

## FREESTANDING N-WORDS IN RUSSIAN: A SYNTACTIC ACCOUNT\*

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**Abstract:** This article provides a syntactic account of freestanding n-words in Russian. The analysis is based on the theory in Brown (1999), where Russian n-words are licensed by agreement with the sentential negation head. Under the proposed analysis, freestanding n-words are licensed by agreement with a phonologically null negative head. The article works out the details of this agreement process for both n-words licensed by sentential negation and freestanding n-words licensed by a phonologically null negative head. As a result, it provides an argument that the driving force of movement must lie in the moving element, the n-word.

### 0. Introduction.

This paper investigates n-words in Russian. The elements in question consist of two morphemes: the unit *ni-*, decomposable into the negation *ne* and a particle meaning ‘even’ (Haspelmath 1997, Watanabe 2004), and a wh-stem, as it is shown in (1) for the n-word *nikto*. Table I below gives an inventory of Russian n-words.

- (1)    n-       i       -kto  
         *NEG even who*

*Table I. Russian n-words*

	wh-word	n-word	approximate meaning
1	kto	<i>nikto</i>	<i>n-who</i>
2	čto	<i>ničto</i>	<i>n-what</i>
3	gde	<i>nigde</i>	<i>n-where</i>
4	kogda	<i>nikogda</i>	<i>n-when</i>
5	kak	<i>nikak</i>	<i>n-how</i>
6	kakoj	<i>nikakoj</i>	<i>n-what kind</i>
7	čej	<i>ničej</i>	<i>n-whose</i>
8	kuda	<i>nikuda</i>	<i>n-where to</i>
9	skol’ko	<i>niskol’ko</i>	<i>n-how many/much</i>
10	otkuda	<i>niotkuda</i>	<i>n-from where</i>

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Abbreviations are as follows. SN: sentential negation; NC: negative concord; DN: double negation; AI: absence of interaction; SC: small clause.

It has been pointed out in the literature that Russian n-words require clause-mate sentential negation (SN) to license them (Brown 1999, Pereltsvaig 2000, among others) (2a). When n-words occur as complements of prepositions, the order is often *ni*+P+*wh*, but still SN is required, as in (2b). Nevertheless, a careful look at data on Russian n-words suggests that SN is not always required, i.e. under some circumstances they can be freestanding (2c,d).

- (2) a. Ja *nikogo* \*(**ne**) znaju.  
       I no one NEG know  
       ‘I don’t know anybody.’
- b. Ja *ne* budu tam rabotat’ *ni* za *kakie* den’gi.  
       I NEG will there work n for what money  
       ‘I will not work there for any money.’
- c. (We planned a story for kids, but) *polučilas’* kniga dlja *nikogo*.  
       ... turned out book for n-who.ACC  
       ‘.... it turned to be a book for nobody (appeals to no audience).’
- d. Oni polčasa progovorili *ni* o čem.  
       They half an hour talked n about what. PREP  
       ‘They spent half an hour talking about nothing.’

The phenomenon of freestanding n-words has been noticed in the literature on other languages (e.g. Herburger 1998, 2001, 2003), but there have not been any detailed studies of freestanding n-words in Russian. Progovac’s (1994, 2000, 2005a, b) work on Serbian n-words provides very valuable insight, but does not straightforwardly extend to the full range of Russian data, as I will show below. In this paper, I establish a new generalization regarding where they occur in Russian and propose an account of the generalization. I assume that the elements in question are in fact not freestanding but licensed by a phonologically null negative head  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$ . This head differs from the SN head *ne* in its distribution and feature composition. I also examine the checking relation between n-words and negative elements and come to the conclusion that the driving force of movement in this relation is located in the moving element, the n-word.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 1 consists of a brief discussion of negative concord and double negation, some general information on Russian n-words as negative concord items, and on freestanding n-words in Russian. It ends with an empirical generalization that describes the distribution of freestanding n-words. In Section 2, I review some existing syntactic accounts of negative concord. Section 3 argues that freestanding n-words in Russian are in fact licensed by a phonologically null negative head and discusses properties of this head. In Section 4, I provide an explanation of the empirical generalization given in Section 1. To this end, I discuss some aspects of the structure of small clauses and PPs. Section 5 focuses on the checking relations between negative elements and n-words in Russian. Finally, in Section 6, two syntactic analyses of freestanding n-words in non-Slavic languages are summarized. These analyses also argue for a phonologically null negative head licensing freestanding n-words. The last section is the conclusion. Appendices A and B provide additional data.

## 1. Negative concord

### 1.1. A general introduction to negative concord

From the point of view of logic, two negatives in one clause lead to an affirmative interpretation, known in the literature as double negation (DN). Many natural languages, however, make use of an option not provided for by logic – negative concord (NC). NC is a situation where two negative items in the same clause lead to a negative interpretation.

The phenomenon of NC in different languages has been studied extensively (Jespersen 1917, Labov 1972, den Besten 1986, Haegeman and Zanuttini 1991, 1996, Laka 1990, Giannakidou 2000, 2002, Watanabe 2004, Progovac 2005a, b, Zeijlstra 2005, among many others). The lexicon of a negative concord language includes a class of items that depend on SN for the grammaticality of sentences containing them, negative concord items (NCIs). In their dependence on negation, NCIs are similar to NPIs. Although it is not quite clear what exactly distinguishes NCIs from NPIs (but see, for instance, Watanabe (2004) for a suggestion), it can be shown that items that depend on sentential negation fall into two groups with respect to several diagnostics. Watanabe (2004) lists the diagnostics (i) – (v), (i) – (iv) from Vallduvi (1994) and (v) from Giannakidou (2000). As Watanabe (2004) notes, Russian n-words show NCI behavior on these diagnostics:

(3) i. NCIs cannot appear in non-negative contexts, but NPIs can.

\*Pridët     li nikto?  
*Will.come Q n-who?*  
'Will anyone come?'

ii. NCIs but not NPIs can appear in preverbal subject position, not c-commanded by negation:

Nikto ne     pridët.  
*n-who NEG will.come*  
'Nobody will come.'

iii. NCIs but not NPIs can be modified by expressions like *almost*:

Počti nikto ne     rešil     zadaču.  
*Almost n-who NEG solved problem*  
'Almost nobody solved the problem.'

iv. NCIs but not NPIs are grammatical in elliptical answers:

- (Who will come?)  
- Nikto.  
  n-who  
'Nobody.'

v. An NCI cannot be licensed across an indicative clause boundary, but an NPI can.

\*Ja ne znala, čto nikto prišel.

*I NEG knew that n-who came*

Russian n-words are, then, NCIs and not NPIs.

In the rest of the article, I will differentiate between n-words and negative elements in Russian. Negative elements are items that carry independent negative meaning (Herburger 2001), such as SN. Russian n-words, on the other hand, are NCIs; they do not carry independent negative meaning. In the following examples, then, SN **ne** is a negative element and the NCIs *nikto*, *nikogda*, *nigde* are n-words. In (4a), the n-word is the subject, in (4b) it is the object, and in (4c) the n-words are adjuncts.

(4) a. Nikto **\*(ne)** popalsja.  
*n-who NEG got.caught*  
'Nobody got caught.'

b. Ja ničego **\*(ne)** vižu.  
*I n-what NEG see*  
'I do not see anything.'

c. Muzyka Betxovena nikogda/nidge **\*(ne)** ustareet.  
*Music Beethoven.Gen n-when/n-where NEG become old-fashioned*  
'Beethoven's music will never become old-fashioned'

Observe two features of (4a-c) that strongly indicate that Russian n-words do not have negative meaning. First, SN is absolutely obligatory; second, DN readings are unavailable. For example, (4a) cannot, under any circumstances, have the double negation meaning asserting that somebody got caught.

## 1.2 Freestanding n-words in Russian

Given the above discussion, it is a surprising fact that Russian n-words occur in certain environments without clausemate SN<sup>1</sup>. Freestanding n-words are those that occur in environments with the following property: if the sentence is negated, the meaning is DN, not NC. In other words, freestanding n-words do interact with negation, but differently from those in (4). These are the environments:

(5) predicates of copula sentences

a. Kto byl ničem, tot stanet vsem.  
*Who was n-what, that-person will.become everything*  
'He who was nothing will become everything'

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<sup>1</sup> There are other exceptional usages of *ni*-items that interact differently with negation and that are licensed by factors independent from the ones I am concerned with. I put them aside here, returning to them in APPENDIX A.

- b. Gripp – ničto po sravneniju so SPIDom  
*Flu n-what.NOM in comparison to AIDS*  
 ‘Flu is nothing compared to AIDS.’

(6) predicates of small clauses (SCs)

- Ja sčitaju tvoego brata nikem.  
*I consider your brother n-who.INSTR*  
 ‘I consider your brother a nobody’

(7) embedded in prepositional arguments or prepositional adjuncts.

- a. Ivan prevratil den’gi v ničto.  
*Ivan transformed money into n-what*  
 ‘Ivan turned money into nothing.’ (i.e., wasted the money)
- b. Ty javilas’ iz niotkuda i isčezla ty v nikuda  
*You came from n-where and disappeared you into n-where*  
 ‘You came from nowhere and disappeared into nowhere’

Negating the sentences in (5) – (7) with SN leads to DN readings. For example, if SN is added in (5a), as in (8) below, a big change of meaning will follow: (5a) can be seen as a promise of improvement of the status of the poor, non-influential class, whereas (8) can only be a promise that the already well-to-do will improve their status still further.

- (8) Kto ne byl ničem, tot stanet vsem.  
*Who NEG was n-what, that person will.become everything*  
 ‘He who was not nothing will become everything’ (i.e., people who already mattered will become everything.)

