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Russian constructions with numerals and quantifiers: Their non-standard use in the subject and object position

In the article, I describe cases of special behavior of Russian phrases with quantifiers like *neskol'ko* 'some', *mnogo* 'many, much' and small numerals like *dva* 'two'. I show that they can occur in the subject position in contexts that usually do not contain a canonical DP/NP subject (constructions with the verb *xvatat'* 'be enough', negation contexts with the verb *byt'* 'be' and its habitual / iterative correlate *byvat'*), and for *neskol'ko*-like quantifiers, the direct object position with intransitive predicates like *na-…-sja* circumfixed verbs is also available. The reason of non-canonical subject behavior is the possibility to be subjects without controlling plural verbal agreement, while the non-canonical direct object behavior is possible because *neskol'ko*-like quantifiers lack the category of case.

Key words: quantifiers, numerals, case-marking, direct object, subject, genitive of negation, agreement

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Русские конструкции с числительными и квантификаторами: нестандартное использование в позиции субъекта и объекта

В статье описываются случаи, когда в русском языке особым образом ведут себя группы с квантификаторами типа *много*, *несколько* и малыми числительными типа *два*. Как мы показываем, эти единицы могут появляться в позиции субъекта в конструкциях, которые не могут содержать NP или DP в номинативе (при глаголе *хватать* и в конструкциях с генитивом отрицания при глаголах *быть* и *бывать*). Для квантификаторов типа *несколько* также доступна позиция (прямого) дополнения при глаголах с циркумфиксом *на-…-ся*, в норме являющихся непереходными. Мы показываем, что причина нестандартного появления в позиции субъекта заключается в способности данных типов групп не контролировать глагольное согласование, тогда как нестандартное прямообъектное поведение квантификаторов типа *несколько* может быть связано с отсутствием у них категории падежа.

Ключевые слова: квантификаторы, числительные, падеж, прямой объект, субъект, генитив отрицания, согласование

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1. Introduction

In modern syntax, multiple factors of argument marking have shown to be relevant. What is, however, understudied, is the role of morphological and mixed (morphological and syntactic) parameters. Normally, the grammatical and lexical class of the argument does not get attention it deserves. Research where the class of object is considered is normally semantic rather than syntactic: mostly the taxonomy of verbs, metaphoric extensions and relations between constructions with different argument types is described. However, as I show, the morphological class and part of speech are highly relevant in some cases. I will describe three of them: the verb *xvatat'* 'be sufficient'; contexts of the genitive of negation; verbs with the circumfix *na-…-sja*.

All of these contexts have one feature in common: they prohibit a nominative- or accusative-marked argument (i.e., a subject or direct object, canonically marked with a structural case) or at least are possible without it. In the article, I argue that under some conditions, the structural case is possible. The question is why the use of nominative/accusative is so selective and what should be proposed to describe these quantifier constructions: the description of the nominative/accusative argument or, by contrast, the description of the genitive group that is unmarked for the constructions under analysis.

In what follows, I will consider two groups of units with semantics of quantification:

1) adverbial-like quantifiers *neskol'ko* 'some, several', *mnogo* 'much, many', *skol'ko* 'how many, how much', *stol'ko* 'so many, so much';

2) small numerals *dva* '2', *three* '3', and so on.

While numerals have a case paradigm, the morphological status of adverbials like *neskol'ko* is problematic. The adverbial like forms like *neskol'ko are* normally used only in nominative and accusative contexts, while in other cases, adjective forms like *neskol'kix* (some-PL.GEN/PL.LOC) are used. In principle, forms like *neskol'ko* and like *neskol'kix* could be regarded as members of the same paradigm – this would be plausible, given that quantifiers do not have a nominative case-marked adjective form like the hypothetical *neskol'kij* or *neskol'kie.* However, this joint paradigm would be very unnatural from the formal point of view: while indirect case forms *neskol'k-ix*, *neskol'k-im* and *neskol'k-imi* contain plural adjective suffixes of GEN/LOC, DAT and INS, respectively, the form *neskol'ko* does not contain a plural suffix. Even if we regard the final *-o* as a separate morpheme, this morpheme apparently does not belong to the plural paradigm and to any slot of the adjective paradigm. Thus, it seems more reliable to regard word forms *neskol'ko*, *skol'ko*, *stol'ko* and *mnogo* as separate words and classify them as adverbial-like quantifiers.

