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A.A. Barentsen

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R. Sprenger



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ON RUSSIAN PREPOSITIONAL *BLAGODARJA*

H.P. HOUTZAGERS

"Видно тебе не довольно, что я,
благодаря тебе, ранен..."
А.С. Пушкин, "Капитанская дочка"

"...и знаком ей благодарил."
М.Ю. Лермонтов, "Кавказский пленник"

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In grammars and dictionaries of Russian¹ the form *blagodarja* is usually regarded as representing two homonyms:
-The gerund of the verb *blagodarit'* 'thank'. Like all other forms of *blagodarit'*, the gerund *blagodarja* takes complements in the accusative case. Example:

Blagodarja sestru za podarok, on poceloval eë
thanking sister [acc.] for present he kissed her
'Thanking his sister for the present, he kissed her'

Cf. with past tense of *blagodarit'*:

On blagodaril sestru za podarok
he thanked sister [acc.] for present
'He thanked his sister for the present'

-A preposition which has the meaning 'thanks to' and governs the dative case. Example:

Blagodarja sestre, on znaet francuzskij jazyk
thanks to sister [dat.] he knows French language
'Thanks to his sister, he knows French'

In the following I shall refer to the former homonym as 'the gerund *blagodarja*', and to the latter, which will be the subject of the present article, as either '*blagodarja*+D' ('D' stands for 'dative') or 'prepositional *blagodarja*'.

1.2 The 1984 issue of *Linguistics in the Netherlands* contains a paper by Jan Odiijk on *blagodarja*+D, in which he attempts:

'to give tentative answers to the following questions:

- (A) Why does the gerund *blagodarja* take an Accusative complement?
- (B) Why does idiosyncratic *blagodarja* [my '*blagodarja*+D' or 'prepositional *blagodarja*' HPH] take a Dative complement?
- (C) Why is there a difference in Case-assignment properties between these forms, although they have exactly the same form and are obviously both historically and synchronically related?' (1984:139)

Odiijk's theoretical framework is provided by Chomsky 1981 and 1970. To my mind, the analysis proposed by Odiijk is in several respects quite unsatisfactory. The present paper consists of a detailed critique of Odiijk 1984. In §2 the main points of his article will be summarized. I shall do so by quoting the greater part of it, leaving out passages of lesser importance. In §3 I shall give my comment on each of these points, in such a way that §3.1 refers to §2.1, §3.2 to §2.2, etc.

2. MAIN POINTS OF ODIJK 1984

2.1 'The categorial status of idiosyncratic *blagodarja*. Idiosyncratic *blagodarja* is classified in almost all traditional Russian grammars and grammatical descriptions as a (deverbal) preposition (cf. a.o. Vinogradov (1947), Isačenko (1975)). We will argue against this hypothesis and show that it is an adverb (...) Prepositions in Russian have the idiosyncratic property that they require third person personal pronouns to be preceded by *n* when they precede them. Thus the normal forms of the third person singular male personal pronouns are *ego* (acc/gen), *emu* (dat) and *im* (instr), but a *n* must precede these pronouns when preceded by a preposition, cf. (5) vs. (6)

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| (5)a. Ona videla ego/*nego | (6)a. ot *ego/nego |
| She saw him | from him |
| b. Ona pomogala emu/*nemu | b. k *emu/nemu |
| She helped him | towards him |
| c. Ona zanimalas' im/*nim | c. s *im/nim |
| She studied it | with him |

(...) When tested after adverbs, we see that the n-form is ungrammatical in this position (8), and it is ungrammatical after idiosyncratic *blagodarja* as well (9) (...)

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| (8) lučše ego/*nego | (9) blagodarja emu/*nemu |
| better him-gen | thanks to him-dat |
| 'better than him' | 'thanks to him' (...) |

We conclude that idiosyncratic *blagodarja* is an adverb, not a preposition. If it were, we would expect *emu* to be ungrammatical and *nemu* to be grammatical after it' (1984:139-140)

2.2 'Chomsky (1981) proposes a Case Theory in which [-N]-categories (verbs, prepositions) are Case-assigners and [+N]-categories (nouns, adjectives) are not. This seems to be falsified immediately by Russian, where [+N]-categories can assign Case (...) let us review Case-assignment by [+N]-categories. First, consider (12), which illustrates patterns of Case-assignment by verbs:

