related to the functioning of the parish house, where every day she has the opportunity to meet her co-religionists and speak Russian. She reads Polish newspapers, listens to the radio and watches TV every day, but only in Polish, because she has not got equipment of sufficient quality to receive foreign broadcasts. She frequently visits retail and service shops, the clinic, and offices.

Table 29. The network of interactions of informant W.S.28

Russian	domain	Polish
+ —————	family	— — — — —
+ - - - - -	neighbourhood	————— +
+ —————	religion	— — — — —
+ —————	work	— — — — —
- — — — —	education	- - - - - +
- — — — —	administration	————— +
- — — — —	mass media	————— +

The network of informant W.S.28 is characterised by equal cohesiveness in the spheres of functioning of Polish and Russian. The informant has got frequent interactions in all the domains of social life. As her dedication to the parish issues is great and, as a matter of fact, she spends some time in the parish house every day, I have assumed that this activity can be treated as the domain of work. The network illustrates that the informant acquires her linguistic competence during constant interactions in the Russian subdialect and the Polish language of the general variant. However, before she started living in the town, she also had contacts with the Suwałki subdialects.

The phonological system of the Russian subdialect of this woman has got several important features in common with the general Polish language, which slightly distinguishes it from the Russian system used in the Suwałki countryside. These distinguishing features include: the occurrence of the palatal series /ś/, /ć/, /ź/, /ż/, represented only optionally by semi-palatal variants (s'), (c'), (z'), (ż') and (t'), (d'); /ɯ/ instead of /ɨ/ and /ɪ/ is sometimes represented by the non-palatal variant (l), which violates the opposition of softness of /ɨ/ : /ɪ/. The occurrence of the phoneme /f/ after voiceless consonants is realised consistently. These features prove the influence of the general Polish language on the Russian subdialect in the environment of the Old Believers living in towns.

The Polish language of this informant is very similar in the phonological aspect to the general Polish language. A lack of nasal phonemes in her Polish language is the only consistently realised feature common to the Russian subdialect and the Suwałki subdialects. In the coda nasal vowels are usually denasalised, and in the nucleus they are pronounced in an asynchronous manner, also before fricatives. Other common features adopted from the Suwałki subdialects and the Russian subdialect are also included in the repertoire of the informant, but she uses them in the Polish text very rarely:

- /e/ : /i/ - [i]: *ni barzo v'em, meščys ni ma, ni mamy*;
- /l/ - (l'): *kl'aštor*;
- /ɯ/ - (ɨ): *uśłyšy*.

Since her competence to a large extent has been shaped for a long time by contact with the general Polish language (neighbours, administration, mass media), her current linguistic repertoire does not generally embrace subdialectal elements alien to the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers, e.g., /u/ : /o/ – [u]: As regards strictly Polish subdialectal phenomena alien to Russian, I only noted two forms related to the asynchronous pronunciation of labial consonants, consisting in the omission of the spirant phoneme: *s całego śfata, na śfadectf'e*. She uses elements from Russian alien to Polish even more rarely. Akanye appeared in the following examples: *čšy čtery lata była, jak to byŭo; tak byŭo pšyžonzone pyšna*.

The competence of this informant is a synthesis of equal proficiency in using both codes and embraces a range of linguistic elements and the knowledge of the principles of combining them, which are sufficient for everyday communication. Thanks to the everyday practice of alternating communication in both codes, the informant is able to maintain two systems separately, avoiding excessive variantivity.

W.G.60. Informant who differs from the basic informant in one variable: age
A woman born in 1960 in Gabowe Grądy, where she is still living together with her husband and son. At home they speak only Russian. Her neighbours are Old Believers. She does not maintain closer relations with inhabitants of Polish villages. She obtained secondary education and is currently working as a religious education teacher in the primary school in Gabowe Grądy. During her school education she also learnt the literary Russian language as a foreign language. She often travels to Augustów to do shopping and to handle other matters. She reads Polish newspapers every day, and rarely Russian newspapers. She listens to the radio and watches the Polish television.

Table 30. The network of interactions of informant W.G.60

Russian	domain	Polish
+ ———	family	—
+ ———	neighbourhood	—
+ ———	religion	—
—	work	——— +
+ - - - -	education	——— +
—	administration	——— +
+ - - - -	mass media	——— +

The network of this informant is characterised by slightly greater cohesiveness within the domains of the Russian language, but two connections with the Russian sphere are weak, while all the connections related to the Polish language are strong. The informant is in contact primarily with the general Polish language. While interacting in the domains of work and administration, she has got contacts with the regional and general Polish language, because her colleagues come from nearby villages and from Augustów. The informant often uses both languages, therefore she is able to maintain two systems separately. She speaks the general Polish language without Polish and Russian subdialectal elements. Only nasal vowels in some examples have been denasalised in the coda: *mamy te kśqžečke vyaśńe maŋo*; *mamy kśoške tako dužo*; *mamy jedno gożine*. In the following examples: *z Moskvy*, *s cerkv'i* the voiced /v/ after /k/ has occurred.

W.S.64. Informant who differs from the basic informant in two variables: place of residence and age

A woman born in 1964 in Gabowe Grądy. She obtained secondary education (school of economics), but she is unemployed. For 10 years she has been living in Suwałki. She is a widow and has got 3 children. The family is not mixed. In her family home in Gabowe Grądy they spoke the Russian subdialect only. Before her husband died, they had spoken Russian and Polish at home. Now she speaks only Polish with her children as well as with her neighbours, because she lives in a block of flats, in a Polish-language environment. She speaks Russian only when she visits her family in the countryside and in the parish house in Suwałki, when she brings her children for religious education lessons. She is a practising person and it is important for her that her children know their religion and the Russian subdialect. She reads Polish newspapers, watches TV every day and listens only to the Polish radio.

Table 31. The network of interactions of informant W.S.64

Russian	domain	Polish
+ - - - -	family	——— +
+ - - - -	neighbourhood	——— +
+ ———	religion	— -
0	work	0
+ - - - -	education	——— +
-	administration	——— +
-	mass media	——— +

The network of this informant is characterised by significantly greater cohesiveness within the spheres of functioning of the Polish code. She lives in the town, so in the domain of neighbourhood the interactions are held in the Polish language. As inhabitant of Suwałki, she often has interactions in the domain of administration. She is young and has completed 15 years at school (primary and secondary), so she has interactions of the strong type with the domain of education in Polish and interactions of the weak type with Russian, which was taught as a foreign language. She is a daily user of the mass media. It follows from the above information that in everyday life the informant has to use the literary Polish language. She attaches great significance to the proficiency in Polish, which is proved by the fact that she brings up her children in this language by making it the language of the family.

She only occasionally speaks the Russian subdialect, but in the areas important for her as regards emotions – while contacting with her parents, who live in the countryside, and while practising religion, i.e., talking to children on topics related to the programme of religious education, and while contacting with other co-religionists in the parish house or at molenna services. The Russian subdialect is of emotional rather than practical significance to her. It is also important that it is the language of her childhood. Therefore, although now she has rare contacts with the Russian subdialect, the informant speaks it fluently. It is, of course, a variant of the subdialect which has got some systemic elements in common with the general Polish language (like in the case of W.S. 28).

The above description of the informant's interactions proves that her linguistic competence is shaped in the constant interactions in the general Polish language and rarely in the Russian subdialect. The competence acquired in this way allows the informant to maintain both systems separately. Her Polish does not differ from the general Polish language of monolingual people of her age.

M.W.12. The informant different from the basic informant in one variable: gender

A man born in 1912 in Wodziałki. Before World War II he completed 2 years of public school. He lives with his wife and his son's family. At home they speak Russian. His immediate neighbours are Old Believers. He maintains contacts with inhabitants of Polish villages, but less and less frequently. Throughout his life he worked on the land. He is very religious, he reads religious books every day, and he handwrites copies of some of them. He observes the principles of the Old Believers' tradition. He rarely reads Polish newspapers and listens to the radio, only occasionally watches the Polish television.

