The Genitive of Negation in Russian: a Relativized Minimality Account[*]

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1   Introduction

The genitive of negation (GenNeg) in Russian (1) is a phenomenon in which an argument or an adjunct DP that bears structural case in an affirmative sentence surfaces bearing Genitive case in the corresponding negative sentence:[1]

(1)   a.   Saša   pokupaet   žurnaly
           Sasha:NOM   buys   magazines:ACC
           'Sasha buys magazines'
      b.   Saša   **ne**   pokupaet   **žurnaly/žurnalov**
           Sasha:NOM   **NEG**   buys   **magazines:ACC/GEN**
           'Sasha does not buy magazines'   (Bailyn 1997:85)

This phenomenon has received considerable attention from various theoretical perspectives which range from discourse/functional approaches to formal accounts (see Jakobson 1936, Dahl 1969, Padučeva, 1974, Gundel 1974, Babby 1980, Pesetsky 1982, Timberlake 1975, 1986, Neidle 1988, Bailyn 1997, Pereltsvaig 1998, Brown 1999 and Borschev and Partee 2002).

In this paper, I offer a syntactic account of the case-alternation facts of the GenNeg in Russian, by drawing on insights from previous research which assumes a correlation between case on DPs and their (non-)presuppostional interpretations (e.g.,

[1] In this paper, I do not make a distinction between NPs and DPs.

Timberlake 1975, Babby 1980, Babyonyshev 1996, Bailyn 1997, Brown 1999, and Borschev and Partee 2002). I show that an elegant treatment of the GenNeg is possible by utilizing tools such as Relativized Minimality (Rizzi 1990) and the Mapping Hypothesis (Diesing 1992; see Babyonyshev 1996, Bailyn 1997, and Brown 1999 for accounts relying on the Mapping Hypothesis). I argue that the GenNeg arises as a result of the head of the Negation Phrase blocking structural-case licensing from above.

This paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 presents some of the important properties of the GenNeg reported in the literature. Section 3 offers a new analysis of these facts within a framework of the Minimalist Program: I propose that functional heads can block the feature-checking of other functional heads when they intervene between these heads and their target DPs. I show that the proposed analysis can readily account for the properties of the GenNeg presented in section 2. Section 4 reviews previous analyses of the GenNeg in comparison with the proposed analysis. Section 5 is concerned with an additional welcome result of the present proposal: it sheds new light on the obligatory occurrence of the GenNeg in existential sentences. Section 6 touches on two remaining issues. Finally, section 7 concludes the paper.

2   Properties of the GenNeg in Russian

First of all, the GenNeg occurs only in the presence of *clausemate*, *sentential* negation (Timberlake 1986, Bailyn 1997, and Pereltsvaig 1998). In (2b), the GEN-case marking on the object of the verb *pisat'* is ungrammatical, because it is in a different clause than the negation. On the other hand, in (3), the GEN-case marking on the nominal referring to 'dictionary' is not possible, because it is under constituent negation rather than sentential negation:

(2)   a. Ja   **ne**   nashel   **tsvetov**
          I   **NEG**   found   **flowers:GEN**
          'I didn't find (the) flowers'   (Pereltsvaig 1998:2)

    b. *Ja   **ne**   obeščaju   [pisat'   **stixov**]
        I   **NEG** promise   [to-write **verse: GEN**]
        (Timberlake 1986:347)

(3)   U nego v rukax   **ne**   **slovar'/*slovarja**
    at him   in hands   **NEG** **dictionary:NOM/*GEN**
    'It isn't a dictionary that he has in his hands (it is something else)'

Second, the GenNeg is accompanied by the default or "impersonal" agreement morphology. As illustrated in (4b), when the subject of a negated sentence takes GEN-case, the predicate bears the third person, singular and neuter agreement morphology. As shown in (4c), however, when the same subject takes Nominative (NOM) case, the agreement is kept intact (Babby 1980, Pesetsky 1982, Gundel 1974, and Babyonyshev 1996):

