

# FORM AND FUNCTION OF THE PERIPHERAL CASES IN SOME SLOVENE DIALECTS: PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

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## 1. Introduction

This paper\* discusses the morphology of the three peripheral cases—dative, locative and instrumental—in selected Slovene dialects. It is hardly exhaustive; indeed, data from only a handful of dialects are studied. It is in fact but the first progress report in a long-term project that aims to describe the morphology and semantics of the noun in South and East Slavic. Here I will concentrate on form, and indicate developmental tendencies in the evolution of noun-paradigms in Slovene. In my conclusion I shall however pose questions concerning the connection of these forms with function, i.e., with the semantics of case in Slavic. In short: I here attempt to set up a framework for the study of the noun in Slavic dialects, and to formulate the questions that will best serve as guideposts in this study.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Theoretical Framework: The Case for Peripheral Cases

The idea that the dat, loc and ins cases should be considered “peripheral” originated, of course, with Roman Jakobson.<sup>2</sup> Let us first review his treatment of the CSR case system and then briefly characterize further the notion of “peripherality.”

Jakobson (1958: 158)<sup>3</sup> argued that each of the CSR—and, by extension, Slavic—cases has an invariant meaning of its own, which can be characterized as a core set of semantic features. Using the notions of markedness and binary oppositions, he divided the six CSR cases into three groups, with the nom unmarked in relation to the other five. He called the gen and the loc (or “prepositional”) *quantifiers* which “focus upon the extent to which the entity takes part in the message;” the acc and dat are *directional* cases, and “signal the goal of an event.” In addition, the dat and loc are opposed to the acc and gen respectively by also characterized as *peripheral*. All the oppositions are presented in TABLE I.

	QUANT	DIR	PERI
nom	–	–	–
gen	+	–	–
dat	–	+	+
acc	–	+	–
loc	+	–	+
ins	–	–	+

TABLE I. SEMANTIC FEATURES OF THE RUSSIAN CASES (after Jakobson)

This is not the place to critique the massive theoretical literature which Jakobson’s analysis has generated over the years, but it would be helpful to further clarify the rather vague notion of *peripherality* for the purposes of this study. Clearly, by “assign the accessory place in the message” Jakobson meant “express relationships which stand outside of the predicative core (i.e., SVO) of the sentence;” and these are mostly (though



by far not entirely) adverbial relationships.<sup>4</sup> David Kilby has given perhaps the most useful refinement to this notion, namely, that peripheral-case constructions are those that can be eliminated from the sentence without causing ellipsis.<sup>5</sup>

### 3. Syncretism and the Peripheral Cases

In his seminal works on the semantics of CSR case, Jakobson (1936: 67-71; 1958: 161-67) discussed syncretism (i.e., instances where different cases have the same form) but briefly.<sup>6</sup> His account, while presented in terms of his feature matrix, was largely descriptive. It is clear, however, that syncretism in CSR very closely follows Jakobson's central vs. peripheral opposition. In the words of one of his students, "the case syncretisms of Russian impose a hierarchical linear order on the cases as syntactic abstractions: . . . [nom acc gen loc dat ins]."<sup>7</sup> What this formulation means is that syncretism occurs most often between two central cases, or between two peripheral cases, whereas syncretism between a central and a peripheral case is extremely rare, being limited almost exclusively to the quantifiers. Most syncretic combinations of central and peripheral cases simply never occur.<sup>8</sup>

Apart from syncretism, the peripheral cases in CSR share other morphological characteristics. The most significant of these is nasality: the consonant *-m-* appears exclusively in the peripheral-case desinences (Jakobson 1958: 170).

### 4. Some Peripheral Cases in Contemporary Standard Slovene

However perfectly—or imperfectly—Jakobson's theory fits the facts of the Slavic languages other than CSR, it seems reasonable to hypothesize that the case systems of at least most of them are close enough semantically and syntactically to CSR that his analysis can be used as a starting-point, if not as anything more, for them also. Indeed, this is one of the operating assumptions behind the present work. Note, too, that another basic assumption here is that if Jakobson's principles have any validity, they should operate as well in dynamic linguistic systems such as dialectal Slovene (which displays great formal variation) as they do in relatively static systems such as CSR (which displays little or no variation). Indeed, these principles should help explain the patterns of variation which we see in the data.

Jakobson himself briefly touched upon the other Slavic languages in both the works referred to here.<sup>9</sup> Scholars after him have applied his theories to them with some success. For instance, Milka Ivić (1961) used the same oppositions in her discussion of the SC case system. The Jakobsonian model has been applied to Slovene by Browne (1986: 6) and by Lencek (1982: 186-87).<sup>10</sup>

No other South Slavic language displays a greater number of peripheral case endings than CSS; that is, in no other South Slavic language are gender distinctions so well maintained in these cases; and in no other is syncretism among them so infrequent. Indeed, syncretism involving the peripheral cases is exceedingly rare; dat = loc in the singular of all declensions, as in SC, although there are prosodic distinctions in a handful of masculine nouns;<sup>11</sup> ins sg = acc sg in Class II nouns<sup>12</sup> (\**q* → *q̣* in both). In the dual, dat = ins. In the plural, the three peripheral cases remain distinct from one another in all three paradigms. The only instance of syncretism involving a peripheral case in the plural is found in the Class I masc paradigm, where nom pl = ins pl.<sup>13</sup> Virtually all these instances of syncretism were either inherited from Common Slavic (the CSS noun declension being quite archaic), or else developed coincidentally through phonological changes. Only the



syncretism dat = loc in Class I nouns involves morphological levelling: loc sg *-u* replaced inherited *\*-ě* and *\*-i* in the written language some time well after the sixteenth century.<sup>14</sup>

Finally, nasality—specifically, the consonant *m*—is less of a mark of peripherality in CSS than it is in CSR, but it is still prominent in this role. In CSS, as in many SC dialects, high vowels tend also to be associated with the peripheral cases, although not exclusively. In fact, only three peripheral-case desinences do not contain the phonemes *i*, *u* or *m*: Class II loc pl and loc du (*-ax* = “ah”); Class II ins sg (*-o*); and Class III ins sg (*-jo*).<sup>15</sup>

The peripheral case-forms, in all three numbers, of the most common CSS noun-paradigms are presented in TABLE II.<sup>16</sup>

Class		I	I	II	III
		masc	neut	fem	fem
sg	dat	koraku	mestu	mizi	nití
	loc	koraku	mestu	mizi	nití
	ins	korakom	mestom	mizo	nitjo
du	dat	korakoma	mestoma	mizama	nitima
	loc	korakih	mestih	mizah	nitih
	ins	korakoma	mestoma	mizama	nitima
pl	dat	korakom	mestom	mizam	nitim
	loc	korakih	mestih	mizah	nitih
	ins	koraki	mesti	mizami	nitmi

