

ON THE MEANING OF THE POLISH AND RUSSIAN QUANTIFYING CASES USED WITH MASCULINE SUBSTANTIVES

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The modern semantic approach and the meaning of quantification were first introduced to case analysis by Roman Jakobson in 1936 in his classical study of the category of case, which has been amended in some of his more recent works (1985, 1966).

The expanded notion of quantification was first applied to the Serbo-Croatian case system by Milka Ivić (1961). She preferred the term "limitedness" to Jakobson's "quantification" (in Russian *ob"emonst'*) because "the accusative is not excluded from the specification relevant only for the genitive and locative."

A few years later Alexander Schenker (1964) adopted M. Ivić's rectangular system of the Serbo-Croatian cases to Polish declension, preferring it to the cubic arrangement proposed for the Russian case system by Jakobson (1985). This cube scheme was the first attempt to present systematically the three-dimensional character of the semantic correlations between Russian declensional invariants, or grammatical cases. Jakobson's most important contribution was the idea that the grammatical cases are classes of invariant meanings or bundles of distinctive semantic features, comparable to that of the classes of phonemes.

This was an enormous step forward in case analysis because for the first time a clear distinction was made between cases proper and their variants, very much the same way as a distinction is made between phonemes and allophones in phonemic analysis of a language.

According to Jakobson (1985) there are three basic semantic features or case minima which lie at the foundations of every Slavic case system. Their

mutual relationship may be presented by the following system of case oppositions marked by the system of minuses and pluses:

Russ. Pol.	Nom'	Acc'	Gen'I	Gen'II	Dat'	Instr'	Loc'I/II
Nom	+*	-	+	+	+	+	0
Acc	+	+	+	+	+	+	0
Gen	-	+	+	+	+	+	0
Dat	+	+	-	-	+	-	0
Instr	+	+	-	-	+	+	0
Loc	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

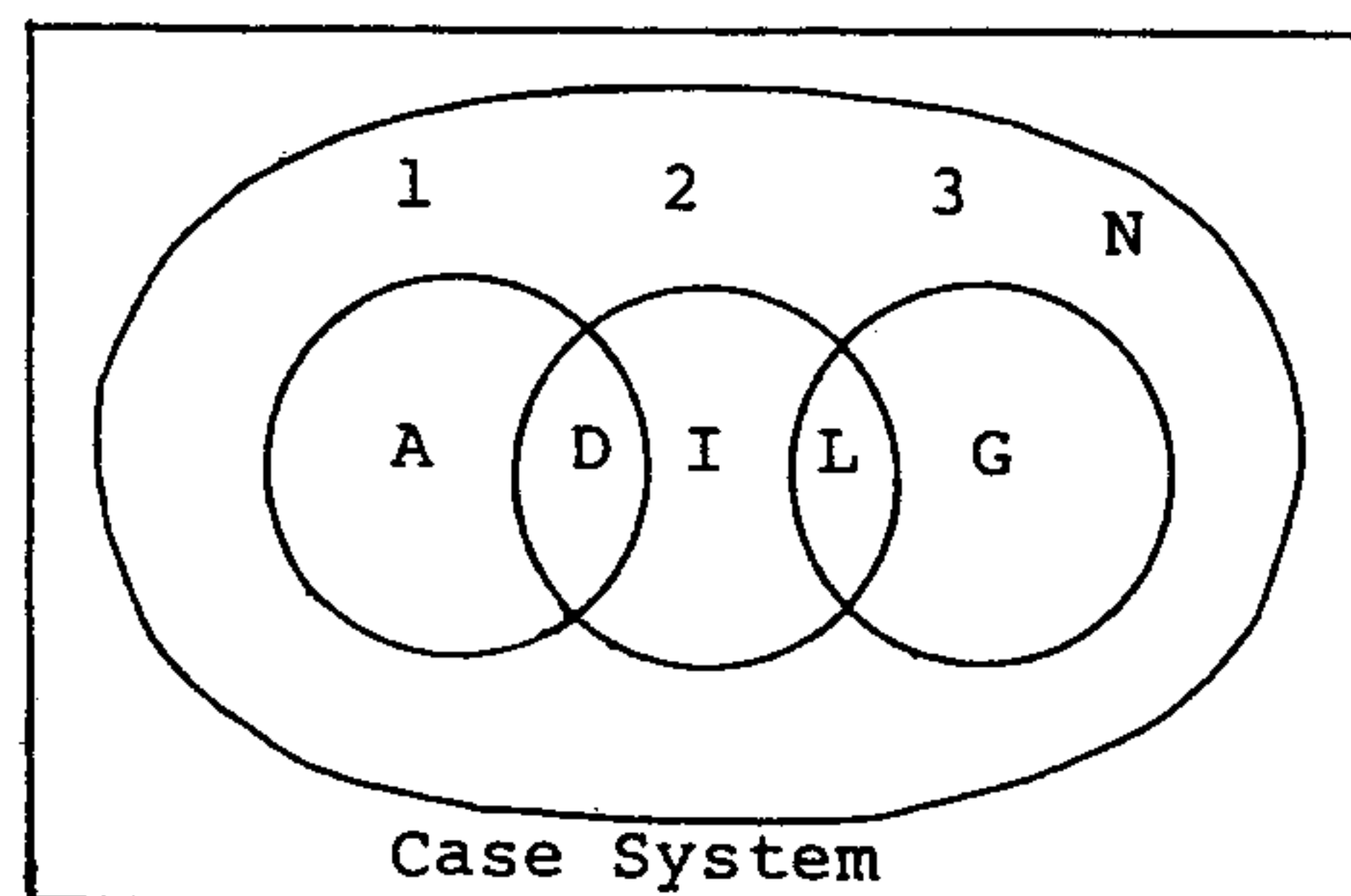
* + means the presence of a correspondence