(4)   a. Zdes' **rastut**   griby
        Here   **grow:3rd, PL** mushroom:**NOM, 3rd, PL**
        'Mushrooms grow here'
    b. Zdes' ne   **rastët**   gribov
        Here   NEG   **grow:3rd, SG** mushroom:**GEN, 3rd, PL**
        'No mushrooms grow here'
    c. Zdes' griby   **ne**   **rastut**
        Here   mushroom:**NOM, 3rd, PL** **NEG**   **grow:3rd, PL**
        'Mushrooms do not grow here'
        (Babby 1980)

Third, as shown in (1), the GenNeg seems to apply *optionally* when the sentence has an unaccusative verb. But in the existential copula construction, it seems to apply *obligatorily* (Dahl 1969, Timberlake 1975, Babby 1980, Gundel 1974, Babyonyshev 1996, Bailyn 1997). (5b) illustrates that the subject of a negative existential sentence cannot bear NOM-case:

(5)   a. Na stole   est'   žurnaly.
            on table   be   magazines:NOM
            'There are magazines on the table'
    b. **Na stole**   **net**   **žurnalov/*žurnaly**.
            on table   **NEG-be**   **magazines:GEN/*NOM**
            'There are no magazines on the table' (Bailyn 1997:86)

The fourth property of the GenNeg is that it only targets the THEME argument of the verb (Pesetsky 1982, Babyonyshev 1996, Bailyn 1997, and Brown 1999).[2] Sentences (6) and (7) show that the GenNeg applies to the object of a transitive verb and the subject of an unaccusative verb, while (8) shows that the GenNeg does not apply to the subject of an unergative verb:

(6)   Ja ne   **čitaju**   **žurnalov**
       I   NEG   **read**   **magazine:GEN**
       'I don't read (any) magazines'   (Brown 1999:46)

(7)   **Otveta**   ne   **prišlo**
      answer:GEN   NEG   **came**
      'No answer came'   (Brown 1999:46)

(8)   **Studenty/*studentov**   ne   **spjat**
      students:NOM/*GEN   NEG   **sleep**
      'Students don't sleep'   (Brown 1999:46)

However, in existential sentences, which characteristically have a locative element in sentence-initial position, GenNeg can also appear on "the subject" of an unergative verb, as exemplified by (9) (Babby 1980):

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[2] Pesetsky (1982) dubs this property as the "unaccusative condition".

(9)   V xorovode   ne   **pljasalo ni odnoj   devuški**
        (odni parni)
        in round-dance NEG   **dance   NI one:GEN   girl:GEN**
        (only guy:NOM)
        'There wasn't a single girl dancing in the round dance (only
        guys)'   (Babby 2000:50)

The fifth property of the GenNeg is that it *never* applies to nominals that bear a lexical/oblique case in an affirmative sentence, as shown in (10) (Babby 1980, Pesetsky 1982):[3]

(10)   a. On   upravljal **fabrikoj/*fabriki**
           he   managed **factory:INST/*GEN**
           'He managed a/the factory'
      b. On   **ne**   upravljal **fabrikoj/*fabriki**
           he   **NEG**   managed **factory:INST/*GEN**
           'He didn't manage a/the factory' (Pereltsvaig1998:2)

Lastly, DPs bearing GenNeg tend to denote *indefinite*, *non-specific*, *unindividuated*, *non-presupposed* entities, as shown in (11a), whereas their structural case-marked counterparts tend to denote *definite*, *specific*, *individuated*, *presupposed* things, as in (11b) (Jakobson 1936, Timberlake 1975, Babby 1980, and Gundel 1974; see Section 4 for apparent exceptions):

(11)   a. Ne   čuvstovovalos   **moroza**
           NEG   felt:N, SG   **frost:GEN**
           'No frost was felt' (there was no frost)   (Babby 1980)
      b. **Moroz**   ne   čuvstvovalsja
           Frost:NOM   NEG   felt:M, SG
           'The frost was not felt' (we were wearing warm
           clothes)   (Babby 1980)

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[3] In the literature, this property is characterized as the "direct case condition" (Babby 1980) or the "non-obliqueness condition" (Pesetsky 1982).

In this section, I have outlined six properties of the GenNeg which are well documented in the literature. In the next section, I offer a new analysis of the phenomenon.

