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Split Quantifier Phrases and Genitive of Negation in Russian

1 Introduction

In this paper, we will prove the striking structural resemblance between two clausal constructions in Russian:

– Split Quantifier Phrase (SplQP) with a focused quantifier and a topicalized DP in Genitive of Quantity that denotes the quantified set, and
– Genitive of Negation (GenNeg), with subject or direct object DP in Genitive under sentential negation.

See examples (1a) and (2a) with intransitive verbs, and (1b) and (2b) with transitive ones. Intransitives have the impersonal form in both:

Genitive of Negation:
(1) a. Konvert-ov ne naš-los'.
   envelope-GEN.PL not find-PST.IMPRS-PASS
   ‘No envelopes were found.’

   b. Konvert-ov ne kupi-li.
   envelope-GEN.PL not buy-PST.PL
   ‘They didn’t buy envelopes.’

Split Quantifier Phrase:
(2) a. Konvert-ov naš-los' mnogo.
   envelope-GEN.PL find-PST.IMPRS-PASS many
   ‘Many envelopes were found.’

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b. Konvert-\textit{ov} k\textit{upi-li} \textit{mnogo}.

\begin{quote}
\textit{envelope-GEN.PL buy-PST.PL} \textit{many}
\end{quote}

‘They bought many envelopes’; or, rather with a topicalized object and focused quantifier: ‘As regards envelopes, they bought many (of them).’

The Genitive DP in SplQP belongs to what Zybatow and Junghanns call “internal topics” in Russian and as such it can be regarded as an adjunct to the AgrSP projection (Zybatow and Junghanns 1998: 26).

In Section 2 of this paper, we remind the reader of some puzzling grammatical properties of both constructions which, in spite of several decades of thorough analytical work and theoretical discussion, lack widely accepted explanations until today. In Section 3, we address the grammatical difference of the SplQP as contrasted with the standard non-split quantitative construction. In Section 4, the similarity in distribution between the GenNeg and SplQP will be shown. In Section 5, we suggest a common grammatical analysis for both.

\section{The issues}

In spite of the tremendous amount of work done on the GenNeg (to mention only some of the most significant works: Ickovič 1982; Babby 1980; Apresjan 1985; Mustajoki & Heino 1991; Padučeva 1997; 2004; 2006; 2013; Brown 1999; Borschev, Partee 2002; Bailyn 2004; Partee, Borschev 2004; Borschev et al. 2008; Guiraud-Weber 2011; Raxilina (ed.) 2008, among many others), and the fairly large, although much less impressive, volume of publications dedicated to SplQP (Skoblikova 1959; Kamynina 1961; Raspopov 1971; Ivanova 1973; Popov 1974; Arutjunova 1976; Crockett 1976; House 1982; Franks, House 1982; Pesetsky 1982; Franks 1995; Choo, Hong, Hwang 2007; Pereltsvaig 2008; Graščenkov 2009; Polinsky, Potsdam 2014, among others), their similarity, to our knowledge, has been overlooked in previous research. Let us begin with some characteristics of both that have attracted special theoretical interest.

GenNeg shares a crucial characteristic with the other regular case alternations in Russian, such as Nominative ~ Instrumental with predicate nominals and the copula (Geist 2006; Timberlake 2004, among others), or Accusative ~ Genitive with objects of intensional verbs (Kagan 2013), viz. the alternation occurs only in those positions where structural cases, i.e. Nominative and Accusative, are available, normally those of the subject (1a) and the direct object (1b), and can be replaced with them:
(2) a. *Konvert-ov ne naš-l-o-s’.
envelope-GEN.PL not find-PST-IMPERS-PASS
‘No envelopes were found.’ (=1a)
b. Konvert-y ne naš-l-i-s’.
envelope-NOM.PL not find-PST-PL-PASS
‘The envelopes were not found.’

(3) a. Konvert-ov ne kupi-l-i.
envelope-GEN.PL not buy-PST-PL
‘They didn’t buy envelopes.’ (=1b)
b. Konvert-y ne kupi-l-i.
envelope-NOM.PL not buy-PST-PL
‘They didn’t buy (the) envelopes.’