2. Non-standard behavior of quantifiers and numerals: Three contexts

2.1. Constructions with the verb *xvatat'*

The verb *xvatat'* 'be sufficient' has attracted linguists' attention (see [Rakhilina, Kor Chahine, 2009; Kholodilova, 2012]) mainly for its inability to be used with a nominative subject and its polysemy related to quantification. For instance, in (1) its genitive argument denotes to the participant that lacks, while in (2), the genitive NP points to the general mass that presents in the situation but is insufficient:

(1) *Ne* *xvata-et* *tol'ko* *Pet-i.*
NEG be.enough-PRS.3SG only Petja-SG.GEN
'Only Petja is missing.'

(2) *Mjas-a* *ne* *xvata-et.*
meat-SG.GEN NEG be.enough-PRS.3SG
'The meat (that we have) is insufficient.'

The quantification semantics and the lack of nominative arguments are tightly related to each other. Genitive is known for its function to denote a quantified group. Cf. examples of the partitive use of genitive with 'normal' transitive verbs:

(3) *Nado* *vypi-t'* *vodk-i.*
necessary drink-INF vodka-SG.GEN
'We should drink (some) vodka.'

It turns out, however, that the inability of *xvatat'* to take nominative is not total. Some numerals in the subject position of this verb can be marked with nominative, and not only with genitive:

(4) *Dve* *minut-y* *xvat-it?*
two.NOM/ACC minute-SG.GEN enough-PRS.3SG
'Are two minutes sufficient?'

The main questions are (1) why quantifier phrases are not marked with genitive with this verb and (2) whether the form *dve* in (4) is really nominative or rather accusative (the genitive form is distinct and looks as *dvux*). The minimal pair with the numeral *odin* is much worse:

(5) ??*Odin* *čas-ø* *xvat-it?*
one.NOM/ACC hour-SG.NOM enough-PRS.3SG
'Is one hour sufficient?'

The native speaker survey also shows the difference in judgments between examples with 'two' and 'one'.

(6) *Mne* *xvati-l-ø* *odin-ø* *čas-ø*
I.DAT be.enough-PST-SG.M one.M.SG.NOM hour-SG.NOM/ACC
čtoby *oceni-t'* *situacij-u.* (ACC)
to analyze-INF situation-SG.ACC
'One hour was enough for me to analyze the situation.' – 76 out of 228

(7) *Mne* *xvati-l-o* *odin-ø* *čas-ø*
I.DAT be.enough-PST-SG.N one.M.SG./ACC hour-SG.ACC
čtoby *oceni-t'* *situacij-u.* (NOM)
to analyze-INF situation-SG.ACC
'Two hours were enough for me to analyze the situation.' – 83 out of 228[1]

(8) *Mne* *xvati-l-o* *dv-a* *čas-a*
I.DAT be.enough-PST-SG.N TWO-M.NOM/ACC hour-SG.GEN
čtoby *ocenit'* *situacij-u.*(NOM)
to analyze-INF situation-SG.ACC
'Two hours were enough for me to analyze the situation.' – 149 out of 228

(9) *Mne* *xvati-l-o* *odn-ogo* *čas-a*
I.DAT be.enough-PST-SG.M one-M.SG.GEN hour-SG.GEN
čtoby *oceni-t'* *situacij-u.* (NOM)
to analyze-INF situation-SG.ACC
'One hour was enough for me to analyze the situation.' – 220 out of 228

(10) *Mne* *xvati-l-o* *dv-ux* *čas-ov*
I.DAT be.enough-PST-SG.M two-PL hour-PL.GEN
čtoby *ocenit'* *situacij-u.* (NOM)
to analyze-INF situation-SG.ACC
'Two hours were enough for me to analyze the situation.' – 212 out of 228

Of course, the variants with genitive, such as one represented in (10), are perfect for almost all informants for both 'one' and 'two'. The key difference is between nominative/accusative versions of the construction with numerals 'one' vs. 'two'. For *odin* 'one', both variants (nominative, with agreement, as in (6), and accusative, without agreement, as in (7)) have the total about 80, which means that the average mark is less than 1.5. For (8),

[1] Each sentence got from each native speaker a mark from 1 (totally unacceptable) to 4 (totally acceptable).

where *dva* is in nominative or accusative, 149 means the average more than 2.5. Fisher's test yields F = 0.000228, which means a statistically relevant difference between 'one' and 'two'.

The situation in the present tense is roughly the same. The total for constructions with *dva* is 130, which is significantly more than the total of 86 for *odin.* Since in Russian, verbs agree in number with the subject and can do it even if the subject is a numeral phrase, the plural variants were also evaluated. Interestingly, they have a much lower mark than their singular correlates, both in past (the total is 68) and present (the total is 72). This fact, however, is not highly illustrative since in many other contexts, plural agreement with quantifier phrases is less frequent even with verbs allowing nominative NP subjects.