3   New Analysis

I adopt a version of the Minimalist Program (Chomsky 1995, 2000), which assumes that syntactic elements are base-generated with lexical features which need to be checked off by agreement between the relevant licensers and licensees.

3.1   Proposal

I claim that the GenNeg instantiates a Relativized Minimality (RM) effect (Rizzi 1990). I argue that functional heads can block the feature-checking operation by other functional heads when they intervene between the relevant heads and their targets. Under this view, structural case (Case) can be licensed when (14) is met:

(12)   *Condition for Case-licensing*
        A Case-licensing head X can license Case feature F on Y if
        and only if there is **no intervening functional head** Z
        which c-commands Y but does not c-command X.

Applying the principle of RM to the GenNeg, I propose that NEG, being a functional head, blocks the operation of Case-licensing heads when it intervenes between these heads and their target DPs. Due to this blocking effect, DPs located below NegP surface with GenNeg instead of structural case.[4]

This proposal is based on the assumption that in Russian, NEG is a functional head and its projection, namely NegP, is located between VP and the functional head that licenses ACC-case (Bailyn 1997, Brown 1999). For our purposes, it does not matter what exactly this functional projection is. But for concreteness, I
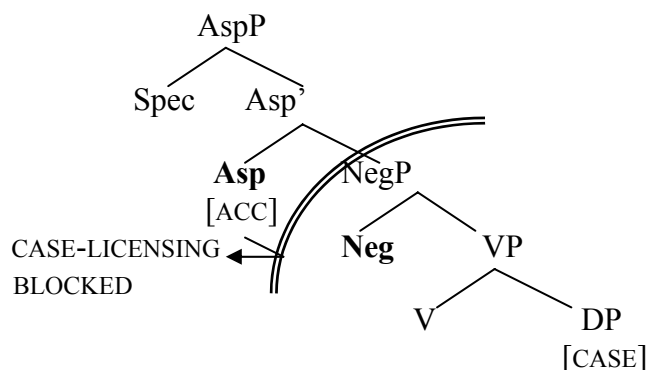
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[4] One may wonder what licenses this GEN-case. One can assume that it comes from NEG (Bailyn 1997 and Brown 1999). Alternatively, one can posit that it is governed by the Redundancy Rule (Babyonyshev 1996), which targets Caseless VP-internal DPs.

assume that it is Aspect Phrase (Yadroff 1994, Bailyn 1997 and Brown 1999; see Harves 2001 for an opposing view).
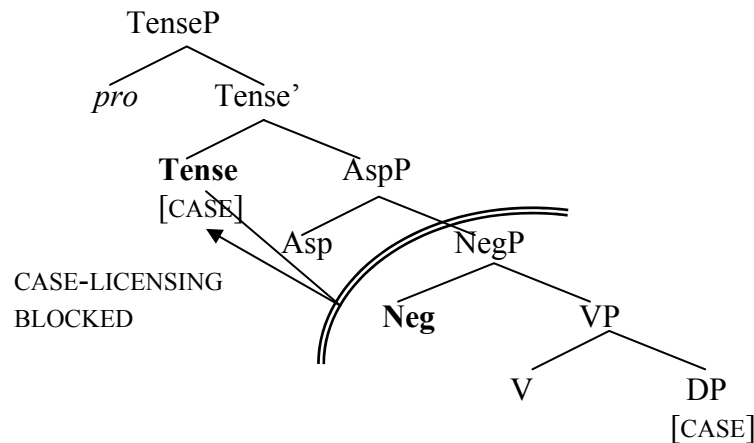
In order to derive the blocking effect by NEG, we need to assume that DPs can get their Case feature checked while staying inside VP. I adopt Chomsky's (2000) view on Case-licensing: that is, DPs need not move for Case reasons, as they can get structural cases if they are in the c-command domain of the relevant Case-licensing head, namely Aspect or Tense. Because NEG is located below Aspect and Tense but above VP, it will block the Case-licensing by these functional heads to their target DPs which remain inside VP. Hence, these DP surface with GEN-case in lieu of ACC- or NOM-case.

