

## Partitives and genitives in negated sentences in Finnish, Latvian and Lithuanian

### *Partitīvi un ģenitīvi nolieguma teikumos somu, latviešu un lietuviešu valodā*

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In Baltic and Finnic languages, the subject and object cases show a similar variation, with nominative or partitive genitive subjects and accusative or partitive genitive objects. The similarities are stronger between Finnic (here represented by Finnish) and Lithuanian, whereas in Latvian the use of the partitive genitive is decreasing. This applies both to affirmative and negated sentences. In this paper, the attention is concentrated upon the Latvian object cases with negation. Examples from literature, both original and translated from Finnish, were presented to a small group of native Latvian speakers living in Finland, with the expectation that the strong similarities between Latvian genitive and Finnish partitive use with negation might affect the choices. However, that did not seem to be the case. The genitive appears to be specialized to express emphatic negation. Genitives of subject in negated existential sentences were compared in translations of Finnish fiction. Partitives are the rule in negated existential sentences in Finnish, and partitive genitives almost to the same extent in Lithuanian. Again, in Latvian the use of the genitive in this function is decreasing. As a rule, it applies to the existential *nebūt* 'not to be', although spoken language tends towards the nominative.

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In Baltic and Finnic languages, the subject and object cases show a similar variation, with nominative or partitive genitive subjects and accusative or partitive genitive objects. The similarities are stronger between Finnic (here represented by Finnish) and Lithuanian, whereas in Latvian the use of the partitive genitive is decreasing. This applies both to affirmative and negated sentences. The situation in affirmative sentences of Finnish and Lithuanian was studied by me in an earlier paper (Leinonen 2015); here the attention is mainly devoted to the Latvian object cases with negation. Examples from literature, both original and translated from Finnish, were presented to a small group of native Latvian speakers living in Finland, with the expectation that the strong similarities between Latvian genitive and Finnish partitive use with negation might affect the choices.

## 1. Negation

In Finnish, negation is expressed by a negative auxiliary and lexical verb in a special construction. Clausal negation (for more details, see Vilkuna 2015, 458–461):

*Pekka nukku-u.* ‘Pekka sleeps’ (P sleep-PRS.SG3)

*Pekka ei nuku-0.* ‘Pekka does not sleep.’ (P NEG.SG3 sleep-CONNEG)

*Pekka nukku-i.* ‘Pekka slept.’ (P sleep-PST.SG3)

*Pekka ei nukku-nut.* ‘Pekka did not sleep.’ (P NEG.SG3 sleep-PTCP)

*Pekka on nukkunut.* ‘Pekka has slept.’ (P be-PRS.SG3 sleep-PTCP)

*Pekka ei olen nukkunut.* ‘Pekka has not slept’ etc. (PNEG.3SG be-CONNEG sleep-PTCP)

Latvian and Lithuanian resort to the negative prefix *ne-* prefixed to the finite verb form, and specific forms for existential predicates.

## 2. Genitive/partitive objects in Finnish and Lithuanian

In Finnish affirmative sentences the object is, depending on the choice of the predicative axis, either genitive (also called genitive-accusative), nominative (also called nominative-accusative), or partitive. In negated sentences the object is obligatorily partitive. This applies even to the adverbial objects of measure:

*Pekka osti auto-n.*

*Pekka ei ostanut auto-a.*

‘Pekka bought a car-GEN’

‘Pekka did not buy a car-PART.’

*Pekka ei nukkunut tunti-a-kaan.*

‘Pekka did not sleep even one hour:PART.PRT’

Nominative (-accusatives) are found only in questions strongly suggesting a positive answer (Hakulinen & al. 2014, 890):

*Eiköhän avata tuo ovi vihdoin ja viimein?*

‘Shouldn’t one open that door:NOM(-ACC) at long last?’

Partitive is common with lexemes implicating negative states-of-affairs, e.g. *vaikea* ‘difficult’ (Tervola 2015: 231):

*Vaikea oli si-tä lähettää.*

‘It was difficult to send it-PART.’

In Lithuanian negated sentences, the object is in the genitive, but accusative is used when the syntactic distance from the predicate increases (see Tervola 2015, 230):

*Nebuvau pratusi matyti tev-q tokios būsenos.*

‘I was not used to seeing father-ACC in such a state of mind.’