- means the absence of a correspondence

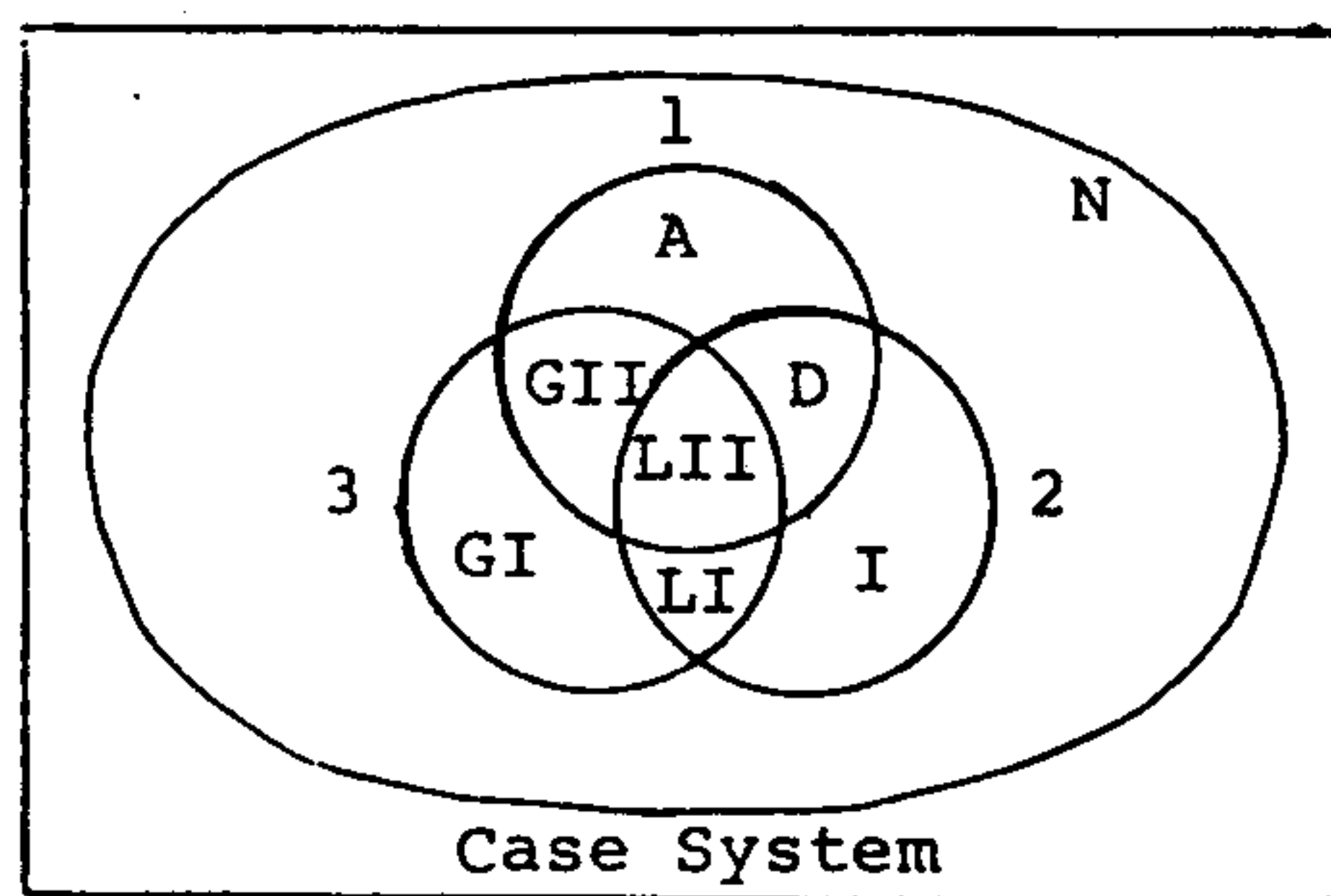
0 means that this type of a correspondence was not investigated in this work