The proposal developed thus far is schematically represented in (13). (13a) represents the occurrence of GenNeg on a DP which would have surfaced with ACC-case in an affirmative sentence; (13b) represents the occurrence of GenNeg on a DP which would have surfaced with NOM-case in an affirmative existential sentence in Babby's (1980) terminology:

(13)   *Schematic representation of the new proposal:*
        a.   Blocking of ACC-case licensing:

b. Blocking of NOM-case licensing in a negative
existential sentence: [5]

TenseP
pro   Tense'
        Tense   AspP
        [CASE]
                Asp   NegP
CASE-LICENSING
BLOCKED   **Neg**   VP
                                V   DP
                                          [CASE]

Why do some DPs escape the blocking by NEG and surface
with a structural case even in a negative sentence? I claim that DPs
with specific, individuated, presupposed interpretations raise out of
VP in overt syntax and by moving above NegP, they escape NEG's
blocking effects and surface with ACC or NOM-case.

We have seen in section 2 that there is a correlation between
the case on a DP and its interpretation: when it is marked with
GenNeg, it refers to a set of non-specific, unindividuated, non-
presupposed entities and when marked with a structural case, it
refers to a set of specific, individuated, presupposed entities.

It has been noted in the literature that a similar phenomenon is
exhibited by other languages as well: Diesing (1992) and Diesing
and Jelinek (1995) show that in languages like Turkish and
German, DPs with presupposed interpretations tend to appear
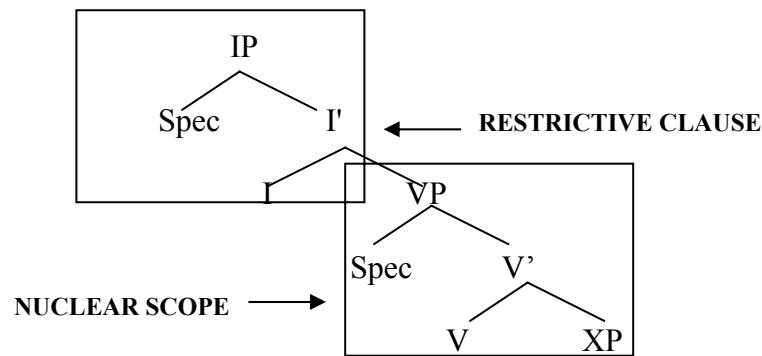outside VP. Based on this fact, Diesing proposes that in these

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[5] I hypothesize that in existential sentences, the sentence has either *pro* (Perlmutter and Moore 2001)
or a locative element filling the subject position, namely [Spec, TenseP] (Babby 2000).

languages, there is a *direct mapping* between syntax and semantics (14), which is executed via the process called *tree-splitting* (15):[6]

(14)   *The Mapping Hypothesis* (Diesing 1992:10):

> - Material from VP is mapped into the nuclear scope.
> - Material from IP is mapped into the restrictive clause.

(15)   *Tree-splitting* (Diesing 1992:9):

The Mapping Hypothesis (MH) predicts that if a DP is inside VP when the interpretatioin occurs, it will get bound by existential closure and hence will receive a non-specific, indefinite or existential interpretation; if a DP is outside VP, it will get bound by the universal quantifier and hence will receive a specific, definite or generic interpretation.
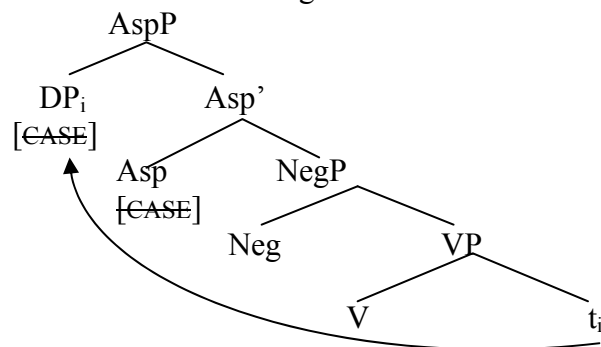
Application of the MH to the GenNeg explains the correlation between Case on a DP and interpretation in a negative sentence: if a DP does not raise out of VP when Case-licensing occurs, then NEG will block the Case-licensing by Aspect or Tense and the DP will be marked with GenNeg. Because this DP is inside the nuclear scope, it will receive a non-specific/existential interpretation. On