Negation attached to other parts of the sentence in Lithuanian attracts the accusative, as well:

*Nacionalsocialism-q laikė jau nebegalimą.*

‘National socialism-ACC he no longer thought not-possible.’

Thus, negation in Finnish is semantic, in Lithuanian – syntactic. Additionally, a variation of direct object Acc/Gen is reported in Berg-Olsen 1999, and Paulauskienė 2000 (via Kalnača 2014, 57).

### 3. Genitive/partitive objects in Latvian

Case variation of the accusative and the genitive is found in grammatical descriptions and is of old origin. It is especially frequent in the eastern dialects (Berg-Olsen 1999). It is presumably motivated by the homonymous forms Sg.Acc = Pl.Gen for masculine nouns (*koks – koku* ‘tree’), and Sg.Gen = Pl.Acc for feminine nouns (*māsa – māsas* ‘sister’). In Standard Latvian, the increase of the accusative is an active grammatical process, while the genitive is found in texts from the XIX – first half of the XX centuries, in the literature of the diaspora of the XX century, and in contemporary fiction. It predominates in older texts, subdialects, speech of older generation (Kalnača 2014, 53–56). Especially with the pronoun *nekas* ‘nothing’ the genitive is frequent in Standard Latvian (ibid. 58). Berg-Olsen, having studied the variation in both newspapers and spoken language, states that the genitive objects with negation are marginal in modern standard Latvian (in the test material accusatives count for 98% and 96% respectively). They are used in idiomatic expressions only, and when the negation is emphasized, but accusatives are found in these cases, as well (Berg-Olsen 1999, 113, 132–133). Similar statements are found in Holvoet & Nau (2014, 7–9).

#### 3.1. Testing the variation

Sentences with negation + Gen found in literature, both original and translated novels, were presented to 10–14 informants – native Latvians living in Finland (the choir *Ziemeļmeita*). They were asked what form would be preferable, the genitive or the accusative, or both. Given the rule of Finnish partitive with negation, and the knowledge of Finnish of the informants – though of varying degree – it might be possible that their use of the genitive would be stronger than that of the accusative. However, their answers confirm the direction of the on-going change: a tendency to associate the object with a unique case form, namely, the accusative (Kalnača 2014, 56). The group is rather heterogeneous; all participants have higher education from Latvia, all are females, aged from 26 to 53. They work in Finland, most of them have families, but 3 are married to non-Finns. Most of them work in English-speaking environments, although almost all use Finnish, as well. Their command of Finnish also varies, but all have taken language courses or are studying at the moment. The tests were taken at various times, and not everyone was present at every rehearsal. However, the general tendency is well observable.

It was not easy to find examples of the genitive; the widest variety stems from the literature of the 1920s, 1930s and 1970s. In the newer publications, the genitive prevailed in idiomatic expressions, and the most frequent genitive object was *nekā* ‘nothing’. In the examples below, the first form, the genitive, is the one used by the author of the text.

(Question: Which form, genitive or accusative would you prefer? Please, comment:)

**Idiomatic expressions:** G/both/A

- (1) *Pār lūpām nevarēja izdabūt ne vārda.* (PB) / .. *vārdu.* 10/1/0  
 ‘One could not get a single word from his lips.’  
 One informant accepted parallelly acc: “vārdu would be correct”.
- (2) *Tu mātei nesaki ne pusvārda par šīm lietām, ...* (AN) 1/1/9  
 / .. *pusvārdu* ..  
 ‘You don’t say half a word to Mother about these things, ...’
- (3) *Es nekad nedzirdu labu vārda, mani vienmēr rāj* (AN) 3/3/5  
 / .. *labu vārdu,* ..  
 ‘I never hear a good word, they scold me all the time.’

