

## **Genitive Case: A Modal Account**

Olga Kagan

*The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

[olgamail@mscc.huji.ac.il](mailto:olgamail@mscc.huji.ac.il)

### 1. Introduction.

In this paper, I discuss the semantics of certain instances of non-canonical genitive Case in Russian. By non-canonical genitive Case I mean phenomena whereby an object of the verb can, often optionally, be assigned genitive Case, rather than accusative. In particular, I will discuss two phenomena: Genitive of Negation and Intensional Genitive. The paper is organized as follows. First, I will introduce the two phenomena. I will further demonstrate that numerous similarities hold between them and, therefore, a unifying account is preferable. Previously proposed analyses of non-canonical genitive Case will be briefly discussed. I will then propose a new direction for analyzing the phenomena in question. I will present part of my on-going research on the topic and argue that a modal analysis is needed in order to account for the alternation in Case. Finally, it will be demonstrated that the modal approach to the alternation is supported by striking similarities that hold between non-canonical genitive Case and subjunctive mood.

It is important to point out that the phenomena under discussion are associated with a considerable variation in native speakers' judgments. Examples that are provided in the paper and treated as grammatical have been accepted by at least several native speakers of Russian. In turn, a question mark suggests that a sentence is considered acceptable by some of my informants but not by all of them.

#### 1.1 Genitive of Negation

I will now turn to the discussion of the phenomena. Genitive of Negation is a well-documented phenomenon whereby a non-oblique internal argument of the verb, which is generally assigned accusative Case, as in (1a), can be optionally assigned genitive Case under negation, as is exemplified in (1b).

- 1 a. Ja pil vodu / \*vody  
 I drank water(acc) / (gen)  
 I drank water / I was drinking water.
- b. Ja ne pil vodu / vody.  
 I NEG drank water(acc)/(gen)  
 I didn't drink water.

The NP *voda* (water) in (1b) can appear either in the accusative or in the genitive Case. Importantly, in the corresponding affirmative clause in (1a), only accusative Case is possible. Thus, it is negation that licenses the assignment of the genitive Case. The same phenomenon is exemplified in (2).

- 2 a. Anna kupila knigi / \*knig.  
 Anna bought books(acc pl)/(gen pl)
- b. Anna ne kupila knigi.  
 Anna NEG bought books(acc pl)  
 Anna didn't buy (the) books.
- c. Anna ne kupila knjig.  
 Anna NEG bought books(gen pl)  
 Anna didn't buy (any) books. (adapted from Harves (2002b:38))

The object NP *knigi* (books) may be assigned either genitive or accusative Case. It can be seen from the translation that the choice of Case affects the interpretation of the sentence. I will discuss the semantic contribution of Case-marking after the second phenomenon is introduced.

### 1.2 Intensional Genitive.

I now turn to the second phenomenon that will be analyzed in this talk, Intensional Genitive. This is the phenomenon whereby certain opaque verbs license both genitive and accusative Case-marking on their direct objects. These verbs include verbs meaning “to wish”, “to want”, “to deserve”, “to ask for”, “to demand”, “to wait for” and others. The phenomenon is exemplified in (3).

3 a. On ždal čuda / Dimu.

He waited miracle(gen) / Dima(acc)

He was waiting for a miracle / for Dima.

b. On prosit vnimania / knigu.

he asks attention(gen) / book(acc)

He asks for attention / a book.

c. Ty zasluživaeš medali / medal'.

You deserve medal(gen) / (acc)

You deserve a medal.

In the sentence *He was waiting for a miracle*, the NP *a miracle* appears in the genitive Case. In *He was waiting for Dima*, *Dima* appears in the accusative Case. In (3c), *You deserve a medal*, *a medal* can appear in either accusative or genitive Case.

It can be seen that with opaque verbs, the genitive Case-assignment is not always optional. Rather, for some verb-object combinations, the genitive Case is obligatory, for some verb-object pairs, accusative is obligatory, and, finally, for some pairs, both genitive and accusative Case-assignment is possible, as in (3c). In such cases, there is a considerable amount of variation in native speakers' judgments as to which Case should be used.

## 2. Intensional Genitive and Genitive of Negation as a Single Phenomenon

Genitive of Negation is discussed in the literature much more often than Intensional Genitive and is normally given an analysis independently from the second phenomenon. However, following Neidle (1988), I believe that a unifying analysis should be proposed. This conclusion is drawn on the basis of numerous similarities that hold between the two phenomena.

Firstly, both phenomena constitute a genitive/accusative alternation in the Case of the object.