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[5] The underlying assumption behind the Mapping Hypothesis that a sentence can be semantically partitioned into three parts: (i) a quantifier, which takes scope over the entire sentence, (ii) the *restrictive clause,* which establishes the domain of *quantification*, and (ii) the *nuclear scope*, the second argument of the quantifier (see Heim 1982 for a detailed exposition of these concepts).
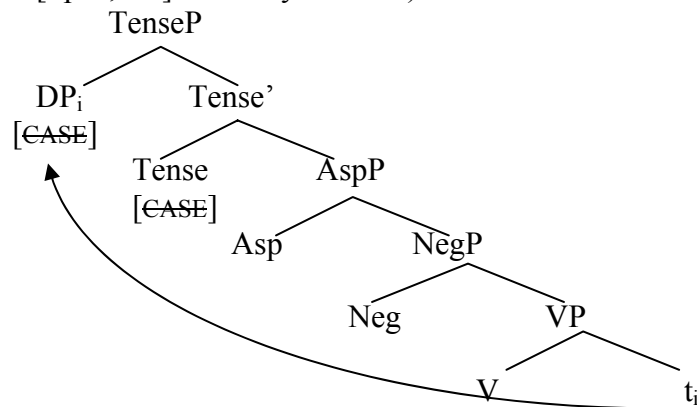
the other hand, if the DP raises out of VP, then it will receive a structural case, because it will be outside the blocking domain of NEG when Case-licensing occurs. Given the MH, this DP will be mapped into the restrictive clause, thereby receiving a specific/definite interpretation.

The structural case-licensing in a negative sentence under the new proposal is schematically represented in (16):

(16)   *Structural-case licensing on DPs in a negative sentence*
       a.   ACC-case licensing:

       b.   NOM-case licensing (I assume that the DP moves to [Spec, TP] to satisfy the EPP):

3.2 Explaining the Properties of the GenNeg in Russian
In this section, I return to the properties of the GenNeg outlined in section 2 and show that the proposed analysis can readily account for them.

First, under the proposed analysis, the reason why GenNeg cannot be licensed by constituent NEG is because constituent NEG behaves like an adverb rather than a functional head in that it adjoins to the phrase it negates (Embick and Noyer 2001). Hence it does not block the operation of Case-licensing heads and DPs under it surface with structural case. On the other hand, the reason why the negation must be clausemate is because in order to block the Case-licensing by Aspect or Tense, NEG must intervene between these heads and their target DPs; if NEG were in a different clause than the DP, this blocking effect would not arise.

Second, the correlation between GenNeg and impersonal agreement morphology on DP is explained as follows. The standard assumption is that NOM-case checking and agreement-feature checking go hand in hand. Therefore, if NOM-case checking is blocked, then agreement-feature checking will also be blocked. Alternatively, one can posit that in an existential sentence, the predicate agrees with the null subject *pro* (see fn. 5), which is presumably 3rd person, singular and neuter.

Third, the GenNeg *never* applies to DPs that receive an oblique case in an affirmative sentence, because the standard assumption is that oblique cases are licensed by the verb rather than a functional head. Since the verb is a lexical category, NEG does not block its oblique-case licensing.

Fourth, the reason for GenNeg targeting only THEME arguments except in the existential copula construction is that THEME arguments are base-generated inside VP and will be in the blocking domain of NEG when Case-licensing occurs.

Fifth, the Mapping Hypothesis explains why the GenNeg seems to apply optionally in non-existential sentences but obligatorily in the existential copular construction: in a non-existential sentence, the object of the verb can have either a

presupposed or non-presupposed interpretation and hence can bear either GenNeg or a structural case. In a negative existential sentence, however, the object invariably refers to a non-presupposed entity, suggesting that it is inside VP. In the proposed analysis, DPs that stay under NEG when Case-licensing occurs cannot receive a structural case. Consequently, the subject of a negative existential copular sentence surfaces with GenNeg instead of a structural case (see section 5 for further discussion of this phenomenon).