Russian examples of the kind (5) - (7) have not gone unnoticed. However, I am unaware of any detailed discussion of them. Brown (1999) only has a footnote saying that in some PPs Russian n-words seem to convey their own negative force, but this usage is limited to fixed expressions. Billings (1997) and Harves (1998) both claim that Russian n-words in PPs have completely lost their licensing requirements. Neither of these suggestions, however, provides an exhaustive treatment of freestanding n-words in Russian, for the following reasons. First, although some PPs that embed n-words may be set expressions, none of the examples in (5)-(7) are. Second, as we have seen in (5) - (7), complement of P is not the only environment where a freestanding n-word can occur in Russian. Together with this observation, the idea of complete loss of licensing requirements overgenerates. Consider (4) again. If it were true that Russian has two series of n-words, series<sup>1</sup> that has lost their licensing requirements and series<sup>2</sup> that has not, we would expect that n-words from series<sup>1</sup> are grammatical in (4) without SN, contrary to fact:

- (9) a. \*Nikto<sup>1</sup> popalsja.  
*n-who got.caught*

b. \*Ja ničego<sup>1</sup> vižu.  
*I n-what see*

c. \*Muzyka Betxovena      nikogda<sup>1</sup>/nidge<sup>1</sup> ustareet.  
*Music Beethoven.Gen n-when/n-where become old-fashioned*

It is thus reasonable to hold that both the n-words in (4) and in (5) – (7) have a licensing requirement. As the three environments in (5) – (7) can be reduced to two following arguments that copula sentences are derived from underlying small clauses and *be* is a raising verb (Pereltsvaig 2001), I propose the following empirical generalization about the distribution of freestanding n-words<sup>2</sup> (10):

(10) *Generalization*

Freestanding n-words occur in Russian in small clause predicates and as complements of prepositions.

The aim of this paper is to account for this generalization. The task is two-fold: (1) to characterize the licenser of freestanding n-words and explain what SCs and PPs have in common that makes this licenser available, (2) to characterize the mutual dependence of this licenser and n-words.

## 2. Existing syntactic accounts.

There are two kinds of syntactic approaches that can be called upon to explain the data in (5) – (7): Progovac's (1994, 2000) binding theory-based approach and Brown (1999)/Watanabe (2004)/Progovac's (2005a, b) checking theory-based approach. I will now briefly summarize them.

The binding-theoretic account concentrates on a parallelism between anaphora and n-word licensing. Generally, both reflexives and n-words require licensing by a c-commanding antecedent (Progovac 1994, 2000). As (11a) illustrates, the anaphor *himself* is licensed by the c-commanding antecedent *John*. When such a c-commanding antecedent is lacking, the sentence is ungrammatical (11b).

- (11) a. John<sub>i</sub> likes himself<sub>i</sub>.  
b. \*Himself likes John.

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<sup>2</sup> I only discuss cases where *nikto/ničto* have a full case paradigm, since lack of a full case paradigm may be taken as an indication we are dealing with a fixed expression (see Appendix B for evidence that *nikto/ničto* indeed decline in the cases under consideration). Also, I am only discussing cases where freestanding n-words yield DN readings in the presence of SN or constituent negation, the relevance of which will become obvious during the discussion in the text (see Appendix A for cases that do not conform to this criterion, hence are ignored during the discussion in the text).

Similarly, n-words in Serbo-Croatian need to be licensed by a c-commanding negation<sup>3</sup> (at some point in the derivation), as shown in (12) from Progovac (1994):

- (12) a. Mario \*(ne) vidi ni(t)koga.  
           *Mario NEG sees n-who.ACC*  
           ‘Mario cannot see anyone.’
- b. Ni(t)ko \*(ne) vidi Marija.  
           *N-who NEG sees Mario.ACC*  
           ‘Nobody can see Mario.’

Progovac observes that, although both n-words and reflexives require licensing by a c-commanding antecedent, there are contexts where this requirement is waived; moreover, these contexts are largely the same for reflexives and n-words. Progovac notes that, just like reflexives require a c-commanding antecedent when they reflexivize the predicate whose arguments they are, n-words require a c-commanding negation when they negativize (the event structure of) the predicate whose event they participate in. Participants of the event are arguments and adjuncts of time and place<sup>4</sup>. Progovac notes further that, when reflexives are used as non-arguments or arguments of non-reflexive predicates, they do not have to be bound. Reinhart and Reuland (1991) call this use of reflexives logophoric. One of their examples is the following:

- (13) The picture of himself that John saw in the post office was ugly.

Likewise, when n-words do not negativize the predicate, they do not require a c-commanding negation (14). Progovac (2000) thus extends the notion of logophoricity to freestanding uses of Serbian n-words.

- (14) On plače zbog ničega.  
       *He cries for n-what*  
       ‘He is crying for nothing.’

In (14), the n-word *ničega* is embedded in a PP adjunct of manner. Adjuncts of manner do not negativize the predicate and are predicted not to require a c-commanding negative. As (14) testifies, this is a correct prediction. However, if we look back at Russian (5) - (7), we will see that many freestanding n-words are not adjuncts (more on this below). The binding-theoretic account then does not directly extend to Russian. In her later work, Progovac (2005 a, b) adopts a checking theory-based approach, but the idea that this special use of n-words is restricted to certain adjuncts is preserved, as discussed below.

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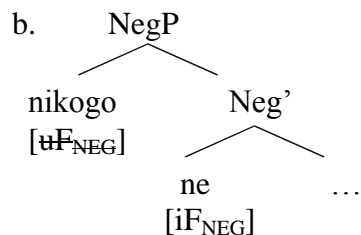
<sup>3</sup> Serbo-Croatian n-words are NCIs, parallel to Russian n-words (see Bošković (to appear 2) and references cited there).

<sup>4</sup> For arguments independent of NPI licensing that adjuncts of time and place pattern with arguments in some respects see Huang 1982, Murasugi 1991.

The checking theory-based approach to Russian negative constituents is worked out in Brown (1999), based on Chomsky (1992, 1994, 1995). According to Brown, the SN morpheme *ne* carries the interpretable negative feature  $iF_{NEG}$  and heads the NegP projection. N-words carry uninterpretable negative features  $uF_{NEG}$ . They raise overtly or covertly to Spec, NegP to check  $uF_{NEG}$  against the  $iF_{NEG}$  of *ne*, as in (15) (Brown 1999). Evidence for this movement comes from the fact that an n-word object is more natural in the pre-verbal position in neutral speech, although other objects in Russian are pronounced in the post-verbal position in neutral speech.

(15) a. Ja nikogo ne videl (?nikogo).

*I n-who NEG saw*  
 ‘I didn’t see anybody.’



The above also explains why there is one negation semantically in (15) although the n-word carries negative morphology: the negative morphology of the n-word does not correspond to an interpretable negative feature.

The approach in Brown (1999) accounts only for cases where the formal licenser is present, but it does not account for Russian freestanding n-words. To see why, consider again (5) - (7) above. Since in all of these examples SN is absent, the  $uF_{NEG}$  feature of n-words should remain unchecked, causing the derivation to crash. Contrary to this prediction, (5) - (7) are all perfectly grammatical.

Progovac (2005a, b) adopts a checking analysis along the lines of Brown (1999) and discusses some examples in Serbian similar to the Russian examples in (5) - (7). In her Serbo-Croatian data, n-words occur freestanding in adjuncts of manner and reason (16 a, b), but not of time and place (17 a, b), (18 a, b):

(16) a. Rekao je to sa n-i-malo zlobe.

*Said.3sg. AUX that with not-even-little malice*  
 ‘He said that with no malice.’

b. On plače zbog ničega.

*He cries for nothing*  
 ‘He is crying for nothing/without a reason.’

(17) a. \*On je zastao nijednog trenutka.

*He AUX paused no moment*

b. On nije zastao nijednog trenutka.

*He isn't paused no moment*  
 ‘He didn’t pause for a minute.’



(18) a. \*On je govorio ni na jednoj konferenciji  
*He AUX spoken no at one conference*

b. On nije govorio ni na jednoj konferenciji  
*He isn't spoken no at one conference*  
 'He spoke at no conference.'

Progovac (2005a, b) explains these data by assuming that only arguments and time/place adverbials are required to check features in the extended projections of the verb<sup>5</sup>. In her examples in (16), manner/reason adverbials are PPs ('*sa nimalo zlobe*', '*zbog ničega*'). Progovac keeps the assumption that all n-words in Serbian, no matter whether they are embedded in arguments or adjuncts, come with a  $uF_{NEG}$  feature. She then needs to explain where they check it in cases where the extended projections of the verb are not accessible. Her solution is to suggest that PPs can in principle embed their own Pol(arity)Ps, whose heads are covert. The label PolP is taken, not NegP, to accommodate different kinds of polarity information, and in this paper I adopt this terminology. It is these covert PolPs that check the  $uF_{NEG}$  feature of n-words located inside adjunct PPs of manner/reason, and the option of having their own PolP is in fact restricted to these PPs.

This proposal captures the Serbian data, but does not account for the Russian data. Examples (5) - (7) contain n-words in predicates, not adjuncts. (7b) contains place adverbials hence should also be ungrammatical if Progovac's (2005a, b) analysis is extended to Russian. Recall that place adverbials are argument-like for Progovac in the way they license their n-words, so they are expected to be grammatical only with SN. (7a) is also problematic for her account, since in this sentence the n-word is embedded in a PP argument. To reinforce the point that it is not the argument/adjunct distinction that matters for the possibility of freestanding n-words in Russian, I give the examples in (19).

(19) a. PP-complement to a verb:  
*Bol'sinstvo ljudej xvataetsja za šans obmenjat' vsë na ničto, na pustyšku.*  
*Majority people seize at chance trade everything on n-what, on trifle*  
 'Most people would seize the chance to trade everything for nothing, for a trifle.'

b. PP-complement to an adjective:  
*Každyj čto-to iz sebja predstavljaet, a ja poxož na ničto, kak-budto i net menja.*  
*Every something of self represents, but I am-like on n-what, as if NEG me*  
 'Everybody has some significance, only I resemble nothing, as if I did not exist.'

c. PP-adjunct:  
*Ty javilas' iz niotkuda i isčezla ty v nikuda*  
*You came from n-where and disappeared you into n-where*  
 'You came from nowhere and disappeared into nowhere'

<sup>5</sup> In a footnote, Progovac (2005a, b) outlines her earlier suggestion that adjuncts, especially manner adverbials, are extracausal, introduced by a conjunction phrase.