Secondly, the same semantic factors appear to affect the choice of Case within both phenomena. Before I turn to listing these factors, it is important to emphasize that all of them merely constitute *tendencies* in the choice of Case. None of them is sufficient to account for the genitive/accusative alternation, either under negation or following an opaque verb.

Case-assignment appears to be sensitive to the following properties:

i). Abstract / Concrete

Firstly, abstract nouns are more likely to be assigned Genitive Case than concrete ones. This tendency is demonstrated in (4) for Genitive of Negation and in (5-6) for objects of opaque verbs.

4 a. On ne našol ???sčast'je / sčast'ja.

he NEG found happiness(acc)/(gen)

He didn't find happiness.

b. On ne našol cvetok / ???cvetka.

he NEG found flower(acc sg)/(gen sg)

He didn't find a / the flower.

5 a. Dima ždjot čuda / \*čudo.

Dima waits miracle(gen sg)/(acc sg)

Dima is waiting for a miracle.

b. Dima ždjot posylku / \*posylki.

Dima waits parcel(acc sg)/(gen sg)

Dima is waiting for a parcel.

6 a. on iščet priključenij / ?priključenija

he seeks adventures(gen pl)/(acc pl)

He is seeking adventures.

b. on iščet knigi / \*knig.

he seeks books(acc pl)/(gen pl)

He is seeking books.

## ii). Number

In addition, genitive is more often assigned to plural NPs than to singular ones. Thus, Genitive of Negation is acceptable in (7a) but not in (7b). Similarly, most of my informants accept (8a), in which the object of the verb meaning *to wait* is plural, but not (8b), its singular counterpart.

7 a. Ja ne našol cvety / cvetov.

I NEG found flowers(acc pl)/(gen pl)

I didn't find (the) flowers.

b. Ja ne našol cvetok / ???cvetka.

I NEG found flower(acc sg)/(gen sg)

I didn't find a / the flower.

8 a. Ja xodila k portnixe, i teper' ždu novyx plat'ev.

I went to dressmaker and now wait new(gen pl) dresses(gen pl)

I went to a dressmaker and am now waiting for new dresses.

b. ??? Ja xodila k portnixe, i teper' ždu novogo plat'ja.

I went to dressmaker and now wait new(gen sg) dress(gen sg)

I went to a dressmaker and am now waiting for a new dress.

## iii). Definiteness

Thirdly, genitive is more likely to be assigned to indefinite NPs than to definite ones. The NP *novyje ukrašeniya* (new jewels) is more likely to appear in the genitive Case than *eti ukrašeniya* (these jewels) in (9) and (10).

9 a. Lena ne kupila eti ukrašeniya / ???etix ukrašenj

Lena NEG bought [these jewels](acc pl)/(gen pl)

Lena didn't buy these jewels.

b. Lena ne kupila novyje ukrašeniya / novyx ukrašenj.

Lena NEG bought [new jewels](acc pl)/(gen pl)

Lena didn't buy new jewels.

10 a. Lena potrebovala eti ukrašeniya / ???etix ukrašenj

Lena demanded [these jewels](acc pl)/(gen pl)

b. Lena potrebovala novyje ukrašenija / novyx ukrašenij.

Lena demanded [new jewels](acc pl)/(gen pl)

iv). Proper / Common

Among definite NPs, proper names are less likely to be marked genitive than NPs headed by common nouns. Thus, the proper name *Lena* in (11a) cannot appear in the genitive Case, in contrast to the definite NP *etot razgovor* (this talk) in (11b), which contains a demonstrative. A similar pattern holds in (12).

11 a. Petja ne pomnit Lenu / \*Leny.

Petja not remember Lena(acc)/(gen)

b. Petja ne pomnit etot razgovor / etogo razgovora.

Petja not remember [this talk](acc sg)/(gen sg)

Petja doesn't remember this talk.

12 a. Ivan ždjot Annu / \*Anny.

Ivan waits Anna(acc)/(gen)

Ivan is waiting for Anna.

b. Ivan ždjot ???etu vstreču / etoj vstreči.

Ivan waits this meeting(acc sg)/(gen sg)

Ivan is waiting for this meeting.

v). Specificity and Scope

In addition, genitive NPs are normally interpreted as non-specific and taking narrow scope. Their accusative counterparts may be interpreted as either specific or not.

13 a. Ja ne polučila otveta. (non-specific)

I NEG received answer(gen sg)

I didn't receive an answer.

b. Ja ne polučila otvet. (either specific or non-specific)

I NEG received answer(acc sg)

I didn't receive an answer.