However, the presence of the same case minima in certain related linguistic systems does not necessarily mean that those systems are identical, as may be seen from this scheme:

The arrangement of the basic semantic minima in Polish



The arrangement of the basic semantic minima in Russian



In this scheme the rectangular area indicates the unmarked nominative, circle #1: directionality; circle #2: marginality; and circle #3: quantification.

The meanings of R. Jakobson's semantic minima may be summarized as follows: the directionality, which includes the correlation of the accusative and the dative, refers to the information which those cases provide about the direction of an action towards the object; the quantification, which marks the genitive and the locative, indicates the extent of the participation of a given

object in the expressed situation (that is, the degree of the object's participation in the action); and finally, the marginality, which embraces the dative, instrumental, and locative cases, informs of a marginal or peripheral participation of a given object in the described action.

At a glance one can see that the semantic case minima of Polish are arranged into six cases (Nom., Acc., Gen., Instr., and Loc.), while in Russian we have two more quantifying cases; that is, Gen. II and Loc. II.

This split of the Russian quantifying cases was made possible by the introduction of a new semantic opposition of directional/non-directional quantification which turned the Russian case system into a symmetrical system of eight cases.

The Russian case system utilized the presence of the former two declensional allomorphs in the genitive and locative (the genitive endings $-a$, from the old "ŏ/jo" declensions and $-u$, from the old "ŭ/ow" declension; and the locative endings $-e$, from Old Russian /e/, and $-ú$, from the same stems as the genitive endings).

Today we have the following distribution of the declensional morphemes of the Russian quantifying cases:

- the stressed and unstressed $-a$ occur in the so-called genitive I,
- the stressed and unstressed $-u$ occur in the so-called genitive II,
- the stressed and unstressed $-e$ occur in the so-called locative I, and
- the always stressed $-ú$ occurs in the so-called locative II.

This distribution can be illustrated by such minimum pairs as:

- *Ja xoču saxara / saxar* (A.) 'I want the sugar' vs. *Ja xoču saxaru* 'I want some sugar'
- *On ljubít zapax čaja / čaju* 'He likes the smell of tea' vs. *On vypil stakan čaju* 'He drank a cup of tea'
- *Oni čego-to iščut v snegú* 'They are looking for something in the snow' vs. *Oni čego-to iščut s snége* 'They look in snow for something' (i.e. for some properties of snow)
- *Ja vstretil volka v lesú* 'I met a wolf in the forest' vs. *V (temnom) lèse živět zloj volk* 'The bad wolf lives in a forest'

As we see the Russian $-u$ endings are used in those instances in which a noun is directly involved; that is, when it functions as a modifier of measurement, time, and place or when it is used in its primary lexical meaning. Thus, it appears that the use of genitive I and locative I is connected with a secondary or more abstract meaning of a noun.

It must be kept in mind, however, that this double use of the Russian quantifying cases does not change the basic lexical meaning of a noun and is rather unproductive, as it is limited to only a small class of referring to material objects which, very often, are marked by the absence of the plural form (*singularia tantum*).