**Negative indefinite pronouns:**

- (4) *Viņa atmiņa nespēja uztaustīt neviena pieturas punkta.* (PH) 0/1/9  
 / .. *nevienu pieturas punktu.*  
 ‘His memory could not reach a single supporting point.’  
 One comment: gen in old literature.
- (5) *Neredzēja nevienas zvaigznes.* (AN) / .. *nevienu zvaigzni.* 2/3/6  
 ‘One could not see a single star.’
- (6) *Es ņemu no labības klēts to, kas man patīk un kad man patīk, neprasot tev nekādas atļaujas!* (AN) / .. *nekādu atļauju!* 5/1/6  
 ‘I take from the granary what I like and when I like, not asking you for any permission!’
- (7) *.. jautāja Tervola, bet tad, nenogaidīdams nekādas atbildes, aizgāja ..* (AN) / .. *nekādu atbildi, ..* 3/1/8  
 ‘.. Tervola asked, but then without waiting for any answer, left ..’
- (8) *Vai vēl kādu tur redzēji? – Neviena, ceļš pavisam kluss.* (OZ) 0/3/8  
 / .. *nevienu, ..*  
 ‘Did you see anyone else there?’ – ‘No one, the road was quite silent.’
- (9) *Brīnums, ka par šiem ieročiem somi līdz šim nekā nav zinājuši.* (AP) / .. *neko* .. 3/1/10  
 ‘It is a wonder that the Finns have known nothing about these arms up to now.’
- (10) *Vari būt vai cik dievticīga, bet pret likteņa pirkstu nekā nepadārīsi.* (AN) / .. *neko* .. 1/2/9  
 ‘You can be just as much god-fearing, but you can do nothing against Fate’s finger.’
- (11) *Un tur nu nekā vairs nevarēja darīt!* (AN) / .. *neko* .. 4/2/6  
 ‘And there was nothing one could do about it!’

**Negative pronoun + adjective:**

- (12) *Cita nekā nevajag.* (AS) *Citu neko nevajag.* 6/2/7  
 ‘Nothing else is needed.’  
 One comment: gen in case “nothing at all”, in general; and acc if the choice is limited to the speech situation.
- (13) *Nekāda laba te nav, nekā laba arī neredzēsim.* (AB) 3/2/7  
 /.. *neko labu* ..  
 ‘There is nothing good here, and neither shall we see anything good.’
- (14) *Tādā rītā es reiz Latgalē redzēju vedam uz kapiem jaunu meiteni: nekā skaistāka es neesmu redzējis un nevaru iedomāties.* (R) /.. *neko skaistāku* .. 2/3/7  
 ‘On such a morning I saw once in Latgale a young girl being taken to the cemetery: I have never seen and cannot imagine anything more beautiful.’
- (15) .. *ko ļaunā pasaule bija nolauņpījusi, nedodot vietā nekā tāda, kas sargātu un sildītu.* (PH) /.. *neko tādu*, .. 5/1/8  
 ‘.. what the bad world had robbed, not giving instead anything such that would protect and give warmth.’

**Noun phrase:**

- (16) *Tikai žurnālista nemanīja.* (AP) /.. *žurnālistu* .. 0/2/12  
 ‘But he did not see the journalist.’
- (17) *Šis darbs jau neprasa brunču, tas piestāv arī bikšainiem varoņiem!* (AN) /.. *brunčus*, .. 5/2/5  
 ‘This work does not require skirts, it is suitable also for heroes in trousers!’
- (18) *Es nepazīstu darba, kurš nebūtu tā traucēts līdz pēdējam:* 0/3/9  
 .. (R) /.. *darbu*, ..  
 ‘I don’t know any work that wouldn’t be so hampered till the last moment: ..’
- (19) *Bet nelaime bija tā, ka viņa nezināja ceļu uz turieni,* 0/2/10  
 .. (AN) /.. *ceļu* ..  
 ‘But it was unfortunate that she did not know the way there ..’

**Proper names, personal pronouns:**

- (20) *No Šveices puses dzelzceļš iet tuvu pie pašas Lugānas pa plašu, skaistu ieleju, bet Lugānas vēl neredz.* (R) 1/1/9  
 /.. *Lugānu* ..  
 ‘From the Swiss side the railway runs close to Lugano itself in a wide, pretty valley, but one cannot see Lugano yet.’