Table 32. The network of interactions of informant M.W.12

Russian	Domain	Polish
+ —————	family	—
+ —————	neighbourhood	— — — — — +
+ —————	religion	—
0	work	0
—	education	— — — — — +
—	administration	— — — — — +
—	mass media	— — — — — +

The network of M.W.12 is characterised by a slightly greater cohesiveness within the spheres of functioning of the Polish code. However, all the connections with the domains of the Russian language are strong, which indicates frequent interactions, and the connections with the spheres of Polish are weak. His network is the same as that of W.W.21. Therefore it appears that in this case gender does not determine the type of network. In everyday life, spent within the domains of family, neighbours, and religion, the Russian subdialect is sufficient for the informant. The informant uses Polish only when talking to his acquaintances from nearby villages. There are rare interactions within the domain of administration, for example when shopping in the marketplace in Suwałki or in a shop in a neighbouring village. The television, radio, and newspapers are of little interest to him. Due to this fact, his competence has been shaped during everyday interactions with the Russian subdialect and less frequent interactions with the Suwałki mazuration subdialect. While speaking Polish, he will often choose linguistic elements common to the Suwałki subdialects and the Russian subdialect:

– /e/ : /i/ – [i], [y]: *ńi ma, bendo otvarty sklepy, pam'eńc ma dobry, on ma gospodark'i, f suk'enečk'i* (chodzi), *tak'i trudnyjė l'ato*;

– /e/ – (e^y), (è): *puźńė, pracuji, tute^yj, gte^ymboka, dla ćekavos'c'i*;

– a lack of nasal phonemes, in the coda the denasalisation of nasal consonants occurs, and in the nucleus the asynchronous pronunciation appears: *tamto strone, bendo, kupujo, poxožo, pačšajo, za to ȳerbato žimovo poro, čensta, monš, mondra, venglu*;

– the phoneme /o/ has got a wider range than in the general Polish language: *to tyx dužyx psyf*, ńi ma tyx cerkfof*, znof, mov'i, ńik ńe mok, fpšot*;

– prostheses: *ȳodać, ȳodm'ana, ȳodebrali ȳod ńix, jido*;

– the phoneme /v/ may occur after a voiceless consonant: *śv'ento, Litv'ini, panstvo, śv'ece, otvarty, Moskvyy, svoje*;

– the phoneme /l/ has got an optional soft variant: *fškol'e, al'bo, v bl'okax, dal'eko, k'il'ometry, tyl'ko, ml'eka, z mal'inam'i, l'at, vyl'ondała*;

– *ł* is used much more frequently than *u*. Thus it is a phoneme, and (*u*) is an optional variant, occurring occasionally;

– the phoneme /n/ occurs before /s/, /c/ and /č/: *panstvo, skonczyło się, vygnancuf*;

– the occurrence of the palatalised phonemes /s'/, /z'/, /c'/, /ʒ'/ and their palatal variants.

While speaking Polish, the informant rarely applies the subdialectal features which he does not know from the primary language. In his language there is no: /o/ : /u/ – [u], (ò), mazuration or pronunciation related to the asynchrony of labial consonants. The group *-je* is consistently preserved in the onset: *jegody, jermark* and the group *-re-* appears, albeit inconsistently, in the nucleus: *teres, greńica*.

Elements of the Russian subdialect penetrate the Polish text, which is the result of a lack of ability to keep the two codes separately:

– on the paradigmatic axis: the occurrence of the reduced vowel ə (cf. examples below);

– on the syntagmatic axis – the neutralisations of unstressed vowels:

– /a/ : /e/ : /o/ – [a], e.g.,

pojexali f pol'a; ni ma tak bliska; mam m'eškańa; jest po para tam; požucana para; tam dobra m'asta; a tu spora, spora jest tyx g'zybuj; f tyx bl'okax to teš tak była zimno; p'exoto šli cała l'ata; kartofle wykopana juš była; dva brata umarła juš; xorovał v l'ata; benže naokoła ten cmentaš grozić; v'encej luži še rozmnożyła; řev'adoma čy ony može juš; rap'eli; rozum'ał; g'že zastał noć, tam nač'uj; razb'ito; aperacije rob'ili; va vtorek, to da Smolńik.

– /a/ : /e/ : /o/ – [ə]; examples were noted only in the coda: *v l'atə, prošə, možə, tam ře była tak, kołə Kouņa, čenstə, vyv'idńałə, doma šeži małə.*

The informant's system of the Polish language is characterised by intensified variantivity. The presented subdialectal features occur along with the general Polish language features. The competence of this informant, like of informant W.W.21, does not include the skill of efficiently separating the elements of the two known codes while the informant communicates. M.W.12 and W.W.21 are very similar to each other in terms of their Polish language, the basic set of features of which is common to the Suwałki subdialects and the Russian subdialect. At the same time, there are few Polish subdialectal features different than in the Russian subdialect. While speaking Polish, the informants transfer some articulation customs from the primary language, which causes the non-systemic akanye and the reduction of unstressed vowels.

The Polish language of the Old Believers in the Suwałki-Sejny centre is diversified as regards idiolects, because particular informants have acquired their linguistic competence in various specific social settings. The Polish language of older people living in villages is closest to the Suwałki subdialects. The language of people living in towns and all those belonging to the young generation becomes similar to the general Polish language. Finally, the young informants living in towns speak fully fledged general Polish language. We could content ourselves with this general conclusion, but it does not reflect

the complexity of the issue that is the process of shaping particular idiolects. The statement that all the older inhabitants of villages use the subdialectal Polish language with numerous Russian elements is not true. Below I will present two differently shaped competences of older people living in villages.

W.G.20. The informant who does not differ from the basic informant as regards variables

She lives in a village (Gabowe Grądy), and is only one year younger than the basic informant. She is probably the last person in the group of the Old Believers who does not speak Polish at all, she has got only passive knowledge of the language. At present she lives with her son, but in the past her family used to be very large (she had fifteen children). Only Russian was spoken at her home. She has never made acquaintances with women outside the group of the Old Believers. She lives in the part of the village which is located rather far from Polish farms, and maintains close contacts only with the female Old Believers living nearby. She worked on the land. She is very religious, participates in all the church services, observes the Old Believers' traditions and customs. For many years she has not gone to the town and has avoided leaving the village. She does basic shopping in a shop in her village, where the shop assistant is an Old Believer. Any matters which must be handled outside the village are handled by her son or another member of her family. She asks them to do so, as she cannot speak Polish and is afraid of being ridiculed. She completed seven years of education at the Polish school, but she admits that she has lost the ability to read. She is not interested in television or radio at all. The presented programmes fall outside the scope of her religious value system and she associates watching them with a sin. Therefore she herself never watches TV, and when her son switches the TV set on, she ostentatiously leaves the room. As regards the radio, she does not treat it with such hostility but she hardly listens to it.

Table 33. The network of interactions of informant W.G.20

Russian	domain	Polish
+ ———	family	—
+ ———	neighbourhood	—
+ ———	religion	—
0	work	0
—	education	— — — — +
0	administration	0
0	mass media	0

The network shows that the informant has got interactions in the spheres operated only by the Russian code. The interaction in the domain

of education took place a long time ago and the informant, who has not had practice in other spheres of Polish, has entirely lost the active knowledge of the language acquired at school. Missing in the shaping of the linguistic competence of this informant are Polish-language interactions in the domain of neighbourhood, which became the basic source of knowledge about Polish for other informants of the same sociological variables. As a result, she does not participate in other domains of Polish – administration and the mass media. The informant does not leave the domains of Russian because she cannot speak Polish. A lack of the interaction in the domain of the mass media is also related to her notion of religiousness.

M.W.13. Informant of the same variables as M.W.12. He differs from the basic informant in one variable – gender

He was born in 1913 in Wodziłki. During World War II he was in Lithuania, then he was relocated for forced labour to Germany. After the war he returned to the home village. At present he lives alone, but earlier he used to live with his family. The family was not mixed and they spoke only Russian at home. He maintains friendly and frequent contacts with Polish neighbours living nearby. His house is situated on the outskirts of the village (Pl: *na kolonii*) and he rather rarely meets other Old Believers living in the “centre” of the village. Moreover, for many years he has been at variance with his co-religionist neighbours. Before the war he completed 3 years at school, however, he has got extensive knowledge as he reads many books in Polish and Russian as well as newspapers in both languages. He has not got a TV set, but every day he listens to the Polish radio a lot. He is well up on political events and economic matters. He is an expert on his own religion and traditions, observes all the Old Believers’ principles, is very knowledgeable about religious books and even makes handwritten copies of them in the evenings. However, he rarely takes part in church services, he goes to the molenna during church holidays only. For many years he worked as a salesman in a grocery store in nearby Szurpiły. He stopped working only one year ago.

Table 34. The network of interactions of informant M.W.13

Russian	domain	Polish
+ - - - -	family	-
+ - - - -	neighbourhood	——— +
+ - - - -	religion	-
-	work	——— +
-	education	- - - - - +
-	administration	- - - - - +
+ ———	mass media	——— +

The network is characterised by greater cohesiveness in the domains operated by Polish. The informant has had no interactions in the domains of Russian operated by the Russian subdialect for a long time (approximately 15 years). He maintains contact with the literary Russian language by reading book and newspapers. His competence has been shaped mainly through speaking the Russian subdialect – earlier at home and with other members of the Old Believers' group, and through speaking Polish – with neighbours from Łopuchowo and Szurpiły while working in a shop. Thus, he is in constant contact with a mazurating Suwałki subdialect. At the same time he has everyday contact with the literary Polish language through the mass media, which has got a great impact on his competence.

In terms of phonology, the language of this informant is similar to the general variant of Polish. There are no Russian features, such as akanye or reductions. There are, however, occasionally substitutions *v* – *u*: *był v sołtysa*. There are few characteristics of the Suwałki subdialect present in the informant's speech, namely: *kv* – e.g., *kv'atk'i*; *tv* – e.g., *tvuj*; and the hard *n* in the word *panstvo*, all inconsistently realised. He is the only informant from the rural environment who quite often realises nasal vowels in a synchronous manner in the coda and before fricatives: *zostałże mnie jedną żefčynkę, v'izależem moją curkę*.

4.1.2. The Shaping of Competences of Informants from the Masurian Centre

In the Masurian centre the community of the Old Believers is very small and, as a matter of fact, it is not diversified as regards generations. It was difficult to work out the charts of networks of interactions for members of this group because I could not base them on interviews with informants, who did not acknowledge that they spoke the Russian subdialect because of its low prestige. On the other hand, direct observations proved that this language was still in use. The distribution of languages was different after the war than before. This requires additional interpretation of the presented charts. I will discuss the shaping of the competences of two female informants living in Gałkowo; they are of similar age. Informant W.G.15 learned the Polish language in the subdialectal Masurian variant before the war. In turn, informant W.G.20 did not know the Masurian subdialect and she learned Polish only after World War II.