TABLE II. PERIPHERAL CASE-FORMS OF COMMON CSS NOUNS

## 5. The Peripheral Cases in Slovene Dialects

### 5.1. Notes on the Data

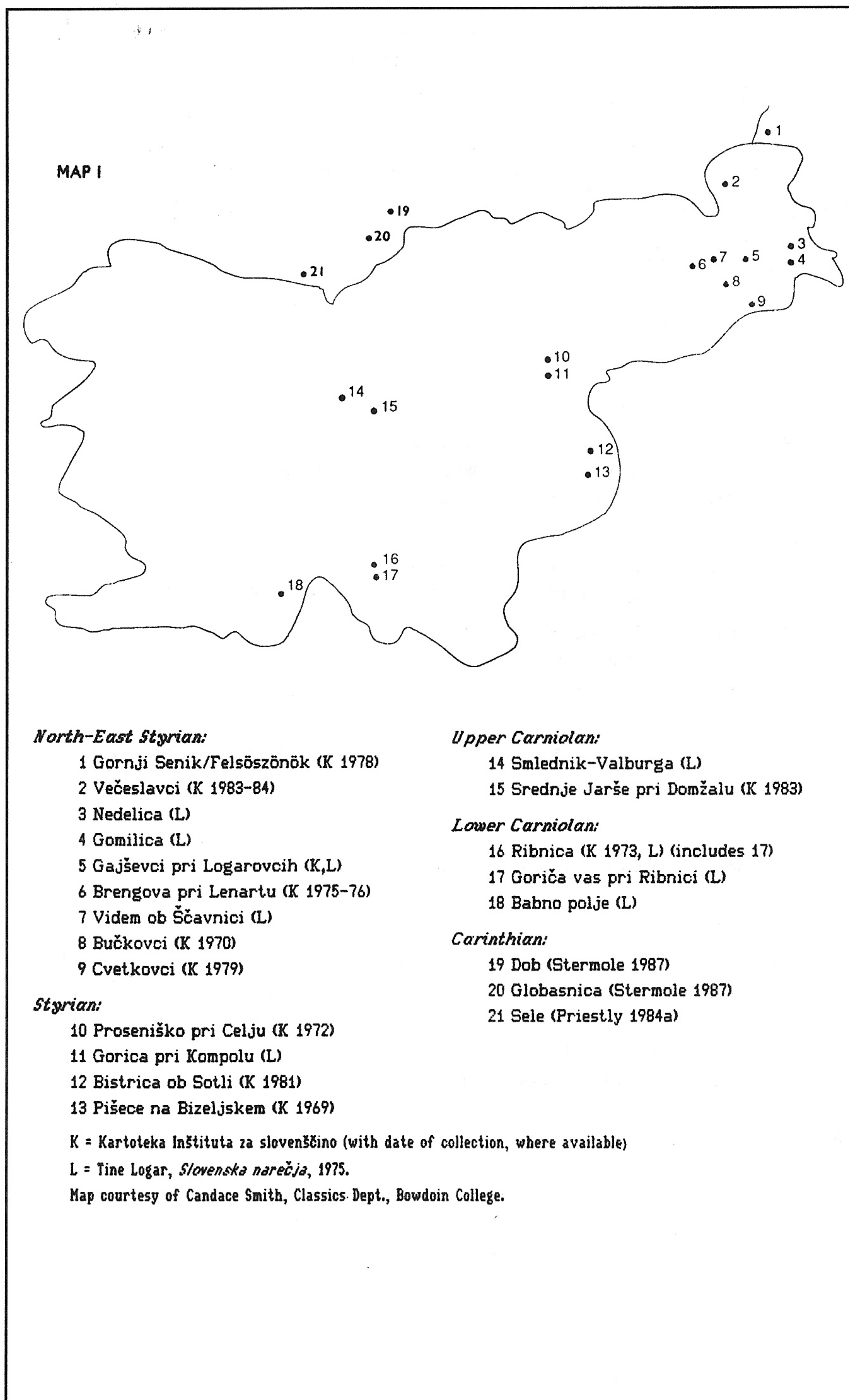
In this paper I refer to the Sln dialect groups (or “bases”) as defined, *inter alia*, in Lencek (1982: 133). The further distinctions within each group—which, as we know, can be multitudinous—will be mentioned only as needed.<sup>17</sup>

My data come from NEStyr (nine villages), Styr (four), UCarn (two) and LCarn (three villages). MAP I shows the location of each village. Whenever in the following discussion I refer to a specific form, I cite the name of the village and its number on MAP I. Material from two Austrian Car dialects is introduced in section 5.8.

These data were selected in the Summer of 1987 from the *kartoteka* at the Inštitut za slovenščino Frana Ramovša pri Raziskovalnem Centru SAZU in Ljubljana [hereafter, IS]. They were culled from material collected in recent years for the Slovene dialect atlas. This material takes the form of responses to a standardized questionnaire; case forms are listed in isolation or as part of a paradigm, and are rarely cited in context.

These data were augmented with the texts published in Logar (1975). In two instances it was possible to use texts from the same villages represented in the IS notebooks. Otherwise the texts came from villages located in the immediate vicinity of these others. The data-collection details are listed on MAP I.<sup>18</sup>







Forms are given in a variation of the transcription system that is used in Logar (1975, especially 85-90). (The same system as Logar's is used in the IS material.) Specific symbols used in my transcriptions are:

ɐ	o	"narrow e o": high-mid vowels intermediate between [i u] and [e o]
ɛ	ɔ	"very open e o"
ɨ		"reduced i": an [i]-colored vowel intermediate between [i] and [e]
ɑ		a slightly rounded low back vowel, mid-way between [ɒ] and [ɔ]
ɞ̃		nasalized yod

All other symbols may be assumed to have the value normally ascribed to them in the literature.

As this is intended as a *morphological* study, reference to the highly complex phonological variation of Sln dialects is kept to the minimum necessary to help account for morphological developments. Readers are referred to the relevant sections of Logar (1975) and Lencek (1984) for good concise overviews of Sln dialectal phonology. I also avoid detailed discussion of suprasegmentals, for the same reason. I am aware of the great emphasis placed on prosodic features in the literature, but believe that treatment of them in this context deserves a separate study.

**5.2. General Remarks** There has been a wholesale reduction in the number of distinct peripheral-case desinences in Sln dialects, especially in NEStyr, where syncretism in the non-singular is particularly advanced. In some instances the restructuring of paradigms seems to have been triggered by sound changes; others seem to have been cases of analogy or morphological levelling. As in CSR, peripheral cases in Sln dialects fall together with other peripheral cases. In fact, dialectal developments tend to actually eliminate the instances of syncretism between peripheral and non-peripheral cases which were inherited from an earlier stage of the language.