- d. Ivan nikak \*(ne) mo $\dot{z}$ et ob”jasnit’ etu teoremu.  
*Ivan n-how NE can explain this theorem*  
 ‘Ivan cannot explain this theorem in any manner.’
- e. On plačet bez pričiny.  
*He cries without reason.*  
 ‘He is crying for no reason.’

(19a, b, c) show freestanding n-words in argument and adjunct PPs, and (19d) shows that in Russian the manner adverb n-word which is not dominated by PP is not licensed without SN. As for a reason adverb n-word, Russian lacks it. One can construct *nizačem* ‘for n-reason’ and *nipočemu* ‘for n-reason’, but they would be occasional jokes at best. Instead of a reason adverb n-word, Russian uses the preposition *bez* ‘without’, as it is exemplified in (19e), which is a Russian translation for the Serbian (16b) above. It is, therefore, the PP/non-PP distinction that matters for Russian, not the argument/adjunct distinction. Notice, however, that I will still follow Progovac’s important insight and argue for the existence of null PolPs in the relevant cases.

Since none of the existing syntactic accounts of n-words extends to Russian freestanding n-words, I will propose a new account, taking (Brown 1999) as the point of departure. To use Brown’s theory, I first need to prove that there is in fact a licenser in (5) – (7), a task to which I turn now.

### 3. The licenser of freestanding n-words.

In this section, I provide empirical support for the claim that freestanding n-words in Russian are in fact licensed. I will still refer to them as freestanding for the rest of the paper, but only for ease of presentation. Recall that a central feature of Brown’s (1999) analysis of Russian n-words is the idea that they carry the  $uF_{NEG}$  feature that gets checked against the  $iF_{NEG}$  feature of SN in a Spec-Head configuration. This hypothesis explains why there is only one semantic negation in a sentence that contains SN and an n-word. It is expected, then, that if we add another word with a negative meaning to a sentence that contains the pair <SN, n-word>, a DN reading will result from the interaction of that word and SN. This is indeed true, as (20) illustrates.

- (20) a. Vanja ne kupil ničego. NC  
*Vanja NEG bought n-what*  
 ‘Vanja did not buy anything.’
- b. Nepravda, što Vanja ne kupil ničego. DN  
*Not-truth that Vanja NEG bought n-what*  
 ‘It is not true that Vanja did not buy anything.’

(20a) is a garden variety NC sentence, whereas the only reading of (20b) is DN. SN *ne* licenses the n-word and checks its  $uF_{NEG}$  feature. Then, the negative non-n-word noun *nepravda* ‘not-truth’ combines with *ne*, and the DN reading results.

Importantly, observe that DN readings also arise in sentences where SN is present but the n-word is freestanding. This situation is illustrated in (21), where (21a) is a non-negated sentence with a freestanding n-word, and in (21b) SN is added.

- (21) a. Vanja sčital Iru nikem. NC  
*Vanja considered Ira.ACC n-who.INSTR*  
 ‘Vanja considered Ira a nobody.’
- b. Vanja ne sčital Iru nikem.  
*Vanja NEG considered Ira.ACC n-who.INSTR*  
 ‘Vanja did not consider Ira a nobody.’ DN  
 ‘Vanja did not consider Ira anybody.’ NC

When SN is added to (21a), the resulting sentence (21b) becomes ambiguous between a DN and an NC reading. Brown’s (1999) theory does not predict this result. The fact that DN becomes a possible reading when SN is added strongly suggests that in (21b) on the DN reading there is another negative element present that remains phonetically unexpressed. As this element licenses n-words, I will refer to it as the  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  head.

Let us see how this hypothesis captures our data on freestanding n-words in Russian. First, consider how the parallelism between (20) and (21) is captured. (21a) will have the structure in (22). The small clause contains a Pol(arity)P headed by the  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  head. This head has an interpretable negative feature that licenses the n-word in the SC predicate, leading to NC on the level of the SC. (22) is then parallel to (20a), which is repeated below, in the relevant respect:

- (22) Vanja sčital Iru [<sub>PolP</sub>  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  [nikem]]. NC  
*Vanja considered Ira.ACC NEG n-who*  
 ‘Vanja considered Ira a nobody.’
- (20) a. Vanja [<sub>PolP</sub> **ne** [kupil ničego]]. NC  
*Vanja NEG bought n-what*  
 ‘Vanja did not buy anything.’

Lets us now consider how the parallelism between sentences with DN readings, (20b) and (21b) is captured. On the DN reading, (21b) must contain two semantically negative elements. One of them will be SN. The other one will be the  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  head that licenses the freestanding n-word as was shown in (22a). The structure of (21b) on the DN reading will be (23). It is parallel to (20b), repeated below.

- (23) Vanja [<sub>PolP</sub> **ne** sčital Iru [<sub>PolP</sub>  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  nikem.]] DN  
*Vanja NEG considered Ira.ACC NEG n-who*  
 ‘Vanja did not consider Ira a nobody.’
- (20) b. **Nepravda**, što Vanja **ne** kupil ničego. DN  
*Not-truth that Vanja NEG bought n-what*  
 ‘It is not true that Vanja did not buy anything.’

Finally, we need to see how the NC reading of (21b) is accounted for. On the NC reading, (21b) contains only one interpretable negative element. I argue that in this case, the small clause will contain no PolP and the n-word will be licensed by the matrix SN. (21b) is thus ambiguous between two structures, (24a), leading to NC and (24b), leading to DN.

- (24) a. NC: Vanja [<sub>PolP</sub> **ne** sčital Iru<sub>i</sub> [*nikem*]]  
 b. DN: Vanja [<sub>PolP</sub> **ne** sčital Iru<sub>i</sub> [<sub>PolP</sub> Ø<sub>NEG</sub> [*nikem*]]]

A welcome consequence of having two different negative heads that can license n-words is that we can now suggest an explanation for the well-known fact that freestanding n-words sometimes have a derogatory or mysterious shade of meaning, but the n-words licensed by SN never do. For illustration, consider the examples in (25). In (25a) the meaning of the n-word has a derogatory flavor: in Vanja's opinion, Ira is a worthless person. In (25b), the n-word carries a flavor of mystery: the points of departure and destination resist description. In (25c), the n-word is neutral, and the PP that contains it just means 'to an unidentified destination.'

- (25) a. Vanja sčital Iru nikem.  
*Vanja considered Ira.ACC n-who*  
 'Vanja considered Ira a nobody.'  
 b. Doroga vela iz niotkuda v nikuda.  
*Road led from n-whence to n-where*  
 'The road went from nowhere to nowhere.'  
 c. Sem'ju Prokof'evyx vyseljaut v nikuda.  
*Family.ACC Prokofiev.pl.GEN evict.pl into n-where*  
 'The Prokofiev family are being evicted and left with nowhere to go.'

It is reasonable to trace this difference in meaning to the different licensors. We have seen that the relationship of n-words with SN results in NC readings. Their relationship with Ø<sub>NEG</sub> must be a little more complicated. Suppose that Ø<sub>NEG</sub> licenses NC, just like SN, but in addition it introduces a restriction on the quantifier to entities that are identified<sup>6</sup>. As a consequence, in the discourse freestanding n-words can acquire a derogatory or mysterious flavor because the entities they refer to are not in the domain of identified objects. Hence we can get three situations depending on the effect of the context: derogatory shade of meaning, mysterious shade of meaning, or just a restriction to entities that are identified.

I suggest that this ability to restrict the quantifier to identified individuals is a lexical property of Ø<sub>NEG</sub> that the SN head *ne* does not have. It is crucially not a special property of n-words themselves<sup>7</sup>. This explains why we cannot use, for instance, (26) below without SN *ne*

<sup>6</sup> The idea that restriction to identified entities can be seen as restriction on the quantifier was suggested by Jon Gajewski (p.c)

<sup>7</sup> An anonymous JSL reviewer outlines an alternative, semantic analysis of Russian freestanding n-words as indiscriminative predicates. More precisely, the suggestion is that the n-words are all lexicalized as adjectives that contain lexical negation and carry a particular meaning similar to Horn's (2000) indiscriminative meaning. This meaning is paraphrased as 'just any', and for Russian freestanding n-words, 'ordinary', 'insignificant.' For SCs like (21), this analysis straightforwardly predicts both the meaning 'Vanja considered Ira an insignificant person' and the

and get a grammatical sentence meaning that the music will grow old at an unidentified point in time or space.

- (26) Muzyka Betxovena      nikogda/nigde      \*(ne)    ustareet.  
*Music    Beethoven.Gen   n-when/n-where    NEG   become old-fashioned*  
 ‘Beethoven’s music will (never) become old-fashioned (nowhere)’

To summarize the discussion so far, I have established the novel generalization that Russian freestanding n-words occur as predicates of SCs and complements of prepositions. Based on the availability of DN readings of sentences containing freestanding n-words and SN, I have argued that there is a phonologically null negative head in these constructions,  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$ , which licenses the freestanding n-words. I have also offered an account of the special shades of meaning of freestanding n-words. In the next section, I will discuss in detail some aspects of the structure of SCs and PPs to explain the generalization in (10).

#### 4. Explaining the empirical generalization: some crucial similarities and differences between small clauses and PPs.

