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ON THE MEANING AND PROTOTYPE OF THE PREPOSITION *PRI* AND THE LOCATIVE CASE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SLAVIC USAGE WITH EMPHASIS ON CROATIAN

This article analyzes the meaning of the Croatian preposition *pri* and its relation to the general meaning of the locative case. The analysis shows how spatial meanings are extended into non-spatial domains. The corresponding Polish and Russian prepositions and their usage are compared to Croatian.

1. Case meanings and prepositional meanings

The locative differs from the six other cases in the declensional system of modern Croatian in that it is always used with a preposition. The Croatian genitive, dative, accusative, and instrumental can be used either with or without a preposition, while the nominative and the vocative occur in the prepositionless form only. If we exclude the vocative on the basis of its specific appellative function, which sets it apart from the other cases of the inflectional paradigms, the locative and the nominative are the only cases to be realized in discourse in a single form: prepositional and prepositionless, respectively.

Whereas the nominative has always been a single-word form (i.e., a prepositionless case), the locative historically had two forms. Prepositional and prepositionless forms of the locative existed in Old Russian and Old Czech (Bauer 1963: 263–264). In medieval Polish the bare form was already disappearing (Kempf 1978: 109–111). In Old Church Slavonic locational and temporal pre-

positionless locatives were not numerous. However, prepositionless locatives were used relatively frequently with certain verbs, particularly those with the prefix *pri-*. Bauer (1963:281) observes variation in the usage of the prepositionless locative and *kb*-dative in constructions with verbs of motion and notes that dative constructions were clearly displacing prepositionless locatives in OCS.

There are no examples of bare locative usage in modern Slavic languages. The locative case in Croatian has not preserved its distinct inflectional ending, in contrast to Polish and Russian. Because the locative case no longer exhibits a bare morphological form in the modern languages, the question arises as to whether it has maintained a distinct case meaning of its own. If it has indeed done so, then the locative case meaning must be compatible with some element or elements of meaning present in the prepositions with which it combines. Because *pri* is the only preposition that combines exclusively with the locative in Croatian, this article examines this particular preposition under the hypothesis that its meaning might be the most compatible with the central meaning of the locative case – that is, the locative prototype.

In case-languages such as Slavic, prepositions are always linked with cases. Prepositional meaning can be considered in isolation from case only to a certain extent. If analyzed in isolation from case, a spatial preposition can be conceived as a grammatical element conveying an abstract geometrical relation. However, a preposition in a prepositional phrase should not be considered in such isolation because the noun in a prepositional phrase is always marked for case. Prepositions and cases in prepositional phrases are dependent upon each other. A particular case cannot combine with all prepositions, and a specific preposition can never co-occur with any or all cases. In Croatian, a single preposition can maximally combine with (or, according to traditional grammar terminology, govern) up to three different cases, as exemplified in (1):

- (1a) *za dan*_{Acc} ‘in a day’
*za dana*_{Gen} ‘during the day, in daylight’
*za danom*_{Instr} ‘after day’, as in *dan za danom* ‘day after day’

Similarly, a given case may combine with several different prepositions. This can be exemplified with the locative and its five prepositions:

- (1b) *u objedu*_{Loc} ‘in the meal’
*na objedu*_{Loc} ‘at the meal’ (performance)
*o objedu*_{Loc} ‘about the meal’
*po objedu*_{Loc} ‘after the meal’
*pri objedu*_{Loc} ‘during the meal’

The Croatian locative combines unambiguously with the five prepositions above: *u* ‘in, at’, *na* ‘on, at’, *po* ‘along, over; after, by’, *o* ‘about’, and *pri* ‘by, near, next to’. As for the preposition *prema* ‘towards, in direction’, grammarians do not agree. According to some descriptions, *prema* combines with the dative and locative (Raguž 1997:117, 138, 151), whereas according to others (e.g., Barić et al. 1997:229) it occurs only with the locative. It seems easier to find arguments for the first opinion. Without any doubt, *prema* can be substituted with *k(a)* in many dynamic, directional contexts (*Idem prema njemu/k njemu* ‘I am walking towards him’), thus corresponding to the spatial directional meaning of the prepositionless directional dative and directional *k(a)*-dative. In static spatial usages such as *Stoji prema meni* ‘he is standing opposite me’, as well as in extended usages denoting circumstances (*raditi prema planu* ‘to work according to a plan’), *prema* corresponds with the locational meaning of the locative case and its extensions. It is worth mentioning that, in *raditi prema planu*, *prema* can easily be replaced with the locative preposition *po*.

The five (or six, including *prema*) locative prepositions form a closed set. Though moderate in number, especially when compared to the 72 primary and secondary prepositions of the genitive (Raguž 1997:117), they cover a broad field of locative case usage. All but one can combine with at least one other case, as illustrated in (2):

- (2a) *U kući_{Loc} sam.* vs. *On ulazi u kuću_{Acc}.*
‘I am in the house.’ vs. ‘He is entering the house.’
- (b) *Na odmoru_{Loc} sam.* vs. *Idem na odmor_{Acc}.*
‘I am on vacation.’ vs. ‘I am going on vacation.’
- (c) *Po bregovima_{Loc} se razliježe pjesma.* vs. *Po što_{Acc} su došli?*
‘The song is heard over the mountains.’ (literally ‘spreads itself over the mountains’) vs. ‘What did they come for?’
- (d) *Govorimo o njemu_{Loc}* vs. *Udario je šakom o stol_{Acc}.*
‘We are talking about him.’ vs. ‘He hit his fist against the table.’

The fact that *u*, *na*, *po*, and *o* can combine with the accusative (and, in the case of *prema*, with the dative) in addition to the locative suggests that they contain an element of meaning in their semantic structure that is shared by these cases. However, there must be another element of meaning that distinguishes the locative from the accusative (and dative), which explains the need for both constructions. A semantic description of the locative case should aim at isolating this semantic element.