- (21) *Nesadzinu jūsu adreses. Un jūsu nevarēju sadabūt.* (R) 1/0/12  
 /.. **adresi** .. .. **jūs** ..  
 ‘I did not get hold of your address. And did not get hold of you.’
- (22) (*Vecā Pāčeka nav vairs.*) *Kad izgājušu reizi atbraucu Kastaņolu apraudzīt, es **viņa** vairs nesastapu: esot aizbraucis uz Milānu un tur laikam nomiris.* (R) / .. **viņu** .. 1/1/10  
 ‘(Old Pāček is no more.) When I returned last time to visit Castagnola, I did not catch him any more: he had gone to Milan and apparently died there.’  
 One comment: “Gen is rather strange”.

### 3.2. Results

Certain set phrases retain the genitive (examples (1)–(3)). Indefinite negated pronouns do not seem to weigh as much as *nekā* ‘nothing’. The genitive is fairly strong with *vajag* (12), which in affirmative sentences would also go with Gen, also *prasīt* (6, 17), which in certain dialects is used with Gen. Otherwise, noun phrases that refer to a definite participant of the situation are assigned the accusative (examples (16)–(18), (20)–(22)).

The factors that favour the genitive object in this material are, in order of strength:

- 1) idioms,
- 2) negative indefinite pronouns with *ne* and *nekā* ‘nothing’; emphatic negation with *ne*;
- 3) archaic style – most of the examples were found in texts by Rainis, and translations of Finnish fiction from the 1930s (AN) and 1970s (PH).

The informants commented on their choices: “Gen is old-fashioned” – “Gen is used in older literature” – “Gen is dialectal” – “When I want to sound literary and formal, I use Gen” (the informant is a professional interpreter) – “Although Gen is the norm, I use Acc” – “Gen shows Russian influence”. Thus, exposure to the Finnish partitive has no influence on the choices by the informants. Although the informant group was small, the results confirm the earlier study by Berg-Olsen (1999, 132), who arrived at the same conclusion – idiomatic expressions and emphatic negation favour the genitive.

### 3.3. General

The change to accusative is and has long been taking place in Latvian. German influence has been suggested, and discarded. In dialects, genitive is more common in the east, less so in the west. Kalnača (2002, 2014) appeals to analogous processes of accusative varying with genitive in Lithuanian and Russian. In fact, in Russian the genitive is strongest with the pronominal form *ničego* ‘nothing’, the premodifier *nikakoj* and emphatic negation with *ni* (Mustajoki & Heino 1991, 17, 46–47). Unification has merely developed further in Latvian, in that the genitive has been gradually excluded from the expression of negation (Kalnača 2014, 56).

The results indicate that despite knowledge of an earlier norm, it is hardly applied by our informants notwithstanding the explicit form of the questionnaire.

## 4. Subject partitives in negated sentences

### 4.1. Finnish

In existential (and possessive) sentences partitive is used for quantitatively indefinite plurals and mass nouns even in affirmative sentences. The prototype is Locative + Existential V.SG3 + Theme/Possessee-NP.Nom/Part. With negation the choice of nominative is absent: Loc + Neg-SG3 + V-Connegative/Sg.PastParticiple + N-Part. (Huumo 1999, 41):

- (23) *Jäällä ei ollut sutta.*  
 Ice-ADE NEG.SG3 be-PRTC.SG wolf-PART  
 ‘There was no wolf on the ice.’

Unlike the NP in affirmative existential sentences, where it generally represents new information, with negation the NP is often sentence-initial and definite (Hakulinen et al. 2004, 874–875). Negation as it were neutralizes the distinction of quantitative definiteness and indefiniteness (ibid. 1535).

In both affirmative and negated existential sentences, the subject is (not) located in the situation, in the world, or within the visibility. In addition to the verbs called existential (*to be, to come, to happen, to be found, to appear, to be visible, to be audible, to leave, to be born, to die ..*), “semantically bleached” existential verbs are widely used: *to play, to jump ..* They express a “typical manifestation of existence in a place”, or its absence. With negation, the choice is, though, restricted: the verbs acceptable with Sg.Part are limited to the prototypical existential verbs. However, quantifying pronouns with a generic reading enable wider lexical choices. With plurals, partitives are normal both in affirmative and negated sentences:

- (24) *Jää-llä ei ulvo-nut sus-i-a. (\*sut-ta).*  
 Ice-ADE NEG.SG3 howl-PRTC.SG wolf-PL.PART (\*SG.PART)  
 ‘There were no wolves howling on the ice.’