- | | | |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| (12)a. Nom | Kollektiv rabotaet | Collective works |
| b. Gen | Bojat'sja odinočestva | To fear loneliness |
| c. Dat | Sočuvstvovat' drugu | To sympathize with a friend |
| d. Acc | Obrabotat' zemlju | To cultivate the land |
| e. Instr | Zanimat'sja fizikoj | To study physics |

The subject of a sentence is usually in Nominative Case (12a). Verbs can have complements in Genitive, Dative, Accusative or Instrumental Case (12b-e). Then consider the nominalizations related to these verbs, in (13):

- | | | |
|------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| (13)a. Gen | Rabota kolektiva | Work of the collective |
| b. Gen | Bojazn' odinočestva | Fear for loneliness |
| c. Dat | Sočuvstvie drugu | Sympathy for a friend |
| d. Gen | Obrabotka zemli | Cultivation of the land |
| e. Instr | Zanjatija fizikoj | Study of physics |

Notice that (13b,c,e) resemble the related verb *qua* Case. This is the usual situation for Genitive, Dative and Instrumental Case. In (13a,d) we observe that the Nominative of (12a) and the Accusative of (12d) are replaced by Genitive Case in the nominalization (...). We conclude that nouns in Russian can assign Case, albeit non-Nominative or -Accusative Case.

A similar phenomenon can be observed when we consider adjectives. Adjectives can take Case marked complements, but not Nominatives or Accusatives (...):

- | | | |
|------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| (15)a. Nom | ----- | |
| b. Gen | dostojnyj uvaženija | worthy respect |
| c. Dat | vernij svoemu slovu | true to ones word |
| d. Acc | ----- | |
| e. Instr | nedovol'nyj synom | dissatisfies with son |

Hence we infer that

- (16) [+N]-categories cannot assign Nominative or Accusative Case in Russian' (1984:140-141)

2.3 'Adverbs in Russian can assign Case, but not Nominative or Accusative. On the basis of this fact we assume that adverbs are [+N]-categories. Independent evidence for this assumption can be obtained from data originally observed by Babby (1975), who notices that [+N]-categories in Russian can be Case-marked, while [-N]-categories cannot. The fact that adverbs in Russian can be Case-marked is illustrated by *čem*-phrases (comparable to English *than NP*), where *čem NP* can be replaced by a Genitive NP:

- | | |
|---------|-----------------------------|
| (19) a. | On rabotaet lučše čem Ivan |
| | he works better than Ivan |
| | 'He works better than Ivan' |
| b. | On rabotaet lučše Ivana |
| | he works better Ivan-gen |
| | 'He works better than Ivan' |

If *čem* is followed by an adverb, then the phrase *čem adverb* can

the categorial status of *blagodarja*+D would be dealt with in a sound and principled way. It is not, as we shall presently see.

3.1.1 Before turning to the test proposed by Odijk (henceforth called '*n*-test'), let us have a closer look at the last sentence of §2.1: 'We conclude that idiosyncratic *blagodarja* is an adverb, not a preposition'. The inference made here is obviously invalid. If the *n*-test makes it possible to decide whether or not a given form is a preposition, then it follows from the examples in §2.1 that *blagodarja*+D is not a preposition, not that it is an adverb. Why not some other part of speech, e.g. a verb? Though Odijk's inadmissible inference would in itself be enough reason to lay his paper aside altogether (remember that all further steps hang on the hypothesis that *blagodarja*+D is an adverb), we shall not do so. For the sake of the argument, I shall assume with Odijk that other categories than prepositions and adverbs are excluded.

Odijk's discussion of the categorial status of *blagodarja*+D starts from (at least) the following two assumptions:

- a) the existence of the categories 'preposition' and 'adverb';
- b) the validity of the *n*-test.

3.1.2 Ad a) It is well-known that in traditional grammars adverbs constitute a morphologically and syntactically most heterogeneous category. As Isačenko puts it:

'So gleicht denn der dem Adverb gewidmete Abschnitt mancher Grammatik einer Rumpelkammer, in die man alle Wörter steckt, mit denen man nichts Rechtes anzufangen weiss.' (1968:176)

Forms traditionally called 'adverbs' show more dissimilarities among themselves than common characteristics, and one even wonders if they have any common characteristic at all. Lyons is probably right that

'it is doubtful whether any general theory of syntax would bring together as members of the same syntactic class all the forms that are traditionally described as "adverbs"' (1968:326)