The last property of GenNeg was that DPs with GenNeg tend to refer to non-presupposed entities, while DPs with structural case tend to refer to presupposed entities. I have explained above that this follows from the Mapping Hypothesis.[7]

3.3 Summary
In this section, I have offered a new analysis of the GenNeg in Russian by utilizing the RM and the MH. I have argued that the GenNeg arises as a result of NEG blocking the operation of Case-licensing heads. I have shown that with a relatively simple mechanism, the proposed analysis can readily explain the properties of the GenNeg outlined in section 2.

4   Previous Analyses of the Genitive of Negation in Russian
In this section, I review some of the previous analyses of the GenNeg, which can be classified into three categories: (i) discourse-pragmatic accounts, (ii) Quantifier Phrase (QP) accounts and (iii) minimalist accounts.

4.1 Discourse-Pragmatic Accounts
Two important studies of the GenNeg from a discourse-pragmatic perspective are Babby 1980 and Gundel 1974. These studies are similar in that they both divide the sentence structure into two parts, namely Theme/Rheme and Topic/Comment, respectively, arriving

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[7] This fact seems to strongly suggest that as Bailyn (1997) argues, from the semantic point of view, the GenNeg is not optional.

at the same conclusion that a nominal that functions as the Theme or Topic of the sentence resists GenNeg-marking. Yet they have a slightly different way of engineering this idea: while Babby proposes that the Topic must escape from the scope of NEG via movement, Gundel contends that GenNeg can target any nominal *except* Topic, regardless of the location of this nominal in the sentence.

These discourse-driven approaches have contributed greatly to our understanding of GenNeg by offering the crucial insight that pragmatic factors may play an important role in the phenomenon. But these accounts are fairly descriptive. In this regard, I believe that the analysis put forth in this paper is much preferable, because it provides a formal account of the GenNeg while incorporating these authors' insights.

4.2 Quantifier Phrase (QP) Accounts

Two QP accounts that I would like to discuss are Pesetsky 1982 and Pereltsvaig 1998.

Pesetsky's analysis hypothesizes that GenNeg is licensed by the implicit quantifier which heads a nominal. Although it is considered the standard account of the GenNeg in the literature, this analysis does not capture the fact that the GenNeg is limited to sentential negation, nor does it capture the correlation between case on a DP and its interpretation; in fact, it incorrectly predicts that GenNeg marked DPs will always have partitive interpretations.

Departing from Pesetsky, Pereltsvaig claims that the quantifier inside a GenNeg-marked DP is a negative polarity item (NPI) with the [+Qu] feature. In so doing, she captures the connection between GEN-case marking on a DP and the presence of negation.

There is little doubt that Pereltsvaig's analysis is a much improved QP account, but it is still not completely satisfactory. One major problem is that it does not account for the Case-alternation facts. Another is that it posits a biconditional relationship between GenNeg-marking and NIP licensing. Consequently, it incorrectly predicts that every NPI will be marked

with GEN-case: as Borschev and Partee (2002, B&B) point out, some NPIs in Russian can surface not only with GEN-case but also with structural case. The relevant data are given in (17):

(17) a. **Nikogo**   tam   ne   bylo
          NI.who:GEN, M, SG   there   NE   was:**N, SG**
          'No one was there'
      b. **Nikto**   tam   ne   byl
          NI.who:NOM, M, SG   there   NE   was:**M, SG**
          'No one (none of them) was there'   (B&B 2002)

The correlation between the NOM-case marking on the NPI and its obligatory presupposed interpretation can be readily explained under the proposed account: *nikto* in (17b) surfaces with NOM-case instead of GEN-case precisely because it has a presupposed meaning, which drives the DP to raise out of VP. Another strength of the proposed system is that it does not preclude the possibility of *nikto* falling under the scope of NEG: in overt syntax, it may seem as if the NI-word *nikto* were outside the scope of NEG. But NEG is an operator, and hence in LF, it can raise above *nikto*, thereby taking wide scope.

4.3 Minimalist Accounts
Two most notable accounts of the GenNeg within the Minimalist Program (MP) are Bailyn 1997 and Brown 1999.