If we compare the Russian and Polish uses of the quantifying case we discover that the Polish case system represents an opposite solution. Although the number of cases originating from Old Polish and Proto-Slavic remained unchanged, the Polish language developed new semantic and morphological rules of distribution for the two sets of the genitive and locative allomorphs.

In the case of the genitive of Polish masculine nouns the two allomorphs were charged with the function of signaling the opposition between animate genders.

In simple language it means that in the rare case when those nouns appear as an inanimate or animate category the declensional allomorphs are used to avoid what may be called gender synonymy.

This is evident in the following pairs of examples:

- *Stał koło dużego buka* 'He was standing near a big beech tree' vs. *Ten stół został wykonany z buku* 'This table is made of beech wood'
- *Nigdy nie widziałem takiego bambusa* 'I have never seen such a bamboo tree' vs. *Koszyk jest zrobiony z bambusu* 'The basket is made of bamboo'

Occasionally the different genitive endings are used to distinguish between such homonymous lexemes as *zamek* 'castle', 'lock' or *nowy świat* 'a new world' and *Nowy Świat* 'New World Street' (in Warsaw), both pronounced as /novi śfat/.

However in the genitive, both meanings are clearly distinguished, for instance:

- *Rycerz wyjechał z zamku* 'The knight has left the castle' vs. *Usłyszał stuk zamka* 'He heard the tap of a lock' or
- *Nie znam nowego świata* 'I do not know the new world' vs. *Nie znam Nowego Świata* 'I do not know the New World St.'

It is interesting to notice that in Russian such homonymy is eliminated by means of the phonemic stress (cf. Russian *zámok* 'castle' vs. *zamók* 'lock'). However, the Russian stress is primarily used to avoid case homonymy or, case syncretism of nouns, and to mark the opposition between conjugational forms of certain verbs (*mésta* 'of the place' vs. *mestá* 'the places', *góroda* 'of the city' vs. *gorodá* 'the cities' or *Ja ne uznájú tebjá* 'I do not recognize you' vs. *Ja ne uznájú tebjá* 'I will not recognize you').

Generally speaking the following semantic criteria are used in the case of inanimate masculine nouns marked in the genitive by the ending *-a*: the names of instruments and containers (*topór/topora* 'ax' *kocioł/kotła* 'kettle'), units of measurement (*kilometr/kilometra* 'kilometer', *karat/karata* 'carat'), names of months (*styczeń/stycznia* 'January', *październik/października* 'October'), church terminology (*kościół/kościola* 'church', *oltarz/oltarza* 'altar'), and words ending in the following suffixes: *-ek*: (*kominek/kominka* 'fireplace'), *-ak* (*barak/baraku* 'barrack'), *-yk* (*patyk/patyka* 'stick'); some words of foreign origin ending *-er* or *-ar* (*stoper/stopera* 'stop watch',

telewizor/telewizora 'television set' plus a number of nouns referring to a factory make (*ford/forda* 'Ford automobile', *remington/remingtona* 'Remington typewriter').

The genitive ending in *-u* is used when an inanimate noun falls into one of the following semantic categories: all kinds of matter (*arszenik/arszeniku* 'arsenic', *benzol/benzolu* 'benzine'), natural phenomena (*deszcz/deszczu* 'rain' *huragan/huraganu* 'hurricane'), abstract states (*ból/bólu* 'pain', *podziw/podziwu* 'admiration'), names of days (*poniedziałek/poniedziałku* 'Monday'), foreign geographical names (*Adriatyk/Adriatyku* 'the Adriatic', *Tyrol/Tyrolu* 'Tyrol'), foreign abstract terms (*socjalizm/socjalizmu* 'socialism'), names of plants and flowers (*bukszpan/bukszpanu* 'boxwood', *jaśmin/jaśminu* 'jasmine', *kwiat/kwiatu* 'flower'), means of transport (*okręt/okrętu* 'ship', *wóz/wozu* 'cart, wagon' but also *woza* in the proverb *Przyszła koza do woza* 'You brought, after all, corn to our mill' which is an archaic use of this case), and abbreviations of institutions and organizations (*PPS/PPS-u*, which is /pe-peés/ vs. /pepeésu/ 'Polish Socialist Party', *ONZ/ONZ-u*, that is, /oenzét/ vs. /oenzétu/ 'United Nations (U.N.)').

