**NUMBER AGREEMENT MISMATCHES IN RUSSIAN NUMERAL PHRASES**
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In this talk I will look at two related cases of number agreement mismatch in Russian numeral phrases. One case concerns examples where a higher numeral that always selects a plural NP seemingly fails to do so (see (1a)) when the head noun lacks singular lexical form and is therefore unable to carry genitive of quantification (GQ) assigned by the higher numeral (Bošković 2006) (see (2)). Instead, an NP headed by a noun that lacks plural lexical form is chosen despite the selectional requirement of the numeral (see (1b)). This occurrence is restricted to specific syntactic environments, with the aforementioned number agreement pattern breaking down in constructions involving modification or topicalization (see (3) and (4b,c), respectively).

The second case concerns data discussed in Franks and House 1982 that involve topicalization of a complement of a lower numeral, which consistently selects a singular NP, with the topicalized NP unexpectedly appearing in plural form, as in (5). In this talk I reject Franks and House’s 1982 external topic account of Russian plural genitive topics and offer a unified syntactic account for both of the said phenomena.

1. a. */?? p’jat’ ljud’ five people.GEN.PL
   b. p’jat’ čelovek five person.NOM.PL
   
2. NPs headed by a noun that lacks a unit for counting are unable to carry GQ
   
3. a. * p’jat’ krasivyx čelovek five pretty.GEN.PL person.NOM.PL
   b. p’jat’ krasivyx ljud’ five pretty.GEN.PL people.GEN.PL
   ‘five pretty people’

4. a. V komnate bylo p’jat’ čelovek in room was.3SG five person.NOM.PL
   ‘In the room there were five people.’
   b. * Čelovek_1 v komnate bylo p’jat’ t_1 person.NOM.PL in room was.3SG five
   ‘As for people, there were five of them in the room.’
   c. Ljud’_1 v komnate bylo p’jat’ t_1 people.GEN.PL in room was.3SG five
   ‘As for people, there were five of them in the room.’

5. Romanov na stole bylo dva novels.GEN.PL on table was.3SG two
   ‘As for novels, there were two of them on the table.’
   
   (Franks and House 1982:157)

The main idea behind the proposed analysis is that in cases where (2) is seemingly violated, as in (3b) and (4c), the structure in (6) is formed, where GQ is assigned to an NP headed by an optionally phonologically null quantifying expression (QE) (see also Kayne 2003 for an analysis of English silent nouns), which in turn assigns genitive plural to the NP hosting the noun that lacks singular lexical form.

6. NumP

   Num
   P’jat’ five
   (čelovek) person.NOM.PL
   (krasivyx) ljud’_1 people.GEN.PL
The structure in (6) is forced in two circumstances: (i) when presence of an adjective that can have no other form in Russian but genitive plural when modifying an NP that is complement to Num (Pesetsky 2013) triggers a φ-feature conflict within an NP headed by a noun that lacks plural lexical form and hence fails to realise genitive plural features and appears in the default nominative singular form (see (3a)), and, (ii) when contrastive topicalization of a non-specific NP triggers its partitive construal which inherently requires plurality (see (4c) and (5)).

The optionally null status of the QE that heads NP1 in (6) is due to its limited semantic function, which is to pick out a certain number of individuals/entities from the set represented by NP2, and to the recoverability of its semantic referent, which consistently denotes a set, of which the referent of NP2 is a subset. Thus, in (3b), ‘pretty people’ form a subset to a set of ‘people’, whereas in (5), subject to context, the null NP may denote a set of reading materials on the table, of which the set of novels is a subset (see (7)), or the set can be more open and include all entities on the table. In the latter case, the QE štuka ‘thing’ is used to refer to the most open set of entities just like čelovek ‘person’ is used to refer to the most open set of individuals.

7. Romanov1 na stole bylo dva (toma) t1 novels.GEN.PL on table was.3SG two volume.GEN.SG

‘As for novels, there were two volumes on the table.’

When N in (6) takes no complement, it becomes semantically irrecoverable and hence must be overt (see (1b)). In this case, NP1 refers to an open set of people. Similarly, if the QE in the NumP of the type dva toma romanov (see (7)) did not take a complement, it would refer to an open set of volumes and it would have to be overt.

Crucially, the structure in (6) is unavailable for (1a) for two reasons. First, (1a) involves neither a φ-feature conflict nor partitive construal. Second, if the structure in (6) were formed for (1a), it would result in semantic oddness, as both NPs would refer to the same open set of people, as in (8). In that respect, the structure in (4c) is of interest, as it demonstrates that the contrastive construal of the topic signals that it belongs to a set of individuals that were present in the room, for some of whom the quantity is unknown (see (9)). This in turn allows for the interpretation where the topicalized NP and the NP headed by the QE refer to different sets – a set of individuals that were present in the room, and an open set of people, respectively.

8. */?? Pjat’ čelovek ljudje5 person.NOM.SG people.GEN.PL

9. Ljudje1 v komnate bylo pjať (čelovek) t1 people.GEN.PL in room was.3SG five person.NOM.SG
(a skoľ’ko hobbitov tam bylo ja ne znaju)
and how-many hobbits there were I not know

‘As for people, there were five of them in the room (and as for hobbits, I don’t know how many were there).’

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1 The structure in (6) has been referred to in the linguistic literature as numeral-classifier construction (Pesetsky 2013, Sussex 1976 and Yadroff 1999). This construction is often found in structures with approximate inversion of the type čelovek pjať’ krasivých ljudej ‘approximately five pretty people’. Yet, the noun čelovek is the only noun out of the group of classifiers found in this construction that lacks plural lexical form.

2 The topicalized NPs in (4c) and (5) are construed as non-specific due to default agreement on the verb (Titov 2012), which forces syntax to interpret the subject as a QP rather than an NP (Pesetsky 1982).

3 I assume that (1b) has the structure in (6) except N does not take an NP complement.