With direct objects as in (3), it is a mere case alternation, accompanied with a slight change in semantics, (3b) being the only option e.g. when the envelopes are specific. With subjects (2), there is more grammatical difference between the alternating constructions, because non-Nominative subjects cannot trigger agreement in the verb predicate, hence the impersonal form in (2a), cf. the verb’s normal agreement in number with the subject in Nominative (2b).

Non-structural cases cannot be involved in the GenNeg alternation, e.g. Instrumental in (4) or Dative in (5):

(4) a. *ne vlade-l pomest’j-ami
not possess-PST estate-PL.INS
‘(He) did not possess estates.’
b. *ne vlade-l pomest-ij
not possess-PST estate-pl.GEN
intended: ‘(He) did not possess estates.’

(5) a. Mne ne bol’no.
I.DAT not hurts
‘I don’t feel pain.’
b. *Menja ne bol’no.
I.GEN not hurts
intended: ‘I don’t feel pain.’

Another distributional characteristic of GenNeg also lacks generally accepted explanation: GenNeg is, as it is claimed, unavailable with the subject of a transitive
verb (6c), although in Section 3 below we will demonstrate that this is not quite true. Only some of the subjects of intransitives (2a) and most direct objects (6b) undergo the alternation:

(6) a. Sekretarša ne otprav-ila *pis’mo.
   secretary.NOM not sent-PST letter.ACC
   ‘The secretary didn’t send the letter.’
b. Sekretarša ne otprav-ila pis’m-a.
   secretary.NOM not sent-PST letter-GEN
   ‘The secretary didn’t send the letter.’
c. *Sekretarši ne otprav-ilo pis’mo.
   secretary.GEN not sent-PST.IMPRS letter.ACC
   intended: ‘No secretary sent the letter.’

There are many intransitive verbs, e.g. those denoting atelic activities or disappearance from the observer’s view, with which GenNeg of the subject is unavailable (cf. Babby 1980, Pesetsky 1982 and much later work):

   children-PL.GEN not run-PST.IMPRS on footpath-PRP
   ‘The children didn’t run on the path.’
b. *Lampočk-i ne pogas-l-o.
   light.bulb-GEN not go.out-PST.IMPRS
   ‘The light-bulb didn’t go out.’

Other Russian negative polarity items, e.g. *ni-pronouns and some other elements sensitive to negation can occur as subjects with all verbs, so the exclusion of GenNeg needs explanation, cf. Bailyn (2012: 204) and references there.

The main problem with SplitQP is its derivation. Is it formed by means of discontinuous topicalization of the genitive DP (cf. 8b) or is it the quantitative construction derived without any movement of the genitive DP, counter to the derivation in (8b)?

(8) a. On pročita-l mnogo knig.
   he.NOM read-PST many book-PL.GEN
   ‘He read many books.’
Below we shall demonstrate that the SplQP construction in fact shows more resemblance to GenNeg than to its alleged non-topicalized counterpart.

3 More on SplQP and the non-split quantitative construction

There are at least five significant grammatical differences between SplQP and its non-split counterpart that are unexpected under the assumption that the former is merely a topicalized version of the latter:

i) SplQP prohibits agreeing premodifiers (9c–10c) which its non-split counterpart (9a–10a) does not:

(9) a. By-l-i rassmotren-y sledujuš-č-ie neskol’ko/pjat’
be-PST-PL considered-PL.NOM following-PL-NOM several/five
punkt-ov.
point-PL-GEN
‘The following several/five points were considered.’

b. Punkt-ov by-l-o rassmotren-o neskol’ko/pjat’.
point-PL-GEN be-PST-IMPRS considered-IMPRS several/five
‘As to the points, several/five (of them) were considered.’

c. *Punkt-ov by-l-o rassmotren-o sledujuš-č-ie
point-PL-GEN be-PST-IMPRS considered-IMPRS following-PL-NOM
neskol’ko/pjat’.
several/five
‘As to the points, the following several/five (of them) were considered.’