- 14 a. Ja ždu otveta. (non-specific)  
 I wait answer(gen sg)  
 I am waiting for an answer.
- b. Ja ždu otvet.  
 I wait answer(acc sg)  
 I am waiting for an answer. (either specific or non-specific)

vi). Existential Commitment

Finally, Genitive NPs consistently lack existential commitment, in contrast to accusative objects. (15) reveals the contrast under negation.

- 15 a. Lena ne čítala Diminy knigi.  
 Lena not read [Dima's books](acc pl)  
 Lena hasn't read Dima's books / books by Dima.
- b. Lena ne čítala Diminyx knig.  
 Lena not read [Dima's books](gen pl)

If the object NP appears in the accusative Case, as in (15a), the sentence means that books by Dima do exist, but Lena has not read any of them. In contrast, if the NP is genitive, the possibility becomes salient that books by Dima do not exist and that is why, naturally, Lena has not read any such books. It should be emphasized that accusative NPs do not always carry existential commitment; this is only a tendency. Genitive objects, however, consistently lack such a commitment.

Let us now turn to complements of opaque verbs. The fact that accusative NPs are compatible with existential commitment is revealed in (12a), in which a proper name appears in the accusative Case. The sentences in (16), in turn, demonstrate the fact that genitive NPs do not carry a commitment to existence. (16a) means that the speaker will be waiting for the addressee's new stories *to be written*; namely, the object NP does not have a referent in the actual world. The sentence does not mean that the speaker is waiting to receive copies of already existing stories. In turn, (16b) can be uttered in the following context: the water is currently cold, and Lena has turned on a boiler in order to

heat it. Crucially, according to this reading, the NP *hot water* does not refer to an entity that exists in the actual world. Thus, existential commitment is absent.

16 a. Ja budu s neterpeniem ždat' vašix novyx rasskazov.

I will with impatience wait [your new stories](gen pl)

I will be waiting impatiently for your new stories.

b. Lena ždjot gorjačej vody.

Lena waits hot(gen) water(gen)

Lena is waiting for a hot water.

I have listed a number of properties that affect Case-assignment both to complements of opaque verbs and to objects under negation.

An additional similarity between Genitive of Negation and Intensional Genitive has to do with the fact that both phenomena are associated with a considerable amount of variation in native speakers' judgments. Thus, native speakers of Russian often disagree as to whether an NP can appear in the genitive Case in a given sentence or not. Such a variation does not normally characterize judgments related to Case-assignment. This factor is probably a by-product of the process of language change taking place in Russian, which is also mentioned by Neidle. She notes that, within both phenomena under discussion, accusative Case is used now with increasing frequency.

Finally, it appears that 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. Thus, in those languages, in which Genitive of Negation is obligatory, opaque verbs in question generally consistently take genitive objects. In those languages in which Genitive of Negation is optional as it is in Russian, opaque verbs also license both genitive and accusative objects. Finally, if Genitive of Negation is essentially absent in a language, Intensional Genitive is also absent, most intensional verbs normally taking accusative complements. There do exist certain exceptions to this correlation, however.



**Table 1**

<b>Language</b>	<b>Genitive of Negation</b>	<b>Intensional Genitive</b>
Old Church Slavonic	obligatory	obligatory
Lithuanian	obligatory	obligatory
Russian	optional	optional
Ukrainian	optional	optional
Belarusian	optional	optional
Latvian	optional	optional
Serbo-Croatian	essentially absent	essentially absent
Czech	essentially absent	essentially absent
Slovenian	obligatory	optional
Polish	obligatory	?obligatory / ?optional <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>For most of the relevant verbs that take an NP complement, only a genitive object is possible; however, some verbs do allow accusative Case-marking as well.

On the basis of this discussion I conclude that Genitive of Negation and Intensional Genitive constitute different instantiations of the same phenomenon, which I will refer to as Modal Genitive.