In terms of the traditional principles of categorization, which are based on the assumed existence of distinctive features that determine a given item's membership or non-membership in a category, defining the specific (i.e., core, underlying, basic, or even potential) meaning of a case consists of finding a semantic characteristic that distinguishes the semantic contribution of this case from the semantic contributions of all other cases in a given language. This is the goal of the traditional studies of case meanings (e.g., Jakobson 1984 [1936]), as well as of case analyses in the framework of cognitive linguistics (e.g., Janda 1993, Dąbrowska (1997), Rudzka-Ostyn (1994), to mention only a few studies dealing with Slavic).¹ In his classic study on the general meanings of the Russian cases, Jakobson (1984 [1936]) suggests that the distinguishing semantic characteristics of the locative case lie in the ability of the locative-marked noun to limit the extension, in the basic spatial or metaphorical sense, of a given entity. According to Jakobson, the locative defines the full extension of the object, which is the dominant category (1984 [1936]:90). For example, in the locative relationship between the bird and the roof in the expression *ptica na krovu*_{Loc} 'a bird on the roof', the spatial extension of the located entity, the bird (which Jakobson would call the "dominant category"), is determined by the limits of the place where this entity is found, the locative-marked noun *krov* 'roof'. We do not know and thus cannot visualize the spatial limits of the roof in this example, but we can imagine the figure (or its contours) of the located entity, the bird, because the picture of this entity is evoked in our minds against its background *locus* in space, the roof. The limits of the located, dominant category are well specified by the *locus* on which the located entity is placed, and the full spatial extension of the located category is thus also determined.

Case analyses in the framework of cognitive linguistics usually employ the notion of a prototype or prototypical meaning. Even though the term "prototype" is commonly used among cognitive linguists, there appears to be no unanimous agreement as to its definition. According to Taylor (1990), a prototype is a mental representation of a typical instance of a category, such that various entities are assimilated to the category on the basis of perceived similarity to the prototype. Thus, prototypes can be considered as the most representative examples of a given category and those that serve as reference points for the categorization of not-so-clear instances. The psychologist Eleanor Rosch (1975)

¹ Although cognitive linguistics and traditional approaches differ in many aspects, interrelations are also evident. As Janda and Nessel (2004:1) put it, "Cognitive linguistics is in many ways a continuation of the Jakobsonian tradition; both frameworks assume that the form-meaning relationship plays an essential role, and Jakobson foreshadowed in some sense the structure of the radial category through his use of the 'relational invariant' and the dichotomy between unity and diversity via a hierarchical system of relationships".

is credited with first applying the term “prototype” to the classification of linguistic categories. Rosch herself restricts her application of the term to the standard parameters employed to describe experimental results in psychology. In the framework of cognitive linguistics, prototypes may be rather abstract, especially as far as grammatical categories are concerned (cf., the meaning representation of the preposition *over* in Lakoff 1987). Langacker (1988:134) represents the complexity of linguistic categories in a network model that incorporates the prototype as a special case. The semantic network consists of different nodes, with the relationship between a prototype and the other nodes of a network usually being one of extension. Within cognitive linguistics, the term prototype is employed to denote either the central member(s) of a category or an abstract concept, a schematic representation of the conceptual core of a category.

Reflecting on the problem of a possible prototype for a case, Janda (1993: 205) considers two solutions. Either a single prepositional usage could be considered to be central, or an abstract central concept could serve as an “empty center” around which the semantic network is built. In the light of Janda’s proposals, the locative usage of *pri* may be an ideal candidate for the central locative prepositional usage because the combination of the locative case with the only exclusively locative preposition points to the existence of the typically locative elements. Identifying the meaning network of the *pri*-locatives might provide valuable insight into the locative prototype as well.

The preposition *pri* ‘by, near, close to’ occurs exclusively with the locative. This empirical fact suggests that, among the locative prepositions, the meaning of *pri* might to a great extent be compatible with the meaning of the locative case. If so, a detailed study of the *pri*-locatives should bring one close to the specific meaning of this case. This analysis aims to shed light on the interrelation of locative case semantics and the semantics of *pri* in Croatian. Thus, the first objective of the semantic analysis of Croatian *pri*-locatives is to determine the contribution of this preposition to the semantics of the locative case as a whole. The second objective is to compare the semantics of *pri*-locatives with their equivalents in Russian and Polish. When two languages employ the same preposition or the same general distinction in the usage of two prepositions, the boundaries between the contrasting categories often differ. Even closely related languages are not immune from differences in the distinctions drawn between spatial relational terms. Analyzing the differences between and distinctions among closely related languages contributes not only to their linguistic description, but also to foreign language acquisition. This analysis also includes some diachronic observations that might be helpful in understanding the differences in the contemporary semantics of *pri*-locatives.

Dictionary descriptions of spatial prepositions actually describe different types of relations expressed not by the prepositions alone, but by whole prepositional phrases. The relations expressed by locative-marked nouns in the *pri*-phrases listed in two Croatian contemporary dictionaries, Anić (1998:878) and JLZ-ŠK (2000:961), can be classified into the following groups:²

(A) Phrases denoting the *physical (spatial) and/or mental proximity* of the trajector (TR)³ to the locative entity, landmark (LM)⁴

(B) Phrases denoting the *parallelism (simultaneity) in time* of a TR and LM

(C) Phrases denoting *accompanying circumstances*: a *pri*-locative LM serves as accompanying circumstances to the main event of the sentence

(D) Phrases denoting an entity “in cooperation, belonging to” another entity. Listed separately in Anić (1998: 878), this group is characterized as archaic. In what follows, it is argued that this usage is closely related to the first one (A) and can be summed up as *dependence or presence in the sphere of influence* of the locative-denoted entity.

These usages can be illustrated by the sentences in (3):

(3a) Stanuje *pri* kraju ulice.

‘He/she lives at the end of the street.’

(b) Pomagala mu je *pri* prevođenju.

‘She was helping him with his translations.’

(c) Rade *pri* danjem svjetlu.

‘They work during the day.’

(d) Bio je pisar *pri* sudu.

‘He was a junior clerk at the court.’

² The dictionaries do not agree on the number of the submeanings. For our purposes, the definitions are merely summarized.

³ One rarely locates objects absolutely. More often the location is relative to certain other things. The located object may be referred to as the figure, theme, or trajector. In some terminologies, the term trajector is reserved for a moving object, whereas the stationary object is called the figure. In this analysis, however, trajector (TR) is used as a general term for the located object. The position of a trajector is relative to a landmark (LM). In the case of a moving object, it moves in a certain way with respect to the landmark. The landmark is also called the ground, relatum, or reference object.

⁴ JLZ – ŠK cites the meaning of “proximity to the end of something” as a separate usage (*pri* kraju dana/rata/posla ‘at the end of the day/the war/work’).