Bailyn claims that GEN-case is licensed by NEG, whose projection is located between VP and AspP. He assumes an earlier version of the MP, where Case-checking is done by specifier-head agreement. Hence, DPs must raise to [Spec, NegP] to get GEN-case. On the other hand, DPs receive a structural case by moving to the specifier position of the relevant functional head.

Bailyn's treatment of NEG as a GEN-case licenser has made a major impact on the study of the GenNeg, generating quite a few subsequent studies along similar lines. Yet, his assumption that GEN-case licensing occurs at [Spec, NegP] creates a rather serious

problem for DP interpretation: this is because under Bailyn's account, DPs with GenNeg are outside VP and hence cannot be interpreted existentially. As a way of resolving this problem, Bailyn claims that NegP is an extended VP and therefore existential closure occurs at NegP. But this is a stipulation rather than a solution. We can improve Bailyn's account by positing that DPs can get their Case features checked off even when they stay inside VP. This is in fact what the present analysis assumes adopting Chomsky 2000.

Brown (1999) offers a rather different minimalist account than Bailyn. She adopts Baker's (1988) Government Transparency Corollary, whose central idea is that Verb moves upward, stopping at each functional head and picking up features such as [Neg] and [Aspect]. In addition, she posits that Verbs are generated with features like $[+/-V^{max}]$ and DPs are generated with [Gen] or [Acc]. Under these assumptions, Brown proposes that the combination of [Neg] on NEG and $[+V^{max}]$ on Verb creates a checking domain for [Gen], whereas the combination of $[+ V^{max}]$, [+ Predicate] and [Aspect] creates a checking domain for [Acc]. When Verb head-adjoins to NEG, the Verb-NEG feature-complex creates the checking domain for [Gen]. Hence GEN-case is licensed at [Spec, NegP]. On the other hand, when the Verb-NEG complex adjoins to Aspect, it creates the checking domain for [Acc]. Hence, ACC-case is licensed at [Spec, AspP].

Brown's approach is highly elaborate and powerful. But it is questionable whether such an intricate system would be indeed necessary to account for the GenNeg phenomenon; the proposed system achieves the same effects without having to resort to such intricate machinery. Another problem with Brown's system is that as Borchev and Partee (2002) point out, it cannot readily explain the correlation between the case on a DP and its interpretation (see paradigm (17)). Under the proposed account, the interpretive differences between DPs bearing structural cases and those bearing GenNeg are readily explained, as shown above.

4.4 Summary

In this section, I have reviewed some of the previous studies of the GenNeg. I have shown that while incorporating the insights of the previous analyses, the proposed system provides a more elegant and fully explanatory account of the facts.

5   Additional Welcome Result of the Present Analysis

The proposed analysis has yet another important welcome result: it elucidates a long-standing problem of the GenNeg, namely the obligatory occurrence of GenNeg in existential sentences (Babyonyshev 1996, Borschev and Partee 2002).

I have mentioned above that the correlation between the case on a DP and its interpretation is not found in negative existential sentences: the THEME argument of the existential verb *must* bear GenNeg even if it refers to a unique individual like Masha, as shown in (18):

(18)   a.   netu   doma   **Maši**

  neg-be   home   **Masha:GEN**

  'Masha is not at home'

  b.   ***Maša**   netu   doma

  Masha:NOM neg-be   home

  (adapted from Babyonyshev 1996:181)

I would like to offer two possible approaches to this apparent conundrum. One approach is to adopt the view that existential sentences instantiate *thetic* statements, whose semantic structures are mono-partite in that they contain only new information (see, among others, Babby 1980, Sasse 1987, and von Fintel 1989 for definitions and characteristics of thetic statements).[8] On this view, the THEME argument of an existential verb is part of new information and hence must stay inside VP when the mapping

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[8] Babby (1980) posits that the LOCATION argument of an existential verb argument can be old information, as its typical occurrence in sentence-initial position suggests.

between syntax and semantics occurs. Recall that under the present analysis, DPs receive GenNeg if they are located inside VP or NEG's blocking domain when Case-licensing occurs. Hence, even highly definite and individuated DPs like proper names can receive GenNeg if they are below NegP. In an existential sentence, due to the peculiar semantics of the sentence, the subject DP will never raise out of VP (unless it is forced to driven by discourse-pragmatic movement like scrambling). It is therefore predicted that this DP will always surface with GenNeg.

