

## Property-Denoting NPs and Non-Canonical Genitive Case

In this paper I examine the semantics of two phenomena that involve non-canonical genitive Case in Russian. One of them, Genitive of Negation, is a well-documented phenomenon whereby a non-oblique internal argument of the verb can be optionally assigned genitive Case under negation (1). The other is sometimes referred to as Intensional Genitive. This is a phenomenon whereby certain opaque verbs, such as *zasluživat'* (deserve), *prosit'* (ask for), *ždat'* (wait), etc., take genitive objects, as well as accusative ones, independently of negation (2).

Following Neidle (1988), I propose that Genitive of Negation and Intensional Genitive constitute different instantiations of the same phenomenon, and therefore, a unifying account of the two is required. A number of striking similarities hold between the two phenomena.

(i) It has been demonstrated that Genitive of Negation tends to be assigned to *common nouns* rather than proper names, *indefinite* rather than definite NPs, *abstract* rather than concrete ones, *plural* rather than singular (Timberlake (1986), Bailyn (1997), among others). In addition, NPs that appear in this Case are normally interpreted as non-specific, take narrow scope and lack existential commitment (Bailyn (1997), among others). An examination of Case-assignment to objects of intensional verbs reveals that Intensional Genitive is sensitive to exactly the same restrictions. For instance, in (3), an abstract NP appears in the genitive Case, while a concrete object of the same negated verb is assigned accusative. A similar pattern is exemplified in (2) for complements of an opaque verb.

(ii) Both Genitive of Negation and Intensional Genitive are associated with considerable variation in native speakers' judgments. Speakers who relatively rarely accept Genitive of Negation appear to be equally reluctant in accepting the assignment of Intensional Genitive.

(iii) Across Balto-Slavic languages, there is a strong correlation between the presence and the obligatoriness of Genitive of Negation on the one hand and of Intensional Genitive on the other, although certain exceptions can be found.

These arguments prove that indeed Genitive of Negation and Intensional Genitive correspond to instantiations of the same phenomenon in different environments. The next step is to determine the semantic feature that is shared by these environments and that licenses genitive Case-marking. I argue that this feature is intensionality of the complement position of negated and opaque verbs. In both cases, the predicate may denote a relation not to an individual but rather to a property.

The fact that opaque verbs introduce an intensional environment is well-known and generally agreed upon. Negation, however, is normally considered to be an extensional operator. However, I argue, following Farkas (1985), Palmer (2001), among others, that negation does introduce intensionality. This is suggested by the fact that negation exhibits a number of properties that characterize intensional operators. For instance, an NP that is interpreted within the scope of negation may lack existential commitment (4). In addition, negation licenses subjunctive mood (5), which is typically exhibited in intensional environments and whose semantics is strongly related to intensionality (Farkas (1985), among others). Also, I will demonstrate that intensional predicates and negation exhibit a similar pattern of behavior with respect to anaphora support. Intuitively, the understanding of a negative sentence is dependent on the interpretation of the negated proposition. I will propose that negation does introduce intensionality, by invoking reference to the set of possible worlds in which the negated proposition  $p$  holds. In particular, a negated sentence asserts that the actual world does not belong to this set ( $\neg p \leftrightarrow w_0 \notin W_p$ ). This analysis is indirectly supported by psycholinguistic

findings, according to which, when processing a negative sentence, the comprehender first creates a mental representation of the negated state of affairs (i.e. the counterfactual situation represented by  $W_p$ ) and then rejects it (i.e. concludes that it is not integrated with the actual world) (Kaup et. al. (2006)).

I propose that Modal Genitive is assigned to property-denoting NPs that occupy intensional complement positions. It cannot be assigned to NPs that refer to or quantify over individuals. (Partee & Borshev (2004) suggest the possibility of a property analysis. They do not assume that the semantics of the genitive Case is intensional, however.) The account is formulated in the terminology of properties as characterized by Partee (1986) and Zimmermann (1992). Modal Genitive is argued to be only assigned to NPs of the intensional property type  $\langle s, \langle e, t \rangle \rangle$ . I demonstrate that this analysis accounts successfully for both semantic and distributional properties of genitive complements.

1. Ja ne pil vodu / vody.  
I NEG drank water(acc)/(gen)  
I didn't drink water.
2. On ždal čuda / Dimu.  
He waited miracle(gen) / Dima(acc)  
He was waiting for a miracle / for Dima.
3. On ne našol sčast'ja / cvetok.  
he NEG found happiness(gen) / flower(acc)  
He didn't find happiness / a flower.
4. John didn't find a solution to the problem.
5. În România nu există oameni care să creadă în el.  
in Romania not exist people who subj believe in him  
In Romania there are no people who believe in him.

(Farkas 1985:128)

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