Neskol'ko-like quantifiers are also possible in examples like (8) (*xvatilo neskol'ko časov* 'several hours were sufficient is acceptable'), though these variants were not checked with native speakers.

2.2. Constructions with genitive of negation

Under negation, Russian NPs marked with nominative and accusative can change their marking to genitive. Normally, this change is optional [Partee, Borschev, 2002a, 2002b; Rakhilina et al., 2008], and others show that the choice of the genitive or the standard DO/S case depends on multiple factors:

1) focus on the scene vs. the participant;
2) dynamic vs. static nature of the situation;
3) agentivity;
4) physical vs. metaphoric meaning, and so on.

However, in some existential and locative contexts, especially with the verb *byt'* 'be' or its iterative/habitual correlate *byvat'* 'exist, happen sometimes, habitually' the genitive marking becomes obligatory. In examples like (11) and (12), nominative is impossible or yields another reading:

(11) *U* *byk-a* *ne* *by-l-o* *rog-ov* /
at bull-SG.GEN NEG be-PST-SG.N horn-PL.GEN
#ne *by-l-i* *rog-a.*
NEG be-PST-PL horn-PL.NOM
'The bull did not have horns.'

(12) *U* *svin-ej* *ne* *byva-et* *rog-ov* /
at pig-PL.GEN NEG be.hab-PRS.3SG horn-PL.GEN
#ne *byvaj-ut* *rog-a.*
NEG be.hab-PRS.3PL horn-PL.NOM
'Pigs do not have horns / never have horns.'

The nominative *ne byli roga* is not ungrammatical but leads a strange reading like 'the horns did not visit the bull, the horn were not at bull's home'. Thus, the use of nominative makes (11) analogous to (13), with an agentive subject *Vanja*:

(13) *U Pet-i doma ne by-l-ø tol'ko Vanja.*
at Petja-SG.GEN home NEG be-PST-SG.M only Vanja-SG.NOM
'Only Vanja has not visited Petja.'

However, for numeral phrases, it turns out to be possible to be marked with nominative in the same contexts.

(14) *U nosorog-a ne byva-et*
at rhinoceros-SG.GEN NEG be.hab-PRS.3SG
tri rog-a.
three.NOM horn-SG.GEN
'Rhinoceroses never have three horns.'[2]

The standard variant with genitive is sometimes even worse:

(15) *U nosorog-a ne byva-et*
at rhinoceros-SG.GEN NEG be.hab-PRS.3PL
tr-ex rog-ov.
three.GEN horn-PL.GEN
'Rhinoceroses never have three horns.'

Notably, here the plural agreement also makes the sentence worse, just as in constructions with *xvatat'* 'be enough'.

(16) *??U nosorog-a ne byvaj-ut*
at rhinoceros-SG.GEN NEG be.hab-PRS.3PL
tri rog-a.
three.NOM horn-SG.GEN
'Rhinoceroses never have three horns.'

2.3. Agreement as a factor of non-typical behavior of quantifiers

There are several possible answers on the question what the possibility of (8), (14) and similar examples results from:

1) the nominative and the accusative form coincide;
2) the nominative form do not control agreement.

[2] Quantifiers like *neskol'ko* or *mnogo* are more problematic to test here, but grammatically, constructions like *u volka ne byvaet neskol'ko* / *mnogo golov* 'wolfs never have several / many heads' seem acceptable.

The first answer does not account for the data. For instance, the noun *vremja* also has the same form of nominative and accusative. However, in the literary speech, it can only be used in genitive with *xvatat'* and *dostatočno* (the nominative form *vremja* is highly colloquial and judged awkward by educated speakers in examples like (17)):

(17) *Ne* *xvata-et* *vremen-i* / *??vremj-a.*
NEG be.enough-PRS.3SG time-SG.GEN time-SG.NOM
'We are short of time.'

Thus, the explanation should be based on the agreement. *Xvatat'* is an intransitive predicate: thus, it should not take an accusative argument. At the same time, their inability to take a nominative argument remains unexplained. Of course, we can suppose that they are simply lexically impersonal: they can take no nominative NP. However, in this case the special behavior of quantifier phrases needs to be stipulated.

We can assume that the inability of *xvatat'* with nominative NPs is in fact inability to take agreement markers. Each NP in Russian must control either singular or plural number verbal agreement.

