

RUSSIAN GENITIVES, NON-REFERENTIALITY, AND THE PROPERTY-TYPE HYPOTHESIS

Vladimir Borschev, *VINITI RAN* and *UMass Amherst*; Elena V. Paducheva, *VINITI RAN*; Barbara H. Partee, *UMass Amherst*; Yakov G. Testelets, *Russian State Humanities University*; Igor Yanovich, *Moscow State University*

Dahl (1971) observed that the same contexts often license Genitive and Subjunctive in Russian, so that the semantic contrast between Gen and Acc may be similar to that between Subjunctive and Indicative. The parallels are clearest in a paradigm due to Kagan (2005) (our examples):

- (1) a. Ja **ne** **zametil**, **čto** jubilej GAI prazdnovali voditeli.
I NEG noticed that anniversary GAI celebrated drivers-NOM
'I didn't notice that drivers were celebrating the anniversary of the road police.' (factive)
- b. Ja **ne** **zametil**, **čtoby** jubilej GAI prazdnovali voditeli.
I NEG noticed **that-SUBJUNC** anniversary GAI celebrated drivers-NOM
'I didn't notice that any drivers were celebrating the anniversary of the road police.' (non-factive)
- c. Ja ne zametil **vodku** na stole.
I NEG noticed vodka-ACC on table
'I didn't notice the vodka on the table.' (presuppositional: vodka was there)
- d. Ja ne zametil **vodki** na stole.
I NEG noticed vodka-GEN on table
'I didn't notice any vodka on the table.' (non-presuppositional: I may suspect there was none)

Similar parallels are found with intensional verbs like *ždat* 'expect, wait for'; correlations between Genitive of Negation (Gen Neg) and Genitive of Intensionality (Gen Int) were described by Dahl, Neidle (1988), Kagan. The similarity between non-veridicality in the sentential domain and non-specificity in the nominal domain has been explored by Kiparsky and Kiparsky (1970), Dahl, Farkas (1985), and others. We suggest that both Subjunctive and the Russian Gen often signal the *absence of a presupposition or entailment*: of truth, and of existence, respectively. Their licensing conditions are similar but not identical. A caveat (to be discussed): we do not believe that our proposed semantic generalizations apply to all cases of Object Gen Neg.

Kagan (2005) and Partee & Borschev (2004) propose to treat Russian alternating Genitive NPs as "property type" ((the intensional variant) of type $\langle e, t \rangle$, "predicative denotative status" in Paducheva (1985)), the type attributed to opaque objects of intensional verbs in Zimmermann (1993) and Van Geenhoven and McNally (2005), to 'subjects' of existential sentences by McNally (1992), Landman (2004), and Paducheva (1985:99), to incorporated nominals in Van Geenhoven (1998), and to Russian 'small nominals' in Pereltsvaig (2006). In all those cases, the authors argue that such NPs lack e-type reference and bear no referential index. Arguments for and against this hypothesis for Gen Neg NPs have been given in Partee & Borschev (In press). The present authors argue in favor and answer most of the arguments against.

The property-type hypothesis has several attractions. (i) Property-type NPs are non-referential, giving a semantic basis for the generalization (with potential exceptions to be addressed) that Gen NPs are "indefinite", or have "decreased individuation" (Timberlake). Cf. Van Geenhoven & McNally's (2005) similar claim for opaque objects of intensional verbs. (ii) All extant proposals give property-type NPs narrowest scope, giving a semantic basis for the narrow scope behavior of Russian Gen Neg and Gen Int (Neidle). (iii) If one accepts the arguments of Zimmermann (1993) and Van Geenhoven and McNally (2005) that opaque objects of intensional verbs are property-type, then the assumption that Russian alternating Genitives are property type provides a unified account of Gen Neg and Gen Int. (iv) Pereltsvaig (2006) notes that property-type NPs, lacking a referential index, cannot be antecedents of

bound anaphora; the same property often holds for Gen Neg NPs, most clearly for Subject Gen Neg, as in (2) from (Chvany 1975).

