

Problem Set 3

Due Sunday, September 29, 23:59. Submit on LumiNUS > Files > Student Submission > PS3.

EL5101R students: There is a separate version of this problem set online, just for you.

Russian is a nominative/accusative language with case morphology. In negative sentences, some NPs have the option of being in *genitive* case.¹ Genitive NPs are in **bold**.

For example, the object 'letters' in the negative (1) can be *pis'ma* (accusative) or *pisem* (genitive). Without negation, though, the object must be accusative: see (2).

- (1) Ja ne polual { \checkmark pisma, \checkmark **pisem**}.
I.NOM not received letters.ACC letters.GEN
'I didn't receive letters.'
- (2) Ja polual { \checkmark pisma, ***pisem**}.
I.NOM received letters.ACC letters.GEN
'I received letters.'

The data below shows that some NPs in negative sentences can become genitive but some cannot. Consider the following data and answer the questions on the next page.

Notes on the data:

- Russian negative quantifiers cooccur with 'not' *ne*, which is why (3), (4), (5), (9) look like they have two negations. Don't worry about this.
- Russian verbs show ϕ -agreement, which is why some verbs look like they have different forms. Ignore this.
- INSTR in (4) is another case, *instrumental*.

- (3) a. Ni odna devuka ne poluala nae pismo.
not one girl.NOM not received our letter.ACC
'No girl received our letter.'
- b. *Ni **odnoj devuki** ne polualo nae pismo.
not one girl.GEN not received our letter.ACC
- (4) a. Ni odin gorod ne byl vzjat vragom.
not one city.NOM not PASSIVE.take enemy.INSTR
'No city was taken by the enemy.'
- b. \checkmark Ni **odnogo goroda** ne bylo vzjato vragom.
not one city.GEN not PASSIVE.take enemy.INSTR

¹Data here comes from *David Pesetsky's 1982 dissertation, Paths and Categories*, but don't look it up!

- (5) a. Ni odna gazeta ne byla poluena.
not one newspaper.NOM not PASSIVE.received
'No newspaper was received.'
- b. ✓ Ni **odnoj gazety** ne bylo polueno.
not one newspaper.GEN not PASSIVE.received
- (6) a. Zdes xoroie ljudi ne suestvujut.
here good people.NOM not exist
'Good people do not exist here.'
- b. ✓ Zdes **xoroix ljudej** ne suestvuet.
here good people.GEN not exist
- (7) a. Griby zdes ne rastut.
mushrooms.NOM here not grow
'Mushrooms do not grow here.'
- b. ✓ **Gribov** zdes ne rastet.
mushrooms.GEN here not grow
- (8) a. Otvet iz polka ne prisel.
answer.NOM from regiment not arrived
'An answer from the regiment did not arrive.'
- b. ✓ **Otveta iz polka** ne prilo.
answer.GEN from regiment not arrived
- (9) a. Ni odin rebenok ne prygnul.
not one child.NOM not jumped
'No child jumped.'
- b. *Ni **odnogo rebenka** ne prygnulo.
not one child.GEN not jumped
- (10) a. V pivbarax kulturnye ljudi ne pjut.
in beerhalls cultured people.NOM not drink
'Cultured people do not drink in beerhalls.'
- b. *V pivbarax **kulturnyx ljudej** ne pet.
in beerhalls cultured people.GEN not drink

In case you know Russian: answer this question based solely on the data here.

1. What is the generalization for which NPs can become genitive in negative sentences?
Make sure your generalization accounts for all the data above.
2. The verbs 'swim' and 'float' are the same in Russian: *plavat*. See (11a). Explain why *plavat* in (11b) must mean 'float' and cannot mean 'swim'.

- (11) a. V bassejne nikakoj rebenok ne plavaet.
in pool no child.NOM not ✓float/✓swim
'No child ✓floats/✓swims in the pool.'

- b. \checkmark V bassejne **nikakogo rebenka** ne plavaet.
 in pool no child.GEN not \checkmark float/*swim
 'No child \checkmark floats/*swims in the pool.'

3. Let's now adopt the following assumptions about Russian:

- Negation in Russian is a Neg head with a [Case:GEN] feature.
- Case-assignment in Russian is always *downwards*: from a c-commanding head with a [Case:...] feature to a c-commanded N with [uCase: ___].

Which of the following hypotheses is correct for Russian?

- Hypothesis 1: The Hierarchy of Projections is T > (Neg) > *v* > V.
- Hypothesis 2: The Hierarchy of Projections is T > *v* > (Neg) > V.

4. Use the lexical items below to build example (12), repeated from (7a). Give the tree and the sequence of Merge, Adjoin, Move_{phrase}, and Agree operations.

- (12) Griby zdes' ne rastut.
 mushrooms.NOM here not grow
 'Mushrooms do not grow here.'

Lexicon:

- [N, uCase: ___] 'mushrooms': *griby* if NOM, *gribov* if GEN
- [Adverb] *zdes'* 'here'
- [Neg, Case:GEN] *ne* 'not'
- [V, uN] *rastut/rastet* 'grow'
- [*v*] (unpronounced)
- [T, uN*, Case:NOM] (unpronounced)

Hint: This takes 7 steps.

(Adger has some discussion of "Locality of Matching" and "Intervention"; you can ignore that here.)

5. Explain how the derivation will differ for (13), the genitive of negation variant of (12), repeated from (7b).

- (13) **Gribov** zdes ne rastet.
 mushrooms.GEN here not grow