Polar Response Particles in Russian and Swedish

Simone Mellquist
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Abstract

The present comparative parallel corpus study of Russian and Swedish polar response particles shows that Swedish displays a highly polarity dependent answering system whereas Russian vacillates between an agreement/disagreement system and a polarity system and also uses echo responses to some degree. It is shown that aligning responses in Swedish always match the polarity of the prior turn. In most cases the Swedish response particles agree in polarity with the following proposition but this tendency is not decisive in the polarity assignment of response particles. In discourse marking functions the polarity of the response particles becomes less apparent.

Nyckelord/Keywords

Polarity, Response Particles, Discourse markers, Swedish, Russian
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1 Introduction

The basic notions of yes and no sometimes cause troubles in translations. Compare the following examples:

(1) **Russian:** Ты конечно в срок никак уже не кончишь?
    – You of course will never finish by the deadline?
    – Да, наверно не кончу
    – Yes, no doubt I won’t finish

**Swedish:**
    – Du kommer förstås inte bli klar på utsatt tid?
    [Lit: – You will of course not finish in time?]
    – Nej, det kommer jag nog inte
    [Lit: – No, I probably won’t]¹

(2) **Russian:** – Ты конечно в срок никак уже не кончишь
    – You of course will never finish by the deadline
    – Нет, я постараюсь
    – No, I’ll make an effort

**Swedish**
    – Du kommer förstås inte bli klar på utsatt tid
    [Lit: You will of course not finish in time]
    – Jo, jag ska försöka
    [Lit: POSITIVE DISAGREEMENT PARTICLE, I will try]

In the above examples Russian *da* ‘yes’ corresponds to Swedish *nej* ‘no’ and Russian *net* corresponds to Swedish *jo* (disagreeing yes) The present study will investigate polar response particles in Russian and Swedish with special focus on polarity issues. It will also examine reactions to implicit items, and discourse marking functions. I will give and overview of the

¹ Examples (1) and (2) Timberlake 2004, 464-65 Literal English translations of the Russian examples by Timberlake. My idiomatic Swedish translations with literal English translations, S.M. Henceforth all English translations added by me will be literal and given in square brackets.
basic concepts and previous research and then present the findings of a limited parallel corpus based investigation of Swedish translations of Russian polar response particles.

The remaining sections of the introduction introduce some basic notions and gives an overview of previous descriptions of Russian and Swedish polar response particles. Chapter 2 presents a number of recent studies specifically devoted to response particles. The presentation of Dobrovol’skij & Levontina’s articles will be given in a more extensive format since the articles contain statements and predictions that the present study seeks to address.

Chapter 3 present methodological considerations and a presentation of the sample material that the present study is based on. Chapter 4 contains a presentation of the results with examples extracts from the Russian original texts and the corresponding Swedish translation. The extracts will be given separate literal English translation. Chapter 5 is a short summary of the results.

1.1 Polar response particles
I will use the term polar response particles (PRP) in referring to the words *da* ‘yes’ and *net* ‘no’ in Russian and *ja* ‘yes’, *jo* (disagreeing yes) and *nej* ‘no’ in Swedish. Polar in order to separate them from other response particles, such as *kanske* ‘maybe’; *response* in order to capture responses other than just answers to questions; and finally *particles* as a means of escaping the difficulty of determining the class the words belong when classified differently by different scholars and traditions in the respective countries. One important property of PRPs is that they can substitute whole utterances. Especially when answering polar questions (yes/no-questions) a PRP is often a sufficient answer.

1.2 Pope’s division of answering systems
Emily Norwood Pope (1971, 1973, 1976) built a typology of answering systems of the languages of the world. She made predictions about the morphological inventories of minimal polar response expressions in languages and compared them with the actual situation. She found that questions can be phrased negatively or positively and so can answers, this leaves us with four possible situations which Pope labels positive agreement, negative agreement, positive disagreement and negative disagreement. These terms notify the following instances: Table I
Middle English did in fact display a morphological system of four lexical forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>non-negated prior turn</th>
<th>aligning response</th>
<th>disaligning response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PA positive agreement</td>
<td>ND negative disagreement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negated prior turn</td>
<td>NA negative agreement</td>
<td>PD positive disagreement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II

Early Modern English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>agreeing</th>
<th>disagreeing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive question</td>
<td>yea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative question</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II is adapted\(^2\) from Pope (1973 pp. 491) Strangely enough, the PRPs used for negated question are the ones preserved in today’s English. The unproblematic cases of positive agreement and negative disagreement, where the interactional agreement/disagreement dimension is congruent with the formal dimension of polarity must be considered the prototype instances of the response particles. The problems arise when the prior turn is negated because languages such as present English or Russian lack the morphological options for those instances. Languages such as French, German and Swedish display a three form system, the third particle being used for disagreeing responses to negatively framed questions:

Table III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>aligning</th>
<th>disaligning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-negated prior turn</td>
<td>ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negated prior turn</td>
<td>nej</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^2\) The order of the terms is changed from the original table in Pope (1973, 491) mainly to maintain consistency throughout the thesis and avoid confusion.
The above table is adapted from the Swedish Academy Grammar (Teleman et al 1999, 752). Swedish has got a special particle for disaligning responses to negated prior turns. The instance of aligning responses to negative prior turns are expressed by the same particle that is used for disaligning responses to non-negated prior turns: nej ‘no’.

English and Russian have only two morphological options for expressing the four distinctions:

(3) English: Yes, we can!
   Russian: Нет, можем!

Using this example Dobrovolskij & Levontina (2009b) point out that as an answer to the implicit prior statement Vy ne smožete ‘You cannot do it’ the positive response particle da in Russian will sound incoherent. You need to use the negative response particle net to mark that you disagree with the prior turn. The inflected verb možem ‘we can’ still capture the positive value that disagrees with the negation in the prior turn. Thus the agreement/disagreement dimension takes precedence over the polarity dimension. In English, you can use the positive response particle even when disagreeing, the PRP share the same polarity as the message. Thus Obama managed to combine a super affirmative message with a hint of protest. In Swedish the positive disagreement particle jo captures both the positive value of the following statement and the disagreeing sense towards the prior turn. Compare example (1) above which shows the same polarity conflict in agreeing responses to negated prior turns. In Swedish the PRP must always have the same polarity as the following statement. Thus the negative response particle is deployed in agreeing responses to negated prior turns. The polarity dimension takes precedence and nej ‘no’ is paradoxically, used as an agreeing answer. As the agreement/disagreement dimension takes precedence in Russian the positive response particle net is used to mark that the response disagrees, even though an affirmative allegation is proposed.

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1 I use the notions of aligning and disaligning as it is less specific than the notions of agreement/disagreement and I follow the terminology of Conversation analysis CA and write prior turn instead of question since PRPs often respond to sentence types other than questions. Moreover, there are several problems connected with negated questions due to the fact that polite requests are often phrased as negated questions.
Pope states that English displays a polarity based (yes/no-system). Sometimes it is vacillating between a polarity based system and an agreement-disagreement system. Japanese have a typical agreement-disagreement system where reminding more of *right* and *wrong* than yes and no function as minimal response particles (Pope 1973, 482)

However not all languages have polar response particles, many languages, such as Latin, lack them altogether. Usually agreement and polarity are expressed by repeating the predicate of the prior turn, with or without a sentential negation or the like. Pope labels this as an echo-system. Sadock and Zwicky (1985, 191) point out that the echo-responses in languages with pure echo-systems are always reduced. No language lack short answers to questions.

### 1.3 Polarity vs. Agreement

Polarity is a formal property of sentences, the presence or absence of a sentential negation will decide the polarity of the sentence. Agreement and disagreement on the other hand, are more complex: They express an interactional property of dialogue. It is dependent on the polarity of at least two propositions, typically both turns in an adjacency pair. The polar response particles serve double tasks. They indicate both the formal and the interactional aspects of assertion and negation. The main tendency, noted by Pope (1973, 483) is that in instances where the two dimensions are congruous with one another the whole response can be replaced by a PRP. In instances where the two dimensions are in conflict a tag is often necessary in order to maintain coherence, as in *yes, we can!* A single *yes* would lack coherence. By contrast the Swedish *jo*, as it expresses the precise instance of positive disagreement, will suffice as a full response turn, albeit maybe not as a campaign slogan. Pope further notes that positive disagreement PA is more likely to be lexicalized in the languages of the world than are negative agreement NA that is likewise an incongruent response instance. Pope states that this is due to the fact that disagreement is more marked than agreement.

### 1.4 Bias and preference structure

Conversation analytic studies in the past four decades have shown a very clear pattern of differences in the design of affiliative/aligning/agreeing versus disaffiliative/disaligning responses. As presented in the Goodwin Heritage (1990) survey of Conversation Analysis
CA, affiliative responses are consistently shorter, more direct, without hesitation etc whereas disaffiliative responses are delayed, prolonged etc. This tendency is called preference structure. A statement prefers agreement to disagreement, a request prefers acceptance over refusal and so forth. It is stated that preference is not merely a psychological property of the very speakers observed in CA but a structural pattern observed by conversational analysts.

1.5 Reference, indexicality, anaforicity
The meaning of the polar response particles is quite simple yet the reference is markedly context dependant. A polar response particle always picks out *something* to negate or affirm. It might be an utterance referring to a state of affairs that a PRP picks out to contradict or confirm, it might be a part of an utterance or the pronunciation of the same (Horn 2001, 371) Lee-Goldberg (2011, 2641) uses the term indexicality, as a means of capturing the pragmatically shifting reference of the PRP *no* in English\(^4\). In the reference grammar of Norwegian, Faarlund et al (1987, 1186) states that the answering words are anaphorically bound.