This division into two clearly defined groups, however, seems to be rather accidental and it would be difficult to connect either the ending *-a* or *-u* with any semantic function. Nevertheless, since the animate masculine nouns take only the ending *-a* in the genitive (cf. *pan/pana* 'Mr., lord, sir', *Bóg/Boga* 'God', *profesor/profesora* 'professor', *rycerz/rycerza* 'knight' etc.) there seems to be a certain tendency to apply this ending to those inanimate nouns which may be considered animate, or rather animated, in the linguistic consciousness of Polish speakers (cf. *trup/trupa* 'corpse', *duch/ducha* 'spirit, ghost', *grzyb/grzyba* 'mushroom' or the aforementioned *bambus/bambusa* 'bamboo tree').

This tendency furthermore leads to a popular linguistic conviction that the ending *-a* is socially more distinguished. Thus, the so-called "prestigious" inanimate nouns take this ending instead of the expected ending *-u* (*rubel/rubla* 'ruble', *mazur/mazura* 'mazurka', *krzyż/krzyża* 'cross'). Therefore we may say that the morpheme *-a* is, from the stylistic point of view, a positively marked allomorph, while *-u* is a negatively marked one.

We may also add that besides the Polish and Russian solutions of the distribution of the genitive endings we find other, different or similar, solutions in contemporary Slavic languages.

For instance, Serbo-Croatian has completely eliminated the ending *-u* from the genitive case of masculine nouns, and only the ending *-a* is used (*-grâd/grâda* 'town', *gospòdin/gospòdina* 'Mr., lord, sir').

But Ukrainian has also preserved two genitive endings and, in spite of its East Slavic character, their distribution resembles the Polish system because the allomorph *-a* is primarily used with the animate nouns and such animated

classes as the names of trees (cf. *kin' / konjá* 'horse', *dub / dŭba* 'oak' but *dux / dŭxu* 'spirit' vs. Polish *ducha!*), names of towns (which usually have adpersonal origin), units of time and measurement (*santymétr / santymétra* 'centimeter, *lystopad / lystopáda* 'November'), instruments and structures (*pluh / plúha* 'plough', *mlyn / mlýna* 'mill') etc. (cf. Medushevsky and Zyatkovska, 1963).

On the other hand the ending *-u* occurs with those inanimate masculine nouns which denote substances and materials (*kvas / kvásu* 'kvass', *čaj / čáju* 'tea'), geographical areas (*Kitáj / Kitáju* 'China', *Urál / Urálu* 'The Urals'), names of rivers (*Buh / Búhu* 'The Bug', *Amúr / Amúru* 'The Amur'), natural phenomena and abstract terms (*vitru / vitru* 'wind', *hniv / hnivu* 'anger', *sport / spórtu* 'sport'), foreign names of structures (*vokzál / vokzálu* 'station', *kanál / kanálu* 'canal').

Just as in Polish the endings *-a* and *-u* are sometimes used to differentiate between the primary and secondary meanings of some inanimate masculine nouns (cf. *lista* 'of a letter' vs. *listu* 'of a leaf', *papéra* 'of a sheet of paper' vs. *papéru* 'of paper', *aparáta* 'of apparatus' vs. *aparátu* 'of an institution').

The names of certain inanimate objects can use either ending without any change of lexical meaning (cf. *polká / pólku* 'regiment', *stolá / stólu* 'table').

The Polish-like and Russian-like stress of the endings of this class of nouns would, perhaps, indicate the Polish origin of their ending *-u* because in general the Ukrainian nominal stress corresponds to that of Russian as both languages have historically developed from the same East Slavic prototype.

Thus we may assert here that the rules of the distribution of the Ukrainian genitive endings were, perhaps, introduced under the Polish linguistic influence which was so greatly manifested in Ukrainian lexicology.

The use of Polish and Russian marginal quantifying or so-called 'locative' cases is also governed by the various rules of distribution of the declensional morphemes and allomorphs of masculine nouns.

In Russian this distribution is implied by the interplay of the case system with the system of prepositions. In the case of a small class of inanimate masculine nouns the distribution of the *-e* and *-u* endings, as was pointed out at the beginning of this paper, is governed by a desire to preserve the semantic opposition between directional and indirectional quantification.