- (25) *Jää-llä ei ulvo-nut min-kään-lais-ta sut-ta.*  
 On-ADE NEG.SG3 howl-PRTC-SG no.kind.of-PART wolf-PART  
 ‘There was no kind of wolf howling on the ice.’ (Huumo 1999, 41)

Proper nouns allow for a choice between Nom and Part, due to the strong presupposition of existence of the NP. The partitive shows a possible switch in the specificity level:

- (26) *Täällä ei ole-0 Anna-a.*  
 Here NEG.SG3 be-CONNeg Anna-PART  
 ‘There is no Anna here.’ (Anna is not here / There is no one by name of Anna here).

This is taken as a refusal to identify a referent of that identity in the location referred to (Wähämäki 1984, 287).

Set phrases usually retain the Nom of the affirmative sentence:

- (27) *Haavikolla ei ollut helppo työ, sillä dokumentteja AA:n ja BK:n suhteesta oli hyvin vähän.* (KLIK suomi)  
 ‘Haavikko did not have an easy job (NOM) (= at-Haavikko was not an easy job), for there were very few documents concerning the relationship between AA and BK.’

Nominative subjects can be used in partial negation (Huomo 1999, 41):

- (28) *Siellä e-i ol-lut susi, vaan ..*  
 there NEG.SG3 be-PRTC.SG wolf-NOM, but ..  
 ‘there was not a wolf, but ..’

The function of negating the qualification of an existing subject produces a nominative:

- (29) *Olen sen osalta varsin skeptinen, sillä muillakaan toimijoilla ei ole kansallinen alue täysin valvonnassaan.* (FinnTreeBank 3: EuroParl)  
 ‘I am rather sceptical about this, for other actors do not have their national area (NOM) in their control either (= at-other actors is not their national area in control either).’

#### 4.2. Lithuanian

With negated existential verbs, the subject is always partitive genitive: *nėra*, *nebuvo* etc. ‘to be’, *likti* ‘to remain’, *girdėti(s)* ‘to be heard’, *matyti(s)* ‘to be seen’, *regėti* ‘to see’, *jausti* ‘to feel’, often strengthened with negative emphatic particles *nei .. nei* ‘neither – nor’, *nė* ‘not one’, *joks* ‘not one’ (Šukys 1998, 108–109). Reflexives are used with genitives (Ambrazas et al. 1997, 668):

- (30) *Čia ne-si-mat-o keli-o.*  
 Here NEG-REFL-see-PST.3SG road-GEN  
 ‘One cannot see the road here.’

According to one study, nominative subjects are favoured when they are “prototypical” – refer to personal and demonstrative pronouns, referential nouns, while both the nominative and the genitive are used for less prototypical subjects (prototypicality hierarchy of Croft 1990), though not basing on animateness. Definiteness and word order correlate to some extent, but definite nominatives are more frequent than definite genitives in both SV and VS order. Indefinite genitives prevail in both VS and SV order. Most likely, genitives are used for non-referential subjects (Semėnienė 2005, 73, 79). The following examples illustrate the use of the nominative:

- (31) *Edvardas laukė Igno kabinete, tačiau kai šis nepasirodė, pats nuėjo sūnaus kambarį. Ignas jau ruošėsi miegoti. – Kodėl neužėjai? – paklausė tėvas. – O kam? – abejingai paklausė sūnus. – Aš pavargęs.*



‘Edvardas was waiting for Ignas in the study, but when this (NOM) did not appear, he went to the son’s room. Ignas was preparing for bed already. – Why did you not come by? – Father asked. – What for? – the son asked indifferently. – I am tired.’

- (32) *Betgi ji baisiausiai supyks, ims bartis, egoiste mane vadinti. Reikia laukti progos, kad ji nematyty, negirdėty. O tokia proga vis nepasitaiko.*

‘But he gets frightfully angry, begins to scold me, call me an egoist. One has to wait for an opportunity when he doesn’t see, or hear. Still, such an opportunity (NOM) did not appear.’

In (31), the Finnish translation would prefer the nominative subject, whereas in (32) the partitive is the only correct choice.