1.6 Prosody
Polar questions can be formed by word order inversion but also by pure prosodic means. Almost every language has got a special intonation contour for questions (Sadock & Zwicky 1985, 181). The interpretation of polar response particles in spoken languages is likewise intonation-dependent. Most of the conflicts of incongruity between polar format and interactional alignment never take place in spoken language. The tone of the voice can easily alter the meaning of the response.

1.7 Sentence type
Most of the studies of polar response particles have focused on question-answer pairs. Answers to question are what first come to mind when thinking about the words yes and no. Those are the prototypical instances, and it is mostly as answer to questions that an PRP can substitute a full proposition. In the case of yes/no-questions the content is most often given in the question, the question is eliciting a judgement, repeating the propositional content might be redundant. However, answers to questions are not the only function of polar response

\(^4\) See Sorjonen’s (2001) study of Finnish PRPs for further discussion.
particle. They might very well respond to various other sentence types. As a reply to a request a yes will suffice as full response turn, whereas a no will sound a bit rough. As feedback comments all of the three PRP-choices in Swedish will suffice, but as a protest to a statement they might need some further elaboration. The case of negated questions is especially complicated and has therefore been analyzed in numerous studies. A negated question can be biased towards an aligning response. Requests can be phrased as a negated question. It is therefore likely that the four categories of Pope will have different response options in responses to different sentence types.

1.8 Earlier descriptions of Russian polar response particles

1.8.1 Grammatika 80

In the Soviet Academy grammar of 1980 (Švedova et al.) it is stated that there are two possible types of answers with net if the first turn is negated:

(4) Вы не читали эту книгу? – Нет, не читал;

(Švedova et al. 1980 § 2650)

[Lit: You not read this book? – No, not read]


(Švedova et al. 1980 § 2650)

[Lit: You not read this book? – No, I read it.]

Švedova et al state that in (4) the word net serves as a confirmation of a negative answer In (5) the word net serves as a negation of a negative answer, expresses of disagreement or objection. In this case an affirmation after net is obligatory. The authors seem to split the answers into two parts, the response particles acting upon the answers. In example (4), this is straightforwardly illustrated by the example net, ne čital ‘No, I did not read the book’ The word net ‘no’ confirms the negative answer, acting merely as an emphasizer. In case (5), it is not easy to find the “negative answer” negated by the negative response particle. It would result in something like: net, ne ne čital, a čital ‘No, I did not not read, but read’ which could be phrased in a humorous way in Russian. As the examples cited do not contain double
negation the “negated answer” referred to must be of an underlying art. The division of the answer in two parts, the polar response particle and the “answer” is a crucial aspect of the analysis of PRPs. In some cases the PRP can substitute the answer, in other cases not, as pointed out by Pope (1971) congruity of polarity is the factor that allows this substitution.

**Per Restan: Russian polar questions**

In his ambitious work on polar questions Per Restan (1969, 442-350) gives a more exhaustive overview of answers to negated questions. It becomes clear that mainly negated questions in which the first turn expresses the assumption that the negated state of affairs holds, will give rise to a polarity conflict between the PRP and the following proposition. Restan classifies those questions as presumptuous:

(6) ты, кажется, не читал Евтушенко? [You seem to not have read Evtushenko?]

    Нет, читал [No, I did read him PD]
    Нет, не читал [No, I haven’t read him PA]

    (Restan 1969, 344)

(7) – Вы не обидитесь на меня, надеюсь? [You will not be disappointed by me, I hope]

    – Нет, обижусь ≈ да, обижусь [No, I will PD ≈ Yes I will PD]

    (Restan 1969, 344)

(8) Ты, кажется, не читал Евтушенко? [You seem to not have read Evtushenko?]

    – да, не читал (да ты прав, я его не читал) [– yes, (you’re right), I haven’t NA]

    (Restan 1969, 345)

The negative response particle *нет* is deployed both in the case of PD and PA.

Only in the case when the questioner does not really presume that the negative situation holds, but instead expresses hope that this is the case, the positive response particle *да* can be used as a disaligning response, but this is a very peripheral, exceptional case.

Restan states that he positive response particle *да* can be used even when confirming that the presumed negative state of affairs holds.

When responding to other kinds of questions, such as purely information seeking questions (that is not biased in any direction despite the negative format) *Ty ne znaeš’ Mašu? or*
“dubious”, unconvinced questions ne čitali li vy etu knigu? the positive response particle will indicate that the positive situation holds PA and the negative response particle will indicate that the negative situation holds ND. To sum up: The negative format of questions will not be considered in responses unless (the respondent thinks that) the questioner really believes that the negative situation holds.

Restan investigates questions. Therefore the PD use of net and NA use of da seem a bit peripheral. When investigating responses to statements, on the other hand, these uses become a lot more frequent as negative statements usually presume that the negative situation holds.

1.9 Descriptions of Swedish response particles

The Swedish Academy grammar (Teleman 1999, 751-758) gives an detailed overview of the use of Swedish polar response particles. I already cited their schema in 1.3 (table III) which shows that negated prior turns are confirmed by the negative response particle nej ‘no’ and refuted by the special particle jo. An interesting point is that nej ‘no’ in the two different meanings (confirming negated prior turns vs. refuting non-negated prior turns) doesn’t display the exact same set of lexical varieties.

ND: nej, nehej, nix, nää, nää, näänämän

NA: nej, nä, nää, näe, nej visst

Another observation is that jo covers both PA and PD, at least regionally, (and as far as I know the Stockholm region is included) whereas ja covers only PA

PA: ja, jaa, ja visst, (ja)ha, jajamän, mm, okej, åja [regionally:] jo, joo, jo visst

PD: jo, joo, jo visst, joho, jojomän, åjo

Aside from prosodic means there seem to be some additional distinct lexical options to express the four types of responses outlined by Pope.

Aside from the listing of response uses of the PRPs Teleman et al. (1999, 756) show that they are also frequently used as “conversation managing signals”, i.e. discourse markers. It is stated that the primary function of the answering word is to indicate truth value, and that the conversation managing signal function emanate from this function, and sometimes retain it alongside with the discourse marker function.
“ja ‘yes’ or jaha ‘aha’ can be used to indicate a new topic or new part of a question, often signalling that what follows is more or less expected. The functions of feedback or acknowledgement are also conveyed by ja or jaha.

The discourse marking functions of of nej, nā ‘no’ include expression of astonishment; rejection of the legitimacy of the interlocutor’s utterance (and refusal to participate in the conversation); contrast indication (that the conversation will take an unexpected direction) and self-correction (when the speaker withdraws her prior utterance).

Similarly the refuting or contrasting meaning of jo is retained in cases where the speaker returns to the previous or main topic. It may also be used with a considerably weakened contrast, more like an acknowledgement-ja.

One interesting observation is that ja ‘yes’, often followed by a disjunctive men ‘but’, is often introducing a disagreeing statement, as a means of weakening the effect of the disagreeing answer or statement.

2 Previous research on polar response particles

2.1 Non coincidence in polar response particles: Dobrovol’skij & Levontina

In a series of articles Dmitrij Dobrovol’skij and Irina Levontina study various non-coincidences in polar response particles between Russian on the one hand and English and German on the other. Using different methods, such as hearings of native English and German speaker informants and parallel corpora with text material from fiction translations they discovered a whole range of interesting non-coincidences.

I will give a short résumé of all the articles and then discuss the most important findings and suggestions.
2.1.1 Résumé of Dobrovol’skij & Levontina articles on polar response particle

2.1.1.1 500 способов сказать «нет» (Русско-немецкие соответствия)

The first article 500 sposobov skazat’ net (russko-nemeckie sootvetstvija) ’500 ways to say “no” (Russian-German correspondences)’ Dobrovol’skij & Levontina (2009) Deals with non-coincidences between Russian net and German nein and further explores some lexical varieties of the two respective words. Using parallel corpora searches that was followed up by hearings of native German informants Dobrovol’skij and Levontina discovered three main context types in which net and no tended to diverge: imperative contexts, contexts where the response particle answers something “unsaid” and contexts where the Russian net is used phaticly.

It is stated that the German nein is disfavoured although not impossible in imperative contexts. The proposed reason is that the German nein displays a narrower meaning than does the Russian net, it is stated that the German nein is more closely bound to the dictum part of the utterance: the immediate preceding proposition, whereas the Russian net have a broader application, referring to the dictum as well as to the modus part of the utterance. The material that these findings are based on consists of Russian made up sentences translated verbatim into German by the two authors, then tested against native German speaker informants that to a varying degree judged them as unfortunate or strange. I discuss the modus-dictum hypothesis more thoroughly in section 2.1.2 In section 4.3 I present my own comparison between Russian and Swedish polar response words in imperative contexts.

The second major context group consists of examples where the negative response particle net lacks explicit reference. Either it opposes something implicit in the interlocutor’s utterance or something in the situation as a whole. Dobrovol’skij and Levontina find that this kind of net is commonly added by the Russian translator in contexts where it is not found in the German original. The authors state that an added word by a good translator is never accidental, instead it is highly significant, as the translator would never add a word if it would not be important as a means of retaining textual coherence. Again Dobrovol’skij and Levontina tested their hypothesis by making up Russian examples, translating the verbatim into German and after that testing them on native German speaker informants who judged most of the examples impossible.
The third major context group consists of examples where the negative response particles are used in a strictly phatic manner, i.e. as a discourse marker, serving purposes like turn-taking or emphasis. The material consisted of actual Russian dialogue transcripts translated verbatim into German and tested on native German informants who judged most of the examples as impossible.

At the end of the article follows an exposition of more or less informal lexical varieties of the Russian *net*. The words *netuški, ne-a* and *ne* are shown to differ not only stylistically but also distributionally, covering different fields of use. Interestingly enough the German lexical variety *nee* is shown to exhibit the same phatic function as the Russian *net or ne*, which are uncharacteristic of the regular German *nein*.

