

Genitive Case: Partitive, Alongside Words and Phrases

Yesterday we discussed how the genitive case is used to show possession, and I mentioned that this case is used in BCS instead of the word “of.” Today, we’re going to continue that discussion, and we’re going to talk about the partitive genitive case. What this means is that the genitive case is used to indicate a part of something else.

Some words always have to be used alongside the genitive case. For example, if you want to say “a lot of” or “a little bit of,” then you’re going to need the genitive case. The words for these phrases are *mnogo* and *malo*, respectively. We’ve already seen these words used as adjectives, but this is somewhat different. Let’s look at some examples in context:

Imamo mnogo ukusnog vina ovde/ovdje.

We have a lot of delicious wine here.

On ima malo piva/pive.

He has a little bit of beer.

Da li vidiš mnogo sira na stolu?/Vidiš li mnogo sira na stolu?

Do you see a lot of cheese on the table?

Another word used in a similar manner is *puno*. This word can be used as a synonym for *mnogo*, but it also often means “full of.” In the latter instance, the word functions as an adjective, modifying a previous word, like in the English sentence “The house is full of cheese.” The word *puno* “full of” will have to agree according to gender/number/case with the word “house”/*kuća*. Let’s look at some examples:

Kuća je puna sira.

The house is full of cheese.

Ova knjiga je puna čudnosti.

This book is full of weirdness.

Moj stan je pun prašine.

My apartment is full of dust.

Njegovo pismo je puno ljubavi.

His letter is full of love.

Another instance where we need to use the genitive case is in phrases like “there is” or “there isn’t.” In order to say these phrases in BCS we use the words *ima* and *nema*. These words are taken from the third person singular of the verbs *imati* and *nemati*, but when used by themselves, they mean “there is” and “there isn’t.” Let’s look at examples:

Ovde/Ovdje ima lepog/lijepog psa.

There is a pretty dog here.

Tamo nema mesta/mjesta.

There is no space there.

Nema hrane kod kuće.

There is no food at home.

Now, can you come up with your examples using what we've learned today?