W.G.15

A woman living in Gałkowo, she was born there in 1915. She lives with her sister. At home they speak German and Russian. Her neighbours are settlers from the Kurpie region but she hardly has contact with them. Formerly it

was an entirely Old Believer environment. Before the war in their family farm some Masurians were employed, from whom the informant learned to speak Polish, but she cannot read and write in Polish. She cannot read in Russian, either, but she writes and reads in German, because she completed the German public school. She is not particularly religious, she does not participate in church services. At home she has not even got an icon; neither has she got any books, which she would not be able to read anyway. She observes only some traditions related to church holidays. She rarely leaves the village, she does shopping in nearby Ukta. She has not got a TV set, she rarely listens to the radio and only the Polish one. She used to read German regularly newspapers a few years ago, but at present she can no longer afford it.

Table 35. The network of interactions of informant W.G.15

domain	Russian	Polish	German
family	———— +	—	———— +
neighbourhood	- - - - - +	- - - - - +	- - - - - +
religion	- - - - - +	—	—
work	0	0	0
education	—	—	- - - - - +
administration	—	- - - - - +	- - - - - +
mass media	—	- - - - - +	- - - - - +

The network shows greater cohesiveness within the spheres operated by German; however, 4 out of 5 connections are weak. In the domains of education and administration interactions in German took place before the war, when the informant was young, and in the domain of mass media – a few years ago. In the domain of neighbourhood the German language may also be used at present, but rarely. The language is constantly maintained only in the family. Russian functions in the family jointly with German and, in addition, it is used, although rarely, in the domains of neighbourhood and religion. Within the spheres of functioning of Polish all the connections are weak. The competence of the informant was shaped when she was young, during interactions in five domains of German, three domains of Russian, and only one domain of Polish of the Masurian variant – that of neighbourhood. After the war the German language was completely superseded from the domains of education and administration, and replaced with the literary Polish language, owing to which the informant has increased her contact with Polish. In the post-war times the number of interactions in Russian decreased in the domains of neighbourhood and religion.

Before the war the Polish language was not of great importance to this informant, and it is not very important to her at present, either. She speaks the

Masurian subdialects acquired when young, in which the subdialectal features that are fostered by the constant interference of German are clearly visible, and elements of the German and Russian codes are added.

The subdialectal features supported by the constant contact with German:

- raising the articulation of the middle vowels *e* and *o* in the unstressed position: *óšemžesont*, *óńi*, *óxrońił*, *uńi*, *v'incej*, *pryntko*, *puŋożyli*, *gutovać ob'at*, *śńidanja*, *vźili*, *maluvaŋa*, *of'ićir*, *grumady*;

- shifting the articulation of *a* to the back in the example: *gǎdali*;

- (i), a variant of the phoneme /i/, is not positional but optional. After hard consonants (i) or the intermediary variant (y') may occur: *bili*, *vixoژی*, *tilko*, *mi* 'my' ('we', as opposed to general Polish: *mi* 'me'), *by'ili*;

- asynchronous pronunciation of nasal vowels in all the positions except the coda, where the denasalisation occurs: *mońku*, *ńesmerzonca*, *mońka*, *zbliżajo*, *majo*, *troxe*;

- mixing of the series /S/, /Ś/ and /Š/. Replacing of the series /Ś/ with /Š/: *časta*, *žatk'i*, *šfontečne*, *lužom*, *xożyŋa*, /Ś/ has got positional alveopalatal variant (š') before *i*, and sometimes before *e*: *pš'iš'et*, *zabž'ić*, *vič'š'imali*, *fš'istko*, *pš'eč'imali*;

- asynchronous pronunciation of labial consonants and the consonant *ń*: *zabž'ili*, *po njemjecku*, *porobjona bjiŋa*, *robjili*, *robx'imy*, *kupx'im*, *ranjony*, *px'ekli*, *bjaŋa*;

- depalatalisations of labial consonants and the consonant *ń*: *nešmerzonca*, *ostali na ojcyžne*, *melim*, *meškalim*.

A subdialectal feature supported by the influence of the Russian subdialect is the occurrence of soft velar variants: *trox'i*, *blax'i*, *g'ensty*, *sux'e*, *marx'efka*, *k'empy*.

The Russian and German elements:

- the vowel *ə* may be a sign of the interference of both German and Russian codes. This vowel additionally enriches the paradigmatic axis, and on the syntagmatic axis it is a variant of three phonemes, /a/, /e/ and /o/, e.g., *tutəj*, *rožicə*, *matkə*, *gədali*, *možə*, *jajkə*. Sometimes the reduction causes the loss of a vowel: *potm*;

- in rare examples replacement of /ʊ/ with /l/, influenced by the German language, e.g., *mlyn*, *mluceńa*;

- in rare examples the neutralisation of voice, influenced by the German language, e.g., *prat* 'brat', *delevizor*, *sabrali* 'zabrali', *totaŋ* 'dodał';

- occurrence of voiced /v/ after voiceless consonants, influenced by the Russian language, e.g., *švaby*, *martveńa*, *zakvasne*, *zakvask'i*;

- /v/ in the function of prosthesis, influenced by the Russian language, e.g., *vojćec*, *vučy še*;

- replacement /u/ → /v/, influenced by the Russian language, e.g.: *navučyli še*, *v rožicuf*;

– frequent akanye, influenced by the Russian language, e.g.: *razžućili, fš'istko zabrana byŭa, vojska taka byŭa, zabili tam pot stodoŭa, razmav'ajo*.

In the consonantal system of this informant mazuration is frequently observed, e.g., *jesce, m'iska, zafse*. The competence of this informant does not allow her to consistently distinguish the features of the three languages. The Masurian subdialectal features, as well as the German and Russian characteristics inserted in the Polish texts, are not realised consistently, therefore the idiolect is characterised by variantivity and great instability. Its mazuration additionally distances it from the general Polish system.

W.G.20

The informant was born in 1920 in Gałkowo and still lives there. Before the war she graduated from the German school. She lives with her husband, they talk in Russian and German with each other. Her immediate neighbours belong to immigrant population and speak the general variant of the Polish language. The informant maintains quite lively contacts with them. Before the war she did not know Polish at all. She is a religious, actively practicing person. She meets her co-religionist neighbours every Sunday at the church service and has an opportunity to talk with them in the Russian subdialect or the German language. Every year she travels to Germany to visit her family. She cannot read or write either Polish or Russian but she reads German newspapers regularly. She does not listen to the radio, and she hardly watches television.

Table 36. The network of interactions of informant W.G.20

domain	Russian	Polish	German
family	———— +	—	———— +
neighbourhood	———— +	———— +	———— +
religion	———— +	—	—
work	0	0	0
education	—	—	----- +
administration	—	----- +	----- +
mass media	—	----- +	----- +

The informant has conversations significantly more often in the German language and the Russian subdialect than in Polish, therefore – as I noticed – she speaks Polish with reluctance. She learned Polish from post-war settlers. The Polish families that are her friends speak the general variant of Polish. The phonological system of her Polish language is similar to the general Polish language. The pronunciation of labial consonants is always synchronous, there is hardly any mazuration (rare examples only), and she

maintains the opposition of the series /S/ : /Š/ : /Ś/ and the opposition of voice. The subdialectal elements supported by the German influence rarely penetrate her Polish:

- (i) after a hard consonant, e.g., *vičšimali, bili* ‘byli’ (‘they were’ as opposed to the general Polish: *bili* ‘they beat [past tense]’);
- raising of the vowel *e*, e.g., *v nívoli, tygo, m’iška, m’ěška, m’iśonc*.

Akanye, a feature of the Russian subdialect, only rarely penetrates the Polish language of this informant: *čšeba by ɔ dakumenty*, (aby dojechać) *da žeći, te fšystk’e*; *to nie kuzyńi, ale moža kiedyś byli*. The reduced vowel *ə* also appears: *čšebə, rożica, ješčə*.

The competences of two informants from the Masurian centre have been shaped in different social relations. When W.G.15 was young, she learned the Masurian subdialect; however, in the post-war period she used it rarely. Her competence is shaped mainly in the spheres of functioning of the German language and the Russian subdialect. In turn, W.G.20 learned Polish after the war, when the contact with the literary Polish language was possible in Masuria. Owing to the relations she established with her new, Polish, neighbours, she has been able to constantly improve her competence in using the Polish language.

4.2. Code Switching

I understand code switching as switching from one language to another (from Polish to Russian, and vice versa, and from Polish to German, etc.) within one text. This phenomenon concerns larger segments of a text – a sentence, several sentences, but it is associated thematically with lexical quotations, discussed above.

Code switching is one of the signs of behaviour of a multilingual person. We should distinguish code switching from linguistic interference, as these are phenomena belonging to different planes of analysis. Linguistic interference is conditioned systemically – it is caused by differences occurring between language systems. Code switching is not determined by systemic differences between particular languages, but by extralinguistic factors – changes in the situational context. Sometimes code switching appears without distinct reasons, and depends only on communication habits of a particular informant.