(10) a. Vs-e odinnadcat’ igrok-ov by-l-i na pole.
all-PL.NOM eleven player-PL.GEN be-PST-PL on field
‘All the eleven players were on the field.’

b. Igrok-ov by-l-o na pole odinnadcat’.
player-PL.GEN be-PST-IMPRS on field eleven
‘As to the players, there were eleven on the field.’
As was first noted in Pesetsky (1982), unlike non-split quantitative constructions, SplQP cannot employ the option of the plural agreement with the predicate; only the default, i.e. impersonal form of 3sg, neuter gender, is licensed:

(11) a. Troe gost-ej priš-l-i/priš-l-o.
    three guest-PL.GEN come-PST-PL/come-PST-IMPRS
    ‘Three guests came.’

b. Gost-ej priš-l-o (/priš-l-i) troe.
    guest-PL.GEN come-PST-IMPRS (/come-PST-PL) three
    ‘As to the guests, three (of them) came.’

iii) SplQP and the non-split quantitative construction display a consistent difference in information structure. In the former, the genitive phrase is almost invariably the topic, and the quantifier the focus, irrespective of the linear order:

(12) a. Čelovek dvadcat’ *sobra-l-o-s’ ix storonnik-ov.
    person twenty gather-PST-IMPRS-RFL their supporter-GEN.PL
    ‘As to their supporters, about twenty (of them) gathered.’

b. Ix storonnik-ov *sobra-l-o-s’ čelovek dvadcat’ *.
    their supporter-GEN.PL gather-PST-IMPRS-RFL person twenty
    ‘As to their supporters, about twenty (of them) gathered.’

Non-split quantitative phrases are most often focused, but can be topics too:

(13) Stol peredvinuli, a tri stul-a ostalis’ na meste ∗.
    table (they) moved but three chair-SG.GEN remained on place
    ‘The table was removed, but the three chairs remained at their place.’

iv) Many SplQPs have no non-split counterpart at all. This is typical for the idiomatic quantifiers that have the internal structure of a clause or NP. Researchers of Russian idioms have detected more than 80 such quantifying phrases (Ermilova 1994). Most of them denote quantitative extremes – ‘very many/much’ or ‘very little/few’, like the following:
(14) prud prudi (lit. “make [imperative] a pond of it”) ‘very many/much’; 
oxot’ otbavlaj (lit. “[you might] well make it less”) ‘very many/much’; 
kot naplakal (lit. “[the tears] a cat cried with”) ‘very little or nothing’; 
raz-dva i občelsja (lit. “one, two, and the count is finished”) ‘very little’, ‘negligibly little amount of’; 
vagon i malen’kaja teležka (lit. “a railway carriage and a small cart”) ‘very many’, ‘an excessive amount of’; 

Such quantifiers are restricted to the SplQP context and cannot head a continuous, non-split quantitative phrase as in (15b):

(15) a. Narod-u sobra-l-o-s’ jablok-u negde upas-t’.  
    people-PART assemble-PST-IMPRS-RFL apple-DAT nowhere fall-INF  
    ‘So many people are assembled that there is no free space left’ (lit.: “that an apple would have no place to fall between”).

b. *Sobra-l-o-s’ jablok-u negde upas-t’ narod-u.  
    assemble-PST-IMPRS-RFL apple-DAT nowhere fall-INF people-PART

Another case without a non-split counterpart occurs when a non-numerative word and a quantifier are used with numerical meaning. Unlike standard numeratives like e.g. štuka ‘thing, token’, such occasional numeratives cannot form a single phrase with the NP denoting the quantified set. In (16), it is deti ‘children’, in (17), sem’ja ‘family’:

(16) a. Želajušč-ix okaza-l-o-s’ neskol’ko det-ej.  
    willing-PL.GEN turn.out-PST-IMPRS-RFL several child-PL.GEN  
    ‘It turned out that there were some children who wanted it.’

b. *Okaza-l-o-s’ neskol’ko det-ej želajušč-ix.  
    turn.out-PST-IMPRS-RFL several child-PL.GEN willing-PL.GEN  
    intended: ‘It turned out that there were some children who wanted it.’