### 3. Previous Analyses.

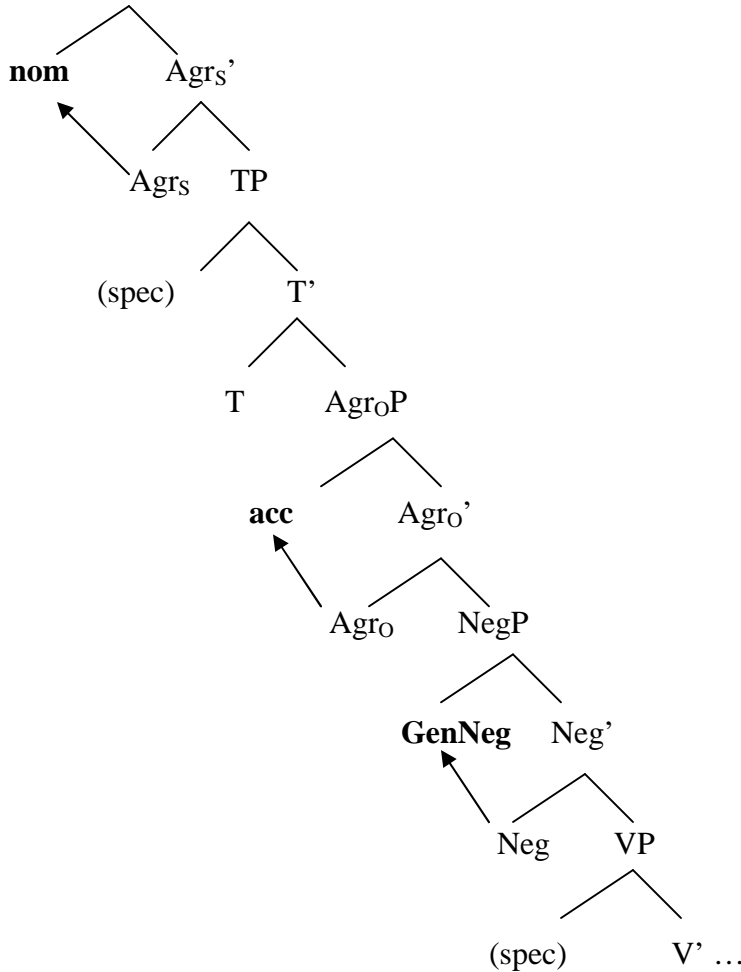
I now turn to a brief discussion of analyses that have been previously proposed to account for the genitive/accusative alternation. Most of these analyses are syntactic, focusing on the mechanism by which the genitive and accusative Case-features are checked. In addition, as stated above, Genitive of Negation is generally analyzed independently from Intensional Genitive.

#### 3.1 The Configurational Approach: Bailyn (1997).

For instance, Genitive of Negation is often accounted for within the framework of the configurational approach originally proposed by Bailyn (1997) and later adopted and developed by other researchers. According to this approach, the genitive and accusative Cases under negation are assigned, or checked, in different structural positions by different functional heads. Thus, accusative Case is checked by Agr<sub>O</sub>; whereas Genitive of negation is checked by Neg, which is the head of NegP (Negation Phrase), which is

projected immediately above VP. The Case-checking configurations are demonstrated in (17). (The tree is adapted from Bailyn in order to fit the Case-checking strategy.)

17. Agr<sub>S</sub>P



Importantly, this analysis accounts not only for the syntactic Case-checking mechanisms but also for certain semantic facts. Thus, Bailyn proposes that NPs that appear below the NegP projection are bound by existential closure, on the lines of Diesing (1992). As a result, genitive objects consistently get indefinite, non-specific, existential readings.

An important disadvantage of the configurational approach is the impossibility to provide a unifying account for Genitive of Negation and Intensional Genitive. According to this analysis, the licensing of the genitive Case under negation is dependent on the presence of the Neg head. Thus, the same Case cannot be available in an affirmative clause that

contains an opaque verb. However, as I hope to have demonstrated above, it is desirable to treat Genitive of Negation and Intensional Genitive as instantiations of a single phenomenon, which can be licensed in the absence of Neg(ation) projection.

### 3.2 The [+/-Q] Feature: Neidle (1988).

Neidle (1988), in contrast to other researchers, does treat Genitive of Negation and Intensional Genitive as the same phenomenon. She proposes that the choice of Case is determined by the [Quantifying] feature ([+/-Q]). The feature [+Q] is contributed to the VP node both by the negation operator and by opaque verbs, and it functions as a scope marker. This feature further spreads to the object NP if the latter appears within the scope of the operator. In this case, the object will be marked genitive. In contrast, the feature [+Q] will not spread to an NP that takes *wide* scope relative to negation or an opaque verb. Such an NP will appear in the accusative Case.

The fact that this approach allows for a unifying account of Genitive of Negation and Intensional Genitive is an important advantage of this analysis. However, it has two substantial shortcomings. Firstly, scope relations are not sufficient to account for the Case alternation in either of the two phenomena since accusative NPs can take both narrow and wide scope relative to negation or an opaque verb. Secondly, it is not perfectly clear why the [Quantifying] feature should be contributed by negation and opaque verbs but not by other quantificational operators, such as, for instance, the generic operator. An NP can appear either within or outside the scope of such an operator; still, genitive Case-assignment to objects is not licensed in generic and habitual sentences.