In this section, I will offer an explanation for the generalization in (10). On the one hand, this generalization, together with the results of the previous section, suggests that SCs and PPs, being the only environments where freestanding n-words occur, share an important syntactic characteristic. This characteristic allows for the presence of the phonologically null negative head  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$ . I will argue that SCs and PPs are both clausal structures lacking a TP, which is crucial for the possibility of licensing certain freestanding n-words following proposals made in Zanuttini (1996) regarding TP and SN. On the other hand, there is a significant difference between PPs and SCs. Namely, as discussed in detail below, SCs allow for ambiguity between DN and NC readings in Russian, which PPs never do. I will explain this difference by showing that PPs are CPs, whereas SCs are smaller structures.

##### 4.1. Small clauses and PPs lack TP.

In this sub-section, I will argue that both small clauses and PPs are clausal structures lacking a TP. The argument is based on Baker’s (2003) formal theory of the distinctions between the lexical categories: N, V, A, P. According to Baker, P is not a lexical but a functional category. As for the lexical categories, only Vs universally take subjects directly, whereas Ns and As in all languages can form predicates with the help of the functional category Pred(ication) (see also Bowers 1993, 2001; for Russian and some other Slavic languages, see Bailyn 2002, 2001).

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possibility of DN reading, which is known to arise with lexical negation too. In PPs, freestanding n-words will on this analysis be indiscriminate predicates to implicit arguments. (7b) will, then, have a meaning along the following lines, ‘you came [from a place that is insignificant] and disappeared [into a place that is insignificant]’.

Such an analysis is not assumed here, for the following reasons, also noticed by the reviewer. First, an implicit argument will have to be postulated for the freestanding n-word complement of P. Second, the fact that the distribution of n-words is constrained will remain unexplained. Nevertheless, this analysis successfully covers the use of n-word adjectives *nikakoj* and *ničej*, which are not discussed in this paper. It is a possibility that the analysis should be applied (and restricted) to this case, an issue that I leave for future research.

Furthermore, Baker (2003) points out a related difference between Vs on the one hand and As and Ns on the other: in many languages only verbs can be inflected for tense. Note also that in semantics, it has been proposed that argument NPs may be involved in the temporal interpretation of a clause (Musan 1997). The conclusion that is important for this paper is that V, N, A are all compatible with tense (directly or with the help of Pred), and are then predicted to pattern together with respect to at least some phenomena. On the other hand, it can be inferred from Baker (2003) that P, being a functional and not a lexical category, is not compatible with Tense<sup>8</sup>. P is then predicted to pattern differently from N, V, A in phenomena where Tense is relevant. Interestingly, this is exactly the right cut regarding licensing freestanding n-words, which are possible with Ps but not with N, V, A.

As for SCs, they have been argued by a number of authors not to have Tense (Chomsky 1981, Bošković 1997, Guéron and Hoekstra 1995, Hoekstra 2004, among others). PPs and SCs, then, both clauses lack TP.

What exactly is the significance of this conclusion for the problem at hand? It allows for an understanding of the complementary distribution of SN and  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$ . Observe that  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  cannot license n-words in a finite clause, whereas SN can (27):

- (27) Ivan ne/\* $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  poceloval nikogo.  
 Ivan Neg/Neg kissed n-who.'  
 'Ivan did not kiss anyone.'

Zanuttini (1996) shows for Romance languages that SN can only occur in a sentence that has TP. She captures this generalization in terms of selection: being a head, Neg selects for a particular type of complement, TP. Zanuttini has two footnotes where she says that the term 'selection' is only used for convenience and speculates on the possible reasons for the special relation between SN and tense, semantic or phonological. While the suggestions might not be compelling, the empirical generalization that there exists a one-way correlation between SN and tense appears robust crosslinguistically and has been noted by a number of researchers (Zeijlstra 2005, Miotto 1998, among others). I will refer to this relation as co-occurrence, without making a claim as to its exact nature.

The Russian SN head *ne* appears in a clause headed by a verb, including infinitives, subjunctives and imperatives. Recent research shows that subjunctives and imperatives arguably have a TP (Tomaszewicz 2007, Khomitsevich 2007, Jensen 2003). As for infinitives, Stowell (1982) and Martin (2001) propose that control infinitives are specified for Tense, and ECM infinitives are not. Brecht (1974) observed that Russian, in contrast to English, is not able to license infinitival complements with a lexical subject. This difference between English and Russian was discussed in Lasnik (1998), who states that ECM is blocked in Russian infinitivals. Based on this conclusion, I assume that Russian lacks ECM infinitives, so all Russian infinitives are specified for Tense. This is, in fact, Lasnik's conclusion. Given the above discussion, it is reasonable to conclude that the Russian negative head *ne* co-occurs with TP.  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$ , then, appears where SN does not appear - in TP-less environments. In other words, the SN head *ne* co-occurs with a TP, and  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  is the elsewhere case.

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<sup>8</sup> For a very different view of tense in projections of various categories, see Pesetsky and Torrego (2004)

## 4.2. Small clauses.

Given the results of the preceding sub-section, the pre-n-word movement structure of an SC containing an n-word in Russian will be as in (28a) if the n-word is freestanding, and as in (28b) if the n-word is licensed by the matrix SN<sup>9</sup>.

$$(28) \text{ a. } [TP \dots [\text{PolP } \emptyset_{\text{NEG}} [\text{PredP } [\text{Pred}' \text{ t}_{\text{NP}} \emptyset_{\text{PRED}}[\text{NP/AP } \dots \text{n-word}]]]]]$$

$iF_{\text{NEG}}$ 
 $uF_{\text{NEG}}$

$$\text{b. } [\text{PolP } ne [\text{TP } \dots [\text{PredP } [\text{Pred}' \text{ t}_{\text{NP}} \emptyset_{\text{PRED}}[\text{NP/AP } \dots \text{n-word}]]]]]$$

$iF_{\text{NEG}}$ 
 $uF_{\text{NEG}}$

As n-words carry  $uF_{\text{NEG}}$  features, they will move to Spec, NegP to check them off, as in (29).

$$(29) \text{ a. } [TP \dots [\text{PolP } \text{n-word } \emptyset_{\text{NEG}} [\text{PredP } [\text{Pred}' \text{ t}_{\text{NP}} \emptyset_{\text{PRED}}[\text{NP/AP } \dots \text{t}_{\text{n-word}}]]]]]$$

$uF_{\text{NEG}}$ 
 $iF_{\text{NEG}}$

$$\text{b. } [\text{PolP } \text{n-word } ne [\text{TP } \dots [\text{PredP } [\text{Pred}' \text{ t}_{\text{NP}} \emptyset_{\text{PRED}}[\text{NP/AP } \dots \text{t}_{\text{n-word}}]]]]]$$

$uF_{\text{NEG}}$ 
 $iF_{\text{NEG}}$

In (28a)/(29a) the SC is a PolP. In (28b)/(29b) the SC is a PredP. If an SC with the structure in (28a)/(29a) is embedded in a negated clause, it will receive a DN interpretation. The reason for this is that in these cases, two negative elements are present. The first one is the  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  head in the SC, the second one is the SN head *ne* in the matrix clause. An SC with the structure (28b)/(29b) is only possible when it is embedded in a negated clause, and the only possible reading is NC because only one negative element is present - the SN head *ne*. Examples corresponding to these structures are given below in (28').

(28') a. (Despite his poor peasant background,) DN  
 Ivan **ne** byl *nikem*; naprotiv, ego vseгда uvažali.  
*Ivan NEG was n-who; on the contrary, him always respected*  
 'Ivan was not a nobody; on the contrary, he was always respected.'

b. (5<sup>th</sup>-year students took part in a play for elementary school kids. Pavel was Pinocchio, Irina was Pulcinella, Anna was the Fox, and Oksana was the Cat,)

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<sup>9</sup> Here and in the rest of the paper, I do not make a commitment as to what the exact full clause structure in Russian is, being explicit only about portions of the structure that are relevant to arguments. For instance, there will be structures in the text with only TP, but also with both AgrP and TP. This is done purely for convenience, and nothing in the paper depends on this choice.

Another position that will remain unspecified for ease of presentation is the landing site of the moved SC subject in complement SCs. It moves to a specifier of a verbal projection where it receives ACC case.

... a Ivan **ne** byl *nikem* – on vsjo fotografiroval NC  
*and Ivan NEG was n-who – he everything photographed*  
 ‘... and Ivan did not play anybody – he took pictures of everything.’

### 4.3. PPs

This sub-section discusses the structure of PPs to explain their ambivalent nature. On the one hand, PPs are similar to SCs in that they admit freestanding n-words, and I will argue that there is indeed a structural similarity between them. But on the other hand, PPs differ from SCs in that they are not ambiguous between NC and DN readings in negated sentences. A PP with an n-word in it can induce either an DN (30a) reading or an NC reading (30b) in Russian, but not both.

- (30) a. Krupnye predprijatija **ne** pojavljajutsja iz **niotkuda**. DN/\*NC  
*Large factories NEG appear from n-where*  
 ‘Large factories don’t come from nowhere.’
- b. Ivan **ne** govorit gadostej **ni** pro **kogo**. NC/\*DN  
*Ivan NEG says bad things n about who*  
 ‘Ivan does not say bad things about anybody.’

I discuss why this is the case, reducing the problem to Bošković’s (2007a) C-intervention effect, which does not arise in SCs.

In discussing the structure of PPs I will rely on two ideas. The first one is Bošković’s (2004a) argument that PPs must have clause-like structure since a number of syntactic processes apply both at the CP and the PP level in exactly the same way. Furthermore, the extended projection of a PP behaves like a CP for locality: movement is forced to pass through the edge of the extended PP similarly to the way it is forced to pass through Spec, CP as noted already in (Riemsdijk 1990). In other words, extended PP is a CP<sup>10</sup>. I continue to assume, as discussed above, that extended PPs can contain their own PolP headed by  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$ . Let me now review the relevant arguments for this problem and explain why I take them to apply to Russian.

Bošković (2004a) comes to the conclusion that in a Germanic PP, the complement of P can make two movement steps (for Case and object shift), and the P itself can make three<sup>11</sup>. All

<sup>10</sup> For rich functional structure of PPs, see also Koopman (1997), Noonan (2004), den Dikken (2006).