I distinguish between situational switching and metaphoric switching [Preston 1987: 691]: the switching determined by a change in the sphere of reality (domain) is called situational; and when the reason for switching is one of the variables of the situational context, e.g. a subject of a talk – such switching is called metaphoric. Situational switching is related to the issue of the functional distribution of languages, hence, as a matter of fact, it has

already been discussed in sections 2.3 and 4.1. Now I will address the issue of changing of the language code under the influence of the situational context, i.e., metaphoric switching.

The most important factor which may cause a bilingual person to switch code is the interlocutor and their language. The informant needs to know that the interlocutor understands the text when the code is changed. Then the informant may decide to switch the code, either because of a change in the topic of the talk or even without distinct reasons. An interlocutor may also cause the switching of the code of a bilingual speaker by joining in the discussion in the other language. Code switching occurs most often when there are more people participating in the talk. I will present examples taken from utterances of an informant from Suwałki (aged 35). The texts were addressed to me, a person speaking Polish, and were recorded in the parish house in Suwałki, in the presence of several Old Believer women. In the first text the informant talks about the origin of the name "Pomorcy" (Pomors) in the other – about religious principles. The presence of the Old Believers, listening with interest, the topic itself and the emotional involvement of the informant, as well as the place of the interview – the parish house, where the Russian language is usually spoken – causes numerous code switches:⁴

i uxaž ili k B'eŷamu m'or'ju tam i tam, 'etā b'yŷā Šib'ir, da, k B'eŷamu m'or'ju i tam v l'eše začeli karčovač zevo, sam'i po prostu sob'e i žyč začeli | a te m'estā nazyvaŷo še Pam'orja i my nazyv'alim še starāabr'acŷy pam'orcy | 'etā m'estā nazyvaŷo Pam'orja |

(Od jakiego wieku dziecko może śpiewać w cerkwi?) *to značy tak, žecko v nas tak v cerkv'e może tak, jak juš mondre może navet ot p'eńču, jak še naučy | jak še naučy, tak może śp'evač, może čytač | t'ol'kā ŷot jev'ang'ilja nel'ž'a čytač | j'etā už'e čyt'ajət pop, jev'ang'ilja | ja to kak b'yŷā ževuškaj, jak byŷam pańenko ješče i m'ne f Kŷaipeže ješče..., ja byŷam i mŷoda čytaŷam, puźńej jakoś tak troxe zańedbaŷam, a puźńej znowu povručiŷam na to |*

u nas kak ņet pr'ič'asčja, tak ņet sakramentuf | to značy u nas ņe ma, to ot tysonc šešćset šešćešontego šustego roku u nas ņe ma tego | u nas po prostu, u nas ņe ma komu, to značy my d'uxām pričasč'ajimśā, dux s'okrušən | (A inne sakramenty?) to značy što, u nas t'ol'kā kažiŷā, t'ol'kā k'aži pop | t'ol'kā gavar'it, x'ožit i dux sv'at'ij, kak skaz'ač | v nas t'ol'kā 'etā ast'aŷāš t'ajna | v nas f t'aińe t'ol'kā, v nas ņet || na pšykyat u katolikuf opŷatek | u nas tego opatka ņe ma, bo my ņe mamy y'er'arxji, my ņe mamy ap'ostāl'stfa tak'ovā, ņe mamy sfoix patr'arxuf, tam ņe ma tego | 'etā fšex ņik'on patr'arxaf nam raz'or'iy, kto teras może zrob'ić | napšykyat pap'eš może zrobić, napšykyat, no kto to może zrob'ić, k'edy pap'eš sam atp'aŷ |

⁴ In noting the parts of texts in the Russian subdialect, I have applied the simplified phonetic transcription, according to the rules specified in *Słownik gwary starowierców* [Grek-Pabisowa, Maryniakowa 1980: VII]. The vowels *a* and *o* are noted as *a* in the first syllable before the stress and in the onset. The sign *ə* means reduced *or*, *a* in further positions before the stress and in the syllables after the stress, as well as reduced *e* after a hard consonant; the reduction of the vowel *e* is presented by the signs *ə* and *i*.

In Sejny I noted an interesting example of the code switching caused by the topic. The informant (aged 85) talks in Polish about the Old Believers' calendar and presents this calendar at the same time. The code switching is carried out gradually. At the beginning of the text the informant pronounces in accordance with the Polish phonetics: *ńeżela, pońeżatek, śo 'sie' pśexożim*. In the second part of the text the same sounds are pronounced in a semi-palatal manner: *d'eń, pońed'atek, ńed'ela, mus'im*. A Russian quotation appears: *o p'eršy mart*. Finally the code is switched fully – the informant begins to speak Russian. We can get an impression that at a certain moment the Old Believer, looking at his calendar, has already begun to think in Russian (although I know that it is difficult to penetrate the thoughts of another human being):

to teras dñi, fšystk'e te litery, to to jest rok, l'ate kturne čšy, f čšy paxsalji, bendo čšymać | a tu dñi, p'ontek, sobota, ńeżela, pońeżatek, vtorek, środa, čvartek | nu teres do p'eršego marca | v zešłym, v drug'im roku čšy mało vy rok, to to był, pačyli, vot to to, że to čvartek | a f tym roku juš ńe čšy ma vy, on čšy ma tylko p'eršego marca | o p'eršy mart i teres juš to juš končyło śo i pśexożim na litera... | f tym roku čšy ma yy, to juš mamy to, o pačec, ktury nam, d'eń bend'e, juš pot tom litero, to juš ten d'eń mušim nazvać, że to ńed'el'a, ńed'el'a, pońed'atek i tak dal'ej | nu i o tak ɣo, a tu o, p'eršy, drug'i, čšeći i tak dal'ej | to to jest kal'endaš tak'i ročny | a juš f paxsalji tam o ten, to jest pśestempne l'ata, co čšy, co čvarty rok, to tu pśestempny, vysak'ostnyj got | no i t'ap'er ot 'etot d'erž'ala prim'erna vy, a už'e n'očju b'ud'it d'erž'at' ɣy i tak f p'at'ok ražstv'o |

I will also quote a text recorded in Bór. The female informant was born in Bór in 1920. When asked to talk about her wedding, all of a sudden she switched the code to Russian. It looked as if the memories of that important day recalled the Russian subdialect:

oj teras bžytk'e tance, bžytk'e tance, pa prostu pajž'oš, paglaž'iš, to daže ńet čev'o i sɣuxać | [...] (Co było do jedzenia na weselu?) do, du ježeńa to po prostu, że ńe tak šykovali jek p'ervej, buŷka zvyčajna | juš to takim p'arag'am nap'ečənə, pr'ostə kak na bl'axu kɣaž'otšə | zvyč'ajnyji p'arag'i, nu buŷk'i ety | i pošle kr'ošut, značyt žimniina, xəɣaž'ec | m'asə b'ɣə t'ušennyja |

In the Masurian centre all the informants easily switched from Polish to German and vice versa. As in the case of the bilingual Russian-Polish Old Believers, the determinant was the language of the interlocutor,⁵ cf., e.g., the talk with a woman (Wojnowo, aged 60) about a fire in the molenna:

das war alles diese, die Blumen auch die von Blumen, Kerzen, das war aus Krepppapier gemacht und danach, daß es angebrannt wurde (Gdzie była stara molenna?) w tym miejsu (To była wspólna z prawosławnymi?) nie była wspólna, prawosławni postavili cerkiew |

⁵ I was able to carry out observations of code switching in the Masurian centre thanks to my participation in the field studies conducted by Professor Klaus Steinke from the Institute of Slavic Studies of the University of Erlangen (Germany).

[[in German:] *it was everything [together], these flowers, and these candles, they [the flowers] were made of paper, and they caught fire* [in Polish:] (Where was the old molenna?) *in this place* (Was it used jointly with the Orthodox people?) *it wasn't used jointly, the Orthodox people built their church*]

another example:

(Ile rodzin tu zostało?) *ile rodzin, u nas pięć rodzin, pięć z naszego wyznania / tu nie taka szczególna wioska, tam Gałkowo, Wojnowo, Piaski, Osiniak, tam jeszcze są naszego wyznania, i wtedy wszystkie do tego kościółka przychodzą* (Tu pięć rodzin, a w Gałkowie?) *a w Gałkowie to nie wiem, ile tam rodzin, też niedużo, też tak może* (Am Sonntag wie viel Leute?) *am Sonntag in der Kirche zwölf bis fünfzehn, bis achtzehn Personen, das ist schon viel.*

[[in Polish:] (How many families have stayed here?) *how many families, five families here, five of our faith / it is not such a special village here, there are Gałkowo, Wojnowo, Piaski, Osiniak over there, and there are [people] of our faith there, too, and then everyone comes to this little church* (Five families here, and in Gałkowo?) *And in Gałkowo, I don't know how many families there are, maybe not a lot, maybe something like that also* [in German:] (How many people come to church on Sunday?) *On Sunday twelve to fifteen, to eighteen people come to the church, it's quite many.*

While talking to two interlocutors speaking two different languages, the informant may switch the code herself, without being provoked by an interlocutor's question:

Tak już mniej więcej może troszeczkę później, może i wcześniej odbudowana ta cerkiew prawosławna, a tak to wir sind hier angesiedelt worden, wir sind gekommen.