- (2) a. Ivan ne byl v svoej komnate. (Chvany 1975:134)
 Ivan_i-NOM NEG was-M.SG in self_i's room
 b. *Ivana ne bylo v svoej komnate.
 Ivana-GEN NEG was-N.SG in self_i's room

Data for Object Gen Neg are mixed and unstable, but partly tend in the same direction. This property is for various reasons untestable for Gen Int. So the bound anaphora facts, undoubtedly depending also on syntactic structure, are largely compatible with (though not unequivocally supportive of) a uniform property-type analysis of Gen NPs. (v) Subjunctive occurs only in non-veridical contexts, i.e. where truth is neither entailed nor presupposed (Giannakidou 1998). Negation can license both Gen Neg and sometimes (perhaps by licensing an implicitly modal meaning) Subjunctive; Kagan has observed that relative clauses in some Gen Neg NPs can be Subjunctive. In (3) we give relevant variants of examples from Paducheva (1997).

- (3) a. Ženščiny, kotorye zasluživajut (*zasluživali by) uvaženija, dlja nego ne suščestvujut.
 women-NOM who deserve-INDIC (*SUBJUNC) respect for him NEG exist-PL
 b. Ženščin, kotoryje {zasluživajut / zasluživali by} uvaženija, dlja nego ne suščestvujet.
 women-GEN who deserve-INDIC / SUBJUNC respect for him NEG exist-SG

We sketch our analysis. Proper names and other definite NPs are basically “referential”, type e, but can shift to type $\langle e, t \rangle$ by a number of routes (Partee 1986, Grønn 2006, von Heusinger and Wespel 2006), with the choice often influenced by pragmatics. Indefinite NPs are basically of type $\langle e, t \rangle$ (Landman 2004); when they occur in e-type argument positions, Heimian mechanisms provide them with existential or other quantificational force (Heim 1982). Generalized quantifiers are of type $\langle\langle e, t \rangle, t \rangle$, but most kinds of quantified NPs can also occur as type $\langle e, t \rangle$ (Partee 1986, Zimmermann 1993, Brisson 1997, McNally 1998). Verbs specify the types of arguments, and variants of a given verb may differ in meaning and in argument types, e.g. extensional and intensional *ždat'* ‘wait for, expect’. Subjects and objects are typically type e but may be $\langle e, t \rangle$ or propositional type. For Neidle (1988) and Bailyn (2004), negation licenses a +Q feature on the verb licensing Gen Neg; we translate that into a shift of the verb's e argument to $\langle e, t \rangle$ (optionally for Objects), simultaneously adding modality (Gen Int) and/or existential quantification (Gen Neg) to the verb's meaning (cf. Dayal 2003, van Geenhoven and McNally). We conjecture that Object Gen Neg is partly syntacticized, hence less semantically conditioned.

We offer solutions to most of the problems we are aware of for the property-type hypothesis. (i) Proper names can occur in some Gen Neg contexts, but not in Gen Int. We argue that that is often associated with the presence of a Locative or Situation argument, where Gen Neg signals absence not of presupposition of existence, but of ‘(observable) existence within Situation’. The $\langle e, t \rangle$ variant of a name *Petja* in *Ja ne videl Peti* ‘I didn't see Petja-GEN’ may denote something like ‘instantiation of Petja in the situation’. (ii) Some quantifier phrases such as *vse X* ‘all Xs’ occur in Gen Neg and in Gen Int, but those that can are those that can be shifted to $\langle e, t \rangle$ type. (Some examples remain unsolved and will be discussed.) (iii) Subjunctive and Gen Neg do not have identical distribution. We propose that they have overlapping but not identical licensing conditions, with Subjunctive more sensitive to truth ‘in a world’ and Gen Neg to existence ‘in a situation’. (iv) Like all Slavists, we face the fact that the distribution of Russian Gen Neg involves “tendencies”, “optionality”, speaker variation. We appeal in part to two factors: (a) competition between semantically conditioned rules and syntacticization, with gradual loss of Genitive; (b) subjectivity of some of the semantic conditions, often allowing the same situation to be described ‘either way’ (I didn't see the individual Petja or I didn't see ‘any trace of Petja’).