(18) *stoja-l-ø* *stol-ø* / *stoja-l-i* *stol-y.*
stand-PST-SG.M table-SG.NOM stand-PST-PL table-PL.NOM
'the table / tables stood'

Thus, the use of the polysemous form *stol* requires either the accusative interpretation (which is impossible for intransitive verbs) or the nominative interpretation with agreement. The peculiar feature of quantifier constructions is that they can lack number and gender agreement:

(19) *Priexa-l-o* / *priexa-l-i* *desjat'* *turist-ov.*
arrive-PST-SG.N come-PST-PL ten tourist-PL.GEN
'Ten tourists came.'

Thus, we propose that this ability to be in nominative without controlling agreement is the key feature in examples like (8). The same is true for GoN contexts. The key factor in the possibility of (14) is that *tri roga* can be used without controlling the plural agreement. It is especially important because the plural agreement construction is designed here for the agentive reading of *byt'* ('visit some place'), often in the 'perfect' sense:

(20) *My* *ne* *by-l-i* *vo* *Florenci-i.*
we.NOM NEG be-PST-SG.M in Florence-SG.LOC
'We have (never) been to Florence.'

At the same time, in some readings of *byt'*, even with quantifiers, the use of the genitive is obligatory. Here belongs the locative *byt'*:

(21) *V* *auditori-i* *Van-i* *ne* *by-l-o.*
in lecture.room-SG.LOC Vanja-SG.GEN NEG be-PST-SG.N
'There was not Vanja in the lecture room / Vanja was not in the lecture room.'

(22) *V* *auditori-i* *ne* *by-l-o* *tr-ex* /
in lecture.room-SG.LOC NEG be-PST-SG.N three-GEN
neskol'k-ix *čelovek-ø.*
several-PL.GEN people-PL.GEN

(23) *??V* *auditori-i* *ne* *by-l-o*
in lecture.room-SG.LOC NEG be-PST-SG.N
tr-i *čelovek-a* /
three-NOM person-SG.GEN
neskol'ko *čelovek-ø.*
several people-PL.GEN
'Three / several people were not in the lecture room.'

2.4. Verbs with the circumfix *na-…-sja*

The third context of unusual behavior of quantifiers is represented by circumfixed verbs with *na-…-sja.* The circumfix *na-…-sja* belongs to the rich system of Russian circumfixes. Most of them include a verbal prefix and the reflexive suffix *-sja*:

u-…-sja – make something to its extreme point;
raz-…-sja – intensively begin to do something; move intensively from each other (of multiple subjects);
s-…-sja – move intensively to each other (of multiple subjects).

The degree of integration of the parts of circumfixes is discussed by [Tatevosov, 2009], but we do not touch upon this matter here.

Verbs with circumfixes are usually intransitive. The class of exceptions is rather small. For instance, it includes the verb *doždat'sja* which is compatible with accusative objects:

(24) *Devočka* *nakonec* *do-žda-l-a-s'* *mam-u.*
girl-SG.NOM finally *do*-wait-PST-SG.F-REFL mother-SG.ACC
'The girl waited his mother for a long time, and finally she came.'

Normally, the DO of the base verb is marked with genitive or instrumental.

(25) *Serež-a* *na-e-l-ø-sja*
Serezha-SG.NOM *na*-eat-PST-SG.M-REFL
grečnev-oj *kaš-i* /
buckwheat-F.SG.GEN kasha-SG.GEN
grečnev-oj *kaš-ej.*
buckwheat-F.SG.INS kasha-SG.INS
'Serezha fed himself with buckwheat.'[3]

Kagan and Pereltsvaig (2011) regard genitive argument of *na-…-sja* verbs as bare nominal due to their non-specificity and general tendency not to take DP-level modifiers like *ėtot* 'this'.

Surprisingly, it turns out that quantifier constructions with words like *mnogo*, *neskol'ko*, *skol'ko*, *stol'ko are* compatible with some circumfixed verbs. This fact is unexpected given that *na-…-sja* verbs are usually intransitive (they do not take accusative NPs/DPs), and, as we have said in the Introduction, adverbial-like forms like *mnogo* usually occur in nominative and accusative contexts.

