

Ljiljana Šarić

Spatial Concepts in Slavic

A Cognitive Linguistic Study
of Prepositions and Cases

2008

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

ISSN 0583-5445
ISBN 978-3-447-05806-3

Contents

Abbreviations	vi
Acknowledgments	vii
Introduction	1
1 Spatial usages of prepositions and their relevance for other facets of prepositional semantics: Extensions from spatial meaning.....	8
1.1 Metaphorical extensions in lexical and constructional meaning.....	8
1.2 Metaphorical extensions underlying grammaticalization, and transitive vs. intransitive coding of events.....	10
1.3 The relation of spatial and non-spatial concepts in the analysis of prepositions.....	12
1.4 Prepositional prototypes and core meanings.....	14
1.5 Spatial metaphors as a basis for meaning extensions of prepositions into non-spatial domains	16
1.6 Spatial meanings in the domain of causation.....	23
1.7 Temporal usages of prepositions and their relation to the spatial domain .	27
1.8 Conclusion	31
2 Surface and container image schemas	32
2.1 The preposition <i>na</i>	33
2.2 The preposition <i>u</i>	81
2.3 The interface between the spatial concepts denoted by the prepositions <i>na</i> and <i>u</i>	108
3 Proximity prepositions: The examples of <i>kod</i> and <i>pri</i>	125
3.1 Proximity as a spatial relation	125
3.2 The proximity preposition <i>kod</i>	128
3.3 The meaning of the preposition <i>pri</i> and the locative case.....	186
4 The spatial meaning of the dative case	209
4.1 Dative semantics	209
4.2 The spatial (prepositional) dative.....	222
4.3 The directional bare dative: A B/C/S peculiarity?	245
4.4 How does directionality fit into the semantic network of the dative case?	269
Concluding remarks.....	273
References	287
Subject index	301

Introduction

In the great number of studies of Slavic philology, certain major languages (first Russian and then Polish and Czech, followed by Bulgarian) receive more attention than others. As a rule, western South Slavic is in last place. Recent discussions of western South Slavic linguistic issues have mainly been sociolinguistic studies about the disintegration of Serbo-Croatian. It is difficult to find any contemporary book-length analysis that focuses on the semantics of this language area. This is why western South Slavic is the main focus of attention in this study and why the other languages considered – especially Russian and Polish – are given secondary attention. Specifically, the analyses in this book concentrate on the language B/C/S.¹ “B/C/S” refers to the language area formerly known as Serbo-Croatian, which is presently differentiated into the standard languages of Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian. In the parts of the book in which I concentrate, for example, on Croatian examples and corpora only, I use the term “Croatian”. However, the findings on the topics examined in this book are generally applicable to all the standard languages. In the parts of analyses treating topics for which differences occur and/or are relevant, I refer to a particular standard language or language register with a precise term; for example, “standard Serbian” or “spoken Serbian”. If examples used in the analyses originate from languages other than Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, this is explicitly indicated. If the language is not indicated, it is B/C/S examples that are cited and discussed.

A comparative dimension is present in the analyses because I believe that a small number of comparative analyses of different Slavic languages (e.g., JANDA 1993, 2002; DICKEY 2000) offer a different, productive, and more in-depth view not only on each single language analyzed, but also on Slavic as a language group. Furthermore, the comparative view contributes to the study of language universals, language typology, and language acquisition. Moreover, the findings of such an analysis contribute to machine translation.

The topic of this book, spatial conceptualization in Slavic, and its impact on the conceptualization of non-spatial domains, has not often been dealt with in the framework of cognitive linguistics. The prepositional and case semantics of South Slavic have seldom been addressed in any semantic framework beyond grammatical descriptions. In recent years there have been an increasing number of cognitive analyses of Slavic. However, these analyses concentrate on the major languages mentioned above. Moreover, the majority of existing studies are limited to the analysis of single categories (e.g., single prepositions or prefixes, or single cases), restricting their attention in most cases to a single Slavic language.

¹ Another western South Slavic language, Slovenian, is also considered in Chapter 2.