2.1.1.2 **Русское нет немецкое nein английское no: сопоставительное исследование на базе параллельных корпусов. Russian net, German nein, English no: contrastive semantic analysis with parallel corpora.**

In their second article Dobrovol'skij and Levontina add English to their investigation. In their study of Russian-English, English-Russian, Russian-German and German-Russian parallel corpora the Russian *net* has consistently been their point of departure. Additional uses of the other language’s negative response particles have meanwhile been set aside.

The first point described in the article is the diverging morphological setup between the languages, German displaying three response particles *ja, nein, doch* whereas the two other languages only have two. In addition distributional differences are shown: the English *yes* can function both to affirm a prior statement and to refute a prior negative statement. C.f example (2) above. In this case the equivalent of English *yes* is the Russian *net* and the German *doch*. The Russian *da* expresses agreement with the partner in dialogue rather than confirmation of the content of the utterance. This leads the authors to conclude that the usage of polar response particles in the three languages differ in scope relations. English and German polar response particles are oriented towards the” inner scope”, the propositional content of the utterance in where they are found, whereas the Russian polar response particles are oriented toward the “outer scope” and expresses agreement or disagreement with what was mentioned or merely implied in other utterances. In German and English the polarity of the response particle must align with the polarity of the proposition of the rest of the response,
whereas the Russian response particle can act as a disagreement marker in its own right, showing negative polarity even though the following proposition has got a positive polarity c.f. example (3) *Yes we can!* *Net, моžem!*

Dobrovolskij and Levontina state that we are dealing with fundamental semantic differences. This investigation gives similar results to that of the preceding article. Russian *net* refer to the non-implicit, displays a phatic function, both of which is highly uncharacteristic of English as well as German negative response particles

2.1.1.3  **Yes and No: Universal ideas in Language Specific Configurations**

The latest article by Dobrovolskij and Levontina is once more based on a contrastive study of both German and English negative response particles compared to their Russian counterparts. In this article, however some attention is put even on the positive response particles *yes, ja* and *da*. This time the parallel corpora used consist of Two J.K Rowlings Harry Potter books and their Russian and German translations. The searches were carried out not only on the word *net* but also on *da* and *nein, doch, yes* and *ja*. The analysis of the data shows that in contexts with a negated prior turn *yes* systematically correlates with *net* and *no* with *da*. Again those differences are explained in terms of scope relations. One interesting new observation is that it is not only the semantics of the single word *yes* and *оa* that are decisive, but also the dialogue strategies favoured by the respective languages. To recycle the Obama example: In English you can say *You cannot do it – of course I can*, whereas the corresponding dialogue in Russian *Vy etogo ne možete – konečno mogu* would sound incoherent. Dobrovolskij and Levontina state that the dialogue strategy of disagreement is lexicalized in Russian. The speaker can express disagreement even with expressions that lack the clear negative polarity of *net: a vot, ešče kak* roughly ‘and still’.

The reaction to the unexpressed as well as the phatic use of the Russian *net* is contested also in the last article. This time the methodology of verbatim translations of colloquial Russian expressions from the first investigation was used again as a complement to the Harry Potter examples, and again it was shown that English *no* and German *nein* lack the phatic function as well as the function of referring to the unexpressed. As a conclusion Dobrovolskij and Levontina describe the special features of Russian discourse structure:

```markdown
Many of the cross-linguistic differences discussed above relate to the specific properties of the discourse structure. Thus, the Russian discourse is characterized by a hypertrophied coherence, addressing various levels of content, and focusing on
```
interpersonal relationships between interlocutors, which they steadily profile in the course of conversation. (Dobrovol’skij & Levontina 2009 c, last page, unpaginated pdf)

2.1.2 Modus and dictum

The distinction between modus and dictum can be traced back to medieval times and has since been advocated by one of the fathers of modern linguistics Charles Bally, representative of the Geneva School and the successor of de Saussure. Bally is not translated into Swedish and I have not found any English version. In contrast, his *Linguistique générale et linguistique française* from 1935 was published in Russian in the Soviet Union 1955. Bally describes modality as the soul of the utterance. Modus consists of a modal subject and a modal verb. Modus complements dictum, they represent different parts of the utterance. Modus is the subjective part of language. Dictum is the part that normally interests language philosophers and linguists, the "objective" which could be attributed a truth value. *I think* is the classical example of the modus part and *that it rains* is the classical example of the dictum part.

Interestingly, describes Bally yes / no-questions as modal questions, dictum is given in the question, what is asked for is the interlocutor’s judgement: *yes, no, maybe.*

Pope's division between polarity and agreement does to a certain extent, coincide with modus dictum perspective. An agreeing response refers to the subjective: *yes, you are right,* whereas a polarity response refers to the objective: *yes, it's true.* In Dobrovol’skij and Levontina’s articles dictum is used to convey the propositional property of formal polarity whereas modus conveys the interactional properties.

The observation that *нет* followed by an imperative could not straightforwardly be translated into German has served as a sort of starting point for the entire project and considerable attention in the first article which deals with non-overlapping translations between German and Russian (Dobrovol’skij Levontina). In their study they started with the Russian *нет* followed by an imperative, translated them literally into German and then observed how the German informants evaluated these.

(9) *Мне пора. – Нет, подожди!*

14
– Ich muss schon gehen. – ?Nein, warte!

(Dobrovol’skij & Levontina 2009a, example (6))

[Lit: it’s time {for me to leave} – No, wait!]

(10) – До свидания! – Нет, останьтесь еще!
– Auf Wiedersehen! – ?Nein, bleiben Sie doch noch!

(Dobrovol’skij & Levontina 2009a, example (7))

[Lit: So long! – No, stay a bit]

(11) – Нет, не бери зонтик, дождя точно не будет.

(Dobrovol’skij & Levontina 2009a, example (9))

[Lit: No, don’t bring the umbrella, it definitely won’t rain]

(12) – Я тебя больше не люблю. – Нет, не бросай меня!
– Ich liebe dich nicht mehr. – ??Nein, verlass mich nicht!

(Dobrovol’skij & Levontina 2009a, example (10))

[Lit: I don’t love you anymore. – No, don’t abandon me!]

The first two examples could the German informants accept with some hesitation whereas the last two were more or less inacceptable, the last example even illogical. Dobrovol’skij & Levontina believe that these findings support their hypothesis. German nein is more closely tied to the proposition, it denies the truth of the prior turn, whereas Russian нет has got a broader application; нет with a following imperative is a protest against the consequences of what has been uttered in the previous turn, it does not refute the utterance itself. Dobrovol’skij and Levontina refer to this usage as "response to the unspoken" ответ на невысказанные. Their analysis states that German nein can not refer to the modus, subjective, illocute utterances. The word nein must refer to the dictum, denying the truth value of the proposition. When you answer "No" to the statement "I do not love you anymore" it is a protest and lamentation, not a denial of the truth of the utterance. In German, according to the findings of Dobrovol’skij & Levontina, this is not readily expressible by nein.

I will raise this issue in more detail in my own comparison with Swedish, section 4.3
2.1.3 Сфера действия лексических единиц: Scope
Another explanation that Dobrovol’skij and Levontina apply to their findings is scope. They follow Igor Boguslavskijs term sfera dejstvija and notes that the German nein has a narrower scope than the Russian net. Whereas nein primarily “is oriented” (the notion of reference is avoided here) to the immediate previous proposition, net is oriented both forwards and backwards, to subjects mentioned several sentences ago, or something left unsaid altogether. The ‘scope’ in question should not be confused with the logical term often associated by negation; the term “sfera dejstvija” is describing lexical properties and has got more in common with ideas like subcategorization frames of verbs etc.

In the Dobrovol’skij and Levontina articles it is stated that the English and German polar response particles are more closely bound to the very proposition in which they occur whilst their Russian counterparts express agreement or disagreement to what was said, or even meant in the previous propositions, thus a negative response particle can initiate a positive proposition, acting merely as a contrast or disagreement marker, as is the case of positive disagreement c.f. example (3) net, моžem!

2.1.4 Phatic function
Dobrovol’skij and Levontina show a broad application of the negative response particle нет as a pure discourse marker in Russian. This usage is widely recognized for the positive response particle in many languages c.f English yeah. However, the phatic applications of the positive response particle has not been the focus of Dobrovol’ski’s and Levontina’s investigations. Instead the less studied phatic uses of the negative response particle are paid considerable attention. This use is shown to be frequent in Russian. In many cases net occurs without clear reference, often in seemingly paradoxical positions, like in the beginning of sentences expressing intense agreement.

(13) Смотри! Наш сын убрался. Нет, какой хороший мальчик!
Schau mal! Unser Sohn hat aufgeräumt. Nein, so ein guter Junge!
(Dobrovol’skij& Levontina 2009a, example (20))
[Lit: Look! Our son cleaned up. No, what a good boy!]

(14) – Давай напишем статью вместе! – Нет, я тоже уже об этом думал.
(Dobrovol’skij & Levontina 2009a, example (21))
[Lit: Let’s write an article together! No, I also thought about that.]

(15) – Он правильно поступил. – Нет, точно. Он молодец
(Dobrovol’skij & Levontina 2009a, example (25))
[Lit: He did the right thing! No, right. He’s a genius!]

(16) Russian *Нет, а что ты лезешь со своими советами!
German *Nein, was kommst du mit deinen Ratschlagen!
English *No, what do you come with your recommendations?
(Dobrovol’skij & Levontina 2009c, example (20))

(17) Russian – Вы опоздали. И юбка у вас слишком коротка. – Нет, а юбка-то здесь причем?
German – Sie kommen zu spät! Und Ihr Rock ist definitiv zu kurz. *Nein, was hat denn mein Rock damit zu tun?*
English – You come too late. And your skirt is definitely too short. *No, what’s wrong about my skirt?
(Dobrovol’skij & Levontina 2009c, example (22))

(18) Russian *Нет, а вам какое дело!
German *Nein, was geht Sie das an!
English *No, is it your business?
(Dobrovol’skij & Levontina 2009c, example (21))

In the parallel corpora searched by Dobrovol’skij and levontina the Russian net was often added to the translations in contexts where it did not figure in the originals. In the same fashion this kind of net was commonly omitted in the English or German translations of Russian originals. Dobrovol’skij and Levontina state that the negative response particles no and nein lack the phatic application altogether. One usage of nein and no is mentioned however, the emphatic, stressed, expression of astonishment or excitement is found in
German and English but not Russian. The authors state that this usage has nothing to do with the unstressed phatic use of *da*.