(26) *Ja* *nasmotre-l-ø-sja* *mnogo* *ljubitel'sk-ix*
I.NOM *na*-watch-PST-SG.M-REFL many amateur-PL.GEN
i *professional'n-yx* *fil'm-ov*
and professional-PL.GEN film-PL.GEN
'I have watched so many amateur and professional films…'

(27) *Na-sluša-eš-sja* *stol'ko* *gor'k-ix* *istorij-ø…*
na-listen-FUT-2SG-REFL so.many bitter-PL.GEN story-PL.GEN
'You will hear so many sad stories that you won't find in any book…'

To estimate the probability of *neskol'ko*-like quantifiers, an experiment has been organized. As with the verb *xvatat'*, here native speakers also had to evaluate several examples from 1 (unacceptable, absolutely impossible) to 4 (acceptable, no mistakes). The medium marks were reserved for bad, but not unacceptable (2) and stylistically imperfect, but in general acceptable (3) Russian sentences. The experiment shows that native speakers often tolerate the use of *neskol'ko*-like quantifiers in these contexts. Some examples almost always get the maximum score:

[3] The instrumental vs. genitive variant are not fully synonymous. It seems that instrumental is used when the final result is emphasized ('the subject is not hungry'), while genitive can simply mark the fact that the subject has eaten a large quantity of some food. However, this difference is irrelevant for the present study.

(28) *Ja ... na-smotre-l-ø-sja stol'ko užastik-ov*
I.NOM … *NA*-look-PST-SG.M-REFL so.much horror.film-PL.GEN
čto teper' bud-u xodi-t' tol'ko na romantičesk-ie
that now be-FUT.1SG go-INF only to romantic-PL.ACC
komedi-i.
comedy-PL.ACC
'I have watched so many horror films during this month that now I will only watch romantic comedies.' – 83 out of 92.

(29) *Skol'ko že antisemitsk-ix šutoček-ø*
how.many PART anti-Semitic-PL.GEN joke-PL.GEN
ja na-sluša-l-ø-sja!
I.NOM *na*-listen-PST-SG.M- -REFL
'I heard there so many anti-Semitic jokes!' – 78 out of 92.

Others are often evaluated for 3 and 4, but are far from getting the maximum score.

(30) *Skol'ko že ja tam na-smotre-l-ø-sja*
how.many PART I.NOM there *na*-look-PST-SG.M-REFL
vsjak-ogo der'm-a!
various-N.SG.GEN shit-SG.GEN
'What a bunch of shit have I seen there!' – 70 out of 92.

(31) *Tam možno mnogo vs-ego na-sluša-t'-sja!*
there possible much all-N.SG.GEN *na*-listen-INF-REFL
'There you can hear lots of different things!' – 66 out of 92.

Interestingly, the standard way of marking (with the genitive form of adjectives like *mnogix*) is judged worse than those with *neskol'ko*-like quantifiers.

(32) *Ja tam na-smotre-l-ø-sja mnog-ix frik-ov,*
I.NOM there *na*-look-PST-SG.M-REFL many-PL.GEN freak-PL.GEN
hippi i drug-ix strann-yx ličnost-ej.
hippy.PL.GEN and other-PL.GEN strange-PL.GEN person-PL.GEN
'I have seen there lots of freaks, hippies and other strange persons' – 62 out of 92.

A possible analysis of *neskol'ko*-like units is that they are not in the direct object position, but rather in an adjunct position. Note that in other contexts, this type of use is possible for *mnogo* and *neskol'ko*:

(33) *On mnogo gulja-l-ø v et-i dn-i.*
he.NOM much walk-PST-SG.M in this-PL.ACC day-PL.ACC
'Those days, he walked a lot.'

In (33), *mnogo* is not an argument – it occupies the position of intensity adjunct. The same phenomenon is illustrated by *neskol'ko stranno* 'a bit strange' where *neskol'ko* is a degree modifier of the adverbial *stranno.* It is theoretically possible that in (26)–(31), the structure looks as in (34):

(34) *navidalsja* [AdvP *mnogo*] [NP *fil'mov*]

However, this analysis faces some problems. For instance, if *neskol'ko*-like quantifiers were adverbials, they would be expected to be compatible with many other circumfixed verbs. This is not the case: verbs like *naest'sja* or *napit'sja* cannot be used with *mnogo*, *neskol'ko*, though the same modifiers are acceptable for base verbs:

(35) *On* *mnogo* *pi-l-ø.*
he.NOM much drink.UP-PST-SG.M
'He drank much.'

(36) *On* *vypi-l-ø* *mnogo* *vod-y.*
he.NOM drink.UP-PST-SG.M much water-SG.GEN
'He drank much water.'

(37) **On* *napi-l-ø-sja* *mnogo* *vod-y.*
he.NOM drink.up-PST-SG.M much water-SG.GEN
Intended: 'He has drunk his … with a big quantity of water.'