2. *Pri* and spatial proximity

The meaning of physical proximity is clearly spatial. In the case of spatial prepositions, one would intuitively presuppose that spatial meaning is their central and primary meaning. Spatial prepositions denoting elementary spatial relations, those considered primary in our understanding of space, such as *u* (containment relations) or *na* (contact/coincidence), should agree with the nouns that denote corresponding prototypical concepts. In the case of *u*, expected LMs are prototypical containers (*u boci* ‘in a bottle’), whereas for *na* they include prototypical surfaces (*na stolu* ‘on a table’). One would also expect concrete spatial usages to show statistically significant frequency. However, this does not seem to be the case for *pri* in Croatian. Its general spatial sense of physical proximity cannot combine with all objects that are prototypical with respect to clear spatial extension. Usages illustrating the concrete spatial meaning of proximity are fairly restricted in standard Croatian and appear to be bounded to certain nouns. Dictionary examples confirm this. Dictionaries cite usages of *pri* in combination with the nouns *vrh*, *dno*, *kraj* (*pri vrhu*, *pri dnu*, *pri kraju* ‘at the top’, ‘at the bottom’, ‘at/near the end’). In his insightful description of case meanings, Raguž (1997: 151) concludes that *pri* is becoming increasingly rare in the meaning of location; that is, a place where one entity is situated close to another.

In order to analyze the semantics of Croatian *pri* in detail, a corpus of 2,675 occurrences was consulted.⁵ A significant number of the occurrences (732) are idiomatic expressions.⁶ Another large group is adverbial expressions denoting time and circumstances. In that search for examples of concrete spatial usages, it was found that *pri* combines relatively frequently with the nouns *vrh* and *dno*.⁷ As for other nouns denoting concrete physical entities, 35 strings link *pri* and the noun *stol* ‘table’ (*pri stolu*). However, most of these examples are taken from 19th-century literature, such as:

- (4) Jedno [se] čeljade *pri stolu* uznemirivati poče. (Miroslav Kraljević)
‘One person at the table began to be worried.’

Other examples with *pri* and nouns denoting concrete physical entities – such as *pri kući* ‘at home/close to the house’, *pri Savi* ‘by the Sava River’/‘clo-

⁵ Hrvatska jezična mrežna riznica. <http://riznica.ihjj.hr/philologic/>

⁶ Those expressions include: *pri svijesti* (14), *pri sebi* (43), *pri (zdravoj) pameti* (8), *pri ruci* (51), *pri duši* (50), *pri srcu* (38), *pri tom(e)* (314), *pri čem(u)* (214).

⁷ There are 16 occurrences for *pri vrhu* and 26 for *pri dnu*, whereas the search included only direct strings of the preposition and the noun; that is, strings with no intervening modifiers between the preposition and noun. The inclusion of non-direct strings would presumably yield more examples.

se to the Sava River’, *pri zavoju ceste* (Šenoa) ‘at/close to the turn of the road’, *pri drugom prozoru* (Kumičić) ‘by/near the second window’ – mostly date back to older literature as well.

When the combination of typical nouns designating spatial LMs (either inanimate or animate) with *pri* is tested in order to obtain an expression indicating concrete physical proximity in standard Croatian, in many cases native speakers judged the constructions as rather odd. Examples include:

(5a) ?Bicikl je pri kući.

(b) ?Stablo je *pri* cesti.

(c) ?Marko je *pri* Ivanu.

In such cases, partly synonymous spatial prepositions such as (*po*)*kraj*, *kod*, *uz*, *do* ‘by, near, close to’ are preferred or considered the only natural choice:

(5d) Bicikl je (*po*)*kraj* kuće.

‘The bicycle is by the house.’

(e) Stablo je (*po*)*kraj/kod* ceste//*uz* cestu.

‘The tree is near/by the street.’

(f) Marko je *kraj/kod* Ivana.

‘Marko is by Ivan//at Ivan’s.’

It is noticeable that, of the numerous occurrences of *pri kraju/koncu* (96), the majority are temporal usages. Spatial usages are more typical in older literature:

(6) ... uboško groblje tamo u šumi *pri koncu* grada (A. Kovačić)

‘the pauper’s cemetery there in the woods at the edge of town.’

Considering the meaning parameters of *pri* in the examples describing concrete spatial proximity, one observes that the preposition emphasizes the physical proximity of a TR and a LM – without details as to the spatial arrangement or relationship between the objects. The only idea communicated by *pri*-locatives is that of the physical proximity of the entities defined in their extension. Such relative vagueness in terms of the physical detail of spatial arrangement is shared by the other prepositions indicating proximity. For specification of the degree of proximity, an additional element is needed; for example, *tik* in *tik do*, *tik uz* ‘close at hand, bordering, contiguous’.

Occurrences of *pri*-locatives employing the noun *posao* ‘work’ can also be found relatively frequently. These examples primarily emphasize the mental closeness of a person to his/her work, but the idea of concrete physical proximity is preserved in the image as well. The meaning of the noun *posao* can be

interpreted as a place of work, but what is primarily meant is an object of work or activity:

(7a) Pomagala je Sofiji *pri* svakom *poslu*.

‘She has been helping Sofija with every job.’

(b) Valja “gerlu” i u kući pogledati, *pri* zdjeli i *pri* poslu.

‘The girl has to be observed at home as well, at the bowl and at work.’

Thus, extensions of concrete spatial usages can be clearly observed in similar examples where spatial meaning co-exists with the other meaning components.

In similar examples, *pri*-locatives emphasize the physical presence of a TR (an entity/person) at the time and place of the action evoked by the LM. Therefore, the LM is in spatial and temporal proximity to the event evoked by the predicate – for example, *pomagati* in (7a). At the same time, the locative expression evokes the mental closeness of the acting person and the LM. The use of *pri* emphasizes both the physical and mental closeness of a person to the activity performed.

Based on the information found in the corpus,⁸ the equivalent Polish preposition, *przy*, can be found in many examples indicating concrete physical proximity. It has a broad concrete spatial sense in modern Polish and is thus capable of combining with many more concrete spatial objects than *pri* in Croatian. The range of spatial usages of *przy* is illustrated by the following examples:

(8a) Magazyn ten znajdował się *przy* Muzeum Puszkina.

‘That storage facility was near/next to the Puškin Museum.’