(17) a. Nas tam by-l-o tri sem’-i.  
    we.GEN there be-PST-IMPRS three family-SG.GEN  
    ‘Of ours, there were three families.’

b. *Tam by-l-o tri sem’-i nas.  
    there be-PST-IMPRS three family-SG.GEN we.GEN  
    intended: ‘There were three families of ours.’
Pronouns in the role of genitive topics do not allow non-split counterparts:

(18) a. *Ix u vas by-l-o bolee odnogo 
   they.GEN at you.GEN be-PST-IMPRS more than one
   ‘Of them, you had more than one.’
b. *U vas by-l-o bolee odnogo ix.
   at you.GEN be-PST-IMPRS more than one they.GEN
   intended: ‘You had more than one of them.’

(19) a. *Menja sta-l-o dve: ta, kotoraja prežde,
   I.GEN become-PST-IMPRS two that which before
   i ta, kotoraja sejčas.
   and that which now
   ‘Of me, two persons became – one I was before long, and
   one I am now.’ (K. Fedin, The Campfire, quoted in: Arutjunova 1976: 227)
b. *Sta-l-o dve menja.
   become-PST-IMPRS two I.GEN
   intended: ‘I split into two.’

v) In a non-split quantifier phrase, the selection of the grammatical features of the NP is strictly determined by the quantifier: the paucal numerals pol- ‘half’, dva ‘two, tri ‘three’, četyre ‘four’ require the genitive singular of quantity, whereas higher cardinals from pjat’ ‘five’ upward require the plural:

(20) a. tri stol-a / *stol-ov
   three table-SG.GEN / table-PL.GEN
   ‘three tables’
b. sem’ stol-ov / *stol-a
   seven table-PL.GEN / table-SG.GEN
   ‘seven tables’

The numeral odin ‘one’ and all the complex (phrasal) numerals that end in this word, agree with the nominal in case, and no genitive of quantity is employed:

(21) odin stol / *stol-a / *stol-ov
   one.NOM table.NOM / table-SG.GEN / table-PL.GEN
   ‘one table’
However, the special patterns employed with the paucal numerals are ignored in the SplQP which can use only the standard genitive of quantity in plural:

(22) a. Spiček v korobke ostava-l-o-s’ dve.
    match.PL.GEN in matchbox remain-PST-IMPRS-RFL two
    ‘As to matches, in the matchbox two (of them) remained.’

    b. dve spič-i / *spiček
       two match-GEN / match.GEN.PL
       ‘two matches’

    c. *Spič-i v korobke ostava-l-o-s’ dve.
       match.SG.GEN in matchbox remain-PST-IMPRS-RFL two
       intended: ‘As to matches, in the matchbox two (of them) remained.’

(23) a. Gost-ej okaza-l-o-s’ dvadcat’ odin.
    guest.PL.GEN turn.out-PST-IMPRS-RFL twenty one.NOM
    ‘As to the guests, it turned out that (they) were twenty-one (persons).’

    b. dvadcat’ odin gost’ / *gost-ej
       twenty one.NOM guest.NOM / guest-PL.GEN
       ‘twenty guests’

    c. *Gost’ okaza-l-sja dvadcat’ odin.
       guest-PL.NOM turn.out-PST.MSG-RFL twenty one.NOM
       intended: ‘As to the guests, it turned out that (they) were twenty-one (persons).’

To account for the grammatical difference between the SplQP and the non-split quantitative construction, we could hypothesize that in the quantitive phrase two structural levels are to be distinguished. The smaller one is QP (Quantifier Phrase) which includes a NP (Noun Phrase); the larger one is DP (Determiner Phrase) which includes an agreeing premodifier or a (possibly nonovert) determiner:

(24) [DP et-i //posledn-ie [QP pjat’ [NP punkt-ov]]]
    this-PL.NOM //last-PL.NOM five point-PL.GEN
    ‘these last five paragraphs’

For more evidence in favour of the two-level structure of the nominal constructions ([DP [NP...]]) in Russian and other Slavic languages see Franks (1995); Isa- kadze (1998); Rappaport (2002); Perel’tsvaig (2006; 2007); Trugman (2005); Lyutikova (2010).
Now consider the following assumptions:

(25) DP has a feature of number whereas QP has it not;
(26) QP can split producing the leftward NP topic, whereas DP cannot split;
(27) the split occurs when the quantifier phrase consists of elements with contrasting information status: NP is the topic, and the quantifier is the focus.