<sup>11</sup> For Bošković (2004a, b) the Case-checking position (the Spec of the appropriate AgrP) is not the final landing site of object shift (see also Holmberg, Platzack 1995 and Chomsky 1999). Bošković (2004b) argues that quantifiers quite generally cannot be floated in  $\theta$ -positions. This means that an object in the Case-checking position, Spec, AgrP, cannot float a Q in the base position, as shown in (i) for a PP:

(i) \* $[_{\text{AgrP}} \text{NP}_i [_{\text{PP}} \text{P Q } t_i]]$

The NPs that successfully float a Q move to a higher position, referred to as Spec, OP. Thus, the structure of a CP<sup>PP</sup> where a Q is floated must be (ii) where the position where the Q is floated is Spec, AgrP:

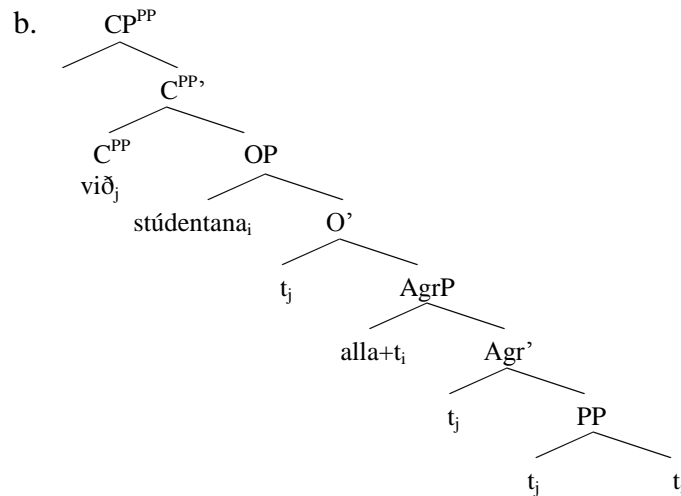
(ii)  $[_{\text{CP}}^{\text{PP}} \text{P}_j [_{\text{OP}} \text{NP}_i t_j [_{\text{AgrP}} \text{Q } t_i t_j [_{\text{PP}} t_i t_j ]]]]$



these movements are shown in Icelandic (31a) ((6), (31) in Bošković (2004a)), which involves object shift that strands a floating quantifier. (31b) gives the same structure in a tree form. The highest projection in the functional layer of PP is a CP.

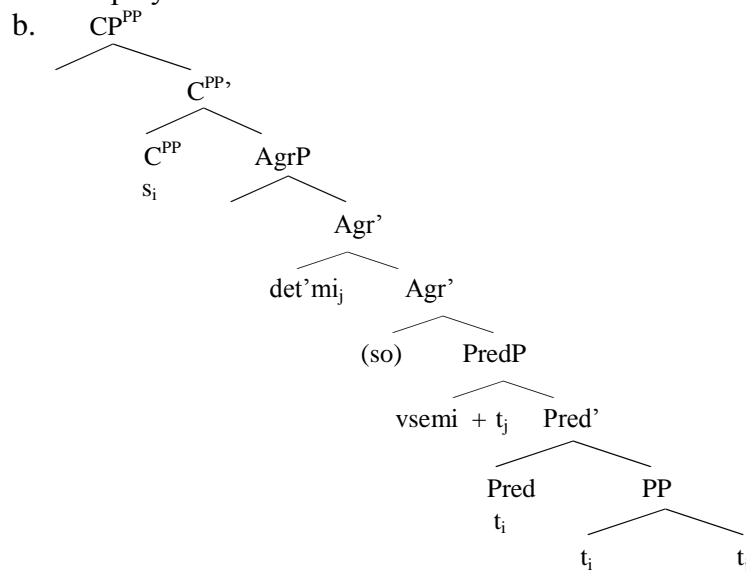
(31) Icelandic

a. ?Ég talaði (i gaer) [CP við<sub>j</sub> [OP stúdentana<sub>i</sub> t<sub>j</sub> [AgrP [alla t<sub>i</sub>] t<sub>j</sub> [PP t<sub>j</sub> t<sub>i</sub>]]]]  
*I talked yesterday with the-students all*



How good is this structure for the Russian PP? Although it may not be the exact equivalent of the Germanic Object Shift, Russian has a construction in which the complement of a preposition moves and floats a quantifier or a modifier; the preposition itself is doubled. In (32) I indicate the doubled copy with parentheses. On the assumption that PredP dominates PP, (32) can then be assigned a structure similar to (31):

(32) a. Ivan igral [CP<sup>PP</sup> s<sub>j</sub> det'mi<sub>i</sub> (so)<sub>j</sub> vsemi t<sub>i</sub> /(s)<sub>j</sub> etimi t<sub>i</sub> t<sub>j</sub> t<sub>j</sub> t<sub>i</sub>].  
*Ivan played with kids.INSTR with all.INSTR.PL/with these.INSTR*  
 'Ivan played with all the kids/ with these kids.'



Let us now turn to the question of empirical evidence for PolP in extended PPs in Russian. Recall that I argued for a PolP headed by  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  in SCs based on the empirical fact that SCs with n-word predicates are ambiguous between NC and DN readings when they are embedded in a negated clause. In contrast, some PPs with n-word complements lead to NC readings, while others lead to DN readings. This is illustrated in (33).

- (33) a. *Krupnye predprijatija ne pojavljajutsja iz niotkuda.* DN/\*NC  
*Large factories NEG appear from n-where*  
 ‘Large factories don’t come from nowhere.’
- b. *Ivan ne govorit gadostej ni pro kogo.* NC/\*DN  
*Ivan NEG says bad things n about who*  
 ‘Ivan does not say bad things about anybody.’

Note that the only interpretation (33a) has is that of DN, which entails the presence of two negative elements in this sentence. One is SN. There must then be another negative element in this sentence, which I argue is  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$ <sup>12</sup>. If  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  is indeed present in this extended PP, it must be the licenser of the n-word. In other words, the n-word in (33a) is freestanding. As we see from (34), where SN is omitted, this prediction is borne out:

- (34) *Krupnye predprijatija pojavljajutsja iz niotkuda.*  
*Large factories appear from n-where*  
 ‘Large factories come from nowhere.’

Given (33) and (34), I conclude that Russian extended PPs can indeed have a PolP headed by  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  embedded in them. (33a) has it and (33b) does not.

If Russian PPs can have a PolP, why are they not ambiguous between NC and DN readings<sup>13</sup>? I argue that the CP layer of the extended PP is the culprit. It is a well known fact that n-words cannot be licensed in Russian across a CP (35).

<sup>12</sup> In fact, when both the SN and the  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  head are present, NC and DN are not always the only possible readings. The third possible outcome is absence of interaction (AI) between the two negative elements *ne* and  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$ , as in (i):

- (i) *Nikomu ne sdelat’ salat iz ničego.*  
 N-who NEG make.INF salad from n-what  
 DN: “Salad can only be made from quality ingredients.”  
 \*NC: “Salad cannot be made from anything (i.e. is impossible to make).”  
 AI: “Salad from nothing is too difficult a dish to make (requires great mastery of cooking that the relevant individuals do not have).”

At this point, I do not have an explanation of the pattern of available readings in (i).

<sup>13</sup> In my judgment, the PP in (i) is ambiguous. The sentence in (i) can be used in two different situations, and these two uses correspond to the double negation and the negative concord reading:

- (i) *Dokladčik ne obraščaetsja ni k komu.*  
 Speaker NEG addresses n to who.DAT  
 DN: ‘The speaker does not direct his talk to nobody.’ (The thing is, he is almost blind and is not sure where the audience is).’

- (35) \*Ivan ne veril, što Marija ljubiti nikogo.  
*Ivan NEG believed that Maria loves n-who*  
 ‘Ivan did not believe that Maria loves nobody.’  
 \*[AgrSP ... [PolP *ne* [TP ... [CP ... [TP [PredP ... [VP *nikogo* ...

As extended PPs are CP-like and SCs are not<sup>14</sup>, I propose to take advantage of CP-intervention effects to explain the contrast between them following Bošković (2007a), who argues that CP intervention effects are actually C-intervention effects. To this end, observe that the availability of NC and DN readings for sentences containing n-words as complements of P appears linked to whether or not the *ni* morpheme is separated by P from the wh-stem. In example (36a), the order is P+*ni*+what, and DN is an available interpretation, whereas NC is not. In (36b), the order is *ni*+P+what, and NC is an available interpretation, whereas DN is not.

- (36) a. Vera ne sdelala salat iz ničego. \*NC, DN  
*Vera NEG made salad from n-what*  
 ‘Vera did not make a salad out of nothing.’  
 b. Vera ne sdelala salat ni iz čego. NC, \*DN  
*Vera NEG made salad n from what*  
 ‘Vera did not make a salad out of anything.’

As not all Russian n-words allow *ni*-movement and *ni*-movement does not always lead to NC readings, the generalization can be formulated as a one-way implication: if in the presence of SN the order is *ni* + P+ wh-stem, NC readings are preferred.

I will assume that *ni* lands in Spec, CP<sup>PP</sup> without going into details<sup>15</sup>. If *ni* raises all the way to Spec, CP<sup>PP</sup>, C<sup>PP</sup> is not an intervener anymore, and *ni* can be licensed by the matrix SN, as shown schematically in (37a). The resulting reading is NC. In contrast, n-words that are complements of Ps but are not divided by them into *ni* and a wh-stem can give rise to DN readings. In these cases, the whole n-word raises to Spec, PolP in the extended PP. As P itself raises, however, on the surface P precedes the whole n-word along the lines of (37b). Since the n-word in this case does not precede P, it clearly cannot be located in the CP projection of the CP<sup>PP</sup>. As a result, it cannot be licensed by the matrix negation, which explains why the NC reading is not available with the P n-word word order. (38) illustrates these two options.