### 4. The Proposal.

The sensitivity of the discussed phenomena to various semantic factors suggests that Case-assignment is affected by the semantics of the NP. An important question that emerges at this stage is what these two environments (the environments created by the negative operator and by opaque verbs) have in common. What is the property that they share and that licenses the assignment of Modal Genitive? I propose that the relevant

property is intensionality of the complement position. Crucially, the complement position of both negated and opaque verbs is intensional. Only an NP that appears in such a position can be assigned Modal Genitive.

The fact that opaque verbs create an intensional environment is widely accepted. However, the fact that negation constitutes an intensional operator is more controversial, although such a claim has been made. For instance, Farkas (1985) states that negation creates an intensional context. I will now demonstrate that negation has at least two properties that characterize intensional operators, including opaque verbs.

Firstly, a sentence with an existential NP in an intensional position does not entail the existentially quantified sentence. Namely, such a true sentence with an existential NP need not have a referent in the actual world which makes it true. Compare (18a) and (b) below:

- 18 a. John found a unicorn.
- b. John is seeking a unicorn.
- c. John didn't find a unicorn.

The speaker who utters (18a) has to be committed that unicorns exist. The sentence entails that there exists a unicorn in the actual world. The case is different in (18b), which contains an opaque verb. The speaker of this sentence need not be committed that unicorns exist (it is possible that John, but not the speaker, believes in their existence). The complement of the opaque verb *seek* need not quantify over entities in the actual world. Crucially, (18c), which involves negation, patterns together with (b), not (18a). Thus, the truth of the sentence does not entail the existence of a unicorn in the actual world, and the speaker of this sentence need not therefore be committed that unicorns exist.

Another property that negation shares with other intensional operators is the fact that it licenses subjunctive mood. Farkas (1985) points out that the subjunctive is licensed in a certain type of intensional environments. For instance, in Romanian, it is acceptable in

sentences containing modal predicates (19a) and, importantly, following an opaque verb (19b). Crucially, subjunctive mood is licensed under negation as well, as demonstrated in (19c), which contains a subjunctive relative clause.

19 a. E posibil ca Ana să fie acasa.

Is possible that Ana subj be home

It is possible that Ana is at home.

(from Farkas (1985:81))

b. Vreau ca Ana să vină cu noi.

want(1<sup>st</sup> sg) that Ana subj comes with us

I want Ana to come with us.

(from Farkas (1985:80))

c. 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.

(from Farkas (1985:128))

It can be concluded that the object position both under negation and following an opaque verb is intensional. Zimmermann (1992), who discusses complements of opaque verbs, claims that an NP that appears in an intensional object position denotes a property, rather than an individual. A property can be formalized as a function from possible worlds to sets of individuals. I will adopt Zimmermann's analysis for opaque verbs, and, moreover, on the basis of the discussion above I assume that the same analysis can be extended to complement NPs under negation.

Turning back to the semantics of genitive complements, I propose that these NPs denote properties (see also Partee and Borschev (2004)); namely, functions from possible worlds to sets of individuals. Thus, Modal Genitive is assigned to property-denoting NPs, and it cannot be assigned to NPs that refer to or quantify over individuals. The semantics of (20), a negative sentence containing a genitive complement NP, is formalized in (20').

20. Dima ne našol dokumentov.

Dima NEG found documents(gen pl)

Dima didn't find (any) documents.



I propose that in Russian, Modal Genitive can be assigned only to those NPs that are ultimately interpreted as properties. Those NPs that come to be interpreted as instantiations of properties in a given world and, thus, denote individuals, rather than intensions, cannot appear in Modal Genitive and are assigned accusative Case instead.

The proposed analysis accounts for both the semantic properties of genitive complements and their distribution. I will begin with a brief discussion of the semantic features.

Firstly, it has been stated that genitive complements normally have narrow scope readings. This results straightforwardly from the proposed account. In order for an NP to get an intensional interpretation, it must appear within the scope of an intensional operator. I have also noted that genitive objects are interpreted as non-specific. This results from the fact that specific NPs normally denote individuals in the actual world, rather than properties. It has also been pointed out that genitive NPs are strongly associated with the absence of existential commitment. As suggested above, these NPs denote properties, functions from possible worlds to sets of individuals. In turn, the value of such a function in some possible worlds can be an empty set. The actual world could be one of these worlds; nothing in the semantics of Modal Genitive eliminates that option. In order for existential commitment to be present, one must use an NP that refers to an entity in the actual world, and this NP will appear in the accusative Case. Finally, many researchers note that genitive NPs tend to be indefinite. I believe that there is no incompatibility between Modal Genitive and definiteness per se. Rather, definite NPs normally carry existential presupposition. Since Modal Genitive is incompatible with existential commitment, accusative Case-assignment results. However, under negation, a definite NP can sometimes lose the presupposition of existence, and in that case, it can be assigned Modal Genitive. Thus, consider (22).

