

The Q Continuum

The topic of Slavic numerals is a perennial one, and has stimulated a great deal of important research, from Corbett's 1978 discovery of a "numeral squish" in Slavic and beyond to Ionin & Matushansky's 2018 account of cardinals as having the semantics of modifiers (type $\langle\langle e, t \rangle, \langle e, t \rangle\rangle$). The potential significance of Russian numerals was first drawn to the attention of the broader population of MIT-oriented formal linguists by works such as Pesetsky's 1982 dissertation and Babby's 1987 *NLLT* paper, both of which inspired some of the earliest forays into Slavic generative syntax. My own work on this topic took as a point of departure Pesetsky's idea that Russian numeral phrases could be QPs headed by Q or NPs headed by N and Babby's idea that the competition between what he called the "heterogeneous" pattern (Q assigns case) and the "homogeneous" pattern (Q agrees in case) could be reduced to competition between kinds of case-assignment. In seeking a parameterization in order to accommodate the numeral systems of other Slavic languages, I combined their ideas, updating the phrase structures with functional categories and recasting the cases in terms of a modified version of Jakobsonian features. The presentation begins with a review of these ideas, drawing on Franks (1994, 1995, 1998, 2002).

There has, of course, been a great deal of research into the syntax and semantics of Slavic numerals since that time, such as (primarily for Russian) Bailyn (2012) or Pesetsky (2013). In the next part of the talk I therefore briefly summarize some of this research, attempting to identify the major directions, the core questions, and the open issues and puzzles remaining.

Most of these issues deal with case, so the body of the talk poses the question of whether Slavic languages with minimal case systems—that is, Bulgarian and Macedonian—need a dedicated Q category. My approach to this issue has three components. Since the status of QP partly depends on whether there is a DP projection above NP, I first reexamine the question asked by LaTerza (2016) of whether DP constitutes a distinct phase, hence binding domain, in these languages. Taking as a point of departure Despić's (2009, 2011, 2013) arguments against a DP phase, but for a QP phase, above NP in their South Slavic neighbors BCMS, she rejects the applicability of his conclusions for Bg and Mac. And while one might, in keeping with Tasseva-Kurktchieva and Dubinsky (2018) for Bg, take issue with the claim that these are canonical DP-languages (in the typology of Bošković 2008 and much other work), I show that under more careful scrutiny there is binding evidence for a distinct QP projection. Second, I concentrate on the obvious morphological fact of the existence of a *brojna* ('count') form in Bg and Mac, where the sensitivity of this form to numeric quantifiers implies the need for some kind of QP projection. Finally, I attempt to put QP together with the kinds of numeral classifiers examined for Bg by Cinque and Krapova (2007), and consider various possible structures for an extended nominal domain.

In sum, my conclusion is that, just as elsewhere in Slavic, the evidence supports the postulation of a distinct QP projection even in these "borderline case" languages—in Corbett's words, Bg and Mac form a *cas limite*. The reasons for assuming a QP may be less obvious here than in Russian, and the evidence for an adjectival to nominal continuum virtually nonexistent, but numerals need to be treated as special in Bg and Mac as well.

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