As regards Chomsky 1981, to which Odijk refers as the theoretical framework within which he is working, nothing is said about adverbs constituting a separate syntactic category (cf. also

Babby 1975:84). It is not clear whether Odijk wishes to bring together all traditional 'adverbs' as members of the same class, but there can be no doubt about the following two points:

- he assumes, without any comment, a syntactic category 'adverb';
- he assigns to the category 'adverb' such forms as *tošno* (see §2.5) and *blagodarja*+D, which are not (or not unanimously) regarded as adverbs in traditional grammars², therewith giving Isačenko even more reason for his qualification 'Rumpelkammer'. Why *tošno* should be an adverb is not told at all, in the case of *blagodarja*+D, as we have seen, the only justification is that, in Odijk's view, it is not a preposition. In this connection it is worth noting that the internal unity of the category 'adverb' has far-reaching consequences in Odijk's paper. To give only one example: in §2.3 Odijk's 'proof' that the adverb *obyčno* carries the feature [+N] is used as 'independent evidence' for the hypothesis that *blagodarja*+D is also [+N].

3.1.3 Ad a) and b) It is clear that if Odijk says that prepositions, in contradistinction to adverbs and other parts of speech, have a certain 'idiosyncratic property', he must have some notion of what prepositions are, and that notion must be independent of the 'idiosyncratic property' referred to. Otherwise he would be saying something like 'words that take *n*-forms can be distinguished from other words by their taking *n*-forms', which would be an empty statement. In other words, even if one believes in the validity of the *n*-test, the grammatical categories must be regarded as fundamentally different things, and the *n*-test as based on a relatively superficial property of one of them. In view of the importance for Odijk's analysis of the assumption that *blagodarja*+D is not a preposition but an adverb, one would expect him to justify his assumption in terms of fundamental properties of adverbs and prepositions. One would wish to be given solid reasons for believing that the distinction Odijk makes is not a trivial one, i.e. that the *n*-test really distinguishes between two grammatical categories and not merely between presence and absence of *n*-epenthesis. The following questions could be asked in this context:

-If the problem (sc. the distinction between prepositions and adverbs) can be so easily solved, why did the traditional grammarians not do so?

-Could it be that they did not do so because, if they did, certain forms they regarded as prepositions would 'become adverbs'³ and vice versa⁴?

-If so, what happens on the adverb-side of the preposition-adverb boundary in Odijk's theory? Is his definition of what adverbs are loose (or empty) enough to accommodate forms having the syntactic and semantic properties of prepositions (except the 'idiosyncratic' *n*-epenthesis)?

3.1.4 Ad b) The *n*-test is not reliable. Odijk himself clearly illustrates this in a footnote (not quoted in §2):

'We must note that Hill (1977) observes adverbs taking *n*-forms in substandard Russian. This fact does not affect our argument, however, since all these adverbs require Genitive Case. It reminds one of 'adverbial prepositions', cf. the contrast between *mimo* 'along' (Genitive; *n*-form) vs. *soglasno* 'according to' (Dative; no *n*-form). It appears that there is a special relation of an unclear nature between Genitive Case and *n*-forms.' (1984:144)

Thus: - *n*-forms occur also after other words than prepositions;
- sometimes the case assigned by the word preceding the *n*-form is more important than the grammatical category to which the word belongs.

Odijk's view that these facts do not 'affect his argument' seems unjustified: it is evident that the *n*-epenthesis is a phenomenon about which much is unexplained, and which itself would be an interesting subject of study. Using it as a key-stone for a theory with far-reaching claims is highly inappropriate.

Odijk is right that there is 'a special relation of an unclear nature between the Genitive Case and *n*-forms'. Judging from Hill's data on the history of Russian prepositions and the *n*-epenthesis (1977), one might even consider the possibility that since relatively recent times there has been a stronger relation between the genitive and *n*-epenthesis than between prepositions and *n*-epenthesis. From the earliest stages of Russian, forms originally belonging to other grammatical categories have become prepositions (in the 'traditional' sense). After a certain time

almost all these 'secondary prepositions' began to take *n*-forms (in Hill's terminology: 'made the transition from apparent to actual status'). However, Hill observes that

'THE LAST TIME A NON-GENITIVE-GOVERNING PREPOSITION MADE THE TRANSITION FROM APPARENT TO ACTUAL STATUS WAS A CENTURY AGO (...) (Compare this with the very large number of genitive-governing prepositions which have made the transition in the same period).' (1977:300, original capitals)

At the same time we see a growing tendency towards *n*-epenthesis after comparative adverbs and adjectives, which assign the genitive case (Hill 1977:201-220). Given all this, it is doubtful whether the fact that such words as *blagodarja*+D and *soglasno* do not take *n*-forms has much significance, or rather, whether it signifies what Odijk claims it does.

