

NEGATED EXISTENTIALS IN BULGARIAN AND RUSSIAN: THE SYNTAX-MORPHOLOGY LINK

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As a point of departure I take Partee & Borschev's (2007) claim that existentials are exemplified in their best when negated. In this respect I look into the asymmetry between negated and assertive existential constructions in Russian (Ru) and Bulgarian (Bg). I further explore the feature valuation in negated existentials with respect to agreement and case in particular, and attempt a unified syntactic analysis thereof.

Consider the following 'assertive-negated' pairs:

- (1)
- a. V dome est' (*moi/*eti) deti. (Ru)
in house be_{AUX.DFLT} my/these children_{NOM}
Intended: 'There are children in the house.'
- b. V dome net (moix/etix) detej.
in house_{PREP} NEG-be_{DFLT.PRES} my/these_{GEN} children_{GEN}
Intended:~ 'There is no sign of existence of (my/these) children in the house.'
- (2)
- a. V kyštata ima deca(*ta). (Bg)
in house-the have_{AUX.DFLT.PRES} children-the
- b. V kyštata *(gi) njama decata.
in house-the CL_{3PL.ACC/GEN} NEG-have_{AUX.DFLT.PRES} children-the

Negated existentials in Ru (1b) and Bg (2b) arguably obviate Definiteness Effects (DE), the latter being at the heart of exploring existential constructions at least since Milsark's (1974) dissertation. Thus the argument in the scope of negation in (1b) is genitive-valued, while the definite DP in (2b) is obligatorily clitic-doubled. However, matters are more complicated and negation alone is not sufficient to explain the potential obviation of DE in these constructions. Thus in Bg (but not in Ru) there are instances of DE obviation even in assertive existentials:

- (3)
- a. Tezi magazini gi ima i v belite dyržavi (Bg; via google)
these shops CL_{3PL.ACC/GEN} have_{AUX.DFLT.PRES} and in white countries
'These shops are to be found in 'cultural' countries as well.'
- b. V magazina gi ima tezi biskviti/??biskvitite.
in shop CL_{3PL.ACC/GEN} have_{AUX.DFLT.PRES} these cookies/cookies-the
'They have these cookies in the shop.'

For the constructions in (1-3) we have to explain the correlation between default agreement (or 'defective T' on the lines of Chomsky 2001) and the lack of NOM (a morphological relation in my approach, a la Marantz 1991/2000; Bobaljik 2008, and relevant work within the framework of Distributed Morphology). Following Jakobson (1971/1936) and subsequent applications of Jakobson's approach towards Ru case (e.g. Bailyn 2004; Pesetsky 1982), I assume that Genitive in Ru is licensed by a silent Q-head which blocks agreement. My take on the matter includes extending this [Q] analysis to the phenomenon of clitic doubling in Bg 'definite' existentials. Thus I assume that this clitic doubling arises as the result of Q-feature probing for a KP complement (on a par with Ru Genitive), which leads to my proposal towards the syntactic unification of both phenomena. In this sense both pronominal clitic doubling and genitive m-case valuation are the result of post-syntactic readjustments of morphological feature matrices.

Further (corollary) implication of this line of reasoning is drawing a parallel between existentials and possessives (a relation also briefly referred to in Freeze 1992 in terms of locativity). Thus existentials (syntactically) coincide with possessives, which under my approach are explored as impersonal possessives with no [Spec, VoiceP] projected in the sense of Kratzer (1996). At least in Bg and Ru this relation seems to hold (cf. also Hartmann & Milicevic 2009 on Serbian *ima*-existentials which displays hybrid patterns between Ru *est'* and Bg *ima*).

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