Another, perhaps a stronger evidence would be if *neskol'ko*-like quantifiers with circumfixed verb could be coordinated with regular genitive arguments. In fact, structures like (38) are marginal, though not totally unacceptable:

(38) *On* *na-sluša-l-ø-sja* *istorij-ø*
he.NOM *na*listen-PST-SG.M-REFL story-PL.GEN
i *očen'* *mnogo* *skazok-ø.*
and very many fairy.tale-PL.GEN
'He has heard (many) stories and lots of fairy tales.'

The explanation of this case is different from that in the previous two contexts. With circumfixed verbs, quantifier phrases occupy the DO position, while the GoN and *xvatat'* show quantifiers in the subject position. Thus, the agreement-based analysis is unavailable. Another difference is that nominative-/accusative-marked small nominal are incompatible with circumfixed verbs. It seems that constructions like (26)–(31) are acceptable due to two factors.

1. The semantic factor. The *na-…-sja* construction means that the quantity of the object X was enough for the situation/participant Y. The name of X is in genitive, which is predictable provided that genitive often has a partitive meaning: the precise quantity of X is irrelevant, X-GEN is the name

of the class from which a sufficient quantity was taken. However, when *neskol'ko*-type quantifiers is used, the quantifier does not denote a class – it points to the precise quantity of objects which is not marked explicitly in examples like (25). This is why it is marked with accusative, and not with partitive genitive.

2. The syntactic factor. The reflexive morpheme usually detransitivizes the verb. However, the main component of this intransitivity is the inability to take accusative-marked objects. Since *neskol'ko*-like units are unmarked for case, they do not conflict with the syntactic characteristics of the verb.

The relevance of the second factor is confirmed by the fact that *na-…-sja* verbs are incompatible with numerals. It is widely known that contrary to *neskol'ko*-like units, numerals are marked for case, though verbal agreement with them is optional.

	Agreement control	**Case marking**
NPs	+	+
Quantifiers	+ or –	–
Numerals	+ or –	+

Thus, while for the two previous cases, the absence of agreement is crucial, for circumfixed verbs, the main feature is absence of case-marking.

2.5. The quantifier data and the NP/DP problem

The fact that quantifiers behave in a special way in the contexts under analysis reminds us of the NP/DP problem. As early as in 1987, Abney proposed for determiners an analysis based on a special projection DP. Bošković (2008), Lyutikova and Pereltsvaig (2015), Lyutikova (2017) show that some facts of Russian and other languages without articles allows an analysis in the DP terms.

Lyutikova claims that some behavioral features characterize DPs as opposed to non-DPs:

1) in constructions with quantifiers, only QPs, but not DPs can denote pluralities with no agreement on the verb:

(39) *Priexa-l-o* *tri* *parnj-a.*
come-PST-SG.N three.NOM guy-SG.NOM
'Three guys came.'

2) in constructions with NPs (Lyutikova's argument is based on collocations like *imet' pravo* 'have right'), extraction of an argument of the complement

clause of noun is possible, while in constructions with DPs, it is prohibited by the complex NP constraint;

3) in constructions with NPs, floating quantifiers in the embedded infinitival clause can be marked with nominative, while for DPs, dative marking of the floating quantifier in the embedded clause is characteristic.

It is tempting to say that *xvatat'* is a special verb that allows nominative marking only for QPs, DPs being marked with genitive. The problem of this construction is that no NP diagnostics is possible there. The very situation when case-marking of various types of constituents differs is rather peculiar. The same problems characterize the other two contexts addressed above. Thus, the special behavior of quantifiers and numerals can be related to restrictions on the volume of constituent, but this claim cannot be extended to NPs like those discussed by Lyutikova (2017).

3. Morphology and syntax: Further perspectives

The morphological characteristics prove their relevance for syntax even outside the domain of transitivity and argument marking. I will mention (i) behavior of predicatives; (ii) zero copula constructions and (iii) complement clauses.

3.1. Predicatives

Predicatives are adverbial-like units that occupy the predicate position.

(40) ***Stranno***, *cto* *Petja* *ne* *priexa-l-ø.*
strange COMP Petja-SG.NOM NEG come-PST-SG.M
'It is strange that Petja did not come.'

Alongside the predicate proper, various subtypes of secondary predicate contexts are available for these units:

(41) ***Kaza-l-o-s'*** ***stranno***, *čto* *Petj-a*
seem-PST-SG.N-REFL strange COMP Petja-SG.NOM
ne *priexa-l-ø.*
NEG come-PST-SG.M
'It seemed strange that Petja did not come.'