- (37) a. [TP [PolP *ne* ... [CP<sup>PP</sup> *ni* [C' C<sup>PP</sup> [PredP Pred+P [PP tp t<sub>ni</sub>+wh]]]]]] NC  
 b. [TP [PolP *ne* ... [CP<sup>PP</sup> Pred+P+C<sup>PP</sup> [PolP *ni*+wh Ø<sub>NEG</sub> [PredP tp<sub>Pred+P</sub> [PP tp t<sub>ni+wh</sub>]]]]]] DN

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NC: ‘The speaker does not address anybody.’ (He just likes to listen to his own voice.)

So, apparently, PPs can in some cases exhibit NC/DN ambiguity, but the data are not completely clear.

<sup>14</sup> Given that the matrix verb exceptionally Case-marks the subject of the SC, the SC in fact cannot be a CP or this Case assignment would be blocked.

<sup>15</sup> In this paper, I do not discuss *ni*-movement separately from n-word movement, primarily because not all Russian n-words allow *ni*-movement. For a discussion of *ni*-movement in PPs that have n-word complements, see Billings (1997), Harves (1998).

- (38) a. Tebja ni s kem ne sputat'. NC  
*You n with who.INSTR NEG mistake*  
 'You cannot be mistaken for anybody.'
- b. Trener ne sdela čempiona iz nikogo. DN  
*coach NEG made champion from n-who.GEN*  
 'The coach has not made a champion out of a nobody (i.e. a person with apparently no noticeable talent).'

To sum up, I have accounted for the generalization in (10). Both PPs and SCs are TP-less clauses. Based on Zanuttini 's (1996) important empirical finding that SN co-occurs with TP, I described the distribution of SN and  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  as follows: SN co-occurs with TP, and  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  is the elsewhere case. I have also explained why PPs do not lead to NC/DN ambiguity in negated sentences the way SCs do. Nevertheless, we still have one important issue to address. As things now stand, nothing prevents  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  from occurring randomly in any PP or SC, making all of them ambiguous between a negated and a non-negated interpretation. This is clearly an undesirable situation. Observationally,  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  is dependent on n-words, and conversely, n-words of the freestanding variety depend on its presence. In the next section I address the issue of how to formalize this dependence and to integrate it into the general theory of n-word licensing in Russian.

## 5. Checking relations between n-words and negative elements in Russian.

In this section, I formally capture the dependence between n-words and negative elements in Russian. Because licensing of n-words is seen in this paper as c-command and feature checking, we could try to capture this dependence in the probe-goal theory (Chomsky 1999, 2006), or in its modification where it is the goal that carries an uninterpretable feature  $uF$ , as in Bošković (2007b) and Brown (1999). I will argue that only the latter option gives the correct result, and thereby provide an argument for the position that the driving force of movement lies in the moving element.

Formalizing the dependence between n-words and negative elements in Russian in the probe-goal framework of Chomsky (1999, 2006) gives problematic results because the driving force of movement is placed on the target in this system. I will only illustrate it for Chomsky (1999) here. In this theory, a  $uF$  of an element constitutes a probe that seeks a matching goal. Matching of a probe and a goal induces Agree, eliminating the  $uFs$  that activated the probe and goal. If the probe has an EPP-feature, the goal moves to the Spec position provided by this feature to satisfy the EPP. Applied to licensing n-words, in the pair <negative element, n-word>, the negative element will have to carry the feature  $uF_{\text{NEG}}$  (since otherwise it would not function as a probe and no Agree relation between the negative element and the n-word would be established) and (optionally) an EPP feature. The n-word will carry the  $iF_{\text{NEG}}$  feature, and some  $uF$  to render it active. We need to consider two cases: the pair <SN, n-word> and the pair < $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$ , n-word>.

Suppose first that the probe  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  has an  $uF_{\text{NEG}}$  feature but no EPP feature<sup>16</sup>. The goal n-word has the feature  $iF_{\text{NEG}}$  and some  $uF$  to make it active for Agree. The  $uF_{\text{NEG}}$  feature of the probe gets checked by Agree, with no movement. Consider a pair that consists of SN *ne* and an n-word. The system does not work anymore, for the following reason. SN *ne* appears in all negated sentences, independently of whether there is an n-word in the sentence or not. If the SN carried the  $uF_{\text{NEG}}$  feature, it would not be able to negate a sentence on its own. It would always need an n-word to Agree with. Facts show very clearly that this is not the case – SN can negate any sentence, and n-words are not required for grammaticality (39):

- (39) Ivan ne ljubit sobak.  
*Ivan NEG loves dogs*  
 ‘Ivan does not like dogs.’

It must, then, be that the negative element carries the  $iF_{\text{NEG}}$  feature, and the n-word carries the  $uF_{\text{NEG}}$  feature, as Brown (1999) suggests. However, in Chomsky’s system, there would be no Agree relation between SN and the n-word, since due to the lack of  $uF_{\text{NC}}$  SN would not function as a probe.

A theory of syntax where the uninterpretable feature driving movement is placed on the moving element, not the target, is worked out in Bošković (2007b). The main idea is that an element that carries  $uF(s)$  has to function as a probe (Epstein, Seely 2004). To check its  $uF(s)$ , the element in question needs to c-command a matching goal. If it is merged in a position from which it c-commands a goal, its  $uFs$  are checked in situ, by Agree. Alternatively, it is forced to move until it finds itself in the Spec of a matching goal. Finally, the  $iF$  of the goal is unaffected by checking, so multiple probes can check their  $uFs$  against the same goal.

Bošković’s (2007b) theory can indeed capture the checking relation between the negative elements and n-words in Russian. As before, we need to consider two situations:  $\langle \text{SN}, \text{n-word} \rangle$  and  $\langle \emptyset_{\text{NEG}}, \text{n-word} \rangle$ . SN can appear in any sentence, whether or not this sentence contains an n-word. Suppose that SN has an  $iF_{\text{NEG}}$  feature and no  $uFs$ , and an n-word has a  $uF_{\text{NEG}}$  and no other uninterpretable features. The  $uF_{\text{NEG}}$  of the n-word makes it function as a probe and move overtly to the Spec, PolP. Evidence for this analysis could be the tendency of Russian n-words to appear before negation (see ex.(15) above and Bošković (to appear), Brown 1999 for

<sup>16</sup> The absence of the EPP feature on the  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  head is an assumption made for simplicity’s sake. As the  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  head is phonologically null, it is not possible to test whether freestanding n-words undergo movement either in SCs or PPs in Russian. In SCs, there will be no detectable word order difference if n-words move (ia,b).

As for PPs, I adopt Bošković’s (2004a) theory of the structure of the Germanic PP and extend it to Russian. On this approach, there will be no detectable word order difference either. The object of the preposition makes two movement steps: for Case and to check its  $uF_{\text{NEG}}$  feature. The preposition itself makes three steps and ends up in a higher position than the object. The surface strings on the EPP and no EPP options are indistinguishable (ic,d):

- (i) a. No EPP: Vanja sčital Iru  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  nikem.  
 b. EPP: Vanja sčital Iru nikem<sub>i</sub>  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  t<sub>i</sub>.  
 c. No EPP: [<sub>CP</sub> [<sub>XP</sub> iz<sub>i</sub>] [<sub>PolP</sub>  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  [<sub>AgrP</sub> *niotkuda*<sub>j</sub> [<sub>Agr’</sub> t<sub>i</sub> [<sub>PP</sub> t<sub>i</sub> t<sub>j</sub>]]]]]  
 d. EPP: [<sub>CP</sub> [<sub>XP</sub> iz<sub>i</sub>] [<sub>PolP</sub> *niotkuda*<sub>j</sub>  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  [<sub>AgrP</sub> t<sub>j</sub> [<sub>Agr’</sub> t<sub>i</sub> [<sub>PP</sub> t<sub>i</sub> t<sub>j</sub>]]]]]

additional evidence for the movement in question). In Bošković's system, the generalization would be that n-words in Russian always move overtly to the Spec, PolP, but in some cases a lower copy may be chosen for pronunciation (as argued in Progovac 2005b for SC). In light of the above discussion, I will then adopt the moving-element-driven system.

Let us now consider the relation between  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  and n-words. In contrast to SN,  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  is dependent on n-words: freestanding n-words and  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  can appear only together. If  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  could stand alone, we would expect PPs without the n-words to be ambiguous between a negative and an affirmative interpretation, which is clearly the wrong prediction (40a, b):

- (40) a. Ivan uexal [v Sibir']  
*Ivan left into Siberia*  
 'Ivan left for Siberia.'
- b. \*Ivan uexal [ $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  v Sibir']  
*Ivan left neg into Siberia*  
 'Ivan has not left for Siberia (but he has left for someplace else).'

It must, then, be impossible for  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  to stand alone. Therefore, I suggest that, besides the  $iF_{\text{NEG}}$  necessary to license n-words,  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  possesses uninterpretable features  $uF_{\text{FOC(US)}}$  and  $uF_{\text{IND(EFINITE)}}$  that can only be checked against the corresponding interpretable features  $iF_{\text{FOC(US)}}$  and  $iF_{\text{IND(EFINITE)}}$  of n-words<sup>17</sup>. For ease of presentation, I will treat the FOC and IND as one feature,  $F_{\text{N(egative)C(oncord)}}$ . The feature composition of  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  and n-words is, then, as in (41):

<sup>17</sup> There exists morphological evidence for an  $iF_{\text{FOC}}$  feature in Russian n-words. Haspelmath (1997) analyzes the Russian *ni* morpheme as derived from the negation *ne* and the scalar particle *i* meaning 'even'. In Russian, this scalar particle is mostly found in set expressions like (ia), but in Serbo-Croatian it is productive (b) and enters into formation of n-words and NCIs (Bošković (to appear), Progovac (2005a, b), (2000), (1994), Partridge (1964)):

- (i) a. Russian  
 Ljubov' zla – poljubiš i kozla.  
*Love cruel will.love.2<sup>nd</sup>.sg even goat.masc*  
 'Love is so cruel that you'll fall in love even with a goat.' (roughly, 'We cannot choose who to fall in love with.')
- b. Serbo-Croatian (Partridge 1964)  
 Susreo sam i njega.  
 'I met even him.'