### 5.3. The Singular (dat = loc)

As in CSS and most other Western South Slavic dialects, the dat sg and loc sg tend to merge their endings in all paradigms in all dialects. However, all the dialects studied here take this syncretism one step further than CSS or SC: all nouns share a single ending for dat and loc sg, at least facultatively. That is, gender distinctions in these cases are either lost, or are in the process of being lost. As for the actual shape of this ending, in NEStyr and in Styr it is a high front vowel, *i*, *ɨ* or *ɐ*. In UCarn and in LCarn it is schwa or zero. Examples are given in TABLE III.<sup>19</sup>

This situation can be accounted for in various ways, and there are so many complicating factors at work here that it is unlikely that any one explanation will suffice for the whole

Village	ending	I	II	III
2 Večeslavci	-e	brwǎ:te	s <sup>e</sup> ǎ:stre	no:wčɛ
5 Gajševci	-i	brǎti	sěstri	nōči
13 Pišece	-i	brǎti	rōki	nučf
15 Sr. Jarše	-a/0	brǎ:t	sé:stra	nó:č
16 Ribnica	-a	brata	sjástra	nōča

TABLE III. DATIVE/LOCATIVE SINGULAR ENDINGS IN EASTERN SLOVENE DIALECTS



region. Many scholars have offered purely phonological accounts. For instance, Ramovš derives the Class I dat/loc sg endings in Prekmurje, *i* etc., from inherited *\*u* via a stage *ü*; he cites instances of *u* → *ə* in UCarn and other dialects (1952: 39). The descriptions of the phonology of the various dialects in Logar 1975<sup>20</sup> all suggest that reflexes of *i* and *u* fall together in post-tonic position, therefore guaranteeing morphological equivalence in the dat/loc sing between masc/neut and fem nouns. Those who collected the IS material seem to tacitly support this kind of analysis.

The trouble with these explanations, of course, is that there are exceedingly few cases of post-tonic word-final *-u* in the language: the examples cited by these scholars for *u* → *i*, *u* → *ə*, etc., in this position are inevitably limited to the Class I case forms. Consequently the reasoning here is somewhat circular. Oblak (1889: 527) specifically rejects phonological explanations.

I believe that we must look to a morphological explanation, or at least to one that combines morphological and phonological elements. Ramovš (1952: 39-41) suggests that these Class I dat/loc sg endings (all of them high front vowels or possible reflexes of high front vowels) could derive from the old soft-stem loc sg *-i* desinence, which could have spread to the dat sg by analogy with the other declensions. Oblak (1889: 525) suggests that it could derive from the dat sg endings of old masc *i*-stem nouns (e.g., *\*gospod*). It is also tempting to look to the old hard-stem loc sg *-ě* ending for a possible origin. This ending has survived in Sln, especially in the central dialects (Ramovš 1952: 40-41), and in some nouns it clearly did spread to the dat sg (Ramovš 1952: 57; see below for examples of dat/loc sg forms with reflexes of *\*ě*). We cannot however always expect *\*ě* to produce the surface forms that we have noted above for the dialects in question;<sup>21</sup> besides, the old ending seems to be limited—wherever it is found—to a very narrow group of Class I nouns (and occasionally also to a few Class II nouns).

I would suggest that, however it was that the dat/loc sg *-i* secured a foothold in the Class I paradigm, it was surely reinforced by the two fem paradigms. I would not now rule out the possibility that analogy with Classes II and III served as the primary impetus for this change, at least in some areas. But, whatever the *historical* explanation for this state of affairs, it is obvious that, from a *synchronic* viewpoint, all nouns have the same dat/loc sg ending in these dialects, and that—given the fact that the surface form is almost invariably a high front vowel—the ending we should set up should be */-i/*.

I found that the genders were largely kept distinct in these forms in the Stry dialect of Proseniško (10). At the same time, however, the data offer clear evidence that we are indeed dealing with morphological levelling in the dat/loc sg of Class I nouns. In this dialect, Class I dat/loc sg is usually either the old ending *-u*, or *-o*, which represents a much later innovation<sup>22</sup> (e.g., *bràto*, *sīno*, *lāsū*); fem nouns have dat/loc sg *∅* ← *i*: *rôk*, *žîên*, *nuôč*. Yet, one also encounters Class I forms in Proseniško: *na brëjk*, *po mëjst*, etc.. A thorough analysis of this dialect would have to be made to arrive at any final conclusions, but it is clear that word-final *-u* is not reduced to *∅* here, and that therefore we may see this variation as a case of the Class II/III in the process of crossing over to the Class I paradigm.<sup>23</sup>

Sln dialectal phonology also obscures another instance where the genders may remain distinct in the dat/loc sg. Texts in Logar 1975 for the Stry dialect of Gorica (11) show that in this village the surface dat/loc sg endings are consistently *∅* for fem and *-i* for masc nouns. Compare *f kas'a:rn* (CSS “v kasarni”), *na pō:t* (CSS “na poti”), *par t'i:st str'a:nk* (CSS “pri tisti stranki”) with *k magac'i:ni* (CSS “k magazinu”), *na fs'a:k m'uosti* (CSS “na vsakem mostu”), *v n'ašm avtomob'i:li* (CSS “v našem avtomobilu”).—Note that neut



noun phrases seem to be distinct from both masc and fem in the dat/loc sg by virtue of the fact that the neut noun ends in  $\emptyset$  like the fem, whereas the neut adjective has the same ending as masc adjectives: thus, *na fs'a:km karž'i:š* (CSS “na vsakem kržišču”).—I believe that we have to set up separate endings for masc and fem here, although it is unclear what these underlying forms should be (/i/ for masc and / $\emptyset$ / for fem?), and also how we may explain the situation historically.<sup>24</sup>

In some dialects, in certain nouns, the dat and loc sg are kept distinct in various ways. As in CSS they are sometimes characterized by different prosodic features: cf. Večeslavci (2, NEStyr) dat *sen'e:j* and loc *s'i:jne* ‘son’—here we clearly see the old loc sg ending \**ě*!—and also cf. Gornji Senik (1, NEStyr) dat *r'o:wke* and loc *rok'e:j*—again obviously from \**ě*. Extremely interesting data from Cvetkovci (9, NEStyr) show that stem variants can distinguish the two cases: in the noun *pas* (CSS “pes”) the dat sg is *pa:se* and the loc sg is *ps'q:vɛ*.<sup>25</sup>

5.4. The Plural

There has been a considerable reduction of plural peripheral-case endings in dialectal Sln. This can result in loss of gender distinctions—often in a way that calls to mind similar phenomena in East Slavic<sup>26</sup>—and in case-syncretism, and often in both at once.