**2.1.5 Summary of Dobrovol’skij & Levontina’s results**

From the articles referred above there seem to be a possibility to outline some kind of hierarchy of proposition-boundedness and referentiality. The prototypical function of a polar response particle is that of affirming or rejecting a prior proposition thereby automatically aligning or disaligning with a prior statement. Dobrovol’skij and Levontina discover several instances where the function deviates from this pattern. The first case is the examples in which the polar response particle answers the partner in dialogue herself rather than her utterance, a case characteristic of agreement based answering systems. Then follows a whole range of instances of response particle responding to something far away from the preceding proposition: hidden presuppositions, the situation as a whole, the world view of the speaker herself, etc. At the extreme the response particles become totally detached from the linguistic content of the discussion and begins to operate at an extra-linguistic meta-discursive level.

When functioning as a phatic device, a discourse marker, the Russian *net* seem to even loose its negative value.

The recurring hypothesis of Dobrovol’skij and Levontina is that the deviations from the prototypical use is characteristic of the Russian negative response particles but highly uncharacteristic, if at all present in the other languages of their investigation.

**2.2 Heinemann: Formal polarity dependency in Danish**

Polar answering words, response words, are studied in Conversational analysis, CA. Heinemann (2005) notes that languages with polarity based systems have sensitivity to grammatical, formal polarity, which is not equally present in agreement system languages. In her study of Danish phone calls, she shows that an agreeing response must always mirror the polarity of the utterance it answers. In her material this tendency was 100 percentile. An agreeing response must always match the polarity of the prior turn. Thus the negative response particle *nej* ‘no’ was used as a means of agreement, affiliating, confirmation and so on when responding to a negatively framed prior utterance. Based on those findings, she
analyzes the positive disagreement particle *jo* (equivalent of the Swedish *jo*) as a means of matching the polarity of the prior turn even when disagreeing.

### 2.3 Jefferson: Affiliation vs. agreement

Gail Jefferson (2002) states that the use of response particle differs between US English speakers and British English speakers. Not all minimal polar responses to prior turns are answers. The words *yes* and *no* are often used as feedback, simply stating that the prior turn is heard and understood. In the article “*Is no an acknowledgement token*” Jefferson attempts at answering the same question. As a starting point she had the intuition that this was not the case i.e. that *no* is in fact not an acknowledgement token but that it carries a deeper meaning, of affiliation rather than mere acknowledgement. When responding with *no* to a negated prior turn, Jefferson’s intuition suggested that you don’t merely acknowledge the negated statement as heard and understood but rather express a shared viewpoint by emphatically repeating the interlocutor’s *no*, strongly affiliating with her.

Examining samples of conversations from four different groups of English speakers: US civilians, US doctors, British civilians and British doctors, Jefferson found that her intuition was correct – regarding the doctors and the Americans – the British civilians on the other hand, contrary to her suspicions, actually did use *no* as an acknowledgement token. Jefferson describes the findings as “a cultural shock”; reading the material she had to be very alert in order not to misinterpret the British examples. Not surprisingly the doctors were more economical with their *no*’s in order not to confuse the patients. The US doctors reserved the *no* for disaligning answers whereas the British doctors alike the American civilians used it to express affiliation, but not acknowledgement.

The British civilians tended to reduplicate the *no* when expressing affiliation, probably to mark the difference, but Jefferson states that the material is too limited to make a strong statement about this tendency.

Jefferson’s study shows that the English usage of polar response particles differ across user population. Besides those findings, the study is very interesting while it shows that English is not on the whole a polarity dependent language. The acknowledgement usage of *no* follows the pattern of formal polarity dependency described by Heinemann: the feedback comment
mirrors the polarity of the prior turn, thereby confirming that it is heard and understood. The affiliation use, on the other hand, is something rather special. This kind of strong agreement or sharing of viewpoints is essentially opposed to the meaning of no. That it should more readily be conveyed by no than the acknowledgement meaning is a bit surprising. It seems to me that this no in this case is not responding to the previous turn at all, but rather joining in and repeating the polarity of the previous speaker’s statement as a kind of protest towards a third position.

2.4 Lee-Goldman: No as a discourse marker

In a new study Lee-Goldman (2011) investigates no as a discourse marker. No is shown to have a phatic application, although not as widespread as the Russian net or the English yeah. In the study, where Lee-Goldman examined a vast amount of spoken conversations, no was found to function as a discourse marker in three major categories: 1, topic shift 2, misunderstanding management 3, turn-taking conflict resolution. In those three context types the negative response word doesn’t negate any particular statement in the previous proposition, but rather opposes to implicit assumptions or the social situation. Lee-Goldman distinguishes these tokens of no from other instances by means of the criteria answerhood and lack of independence. None of the discourse marker senses of no in Lee-Goldman could constitute a full turn by itself and none of them could be described as expected answers to speech acts. All of them needed additional explanation in order to be understood and all of them where initiated by the no-deployer herself, they were not preceded by any questions demands or the like. In order to distinguish the three discourse marker senses from each other Lee-Goldman analyzes them in terms of indexicality and negation. Topic shift-no operates on a textual level as well as on a situational level, bracketing what came before as the old topic and preparing the interactants to the original or new topic. The negation functions on the textual level. “Making a shift back to a main topic denies that what is about to be said will form a cohesive unit with what preceded it (or at least, that the level of cohesion will be lower)” (Lee-Goldman 2011, 2642) Misunderstanding management-no is a more explicit rejection, in some cases it picks out a particular bit of what was spoken whereas in other cases it rejects an action of a previous speaker or a belief that the prior speaker is thought to have: “This sense of no allows partipicants to get at these presuppositions, attitudes etc., and problematize, reject, or, in an extended sense, negate them” (Lee-Goldman 2011, 2642)
negation sense of turn taking-no is apparently not applying to any content of utterances but rather to the action of uttering them.

There are many striking similarities in Lee-Goldman and Dobrovol’skij & Levontina’s respective descriptions of no and net as discourse markers. Cohesion-retaining, reactions to the unexpressed as well as turn-negotiating are described by both parts. One difference is that the examples of turn taking-no in Lee-Goldman is of the type “no, no go ahead” (Lee-Goldman 2011, 2640) merely refusing the interlocutor to hesitate or be silent whereas in the Russian examples cited by Dobrovol’skij & Levontina the speaker are claiming the word for himself because he is eager to express affiliation with the interlocutor to the extent that he wants to exceed him, thereby, paradoxically, deploying no: Compare examples (13)-(15) above.

3 Present study, purpose, material and methods

3.1 Purpose
The present work is primarily a follow-up work of Dobrovol’skij and Levontina studies. It will focus on 1, polarity issues 2, responses to non-overt actions and 3, discourse marker functions of PRPs and how these are distributed in Russian and Swedish. The main focus will be on non-coincidences, but coinciding uses will also be of interest as a comparison with Dobrovol’skij and Levontina’s findings.

3.2 Methods
To obtain similar conditions as Dobrovol’skij and Levontina, the main survey uses parallel corpora. A parallel corpus gives the possibility to obtain the (more or less) same contextual environment. As the polar response particles are highly context dependant this is essential for a good comparison.

Unfortunately, I have not had access to any existing parallel corpus. I have built up my own corpus of digital text files. The guidelines for the selection of texts have been: contemporary, fiction with much spoken language especially, dialogue. Because an outdated language would
be more difficult to analyze, my own intuition mainly concerns today’s language. Fine
Literary texts are used mainly to pursue the study in accordance with Dobrovol’skij and
Levontina. Moreover, I have attempted to find texts with much dialogue. Response words in
monologues or narrative serves more rhetorical purposes and the subject of investigation
would be different One obvious problem with written dialogue is that both the prior turn and
the response turn are always produced by the same person. The dialogue is never authentic.
Perhaps dialogues with various interlocutors could provide a different outcome? Translated
authentic conversations would be the ideal subject of investigation. Provided they were
competently translated.

I use original texts in Russian and Swedish translations. This procedure is one-sided, to study
from both sides – as Dobrovol’skij and Levontina actually do – would be more accurate, but it
is beyond the scope of this study.

I have avoided constructing my own examples to identify and access differences. It may be
tempting to do own translations of Dobrovo'skij Levontina’s made up examples, or to
construct examples with a clear modus or dictum reference. I believe that such a procedure
would lead astray, Individual examples could easily be constructed, but they might not
contribute much to the understanding of the actual language use. Still, I will provide some
additional text examples from the internet, when the material will not suffice.

Considering the limited material the investigation will be strictly qualitative, there is no
possibility to base any reliable statistics on the corpus. No percentages of instances would be
significant enough. By contrast, all occurrences are significant in my limited sample. I will
consider every occurrence in its own right.

3.3 The corpus

Мрамор Marbles, Marmor by Joseph Brodsky

Russian original Iosif Brodskij Mramor http://lib.ru/BRODSKIJ/br_marbles.txt Swedish
translation: Marmor Bengt Jangfeldt Stockholm Wahlström & Widstrand 1987, English
This is a play in two acts with two characters who have been imprisoned in a tower in a Roman empire of the future. The play contains endless conversations between the two prisoners Publius and Tullius and the style shifts according to the topics of conversation, ranging from naughty military anecdotes to literary recitation.

As the Swedish translation, made by Bengt Jangfeldt is based on the Russian original as well as the English version, co-written by Brodsky himself and Alan Myers, I will present the English counterparts of the chosen example extracts as a means of comparison.