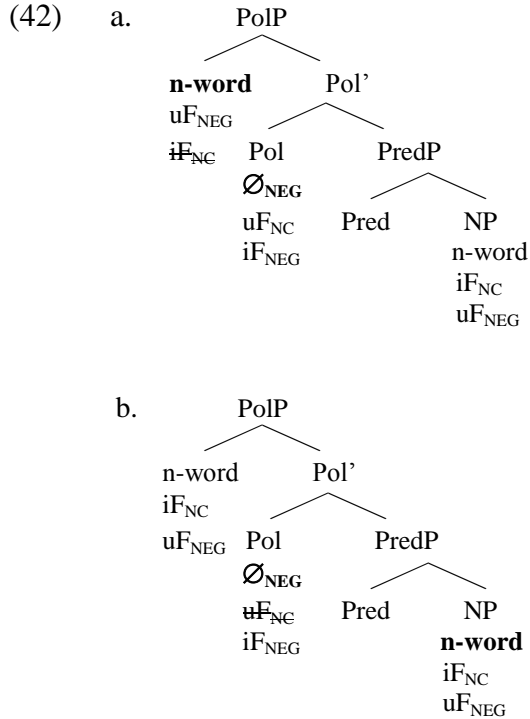
Next, the fact that the wh-stem of Russian n-words is identical to a bare interrogative constitutes evidence for their  $iF_{\text{IND}}$  feature. Haspelmath (1997) observes that in many Indo-European languages, including most Slavic languages, bare interrogatives can be used as indefinites. In Russian, bare interrogatives can be used as indefinites in colloquial speech (iia). There also exist several series of indefinites that are derived from bare interrogatives (iib):

- (ii) a. Esli kto budet menja iskat', ja v 340-om.  
*If who will me seek I in 340<sup>th</sup>*  
 'If anyone comes looking for me, I'm in room 340.'
- b. Kto-to razbil okno.  
*Who-to.IND broke window*  
 'Someone broke the window.'

- (41) a. N-word:  $uF_{NEG}$ ,  $iF_{NC}$   
 b.  $\emptyset_{NEG}$ :  $iF_{NEG}$ ,  $uF_{NC}$

Given the proposed feature composition of n-words and the  $\emptyset_{NEG}$  head, I suggest that the  $uF_{NC}$  of the  $\emptyset_{NEG}$  head acts as a probe, and the matching goal for it is the n-word. Conversely, the  $uF_{NEG}$  of an n-word acts as a probe too, and the matching goal for it is the  $\emptyset_{NEG}$  head. This means that the n-word and  $\emptyset_{NEG}$  need to c-command each other since they both have to function as probes. For Bošković, this is achieved after the n-word moves to Spec, PolP, since at this point the n-word and a projection of  $\emptyset_{NEG}$  (Pol'), which is  $\emptyset_{NEG}$  because its label is  $\emptyset_{NEG}$ , c-command each other (see Bošković 2007b) for technical details).

Alternatively, the desired result can be achieved in Bošković's (2007b) framework by assuming a copy theory of movement. The n-word enters the derivation earlier than  $\emptyset_{NEG}$  and starts moving until its topmost copy c-commands  $\emptyset_{NEG}$  and its  $uF_{NEG}$  can be checked. When  $\emptyset_{NEG}$  enters the structure, it already has a copy of the goal within PredP in its c-command domain and need not move: its  $uF_{NC}$  can then be checked in situ by Agree against the goal within PredP. Under this analysis, then, both copies of the n-word are engaged in checking relations. (42a) illustrates this process for the checking relation between the upstairs copy of the n-word and  $\emptyset_{NEG}$ ; (42b) illustrates this process for the downstairs copy of the n-word and  $\emptyset_{NEG}$ .



It seems reasonable to assume that the  $\emptyset_{NEG}$  head carries the uninterpretable counterparts of the n-word's focus and indefiniteness features:  $uF_{FOC}$  and  $uF_{IND}$ . The details of the analysis are actually not important here. The above features may turn out not to be the exact features involved in the relevant feature licensing. Still, the logic of the argumentation should be clear.  $\emptyset_{NEG}$  should have an uninterpretable feature  $uF$ , and n-words, and only n-words, should have its interpretable counterpart. This means only n-words should check the  $uF$  of  $\emptyset_{NEG}$ . While the  $uF$  feature may be related to focus and indefiniteness, I will leave its identity open for now and tentatively adopt (41) in the body of the text.

The SN head *ne*, then, differs from the  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  head in that *ne* has no uninterpretable features that need to be checked against an n-word.

This analysis correctly captures the observation that  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  is dependent on n-words and SN is not, and the unwanted ambiguity between negated and non-negated readings in PPs and SCs does not arise.

## 6. Freestanding n-words in non-Slavic languages.

In this section I will discuss freestanding n-words in two non-Slavic languages, Spanish and Greek, for which analyses have been proposed that are very similar in important respects to the analysis I advocate here for Russian.

Herburger (2001) analyzes freestanding n-words in Spanish. She seeks to explain two generalizations concerning NC. First, postverbal n-words require negation (43a), but pre-verbal ones do not (43b), a pattern which is not found in Russian. Second, NC can involve multiple n-words with no SN (43c), which is also unacceptable in Russian.

(43) a. No vino nadie.  
           *not came n-body*  
           ‘Nobody came.’

b. Nadie vino  
       *n-body came*  
       ‘Nobody came.’

c. Nadie miraba a nadie.  
       *n-body looked at n-body*  
       ‘Nobody looked at nobody.’

Herburger comes to the conclusion that Spanish n-words are ambiguous between negative element readings and NC readings.

An alternative analysis that does not postulate ambiguity but captures the data in (46) is offered in Bošković (2001). He is primarily interested in Italian, but his analysis extends to Spanish, because the basic NC paradigm in the two languages is the same. For Bošković (2001), SN in Spanish and Italian is always phonologically null and a PF affix on a negative constituent. SN is realized as *non/no* if no negative constituent merges with it and becomes its host. If, on the other hand, an n-word merges with it, it serves as its host and *non/no*-insertion is unnecessary. The phenomenon at hand is, then, parallel to *do*-support in English: just like *do* is inserted as last resort when Tense is not adjacent to a verb, *non/no* is inserted as last resort when the phonologically null SN is not adjacent to a negative element. Under this analysis, then, the n-words in (43b, c) are in fact not freestanding in the sense of the word used here, since they are indeed licensed by SN. Such examples are then irrelevant to our analysis.

Giannakidou (2007) discusses a Greek n-word that is similar to Spanish n-words in behavior and gives it a syntactic analysis strikingly parallel to the one I argue for in this paper. The item in question is *oute* (*kan*) ‘even’. Giannakidou argues that it is licensed syntactically, by agreement. In contrast to all other Greek n-words, it does not require SN in the preverbal position, as illustrated below.



- (44) a. KANENAN \*(dhen) proskalese o pritanis.  
*n-person not invited.3sg. the dean*  
 ‘The Dean invited nobody.’
- b. Oute (kan) ti Maria (dhen) proskalese o pritanis.  
*Even the Maria not invited.3sg. the dean*  
 ‘Not even Maria did the Dean invite.’
- c. O pritanis \*(dhen) proskalese oute (kan) ti Maria  
*the dean not invited.3sg. even the Maria*  
 ‘The Dean didn’t invite even Maria.’

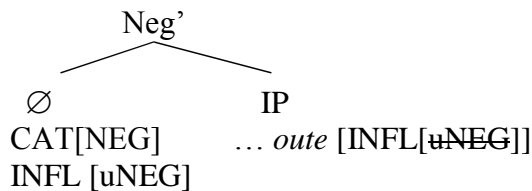
(44a) shows that the *KANENAN* ‘n-person’ requires SN in preverbal position. In contrast, *oute* (*kan*) can, but does not have to co-occur with SN in that position (44b). Finally, (44c) shows that *oute* (*kan*) requires SN when it occurs post-verbally.

To explain (44b), Giannakidou suggests that SN *dhen* has a covert counterpart whose feature composition is different from *dhen*. In particular, the feature composition of the two negative elements and *oute* (*kan*) is as follows:

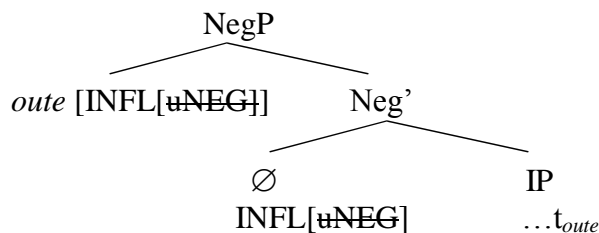
- (45) *Dhen*: categorial semantic feature NEG  
 $\emptyset$  : categorial feature NEG  
 inflectional uNEG  
*Oute* (*kan*): inflectional feature uNEG

$\emptyset$  and *oute* (*kan*), then, each check offending features of the other, similarly to the way the checking relation between the n-word and  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$  works in Russian in the current system. In the derivation of (44b), NegP headed by the phonologically null negation  $\emptyset$  is constructed in the following two stages:

- (46) Stage a:



Stage b:



In the first stage, the uNEG of *oute (kan)* is checked; in the second stage, the uNEG of  $\emptyset$  is checked, after movement of *oute (kan)* to Spec, NegP.

Although the exact implementation of the relevant feature-checking relations is different from the current theory, the basic idea is the same. The distribution of this  $\emptyset$  still has to be subject to the same kind of scrutiny as the distribution of the Russian  $\emptyset_{\text{NEG}}$ , the two clearly do not have the same distribution. I leave this for future research.