(b) Ludmiła Patała sięgała pamięcią do swojego dzieciństwa, do ogrodu *przy domu* rodzinnym.

‘Ludmiła Patała’s memories went all the way back to her childhood, to the garden by the house where she was born.’

Other examples of *przy*-locatives entail different kinds of physical objects serving as LMs: *przy głównym bazarze* ‘near the main bazaar’, *przy drodze* ‘by/near the street’, *przy stole* ‘at the table’, *przy granicy* ‘near/by the border’, *przy kościele* ‘near/by the church’, *przy grobie* ‘near/by/at the grave’. Further examples include both inanimate objects (three-dimensional objects and objects con-

⁸ <http://korpus.pl/>. The IPI PAN Corpus is a morphosyntactically annotated, publicly available corpus of Polish, developed by the Linguistic Engineering Group at the Institute of Computer Science, Polish Academy of Sciences (ICS PAS). The Polish examples cited in this text are from this corpus.

ceptualized as a line) and persons occurring as *przy* LMs. Many examples with locatives of personal pronouns can be found – for example, *przy mnie* ‘by/near/with me’, *przy was* ‘by/near/with you’, *przy nas* ‘by/near/with us’. Equivalent Croatian contexts would require the prepositions *kod*, *(po)kraj*, *uz*, or *s(a)*.

As to the mental proximity, the string *przy pracy* ‘at work’ appears to be very frequent in Polish.⁹ However, in these examples, as well as in Croatian examples entailing *posao* ‘work’, a concrete location, the place of work, is a secondary element in the image, blending with the meaning ‘activity performed’ and ‘time of the activity’:

(9) Zastał profesora *przy pracy*.

‘He found the professor at work/working.’

The string *wypadek przy pracy* ‘accident at work’ shows a particularly high frequency in the Polish corpus. The Croatian equivalent *nesreća na poslu* suggests that there are shared elements of the meaning chain of the prepositions *na* ‘on, at’ and *pri/przy*; that is, similar possibilities of meaning extensions. *Na* profiles one of the basic relations that are expressed by spatial prepositions: coincidence. *Coincide* in this context means ‘to occupy the same place in a spatial configuration’. The essence of this spatial relation is a spatial co-occurrence. Two entities are perceived as occupying one physical space. This general notion of spatial co-occurrence is shared by *pri* and *na*, allowing related languages to choose between the two prepositions when expressing a co-presence relation. *Na*, as well as *pri*, implies coincidence that can vary from exact coincidence to very close proximity. In the examples *nesreća na poslu // wypadek przy pracy* (where activity blends with the place of work), the TR and the LM are seen as coincident points. Overlapping meaning components of *na* and *pri/przy* explain variations of Croatian *na ulazu* and Polish *przy wejściu* ‘at the entrance’.

Concrete spatial usage is the first type given in dictionary descriptions for Russian (Ožegov 1989:584). Typical examples of spatial usages found in the corpus¹⁰ include extensive outer, open locations and geographical names serving as LMs:

(10) Bitva *pri* Gallipoli

‘the Battle at Gallipoli’

For the relations of spatial objects located on smaller, bounded locations – for example, objects located within a room – *pri* seems not to be a natural cho-

⁹ 292 occurrences.

¹⁰ Nacionalnyj korpus ruskogo jazyka at <http://ruscorpora.ru/>.

ice in modern Russian. Other prepositions denoting spatial proximity are used instead, such as *rjadom* ‘near, close to, by’. Nevertheless, other examples found in the corpus include *pri reke/more* ‘near the river/sea’, *pri stole* ‘at the table’ (the occurrences are from the 19th century, with modern language usage preferring *u stola*). In some examples, the meaning of a location overlaps with that of an activity – for example, *pri doroge* ‘by the street’/‘during travel’, *pri vhode* ‘at the entrance/when entering’, *pri dele* ‘at work’, the last one indicating both the activity and the object of work as do the Polish and Croatian equivalents.

The examples in (11) illustrate an interesting variation in spatial conceptualization in Russian and Croatian:

(11a) Odin iz nih zajavil *pri* svideteljah. [Russ]

‘One of them testified in the presence of witnesses.’

(b) Jedan od njih izjavio je *pred* svjedocima. [Cr]

‘One of them testified in front of witnesses.’

In the Russian example, the general idea of the spatial proximity of the subject and the witnesses has been communicated; that is, only that the subject and the witnesses are at the same location. Merely the idea of spatial co-occurrence of the TR and the LM is given, with no details as to their spatial arrangement. The same situation may be described in Russian with *pered*-instrumentals (*pered svideteljami* ‘before witnesses’). In Polish, *przy świadkach* provides the same image as the Russian example in (11). Przybylska (2002:502) states that Polish uses *przed*-instrumentals to express the same functional relation as with *przy*-locatives, having also two possibilities when Croatian makes use of only one (i.e., *pred*-instrumentals). *Pred/pered/przed*-instrumentals indicate a more differentiated spatial arrangement. The subject and witnesses are at the same location, but the highlighted part of this spatial image is a particular position of the subject in relation to the witnesses. In this way of specifying location, both the LM and the spatial relationship are more complex. The landmark is regarded as a volume, not as an undifferentiated volume but as one with intrinsic sides (two of them being front and back). Location is specified as a projection from one of the intrinsic sides. The entire space around the LM is not important, only the portion projected from the intrinsic side. The image suggests witnesses’ ability to have a superior view of the situation, whereas the subject’s position appears to be exposed to it. However, *pri*-locatives, as well as *pred/pered/przed*-instrumentals, in everyday language usage merely concentrate on the presence of the witnesses.

3. Extensions of spatial meaning

3.1 Dependency or presence in the sphere of influence

The spatial meaning of the preposition *pri* suggests, at a more abstract level, the general idea of the association of a TR with a LM. This idea can involve a setting in which the TR is equally visible and hence equally important as the LM, or one in which the TR is less visible and thus less important than the LM. Furthermore, this general idea of association can be extended from spatial to other domains via metaphor, resulting in a relation of a TR and a LM in which the TR is dependent upon the LM or is within its sphere of influence. This relation, which is still very close to the spatial relation expressed by *pri*, is illustrated by the following occurrences from the Croatian corpus:

(12a) Ukrade li štogod, reći će gospoda *pri* sudu ...