When one considers analyses dealing with prepositions and cases in the cognitive framework, CIENKI's (1989) study, following JACKENDOFF's (1983) theoretical framework, is the first monograph dealing with a set of Russian and Polish spatial prepositions and their English equivalents. Some later analyses employ a comparative view on Russian and English spatial prepositions (ŠABANOVA ET AL. 2001; PEKAR 2001; SELIVERSTOVA, MALJAR 1998). The analyses in the collected volume edited by PAJAR, SELIVERSTOVA (2000) illustrate the state of the art in research on individual Russian prepositions, mainly their spatial meanings. PAJAR, PLUNGJAN (2000) examine the Russian preposition *nad*, PLUNGJAN, RAKHILINA (1996) *skvoz'* and *čerez*, as well as *pod* (2000), and SELIVERSTOVA (2000) and KUSTOVA (2001) *na*. Among the first analyses of Polish prepositions within the cognitive framework is KALISZ (1985), concentrating on the preposition *za*. Individual Polish prepositions are analyzed by DĄBROWSKA-MICHALCZAK (1992) and KOCHAŃSKA (1996); the object of these analyses are *pod*, and *przez* and *w*, respectively. HAMMEL (2003) analyzes several Polish prepositions – limiting himself to the description of spatial relations; WŁODARCZYK (2003) is similar. WEISS (2003) examines the main set of Polish prepositions used in the temporal domain, concentrating on spatio-temporal metaphorical mappings. The study by PRZYBYLSKA (2002) is the most extensive analysis of Polish prepositions in the cognitive framework.

When turning to analyses of case semantics in Slavic within the cognitive framework, even fewer studies can be found. Few analyses are devoted to the cognitive analysis of individual cases in Russian, Polish, and Czech. WIERZBICKA (1988) focuses on the Polish dative in a semantic framework close to cognitive. The Polish dative is also the subject of two cognitive studies: RUDZKA-OSTYN (1992) and DĄBROWSKA (1997). JANDA (1993) provides detailed descriptions of the Czech dative and the Russian instrumental along with a briefer comparative view on the Russian dative and Czech instrumental.² In her later work, JANDA also deals with different aspects of the Slavic case semantics (e.g., JANDA 2002).³ Although they provide valuable methodological insights into the analysis of spatial language in general, and Slavic prepositions and cases in particular, these studies have left western South Slavic entirely out of consideration. Apart from my own analyses of certain aspects of prepositional and case semantics of Croatian (ŠARIĆ 1998, 2001, 2002, 2006a, 2006b), only one book-length study (KLIKOVAC 2002, rev. ed. 2006) partly concentrates on issues related to the concept of space in western South Slavic, specifically on the containment concept in Serbian and English.

This study of prepositions and cases is conducted within the theoretical framework of cognitive linguistics, an approach that provides an outstanding basis for

2 Single Slavic verbal prefixes have been the subject of several analyses (e.g., RUDZKA-OSTYN 1983; JANDA 1986; PASICH-PIASECKA 1993; TWARDZISZ 1994; DĄBROWSKA 1996; SHULL 2003; BELAJ 2008).

3 For an overview of JANDA's work on case semantics, cf. <http://hum.uit.no/lajanda/mypubs/mypubs.html>.

analysis of the issues related to the perception of spatial relations and their language coding (LAKOFF 1987; LANGACKER 1987, 1991a, 1991b; JANDA 1993; DĄBROWSKA 1997; EVANS, TYLER 2004; TYLER, EVANS 2007). Constructionist approaches such as GOLDBERG (1995, 2006) are very promising for the analysis of topics related to those dealt with in this study; see, for example, their application to Slavic material in FRIED (2004, 2005).

Cognitive linguistics implies that grammar is inherently symbolic and that all grammatical forms are meaningful. Therefore, in the analysis of linguistic forms, I aim to define their meanings and demonstrate how the proposed semantic analyses differentiate them from other related categories. A very brief outline of some basic concepts employed in the subsequent chapters follows. Other theoretical issues are discussed in greater detail in the respective chapters. The concept of the semantic network (LANGACKER 1991a: 369 ff., 1991b: 266 ff.) means that the senses of polysemous linguistic units form a network that is organized by various categorizing relationships, which include *extension from a prototype* and the *similarity principle*. Extension implies that a peripheral member of a category is related by general cognitive principles to the more central, “prototypical” member. General cognitive principles employed in this process are metaphor and metonymy. Similarity implies resemblance among the members of a category when it is not possible to identify basic, or central, members, thus contributing to a distinct shape of a category.

Meaning in cognitive linguistics is equivalent to conceptualization. It comprises not only content, but also imagery, or *construal* of the content. The ability to construe the same content in different ways is one of the most important human cognitive capacities. An example of profiling is the relation of semantically related verbs and nouns; for example, *reading* and *to read*. Whereas verbs profile processes, nouns involve construing an event as a “thing”. The term “thing” in cognitive grammar covers physical objects, abstract entities, and qualities (i.e., entities designated by nouns). The noun *reading* backgrounds a temporal dimension profiled by the verb *to read*. Verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositions designate relations between entities. When perceiving relations, we tend to impose different perspectives on the event and participating entities. Our tendency is to view one element as the central element of a scene against the background of other entities. In cognitive grammar, the more salient element is termed the *trajector*, and the elements of the background are referred to as *landmarks*. A construction may involve more than one trajector and landmark; for example, the clausal trajector may differ from the trajector of a preposition involved in a construction. I use the terms “trajector” and “landmark” through the analyses in this book in a simplified way: I analyze spatial constructions typically involving two entities placed in a spatial relation with the help of a preposition and a case; for example, *knjiga je na_{PREP} stolu_{LOC}* ‘a book is on the table’. By the term *trajector* (TR), I refer to a located object, be it a moving ob-