## Conclusion

In this paper, I presented data on freestanding n-words in Russian and gave a novel empirical generalization regarding their distribution. I explained this generalization by showing that Russian freestanding n-words are in fact not freestanding but licensed by a phonologically null negative head. On the theoretical side, I provided a detailed analysis of the checking relation between n-words and negative heads in Russian and came to the conclusion that the moving-element-driven system should be preferred to the target-driven system.

**APPENDIX A.** This Appendix contains examples of *ni*-indefinites standing on their own that do not fall under the generalization in (10). That generalization covers only the environments where both the n-words *nikto* and *ničto* have the full case paradigm (the lack of a full case paradigm can be taken to indicate that we are dealing with a fixed expression), and the presence of SN or constituent negation leads to DN readings (the relevance of this should be obvious from the discussion in the text). In the examples summarized in this appendix, the *ni*-indefinites are either n-words licensed by sentential negation and thus not freestanding, or are not n-words at all. These are the examples:

(i) The n-word *nikto* exists in several varieties in Russian. Besides the NCI *nikto*, we encounter *nikto* in argument positions meaning ‘a nobody’, jokingly or in the derogatory sense. In this usage, it is often degraded in oblique cases and does not yield DN readings with sentential negation. To see this the latter point, consider the following two examples provided by an anonymous JSL reviewer. Each of them is ambiguous between the NC reading (1,2a) and the absence of interaction (AI) reading ‘a nobody’ (1,2b), but crucially neither of them has the DN reading (1,2c).

- (1) Nikto ne mozet stat' velikim učēnym.  
*n-who NEG can become great scientist*  
 a. NC: ‘Nobody can become a great scientist.’  
 b. AI: ‘A nobody cannot become a great scientist.’  
 c. \*DN: ‘Somebody can become a great scientist.’

- (2) Nikomu ne stat' vsem.  
*n-who.INSTR NEG become everything*  
 a. NC: ‘No one can become everything.’  
 b. AI: ‘A nobody cannot become everything.’  
 c. \*DN: ‘Somebody can become everything.’

In this usage, then, the word *nikto* is not a freestanding n-word in the sense of this paper; in fact, it is not an n-word at all. It has undergone a lexicalization process and lost NCI properties.

An even more striking example of this lexicalization process is the philosophical *ničto* ('nothing') as the opposite of *bytije* ('being') (3a). When SN is present, the reading is AI (3b). Moreover, philosophical *Ničto* is indeclinable (3c).

- (3) a. Bog i mir mogut byt' ponjaty kak modusy Ničto  
*God and world can be understood as modes n-what.GEN*  
 'God and the world can be understood as modes of the Nothing.'
- b. Bog i mir ne mogut byt' ponjaty kak modusy Ničto  
*God and world NEG can be understood as modes n-what.GEN*  
 'God and the world cannot be understood as modes of the Nothing.' (seeing them as modes of Ničto will not help to understand the world.)
- e. \*Bog i mir ne mogut byt' ponjaty kak modusy Ničego.

For some speakers, the philosophical *Ničto* is also pronounced differently. The NPI *ničto* for these speakers is pronounced as [ništo], but the philosophical *Ničto* is pronounced as [ničto].

(ii) The adjective *nikakoj* exists in two varieties for many Russian speakers. Both are adjectives, but one is the n-word meaning 'of no kind', and the other one has no licensing requirements. This latter word means 'bad, mediocre', or 'wasted' (4).

- (4) Prjamo na trotuare valjaetsja nikakoj (vo vsej otnošenijax) student.  
*Straight on sidewalk lays n-what-kind in all respects student*  
 'Right on the sidewalk there lays a wasted student/ a student wasted in all respects.'

Another adjective similar to *nikakoj* is *ničej* 'n-whose'. The Russian lexicon appears to contain two lexical items *ničej*. One of them is an n-word, the other one – an adjective with no licensing requirements. This latter adjective means 'orphan', 'unowned', as in the following sentence about a Soviet-era monument made of valuable metals that is being raided, and there is no one to stop this because no person or organization owns it (5).

- (5) Ničej monument rasxiščajut.  
*N-whose monument raid.3<sup>rd</sup>.PL.*  
 'An unowned monument is being raided.'

(iii) Parallel to Spanish and Serbo-Croatian, n-words occur freestanding in elliptical answers (6a) and conjunctions (6b).

- (6) a. -(Who agreed to help you?)  
 - Nikto.  
*n-who*  
 'Noone.'

- b. Prišli pjat' devoček i bol'she nikto.  
*Came five girls and more n-who*  
 'There came five girls and nobody else.'

Such examples have been analyzed as involving ellipsis of material that contains regular SN, which means that we are clearly dealing here with n-words licensed by sentential negation.

In some cases, it is not obvious whether or not ellipsis is involved, but the conjunction containing a *ni*-indefinite is still acceptable, as in example (7a) provided by an anonymous JSL reviewer. (7b) is a set expression where conjunction may be the reason n-word *nigde* 'n-where' is grammatical. Observe that without the conjunction, *nigde* is not acceptable (7c). I leave (7) for future research.

- (7) a. On žil nigde i vezde.  
*He lived n-where and everywhere*  
 'He lived nowhere and everywhere.' (i.e., had no permanent address and kept moving around)
- b. Ty nikto, živeš' nigde, i imja tebe nikak.  
*You n-who live n-where and name you.DAT n-how*  
 'You are a nobody, you live nowhere, and you have no name.'
- c. \*On žil nigde.  
*He lived n-where*  
 'He lived nowhere.'

(iv) Another circumstance where n-words can be found alone is quoting somebody using n-words, as in the response sentence in the dialogue in (8). This usage of n-words can be clearly differentiated from the other ones only when the context is given.

- (8) – Začem tol'ko ego nanjali? On v fizike sovsem nikto.  
*Why even him hired? He in physics completely n-who.*  
 'Why did they hire him at all? He is a nobody in physics.'
- K tvoemu svedeniju, etot 'nikto' sdelal važnuju rabotu v oblasti fiziki tvërdogo tela.  
*To your information, this n-who did important work in sphere physics hard body*  
 'For your information, this 'nikto' has done important work in solid state physics.'

(v) Three verbs exceptionally take the n-word *ničto* as complement with or without SN; there seems to be no difference in meaning between the two options<sup>18</sup>, as, for example, in (9):

<sup>18</sup> An anonymous JSL reviewer point out that there is a difference in meaning between the negated and non-negated version of (5), namely, that only in the negated version the negotiations may still be in progress. To illustrate, the reviewer points out the following contrast:

- (9) Peregovory (ne) zakončilis'/okončilis'/zaveršilis' ničem.  
*Negotiations NEG ended n-what.INSTR*  
 'Negotiations ended in nothing (i.e. no significant result was achieved, or no result was achieved).'

More generally, other Russian verbs that take true INSTR complements do not license freestanding n-words in their complement position, it is not clear what is responsible for the difference between verbs taking INSTR complements<sup>19</sup>. Note also that the presence of *ne* in (5) does not affect the meaning of the example, in contrast to the examples discussed in the text.

**APPENDIX B.** In this Appendix, I show that freestanding *nikto* and *ničto* have the full case paradigm. This fact indicates that we are not dealing with fixed expressions.

NOM.: Gripp – ničto po sravneniju so SPIDom  
*Flu n-what.NOM in comparison to AIDS*  
 'Flu is nothing compared to AIDS.'

Ivan zdes' nikto.  
*Ivan here n-who.NOM.*  
 'Ivan is a nobody here.' (i.e. an insignificant person)

GEN: Bukval'no iz ničego polučilsja xorošij salat.  
*Literally out n-what.GEN turned out good salad*  
 'A good salad has been made out of nothing.'

- 
- (i) a. Peregovory poka eščë ne zakončilis' ničem.  
*Negotiations still NEG ended n-what.INSTR*  
 'The negotiations have not ended in anything, so far.'

b.\* Peregovory poka eščë zakončilis' ničem.

I am grateful to the reviewer for bringing these important observations to my attention. I would like to point out, however, that in my judgment and in those of my consultants, (5) can be used both with and without negation in a situation where the negotiations are over and no desirable results have been achieved:

- (ii) Peregovory opjat' (ne) zakončilis' ničem.  
*Negotiations again NEG ended n-what.INSTR*  
 'The negotiations have ended in nothing again.'

I would like to return to these contrasts in further research.

<sup>19</sup> In my data, out of 49 verbs taking true INSTR complements, only these 3 verbs can take n-word complements without sentential negation. 4 more verbs can take INSTR n-word complements without sentential negation either marginally, or for some speakers but not for others. Wherever a freestanding n-word in the INSTR case is acceptable, it is not a true complement but a small clause predicate.

Xorošij trener možet vyrastit' čempiona iz nikogo.

*Good coach can grow champion from n-who.GEN*

“A good coach can train a nobody (i.e. a person with apparently no particular talent) into a champion.”

ACC: Bol'sinstvo ljudej xvataetsja za šans obmenjat' vsë na ničto, na pustyšku.

*Majority people seize at chance trade everything on n-thing.ACC, on trifle*

“Most people would seize the chance to trade everything for nothing, for a trifle.”

(We planned a story for kids, but) polučilas' kniga dlja nikogo.

*... turned out book for n-who.ACC*

‘.... it turned to be a book for nobody (appeals to no audience).’

INSTR: Ja sčitaju tvoego brata nikem/ničem.

*I consider your brother n-who.INSTR/n-what.INSTR*

‘I consider your brother a nobody/nothing.’

DAT: Dokladčik obraščaetsja ni k komu.

*Speaker talks n to who.DAT*

‘The speaker directs his talk to nobody (i.e. does not look at the audience).’

PREP: Oni polčasa progovorili ni o čëm.

*They half an hour talked n about what. PREP*

‘They spent half an hour talking about nothing.’

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