The loss of gender distinctions in the dat, loc and ins pl is widespread and often mentioned in the literature. Logar (1974a: 101; 1975: 15), for instance, notes that all plural paradigms have generalized the same set of peripheral-case endings over the greater part of Styr, Car and Littoral dialects; some have *-am -ax -ami*, others have *-em -ex -emi*, and still others have *-im -ix -imi*.<sup>27</sup> But in none of the dialects studied to date were these systems found in a pure state, and many of them seem indeed to maintain the archaic state of affairs that is reflected in CSS.

Prekmurje dialects show a loss of gender distinctions in the loc and ins pl, but not in the dat: all nouns take loc pl /-aj/ (← *-ax'* ← *-ax*, Ramovš 1952: 49) and ins pl /-ami/; masc nouns retain the inherited dat pl /-om/, while fem and neut nouns take /-am/. See TABLE IV for examples.<sup>28</sup>

Village	case	I	II	III
1 Gornji Senik	dat	br'āton/am	r'o:wkan	noč'a:n
	loc	br'ātaj	r'o:wkaj	noč'a:j
	ins	br'ātame	r'o:wkame <sup>1</sup>	noč'a:mɛ
2 Večeslavci	dat	brw'ā:ton	krw'ā:van	noč'a:n
	loc	brw'ā:taj	krw'ā:vaj	noč'a:j
	ins	brw'ā:tame	krw'ā:vame	noč'a:mɛ
4 Gomilica	dat	br'ātun	m'āman	-----
	loc	br'ātaj	m'āmaj	nuč'a:j
	ins	br'ātame	m'āmame	nuč'a:mɛ

1 also rok'a:mɛ

TABLE IV. EXAMPLES OF PLURAL PERIPHERAL CASES IN PREKMURJE DIALECTS

TABLE IV suggests that doublets in *-an* exist in the dat pl of masc nouns in Gornji Senik (1); the IS notebook for this dialect also records ins pl doublets for the noun *konj*, viz.



*k'onjame* and *konj'i*. (No doublets were found in the loc pl.) These forms suggest the existence of doublets in other villages of the region, and in other nouns.<sup>29</sup>

This situation is very interesting when viewed in light of Ramovš' statements (1952: 47, 50) that in East Sln the masc is opposed to the neut and fem in the dat pl (viz., *om* vs. *am*) and in the ins pl as well (viz., *i* vs. *ami*). The IS data suggest that the ending *-ami* has since spread to the masc pl paradigm in Prekmurje, where it is now preferred to *-i*, and that *-am* is possibly starting to displace *-om* as well.<sup>30</sup>

In UCarn and Central Styr the dat can merge with the ins in the plural. The genders remain distinct, although Class I can be identical to Class III. For examples, see TABLE V. It will be noted that the loc pl remains distinct from the dat/ins pl, but that in at least one dialect all declensions share the same loc pl ending. In his only mention of this phenomenon Ramovš (1952: 61) indicates that, at least in Class II nouns, prosodic features can differentiate the dat and the ins (see also Oblak 1890: 408, 447-448). The numerous doublet forms listed on TABLE V suggest that the declensional systems of these dialects are in a state of flux, and that the subsystems under discussion are rather the final targets of changes in progress than regular dialectal features. It is worth noting that Ramovš virtually ignores this phenomenon; this, too, perhaps suggests a very recent change.

Village	case	I	II	III
10 Proseniško	dat	brâtem <sup>1</sup>	krâwm <sup>2</sup>	mâterem <sup>3</sup>
	loc	brâtix	krâvix	mâterix
	ins	brâtem	krâwm <sup>2</sup>	mâterem <sup>3</sup>
15 Srednje Jarše	dat	brâ:tem	krâ:vam	nučë:m
	loc	brâ:tax	krâ:vax	nučë:x
	ins	brâ:tem	krâ:vam <sup>4</sup>	nučmí: <sup>5</sup>

1 doublets in *-om*: brâtom

2 some nouns with doublets in *-am/-əm*: kûram/kûram

3 also dat pl mâteram, ins pl mâterim

4 dat differs from ins for *ró:ka*: dat rukà:m, ins rukà:m

5 cf. mî:šax mî:šam

TABLE V. EXAMPLES OF PLURAL PERIPHERAL CASES IN CENTRAL SLOVENE DIALECTS

### 5.5. The Dual

Sln is unique among the South Slavic languages in that it has retained the dual number. CSS has special dual forms for all paradigms, and has even gradually expanded rules for their use (Lencek 1982: 50, 185). Nevertheless, the dual would not be a CSS feature at all were it not for the intervention of the nineteenth-century grammarians (Tesnière 1925a: 202-03, 218, *et passim*; Lencek 1982: 185).

As for the dialects, "... the dual category has been losing ground [there] for centuries" (Lencek 1982: 186). Tesnière demonstrates that the loss of the dual in Sln dialects is actually a complex series of interrelated processes,<sup>31</sup> and that the noun was first affected in the sixteenth century, when the old gen/loc endings in *-u* first began to be lost (1925a: 192-193). Total loss of this category was first encountered in Bela Krajina (1925a: 231) and by the twentieth century the dual was no longer to be heard in UCarn, LCarn, Lit, and Car (1924a: 231).

As could be expected, only vestiges of the dual were noticed in the data from UCarn and LCarn studied for this report. The situation was similar in Styr, although one dialect



from this area (12, Bistrica) seems to have preserved the old situation found in CSS.

Tesnière called NESTyr the "citadel of the dual in Slovene" (1925a: 231) and indeed this was where the old peripheral-case dual endings are best preserved, although with a greatly different distribution from that found in CSS. Throughout the region the loc du takes the dat/ins du endings and, in most of the dialects studied, this ending in *-oma* for all nouns. In other words, there tends to be only one peripheral-case dual form in the NESTyr region. TABLE VI contains examples.

Village	case	I	II	III
2 Večeslavci	dat	k'q:njoma	krw'a:voma <sup>1</sup>	kok'o:wšoma <sup>1</sup>
	loc	k'q:njoma	krw'a:voma <sup>1</sup>	kok'o:wšama
	ins	k'q:njoma	krw'a:voma <sup>1</sup>	kok'o:wšama
5 Gajševci	dat	kúĵjoma	krá'voma <sup>2</sup>	nôčoma <sup>3</sup>
	ins	kúĵjoma	krá'voma <sup>2</sup>	nôčoma <sup>3</sup>
	loc	kúĵjoma	krá'voma	nôčoma <sup>3</sup>
6 Brengova	dat	kok'o:toma	z'i:moma <sup>4</sup>	m'i:šoma
	ins	kok'o:toma	z'i:moma <sup>4</sup>	m'i:šoma
	loc	kok'o:toma	z'i:moma <sup>4</sup>	m'i:šoma
8 Bučkovi	dat	kôĵjoma <sup>5</sup>	krá'voma <sup>6</sup>	má'eteroma <sup>6</sup>
	ins	kôĵjoma <sup>5</sup>	krá'voma <sup>6</sup>	má'eteroma <sup>6</sup>
	loc	kôĵjoma <sup>5</sup>	krá'voma <sup>6</sup>	má'eteroma <sup>6</sup>