Aleksandravičiūtė (2013, 9–12), dedicating her research to reflexives and subject genitives with negation, states: “The subjects marked nominative are committed to exist, whereas those with genitive carry no such commitment – either they implicate a lack of existential commitment, or the non-existence of the subject referent in the location in question or in the world itself.”

The following examples show Lithuanian subject nominatives (T. Venclova) corresponding to Finnish partitives (translation of TV):

- (32) *Turbūt galima pasakyti, kad Izraelio valstybė (NOM) be Vilniaus nebūty atsiradusi... (TV)*

Fi: *Ehkä voidaan sanoa, että Israelin valtiota (PART) ei olisi muodostunut ilman Vilnaa.*

‘Perhaps one can say that the state of Israel would not have arisen without Vilnius.’

In the Finnish translation, a nominative subject might be imaginable, with a stretch, since it exists. Not so in the following, where the Lithuanian translation still resorts to the nominative. Or perhaps the trust in the future is stronger in the Lithuanian translator than in the Finnish author:

- (33) *Eikö ollut enää missään odottamassa „miestä (PART), joka ohjaisi edelleen“? (PH)*

Li: *Ar vélei neatsiras „žmogus (NOM), kuris ves liaudį pirmyn“? (PH)*

‘Was/will there not to be found “a man, who will lead people forward”?’

And finally, a Lithuanian example with partial negation is translated into Finnish with a partitive:

- (34) *Naujoji lietuvių inteligentija (NOM) ėmė bręsti ne tik Suvalkų krašte. (TV) Uudenlaista liettualaista älymystöä (PART) ei kypsynt ainoastaan Suvalkijassa. (TV)*

‘New Lithuanian intelligentsija was ripening not only in Suvalkia.’

The nominative would be acceptable, but it would stress the definite and thus limited extent of the NP referent, which would sound odd in this connection.

### 4.3. Latvian

The genitive as subject of negated existential (and possessive) sentences varies with the nominative already in the earliest texts, dialects and dainas. The genitive still is stronger and even the norm (Berg-Olsen 1999, 18–19, 50ff, 67, 101–102), but the use of the nominative is on the increase (ibid. 155–172). *Jūrā nav viļņu* ‘At sea NEG-be waves-GEN’ equals *Jūrā nav viļņi* ‘At sea NEG-is waves-NOM’= ‘At sea, there are no waves’. In addition to *nebūt* ‘not-be’, only verbs of quantification, such as *(ne)trūkt* ‘(not) to lack’, *(ne)vajadzēt* ‘(not) to need’, *(ne)pietikt* ‘(not) to suffice’ are mentioned as requiring the genitive; *vajadzēt* often appears with the accusative. The status of the primary NP with these verbs is “adverbial genitive” (Nītiņa, Grigorjevs 2013, 348–9).

With *nebūt*, the “subject” of the sentence is generally in the genitive, but when the content is concerned with something else than existence or possession, the nominative is used: *Man likās, man nebija taisnība* ‘It seemed that I was not right’ (I did not have the truth-NOM) (Nītiņa, Grigorjevs 2013, 728). Such predications are processes: *Eksāmens rīt nebūs* ‘There will be no test tomorrow/ The test will not be tomorrow’ (?), *Starp viņiem nekas nebija* ‘There was nothing between them’, and states: *Vēl nav ne augusta beigas*, ‘It’s not yet the end of August’, *Ja jums nav slinkums*, .. ‘If you don’t feel lazy ..’ (-a set phrase?) (Lagzdiņa 1997, 186–197). – Note that in Finnish as well, natural state NPs are in the nominative (*Ei ole talvi, keskiviikko* etc. ‘It is not winter/Wednesday’. – Further, as in Lithuanian, partial negation requires the nominative: *Šai zālē nav tikai valodnieki* ‘In this hall there are not only linguists’ (Lagzdiņa 1997, 174). The nominative is used with identifying and classifying predicatives: *Te gan nebija piemērota vieta naktsmājām* ‘Here was not a place suitable for spending the night’; *Tai viesnīcā neesot slikti ēdieni un dzērieni* ‘In that hotel the food and drink is apparently not bad’ (ibid. 197).