The declensional ending *-u* is used in combination with the prepositions *v* 'in' and *na* 'on, at' in the primary (i.e. locative) meaning of that case: *Včera ja byl v lesú* 'Yesterday I was in the forest' or *My žili v krugú prijatelej* 'We lived in a friendly circle' and *Ona eščě ne byla na balú* 'She has not gone to the ball yet' or *My dolgo stojali na vetru* 'We stood in the wind for a long time'.

In some instances, however, the prepositions *v* and *na* can be used with either ending, but such use affects the lexical meaning of the noun, for

instance: *Vesna v cvetú* 'Spring in bloom' vs. *Ženščina v cvéte let* 'A woman in the prime of life' and *robota na domu* 'work at home, homework' vs. *robota na dóme* 'work on the house' (cf. Unbegaun, 1957).

The possibility of such use is limited to a very small class of inanimate masculine nouns, but it is a very interesting example of how a general case meaning may help to differentiate between homonyms, because the choice of a declensional ending is not accidental and is closely related to the basic meaning of the Russian locative I and II.

It is noteworthy that the Polish locative endings cannot be influenced by the system of prepositions. Such prepositions as *w* 'in', *na* 'on, at' or *o* 'about' are always used with the same locative allomorph, for example: *o kwiecie* 'about the flower', or *w domu* 'in the house, at home', *na domu* 'on the house', and *o domu* 'about the house, about home' in which the distribution of the prepositions is unaffected by the endings *-u* and *-e*.

The distribution of these two endings is governed exclusively by the morphological principle based on the inherited Proto-Slavic tendency to have two sets of endings for so-called hard and soft stems or paradigms (cf. Old Church Slavic *gradŭ / gradě* 'in the city', *vragŭ / vradzě* 'in the enemy' vs. *konŭ / koni* 'in the horse', *oŭčŭ / oŭci* 'in the father').

In contemporary Polish this old linguistic tendency was preserved, however, not without a change of the old declensional endings. The palatalizing ending *-e* (from **-ě*) occurs with the old **-o* stems with the exception of the nouns whose stems ended in a velar, an innovation which was introduced to avoid the inconvenient morphophonemic alternations [k/c], [g/dz], and [x/s] (cf. Old Polish *człowiek / człowiece* 'in the man', *Bóg / Bodze* 'in God', and *strach / strasze* 'in fear' vs. contemporary Polish *człowiek / człowieku* 'in the man', *Bóg / Bogu* 'in God', and *strach / straciu* 'in fear') (Klemensiewicz et al, 1965).

In the rest of the non-feminine (that is, masculine and neuter) nouns, we have the ending *-u* which expanded from the old **-u* stems (cf. Old Church Slavic *domŭ / domu* 'in the house, at home' and *synŭ / synu* 'in the son' (Seliščev, 1952).

One of the most important morphological innovations was the expansion of this ending into the old **-jo*, **-i*, **-u* and even **-o* stems (cf. modern Polish *maż / mężu* 'in the man, in the husband', *golaq / golebiu* 'in the dove', and *kamieñ / kamieniu* 'in the stone' and such Old Polish forms as *sād / sadu* 'in the orchard', *lŭd / ludu* 'in the people', *czās / czasu* 'at the time' vs. modern Polish *sad / sadzie* 'in the orchard', *lud / ludzie* 'in the people'. From this last class only the noun *pan* 'Mr., lord, master, sir' has preserved that old ending *-u*, probably by analogy with the form *Bogu*, repeated in such a common phrase as *w Panu Bogu* 'in Lord God'.

All the other former *-u stem nouns, with the exception of such frequently used nouns as *dom/domu* and *syn/synu*, have accepted the ending -e (cf. OCS *medŭ/medu* 'in the honey, mead' vs. Polish *miód/miodzie*).

This redistribution of the Polish locative masculine endings resulted in a new and clear system based on the principle of plain consonant+mid acute vowel and sharp consonant+high grave vowel, in which one can see some kind of articulatory harmony; that is, the lower consonantic formants go together with the higher vocalic formants.

If we could prove this point by using examples from some other inflective languages it might turn out that the distribution of the grammatical morphemes is not arbitrary but is governed by the logic of linguistic structure.