22. Petja ne pomnit etot razgovor / etogo razgovora.

Petja NEG remember [this talk](acc sg) /(gen sg)

Petja doesn't remember this talk.

The NP *this talk* can appear in the genitive Case, as long as the sentence does not carry a commitment that the talk in question actually took place. Thus, according to the genitive variant of (22) it is certainly possible that the talk did not take place and that is why Petja cannot remember it. This demonstrates that a definite NP can be assigned Modal genitive, but only as long as it lacks an existential presupposition.

Let us now turn to the distribution of genitive complements. I have accounted for the fact that these NPs are acceptable under negation and following opaque verbs since in both these environments, the complement position is intensional. I have also accounted for the fact that Modal Genitive is unavailable in a sentence that does not contain an intensional operator since in the absence of such an operator, an NP cannot get the necessary intensional reading. What remains unclear at this stage is why genitive complements are unacceptable in other intensional environments, such as counterfactual conditionals, generic sentences or even complement clauses of opaque verbs. Thus, if an opaque verb takes a clausal complement, an object NP within this clause cannot appear in the genitive Case, even though the same verb licenses genitive Case-assignment to its NP complement. (23) on the handout demonstrates the unacceptability of genitive Case-marking in the consequent of a counterfactual conditional (23a), the antecedent of a counterfactual conditional (23b) and a complement clause of an intensional verb (23c).

- 23 a. Esli by rusalki suščestvovali, Petja našol by  
 If subj mermaid(nom pl) exist(past) Petja find(past) subj  
rusalku / \*rusalki.  
 mermaid(acc sg)/(gen sg)  
 If mermaids existed, Petja would find a mermaid.
- b. Esli by Dima obratil na Lenu vnimanije / \*vnimanija, ona byla by rada.  
 if subj Dima turn(past) on Lena attention(acc)/(gen) she be(past) subj glad  
 If Dima paid attention to Lena, she would be glad.
- c. Dima xočet uvidet' čudo / \*čuda.  
 Dima wants see(inf) miracle(acc sg)/(gen sg)  
 Dima wants to see a miracle.



For instance, the NP *mermaid* in the consequent clause in (23a) does not carry existential commitment; it does not denote an individual in the actual world. Still, it is obligatorily accusative.

I propose that the reason for the unacceptability of genitive Case-assignment in (23) is the following. In all the exemplified environments, the complement position per se is not intensional, and an NP that appears in that position does not denote a property, but rather quantifies over individuals. The NPs lack existential commitment by virtue of the semantics of the clause as a whole. The clause appears within the scope of an intensional operator which influences its interpretation in the following way: The proposition denoted by the clause is not asserted to be true in the actual world. Rather, it is asserted to hold in a set of possible worlds which need not include the actual one, or it may be interpreted as a propositional concept, without a commitment that it is true in any given world. For instance, the consequent of a counterfactual conditional, as in (23a), is asserted to hold in a set of possible worlds in which the antecedent is true, which tends *not* to include the actual world. The complement NP that appears within such a clause denotes or quantifies over individuals. But, naturally, it denotes an individual *in the world in which the proposition is asserted to hold*. If the proposition is not asserted to be true in the actual world, the NP will not refer to or quantify over individuals in the actual world, and will therefore not carry existential commitment. However, there does exist a commitment that the NP has a referent in the world in which the proposition holds. Thus, consider the consequent clause in (23a). In those possible worlds in which the proposition *Petja find a mermaid* holds, the NP *mermaid* must have a referent. To sum up, in the environments discussed the complement NP refers to or quantifies over individuals, and the fact that it lacks existential commitment results from the semantics of the clause as a whole. In turn, Modal Genitive can only be assigned to property-denoting NPs that appear in intensional object positions.

##### 5. Subjunctive Mood.

I will now turn to a discussion of genitive Case and subjunctive mood.

The modal analysis of genitive complements is further supported by the similarities that can be observed between Modal Genitive Case and subjunctive mood. I will start with a brief discussion of the subjunctive and then turn to the similarities between the two phenomena.