The three assumptions (25–27) can satisfactorily account for the SplQP’s three characteristics i)–iii) above, but they cannot explain the remaining two, namely iv)–v), because the latter cannot be derived from their non-split counterparts. Instead of assuming an asymmetrical chain, we choose not to derive the SplQP from the non-split construction. The clue that leads to that solution is the fact that SplQPs reveal a number of crucial characteristics shared with GenNeg, which we turn to in the following section.

4 Split QP and Genitive of Negation

The grammatical similarities between SplQP and GenNeg are unexpected, as are the dissimilarities between the former and its non-split counterpart addressed in the previous section.

First, both constructions are available only in the contexts of the two structural cases, Nominative and Accusative, but ruled out in the contexts that require other cases. For SplQP, the distributional restriction was first noticed in Franks (1995: 186–195), cf. the following pair:

(28) a. SplQP:

\[
\text{Inostrann-\text{-pl.gen} jazyk-\text{-ov} on znaet pjat’.'}
\]

foreign-\text{-pl.gen} language-\text{-pl.gen} he knows five.ACC

‘(Speaking of) foreign languages, he knows five.’

b. GenNeg:

\[
\text{On ne znaet inostrann-\text{-y} jazyk-\text{-ov}.}
\]

he not knows foreign-\text{-pl.gen} languages-\text{-pl.gen}

‘He does not speak (lit. know) foreign languages.’

In (28a), the DP in Genitive case occurs where Accusative case is also possible, because znat’ ‘to know’ is a transitive verb. In contexts where oblique cases are
required, SplQP is not available, and neither is GenNeg, because the verb *vladet’* meaning ‘to have a (good) command of sth.’ here is intransitive and takes an object in the Instrumental case:


he commands five-INS foreign-PL.INS language-PL.INS

‘He has a good command of five foreign languages.’

b. SplQP:

*Inostrann-yx jazyk-ov on vladeet pjat’-ju.*

foreign-PL.GEN language-PL-GEN he commands five-INS

intended: ‘As for foreign languages, he has a good command of five of them.’

c. GenNeg:

*On ne vladeet pjat’-i inostrann-yx jazyk-ov.*

he not commands five-GEN foreign-PL.GEN language-PL.GEN

‘He has no good command of the five foreign languages.’

With the intransitive two-argument verb *pomogat’* ‘help’ which takes an object in Dative case, both constructions are also impossible:


he helped two-DAT friend-PL.DAT

‘He helped (his) two friends.’

b. SplitQP:

*Druz-ej on pomog dv-um.*

friend-PL.GEN he helped two-DAT

‘As for friends, he helped two of them.’

c. GenNeg:

*On ne pomog dv-ux druz-ej.*

he not helped two-GEN friend-PL.GEN

‘He didn’t help (his) two friends.’

Although the discontinued topicalized orders with the homogeneous case pattern (Babby 1987) like that in (31a) are marginally possible (Graščenkov 2009), the construction is not SplQP, because it allows agreeing premodifiers, cf. (31b) and (9–10) above:
The second similarity between SplQP and GenNeg is that they show the same pattern with the subjects of intransitive verbs. The common view of the researchers of GenNeg in Slavic has been that GenNeg cannot involve subjects of transitive verbs cf. Peškovskij (1956); Kozinskij (1983:21); Testelec (2001: 336); Padučeva (2004: 457), and references therein. The only known exception noted in Guiraud-Weber (1973) was the Genitive form of the negative pronoun ničto ‘nothing’ which can occur in this position2:

(32) Ego nič-ego ne volnuet.
    he.ACC nothing GEN not worries
    ‘Nothing worries him.’