‘If he steals something, the gentlemen at the court will say ...’

(b) Odbor *pri* uredu kancelara

‘Council of the chancellor’s office’

In Anić (1998: 878), this usage type is specified as archaic. However, this can be claimed only for (12a), where the relation implies that the animate TR (*gospoda* ‘sirs’) is affiliated with an institution (*sud* ‘court’). The examples of the second subtype (12b) can very frequently be found in all types of contemporary texts. Here, an institution or organization serves as a LM, whereas the TR is an inanimate object, a subordinate organization or unit that is either a part of the LM or is conceptualized as belonging to the LM. The locative LMs denote concrete spatial entities. Institutions and organizations may be perceived through the activities they perform, but they are primarily attributed concrete spatial existence in that they occupy spatial locations. The basic spatial meaning component of *pri*, that of spatial proximity, directly forms a basis for this usage. In the following examples, the relation “TR *pri* LM” implies a connection of a TR (e.g., *Zavod za aeronautiku*) and a LM (e.g., *Fakultet prometnih znanosti*), with the TR being either a subordinate, dependant or smaller unit of the LM, or a unit within the sphere of control or direct influence of the LM:

(12c) *Zavod za aeronautiku pri Fakultetu prometnih znanosti.*

‘Institute of Aeronautics at the Faculty of Traffic.’

(d) *Projekti pri Ministarstvu prosvjete.*

‘Projects at/within the Ministry of Education.’

(e) Pri Ministarstvu kulture osnivaju se Vijeća.

‘Councils have been established at/within the Ministry of Culture.’

In (12c), the TR is a department of the LM. In (12d), the TR (projects) is in the sphere of LM’s (Ministry of Education) direct influence, being controlled and/or financed by it. The TR in (12e), the councils, are within the sphere of influence of the Ministry of Culture, or attached to it in an unspecified manner. In Croatian, this usage of *pri* applies mainly to relations of institutions or organizations and their units or dependent parts. Similar usage types can be found in Polish as well, where a TR is metaphorically located at a LM, or a LM controls a TR:

(13) ... prac doktorskich i magisterskich, które obecnie prowadzone są *przy* katedrze Metafizyki.

‘... doctoral dissertations and master’s theses that are usually conducted at the Department of Metaphysics.’

However, the relation of dependency in Polish can apply to the relations of persons as well. If an animate TR is subordinated to or dependent upon an animate LM, the relation can still be expressed with *przy*:

(14) Dzieci dużo (dziewięcioro, ale w domu, *przy* rodzicach siedmioro).

‘There are many children (nine, but seven of them were at home, with their parents).’

When taken in its purely spatial sense, *pri/przy* indicates location near the object evoked by the locative-marked noun. Logically, if A is near B, then B is near A, as expected in prototypical cases of spatial proximity. However, *pri*-locatives of this metaphorically extended category differ from those expressing the basic spatial sense in a way that is difficult to account for in terms of abstract logical relationships. The relationship of the two involved entities is no longer reversible. The locative-marked entity exerts control and thus determines the manner of being of the other entity. In the Polish example in (14), the children not only live with their parents, but also depend on them financially. One could conclude with Jakobson that the locative-marked element determines the meaning of the significate to which it refers.

Russian *pri*-locatives generally share the same possibilities in denoting the relation of a TR within the sphere of dependence or influence of a LM (15a). However, many more types of relations broadly belonging to the domain “sphere of influence” might be expressed by *pri*-locatives in Russian than in Croatian. Not only parts of a whole (institution/establishments and their dependent units), but also units seen as attachments or supplementary parts of a main en-

tity, can be related with *pri* (15b). Different kinds of supplementary activities accompanying an institution, seen as attached or belonging to it or as being organized or controlled within its framework, are included in the *pri*-relation as well, as in (15c):¹¹

(15a) A mama – vospitatelem v detskom sadike *pri* zavode.

‘And the mother is a teacher at the factory’s preschool.’

(b) Predmetnyj ukazatel’ *pri* knige.

‘Subject index of the book/added to the book.’

(c) Sport očen u nas bil razvit – i *pri* zavode, i *pri* rajone.

‘Sports have been well developed by us – at the factory, as well as in the (local) district.’

Although the general idea of spatial proximity influences and enables similar types of relations expressed by *pri*, prototypical spatial proximity is not the primary notion language users think of when using similar expressions. This applies to all three languages. While grounded in the idea of spatial proximity, the examples in (12)–(15) involve primarily extended functional relation, with the spatial meaning component being only secondary. The relation A *pri/przy* B indicates that A has some function, role, or importance with reference to B. Although A has an individual function, its nature requires B as a general background.

3.2. Possession

Spatial proximity is the basis for linking two objects in different ways; that is, of seeing them as associated. If an item is permanently associated with or connected to another, then the primary spatial meaning of *pri* ‘close to’ (in a broader sense ‘being there’, ‘being present’), extends into the direction of ‘with’ and ‘having’. In this context, the relation “TR *pri* LM,” including an animate TR and an inanimate LM, indicates that the TR has the LM at its disposal. Thus, the idea of possession is the basis for some Croatian idiomatic expressions containing *pri*: *biti pri novcu/parama* ‘to have money’, *imati pri sebi* ‘to have (something) with’, *biti pri zdravoj pameti* ‘to have a healthy mind’/‘to be normal’. This extension is not productive in modern Croatian. The same type

¹¹ In Croatian, the relation of an institution and those activities, organizations, or establishments that are not “inherently” connected with the main activity of the institution but are nevertheless in reality attached to it, is expressed by various expressions (*pri* ‘at’, *u sklopu* ‘in the complex’, *u okviru* ‘in the framework’); *Dječji vrtić pri Dječjoj bolnici Kantrida* ‘Kantrida Children’s Hospital Preschool’; *Sportski vrtić u okviru Sportskog društva “Ciciban”* ‘Ciciban Sports Association Sports Preschool’, *Dječji vrtić u sklopu Sportskog centra Monterey* ‘Monte-rey Sports Center Preschool’.

of possessive constructions exists in Polish (*mać pieniędzy przy sobie* ‘to have money with oneself’) but is no longer productive in that language either and seems to be bounded to idiomatic expressions (*ona jest przy nadziei* ‘she has hope’; Przybylska 2002:512).