The subject may be in the nominative or the genitive, if *nebūt* refers to something found in a certain place: *Lotes nekur nebija* ‘Lote (GEN) was nowhere’; *Sandra naktī nebija mājās* ‘Sandra (NOM) at night was not at home’ (Nītiņa, Grigorjevs 2013, 790); *Jāņa nav mājās* ‘Jānis (GEN) was not at home’ (Lagzdiņa 1997, 183).

Berg-Olsen (1999, 128–130, 155) found that in his material of spontaneous speech, the nominative counted for 51% of the cases with the verb forms of *nebūt*. There was no clear differentiation of meaning, the genitive was perhaps felt to be merely more prestigious. However, when the informants were asked to produce existential sentences with negation, the genitive subject was strongly favoured over the nominative (for example, 14/5, 20/3), thus following the standard norm. And in newspaper texts, the genitive counted for 94% of the cases (Berg-Olsen 2005, 187).

## Empirical material

A few examples from translations of Finnish into Latvian show nominatives corresponding to Finnish partitives:

- (35) *Vai tad nu vēl malka nebūs!* (AP)

‘Won’t there be firewood:NOM yet?’ (Strong expectation of an affirmative answer)

- (36) *Netriecies ar to laivu uz akmeņiem, sāc uzmanīgi, tad nekas slikts nenotiks.* (AP)

‘Don’t drive the boat onto the stones, start carefully so that nothing bad (NOM) will happen.’

The informants (members of the abovementioned choir complemented with Estonian Latvians, altogether 15 persons) preferred the nominative to the genitive; several remarked that *nekas* was a subject. Cf. Kalnača (2014, 55): “The subject domain belongs to Nom .. Nom challenges the Gen for the position of the subject”.

In the following example, the original genitive was shunned by most of the informants:

- (37) *Varbūt šie zābaki bija vainīgi pie tā, ka radās šī ideja, no kuras viņam netika nekāda labuma.* (PH)

‘Maybe these boots were the reason that there arose the idea from which no-GEN good-GEN fell to him.’

Nominative subject *nekāds labums* was suggested to the informants, and chosen by the majority. One added that Gen would be fine with *nebūt*, instead of *tikt* ‘to happen’. The near idiomacy of *nebūt* is evidenced by the following example, where *neradās* + Gen *nekādu sarežģījumu* of the text was not accepted by anyone, and Nom *nekādi sarežģījumi* was suggested instead:

- (38) *Neradās nekādu sarežģījumu.* (PH)

‘There arose no complications.’ (GEN)

The following example contains two subjects of negated existentials (Nom underlined, Gen in bold):

- (39) *Mums nekas pret jums nav. Ja jums, piemēram, nebūtu **tā zaķa**, tad viss būtu daudz vienkāršak.* (AP)

‘We have nothing (NOM) against you. If you, for instance, would not have that (GEN) hare (GEN), everything would be much simpler.’

The informants’ decisions (14 informants) were: *nekas* 4 Gen / 1 both forms / 10 Nom, and *tā zaķa* 14 Gen / 1 Nom). Thus, the majority of the informants accepted the subject forms as such, a few suggested for *nekas* Gen *nekā*, one felt both are acceptable. Apparently, subjecthood does not produce the nominative as such, for Gen for ‘that hare’ was almost unanimous. Perhaps indeed *nekas* referring to abstract states-of-affairs prefers the nominative, while the word order, or irrealis mood plays a role for the choice of the latter NP.

## 5. Negation and subjects in Finnish, Lithuanian and Latvian literature

Translations of three Finnish novels into Lithuanian and Latvian and one volume of Lithuanian academic prose translated into Finnish were checked for the correspondences of Finnish Partitives to Lithuanian and Latvian Genitives with negation. For one novel (PH), the results (in tokens) were:

Finnish partitives 71, Lithuanian genitives 46 (+ 10 'to have'), Latvian genitives 44.

Lithuanian and Latvian differ somewhat, but the difference here is hidden largely due to the Latvian possessive construction with *nav* + Gen. The repertoire of verbs in existential constructions in Lithuanian is wider. Naturally, the list below is limited to the corpus, but still it is larger than those presented in grammars.