### 5.1 The Semantics of Subjunctive Clauses

Subjunctive mood is exhibited in a variety of languages, including Romance, Germanic and Slavic languages. It has often been claimed to be acceptable in so-called *irrealis* contexts. Indeed, it is licensed in various *intensional* environments, as demonstrated in (19) above for Romanian. (24) contains examples from Russian, demonstrating that subjunctive mood is licensed in counterfactual conditionals, purpose clauses and complement clauses of some opaque verbs. Importantly, the subjunctive is accepted in the same environments in certain Romance languages as well.

- 24 a. Esli by Dima obratil na Lenu vnimanije / \*vnimanija, ona byla by rada.  
 if subj Dima turn(past) on Lena attention(acc)/(gen) she be(past) subj glad  
 If Dima paid attention to Lena, she would be glad.
- b. Lena kupila trenazor' čtoby ty zanimalas' sportom.  
 Lena bought trainer that-subj you engage sports  
 Lena bought a trainer in order for you to do some sports.
- c. Dima xočet, čtoby Lena prišla.  
 Dima want that-subj Lena come(past)  
 Dima wants Lena to come.

According to Farkas (2003), unless additional restrictions intervene, a subjunctive clause denotes a proposition that is neither asserted nor presupposed to be true in the actual world, nor in any other possible world that is salient in the discourse. If *proposition* is analyzed as a propositional concept, it follows that a subjunctive clause essentially denotes a propositional concept - with no commitment that the proposition in question is true in any given world. This account is set in the same terms as the analysis of Modal Genitive proposed above, the only difference resulting from the fact that the analysis of mood has to do with the semantics of clauses, whereas genitive Case has to do with the

semantics of NPs. Thus, a subjunctive clause is interpreted as a propositional concept, namely, a function from possible worlds to truth values, with no commitment that the proposition is true in the actual world, or any other given possible world. Similarly, a genitive complement denotes a function from possible worlds to sets of individuals, with no commitment that the NP has a referent in the actual world, or any other given possible world. The similarity becomes even more striking once subjunctive *relative* clauses are considered. Relative clauses denote properties, rather than propositions. On the basis of the analysis of the subjunctive formulated above, a subjunctive relative is expected to denote a function from possible worlds to sets of individuals that have the property in question, again, with no commitment that such individuals exist in any specific possible world. The denotation of subjunctive relative clauses is very similar to the denotation of genitive complements. I will now demonstrate that, indeed, Modal Genitive Case and subjunctive mood share various distributional and semantic properties.

## 5.2 Modal Genitive and Subjunctive Mood

The similarity between the two phenomena is revealed through a comparison of the contrasts in (25) and (26).

- 25 a. Ivan ne čuvstvoval, čo bylo xolodno  
 Ivan NEG felt that be(past) cold  
 Ivan didn't feel that it was cold.
- b. Ivan ne čuvstvoval, čtoby bylo xolodno  
 Ivan NEG felt that-subj be(past) cold
- 26 a. Ivan ne čuvstvoval xolod.  
 Ivan NEG felt cold(acc)  
 Ivan didn't feel the cold.
- b. Ivan ne čuvstvoval xoloda.  
 Ivan NEG felt cold(gen)

(25) exhibits the indicative/subjunctive contrast. *Ivan didn't feel that it was cold.* (25a), in which the complement clause is indicative, suggests that it was, in fact, cold, but Ivan did

not feel that. In turn, (25b) with a subjunctive complement clause, makes salient the possibility that it was not cold, and that is why Ivan did not feel cold. (It should be pointed out, however, that (25b) is somewhat colloquial and is considered acceptable not by all the speakers of Russian.) Interestingly, the same semantic contrast is present in (26), in which the accusative/genitive alternation is exhibited. Thus, (26a), in which the NP *cold* appears in the accusative Case, means that it was cold, but Ivan failed to feel that. In contrast, according to (26b), which contains a genitive complement, it is possible that it was not cold and therefore, naturally, Ivan did not feel cold.

I will now turn to a more detailed discussion of specific properties shared by Modal Genitive and subjunctive mood.

### 5.2.1 Distribution.

Firstly, the distribution of the two phenomena should be considered. The distribution of genitive complements and subjunctive clauses is not identical: subjunctive mood is licensed in numerous environments in which Modal Genitive cannot be assigned. This is not surprising given that Modal Genitive is sensitive to the intensionality of the complement position per se, whereas the subjunctive is sensitive to the intensionality of a clause as a whole. However, importantly, in all those environments in which Modal Genitive can be assigned, subjunctive mood is licensed as well. Thus, it is licensed both under negation and in clauses embedded under opaque verbs, as demonstrated in (27).

