

**Title:** Lexical-Semantic Factors in the Genitive of Negation  
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The Russian Genitive of Negation (GN) involves the alternation of Nominative or Accusative case with Genitive under negation under certain conditions. One influential approach unifies the construction via the Unaccusative Hypothesis (UNACC) (Chvany 1975, also Perlmutter, Pesetsky, Neidle, others), under which all “Subject” GN involves unaccusative verbs, hence all GN is Object GN. Babby (1980) argued that Subject GN happens in existential sentences; in (Babby 2001), he gave syntactic arguments against UNACC and offered a unified analysis of GN putting post-verbal subjects of existential sentences inside the VP but still analyzing them as subjects.

Our own work with Russian colleagues has built on Babby’s idea that Subject GN occurs in existential sentences. We have developed the semantics of GN to account for “decreased referentiality” of Genitive NPs, and for the similarities and differences between Subject GN and Object GN (Borschev, et al. 2008, Partee and Borschev 2004). In (Partee, et al. 2011) we analyzed the kinds of shifts in lexical verb meanings that facilitate the use of Genitive.

That work can strengthen Babby’s arguments against UNACC. We show pairs of syntactically similar unaccusative verbs that do and do not normally license GN, as in (1a–b). The verb *pojavit'sja* ‘appear’ is compatible with existential meaning, while the equally unaccusative verb *isčezat'* ‘disappear’ presupposes the prior existence of its argument and resists existential interpretation. We also show pairs of transitive verbs whose passives do and do not allow Subject GN, again for reasons traceable to their lexical semantics, and inconsistent with the predictions of UNACC. (2b) can be interpreted as an existential sentence and allows GN; (3b) cannot and does not. These findings support Babby’s main hypothesis over the UNACC hypothesis, although it is not clear that Babby’s own analysis of passives is compatible with it.

- (1) a. Na meste ožega puzyrja ne pojavilos'.  
on place burn-GEN blister-GEN.M.SG NEG appeared-REFL-N.SG  
‘On the place of the burn there didn’t appear a blister.’
- b. \*Na meste ožega puzyrja ne isčezlo.  
on place burn-GEN blister-GEN.M.SG NEG disappeared-N.SG  
(#On the place of the burn there didn’t disappear a blister.)
- (2) a. On ne podal **zajavlenija** o kraže.  
he NEG submit statement-GEN.N.SG about theft  
‘He didn’t submit a statement about the theft.’
- b. **Zajavlenija** o kraže ne **bylo** podano.  
statement-GEN.N.SG about theft NEG was-N.SG. submitted  
‘No statement about the theft was submitted.’
- (3) a. On ne osuždal **povedenija** molodyx xuliganov  
He NEG condemned behavior-GEN.N.SG young-gen thugs-GEN  
‘He didn’t condemn the behavior of the young thugs.’
- b. \***Povedenija** molodyx xuliganov ne osuždalos'.  
behavior-GEN.N.SG young-GEN thugs-GEN NEG condemned-REFL-N.SG  
(Intended meaning: ‘The behavior of the young thugs wasn’t condemned.’)

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