3.2 (ad §2.2)

It is questionable whether within the theories of Chomsky 1981 Odijk's examples (13)a-d contain any real instance of case-assignment by nouns⁵. In (13)b, c and e, case is assigned by the verb that is present in D-structure (cf. Chomsky 1981:51), in (13)a and d the genitive is probably due to some general principle comparable to Chomsky's Genitive Rule and/or his of-insertion (e.g. *John's reading the book, the city's destruction/destruction of the city*; 1981:49-51). What remains to be explained, of course, is that somewhere in the derivation of such sentences as (13)d the accusative is blocked. Hence, Odijk's conclusion that 'nouns in Russian can assign Case, albeit non-Nominative or -Accusative Case' lacks support. It is worth noting that, although Odijk is a generative grammarian, his reasoning is based entirely on the comparison of surface structures, without reference to their derivation.

I have two further remarks on §2.2:

- 'This seems to be falsified...' (2nd sentence). This assertion betrays careless reading on the part of Odijk. On page 50 Chomsky writes: 'In other languages [sc. than English HPH], categorises other than [-N] are Case-assigners.'
- If (12)a *Kollektivnaja rabota* is an example of Case-assignment by verbs (see however note 5), why not fill in (15)a by

devuška krásiva
 girl beautiful
 'the girl is beautiful'

(Note that the copula is not a full verb: Chomsky 1981:272; cf. also Babby 1975:76ff.)

3.3 (ad §2.3)

In §2.2 Odijk concluded (as we have seen on highly questionable grounds) that [+N]-categories can assign case, but not nominative or accusative. In §2.3 he proceeds:

'Adverbs in Russian can assign Case, but not Nominative or Accusative. On the basis of this fact we assume that adverbs are [+N]-categories'

Odijk's inference is of the following type:

tables have four legs
 my dog has four legs
 —————
 my dog is a table

Now the reader might object that Odijk lives in a world where the only four-legged objects are tables, in other words that there are only [+N]- and [-N]-labelled forms and that [-N] being excluded, adverbs must be [+N]. However, such is not the case: Chomsky 1981 also allows for forms labelled [+V], without reference to the feature [\pm N] (p. 55). The purpose of my remark is not to suggest that adverbs should be labelled [+V], but to show to the reader the inaccurate reasoning which is so characteristic of Odijk's article.

'Adverbs in Russian can assign Case, but not Nominative or Accusative. On the basis of this fact...'. What fact? The only examples of adverbs he has given us so far are *lučše* 'better' and *blagodarja*+D, the categorial status of which is under discussion in his paper. Apparently Odijk has not searched for adverbs with accusative complements. However, under his strict definition of prepositions (see §2.1), *blagodarja*+D is not the only form to 'become an adverb' because of the absence of *n*-epenthesis; so do the other 'gerund prepositions', some of which take accusative complements, e.g.⁶

*nas bylo četvero, sčitaĵa ego/*nego i ego sestru*
 us [gen.] was four counting him [acc.] and his sister
 [acc.]

'we were four, counting him and his sister'

Now let us take a look at the 'independent evidence' Odijk gives. On the basis of the fact that the sentences *on ėovorit bol'she čem obyčno* and *on ėovorit bol'she obyčnogo* are both correct in Russian, he concludes that adverbs can be case-marked. I have two remarks to make on this issue:

- The possibilities to replace *čem* + adverb by 'the adverb in the Genitive Case' are very restricted in Russian. As a matter of fact, I have tried in vain to find another pair of sentences of the type presented by Odijk. In such sentences as

Ona počt krásivo a on bolee čem krásivo
 She sings beautifully and he more than beautifully
On xorošo igraet a ona bolee čem xorošo
 He well plays and she more than well
On často xodit v teatr a ona bolee čem často

He often goes to theatre and she more than often

replacement of *čem* + adverb by a corresponding genitive form was not acceptable to my native informants.