Personal pronouns occurring as LMs in Russian *pri* phrases indicate that the LM has an object (the TR) at a given moment (*dokumenty pri nem* ‘he has the documents’). This meaning is most commonly found in the phrase *pri sebe* ‘with you’,¹² such as in *imet’ pri sebe summu v razmere 300 zlotyh* ‘to have the sum of 300 złoty’.

Like the relation discussed in 3.1, this type of relation of a TR and a LM is not symmetrical: a TR possesses a LM (i.e., controls it or has it under its influence). However, it is exactly the opposite of the relation in 3.1, in which a TR is dependent upon a LM.

3.3. Temporal simultaneity

Spatial usages are typically transferable into the temporal domain. Proximity in the spatial domain transfers easily into the temporal domain, indicating temporal proximity. Two entities that are close in space are able to map onto actions that are close in time. The spatial meaning dimension of *pri*-locatives can thus easily be transferred into the temporal domain. Proximity in the temporal domain is realized as the temporal simultaneity of events. Occurrences indicating temporal simultaneity are very frequent in Croatian corpus. In prototypical examples, LMs are nouns denoting actions and activities (*dolazak* ‘arrival’ and *odlazak* ‘departure’):

(16a) I davao sam ti znak motikom: *pri* svakom tvom dolasku, *pri* svakom tvom odlasku.

‘I gave you a sign with the hoe: whenever you came, whenever you left.’

(b) Bile su to brojke koje su se odmah javljale, *pri* svakom razgovoru.

‘Those numbers appeared immediately, during every talk.’

In (16a), two events, the giving of a sign and the arrival/departure, correlate in time. The *pri*-locative indicates their temporal simultaneity. The circumstance evoked by the locative-marked noun (arrival/departure) can be interpreted as the immediate cause of the main event (giving of a sign). The construction with *pri* in similar examples can be paraphrased with a temporal clause using *kad* ‘when’, *dok* ‘while’, *uvijek kad* ‘whenever’.

¹² 514 occurrences of *pri sebe* were found in the corpus.

Polish *przy* extends its spatial meaning into temporal domain as well. In the majority of temporal usages, the LM is a noun denoting an activity or process, thus having an explicit temporal meaning component, as in (17a). A noun can metonymically acquire temporal meaning, as *kawa* ‘coffee’ does in (17b):

(17a) Poprosiła mnie więc, bym asystował *przy* malowaniu Lutosławskiego.

‘So, she asked me if I could assist Lutosławski while painting.’

(b) Rozmawialiśmy *przy* kawie.

‘We talked by a cup of coffee/over coffee.’

Unlike Croatian *pri*, Polish *przy* appears with nouns denoting actual temporal categories, such as the names of days and holidays: *przy niedziele* ‘when it is Sunday’, *przy sobocie* ‘when it’s Saturday’. However, this usage of *przy*-locatives is bounded to specific lexemes (Przybylska 2002:506) and is not a neutral way to express temporal relations. Here, time is not merely a background for the described events, as in *w niedzieli/sobocie* ‘on Sunday/Saturday’. When denoted by the *przy*-locatives, periods of time are viewed as elements accompanying, and in some way affecting, the events evoked by the rest of the sentence. If a *przy*-locative is used, the nouns do not designate merely time, but all events and/or occasions connected with the particular time or day(s) that are simultaneous with the events/states expressed by the sentence predicates.

The Russian corpus suggests that the use of *pri*-locatives in the domain of time is by far the most frequent. The preposition temporally connects a TR and a LM (usually a noun denoting an activity) in an image that conveys their simultaneity: *pri razvode* ‘when divorce takes place’, *pri proizvodstvie* ‘during production’. One usage subtype is, however, typical for Russian: in the temporal domain, some *pri*-locatives are personal names (18a), or names of historical periods (18b). An animate LM, typically a name of a person, is a metonymical substitute for the period of time in which the person lived. The relation “TR *pri* LM” indicates temporal simultaneity of an event and the time when a person ruled or was influential:

(18a) Uže *pri* Gorbačeve prinimalis’ rešenija.

‘Already in the time of Gorbachev people got the resolutions.’

(b) *Pri* feodalizme status neotdelim ot lica.

‘In feudalism, a person and person’s status are not separable.’

Croatian shows more bounded usage of *pri* in the temporal domain than Polish and Russian do. In the same temporal situations, Croatian would use another preposition denoting spatial proximity. In the Croatian equivalent of (17b)

uz/kod ‘by’ would be used, whereas the equivalents of (18) would entail *za* (*vrijeme*) ‘during’ or *u* ‘in’.

3.4. Accompanying circumstances

In one usage type, a very frequent one in all three corpora considered, entities denoted by *pri*-locatives can be described as circumstances accompanying the other involved entities or events. The spatial basis is evident: a TR and a LM, both being events, are included in the same spatial configuration. Additionally, a LM forms a specific setting for a TR. This usage is closely connected to the temporal usage. The second event, coded with *pri/przy* + locative in Croatian, Polish and Russian, is temporally simultaneous with the main one. In (19b), the supper and the burning of the candles occupy the same place and the same time. In many examples, it is only the foregrounding of an event that makes the difference between a temporal interpretation and an accompanying circumstances interpretation. In the first, two events are equally highlighted. In the second interpretation, the *pri*-locative LM is an additional, secondary event accompanying the main event and forming its detailed setting.

The examples in (19) illustrate the use of the *pri*-locative to express circumstances accompanying the main event:

(19a) *Pri* onoj slaboj svjetlosti sutona ‘in that twilight’; *pri* svjetlu male baterije ‘in the light of the small flashlight’; *tko će se pri* svijeći svlačiti ‘who is going to undress in the candlelight’ [Cr]

(b) *Kolację przy* świecach ‘candlelight dinner’; *piewać przy* akompaniamencie gitary ‘to sing accompanied by guitar’ [Pol]

(c) *pri* otsustvii otkrytogo ognja ‘without open fire’; *pri* poniženii temperatury ‘with low temperatures’; *pri* želtom svete sveči ‘in the yellow candlelight’; *pri* vetre ‘in the wind’ [Russ]

These circumstances, such as the light of the candles in (19a) and (19b) or the low temperature of example (19c), can be neutral, favorable, or unfavorable. They can be physical or mental, strongly influential on the main event or relatively indifferent. They do not provide the time and place parameters necessary to locate an event, but they evoke additional defining elements the speaker wants to bring into the image. The role of the *pri*-locatives in these examples is to bring these additional elements into the picture of the event, but the precise manner in which they are related to the event is not specified.¹³ The *przy*-locative here only

¹³ As Bacz (1997) puts it for Polish, the main event as such does not depend on these elements to the extent it would if other, more precise locative prepositions were used, such as *w*.

brings the accompanying elements into the picture of a described main event and stresses their presence in (or their co-presence with) the main event.