[[in Polish:] *So more or less, maybe later, maybe earlier was this Orthodox church reconstructed, and* [in German:] *we settled here, we came here.*]

It was also possible to switch some informants to the Russian code. I present the example of a talk which was held in three languages. It is worthy of admiration how easily and automatically the informant switches between languages, adapting to the interlocutor:

(Jak ludzie stoją w molennie, po prawej kobiety, po lewej mężczyźni?) *u nas jest inaczej. Po prawej mężczyźni, a po lewej kobiety zawsze* (A dzieci?) *a dzieci no to też, chłopaki kole ojca, a dziewczynki, jo, kole matki* (Aber vorn oder hinten? Stehen hinten oder vorn oder überall) *überall* (Es gibt keine Ordnung?) [...] (Und wie haben Sie den Namen gekriegt?) *ich Stefan* (Почему Стефан?) *pačemu, a tak sa sv'atca f r'usk'ix* (Как?) *no tam f kak'oi d'eń* [...] *no c'ep'er už'e nie glad'at na 'etə kagd'a raž'its'ə / bo kak kam'u panr'av'its'ə* [Man, Gałkowo, aged 85].

[[in Polish:] (How do people stand in the molenna, women on the right, and men on the left?) *It is different in our place. Men on the right, women always on the left* (And children?) *and children as well, boys next to their fathers, girls, jo* ['yes'], *next to their mothers* [in German:] (But in front of them or behind. Do they stand in front, or behind, or everywhere?) *everywhere* (Isn't there any order?) [...] (And how did you get your name?) *I'm Stefan* [in Russian:] (Why Stefan?) *why? It is*

after Russian saints (How so?) well, whichever day you were born on [...] but today nobody pays attention to when one was born, and [we name children] as we want.)

Code switching, as shown by the examples of the cited texts, may be made under the influence of the situational context: partner, topic, place of talk. The Old Believers switch the codes easily, they are able to change their language several times during one talk, even within one sentence. Their code switching serves as a proof of the real active multilingualism of the Old Believers. What I found most astonishing was that the Old Believers were never surprised that their interlocutor asks questions in one various language after another (as in the talk with the man from Gałkowo presented above), as if speaking in two or three languages, which for us seems to be a rare and admirable art, was for them a normal ability possessed by every human being.

4.3. The Issues Related to Awareness and the Linguistic Norm in the Communities of the Old Believers

On the basis of the conducted interviews and my own observations I will attempt to present the views of the Old Believers themselves on topics related to linguistic correctness. The Old Believers very willingly engaged in conversations about their linguistic situation and themselves assessed their language skills.

They realise that their Russian language is different from the literary variant, because its norm allows for easy communication only between its users. In the contacts with interlocutors speaking the literary Russian language, some communication problems appear, and this is clearly noticed by my informants:

Nasi ludzie jak rozmawiają czasem z tym, co przyjadą z Moskwy, to niektórzy nawet nie rozumieją, my nie rozumiemy. Dzieci jak przyjadą ze Związku Radzieckiego, to jakoś trudno im z naszymi, to jakoś nie mogą się porozumieć. Nasz język to ruskim trudno jest zrozumieć, łamany wszystko, spolszczony [Gabowe Grądy, woman, aged 35].

(Our people, when they sometimes talk with those coming from Moscow, some of them don't even understand, we don't understand. When children come from the Soviet Union, it's somehow difficult with ours, they can't communicate. Our language is difficult to understand for Russians, it is all broken, Polish.)

Such views can be heard only in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres, as the Masurian Old Believers have no contacts with Russians, and they talk reluctantly about their Russian subdialect due to its low prestige.

Some Old Believers notice particular lexical differences of their Russian subdialect:

Jakiś inny ten język, bo weźmy nawet po rosyjsku jest ščav'eľ, po polsku szczaw, a my sobie (mówimy) kiślica [Gabowe Grądy, woman, aged 35].

(This language is somehow different, let's have a look at this: in Russian it is ščav'eľ, in Polish – szczaw, and we [say] kiślica ['sorrel'].)

Skąd ten barkan, jak to nazwali, po jakimu? Nie wiem, po jakimu to, bo Mazurzy mówili marchew i po polsku marchew, a my mówili barkan, i od czego, to ja nie wiem, bo po niemiecku też Mohrrübe, a to barkan. Może skądś przynieśli ten barkan [Wojnowo, woman, aged ca. 70].

(Where is this barkan ['carrot'] from, how did they call it, in what language? I don't know in what language it is, because the Masurians said marchew and in Polish it was marchew, and we said barkan, I don't know why, because in German it is Mohrrübe, and here – barkan. Perhaps they brought this barkan from somewhere.)

While giving me answers to the questions from the lexical questionnaire, they often warned:

To my tak nazywamy, a jak czysto po rosyjsku, to nie wiem; po rusku czysto chyba inaczej mówili, a ja tam nie wiem [Wodziłki, woman, aged ca. 40].

(We call it like this, and how it is in proper Russian, I don't know; in proper Russian they called it another way, but I don't know.)

Ad'ijaŋo, ale oni po rusku czysto to chyba jeszcze inaczej [Wojnowo, woman, aged ca. 65].

(Ad'ijaŋo, but in proper Russian it is called different still.)

In their opinion, the reason for differences between their subdialect and the literary Russian language is the influence of the Polish language and – in Masuria – the German language:

Nasz język pokręcony, pomieszany, trochę polskiego, trochę ruskiego [Gabowe Grądy, woman, aged ca. 40].

(Our language is twisted, mixed, a bit of Polish, a bit of Russian.)

U nas język taki bardziej sproszczony, taki bardziej już z polskim więcej, taki mieszany, taki polsko-ruski, bo jak styczności się ma z Polakami na co dzień, to bywa, że już słowa [polskie] się przyczepiają [Ruska Buda, man, aged 30].

(Our language is more simplified, there is more Polish in it, it's mixed, it's Polish-Russian, because as we have everyday contact with the Polish people, it happens that [Polish] words stick [with us].)

Nasz język mieszany, jak nie możesz, to po rusku, to po polsku, po niemiecku wszadzisz [słowo] [Gałkowo, man, aged 85].

(Our language is mixed, if you can't, you put a Russian, Polish or German [word].)

The theme of mixing languages was very often running through the statements of my informants. They also think that their Polish is different because of the penetration of Russian and (in Masuria) German components. Even young people say that they are unable to avoid foreign influences because:

Jest zakodowana w człowieku ta mowa [Suwałki, woman, aged 29].

(This speech is ingrained in you.)

To śmiesznie, jak na rynku w Augustowie ruskie słowo wyskoczy [Gabowe Grądy, woman, aged 50].

(It's funny when a Russian word pops out in the Augustów marketplace.)

Nieraz na dyskotecę ruskie słowo wyskoczy [Gabowe Grądy, man, aged 30].

(Sometimes in the disco some Russian word pops out.)

The Old Believers notice the opportunities to make phonetic "alterations":

Nigdy nie zapomnę, jak koleżanka Irka: Proszę pani, ja nie była w szkole, bo mama štony ['spodnie'] wyprała. Nigdy nie zapomnę: Mama štony wyprała. Co za štony, jak oni wyglądają? A'na štan'y musiała ['chciała powiedzieć'], po polsku štony [Nowinka, woman, aged ca. 40].

(I will never forget when my friend Irka [said]: Miss, I was absent from school because my mum washed my štony ['trousers']. I will never forget: Mum washed my štony. What does štony mean, what do they look like? She had to ['wanted to say'] štan'y, in Polish štony.)

In the Masurian centre the informants frequently drew my attention to lexical influences of the German language, which are sometimes the topic of various anecdotes:

Moja córka też raz, po niemiecku skarpety to byli Socken, nie. Mój [mąż] tam miał takie ekstra fajne. Siostra mu przysłała już z Niemiec, a córka jemu tam ściągnęła i sobie na nogi. On patrzy na nią – moje zoki ['skarpety'] ubrałaś, moje zoki nadzieła, moje zoki, no. To było przekręcone.

(My daughter once, too... in German socks are Socken, aren't they? My [husband] had an extra special pair. [His] sister sent them to him from Germany, and [our] daughter pulled them off him and put them on her feet. He looks at her: my zoki [Polonised German: 'socks'], you put on my zoki, she just nadzieła [Polonised Russian: 'put on'] my zoki. It was twisted.)

Jo, jo, to z niemieckiego, ja. I potem te mazurskie jo zawsze. Potem te Polaki jak się nasiedlali, to też: jo, jo, i jedna dziewczyna została Jojo [przezwaną]. Z tymi językami to jest strasznie, tak się miesza [Wojnowo, woman, born 1920].

[Jo, jo [pronounced yo, yo], it's from the German: ja. And later this Masurian jo all the time. Later on, when these Poles were settling, it was also: jo, jo, and one girl was [nicknamed] Jojo. It's awful with these languages, they mix so much.)

The male informant from Gałkowo (aged 85) points out that Russian elements may also penetrate their German language:

Sehr oft in deutschen Sprache sagt man statt, na ja ich habe gesagt, a ja gavar'iy.

(Very frequently, while speaking German, instead of saying [in German:] I said [I say in Russian:] I said.)