The class of predicatives is semantically heterogenous, but mainly they express semantics of evaluation, emotion, perception, and physical feelings. In his work, Zimmerling (2018) made an extensive list of predicatives in Russian. Say (2013) and Letuchiy (2014) showed that predicative are not uniform syntactically, as well as semantically: for instance, only some of them can be claimed to have a subject, others are rather impersonal. Evaluation predicatives have a special property: they can remain in the present tense

form (= without an explicit tense marker) for tense in some contexts referring to past (42) or denoting an irreal situation normally requiring the use of subjunctive (43):

(42) ***Neponjatno*** *kak* *djadj-a* *Julius*
unclear how uncle-SG.NOM Julius-SG.NOM
sobira-l-ø-sja *eto* *sdela-t'.*
be.going-PST-SG.M-REFL this-SG.ACC do-INF
'It was / is unclear how Uncle Julius was going to do it.'

(43) ***Stranno*** *jesli* *by* *on* *ne* *nervniča-l-ø.*
stranno if IRR he.NOM NEG worry-PST-SG.M
'It would be strange if he did not worry.'

This property is tightly linked to the morphological specificity of predicatives. Although predicatives are compatible with zero copula that functions as tense marker here, its status is autonomous – thus, tense is marked outside the predicative. By contrast, in verb forms, tense is marked with intra-word affixes. Thus, when predicatives are used in present tense in examples like (42) or (43), no tense marker is used in the matrix clause and no grammatical conflict emerges between the predicative and the embedded predicate (e.g., *sobiralsja* 'was going to' in (42)).[4]

3.2. Complement clauses

Some aspects of behavior of complement clauses also result from their morphological properties, mainly from the absence of the category of case. Here belong, for instance, the impossibility of the standard nominalization type of transitive verbs and, by contrast, possibility of a copula construction that is impossible for NPs.

The standard nominalization techniques used with transitive verbs in Russian includes change of the case of the verb subject (A) to instrumental and the case of the object (P) to genitive.

(44) *ubijstv-o* *byk-a* *mjasnik-om*
killing-SG.NOM bull-SG.GEN butcher-SG.INS
'killing the bull by the butcher'

[4] Note that the situation allows an alternative, syntactico-semantic, treatment. We can suppose that predicatives is static by their meaning. They need a copula to link the situation to precise temporal and modal conditions, but can also be interpreted without these conditions. However, this analysis does not explain why constructions like (41) and (42) are impossible with matrix predicates like *razdražat'* which are well compatible with names of generic and repeated events.

However, the same mechanism cannot be used with complement clauses, or is dubious in most cases. For instance, it is natural to regard the verb *znat'* as transitive, even with a complement clause, but if this clause is retained under nominalization, the base subject is not marked with instrumental.

(44) *znani-e* *ljud-ej* / *??ljud'-mi*
knowledge-SG.NOM people-PL.GEN people-PL.INS
kak *razviva-et-sja* *stran-a*
how develop-PRS.3SG-REFL country-SG.NOM
'people's knowledge how the country develops'

Since Russian lacks a Germanic-like prepositional genitive, mainly the standard postpositional genitive form is used if the base object is clausal, as in (44). The reason of unacceptability of the instrumental form is that the complement clause does not have the category of case. Instrumental is used when there is another case (more privileged, in some aspects) in the construction. Thus, what is crucial, are morphological properties of the complement clause, and not their syntactic position (the impossibility of instrumental in (44) does not tell us directly if the CC is or is not a direct object in the base construction).

In the second case, the CC is, by contrast, 'more liberal' to the makeup of a construction than NPs. In modern Russian, in construction with an explicit copula, one of the arguments is most often marked with instrumental, and the other one with nominative. This is also the case with constructions including abstract predicate nouns like *dolg* 'duty', *objazannost'* 'obligation', *zadača* 'task', and so on: the abstract nominal occupies the predicate position and is marked with instrumental, while the content of the task or duty takes nominative.[5] The variant with two nominatives is either fully excluded or obviously worse than one with instrumental.

(45) *Ego* *zadač-ej* *by-l-ø* / **zadač-a* *by-l-a*
his task-SG.INS be-PST-SG.M task-SG.NOM be-PST-SG.F
sbor-ø *informac-ii.*
collection-SG.NOM information-SG.GEN
'His task was was data collection.'

By contrast, if the content of the abstract noun is a complement clause, the abstract noun can be marked either nominative or instrumental.