However, the observation does not hold true for some transitive verbs that – in contrast to the majority of this class of verbs – denote states or transitive movement (like ‘accompany’ or ‘follow’) and take subjects containing negative modifying quantifiers ni odin; ni edinyj ‘no one’, ‘no...’ 3. This class encompasses transitive verbs like ukrašat’ ‘adorn, decorate’, osveščat’ ‘light up, illuminate’, soprovoždat’ ‘to accompany’ and the like. Examples (33–36) below are taken from the Russian National Corpus (RNC; ruscорpora.ru), or Yandex Internet Search System (Yan):

(33) Ni odn-ogo pisatelj-a ne provoža-l-o jego.
    no single GEN writer GEN not see off-PST-IMPRS he ACC
    ‘Not a single writer attended his funeral.’ (RNC)

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2 It is sometimes assumed that nič-ego ‘nothing-GEN’ is gradually becoming another Nominative form, alongside ničto, which explains uses like (32), cf. Padučeva (2013: 99).
3 On the ability of these quantifiers to force GenNeg, in contexts where it is unavailable cf. Kozinskij (1983: 21); Apresjan (1985); Padučeva (2004: 456); Padučeva (2013: 99), with the semantic effects associated with GenNeg – suppressing the subject’s presupposition of existence Babby (1980) or denoting that a participant is not perceived by the observer Padučeva (1997; 2004; 2006).
No single sound disturbed the winter mountains’ calm.’ (RNC)

No trinket adorned the huge bureau.’ (Yan)

‘No lantern lighted the small street.’ (Yan)

If the special requirements are not met, the subject of transitive verbs is not available for GenNeg:

‘The lantern did not light the small street.’

‘None of the lanterns lighted the small street’ (presupposition of existence: there were lanterns, but they did not light the street)

In (36b), there is no quantifier to force GenNeg on the subject of the transitive verb, so the Genitive is unavailable. In (36c), the subject is in Nominative case, because under the presupposition of its existence, GenNeg is not allowed. In (36a), to the contrary, there is no presupposition of existence: either there were no lanterns at all, or the observer could not see them in the darkness.

In Franks (1995: 186–195), it is claimed that SplQP is impossible with subjects of transitive verbs:

‘As regards the students, nine (of them) passed the examination.’

‘As regards the editors, only two (of them) have read this text.’
However, we see that SplQP is possible in this context under largely the same conditions as GenNeg, i.e. if the transitive verb denotes a state or appearance of a participant in the observable space:

(39)  
\[ \textit{Surpriz-ov vas ze-t nemalo.} \]
\[ \text{surprize-PL GEN you.ACC wait-3SG not.little} \]
\[ \text{‘Many surprises await you.’} \] (Yan)

Moreover, SplQP tend to occur with the same groups of intransitive verbs that favour GenNeg (Padučeva calls them “Genitive verbs”), e.g. verbs denoting appearance or existence:

(40) a.  
\[ \textit{Nov-xy lic ne pojavi-l-o-s’}. \]
\[ \text{new-PL GEN face.PL GEN not appear-PST-IMPRS-RFL} \]
\[ \text{‘No new faces appeared.’} \]

b.  
\[ \textit{Nov-xy lic pojavi-l-o-s’ sem’}. \]
\[ \text{new-PL GEN face.PL GEN appear-PST-IMPRS-RFL seven} \]
\[ \text{‘As for the new faces, seven (of them) appeared.’} \]

(41) a.  
\[ \textit{Den-eg ne osta-l-o-s’}. \]
\[ \text{money-GEN not remain-PST-IMPRS-RFL} \]
\[ \text{‘No money was left’.} \]

b.  
\[ \textit{Den-eg osta-l-o-s’ v obrez}. \]
\[ \text{money-GEN remain-PST-IMPRS-RFL in short} \]
\[ \text{‘As for money, very little (of it) was left.’} \]