While collecting the Polish vocabulary parallel with the Russian vocabulary using the questionnaire method in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres, I had the opportunity to witness that the majority of the informants were able to consciously distinguish the codes they used.⁶ In the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres, the Old Believers pointed out words which came to the Russian subdialect from the Polish language. In Gabowe Grądy a 70-year-old woman listed synonyms functioning in the Russian subdialect: *lic'o* – *tfaś*; *p'ečonka* – *vantroba*; *v'ekša* – *v'ev'urka*; *ajist* – *baćan*; *červ'ak* – *gońšeńica* and she informed me that *tfaś*, *vantroba*, *v'ev'urka*, *baćan*, *gońšeńica* were borrowed from Polish. The informants properly categorised as belonging to the Polish or Russian code lexemes common to Polish and Russian but shaped differently as regards the phonetics and the morphology; the following forms were assigned to the Russian code:

m'yło, *gr'eb'eń*, *vaz'on*, *šapka*, *fat'ograf*, *tap'or*, *ab'ux*, *šer'ed'ina*, *žard'ina*, *pščel'ar*, *krot*, *txor*, *kryl'jo*, *varab'ej*, *br'uxo*;

and to the Polish code:

mydło, *gžeb'eń*, *vazon*, *čapka*, *fotograf*, *topur*, *obux*, *šrodek*, *žerz*, *pščelaś*, *kret*, *txuś*, *kšydło*, *vrubel*, *bžuxo*.

This proves that they are aware of phonological and morphological differences between the used systems. I did not note mistakes in qualifying lexemes; the following Russian lexemes occurred:

Kravat', *skam'eječka*, *jaščyk*, *kastru'a*, *skavaroda*, *katałka*, *tałkańica*, *xatažec*, *kufšyn*, *jupka*, *gałstuk*, *bal'ńica*, *gruži*, *pl'ečo*, *kłop*, *blaxa*.

And the following Polish lexemes:

łuško, *stołeczek*, *śufłatka*, *kšem'eń*, *gar*, *patelńa*, *wałkovńica*, *tłucone żemńaki*, *gala-retka*, *zbanek*, *spudńica*, *kravat*, *šp'ital*, *klatka*, *ram'e*, *pluskfa*, *płta*.

The knowledge of the Polish vocabulary belonging to the subdialectal layer is usually poorer than the knowledge of the Russian subdialectal vocabulary. This was proved by the answers to the questionnaire items concerning traditional rural activities, e.g., weaving. A female informant from Bór (aged ca. 70) gave the majority of names only in the Russian subdialectal variant. She did not give Polish equivalents of Russian names: *kəžaťok* 'a support to beat flax fibre,' *kastr'a* 'refuse from beating flax fibre,' *kuželə* 'distaff,' *tənak'a* 'joint spinning by many women in one cottage,' etc. Another informant, a man from Gabowe Grądy (aged 49), also had problems with naming parts of a cart in Polish, he did not give Polish equivalents of a few names, e.g., *p'erad'ok*, *zad'ok* 'front and back of a cart,' *krug*, *raśčan'ut'*, *zamuzd'at'* 'to draw in the reins.'

⁶ I used the questionnaire from *Atlas gwar wschodniosłowiańskich Białostoczczyzny* [Glinka, Obrębska-Jabłońska, Siatkowski (eds.) 1980: 64–112].

In the Masurian centre they usually gave German equivalents, sometimes warning that these exact words had been used by their parents, and Russian words – by their neighbours only. They mostly said that they did not know Russian words and they were not able to give answers to me:

*Nie wiem, po niemiecku **Laken** ['prześcieradło'], a po rusku nie wiem [Wojnowo, woman, born 1927].*

*(I don't know, in German it's **Laken** ['bedsheet'], and in Russian I don't know.)*

*Nie znam ruskich słów. Nie wiem, jak jest gazeta, **Zeitung** [Gałkowo, woman, born 1920].*

*(I don't know Russian words. I don't know how to say newspaper, **Zeitung**.)*

They drew my attention to German borrowings:

***štruz'ak**⁷ to z niemieckiego, a mama mówiła **paść^{el}**, czy jak [Wojnowo, woman, born 1920].*

*(it is **štruz'ak** in German, and our mum said **paść^{el}** ['bed covering'], something like that.)*

*U nas buraki to **ronkli**,⁸ bo to z niemieckiego, po niemiecku się nazywa **Ronkel**, nie, a też z niemieckiego przekręcili [Wojnowo, woman, born 1920].*

*(We call beetroots **ronkli**, because it is from German, in German it is **Ronkel**, right, so it is twisted from German as well.)*

*My mówili **Mohrrübe**, a w Niemczech to mówią **Mören** ['carrot'], **barkan** to po rusku [Wojnowo, woman, born 1927].*

*(We said **Mohrrübe**, and in Germany they say **Mören**, and in Russian **barkan**.)*

They used German words to explain the meaning of a word to me:

***very** ['pościel'], no też mówili [...] na te jak no ten **štruz'ak** ['siennik'] słummy co było napchane, jak wy mówicie? Te **šynnyk** ['siennik'] coś, czy tego, ja? Ta pościel to były te **very**, **štruz'ak** to po niemiecku był [Wojnowo, woman, aged 70].*

*(**very** ['bed covering'], they also called [...] this **štruz'ak** ['pallet'] stuffed with straw, how do you call this? It's **šynnyk** ['pallet'] or something like that, ja? Bed covering was [called] **very**, **štruz'ak** it was in German.)*

It was even more difficult to obtain Polish words because the questioned informants really did not use Polish at home, and they did not know the vocabulary required in the questionnaire. Their frequent reaction was discouragement and they were sending me to their young non-autochthonous neighbours. The female informant [Wojnowo, born 1920] who agreed to fill this questionnaire in Polish and in Russian, to a large extent did not distinguish between these codes. Most frequently she categorised one lexeme both to Russian and to Polish:

⁷ Ger. Strohsack.

⁸ Ger. Runkeln.

ščyt ['drewniana ława lub łózko'] *to i po polsku i po rusku, ślubank* ['łózko, ława'] *można powiedzieć po polsku i po rusku tak mówili.*

(*ščyt* ['wooden bench or bed'] *it is in Polish and in Russian, ślubank* ['bed, bench'] *it can be said in Polish, and they also said it in Russian.*)

Indeed, these lexemes are common, but she also categorised other lexemes of the Polish pronunciation to both codes: *pośćel, pšeścerađło, fsypa, poduška, šenńnik, verzalk'i, łuško.*

There are interesting opinions which show that some Old Believers treat the Masurian subdialect as a distinct language:⁹

Bardziej gadamy po mazursku, po polsku nie umiemy; Polacy tu nie mieszkali na naszych wioskach, ale byli Mazurzy, no Niemcy, ale po niemiecku ci starsi nie mogli, tylko po polsku, to znaczy po mazursku mogli [man, Ukta, born 1935].

(*We rather speak the Masurian language, we can't speak Polish; Polish people didn't live in our villages but there were Masurians – well, Germans, but the older ones couldn't [speak] German, only Polish, that is, they could [speak] the Masurian language.*)

They also notice some differences between the general Polish language and the Masurian subdialect:

Przed wojną tak przeważnie na ulicach wszystko było po niemiecku, no a my wiarę mielim, to w domu czasami się mówiło i pa ruski, tam, nie. A te stare babki, jak ja mówię, to oni swoje mazurskie mieli. My myśleli, że mazurskie to polskie, ale to nie. Teraz zobacz, po mazursku to się mówi żerćadło ['lustro']. Czy tam Polak to mówi żerćadło? A Mazur żerćadło, ale Polak mówi lustro, nie. Teraz u Mazurów, to co było okrągłe, to było kółko. I jak z niemieckiego to było Fahrard, nie. To było kółko to ten Fahrard, to było kółko. Ale przyszli Polaki, przyszli, to jest rower. To trzeba było się uczyć. Teraz Mazur mówi kwas, a Polak ocet. Mazur śfyble, a Polak zapalki. To różnica między mazurskim a polskim. Myśleliśmy, że mazurski to polski, a to nie było. To jest specjalna mowa mazurska.

Jak śpiewali te stare Mazury, to śpiewa tak: dobry wieczór wam, czyście redzi, czy nie redzi, dobry wieczór wam. To znaczy Polak by mówił radzi, nie, a oni mówili redzi. I nas tak uczyli.

Pojechaliśmy do Mrągowa ze znajomą, bo córka do szkoły, włosy miała, nie. Mówi na włosy zapłatać to była plotka. Pojechaliśmy po te plotke, przyszliśmy do sklepu. No co wy chcecie? Ja pokazuję metr plotki. Jedna drugą trąci, no plotke, co oni chcą, co pani chce? No metr plotki, pokażcie, co wy chcecie? A, oni chcą kupić wstążkę, a my tego nie słyszelim. A po polsku się nazywała plotka, jak kogo obmawiasz [Wojnowo, woman, born 1920].

(*Before the war everything was usually in German in the street, but we had our faith, so we sometimes spoke also Russian at home, but not there. And those old women, as*

⁹ Treating the Masurian subdialect as a separate language may be explained by the feeling of an intermediate, not fully developed national identity. This identity is based on the sense of "locality," of belonging regionally but not to a state. Such identity is common for a large group of autochthonous people living in Masuria [Sakson 1990: 285].