ject or stationary object (*knjiga* in the given example). By the term landmark (LM), I refer to the object in relation to which the TR is located (*stol* in the given example).⁴

Speakers of a language often construe the same content by imposing contrasting images; that is, by highlighting different aspects of the situation. The language offers a range of options, and speakers choose options that best match their communicative intentions. The choice between different prepositional and case coding is always semantically motivated. The constructions may convey a similar meaning, but they illustrate choice options, and at times considerable differences in what is highlighted in a situation. It is challenging to analyze the motivations for different coding within one language, and even more the varieties in prepositional and case usage between two or more related languages. In some cases, we are confronted with intriguingly different ways of seeing spatial settings, of foregrounding and backgrounding their elements. Choices are always logical and explainable, although they may not be predictable. Grammatical choices reflect conceptualization patterns conveying a particular image behind the form. The grammar imposes a particular perspective on a situation.

Cognitive approaches to prepositions have enabled a different insight into the long catalogue of meanings listed in traditional linguistic descriptions and dictionaries. They observe meanings of a preposition traditionally considered “irregular” and “idiomatic” as part of a structured meaning network of the preposition. Regarding cases, cognitive linguistic studies have demonstrated that they can be analyzed differently: not only in purely syntactic terms, in which the case ending seems to be merely a formal exponent of grammatical function, or as in traditional grammars, which attempt to define cases in describing their numerable uses, whose interrelation is very difficult to discover. Cases in cognitive linguistics are ascribed distinct meanings. It has been demonstrated that the meaning of a single case can be seen as a structured meaning network (cf., e.g., JANDA 1993 for the Czech dative and Russian instrumental, and DĄBROWSKA 1997 for the Polish dative).

Moreover, a semantic approach to prepositions and cases in the tradition of cognitive linguistics is a valuable didactic tool in language acquisition (JANDA, CLANCY 2002). I am convinced of the applicability and strength of the main ideas of cognitive linguistic in analyzing prepositional and case semantics. However, the analysis of spatial language must try to link spatial language and perceptual processing more directly (e.g., REGIER, CARLSON 2001). The relation of spatial language and geometric relations in the scene being described is certainly an important factor, as shown, for example, in HERSKOVITS (1986) and LANDAU, JACKENDOFF (1993). Even so, an account must also be sought that takes into consideration how objects interact with

4 LANGACKER (1987: 217 ff.) introduced the terms *trajector* and *landmark* to distinguish a foreground figure that is mobile or more movable in relation to its location, which usually is more stationary. The foreground is called the *trajector* and the background the *landmark*. There are various opinions regarding the adequacy of the terms in describing various spatial configurations.

each other, the forces they exert on each other, and the conceptual relation between the objects that is reflected in the prepositional and case usage. The advantages of such an account are illustrated, among other approaches, in the “functional geometric framework” of COVENTRY, GARROD (2004).

Overview

By concentrating on selected prepositions *and* cases, the chief aim of this work is to overcome the limitations related to the analysis of single language units (i.e., prepositions or cases). Hence it concentrates on an important segment of spatial language, which I believe emerges in the interrelation of prepositional and case meaning in the Slavic languages that have preserved nominal inflection. I address not only the semantic profile of spatial expressions, but also how spatial concepts are used in the construal of non-spatial domains. Because an overview of spatial language in its entirety far exceeds a book-length study, the selection of individual topics analyzed in the individual chapters of this book is motivated by their importance for the conceptualization of space.

Various language corpora are used in this analysis of spatial constructions. The corpora and other sources (e.g., dictionaries and collections of old text examples) are indicated in individual chapters. When relevant, a diachronic perspective is included in the analysis as well. Diachronic study of the usage of spatial expressions is useful not only when verifying the temporal order in which particular usage types occurred, but also when seeking an explanation for the development of the contemporary usage network.