Половое покрытие, Floor Covering, Under mattan by the Presn’akov brothers

Russian original Polovoe pokrytie Oleg & Vladimir Presn’akov 2000 I have been using the same digital version as the Swedish translator, the play is published in a collection of Presn’akov plays5 Swedish translation: Staffan Skott unpublished

This play is about two brothers in Moscow who find a dead body under the carpet in the apartment they just rent. The character of the play includes the brothers Andrej and Nikolaj, and their landlord Igor, Their neighbour Arkadij, a wedding company, the dead body and some people at the airport among them a woman referred to as “the afro-american woman”

The Presnyakov brothers have been praised for their ability to capture the daily life language of contemporary Russia. I have used an unpublished manuscript of Staffan Skott’s Swedish translation. I am very grateful to him for letting me use it. There is yet no English Translation of “Floor covering”.

4 Results

4.1 Presentation of the results

The examined material contained more occurrences of positive polarity response particles than negative RPRs. This is largely due to lexical differences between the languages. The Russian da can be used as a conjunction corresponding to ‘and’ or ‘but’, this is not found in Swedish. Furthermore: the Russian da is often used as a disjunctive tag-question or as some

kind of questioning feedback markers. These functions are fulfilled by other means than RPRs in Swedish.

I will start to present some lexical deviations, the above mentioned use of *da*, and the case of the Swedish positive disagreement particle *jo*. Then follows a presentation of RPRs divided into Pope’s four categories as responses to statement. The case of answers to questions is presented separately in the following section. As a follow-up to Dobrovol’skij and Levontina’s studies I will present the context types of imperatives, responses to the unexpressed and phatic uses, for these context types I have mainly examined the negative PRPs *net* and *nej ‘no’*. Some additional findings are presented in the last section.

### 4.1.1 Presentation of example extracts

I will to provide literary [note: not idiomatic nor full morphological glosses] translations of the example extracts I choose to demonstrate. The examples from “Floor covering” will be displayed with a literal English translation for every line to provide satisfactory context. The example extracts from Marbles will be presented in larger blocks with literal translations of the focal lines. The professional English translations provide enough context. Page numbers will not be indicated because the investigation has been carried out using digital text files without paginations. Throughout the thesis cited examples will be italicized and the polar response particles and other relevant items will be in bold.

### 4.2 Lexical deviations

#### 4.2.1 Da-constructions

The first striking impression of the statistics is that there are many more *da* than *ja*. I counted four different construction types in which *da* functions as a (non-responsive) particle: I have not counted *da* used as a conjunction like “and” or “but”. Only that usage is treated as a separate lexicon entry in the authoritative dictionaries i.e. Ožegov & Švedova (1996)

#### 4.2.1.1 *da*? tag question

which in Swedish translates to *eller hur? ‘not right?’* [or how] *visst? ‘Sure?’* And similar expression. It is adjoined to the end of a statement in order to elicitate a confirmation:

(19) **Russian original**
4.2.1.2 **da? as feedback comments**

This kind of mildly questioning feedback or acknowledgement comments corresponds to *jaså?* ‘Really?’ [yes so] or *jaha* ‘Well’ [aha] or similar which in Swedish are polarity sensitive as they are compounded with the positive polarity particle *ja*, the negative counterparts are *nehej? Nähä?* (Among others, I will present the negative feedback comments in the section about conflicting response systems.) in contrast to the above *da?* (5.2.1) this *da* appears in the beginning of a turn, as a response to the interlocutor’s statement:

(20) **Николай: Попросил бы разделать... по частям...**

[Lit. Nikolai: You could have asked them to divide it ... into pieces...]

**Андрей: Да?! И как еë нести по частям? A так удобнее...**

[Lit. Andrej: Yes?! And how to carry it in pieces? This is more convenient ...]

**свежак, ты чувствуешь, как пахнет?**

[Lit. Fresh meat, do you feel how it smells?]
Nikolaj: Du kunde ha bett dem stycka den... i flera bitar.

[Lit. Nikolaj: You could have asked them to cut it ... into several pieces.]

Andrej: Jaså?! Hur skulle jag ha burit den i bitar? Det är bekvämare...

[Lit. Andrej: Really [yes-so]?! How would I have worn it to pieces? It is more convenient... ]

Färskt kött, känner du lukten?

[Lit. Fresh meat, do you feel the smell?]

4.2.1.3 da + WH

da as a particle that signal questioning - as opposed to asking for information- is a very frequent construction consisting of da combined with a question initiated by a query word of WH-type. In Polovye pokrytie "Floor covering" this construction occur eight times:

(21)

Russian original

Андрей: Да отчего же, Игорь Игоревич, дело молодое, пусть погуляет...

Andrej: Yes Why [for what], Igor Igorevich, it is a young thing, let him party

Swedish translation

Andrej: Varför säger du så, det är inget fel att ha roligt när man är ung...

Andrej: Why do you say so, it is nothing wrong to have fun when you're young...

4.2.1.4 Да + imperative,

A very common construction in which da has no affirmative role. In "Половое покрытие" "Floor covering” I found six occurrences of da + imperative as that kind of that construction and three da + imperative, with proper function of affirmation and request. The Brodsky play Мрамор ‘Marbles’ contains several constructions of this kind, Bengt Jangfeldt translates them in various ways. In one instance he translates the particle da as ja ‘yes’:

(22)

Russian original:
Туллий. Да оставь ты птичку в покое. Далась она тебе!

[Lit: Yes leave you the bird in peace, it has given to you]

Swedish translation

Tullius: Ja, men låt för fan fågeln vara i fred. Den har gått dig på hjärnan!

[Lit: Tullius: Yes, but let, for the devil the bird be in peace. It has gone on your brain!]

This translation must be considered an exception. In most of the cases the *da* is omitted in the Swedish translation. But the translation is nevertheless successful, the Swedish *ja, men* ‘yes, but’ expresses much of the emphasis conveyed by *da*+imperative construction, it is further accomplished by the oaths that follows *för fan*, roughly ‘for the devil’s sake’.

4.2.2 What is translated into *jo*

Of the 20 instances of *jo* in ‘Under the carpet "was eight corresponding to *da* three corresponding to *net* and nine instances that were not matched by response words at all in the Russian original.

Of those not matched by response words in Russian, a number corresponded to *nu* ‘well’ in Russian, a kind of modal or discourse particle. The use of *nu / jo* express the phatic, discourse marking functions of feedback or acknowledgement: "I heard your question" or signals return to the previous conversation:

(23) Russian original

Женщина-гость: Это как, как это?

[Lit. The female guest: it is how, how is it?]

Свидетельница: Ну, это когда мы интервьюируем живых людей, то есть, всё по их словам...

[Lit. The female wedding Witness: Well, it is when we interview living people, thus all after their words...]

Swedish translation

Den kvinnliga gästen: Hur då, vad menar du?

[Lit. The female guest: How then, what do you mean?]

Det kvinnliga bröllopsvittnet: Jo, alltså, det är alltså så att man intervjuar verkliga människor, alltså helt följer vad de har sagt...
[Lit. The female wedding Witness: POSITIVE DISAGREEMENT PARTICLE, that is, it is so that one interview real people, thus completely follow what they said ...]

(24)  

Russian original

Игорь Игоревич: Просто есть, такое, как это сказать, чтобы не обидеть ...
[Lit. Igor: Simply there is, that kind of, how can you say in order not]

и, эффект поднятой ракетки - то есть это ты как бы поднял свою ракетку, а мяч никто не подаёт! У мужчин от этого всякое бывает ...
[Lit. to hurt..well, the effect of the lifted racket... that is, you have kind of lifted your racket, but the ball isn’t given by anyone! Among men various thing happen from this...]

... отдаётся, в основном, кстати, на голову ...
[Lit: It strikes, mostly, by the way, on the head...]

Swedish translation

Igor: Jag menar, det finns, hur ska man säga så det inte sårar... jo, den lyfta racketens effekt... det vill säga man har liksom hållit upp sin racket, men det är ingen som servar! Det förekommer allt möjligt med karlar då... som regel
[Lit. I mean, it exists, how can you say so it does not hurt ... POSITIVE DISAGREEMENT PARTICLE, the lifted]

racket effect ... that is, you have, like, been holding your racket in the air, but ]

slår det sig förresten på huvud...
[Lit. it strikes, by the way, on the head]
4.3 Pope’s categories

I will present my findings according to Pope’s categories Positive Agreement PA, Negative Disagreement ND, Positive Disagreement and Negative agreement. Note again that the polar values of the response particles in the respective categories are unspecified. The slots in table (I) indicate merely the environment in which they are being found. Thus e.g. PD indicates a disaligning response to a negated prior turn. The response particle itself is not necessarily positive. Most of the response particles in my findings occurred as responses to statements, not as answers to questions as in the prototypical case. I have chosen to present PRPs as answers to questions separate from responses to statements. Section 4.1.2 deals only with responses to statements.

4.3.1 Positive Agreement, aligning responses to non-negated prior turns

(25) **Russian original:** Игорь Игоревич: Так, надо пойти глянуть, как его безопаснее протащить на полосу... и рейс выбрать, под какой его пахать...
Когда тут чё летает...

Andrew: Да, надо выбрать маршрут, а то так с ним тыкаться будет тяжело...

[Lit: Igor: Thus, we must go and check, how it is safer to drag him on the strip ... and select the flight which we should place him under ... When who is flying ...
Andrew: Yes, it is necessary to choose the route; otherwise it would be hard dragging him back and fourth]

**Swedish translation:** Igor: Vi måste gå och se efter först hur man säkrast kan släpa in honom till startbanan... och välja en flight som vi kan putta in under. Vilka plan som går när.

Andrej Ja, det gäller att välja rätt väg, för vi orkar inte släpa honom hit och dit.