Especially tempting is here the example of the Altaic languages with their principle of vocalic harmony governing the distribution of their grammatical morphemes (for instance, in Turkish the vowels of a word are either all acute vowels or all back vowels, that is, /sevildirememek/ 'not to be able to cause to be loved' vs. /jazıldiramamak/ 'not to be able to cause to be written') (Bloomfield, 1956). Thus the distribution of the Polish locative endings can be presented in the following order:

(a) the ending -e occurs with those masculine nouns which end in one of the following plain consonants: /p/ (*chłop/chłopie* 'in the peasant'), /t/ (*plot/plocie* 'in the fence'), /d/ (*koniokrad/koniokradzie* 'in the horse thief'), /f/ (*traf/trafie* 'in a chance'), /s/ (*głos/głosie* 'in the voice'), /z/ (*glaz/glazie* 'in the rock') and l (/w/) (*stol/stole* 'on the table');

(b) the ending -u is used with those masculine nouns which end in one of the sharp or palatal, or historically palatal, consonants: /g/ (*pociąg/pociągu* 'on the train'), /ś/ (*struś/strusiu* 'in the ostrich'), /š/ (*palasz/palaszu* 'on the saber'), /x/ (*proch/prochu* 'in the dust, gun powder'), /ž/ (*paź/paziu* 'in the page'), /ž/ from ž (*garaż/garażu* 'in the garage') and rz (*kołnierz/kołnierzu* 'in the collar'), /c/ (*koc/kocu* 'on the blanket'), /ć/ (*kopeć/kopciu* 'in the soot'), /č/ (*miecz/mieczu* 'on the sword'), /dz/ (*ksiądz/księdzu* 'in the priest'), /dž/ (*brydż/brydżu* 'at the game of bridge'), and /j/ (*pokój/pokoju* 'in the room, in peace');

(c) this group includes the masculine nouns which can take either the ending -e or -u: /b/ (*grób/grobie* 'in the grave' vs. *gołąb/golebiu* 'in the dove'), /v/ (*staw/stawie* 'in the pond' vs. *paw/pawiu* 'in the peacock'), /m/ (*grom/gromie* 'in the thunderbolt' vs. *dom/domu* 'in the house, at home'). Thus, for practical purposes it is better to say that the masculine nouns ending in /m/ take the locative allomorph -e and treat *dom* as an exception since in substandard Polish one can also hear the "incorrect form" *domie* along with *domu*; /n/ (*stan/stanie* 'state' vs. *pan/panu* 'in the lord etc.'). However, *pan* is just another exception as the noun *dom* and has a substandard form *panie*.

The words *bór* and *dwór* can sometimes take both locative endings. The words *w borze* 'in the forest' is normally used but in the archaic language of the folk tales we often find the form *w boru* 'in a forest'. The locative form *w dworze* 'in the court' or *na dworze* 'at court, in the courtyard' are used in standard Polish, but in substandard Polish one can find the following semantic distinction: *Przebywał na dworze* 'He was staying at the court/in the yard' vs. *Przebywał na dworzu* 'He was staying in the yard' (used only in the second meaning).

The use of two allomorphs with the words ending in the labial /b/ and /v/ goes back to the time when they could occur either in the palatalized or non-palatalized form (cf. Old Polish /pay/ from *paŭi and /stav/ from *stavŭ, or /gołq̄b/ from *golobí and /grób/, from *grobŭ). However, the sharpness of these phonemes was neutralized in the final position of the word in the process of the phonemic development of the Polish language (Stieber, 1952).

In conclusion, we may say that a contrastive semantic and morphological analysis of related linguistic systems is scientifically justified because it not only provides us with a clearer picture of the semantic and morphological structure of each system, but also helps to establish the individual and the common source of linguistic innovations, their semantic range, and morphological distribution. In addition it permits us to predict the future development of certain innovations before they become a commonly accepted norm (cf. substandard Polish innovations in the use of the locative).

This is especially important in the cases of such closely structurally and lexically related languages as Polish and Russian which are united not only by their common Proto-Slavic heritage but also by their similar lexical, phonemic and morphological North Slavic innovations, their geographical proximity, and the similarities in their subsequent cultural and political developments.

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