1 most fem nouns are listed with *-ama*

2 also dat *rokàma*, ins *rokàma/rôkama*

3 cf. also *čêroma*, *čêrax*, *čêroma*

4 cf. also *rok'a:ma*, *r'o:kax*, *rok'a:ma*

5 also loc du *-ix* for some nouns

6 loc differs from dat/ins in fem nouns; hence also *rôkama*, *rôkax*, *rôkama*

TABLE VI. EXAMPLES OF DUAL PERIPHERAL CASES IN N.E. STYRIAN DIALECTS

Tesnière devotes much attention to the phenomenon of loc du = dat/ins du in *-ma* in NESTyr. In some of his examples (1925a: 185) dat/loc/ins du is *-oma* in the masc and *-ama* in the fem and neut;<sup>32</sup> in others, all nouns have the ending *-ama* in these cases, at least facultatively; in still other dialects, masc nouns have the plural endings exclusively and only fem nouns have dat/loc/ins du *-oma*. The state of affairs represented in Table VI is not mentioned by Tesnière; his data do not suggest that it even existed at the time of his fieldwork in this area. This fact, and the plethora of doublet forms given with the table, suggest that, like the instance of dat pl = ins pl outlined above, this may be an extremely recent set of changes.<sup>33</sup>

## 5.6. Summary of developments in Non-singular Paradigms

**5.6.1. Northeastern Styrian** Looking at NESTyr in general, we see a marked tendency toward minimalization of gender distinctions—and hence of distinct forms—among peripheral cases in the dual and plural. CHART I demonstrates how dramatic this reduction of forms can be.



DUAL		I	II	III
stage one	dat	-oma	-ama	-ima
	ins	-oma	-ama	-ima
	loc	-u	-u	-ju
stage two	dat	-oma	-ama	-ima
	ins	-oma	-ama	-ima
	loc	-i	-ami	-i(mi) <sup>1</sup>
stage three <sup>2</sup>	dat	-oma	-ama	-ama
	ins	-oma	-ama	-ama
	loc	-oma	-ama	-ama
stage four	dat	-oma	-oma	-oma
	ins	-oma	-oma	-oma
	loc	-oma	-oma	-oma
PLURAL		I	II	III
stage one	dat	-om	-am	-im
	loc	-ěx	-ax	-ěx
	ins	-i	-ami	-i(mi)
stage two	dat	-om	-am	-am
	loc	-i(x)	-a(x)	-a(x)
	ins	-i	-ami	-ami
stage three	dat	-om	-am	-am
	loc	-a(x)	-a(x)	-a(x)
	ins	-ami	-ami	-ami

1. Viz., dual replaced by appropriate plural endings.

2. Two stages collapsed in one here, namely:

(a) loc merges with dat and ins; (b) II merges with III.

#### CHART I. DEVELOPMENT OF THE DUAL AND PLURAL IN N.E. STYRIAN DIALECTS

Chart I may oversimplify the historical processes involved, but nevertheless reveals a remarkable streamlining of the inherited system, from five distinct forms to one in the dual, and from nine distinct forms to one in the plural.<sup>34</sup>

What makes this even more interesting is the fact that the two simplification processes—the one in the dual, and the one in the plural—seem to be mutually exclusive! The weakening of gender distinctions in the plural is most advanced in the Prekmurje dialects, while loss of case and gender distinctions in the dual has progressed farthest in the dialects spoken between the Drava and the Mura. We noted traces of the latter change in Prekmurje, but not a hint of the former change could be found in Styria.

*5.6.2. Upper Carniolan* In dialects where dat pl = ins pl one can look to phonology for the root causes of the development of the syncretism. In UCarn, word-final *-i* tends to reduce to  $\emptyset$ , while post-tonic *i* in other environments changes to schwa. This development alone would radically alter the set of inherited peripheral-case endings, as is shown in CHART II.



PLURAL		I	II	III
stage one	dat	-om	-am	-im
	loc	-ix	-ax	-ix
	ins	-i	-ami	-i(mi)
stage two	dat	-om	-am	-əm
	loc	-əx	-ax	-əx
	ins	-0	-am	-əm

CHART II. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLURAL IN UPPER CARNIOLAN DIALECTS  
AFTER REDUCTION OF POST-TONIC -i

We may conjecture that in fem nouns these endings were reanalyzed as “non-terminal suffix V + terminal case-endings (-m, -x)” and that this model was extended to Class I nouns. Surely the adjective declension (viz. dat -əm, loc -əx, ins -əm, with schwa ← i) would reinforce this development, as would the pattern dat = ins in the dual—if the dual were still extant in the dialects in question when this restructuring started! In any event, Class I and Class III have fallen together in the peripheral sub-paradigm of the plural.

**5.7. Use of the Peripheral Cases** Neither the IS data nor the texts in Logar (1975) offer any solid evidence that the dat, loc or ins are used any differently in these dialects from how they are used in CSS. There is however some indication that there has been a total falling together of the loc and the ins in some Sln dialects. Functional neutralization, when it occurs, is realized formally as the replacement of the ins endings by those of the loc. Tine Logar (personal communication) has stated that this development is widespread, i.e., may be encountered over a large area, but is still quite rare; and that it is most frequent in Littoral dialects, UCarn and Styr.

The only concrete example that I found was one form from the NESTyr dialect of Večeslavci (2): here the loc and ins of the *pluralia tantum* noun *p'r:si* is *p'r:saj*. In addition, marginal notes in the IS notebooks for Srednje Jarše (UCarn, 15) and for Proseniško (Styr, 10) suggest that the researchers were specifically looking for this phenomenon in these dialects, although they cite no such forms.