(42) a.  
\[ \textit{Drakon-ov ne suščestvue}. \]
\[ \text{dragon-GEN.PL not exist.IMPRS} \]
\[ \text{‘No dragons exist.’} \]

b.  
\[ \textit{Drakon-ov suščestvue neskol’ko vid-ov}. \]
\[ \text{dragon-GEN.PL exist.IMPRS several kind-PL GEN} \]
\[ \text{‘As for dragons, several kinds (of them) exist.’} \]

The verbs that are known to normally not occur with GenNeg, do not occur with SplQP either:

(43) a.  
\[ \textit{*Pal’c-ev ne krovotoči-l-o}. \]
\[ \text{finger-PL GEN not bleed-PST-IMPRS} \]
\[ \text{‘No fingers bled.’} \]
  finger-PL.GEN bleed-PST-IMPRS two
  ‘As for fingers, two (of them) bled.’
(44) a. *Det-jej ne pe-l-o v xore.
  child-PL.GEN not sing-PST-IMPRS in choir
  ‘No children sang in the choir.’
  child-PL.GEN sing-PST-IMPRS in choir three
  ‘As for the children, three (of them) sang in the choir.’
(45) a. *Reform ne nača-l-o-s’.
  reform-PL.GEN not begin-PST-IMPRS-RFL
  ‘No reforms began.’
b. *Reform nača-l-o-s’ neskol’ko.
  reform-PL.GEN begin-PST-IMPRS-RFL several
  ‘As for reforms, several (of them) began.’

As expected, the existential verb byt’ ‘to be (present)’ allows both constructions:

(46) a. Teatr-ov v gorode ne by-l-o.
  theater-PL.GEN in city not be-PST-IMPRS
  ‘There were no theaters in the city.’
b. Teatr-ov v gorode by-l-o dva.
  theater-PL.GEN in city be-PST-IMPRS two
  ‘As of theaters, there were two (of them) in the city.’

The copula which is homophonous with the existential verb (Chvany 1975; Arutjunova, Širjaev 1983), again predictably, prohibits both:

(47) a. *Ix ne by-l-o lingvist-ami.
  they-PL.GEN not be-PST-IMPRS linguist-PL.INS
  ‘They were not linguists.’
b. *Ix by-l-o lingvist-ami dvoe.
  they-PL.GEN be-PST-IMPRS linguist-PL.INS two.Collect
  ‘Of them, two were linguists.’

The same transitive verbs allow both constructions with their direct objects:
Likewise, the same transitive verbs, e.g. those that normally occur with a specific object (Padučeva 2013), rule both constructions out:

(49) a. ?³Devušk-i on ne obide-l.
girl-GEN he not offend-PST
‘He did not offend the girl.’

b. *Devušek on obide-l dvux.
girl-GEN he offend-PST two-GEN
‘As for girls, he offended two (of them).’

Finally, both constructions allow “forced” use (Kozinskij 1983: 21; Apresjan 1985; Padučeva 2004: 456) which is possible only with a negative quantifier, cf. footnote 3:

(50) a. *Mašin ne exa-l-o po šosse.
car. PL.GEN not go-PST-IMPRS on highway
‘No car was moving on the highway.’

b. *Mašin exa-l-o po šosse devjat’.
car. PL.GEN go-PST-IMPRS on highway nine
‘As of cars, nine (of them) were moving on the highway.’

c. Ni odnoj mašiny ne exa-l-o po šosse.
not one.GEN car.GEN not go-PST-IMPRS on highway
‘No car was moving on the highway.’

d. Mašin ne exa-l-o po šosse ni odnoj.
car. PL.GEN NEG go-PST-IMPRS on highway not one.GEN
‘As of cars, none (of them) were moving on the highway.’