27 a. Ivan ne čuvstvoval, čtoby bylo xolodno

Ivan NEG felt that-subj be(past) cold

Ivan didn't feel that it was cold.

b. Dima xočet, čtoby Lena prišla.

Dima want that-subj Lena come(past)

Dima wants Lena to come.

It can be concluded that the set of environments in which Modal Genitive is acceptable constitutes a proper subset of those environments in which subjunctive mood is licensed. This is further revealed once the set of opaque verbs licensing the two phenomena is

considered. Not all opaque verbs allow for the assignment of Modal Genitive. The left column of Table 2 contains a list of verbs that can take genitive complements; the right column lists intensional verbs whose complement is obligatorily accusative.

**Table 2**

<b>Opaque Verbs that License Genitive Case-Assignment</b>	<b>Opaque Verbs that do not License Genitive Case-Assignment</b>
<i>xotet'</i> (want), <i>želat'</i> (wish), <i>žadždat'</i> (thirst for), <i>trebovat'</i> (demand), <i>prosit'</i> (ask for), <i>ždat'</i> (wait), <i>ožidat'</i> (wait, expect), <i>iskat'</i> (look for, seek), <i>izbegat'</i> (avoid), <i>zasluživat'</i> (deserve), <i>stoit'</i> (cost, be worth), <i>bojat'sja</i> (be afraid of)	<i>predvidet'</i> (foresee), <i>predskazat'</i> (foretell) <i>predstavljat'</i> (imagine), <i>risovat'</i> (paint), <i>izobrazat'</i> (picture), <i>napominat'</i> (remind, resemble), <i>planirovat'</i> (plan), <i>obeščat'</i> (promise) <b><i>razrešat'</i> (allow), <i>zaprješčat'</i> (prohibit), <i>predpočitat'</i> (prefer)</b>

Importantly, all those verbs that allow genitive complements, also license subjunctive mood – either in their complement clause or in a relative clause embedded under them. In turn, those opaque verbs that do not take genitive complements tend not to license subjunctive mood either, although several exceptions can be found.

In any event, a close look at opaque verbs supports the claim that Modal Genitive is licensed only in those environments in which subjunctive mood is acceptable.

### 5.2.2 Semantic Properties

Finally, I turn to semantic properties. In order to compare the semantics of the alternations in Case and mood, I will focus on subjunctive *relative* clauses since they are embedded under the NP projection. As a result, it becomes possible to compare genitive NPs to NPs modified by subjunctive relatives.

The genitive/accusative alternation and the subjunctive / indicative contrast exhibit similar patterns with respect to such properties as specificity, scope and existential

commitment. For reasons of lack of space I will not discuss each of these properties separately, focusing mainly on specificity.

It has been stated above that genitive complements normally get non-specific, narrow scope readings. In contrast, their accusative counterparts may be interpreted as either specific or not. This contrast is exemplified in (28), which has been discussed at the beginning of this paper.

28 a. Anna ne kupila knigi.

Anna NEG bought books(acc pl)

Anna didn't buy (the) books.

b. Anna ne kupila knjig.

Anna NEG bought books(gen pl)

Anna didn't buy (any) books. (adapted from Harves (2002b:38))

(28b) means roughly that Anna did not buy any books, whereas (28a) is likely to mean that Anna did not buy a specific set of books, although the specific reading is not obligatory.

Similarly, NPs modified by subjunctive relative clauses are interpreted as non-specific and take narrow scope relative to the licensing operator. In turn, NPs that contain indicative relatives are often ambiguous between a specific and a non-specific reading. Consider, for instance, (29).

29 a. Ja xoču pogovorit' s človekom, kotoryj xorošo znaet anglijskij.

I want talk(inf) with man that well knows English

I want to talk to a man that knows English well.

b. Ja xoču pogovorit' s človekom, kotoryj xorošo znal by anglijskij.

I want talk(inf) with man that well know(past) subj English

I want to talk to a man that knows English well.

(29a), which contains an indicative relative clause, can be interpreted in two ways. It can mean that the speaker has a specific person in mind who knows English well and to

whom she is willing to talk (this is the specific reading). Alternatively, the sentence can mean that the speaker wants to talk to *any* man who knows English well (because she wants to ask some question about English). However, (29b), in which the relative clause is subjunctive, can have only the second, non-specific reading.

It should be noted that, similarly, NPs modified by subjunctive relatives consistently take narrow scope and lack existential commitment, in contrast to their counterparts that contain indicative relatives.

The similarities between the genitive/accusative alternation on the one hand and the subjunctive/indicative contrast on the other further support the modal approach to genitive complements.

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