Stermole (1987) describes this same innovation in the Austrian Car dialect of Podjunsko. Although his presentation is rather sketchy, it does offer many valuable details. His data show that, at least in this instance, the neutralization in fact involves all three peripheral cases, and that it has occurred very recently, viz., within the last generation (1987: 213). It is manifested morphologically in the use of the original dat/loc ending for all peripheral cases in the singular (and this, incidentally, is -i more often than not). Stermole studied the plural much less intensively, but he did find instances of the dat pl having the original ins pl ending, and at least one instance of the loc pl ending being used for the ins pl. This might all mean that in this village, at least, the original dat, loc and ins have fallen together into one case, and that all the old endings can be used to express its functions.<sup>35</sup>

6. Conclusion, and Some Questions

Like the CSR data reviewed in section 3 above, this Slovene material suggests that at least one of Jakobson’s basic intuitions is correct: for his putative “central vs. peripheral” opposition seems to be the principle behind the active syncretism that we see in Sln



dialects. All recent instances of syncretism involve the peripheral cases—while most of the syncretism inherited from an earlier linguistic stage involves the central cases. We have seen instances of paradigms being rebuilt so as to formally collapse two, or all three, cases: e.g., the plural in Carn, the dual in NEStyr, the singular in Podjunsko (Car). What is more, syncretism between central and peripheral cases inherited from Common Slavic has actively been eliminated by these later processes: e.g., the inherited syncretism between nom pl and ins pl in masc nouns has been eliminated in several dialects by the introduction of new ins pl endings; syncretism between gen du and loc du was eliminated in the sixteenth century over the entire Sln language area by the replacement of the old dual ending by the corresponding plural endings.<sup>36</sup> Other important developments we have considered—extension of dat/loc sg /-i/ to Class I nouns, extension of Class II pl endings to all other nouns in NEStyr—involve the elimination of gender distinctions in the peripheral cases.

In fact, if we take Jakobson’s feature matrix as a given, we see that this syncretism removes the need to refer to other semantic and morphological features in assigning case endings. The developments mentioned at the end of the last paragraph render irrelevant the reference to gender or declensional type in ending assignment. Other types of syncretism eliminate the need to refer to [DIRECTION] or [QUANTIFICATION].<sup>37</sup> In UCarn, the feature [DIR] has been rendered irrelevant in plural peripheral cases: if a peripheral case is [+QUANT], then its ending will be *-ix*; if it is [-QUANT], it will take an ending in *-m*, the precise shape of which will be determined by gender and/or declension type. In dialects in which loc = ins, it is the feature [QUANT] which has been made irrelevant: [+PERI], [+DIR] means an ending in *-m*; [+PERI], [-DIR] means an ending in *-aj* or *-ax*. In the dual of nouns in NEStyr and in the singular of nouns in the Car dialect described by Stermole, both [DIR] and [QUANT] are irrelevant: all cases that are marked [+PERI] have the same ending.

To repeat: there is clearly a perceived “bond” among the dat, loc and ins cases which is frequently reflected in morphological developments in Sln dialects. However, three major questions present themselves, the answers to which are well beyond the scope of this paper.

- 1) Why does peripheral-case syncretism never “match” across all three numbers? In the singular of every paradigm in almost every dialect, dat = loc; but in the plural, dat = ins *or* ins = loc, and in the dual, dat = ins. Dat = loc = ins is possible in the singular—it occurs in Podjunsko (Car), at least—and also in the du (in NEStyr). In

	sg	du	pl
<b>dat = loc</b>	+	–	–
<b>dat = ins</b>	–	+	+
<b>loc = ins</b>	–	–	+
<b>dat = loc = ins</b>	?	+	–

+ always, or frequently, encountered  
? rarely encountered  
– never encountered

TABLE VII. TYPES OF SYNCRETISM BETWEEN PERIPHERAL CASES  
FOUND IN SLOVENE DIALECTS, BY NUMBER



- no dialect, however, do we find the same syncretic equation in all three numbers. This state of affairs is captured on TABLE VII. Syncretism obviously occurs within the bounds of a three-member peripheral-case subsystem, but why does  $sg \neq pl \neq du$ ?
- 2) What are the semantics of case syncretism? In his study of the plural declension in East Slavic, Andersen (1969) chided earlier investigators for failing to take into account the meaning of the forms they were discussing and for treating their evolution strictly as a by-product of sound-change (or, perhaps, of vaguely-characterized morphological processes). Recognizing the eminent justice of this approach, let us ask: What in the semantics of the Sln case system allows for wholesale formal syncretism in the dialects? How is it that the functional load of certain morphemes can be increased by extending them to one or two other cases? Is it enough to say that if cases share the mark [+PERI], they will tend to be formally expressed by the same morphemes? Surely, if Jakobson's dictum "same form, same function" is to be heeded, these developments are not trivial.

While we are unable to delve too deeply into the issue, let us briefly consider the semantic and functional aspects of all four types of peripheral-case syncretism in Sln:

● **loc = ins:** functionally, this is the least surprising of all the developments that we have encountered. In all of Sln, both cases are used solely with prepositions, many of which express some kind of location—loc: "v, na, pri"; ins: "pred, za, med, nad, pod". Both cases are strongly adverbial, expressing relationships that stand well outside of the predicative core of the sentence.<sup>38</sup>

● **dat = loc, dat = ins, dat = loc = ins:** these instances are somewhat more problematical, for the dat differs functionally from the other two cases to a considerable extent. In contrast to the "bound" loc and ins cases, the dat is usually used in free function—indeed, only three prepositions govern the dat in CSS: "k/h, proti, kljub", and of these only "k/h" is encountered with any great frequency. Also, whereas the dat may, *sensu strictu*, be viewed as "peripheral" (both vis-à-vis its directional partner the acc, and in the sense that elimination of a dat construction will not normally result in ellipsis), it is clearly much less "peripheral" than the loc or the ins. After all, the indirect object of verbs of giving and communication is obviously close to the SVO core of the utterance, and indeed for this reason Mel'čuk (1986: 41, 71) includes the dat in his "gramatical" cases; and Topolińska (1986: 294) also argues, albeit more cautiously, that the dat is more of a "grammatical" case than an "adverbial" one. On the other hand, Kilby (1986: 327) connects the ins in deep structure with the dat. Furthermore, he suggests (1986: 329-30) that a language will tend to streamline its case system by combining as many constructions into one case as can be done without causing hopeless ambiguity. Since both the loc and ins are used with prepositions, and the dat almost never is, misunderstandings would be rather unlikely if the dat shared endings with either or both of these other cases. This is a rich field for future research.

- 3) Based on these data, where is Sln noun declension headed? First, it is clear that these are very recent changes. Those that Stermole discussed for Globasnica and Dob in Carinthia have arisen within the past twenty years or so; and the forms cited above for the other dialects were not discussed in works as recent as Tesnière (1925a, 1925b) and Ramovš (1952). One is tempted to surmise that if these processes were left to run their course naturally, with no interference from CSS or from grammarians, Sln dialects would eventually evolve a single "super" peripheral case, and thus a four-case



system: a case that would be used to express all adverbial relationships, together with grammatical relationships standing outside the predicative core of the sentence. Diachronically, the model for this would have to be the German *dat*, the influence of which Stermole (1987: 213) and Priestly (1988: 69-70) invoke as possible explanations of some developments in the Carinthian dialects that they studied. We might also expect all nouns to take the same set of endings (or, almost the same set) for this “super” peripheral case: i.e., the peripheral cases would never express such semantic features of the noun as gender. It is possible that in dialectal Sln the expression of features of this kind tend to be reserved for the central cases, used within the predicative core of the sentence where they arguably would be deemed more relevant.