[Lit: Igor We must go and see first how we safest can drag him to the runway ... and choose a flight that we can push up under. Which aircraft goes when.
Andrej Yes, it comes to choosing the right path, because we can not be bothered to drag him here and there]

(Oleg & Vladimir Presn’akov *Polovoje pokrytie*; Staffan Skott *Under mattan*)

Example (19) contains the rather uncomplicated case of “positive agreement” In the second turn Andrej uses *da* ‘yes’ to express affiliation, he joins with the positive response particle and elaborates the argument of the prior. This is straightforwardly translated to *ja* ‘yes’ in Skott’s translation.

(26) **Russian original: Aфроамериканка: Просто у меня сейчас... сейчас мой рейс... мне лететь... а я не могу... мне страшно... но если не полететь я... я лишусь всего... это мой последний шанс... у меня работа, чтобы работать, я должна лететь... моя работа связана с перелётами, а как, если я не могу... может, если я выговорю свой страх, мне станет легче...**

**Nikolaj: Д-а-а-а-а-а...**

[Lit: (19) African American woman: Just for me right now ... now ... my flight, I fly ... and I can not ...I'm afraid ... but if I do not fly ... I lose everything ... this is my last chance ... I have a job, to work I have to fly ... my work is connected with flights, and how, if I can not ... maybe if I speak out about my fear, I feel better ... NIKOLAJ Ja-a-a-a-a-a...]

**Swedish translation: Afroamerikanskan Det är bara så att jag just nu... att det är min flight nu... jag ska med planet... men jag kan inte... jag är rädd... men om jag inte flyger... så förlorar jag allt... det är min sista chans... jag har ett arbete och för att arbeta måste jag ta det där planet... mitt arbete förutsätter att jag flyger, och om jag inte kan... om jag berättar om hur rädd jag är blir det kanske lättare...**

Example (20) might be considered a hidden request, phrased as a hypothetical statement. It is responded to by a single (albeit prolonged) *da* as a minimal response. The translation into Swedish is again unproblematic.

(27) **Russian original:** Андрей: Молодец, чужим людям всё готов сделать...
    Николай: Да!..
    [Literally: Andrej: Good boy, always ready to everything for strangers
    Nikolaj: yes!]

**Swedish translation:** Andrej: Så duktig du är, beredd att göra allt för främmande människor...
    Nikolaj: Ja!..
    [Literally: Andrej: So good you are, ready to do everything for strangers ...
    Nikolai: Yes! ..]

(Russian original: Oleg & Vladimir Presnakov 2000, Swedish translation: Staffan Skott unpublished, Middle of act III, unfortunately no paginations due to digital versions, my English)

Example (21) is again an instance of a minimal response. Although the prior turn is probably best pronounced ironically, the respondent, Nikolaj, nevertheless responds in an affiliative fashion, proudly joining in in the praise of himself. Like all the other PA instances, this is easily translated into Swedish.

### 4.3.2 Negative disagreement, disaligning responses to non-negated prior turns

(28) **Russian original:** Афроамериканка: Вы добрый ...
    [Literally: Afro-American woman: You are good ...]
    Николай: Нем, вы ошибаетесь ...
    [LiterallyNicholas: No, you are mistaking ...]

**Swedish translation:** Afroamerikanskan: Ni är snäll...
In example (22) the proposition following the negative response particle does not contain a sentence negation, instead the contrasting sense is conveyed by the word ошибаться ‘mistake’. This is translated into misstaga sig (cognate of mistake) in Swedish, the Swedish word, but not as clearly the Russian contains a negative prefix.

4.3.3 Positive disagreement, disaligning responses to negated prior turns

(29) **Russian original:** Афроамериканка: Вы добрый ...  
[Lit: Afro-American woman: You are good ...]  
Николай: Нет, вы ошибаетесь ...  
[Lit: Nikolaj: No, you are mistaking ...]  
Афроамериканка: Нет, вы добрый, я же вижу ...  
[Lit: Afro-American woman: No, you are good, I can see...]  
Николай: Вы ничего не путаете, может, вместо слова добрый вы хотели сказать решительный, деловой ... целеустремлённый ...  
[Lit: Nikolaj: don’t you mix it up, maybe instead of the word good, you wanted to]  
сказать резолютильный, деловой ... целекустроимливый ...  
[Literal: say resolute, effective ...purposeful ...]

**Swedish translation:** Afroamerikanskan: Ni är snäll...  
[Lit: Afro-American woman: You are kind ...]  
Nikolaj: Nej, där misstar ni er...  
[Lit: Nikolaj: No, there you are mistaken ...]  
Afroamerikanskan: Jo, ni är snäll, det märker jag väl...
[Literally: -American woman: POSITIVE DISAGREEMENT PARTICLE, I notice that very well…]

NIKOLAJ: Blandar ni inte ihop det, ni kanske inte menade snäll, utan beslutsam,
[ Literally: Nicholas: you do not mix it up, you may not have meant kind, but resolute]

effektiv… målmedveten…
[Lit: effective …purposeful …]

Afroamerikansk Jodå, jag menade att ni är snäll… framför allt så är ni snäll!
Jodå, säg inte emot…
[Lit: Afro-American woman, POSITIVE DISAGREEMENT PARTICLE then, I meant that you are kind … First of all so are you kind! POSITIVE DISAGREEMENT PARTICLE… don’t say against …]
(Oleg & Vladimir Pres’akov Polovoje pokrytie; Staffan Skott Under mattan)

Example (23) clearly shows that the Swedish particle jo can be used for both PD and PA responses and thus correspond to both da and net in the original.

4.3.4 Negative agreement, aligning responses to negated prior turns

(30) Russian original:
Тулий. Ну, ты б тоже со мной не поделился - будь ты на моем месте.
Публий. Да. Но я бы и не вернулся! […]
[Lit: Yes. But I’d never return]

Swedish translation:
Tullius: Du skulle inte heller ha delat med dig om du var i mina skor
Publius: Nej. Men jag skulle inte ha kommit tillbaka heller! […]
[Lit: No. But I would not have come back either!]

Brodsky-Myers English translation
Tullius: Well, you wouldn’t have confided in me in me either – had you been in my place….
Publius: True; but I wouldn’t have come back, mind you! […]
(Brodskij *Mramor*; Jangfeldt *Marmor* Brodsky&Myers *Marbles*)

(31) **Russian original:**

Публий: И правильно вообще, что ему из мрамора бюст заделали. Хотя и копия. С другой стороны, копию не так жалко, если нос отвалится.

Туллий ([задумчиво, с отсутствующим выражением на лице]). Да, копию, конечно, не так жалко.

[Lit: Yes, for a copy, of course, not such a pity]

**Swedish translation:**

Publius: Jo, så det är bara rättvist att han fick sig en staty av marmor. Även om det bara är en kopia. Å andra sidan gör det inte så mycket om näsan ramlar av på en kopia.

Tullius: (tankfullt, med ett frånvarande uttryck i ansiktet) Nej, om det är en kopia gör det inte så mycket.

[Lit: No, if it’s a copy it doesn’t harm much]

**Brodsky/Myers translation**

Publius: And so it’s only fair that they made this thing out of marble. Even though it’s just a copy. On the other hand, with a copy it’s not so sad if the nose drops off.

Tullius: Pensively, with a detached expression on his face):

Yes, not so bad if it’s a copy

(Brodskij *Mramor*; Jangfeldt *Marmor* Brodsky&Myers *Marbles*)

In examples (24) and (25) *da* is used to express NA, aligning responses to negated prior turns. This shows that the agreement/ disagreement dimension takes precedence over the polarity dimension. This is the case in all the material.

**4.4 The special case of answers to questions, echo responses and negations that doesn’t count**
Examples (26) and (27) are both unproblematic cases of minimal responses to non-negated questions, as such they are straightforwardly translated into Swedish equivalents.

Unfortunately, I have not come across any instances of aligning responses to negated questions NA. The only examples of negatively framed questions receive disaligning responses:

(34) Russian original.
Афроамериканка: Я выговорюсь, если я выговорюсь ... прямо здесь, я
[Lit:Afro-American woman: If I speak out, if I speak out...Right, here, I'm not]
вам не помешаю?
Despite the negative format of the question this must be considered a ND response, a disaligning response to a non-negated prior turn. The question is handled as if the negation wasn’t present. Considering the personality of the character Nikolaj NA is another possible interpretation of his answer. He might very well answer it in a literal fashion: No (You are not disturbing in fact you are very disturbing).

Another characteristic of Russian question-answer pairs is the use of echo-replies. In examples (29) and (30) a repetition of the focal word of the question functions as an answer in Russian. In Swedish, on the other hand, a polar response particle must be deployed, a pure echo-reply is probably too stylistically marked in Swedish. In English, on the other hand, this is possible:

(35)   Russian original:
Публий. Как? Как ты сказал? Ты имеешь в виду - сбежать возможно?
Да, ты сказал - осуществимо ... Я не ослышался? ..
Туллий. Осуществимо, душка Публий, осуществимо. Все осуществимо. А пока ... 
[Lit: Tullius: Possible, darling Tullius, realizable. Everything is realizable. But in the meantime]

Swedish translation:

\footnote{Compare the notion of dubious (дубитативные) questions in Restan 1969.}
Publius: Va? Vad var det du sa? Att det är möjligt att fly? Va? Sa du att det är fullt utförbart... Hörde jag rätt?
Tullius: Ja, Publius lille, det är fullt utförbart. Allt är utförbart. Men dessförrinnan...
[Lit: Yes, Publius little, it is fully executable. Everything is executable. But before that]

Brodsky-Myers English translation
Publius: What! How! What’d you say? ... Escape’s possible? ... eh? You said... did you say... it’s manageable... Did I hear you right?
Tullius: It’s manageable, yes it’s manageable. Everything’s manageable.
Meantime...
(Brodskij Mramor; Jangfeldt Marmor Brodsky&Myers Marbles)

Russian original:
Туллий (из-за шторы). В Риме, Публий, всегда лето. Даже зимой.
Публий (снова глядя в окно). По крайней мере, утро сейчас, а?
Часов, как говорили при христианстве, десять.
Туллий. Утро, утро. Не волнуйся. С этим они еще дурака вавить не научились
[Lit: Tullius: Morning, morning. Don’t worry. With this yet to fool around they have not learned]

Swedish translation:
Tullius: Det är alltid sommar i Rom, Publius. Till och med på vintern.
Publius: (Tittar ut genom fönstret igen) Det är väl morgon nu, va? Tio, ungefär, som man sa på den kristna tiden.
Tullius: Ja, ja, det är det. Var inte orolig. Det har de inte lärt sig mixtra med än...
[Lit: Tullius: Yes, yes, it is. Don’t worry. They haven’t learned to mix that up yet.]
Brodyks-Myers English translation:

Tullius (From behind a partition): In Rome, Publius, it’s always summer. Even in winter.