The first chapter of this book is devoted to the main theoretical notion this analysis operates with: metaphorical extension. Cognitive linguistics has recognized the importance of spatial semantics in conceptualizing other non-spatial domains. However, analyses have often left uncertainties regarding the real status of the spatial domain and how it is related to other domains. This chapter seeks to introduce and exemplify the relation of spatial usages of prepositions and cases (i.e., prepositional constructions) to other, non-spatial usages. Selected examples are used to discuss what a spatial prototype is and how it can be extended, as well as how metaphorical extensions map spatial usages onto non-spatial domains. The analysis seeks to demonstrate how the meanings of spatial prepositions and cases they combine with extend – for example, into the domain of causal and temporal usages.

In concentrating on two of the most basic and most frequent spatial prepositions in Slavic – that is, on two opposite spatial relations, “in-ness” and “on-ness” and their interrelation in Chapter 2 – the principles of organizing their meaning network are demonstrated along with the variety of spatial settings these prepositions cover. Moreover, the choice of the prepositions *na* ‘on, at; to’ and *u* ‘in, into; to, at’ and their equivalents in Slavic enables a view of their interrelation with the cases they combine with; that is, the accusative and locative. These two prepositions are the

most typical prepositions occurring with the accusative and locative. The close correspondence between the concepts expressed by *u/v/w* and *na* in Slavic suggests similarities in the conceptualization of basic spatial relations that are associated with straightforward geometry. However, the observable divergences of the prepositional and case usages in individual languages reveal a challenging field of investigation because they are already observable in the conceptualization of basic spatial relations. An equally interesting issue concerns overlap in the usage of prepositions denoting “in-ness” and “on-ness” within a single language.

Proximity is another crucial spatial relation. The choice of the preposition *kod* ‘by, beside, next to, near, at; during; among’ in the discussion of proximity concepts in Chapter 3 is motivated by its frequency and the fact that this preposition is semantically less “distinct” and thus less restrictive regarding its combination with different kinds of spatial landmarks than other proximity prepositions. With the variety of concepts it covers, it is an ideal candidate for explaining how the spatial conceptualization of proximity relations influences the understanding of non-spatial domains. Furthermore, the contexts it occurs in offer a view of an important aspect of the semantics of the genitive case. The preposition *kod* has been a “troublesome” preposition for language normativists. It occurs in static and dynamic contexts, the second being a matter of controversy in the standardization processes of Serbo-Croatian and the languages that emerged after its disintegration. Although *kod* primarily relates to static scenes, I argue for the validity of dynamic usages of *kod* on the basis of the general semantics of the genitive, the case it combines with. I also argue that the constructional meaning actually triggers the dynamic usage of *kod* because its occurrence strongly depends on the meaning of the verb used in a construction. This analysis opens additional challenging issues, such as how the opposition static vs. dynamic is expressed in Slavic, how the speakers of a particular language conceptualize motion vs. static scenes, and what this means for the coding possibilities of a language. A part of the chapter addressing proximity relations deals with the preposition *pri* ‘by, at, near, close to, next to’, which is a preposition shared among the Slavic languages. The analysis of its meaning network seeks to account for the divergences in the spatial and non-spatial usages of *pri* in different languages and to demonstrate how one and the same basic spatial meaning enables different metaphorical extensions and meaning shifts that may occur in individual languages while not being observable in other, albeit closely related, languages. In addition, *pri* offers a closer look at the general semantics of the case it combines with – the locative. Thus, through their central spatial meaning, *pri* and its near-synonym *kod* enable a perspective on the semantic profile of the locative and genitive, respectively.

When examining the prepositions *na* and *u* – that is, the containment relation and contact with a surface relation – the analysis in Chapter 2 covers most typical accusative and locative prepositions, hence providing a solid basis for an insight into the semantics of the accusative and locative. The inclusion of proximity relations enables a closer look at a great deal of spatial semantics of the genitive and locative case. However, an intriguing phenomenon remains, which is the subject of the

Chapter 4. Two cases in modern B/C/S, the dative and the instrumental, resemble spatial “cases proper” in certain other languages in that they convey spatial information not only with, but also without prepositions. In the analysis dealing with the spatial meaning of the dative case, dative prepositional usages are first examined in detail, including comparative remarks on the semantics of the preposition *k* in various Slavic languages. This dative preposition is shared by the Slavic languages, hence providing a perspective on their unexpected divergence in prepositional usage. The analysis of the bare “directional” dative that follows in the second part of Chapter 4 seeks to determine the motivations and sources of this “peculiar” usage – peculiar, because analytical tendencies and a tendency toward increasing the set of prepositions are observable in modern Slavic. The bare directional dative form appears to represent an opposite tendency, thus raising the issue of the motivations for this usage. It is argued that the specific semantics of the bare directional dative, which occur almost exclusively in contexts with humans as end-points of the motion, are closely related to other, central meaning domains of the dative case.