Backward Negative Concord in Russian

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1 Background. Russian negative concord items typically need to be licensed by a clausemate negation. However, some exceptions have been discussed in the literature. Independently, Minor (2013), Lyutikova & Tatevosov (2020) discuss object control structures in which the object of the matrix clause can be an NCI while negation is only present in the embedded clause(1)-(2), and Letuchiy (2017), Kholodilova (2015) notice subject control structures in which the subject of the matrix clause can be an NCI while negation is only present in the embedded clause (3)-(4). I unify the phenomenon presented by these subject and object control structures under the name Backward Negative Concord (BNC).

2 Data. This paper follows the arguments in Lyutikova & Tatevosov (2020) against an ECM account of object control cases of BNC, and provides evidence against the floating quantifier approach proposed by those authors based on examples like (6). (6) shows that the case of the secondary predicate in the embedded clause need not match the case of the NCI. Under the floating quantifier analysis, (6) is wrongly predicted to be ungrammatical since both these elements would putatively get their case from PRO. Additionally, I show that positions in which an NCI can be licensed by negation in the controlled clause are limited to the controller: other NCIs cannot get licensed in the matrix clause, even when the neg-controller is licensed (7)-(8). I examine the types of control complements that allow BNC and motivate a generalization that *a control complement needs a CP layer for BNC to be possible*. This is partially based on the fact that restructuring complements do not allow BNC while more structurally complex ones do ((4) vs. (5)).

(1) Petja posovetoval **nikomu** [sjuda **ne** xodit'].
Petya advised nobody.DAT here NEG go.INF
'Petya advised that no one go here.'

(2) Žar zastavil **nikogo** [**ne** približat'sja k nemu].
heat forced nobody.ACC NEG approach.INF to him
'The heat made everyone not come close to him.'

(3) **Nikto** rešil [**ne** prixodit']
nobody.NOM decided NEG come.INF
'Everyone decided not to come.'

(4) **Nikto** obeščal [**ne** napivat'sja]
nobody.NOM promised NEG get.drunk.INF
'Everyone promised not to get drunk.'

(5) *__Nikto__ uspel [**ne** vpustit' košku].
nobody.NOM managed.in.time NEG let.in.INF cat
Int.: 'Everyone managed to (close the door behind them in time to) not let the cat in.'

(6) Profesor poprosil **nikogo** [**ne** prixodit' **odnomu**].
professor asked nobody.**ACC** NEG come.INF alone.**DAT**
'Professor asked that nobody come alone.'

(7) *Nikto posovetoval **nikomu/** Pete [sjuda **ne** xodit'].
nobody advised nobody.DAT/ Petya.DAT here NEG go.INF
Int.: 'Everyone advised that no one go here.'

(8) #Petja [**ni na kakom zastol'e**] rešil [**ne** golosovat' za Putina].
Petya NEG at any dinner decided NEG
i.*'At every/no dinner party, Petya made a decision not to vote for Putin.'
ii. 'Petya made a decision to vote for Putin at every dinner party.'

3 Proposal. I propose, following Lyutikova & Gerasimova (2023), that CP control complements in Russian can have a complementizer bearing a [*u*NEG] feature. That feature gets checked by clausemate negation and transmitted to the controller through PRO, yielding BNC structures (departing from Landau (2015)'s theory of control). This paper argues against a movement theory of control analysis (Hornstein (1999)), based on the generalization that BNC is only possible with larger complements and the problems that a movement-based account would run into with case mismatches as shown in (3). I also argue that BNC shows that the Agree relationship involved in establishing obligatory control can allow features to be transmitted from the embedded clause to the matrix one (along the lines of bidirectional Agree feature transfer argued for in Deal (2022)). i also show that BNC sheds light on the mechanism of Negative Concord as involving both morphological concord and semantic licensing (as argued for in Erschler (2023)).

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