However, as we know, languages do not develop in a vacuum. Indeed, the entire noun phrase (i.e., noun with modifiers) should be studied in this regard—the approach taken by Priestly (1984b). It would consequently be interesting to study how old paradigmatic patterns (in CSS, or other prestige dialects) are interfering with these internal tendencies: these are the kinds of influence that might be at work rendering syncretism different in the various numbers.

In order to attack such questions we must study the morphological data more thoroughly, including forms of adjectives and pronouns. We need to examine case use in dialect texts and closely check agreement between noun and modifiers. In any event, if we believe with Jakobson that form equals function, and that all the functions of any given case reflect a core of semantic invariants, then we have to view instances of case syncretism in the dialects as developments of great importance. For there must be some justification—*semantic* and/or *syntactic*—for “allowing” the morphological existence of *dat* = *loc*, *loc* = *ins*, *dat* = *ins*, or *dat* = *loc* = *ins*. It is our job to find out what this justification is.

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## NOTES

- \* Revised version of paper “Noun declension in Slovene dialects” presented at the Mid-West Slavic Association Conference, Bloomington IN, March 1988.
- 1. Abbreviations used in this paper are as follows: Sln (Slovene), CSS (Contemporary Standard Slovene), SC (Serbo-Croatian), CSR (Contemporary Standard Russian); Car (Carinthian), UCarn (Upper Carniolan), LCarn (Lower Carniolan), Styr (Styrian), NESTyr (North-East Styrian or Pannonian); *nom* (nominative), *gen* (genitive), *dat* (dative), *acc* (accusative), *loc* (locative), *ins* (instrumental); *sg* (singular), *du* (dual), *pl* (plural); *masc* (masculine), *fem* (feminine), *neut* (neuter).
- 2. For his treatment of the *dat*, *loc* and *ins*, and his development of the notion of peripherality, see Jakobson 1936: 45-60 and 1958: 158 *et passim* (page references here are to the 1971 reprints).
- 3. In this paper I do not wish to touch upon certain other aspects of Jakobson’s analysis, namely the controversial status of “Gen II” and “Loc II,” the feature “definite/indefinite”, etc.. Nor do I want to discuss in any detail the debates that have surrounded the three features utilized for my account (e.g., replacing the label “Directionality” with the term “Ascriptiveness,” see Chvany 1986: 127, fn 4.)
- 4. Kuryłowicz, as discussed in Gladney 1986: 131, distinguished “grammatical” cases (which express major syntactic relationships: subject, object, etc.) from “adverbial” cases (which express secondary relationships). The two groups are also called “syntactic” and “abstract” vs. “semantic” and “concrete,” respectively. In the literature these two categories seem to be considered as roughly equivalent to Jakobson’s “central” vs. “peripheral” opposition, although Mel’čuk (1986: 70-75) demonstrates how adverbial cases can have “grammatical” functions, and vice-versa. I return to this problem in my conclusion, when I consider the less peripheral status of the *dat* vis-à-vis the *loc* and the *instr*.



5. Kilby 1986: 325; see also his discussion of other literature on the ins, 1986: 331.
6. Here, syncretism between cases is shown by the equals sign; thus, e.g., "dat = loc" is to be read as "there is syncretism between the locative and the dative."
7. Chvany 1986: 111 ff.; see also her discussion of Carol Neidle's work, 118-21.
8. Most common is syncretism between the two quantifiers: this occurs in the pl adjective declension and in the personal pronouns *my* and *vy*. Dat = gen/loc occurs in third-declension feminine nouns, in the feminine adjective declension, and in neuters of the type *imja*. Ins = dat = gen/loc occurs in a handful of numerals (and, in Contemporary Standard Russian, in the feminine adjective declension also). See Jakobson 1958: 164-66.
9. In Jakobson 1936: 69 he briefly mentions Czech and Serbian data; in 1958: 178-79 he touches upon Czech, Serbian and Polish.
10. Lencek adds the reasonable caveat that such applications must be tentative until a rigorous analysis of the Slovene case system can be made.
11. See Lencek 1982: 204; the quality of the mid vowels is also involved.
12. I follow Lencek's classification of Slovene nouns: Class I — masc and neut nouns with the gen sg ending /-a/; Class II — mostly fem nouns with nom sg in /-a/ or /-əv/; Class III — all other fem nouns with nom sg in  $\emptyset$ . Here, I focus on only the most common paradigms within each class. For details of the classification system and sample paradigms see Lencek 1982: 194-212.
13. This is due to a phonological change, viz., the merger of \*/i/ and \*/y/ in South Slavic; cf. original nom pl. \*/stoli/, ins pl. \*/stoly/.
14. In the earliest Sln documents all three endings were used, see Lencek 1982: 114, Ramovš 1952: 41, Oblak 1889: 530. The ending /-u/ in the loc was originally used in the old u-declension, although it could also conceivably have spread from the dat of Class I nouns, on the analogy of other declensions where dat = loc (but see Oblak 1889: 540).
15. If we can equate the glide /j/ with its [+vocalic] counterpart /i/ in this instance, that leaves only two peripheral case-endings not marked with /i u m/!
16. See Lencek 1982: 194-212 for a discussion of such issues as stem differentiation, zero/vowel alternations, and other accentual and vocalic alternations.
17. For an account of Sln dialect divisions see Logar 1974 and, for a description of the phonology of each major division, Logar 1975: 90-116.
18. I tend to use the terms *village* and *dialect* as synonyms, and for more than just convenience: I believe that the most useful level for the dialectologist to study dynamic regional variants of a language is that of the kind of small, relatively stable, rural community still so often found in largely agricultural communities like Slovenia. Here I would reject recent approaches which focus on the idiolect (see Petyt 1986: 48ff. for a discussion): narrowing our focus to such an extent, I feel, serves only to trivialize our efforts.
19. In my tables of data I always try to cite the same nouns for each dialect included, for ease of comparison. Whenever different nouns are listed, therefore, it may be assumed that the data do not contain the same set of words. Glosses of the cited forms are not normally given; anyone reasonably familiar with Sln—or with any Slavic language, for that matter—should have no trouble recognizing the words. Forms cited within the body of the text are glossed if it felt that phonological developments have rendered them difficult to recognize.
20. See Logar 1975: 91 (UCarn), 115 (NEStyr) and 116 (Prekmurje dialects, NEStyr dialect group).
21. According to Logar 1975: 91 (UCarn), 95 (LCarn), 113-15 (Styr), 116 (Prekmurje), short \* $\check{e}$  in these areas (but not in Prekmurje) does tend to merge with *i* (and with *u*—but see above!), while long \* $\check{e}$  develops independently. I would however still hesitate to explain developments in the Class I dat/loc sg through the evolution of \* $\check{e}$ .
22. Logar 1975: 92 sees this -o developing from the dat sg adjective ending -emu. He places this innovation in UCarn, not in Styr; in general, I observed that the dialect of Proseniško was characterized by many UCarn features, although situated well within the Styr area. This situation should be investigated thoroughly.
23. Priestly (1984a: 41) sees the  $\emptyset$  ending of the dat/loc sg of what were originally neuter nouns in the Carinthian dialect of Sele as evolving from a front vowel; see also Miller ms.
24. The regular change of word-final -i to  $\emptyset$  seems to have been grammaticalized in this dialect. Besides the example just discussed we see an original morpheme -i dropping regularly in the masc nom sg of adjectives (e.g., *ofic'i:ersk k'u:wfar*) but always being retained in the nom pl of masc nouns (*voj'a:ki*, *pomočn'i:jki*). From the point of view of morphology it will be noted that when the -i of the adjectival form drops this becomes identical to the nom sg of the noun, while the retention of the -i in the nom pl guarantees that this form will remain distinct from the nom sg.