*I say, they had their own Masurian [speech]. We thought that Masurian was Polish, but it wasn't. Now look, in Masurian it is **żerćadło** ['mirror']. Would a Pole say **żerćadło**? And the Masurian says **żerćadło**, but the Pole says **lustro**, doesn't he? In the Masurian [speech], everything which was round, it was **kółko** [in general Polish: 'little circle, little wheel']. And in German it was **Fahrad**, right. It was wheel, this **Fahrad**, it was **kółko**. But the Poles came, they came and this is **rower** ['bicycle']. So we had to learn it. Now the Masurian said **kwias** [in general Polish: 'acid'], and the Pole said **ocet** ['vinegar']. The Masurian **śfyble**, and the Pole **zapałki** ['matches']. This is the difference between the Masurian and the Polish languages. We thought that Masurian was Polish, but it wasn't. There is a special Masurian speech.*

*When these old Masurians sang, they sang like this: good evening to you, if you are **redzi** ['glad'] or not, good evening to you. I mean, the Pole would say **radzi**, right, and they said **redzi**. And they taught us this way.*

*My friend and I went to Mrągowo, because the daughter went to school, she had hair. A Masurian calls this thing you use when you plait hair **plotka**. We went to get this **plotka**, we entered a shop. What do you want? I show one metre of **plotka**. One nudges the other, well, **plotka**, what do they want, what do you want? Come on, one metre of **plotka**. Show us, what do you want? Oh, they want to buy **wstążka** ['ribbon'] and we haven't heard that. In Polish they say **plotka** ['gossip'] when you backbite somebody.)*

*Mazury to nie mówili **był** tylko **beł** [Gałkowo, woman, born 1920].*

*(The Masurians didn't say **był** ['was'] but **beł**.)*

On the basis of the experience gained when filling in the questionnaire, I came to the conclusion that in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres the ability to recognise the Russian and Polish codes is much better than in the Masurian centre. In the Masurian centre, the Old Believers rather juxtapose the German language with the two Slavonic languages. At the same time, the observations concerning differences between the Masurian subdialect and the general Polish language prove some, at least passive, knowledge of the general Polish language.

It is interesting how the Old Believers themselves assess the correctness of their Polish and how aware they are of its norm. A linguistic norm is the realisation of a specific language system in line with that which is common to the particular communication community [Szulc 1984]. Suggestions for research on the linguistic norm in different variants of Polish are contained in the article by D. Bartol-Jarosińska [1990]. The author writes about the relativism of the norm:

każda wypowiedź podlega ocenie ze względu na normy wewnętrznie uświadamiane przez nadawcę i odbiorcę, a także ze względu na normy upowszechnione w danej zbiorowości, a ściśle w grupie mówiących [Bartol-Jarosińska 1990: 45].

(each statement is subject to assessment as regards the norms internally recognised by the speaker and the audience, and also as regards the norms common to the particular community, or more precisely, in the group of speakers.)

As the studies of I. Grek-Pabisowa and I. Maryniakowa¹⁰ have proven, the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers, because of its limited nature, significantly differs from the literary Russian language. Therefore, it would be a misunderstanding to evaluate the correctness of the Old Believers' statements in Russian according to the criteria of the literary Russian language norm. The Russian subdialect functions as a fully separate system, has its own rules established by the day-to-day functioning of the language in the conditions of the contact with another language, and only the Old Believers themselves are able to define the boundaries of this subdialect's norm.

Because of the relativism of the norm, the assessment of the Polish language's correctness is different in the eyes of the Old Believers, their neighbours, and in the opinion of educated people who speak the literary language. The Old Believers living in the countryside compare their Polish with the language of nearby villages, as well as with the general variant of Polish, heard mainly on the radio, television, and in towns. According to all my informants from the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres, there are two conspicuous features of the local Polish: mazuration and the use of inflectional endings genetically related to the dual number. Some of them, when asked about mazuration, were even outraged that I suspected them of a lack of general culture and refinement. They gave me names of their friends with a mазurating pronunciation from the surrounding Polish villages:

My tak nie mówimy, to na Łopuchowie i Szurpilaki ['mieszkańcy wsi Szurpiły']. *My wszystko ładnie wymawiamy po polsku, czysto jak w telewizji. I tego chodźwa, zróbta okropnego u nas nie ma* [Wodziłki, woman, age 45].

(*We don't speak this way, it's in Łopuchowo and Szurpilaki* ['inhabitants of the village Szurpiły']. *We pronounce everything nice in Polish, as pure as on TV. And these horrible chodźwa, zróbta* [subdialectal inflection forms of the verb considered flagrant in general Polish] – *we don't have.*)

The opinions of teachers from the primary school in Gabowe Grądy seem to be interesting as well. The teachers (they are non-Old Believers, commuting from Augustów or Białobrzegi) believe that during the lessons the Old Believer children speak Polish better than children from Polish villages, because they display neither mazuration nor endings related to the dual number in their speech, and these are the features which at school are perceived as the most "ungrammatical." In turn, the most difficult skill for the Old Believer children is distinguishing personal endings of verbs in the past tense.

The Poles from the surrounding villages, using the subdialect (of Suwałki or Sejny) or the regional language, note differences between their Polish and the Polish language of the Old Believers. One Polish farmer tells the following story as a joke:

¹⁰ The titles of the studies by these authors are listed in the References section at the end of this book.

Jak pani do nich [czyli do staroobrzędowców] pójdzie, to od razu mówią, w nas proszę nie palić, a ja odpowiadam, kto by tam w was palił.

(When you go to their home [to the Old Believers], they say at once, please don't smoke w nas ['at us, i.e., at our place'], and I answer, who would smoke w was [general Polish: 'in you, inside you'].)

The village leader in Ruska Buda (a Catholic) described the language of his Old Believer neighbours as follows:

Jak gada po rusku, to polski wpadnie, jak gada po polsku, to ruski wpadnie.

(When he speaks Russian, a Polish word slips in, when he speaks Polish, a Russian word slips in.)

There are also other opinions:

Po prostu by i nie poznał, tylko tyle, że ci mężczyźni noszą, stare broda nosi, znaczy takie tego. A tak jak te, tu u nas, to by nie poznał, czy on tam Ruski, czy tam Niemiec, czy tak Polak, bo oni po polsku dobrze mówią [the village leader from Sztabinki].

(They would not be recognised simply, but these men, old men, they have got beards, you know. And these here, you wouldn't recognise if he is Russian or German, or Polish, because they speak good Polish.)

The Old Believers in Masuria had their first contact with the general Polish language only after World War II. Their linguistic awareness is primarily shaped by familiarisation with the Masurian subdialect and various Polish subdialects brought to this territory after the war by immigrants from the Kurpie region and former Eastern Borderlands. I found that in the opinion of my informants from Masuria, mazuration is not a feature which disparages linguistic correctness. All the Old Believers (except those who have spent a large part of their life in large cities) inconsistently, more or less frequently, display mazuration in their speech.

The Old Believers in Masuria realise that they speak the language which differs from the general Polish language. When they say that they speak Polish, they add right away:

tak po mazursku więcej, tak po mazursku gadamy [Gałkowo, man, aged 85].

(it's more Masurian, we speak rather Masurian.)

They believe that this subdialect is sufficient to communicate in the circle of neighbours:

śmieją się z nas sąsiedzi, że słabo gadamy, ale się zgadamy [Gałkowo, woman, born 1915].

(neighbours laugh at us that our speaking is poor, but we manage to communicate.)

But while in the town (e.g., in Mrągowo) speaking the Masurian subdialect is not sufficient. A female informant (Gałkowo, born 1920) claims that she does not like running errands in the town, because she feels uncomfortable when she speaks:

a ja się w ogóle nie odzywam, bo potem: co pani, Mazurka?

(and I don't speak at all, because then: are you a Masurian?)

and her husband adds

wstydzi się, jo, bo błędów narobimy.

(she is ashamed, jo, because we would make a lot of mistakes.)

Their Polish neighbours, the post-war settlers, perceive the Polish language of the Old Believers (and other autochthons) as, generally speaking, poor. In the opinion of the teacher from the primary school in Wojnowo (a settler from Mazovia), in the 1970s, when he began his work there, the knowledge of the Polish language among the Old Believers was extremely poor:

W ogóle mowa polska tu była bardzo słaba, bo mówili w trzech językach, przede wszystkim rosyjski, niemiecki na drugim miejscu, i trzeci to był polski.

(Actually, the Polish language here was very poor, as they spoke three languages, first of all Russian, German came in second and third [language] was Polish.)

At school children of autochthons, including the Old Believers, had problems with speaking the correct general Polish language:

w szkole była łamana ta polszczyzna, nie była czysta. Wchodził do niej niemiecki [teacher of primary school in Wojnowo].

(at school this Polish was broken, it was not pure. The German language penetrated it.)

Some people assess the Polish language of the Old Believer as something bizarre:

jak ona rozmawia po polsku, to u mnie brzuch boli od śmiechu [Wojnowo, settler from the Vilnius region, teacher, aged ca. 70].

(when she speaks Polish, I laugh my head off.)

pomieszani, pół Ruska pół Niemca, jak mówią po polsku, to się śmiejemy [Wojnowo, woman coming from the Kurpie region, aged ca. 60].

(they are mixed – half-Russian, half-Polish – when they speak Polish, then we are laughing.)

Nie mówili tato, tylko tak nie po polsku, uma jakoś tak i tak wszystko [Wojnowo, woman coming from Mazovia, aged 30].

(They didn't say "dad" but something not in Polish, something like "uma," and that was it.)

In Masuria I did not hear the opinions, as in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres, that the Old Believers insert Russian words or have a "soft accent." Rather, German elements are noticed in their language, and the Polish language of these Old Believers is equated with the speech of other autochthons – Masurians. Some features in the Masurian subdialect, particularly

lexical ones, may be interpreted by settlers from other parts of Poland as German influences. This is in line with the views that the Old Believers are Germans, or alternatively, a “mixture” of different nations.