To summarize, in this section we have demonstrated that SplQP and GenNeg show impressive distributional similarities. We see no other possibility to explain this fact than to suggest a common grammatical analysis for both.
5 A Common Structure for SplQP and GenNeg

Many authors who addressed GenNeg in Russian and other Slavic languages within the generative framework have suggested that GenNeg is an instance of Genitive of Quantity (Pesetsky 1982, Bailyn 1995; 2004; 2012; Babyonyshev 1996; Brown 1999; Harves 2002). Like the Genitive of Quantity, GenNeg is required by the quantifier. In these authors’ view, the only difference with the standard constructions denoting quantity is that with GenNeg the quantifier is null, or nonovert:

(51) a. On čita-l  mnogo knig.  
    he  read-PST  many  book.PL.GEN  
    ‘He read many books.’

b. On ne  čita-l  Q  knig.  
    he  not  read-PST  Q  book.PL.GEN  
    ‘He didn’t read (any) books.’

In the above mentioned work, it was assumed that the null quantifier Q which occurs in the GenNeg construction belongs to the same grammatical class as the overt negative quantifiers i, ni ‘(even) one’, ni minuty ‘not a minute long’, nikakoj ‘none’, ni odin ‘not a single’ and the like which are all negative polarity items and as such require sentential negation:

(52) a. On ne  perevernu-l  i  stranic-y.  
    he  not  turn-PST  even.one  page-GEN  
    ‘He didn’t turn even a single page.’

b. On ne  perevernu-l  Q  èt-øj  stranic-y.  
    he  not  turn-PST  Q  this-GEN  page-GEN  
    ‘He didn’t turn this page.’

Although the grammatical pattern in (52a,b) seems to be exactly the same, the hypothesis that in GenNeg a null quantifier takes a DP in Genitive case as its complement has met well-founded criticism. It was shown that a DP in GenNeg can be preceded by any kind of quantifier, which is a fact incompatible with the null quantifier hypothesis claiming that quantifiers usually do not co-occur within the same DP (Borščev et al. 2008: 167–170).

Our suggestion is to place both the null quantifier in GenNeg and the overt quantifier in SplQP within the VP and let the DP bearing the Genitive of Quantity occupy the argument position of the subject or the direct object, depending on
the transitivity of the verbal predicate. Therefore, the relationship between the case-governing category (the quantifier) and the governed DP is not that of a head and its complement:

(53) Intransitive verbs:
   a. *Pisem priš-l-o tri.*
      letter.PL.GEN come-PST-IMPRS three
      ‘As for the letters, three (of them) arrived.’
   b. *Pisem ne priš-l-o Q.*
      letter.PL.GEN not come-PST-IMPRS Q
      ‘No letters arrived.’

(54) Transitive verbs:
      letter.PL.GEN write-PRS.3PL many
      ‘As for letters, they write many (of them).’
   b. *Pisem ne piš-ut Q.*
      letter.PL.GEN not write-PRS.3PL Q
      ‘They don’t write letters’.

The quantifier within VP licenses Genitive, and, unlike the standard relationship between a case value and the category which assigns (or otherwise determines) it, licensing allows for several instances of Genitive to occur in the same clause. In (55), we see three GenNegs: the subject, the direct object and the temporal adjunct DP which without negation takes the form of the temporal Accusative:

(55) \textit{Ni one-GEN lantern-GEN not light-PST-IMPRS street-GEN even five-GEN minute-PL.GEN}.
    ‘No lantern lighted the street even for five minutes.’

The simultaneous licensing of several Genitives like in (55), although grammatically available, is an infrequent phenomenon because of semantic restrictions that rule out most transitive subjects and adjuncts in Accusative case.

The overt quantifiers \textit{ni odin} and \textit{ni edinyj} both meaning ‘no(t a single) one’, stand closest to Q, because they are compatible with both singular and plural Genitive DPs, although most quantifiers take Genitive of Quantity in the plural as their complement, e.g. both (56a) and (56b) are equally acceptable and have the same meaning:
The restricted distributions of SplQP and GenNeg in the contexts of Nominative and Accusative can be explained with the Direct Case Condition (Babby 1985; Testelets 2012). Only the positions of structural cases can host elements that do not get case by standard grammatical mechanisms. Prepositional quantifiers (okolo pjati ‘about five’) and several adverbial quantifiers (malo ‘a little; a few’, polnym-polno ‘chock-full’) are found in these constructions as well.

References