Another possible line of approach to the obligatory occurrence of GenNeg in existential sentences is to implement Borschev and Partee's (2002) idea that the "Perspectival Center" of a sentence is always presupposed to exist and in an existential sentence, the LOCATION functions as the "Perspectival Center". Adapting Borschev and Partee's proposal slightly, we can assume that the THEME argument of an existential verb is *not* presupposed to exist, because what is presupposed to exist is the LOCATION. Due to its non-presuppositional interpretation, the THEME argument does not raise outside of VP and because NEG blocks NOM-case licensing from Tense, it surfaces with GenNeg.

6   Remaining Issues

This section touches on two remaining issues of the GenNeg: one issue concerns the typology of the GenNeg and the other a theoretical repercussion of the proposed analysis.

As well documented in the literature (e.g., Comrie and Corbett 1993), the GenNeg patterns quite differently across Slavic languages. In Polish, for example, the GenNeg is mandatory with direct objects, but not with subjects, as shown in (19). In Modern Serbo-Croatian, it seems that the GenNeg has disappeared, as shown in (20):[9]

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[9] Bailyn (1997) notes, citing Wayles Browne (personal communication), that in both Polish and Serbo-Croatian (in fact almost every Slavic language), GenNeg is obligatory in the existential construction (p.110).

(19)   Polish (from Bailyn 1997: (37), p.107)
        a. Jan   nie lubi   tych   ksiązek.
           Jan:**NOM**   **NEG**   likes   [those books]**GEN**
           'Jan doesn't like those books'
        b. *Jan   nie lubi   te   ksiązki
           Jan:**NOM**   **NEG**   likes   [those books]**ACC**

(20)   Serbo-Croatian (from Bailyn 1997: (38), p.107)
        a. *Jovan   ne   voli   tih   knjiga
            Jovan:**NOM**   **NEG** likes   [those books]**GEN**
        b. Jovan   ne   voli   te   knjige
            Jovan:**NOM**   **NEG** likes   [those books]**ACC**
            'Jan doesn't like those books'

These heterogeneous manifestations of the GenNeg across Slavic languages call for a thorough investigation involving a diachronic as well as synchronic analysis. I leave it for future research.

The other remaining issue has to do with my claim that functional heads can block the operation of other functional heads. This idea makes an interesting prediction that functional heads other than NEG such as Aspect and Mood will also generate blocking effects reminiscent of those instantiated by the GenNeg. What kind of functional heads can interact with what kind of functional heads and why? Is it parameterized across languages? I leave the answers to these questions for future research.[10]

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[10] There seems to be one seemingly unrelated phenomenon to which the present proposal might be applied. It is Case-stacking in Korean, where focus markers can be stacked on a lexical-case marker but *not* on a structural-case marker (see Schütze 2001 for the data and an interesting line of account).
In light of the proposed analysis, this may result from a Case-licensing head blocking the operation of the Focus-licensing functional head from above: when a DP has a structural case, focus feature licensing on it can be blocked by a Case-licenser which intervenes between this head and the target DP. When the DP bears a lexical-case, however, no such blocking effect results, because a lexical/oblique case comes from the verb, which, being a lexical head, does not block the operation of the focus-licensing head. I leave further development of this idea for future research.

7 Conclusion

In this paper, I have demonstrated that the apparently complicated phenomenon of the GenNeg in Russian can be explained most parsimoniously by the operation of theoretical tools that are now available in the literature such as the Relativized Minimality (Rizzi 1990) and the Mapping Hypothesis (Diesing 1992). I have argued that the GenNeg arises as a result of a functional head NEG blocking the Case-licensing by the relevant functional head from above. In addition, by resorting to a Diesing-Jelinek type semantically-driven movement, I have explained the correlation between case on DPs and their presupposed or non-presupposed interpretations.

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