- The fact that the sentences presented by Odijk are both grammatical in Russian does not imply that one is derived from the other (remember that such pairs of sentences are rare). Why should *obyčnogo* not be the genitive neuter singular of the adjective *obyčnyĵ*? Consider the following examples, in which, in contradistinction to *obyčnyĵ-obyčno*, the adverb is not derived from the adjectival stem:

on vygljadit lučše čem prežde
 he looks better than before [adv.]
on vygljadit lučše prežnego
 he looks better than previous [adj.gen.neutr.sing.]
on vygljadit lučše čem včera
 he looks better than yesterday [adv.]
on vygljadit lučše včerašnego (colloquial)
 he looks better than yesterday's [adj.gen.neutr.sing.]

I wish to stress that I am not aiming at refuting 'adventurous or bold ideas with unexplained data' (Chomsky 1982:45), but it is evident that saying 'If čem is followed by an adverb, then the phrase čem adverb can be replaced by the adverb in the Genitive Case' is obscuring the facts in an inadmissible way.

3.4 (ad §2.4)

Now that we are nearing the final part of Odijk's account, it is useful to return to the last of the three questions quoted in §1:

'(C) Why is there a difference in Case-assignment properties between these forms, although they have exactly the same form and are obviously both historically and synchronically related?'

I agree that the gerund *blagodarja* and *blagodarja+D* are obviously historically related. It would be too much of a coincidence if two homonyms with so similar meanings would have arisen independently of one another. But why are they 'obviously synchronically related'? Why should a synchronical grammar not accept two unrelated homonyms with an evident historical relationship? Must all historical relationships be accounted for in a synchronical grammar?

Even if we assume that both *blagodarjas* are synchronically related, the question remains strange, because Odijk, following Chomsky 1970, allows for a type of synchronical relatedness which he calls 'morphological relatedness' and which has no implication whatsoever for the syntactic environments in which the related forms may occur. So if we isolate the 'synchronic part' of Odijk's question (C), we see that 'why is there a difference in Case-assignment properties between these forms, although they have exactly the same form and are obviously synchronically related?' is answered by 'because synchronical relatedness does not necessarily say anything about case-assignment', which is rather an empty answer.

If we concentrate on the 'historical part' of Odijk's question (C), we see that 'why is there a difference in Case-assignment properties between these forms, although they have exactly the same form and are obviously historically related?' is an-

swered by: 'at some point in time *blagodarja* acquired its idiosyncratic meaning and the syntax-morphology boundary was shifted upwards, so that idiosyncratic *blagodarja* and the verb *blagodarit*' were no longer syntactically related'. The latter answer is less empty, but it is no more than a complicated way of saying what everyone had already guessed: at some point in time the gerund *blagodarja* acquired a 'second', idiosyncratic meaning, so that then there were two homonyms *blagodarja*. The 'second', idiosyncratic *blagodarja* became isolated from the paradigm of *blagodarit*'.

3.5 (ad §2.5)

Since from a synchronical point of view *blagodarja+D* is not in any non-empty sense a form of *blagodarit*', it is not self-evident that it should take the accusative case. On the other hand, as I have shown in §3.3 (*ščitaja* 'counting' with accusative), there is also no a priori reason why it should *not* assign the accusative (as a matter of fact, Hill (1977:221) and Čerkasova (1964:232) observe that in past centuries it often did⁸).

Let us assume for a moment that there is a special reason why *blagodarja+D* should not assign the accusative case. Why does it assign the dative? Odijk gives two suggestions. The first ('the dative is the unmarked case for adjectives and adverbs to assign') is not sufficiently elaborated to say anything about it. Remember that in the present discussion we have seen adjectives and 'adverbs' with complements in all cases except the prepositional. Of course one can always call one of these cases 'unmarked' and the other ones 'marked'. It is not clear to me why especially *tošno* and *tošnit*', which appear in a very specific and limited type of construction (see note 2), should be examples of 'unmarked' case-assignment⁹. The second suggestion ('inherent case') is a complicated way of saying that the case-assignment of *blagodarja+D* could be idiosyncratic and that related words are known to have related idiosyncrasies, which is not something new and for which we did not need the whole story about [+N] and [-N].

Perhaps the most striking thing about Odijk's 'explanation' of the historical development of *blagodarja*+D is that no use whatsoever is made of historical data. I even doubt whether he gathered any such data, because if he had, the problems to be solved and the type of answer to be found in his paper would probably have been different. From easily accessible sources¹⁰ he could have obtained the following information:

- In past centuries the verb *blagodarit'* has, at least for a certain period (late 18th and early 19th century), assigned both accusative and dative case. There has probably always been a statistical preference for the accusative. After approximately 1830, *blagodarit'* with dative case became obsolete.