The Finnish verbs used with the partitive in negated sentences comprise a large group:

The basic existential verbs *olla* 'to be', *kuulua* 'to be heard', *näkyä* 'to be visible', *jäädä* 'remain', *tapahtua* 'to take place', *sattua* 'to happen', *tulla ilmi* 'to emerge'; descriptive verbs indicating appearance, change of state: *tarttua* 'to stick' (= 'remain'), *purjehtia* 'to sail' (= 'arrive sailing'), *tippua* 'to fall', *puhjeta* 'to blossom, appear', *kulua* 'to pass' (about time), etc.

The Lithuanian verbs co-occurring with the partitive genitive in the corpus are:

*atsirasti* 'to be found', *būti* 'to be', *girdėti* 'to be-heard', *įvykti* 'to happen', *kilti* 'to arise', *likti*

'to remain', *matyti* 'to be seen', *pasitaikyti* 'to be found', *tikti* 'to happen'

+ elliptical phrases, e. g.: *nei maisto, nei rūkalo, nei benzino* 'no food, no tobacco, no gasoline', *jokios abejonės* 'no doubt', *nė gyvos dvasios* 'not a soul', *nieko nostabaus* 'nothing strange'.

The Latvian verbs co-occurring with the partitive genitive in the corpus were much fewer:

*būt* 'be', *atlikt* 'remain', *tikt* 'arrive', *nākt* 'come', *rasties* 'arise', *kļūt* 'become'

+ elliptical phrases, e. g.: *nekādu šaubu* 'no doubt', *ne atvaļinājumu, ne pasta* 'no leaves, no mail', *ne ēdamā, ne smēķa, ne benzīna* 'no food, no tobacco, no gasoline'.

## 6. Conclusion

As it was put by Berg-Olsen, in Finnic, the partitive functions are the central ones of this case, while in Baltic, the partitive meanings of the genitive are relatively peripheral, and thus, more vulnerable to change (Berg-Olsen 1999, 184). In Latvian, there is a clear tendency to establish the subject and object domains each with a unique case (Kalnača 2014, 55). The use of the genitive with negation is decreasing, especially in the object position it is almost lost. Influence from other languages remains a question. As the genitive is strongest in expressions

with *ne-* + pronoun (and elliptical *ne* + NP), it may be specialized to express emphasis, the outer end of the speech act repertoire. A role is played by reduced referentiality, which is stressed in studies of Finnish and especially Lithuanian, as well. Simultaneously, the repertoire of verbs co-occurring with non-nominative subjects is smallest in Latvian, while in Finnish the usage with the partitive is strongest.

## Abbreviations

ACC	accusative
ADE	adessive
CONNeg	connegative
GEN	genitive
NEG	negation
NOM	nominative
PART	partitive
PL	plural
PRS	present
PRT	particle
PRTC	participle
PST	past
REFL	reflexive
SG	singular
3	third person

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## Kopsavilkums

Baltu un somugru valodā vērojama subjekta un objekta locījumu variēšanās starp nominatīva un ģenitīva (resp. partitīva) subjektiem un starp akuzatīva un ģenitīva (resp. partitīva) objektiem. Šī pētījuma mērķis ir analizēt locījumu izvēli nolieguma teikumos somu, latviešu un lietuviešu valodā. Baltu ģenitīva un somu partitīva funkcijas lielā mērā saskan, taču latviešu valodā ģenitīva izvēle kļūst arvien retāka – gan apgalvojuma, gan nolieguma teikumos. Rakstā galvenā uzmanība veltīta latviešu valodas objekta locījumiem nolieguma teikumos. Nelielai grupai Somijā dzīvojošu latviešu tika piedāvāti daiļliteratūras, pirmavotu un tulkojumu (no somu valodas) piemēri. Aptaujas pamatā bija hipotēze, ka somu partitīvs varētu ietekmēt viņu izvēli, tomēr aptaujas rezultāts bija negatīvs. Liekas, ka ģenitīvu lieto tikai noteiktās idiomās, turklāt īpaši uzsverot noliegumu. Tika salīdzināti arī subjekta ģenitīvi eksistenciālos nolieguma teikumos visās trīs valodās. Partitīvu somu valodā lieto gandrīz bez izņēmuma, līdzīgi arī lietuviešu valodā, taču latviešu valodā ģenitīvu lieto mazāk, galvenokārt tikai ar verbu *nebūt*, kaut arī te sarunvalodā bieži sastopams nominatīvs.