Publius (Another glance at the window): At least it’s morning now, eh? About ten, as the Christians say

Tullius: Morning, morning. Don’t get worried. They haven’t learned to control that yet..

(Brodsks Mramor; Jangfeldt Marmor Brodsky&Myers Marbles)

4.5 Imperatives

Dobrovol’kij and Levontina (2009a) state that the German negative response particle nein is often avoided in imperative context. In Dobrovol’skij and Levontina’s analysis this is due to the fact that German response particles are more tied to the propositional content of the preceding proposition and could not as easily as their Russian equivalents refer to anything outside it. This is rather surprising considering that negative response particles are frequently found in imperative sentences in Swedish. All of the imperative examples listed by Dobrovol’skij and Levontina, examples (9) – (12) above, can be translated by the Swedish negative response particle nej ‘no’. Example (36) shows a Russian imperative sentence, initiated by net ‘no’ translated into the Swedish nej ‘no’:

(37) Russian original

Andrey Он знал! Он знал-знал-знал! Я тебе точно говорю, он всё знал,
[Lit: Andrei: He knew! He knew, knew, knew! I tell you accurately, he knew it all]

Это - его труп!
[Lit: It is his corpse]

Nikolai: Нет, подожди, он если бы его знал, он бы его узнал,
[Lit: Nikolai: No, wait, he if he would have known, he would have recognized,]

узнал бы и не спрашивал ...
[Lit: would have recognized and not ask]

Andrey: Ага! Узнать, это значит признать! ..
[Lit: Andrei: Aha! Recognize, that means to confess!..]

Swedish translation
4.6 Responses to the unexpressed

Dobrovol’skij and Levontina further state that the German and English negative response particles *nein* and *no* cannot readily be used to reject implicit assumptions. In their analysis this is again due to the fact that *nein* and *no* are tightly bound to the propositional content, and could therefore not respond to anything that is not explicit in the proposition. My findings contradict this: I have found many instances of replies to the unexpressed successfully translated into *nej* in Swedish, and *no* in English:

(38) **Russian original:** Туллий. Из жалости к себе, Публий, из жалости к себе. Тебе же отсюда сбежать хочется. Или -- самоубиться. То есть тебе вечной жизни хочется. Вечной -- но именно жизни. Ни с чем другим это прилагательное связывать не желаеть. Чем более вечной, тем более жизни, да?

Публий. Ну и что? Чего в этом дурного-то?

Туллий. Да нет, разве же я... что ты? ничего дурного в этом нет. Ровно наоборот. Более того, все это осуществимо, Публий: и сбежать, и самоубиться, и вечную жизнь обрести тоже. Все это, Публий, как раз возможно. Но стремление-то к возможному как раз для римлянина и есть самый большой моветон. А поэтому, душка Публий...
Yes no, as if I..., what do you mean? There is nothing bad in that at all[...]


Publius
Ja, vad är det med det då? Vad är det för fel på det?

Tullius: Nej, det har jag väl inte sagt?... Nej, nej. Det är inget fel på det.
Tvärtom. Dessutom är det fullt utförbart, Publius: både att fly och begå självmord och få evigt liv. Allt det där är fullt möjligt, Publius. Men för en romare är strävan efter det möjliga ett uttryck för dålig smak. Och därför, Publius lille...

No, I didn’t say that, did I? ... No, No. It’s nothing wrong with that [...]

TULLIUS: Out of self-pity, Publius, out of self-pity. Since you want to escape from here. Or—to commit suicide, right? That is, you crave life, preferably eternal. Eternal—but life it must be, right? You don’t want to attach this adjective to anything else, do you? The; more eternal, the more life, eh?

PUBLIUS: Well, what of it? What's wrong with that?

TULLIUS: No, no, surely I didn’t . . . no. There's nothing wrong with that. Quite the contrary. What’s more, it's all manageable, Publius: escape, suicide; to gain eternal life as well. All that, Publius, is certainly possible. But this striving for the possible is precisely the mauvais ton for a Roman. And therefore, dear Publius

(Brodskij Mramor; Jangfeldt Marmor Brodsky&Myers Marbles)

(39) Russian original:
Публий. Когда мы в Лептис Магне когортой стояли...

Туллий. Публий! умоляю...
Публий. Да нет; просто у меня лавровый венок по плаванью был... Э-э, да чего там. ([Машет рукой.]) Они там сейчас, поди, поуже прежней сечку заделают. Электронную. Либо лазерную. По последнему слову.

Yes no, just I got a laurel wreath for swimming[...]

40
Publius: When our cohort was stationed at Leptis Magna ..

Tullius: Publius, I beg you ...

Publius: No, it's just that I got a laurel wreath for swimming . . . Oh well, never mind . . . (Waves his hand) Now I guess they'll go and set up a worse chopper than ever. Electronic one. Or lasers. The last word of . . .

(Brodsky Mramor; Jangfeldt Marmor Brodsky&Myers Marbles)

Russian original:

Публий. Острослов. Думаешь, есть какая-то разница? После тебя то есть? Этих-то ([с внезапной надеждой в голосе, тыча пальцем в два оставшихся бюста]), их-то ты -- зачем оставил?

Туллий ([качая головой]). Нет, не за этим... Просто на развод, на племя... Большая личная привязанность. С детства Назона любил. Знаешь, как "Метаморфозы" кончаются?

[Lit: No, not for that...[...]]

Swedish translation:

Publius Kvickhuvud. Tror du verkligen det spelar nån roll? Efter dig, vill säga?
De här (med oväntad hoppfullhet i rösten, pekar på de två återstående bysterna), de här - varför lämnade du kvar dem?

Tullius (skakar på huvudet) Nej, inte därför... för odling, förädling... Person liga band. Har älskat Ovidius sen jag var barn. Vet du hur "Metamorfoserna" slutar?
[No, not therefore... [...]]

Brodsky-Myers English translation:
Publius: Very witty. Do you think that makes a difference? After you, that is?...
These, by the way (With sudden hope in his voice jabbing his finger at the two remaining busts)... What did you keep them for?

Tullius:(Shaking his head): No, not for that . . . Just for breeding, for cultivation . . . Great personal attachment. I’ve loved Ovid since childhood. D’you know how The Metamorphoses ends?

(Brodskij Mramor; Jangfeldt Marmor Brodsky&Myers Marbles)

(41) Russian original:

Публий. Если бы фильтры говорить умели... ([Пауза.] ) И моя жена в ней мылась... И твоя.
Туллий. Что ты хочешь этим сказать?
Публий. Да нет, не это... И дети тоже. Вода -- везде вода. Что в

Swedish translation:

Publius: Om bara filter kunde tal... (Paus. ) Och min fru har tvättat sig i det...
Och din med.

Tullius: Vad menar du med det?!


Brodsky-Myers English translation:

Publius: If only filters could talk . . . (Pause) And my wife washed in it . . . and yours . . .

Tullius: (Sharply): And what do you mean by that?

Publius: No, no, nothing like that . . . And the kids, too. Once water, always water, after all. Whether it's an apartment or a cell. Like I said: connecting vessels.

(Brodskij Mramor; Jangfeldt Marmor Brodsky&Myers Marbles)

(42) Russian original:
4.7 Phatic uses of polar response particles: discourse markers

Dobrovolskij and Levontina state that phatic uses of German and English negative response particles are highly uncharacteristic. There was no clear instance of phatic *net* translated by *nej* in my material. However, discourse marking *nej* is rather frequent in Swedish. As a demonstration of Swedish negative response particles used as discourse markers (Compare 1.10) I present some example extracts from the internet displaying the most frequent uses. The tendency is that *nej* is being used as a generalized contrast marker that doesn’t need any propositional content to reject:

(43) *Nej, jag måste skriva om det här med. För det var så lågt. Jag blev så sårad. Och jag är så trött på honom. Hela den här episoden utspelade sig på Twitter.* [Lit: No, I must write about this]

This is a parallel to Dobrovo’skij and Levontina’s Gogol’ example: *Net, ja dolžna k tebe pisat’* ‘No, I must write to you’ in the beginning of a letter as a means of expressing hesitation followed by determination, the Gogol’ translator actually retain the negative response particle in the Swedish version and it is frequently found in contemporary texts, especially in weblogs, where the author expresses some embarrassment in writing too much, but nevertheless, couldn’t resist the urge. It can be categorized as topic shift nej (Lee-Goldman) or as expressing the unexpected (Teleman et al)

(44)  

*Nej, det är bara för mycket!* Jag förstår inte hur resonemanget går ihop. Jag hör alldeles för ofta i min omgivning föräldrar som med en självklarhet lämnar sina äldre barn på dagis när de är hemma med en nyfödd. [Lit: No, it is just too much]

(44)  


[No, it is just too much] This is a very common expression in Swedish, other varieties include nej han är bara för mycket ‘no he is just too much’

(45)  

Så resonerar någon som inte varit utsatt för anmälningar och inblandning av soc. I vanlig domstol är du oskyldig till motsatsen bevisats - vid anmältning till socialen det motsatta. Du påstår det är en söndagspromenad att bli kallad till möte och behöva förklara sin rätt att vara förälder pga att någon valt att anmäla en familj för att jävlas?