[5] The choice of the subject marked with nominative is a special issue: Paducheva and Uspenskij (1979/2002) claim that case-marking reflects syntactic relations in the copula construction; however, it turns out that semantics is also a relevant factor: for instance, nouns denoting a role of the object in the situation (as *dolg* 'duty') usually occupy the predicate position, while nouns with the meaning independent from the situation (e.g., *sbor informacii* 'data collection') is normally assigned the nominative case and the subject status.

(46) *Ego* *zadač-ej* *by-l-o* / *zadač-a* *by-l-a*
his task-SG.INS be-PST-SG.N task-SG.NOM be-PST-SG.F
sobira-t' *informacij-u.*
collect-INF information-SG.ACC
'His task was was data collection.'

It is hardly possible that *zadača is in* different syntactic position in (45) vs. (46). More probably, morphological properties of the CC influence the noun marking. The construction where two arguments of the verb (including the copular verb *byt'* 'be') bear the same case-marking is avoided in modern Russian. By contrast, not case-marked arguments do not create the situation of case-doubling and allow nominative marking. Note that the syntactic position of the complement clause in (46) is opaque: by analogy with (45), we could suppose that the CC occupies the subject position – however, due to the absence of case, this point of view will remain questionable until some behavioral syntactic tests are applied.

3.3. Zero copula constructions

As Testelets (2008) shows, Russian zero copula constructions are not reducible to a single phenomenon. Testelets divides them into two types: (i) binominative and constructions with short adjectives and (ii) other constructions where one of the parts (the 'predicate') is unmarked for case. The former are shown to behave as regular VP constructions, while the latter manifest many differences from VPs and are likely to be analogous to constructions like *For Mary to leave* (*would be stupid*) which do not have a finite predicate.

Letuchiy (2015) procedes along the same line but uses other syntactic tests. They show copular constructions not to be reducible even to two Testelets' types. Also, the peculiar behavior of copula constructions is shown to derive from the absence of an explicit predicates:

i) Zero copula constructions show more freedom of tense-marking, since they do not contain an explicit verb that might conflict in its tense marking with the verb of the other clause;
ii) Zero copula constructions are incompatible with some particles, and with the standard negation strategy, which is also because of the absence of an explicit verb. Some particles require a verbal form to be their 'morphological anchor'. Of course, a zero cannot be an anchor of a particle.

This means that what seems to be syntactic features of zero copula constructions is in fact morphologically motivated. It is not crucial for criteria (i) and (ii) if zero copula constructions do or do not manifest properties of verbal phrases. What is important, is that morphologically (and

phonologically), the head of the construction is empty. Of course, not all properties of zero copulas behave like this: for instance, the ability of zero copulas to host adverbials is linked to its (syntactic) verbal nature, ignoring its (morphological) emptiness.

4. Conclusions

The main conclusion the data allowed to reach is that quantifier phrase behaves as a special type of phrase in some cases. This special behavior results from several properties related to each other.

1. Phrases with *neskol'ko*-like quantifiers and small numerals not only have the same for in nominative and accusative, but also allow the predicate to lack plural agreement which is impossible for plural NPs. This is why quantifiers and numerals are possible as subjects in some contexts that prohibit NP or DP nominative subjects.

2. *Neskol'ko*-like quantifiers lack case-marking. This is why quantifiers (but not numerals!) are possible with *na-…-sja* verbs that prohibit case-marked accusative Dos.

3. Quantifier phrases are explicit markers of quantification. On usual NPs that lack an explicit quantifier, some constructions like *na-…-sja* or genitive of negation impose a quantificational interpretation. This results in genitive marking of the NP, the implicit quantifier (if it is postulated at all) being marked with nominative or accusative.

4. The constructions with quantifiers instantiate the tight relation between syntax and morphology. The way of marking accessible for an argument crucially depends on its morphological properties, including the grammatical categories, and not only on its syntactic position.

It turns out that something we regard as strict grammatical rules of argument expression is in fact valid for case-marked NPs and non-valid for quantifier phrases. These facts allow two analyses. In first, we suppose that morphology is relevant for syntax, and quantifier direct objects are possible even in contexts where nominal objects are impossible. In the second line of analysis, we suppose that quantifier 'direct objects' are not really direct objects / subjects – thus, their ability to occur in non-transitive (or non-subject) contexts results not from morphology, but from their non-canonical syntactic position.

We suppose the first type of analysis more adequate for the cases above. What seems us to be a syntactic property like 'impersonality' or 'intransitivity', are often morphological (or syntactico-morphological) restrictions on number agreement or accusative case marking. The reasons of emergence of restrictions like these are to be addressed in more detail.

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