The attitude of the Old Believers themselves to the Polish language, of the general and subdialectal variants, is different in the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres, and entirely different in the Masurian centre. In the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres, the Old Believers are more interested in the correctness of their language. Even older people have aspirations to use the variant as close as possible to the general Polish language. It is reflected, for example, in the negative attitude to mazuration and the forms related to the dual number. Moreover, they willingly begin to talk about language, and ask me to assess their Polish. But in the Masurian centre I did not notice such tendencies. I often felt that my informants did not aim to achieve linguistic integration with the general Polish norm. This is understandable when we consider the fundamental differences between the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres on the one hand, and the Masurian centre on the other.

The Old Believers of the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres had contact with the literary Polish language as early as in the mid-19th century. Continuously since the end of World War I all the successive generations have been learning the literary Polish language at school. In the Masurian centre the contact with the literary Polish language ceased as early as in 1872, when Polish was replaced by German at school. It was only after World War II that the Old Believers children could once again learn the literary Polish language at school.

Although the Old Believers of Suwałki and Augustów profess their religion and speak Russian, they feel that they are Polish citizens. They think that thanks to the functioning in the Polish state they have chances for social advancement, improvement of their financial situation and education for their children. They feel, colloquially speaking, “in the right place.” In turn, the Masurian Old Believers spent their childhood and youth in Germany. Before World War II they were Germanised to a large extent, and after the war – like other indigenous inhabitants of former East Prussia – they were condemned to harassment and persecution by Polish authorities and settlers. Therefore they are disappointed with Polishness and feel an emotional bond with Germans. They have not got great hopes for social advancement and the improvement of their financial situation which would be a result of living on the territory of Poland. Thus, the general Polish language is not necessary for them at all. The Masurian subdialect, even with deviations from the Polish norm, is entirely sufficient to communicate with neighbours, to do shopping, and to handle the simplest matters in local offices.

CONCLUSION

The Old Believers, the faithful of the Pomorian Old-Orthodox Church in the Republic of Poland, are a minority ethnic group focused around their religion and language. The Old Believers started settling in the territory of the Republic of Poland as early as in the late 17th century, fleeing from persecution in Russia. Nowadays approximately 2,500 of the Old Believers live in Poland.

In the Sejny-Suwałki and Augustów centres there are two languages existing in everyday communication, of which one – the Russian subdialect – is used in colloquial and private; and the other – the Polish language – in official and public settings. The analysis of the functional distribution of the Russian and Polish codes among various generations and environments of the Old Believers demonstrates that there is a clear tendency to replace the Russian code with the Polish one, also in the domain of family life. This process is now very advanced among younger generation of the Old Believers living in towns and cities.

There is a significant difference between the linguistic situations of the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres, and the Masurian centre. The Old Believers in Masuria are in the sphere of influence of the German culture and even today they use the German language, apart from the Russian subdialect and the Polish language (in the subdialectal and general variants). The German language has got a very high prestige.

Religion is a factor which supports the preservation of the language continuum of the Russian subdialect. The cultivation of linguistic traditions is essential for the sense of identity and integrity of the community of the Old Believers living in Poland. The establishment of the Supreme Council of the Old Believers in 1983 and the commencement of the systematic religious education were undoubtedly of paramount importance for the integration of the Old Believers' environment.

The multilingualism of the Old Believers is related to their multiculturalism. While practising their religion and preserving their old tradition, the Old Believers use the Russian subdialect, which is a part of their cultural

roots. In the Masurian centre, the Old Believers – even 50 years after the incorporation of East Prussia to Poland – still speak German at home. By doing so, they express their attachment to the German culture, in which they were brought up and spent their childhood and youth. The situation of language contact is reflected in the Polish language of the Old Believers. The linguistic interference clearly visible here manifests itself not only in the transfer of elements from the primary to the secondary language and the other way round, but it also has an impact – on the one hand – on stimulation, understood as cooperation, mutual supporting some tendencies and strengthening the phenomena in both languages, and – on the other hand – on hindering these tendencies and, to a certain extent, eliminating them.

The Polish language system is realised differently in each idiolect, depending on the linguistic competences of the informants. First of all, there are quantitative differences regarding the Polish subdialectal features, and the features deriving from their primary language. The latter manifest themselves at the level of openness of the system, optionally and inconsistently, they are produced by a multilingual person at the moment of speaking. This type of interference is a constant and incessant process.

The phenomenon of interference can be seen in at least two ways, depending on the perspective adopted by the researcher. G. Lüdi and B. Py point out two possible ways of understanding the linguistic competence of multilingual people [Lüdi, Py 1984: 52]:

- In the first approach, the linguistic competence of a multilingual person is compared with the ideal competence of a monolingual person. A bilingual person who uses L a (language a) and L b (language b), has got two components of one linguistic competence, which are described from the perspective of one of the languages. Then the competence of the bilingual person has to receive a negative status in comparison with the competence of the monolingual person, and interference is analysed in terms of a linguistic error;

- In the other approach, the multilingual competence receives a positive status and is analysed as an autonomous phenomenon. According to this approach, the bilingual person has got one specific broad competence, which is not a sum of L a (language a) and L b (language b). Certainly, it does not mean that this person cannot use L a (language a) or L b (language b). This person uses them as two possibilities of one repertoire, which also contains other possibilities. Interference is considered as the process of enriching the language system, and adjusting it to the communication needs of a multilingual group.

The languages spoken by the Old Believers should be perceived from the latter, i.e., “positive” perspective. Having lived for a long time in the reality of the Polish culture, and in Masuria also the German culture, they are not able to speak Russian like perfect monolingual speakers of Russian. Their Polish language cannot be evaluated from the point of view of the competence of a monolingual person, either, because it has to function in the

areas of reality related to not only the Polish, but also Russian and German cultures. Their Polish is therefore a new and autonomous linguistic quality, which is created as a result of continuous choosing (intentional or unintentional) between linguistic means of various systems: the general and subdialectal Polish language, the Russian subdialect of the Old Believers, and – in the Masurian centre – also the German language.

The Old Believers acquire linguistic competence in numerous interactions in specific social situations operated by particular languages. The idiolectal differentiation of their Polish is related to the differentiation in the socialisation processes of the informants. The informants belonging to the older generation, living in villages, acquire their basic knowledge about Polish when occasionally speaking this language – while talking to their immediate neighbours, who mainly use the local subdialect. As their linguistic competence is a synthesis of the local Polish subdialect and the primary language, while speaking Polish, they will mainly choose subdialectal tendencies, and phenomena stimulated by interference – construed as a process – with the primary language. Therefore in the speech of the Old Believers from the Masurian centre, the following features occur: neutralisation of the correlation of softness of labial consonants, simplification of the correlation of dental consonants : palatal consonants : alveolar consonants to the opposition – alveopalatal : dental; morphological unifications of inflectional stems (see subsection 3.5.2.1); and in the speech of the Old Believers from the Suwałki-Sejny and Augustów centres such features will include voiced pronunciation of the phoneme /v/ after voiceless consonants and non-distinguishing of the masculine-personal plural gender in N pl of nouns, adjectives and numerals (see subsection 3.5.1.1). In relation to the Polish subdialectal features which are not supported by the primary language, distinct evaluation can be seen. In the Suwałki and Augustów centres, where the Old Believers have had long contact with the literary Polish language and their emotional attitude to it is positive, they intentionally avoid the conspicuous mazuration existing in nearby villages and some other subdialectal features (see subsection 3.5.1.2). In turn, in the Masurian centre, where the contact with the literary Polish language is fresh (since 1945), and the attitude towards Polish is quite neutral, there is no negative evaluation of the features of the Masurian subdialect.

The Old Believers of the young generation and living in towns and cities have a wider contact with the general Polish language (because of school education, professional work in the Polish environment, the mass media, numerous contacts in offices, shops, etc.). Their linguistic competences, shaped in the domains of reality operated by the general variant of Polish, result in gradual elimination of any Polish subdialectal features from their speech.

However, in each idiolect, even of young people living in towns and rarely speaking Russian, the process of penetrating the Polish language by elements of the primary language is present. It occurs with diverse intensity,

in various communication situations (an intensification of this process may be seen, e.g., when interlocutors in a group speak different languages). The situation is best summarised by what one of the young informants said:

dobże muv'e po pol'sku, a fs'o tak'i zafše rusk'e słowo praskatżńots'a.

[[in Polish:] *I speak Polish well*, [in Russian:] *and still* [in Polish:] *a Russian word will always* [in Russian:] *slip in.*]

The penetration of the primary language elements, occurring in the linguistic practice, stands in contradiction to the good theoretical ability of the Old Believers to distinguish the codes used by them. They show interests in language, which is typical of multilingual and multicultural communities in general, and are able to correctly indicate the similarities and differences between the particular languages known to them.

Linguistic competence in the sociolinguistic aspect is not limited to the knowledge of grammar only, but it also encompasses the dimension of social interactions, i.e. the ability to apply theoretical principles in a specific situation of speaking, when a multilingual person uses one of the codes. The competence of the Old Believers, which is shaped in the course of interactions in two or three languages, contributes to the enrichment of their Polish with elements which are the result of the interference with other used languages.

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