*Nej vet du vad* - du har ingen aning om hur socialen arbetar, det märks. [Lit: No, do you no what]

(45)  

http://www.familjeliv.se/Forum-4-121/m60375620.html 2011-10-20

[No, do you no what] This is a harsh reprimand with the meaning “You should really know better” the stress i s on vet ‘know’. The negative response particle is inadmissible.

(46)  

*Nej, nu ska vi skänka bort lite böcker*

Här, kära vänner… Här har ni drygt 100 böcker jag har rensat ut från min boksamling. Böcker som hittat in i hyllan av olika anledningar och som hittar ut ur den av andra. [Lit: No, now we shall give away some books]
This combination of nej ‘no’ and nu ‘now’ is expressing impulsivity or determination, reminding of the sayings Nej nu går fan på torra land [no now the devil walks on dry ground] or nej nu jävlar [no now devils] both of which express some kind of reaching the point where one’s temper is running out. This has developed into a productive schema and numerous of examples beginning with nej nu can be found.

(47) dazed: jo det e sant

hehe nej men gu nej men oj ok [Lit: haha no but gawd not but ouch ok]


(48) Fredag 19 aug 22:10

Nej, vad roligt!! Vilket härligt fynd!! [Lit: no, how fun!! What a lovely buy!!]


[no, how fun!! What a lovely buy!!] here nej ‘no’ alone is doing the job of expressing astonishment. Both nej and nej men (nämen) are probably developing into some kind of general contrast markers, gradually loosing their meaning of astonishment or surprise.

The important point is that these discourse marking nej are not congruent with any following propositions. The do not necessarily initiate any negated statements.

In sum, the discourse marker uses of nej ‘no’ seem to function in much the same way as the tokens described by Dobrovolskij and Levontina for Russian and Lee-Goldman for English.

**4.8 Other non-coincidences**
In some cases Russian polar response particles were translated into non-PRPs in Swedish (and English). I’ll give three examples. This tendency is observed first of all in agreeing or affiliative responses.

(49) **Russian original:**
Свидетельница: Да, это я позволила себе ... Хотя, как бы, весь спектакль
[Lit: Female wedding witness, yes, I took the liberty ... Even though, the whole performance]
выполнен в технике верbatim ...
[Lit: was executed with a verbatim technique]

**Swedish translation:**
Det kvinnliga bröllopsvittnet: Det är sant, jag tog mig den friheten... Även om
[Lit: The female wedding witness, it is true, I took the liberty ... Even though ]
hela föreställningen liksom var utformad som dokumentär improvisationsteater.
[Lit: the whole performance and was designed as a documentary improvisational theater. ]

(Oleg & Vladimir Presn’akov Polovoje pokrytie; Staffan Skott Under mattan)

(50) **Russian original**
Андрей: А это он всегда так выглядит - неважно ... Есть такой сорт
[Lit: Andrei: Well, he always looks like this – not feeling well, there is this kind]
людей - они всегда выглядят неважно! ..
[Lit: of people – they always look like they’re not feeling well!!]
Игорь Игоревич: Ну да и впрочем не важно ...
[Lit: Igor Igorevich: Well yes, and it doesn’t matter much anyway]
Андрей: Да ... Садитесь, Игорь Игоревич ...
[Lit: Andrei: Yes... Have a seat, Igor Igorevich...]

**Swedish translation**
Andrej Det är alltid så med honom... Det finns ju människor som är så, att de
[Lit: Andrej It is always with him ..There are people who are so, they always]
alltid ser ut att inte må så gott!
[Lit: seem to not feel so good! ]

_Igor Lika gott det...

[Lit: Igor Just as good... ]]

_Andrej Jo-Visst... Ska du inte slå dig ner..._

[Lit: Andrej POSITIVE DISAGREEMENT PARTICLE-sure ... Will not you sit down...]

(Oleg & Vladimir Presn’akov Polovioje pokrytie; Staffan Skott Under mattan)

(51)  Russian original:

Публий (….)Мебель! Инициалы можно вырезать.

Туллий. Ну да, или: "Публий плюс тумбочка. Равняется любовь". Хотя татуировка еще лучше будет. Зависит, конечно, где...

[Lit: Well yes, or ”Publius plus bedside table equals love”, Although a tattoo would be even better. Depends, of course of where...]

_Swedish translation: Publius (...) En möbel! Något att rista in sina initialer i!


[Lit: Sure, or "Publius plus bedside table is equal to love." A tattoo would of course be even better. But it depends on where.]

_Brodsky-Myers English translation:

Publius: Furniture! Mahogany! Something to cave initials in...

Tullius: Sure. Or: “Publius plus cupboard equals love.” Although a tattoo would be even better. Depends, of course, where.

(Brodskij Mramor; Jangfeldt Marmor Brodsky&Myers Marbles)

(52) Russian original:

Публий. Тем и жальче (кряхтя) выбрасывать. Потому что многосторонняя.

Туллий. Ну да, воображение разыгрывается. Варианты ... Задняя стенка Вон совсем нетронутая. Не то что если круглая.

[Lit: Well, yes, imagination starts playing. Varieties... The back side look wholly untouched, not so if it were round]
Swedish translation:
[Lit: That’s right. It puts your imagination in motion. Variations and stuff ... The back is almost completely unscathed. There are other things than if it were round.]

Brodsky-Myers English translation
Publius: That’s why it’s so sad (groans) to throw it away. ‘Cause it’s so many-sided
Tullius: Sure. It unleashes the imaginations. Variants and so forth. The back side – look – is absolutely... well, pure. It would be different if it were round.
(Brodskij Mramor; Jangfeldt Marmor Brodsky&Myers Marbles)

One way of accounting for this tendency is that maybe the agreement/disagreement precedence over polarity in Russian is somehow present even in responses to non-negated prior turns; the agreement/disagreement meaning in Russian dominates to the extent that the polar response particles are better translated into words that clearly conveys the same nuance of agreement/disagreement in Swedish and English much like in the case of Japanese, which displays a fully fledged agreement-disagreement system.

5 Conclusions

Because the Russian language displays only two morphological options for response expression Russian is expected to vacillate between a polarity based answering system and a agreement based system. According to my findings the table for Russian statements will have the following form:

Table IV
Responses to Russian statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>aligning</th>
<th>disaligning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>non-negated</td>
<td>da</td>
<td>net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negated</td>
<td>da+tag / net+tag</td>
<td>net+tag</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The agreement/disagreement dimension clearly takes precedence over the polarity dimension; still a negative response particle is possible in NA instances, aligning responses to negated statements. For example (1) net, navern’aka ne konču [Lit: no, no doubt I won’t finish] is an equally adequate answer. As only da was found in my material, I place it before net in the figure. To sum up, it seems like Russian displays some kind of agreement-based system in responses to statements.

In Pope 1973 a rather different figure is given for Russian⁷

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>agreement</th>
<th>disagreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>positive</td>
<td>da</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negative</td>
<td>n’et</td>
<td>n’et</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table (Pope 1973:118) fails to capture the agreement/disagreement character of the Russian response system mainly because of the outline of the table itself. In this version the table was designed to capture the morphological inventories of the respective languages. “Positive” and “negative” in this version indicate the polarity of the second, responding turn, not the polarity of the prior, asking turn. Therefore the table fails to capture the incongruent polarity instances of Russian responses to negated prior turns. In Scandinavian German and English, this incongruity is mostly not present due to the fact that the polarity dimension most often takes precedence.

The Swedish examples largely follow the predictions of Dobrovol’skij & Levontina and Heinemann in the respect of polarity; Swedish response particles are mostly congruent in

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⁷ **indicates that a tag or some other lexical means is required, the PRP itself not being sufficient. The design of the table, as it aims at capturing the morphological setup rather than distribution, is put in a different order from the ones I have shown earlier in the paper. The PD position is in the upper right corner instead of the lower right corner.**
polarity with their following statements and aligning responses match the polarity of the prior turn.

The prediction of turn internal polarity congruity by Dobrovolskij & Levontina has got important exceptions:

1) examples in which mutual alternatives rather than polar opposites are posed

(53) **Russian original**

Андрей: Может, это тот, а мы выкинули нашего?
[Lit. Andrej: Maybe this is that one and we threw away the other one?]

Игорь Игоревич: Нет… нет… это наш...
[Lit. Igor: No… No… this is ours]

**Swedish translation**

Andrej Det här är kanske den som redan var här, så att den som vi slängde framför planet var vårt?
[Lit. Andrej: Maybe this is the one that already was here, so that the one we threw in front of the aircraft was ours?]

Igor Nej... nej... det här är vårt...
[Lit. Igor: No… no… this is ours]

(Oleg & Vladimir Presn’akov *Polovoje pokrytie*; Staffan Skott *Under mattan*)

The Swedish example retains the *nej* even though it is a disaligning response and the following statement is positive. This shows that the positive disagreement particle *jo* is not used as a disaligning response unless the prior turn is negated.

2) Examples in which *nej* is used as a discourse marker.

Most of the examples in section 4.7 show that the RPR must not be congruent in polarity with the following statement. In its discourse marker use *nej* functions as a contrast marker indicating some kind of possibly negative stance about what follows, but the polarity of the PRP does not necessarily have scope over the adjacent proposition.

The Russian positive PRP *da* ‘yes’ has got some strongly lexicalized discourse marker uses, in which the polar value is nearly extinct. These instances can not be translated by the Swedish equivalent *ja*. The same does not hold for the Russian negative PRP *net* compared to the Swedish counterpart *nej*. 

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6 References