Concerning this usage type, Russian and Polish show a broader choice of LMs that can be combined with *pri* than Croatian does. The equivalent for Russian *pri vetre* would be expressed with another preposition (*na/po vjetru*), and the equivalent for Polish *przy akompaniamencie gitary* in (19b) would be expressed by *uz* (*uz pratnju gitare*).

3.5. Juxtaposition, comparison and contrast

In one category of examples found in the Russian and Polish corpus, the already introduced concept of coincidence of two objects, events or states of affairs can be observed, their coincidence having spatio-temporal nature. However, the coincidence of two entities produces a different effect: entities introduced by the *pri*-locatives contrast with another entity or event of the sentence. Two contrasted entities (objects or events) might share the same concrete space (if they are in reality existent objects), or they might be brought together into a common space of reference in order to be “evaluated” for a particular purpose. Temporal coincidence of two entities is not excluded either. Two entities are brought into one common mental space for the sake of comparison. In the moment of comparison, they share the same space and same time. The comparison of two elements results in a highlighted contrast:

(20a) *Przy* twoich pracach ja sie wstydze swoich.

‘Against all your efforts, I am ashamed of mine.’

(b) *Przy* wszystkich moich błędach i grzechach mam nadzieję.

‘In spite of all my mistakes and sins, I have hope.’ [Pol]

(c) *Pri* vsem uvaženii v žizni on ves’ma skučen.

‘With all due respect, he is very boring in his life.’

(d) David okazalsja nižčim *pri* svem svoem bogatstve.

‘David turned out to be poor in spite of all his richness.’ [Russ]

The *przy*-locatives in (20) introduce entities that express a physical or mental contrast with the lexical content of the rest of the sentence. The fact that the prepositions *pri/przy* are used for the stylistic effect of contrast confirms the suggestion that the two elements brought together by the locative expressions are of equal importance in the speaker’s mind, since one cannot contrast elements of unequal rank or value. The effect of contrast is produced by the contrasting lexical values of the juxtaposed elements. The role of the locative is merely to

bring these elements together. The basis that enables this usage type is the pair of conventional metaphors PROXIMITY IS SIMILARITY and DISTANCE IS DISSIMILARITY. If two elements are spatially coincident, their similarity is expected. *Pri*-locatives, at first glance signaling similarity on the basis of their spatial meaning component and conventional metaphor, effectively produce the opposite effect of disparity.

In standard Croatian, constructions with the effect of comparison would instead employ other spatial prepositions, such as *kod*, *(po)kraj*, and *uz*, or a different syntactic structure containing the expression *u usporedbi s(a)* ‘in comparison with’. In general, it seems that other spatial prepositions have extended their usages to the field originally belonging to *pri*. However, in older examples from Croatian and Serbian language found in the JAZU-dictionary (Vol. 11, 1935), numerous usages with juxtaposition, comparison and effect of contrast can be found:

(21a) Petar *pri* Pavlu jest dobar.

‘Compared with Pavle, Petar is good.’

(b) Vas svijet *pri* Bogu ništa.

‘The entire world is worth nothing in comparison with God.’

(c) *Pri* vincu ostale slasti su za ništar.

‘Compared with wine, the other pleasures are worth nothing.’

(d) Sunčenoj su *pri* svitlosti zdrake zvijezda odveć male.

‘Compared to the sunshine, the rays of the stars are too weak.’

In the last example, *sunčenoj ... pri svitlosti* has the meaning of circumstances. The whole sentence context produces the effect of comparison and contrast.

4. Concluding remarks

The discussion above has shown that all the usages of the preposition *pri* are related by the notion of proximity. From the domain of the relations of spatial objects, it is easily applicable to events. Metaphoric proximity of events means their temporal simultaneity. Additionally, the proximity of objects and events enables comparison and contrasting, as well as different profiling of the relation of the two objects. The context enables the listener to conceive one event as a cause or condition for another one.

Concerning the preposition *pri* and *pri*-locatives, the situation in different Slavic languages varies to some extent. The basic parts of the meaning chain

are shared, but some parts of the meaning chain in one language are covered in others by another preposition denoting proximity or coincidence. The prepositional usages went through diachronic changes. The most common types of *pri*-locatives found in the modern Slavic languages resemble the situation in Old Church Slavonic, where *pri* shows spatial usages (*pri mori* ‘by/at the sea’, *pri ezerě* ‘by/at the lake’, *pri gore* ‘near the mountain’, *pri brěžě rěky* ‘by/near the river bank’, *pri pŕti* ‘by the path’, *pri vratěxъ* ‘at the door’, *pri krstě* ‘near the cross’) and temporal usages (*pri večerě* ‘during the supper’, *pri straži noštъnĕi* ‘during the night guard’, *pri devětĕi že godině* ‘around nine’).¹⁴ *Pri*-locatives also designate accompanying circumstances (*pri svěšti* ‘by candle light’). There are many examples of personal pronouns as LMs: *pri nemъ estъ...* ‘he has...’, *pri nasъ* ‘with/at us’ indicating possession or associativity. Other OCS usages match the present situation only in individual languages, e.g., OCS *pri*-locatives of proper names denoting time (*pri diokletъĕně cěsari* ‘during the time of the emperor Diocletian’).¹⁵ According to Xodova (1971), spatial meanings of *pri*-locatives, *u*-genitives, *blizъ*-genitives (or datives), and *iskrъ*-genitives in OCS do not show any significant differences. However, some prepositions prefer inanimate nouns as LMs (*pri*, *blizъ*), whereas the LMs denoted by *u*-genitives are mainly nouns denoting persons.

Generally seen, the inventory of prepositions in modern languages has been increasing in comparison to their historical situation. In that process, there are different possibilities for development of the prepositional semantics. One preposition can overtake usage types that another one, a semantically close preposition, had at an earlier stage. Semantically close prepositions can differentiate the field of their former common usage, in such a manner that a preposition A, for example, acquires a more precise spatial interpretation than preposition B. A preposition can semantically expand, thus causing narrowing of the meaning field of a semantically related preposition, or even causing its disappearance.