- Prepositional *blagodarja* probably arose in the 18th century and was then predominantly used with the accusative. In the early 19th century use of the dative after prepositional *blagodarja* rapidly gained ground and after approximately 1830 prepositional *blagodarja* with accusative case became more and more rare.

Thus, the dative after *blagodarja*+D is not a total surprise and we do not have to discover new principles of universal grammar to account for it. Apparently in the early 19th century there was a tendency toward reducing the case-assignment possibilities after *blagodarit'* and *blagodarja* (cf. Čerkasova 1964:234). The question which remains to be answered is: why did, out of the two possibilities, prepositional *blagodarja* 'choose' the dative, whereas the verb *blagodarit'* 'chose' the accusative?

Although Odijk suggests that the crucial moment in the development of *blagodarja* is the moment when it acquired a second, 'idiosyncratic' meaning, the meaning of prepositional *blagodarja* does not play a central role in his explanation of the case assigned by it. Taking into account both the historical data and the difference in meaning between prepositional *blagodarja* and the verb *blagodarit'*, one can think of another type of explanation than the type of explanation (unsuccessfully) aimed at by Odijk. I shall give an example of such an explanation here, without claiming, however, that it is more than a reasonable guess. No reliable answer can be given without extensive study of the mean-

ing of the cases, the development of case-assignment and the normative tendencies in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The semantic relation between prepositional *blagodarja* and its complement is different from that between *blagodarit'* and its complement. The complement of 'to thank' is, to witness the predominant use of the accusative through the ages, regarded as a direct object in Russian. The complement of prepositional *blagodarja*, however, is not 'someone being thanked', but a person or thing that is considered the cause of a pleasant or unpleasant event. It can be imagined that in the early 19th century, when prepositional *blagodarja* was still associated with the verb, and for that verb both case-assignment possibilities were still extant, prepositional *blagodarja* developed a preference for the case which did not have the meaning 'direct object'¹¹.

3.6 (ad §2.6)

As I have tried to show, the merits of Odijk's article must not be overestimated. Considering the title of the volume in which it was printed (*Linguistics in the Netherlands*), it is hardly a good advertisement for Dutch Slavistics and linguistics.

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NOTES

¹ E.g. Isačenko 1968, Svedova 1970, Tauscher-Kirschbaum 1980, Akademija Nauk SSSR 1981-84.

² The form *tošno* appears in such sentences as
mne tošno
 I [dat.] sick
 'I am sick'

About the categorial status of forms of this type discussion has been going on, according to Isačenko (1968:194), since Ščerba 1928. The form *blagodarja*+D is, as we know, almost always regarded as a preposition.

³ E.g. *blagodarja*+D, *soglasno* 'according to', *podobno* 'like'.

⁴ Comparative adverbs which sometimes take *n*-forms (cf. Hill 1977:201-220).

⁵ Neither is (12) an instance of case-assignment by a verb (cf. Chomsky 1981:52, 170, 259 ff.).

⁶ I wish to thank Mrs. O.N. Heuvelman-Godovikova and Mr. A.V. Parchomov for giving their native speakers' judgments on the Russian sentences presented in the present section.

⁷ Babby, from whom Odijk takes his example, remarks that it cannot be mere coincidence that in the English glosses *than usually* can be replaced by *than usual* (1975:22).

⁸ Unfortunately, in Hill's and Čerkasova's examples the complements are always male persons, which in Russian have the same form for genitive and accusative.

⁹ In a footnote (not quoted in §2) Odijk himself explains *vidno* and *slyšno* (exceptions to his assumption that adverbs cannot assign the accusative) by the fact that *vidno* and *slyšno* appear in a 'special construction' (1984:144).

¹⁰ Akademija Nauk SSSR 1948-65, Akademija Nauk SSSR 1975-..., Sreznevskij 1956 (1906), Čerkasova 1964.

¹¹ The difference with other 'gerund prepositions' as *ščitaja* is twofold:
-the complement of *ščitaja* is not wholly unlike a direct object: as in the case of the verb itself, someone is 'being counted';
-the verb *ščitat'* never assigned any other case than the accusative to the object being counted.

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