25. Here, in this noun, the suffix *-ov* also appears in the dat pl (viz., *ps'q.von*), and throughout the dual. Note that this means that the loc pl *ps'q:x* is distinct from the loc du *ps'qvex*. Thus we have an unusual situation in which case (in the loc sg) and number (loc du vs loc pl) are expressed by the same non-terminal suffix! Incidentally, if the data I examined are any indication, the distribution of different stem variants in certain noun paradigms in Sln dialects is a subject that richly deserves a monograph of its own.
26. See Andersen 1969 for a good overview of these East Slavic developments.
27. Traditionally, the desinences in */-a/* are seen as coming over from the Class II paradigm. Oblak 1890: 363 *et passim* argues persuasively, however, that this is not the case: rather, */-am/* and */-ax/* developed independently first in the neuter (on the basis of the nom acc pl endings */-a/*) and then spread to masculine nouns. Those in *-i* have clearly been transferred from the adjective declension. The forms in *-e-* arose due to a complex process of leveling and analogy involving the old Class I loc pl ending *-ěx* (see Ramovš 1952: 47-48, 61, 64-66).
28. Post-tonic *akanje* in Ribnica (16) seems to have created the exact opposite situation: Class I and Class II nouns share the dat pl ending *-am* (cf. *brātam*, *rokām*) but remain distinct in the loc pl (*brātəx* vs. *rokax*) and ins pl (*brātə* vs. *rokāmə*). Cf. Oblak 1890: 365, who specifically rejects 'akanje' as an explanation in this instance.
29. Alas, we have no idea what these doublet forms represent: do the endings coexist in individual idiolects? Is it a matter of variation among individual speakers? Incidentally, according to Ramovš (1952: 46-50) and Oblak (1890: 382-84) it is the dative *-am* that first spread to Class I, followed by the loc and the ins endings; this occurred during the 16th and 17th centuries; neut nouns were affected before masc ones. It is therefore unclear what relation (if any!) the present-day variation bears toward the history of this phenomenon.
30. Our data, and the historical accounts by both Ramovš and Tesnière, demonstrate that Andersen (1969: 23-24) is wrong to reject out of hand the notion that paradigms can be rebuilt in discrete stages. See also Oblak's discussion of the spread of endings in */-a/* in Class I plural paradigms (1890: 382-85 *et passim*).
31. See the discussion in Tesnière 1925a: 219-24. There is a definite hierarchy in the loss of the dual in all categories (case, gender, part of speech): the loc is the first case to lose the dual, fem the first gender; and nouns, according to Tesnière, are the third part of speech (after adjectives and demonstrative pronouns) to lose this number. Again, Tesnière's work proves that such changes *do* proceed by discrete, recoverable stages.
32. This opposition occurs facultatively in data-point 4, Gorica. See also Oblak 1890: 419.
33. According to Tesnière (1925a: 186) the loc du is found with endings in *-ma* in the oldest literature of the NEStyr region, at the end of the 18th century. He also concludes that, since such forms are also sporadically encountered elsewhere on Slovene territory, they must have been once quite widespread. See also Tesnière 1925b: map 38.
34. This schematic representation of these changes is not meant to necessarily imply any particular set of individual stages in any particular order. The reconstruction of the actual process of these changes deserves a study of its own.
35. Once again, more work needs to be directed at this problem in order to determine if this admittedly extreme solution is the correct one. The assumption that the morphemes of Category A and Category B become allomorphs if A absorbs the functions of B is a valid one, however; it appears that this is what happened when, in SC, for example, the plural absorbed the dual; see Belić 1972: 61ff.
36. We may also add the new Class II ins sg endings found in Styr, NEStyr (*/-oj/*), and Prekmurje (*/-ov/*)—endings which eliminate homonymy with the acc sg, see Ramovš 1952: 58-60. I hope to treat this major development, which Jakobson's work actually predicts to some extent, in a separate study in the near future.
37. It is worth noting that dat = acc is one of three kinds of syncretism that never occur in Russian (Jakobson 1936: 69, 1958: 162). Chvany (1986: 122-23), incidentally, mentions how little empirical support there really is for presupposing semantic or syntactic features common to these two cases. Here, features are printed in UPPER CASE and enclosed in square brackets. Abbreviations: PERI (peripheral), QUANT (quantification), DIR (direction).
38. On adverbial vs. grammatical cases, see note 3 above. Among the 53 adverbial cases discussed briefly by Mel'čuk (1986: 72-75) the reader will notice many functions indeed performed by the Sln (and the Slavic) loc and ins. Only one such function—"instrumental," narrowly defined—is included by Mel'čuk among his grammatical cases. Interestingly, Kilby (1986: 327-28) perceived a close connection between the two cases in his work.



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**POVZETEK****NEKAJ MISLI O FORMI IN FUNKCIJI "PERIFERNIH" SKLONOV V SLOVENSKIH NAREČJIH**

*Članek je posvečen morfološkim posebnostim treh "perifernih" sklonov, dajalnika, mestnika in orodnika, v izbranih centralnih in vzhodnih narečjih slovenskega jezika, s posebnim poudarkom na govorih štajerske in panonske dialektnih skupin. Po krajšem uvodnem razmišljanju o teoriji sklona v slovanskih jezikih, kot si jo je zamislil Roman Jakobson, avtor najprej predstavi jezikovno gradivo in razvojne tendence večjih formalnih samostalniških vzorcev v slovenščini. Za tem kratko označi semantiko sklona v slovanskih jezikih in v tej zvezi nakaže važnejša področja in smeri za njeno raziskovanje. V članku, ki je del dolgoročnejšega načrta za raziskovanje forme in funkcije samostalnika v južno- in vzhodnoslovanskih jezikih, avtor poskuša opredeliti okvir za študij sklona v slovanskih jezikih.*