Of the languages taken into consideration, the concrete spatial usage of the preposition seems to be most elaborated with Polish *przy*, while concrete spatial meanings of Russian *pri*-locatives are often considered archaic. In modern Croatian, spatial usages of *pri* are fairly bounded. Earlier periods in Croatian more closely resemble the situation observed in contemporary Russian and Polish.¹⁶

¹⁴ Examples from Xodova (1971). Also Gerodes (1963:354–355) cites examples mostly belonging to the spatial and temporal domain.

¹⁵ It can still be found in Russian (cf. (18a)). Examples of the same type can be found in older Serbian texts, as well (cf. JAZU dictionary, 1935: 830–831).

¹⁶ The JAZU dictionary (1935) cites many more usage types of *pri* than can be found in the modern language.

The “loss” of the concrete spatial function of *pri* in standard Štokavian is, to a large part, a 20th century development.

Jakobson’s formulation of the basic locative meaning in Russian¹⁷ does not quite apply to the Croatian *pri*-locatives. The *pri*-locatives always affect, and in some way determine, the entity evoked by the sentence predicate or the non-locative category. This semantic role agrees with the primarily adverbial grammatical function of the locative expressions. However, it is practically impossible to specify the limits of this determination in terms of Jakobson’s “fully delimited extension” of the dominant, non-locative category.

The semantic core of the *pri*-locatives appears to lie in the ability of the locative case to express proximity, evoked in either physical or mental terms, of a TR to the LM, i.e. the entity that is being referred to by the locative. There are no details specifying the manner in which the entities are brought together. The abstract idea of coincidence or co-presence of two elements is common to the Croatian, Russian, and Polish analyzed locatives. The general abstract idea of coincidence or co-presence of two elements, expressed by the *pri*-locatives, appears to be compatible with one component of the locative’s central, abstract meaning. This idea is entailed in locative phrases with the other prepositions, as well. However, the notion of coincidence expressed by *pri* and the locative case does not appear to be the locative prototype, if the term “locative prototype” is to be understood as the locative use most likely to be quoted as a typical example of the locative case category.

Janda & Clancy (2002) sum up all usages of the Russian locative with the help of the notion of location. If one considers the frequency of locational meanings expressed by *u*-locatives (prototypically denoting any location that is understood as a potential container), *na*-locatives (prototypically denoting any location that has some vertical elevation and can be conceived as a surface), and *po*-locatives (where *po* means ‘all over, through; after’), the locational meaning of the locative case in Croatian seems to prevail. This meaning structures a clear basis for other domains (e.g., temporal). Yet when *pri* is taken into consideration as the only exclusive locative preposition and its usage domains are compared in standard Croatian and Polish, it is obvious that the concrete spatial meaning of *pri* in Croatian tends to be very bounded. In Russi-

¹⁷ Jakobson’s generalization about locative usage applies to the stressed Russian Second locative, as opposed to the “explicative unstressed -e locative” (Jakobson [1936] 1984:365, 367). Jakobson observes that “with the prepositions *o*, *pri* the Second Locative cannot be used [...] since these prepositions do not indicate the shaping function of the referent” (Jakobson [1936] 1984: 367). However, an explanation of why this observation about the Russian locative should be related to his earlier generalization about the locative case core meaning is missing.

an, the common idea connected with *pri*-locatives is rather a functional relation of a TR and a LM than spatial proximity. However, *pri*-locatives in domains other than spatial clearly show locative case capability of extending its locational meaning into abstract domains. To a great part, *pri* in Croatian has lost its spatial meaning of proximity in the competition with other proximity prepositions that had been encountering its semantic space (*uz, kod, (po)kraj* ‘by, near, close to’). If *o*-locatives are taken into consideration, the locational thesis seems to be hardly applicable. *O*-locatives (*o* ‘about’) indicate topics of the thoughts, conversation, or writing. On a very abstract level, the LMs of those locatives are brought into the same mental space that the sentence subject occupies. Thus, the effect of the *o*-locatives is closely connected with the core meaning of the preposition *pri*, as locative LMs are brought into the subject’s proximity and indicate an achieved mental closeness of the subject and the locative LM (*razmišljam o Ivanu* ‘I am thinking about Ivan’). If frequencies of *pri*-locatives in modern Croatian are considered, and if one tries to link the basic meaning of the locative to this preposition only, the locative prototype would be metaphorical location rather than concrete location. This does not seem to be the best way to describe the locative prototype as a whole. However, this preposition also sheds light onto the non-locational potential of the locative case, i.e., onto extended meanings of the locative and the nature of spatial usages’ relations to temporal and other usage domains. Locative usages with spatial prepositions *na* and *u* better illustrate the spatial prototype of the locative case. The locative prototype as a whole can be sufficiently described only if all locative prepositions are taken into consideration. However, an abstract version of the locative prototype, if it is intended to be applied to all locative usages, barely implies that there is one better or worse defined, or even undefined, proximity characterizing the relation of a TR and a LM. This idea is implied in the meaning of *pri*, as well.

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Corpora:

Croatian: Hrvatska jezična mrežna riznica; <http://riznica.ihjj.hr/philologic/>

Polish: IPI PAN; <http://korpus.pl/>

Russian: Nacionalnyj korpus ruskogo jazyka; <http://ruscorpora.ru/>.

O značenju i prototipu prijedloga *pri* i lokativa: Komparativna analiza slavenskih uporaba s naglaskom na hrvatskome

Sažetak

U radu se analizira značenje prijedloga *pri* i njegova veza s općim značenjem lokativa, odnosno lokativnim prototipom. Analiza pokazuje kako se prostorna značenja prijedloga preslikavaju u neprostorne domene, te upućuje na načine na koje je značenje ovoga isključivo lokativnog prijedloga povezano sa središnjim lokativnim značenjem. Rad uključuje i osvrt na značenje sinonimnih poljskih i ruskih prijedloga te kontekste njihove uporabe u usporedbi s hrvatskim.

Key Words: preposition *pri*, locative case, spatial meanings, meaning extensions

Ključne riječi: prijedlog *pri*, lokativ, prostorna značenja, značenjske ekstenzije