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## Changes in the System of Oblique Cases in Molise Croatian Dialect

Ivica Peša Matracki

Nada Županović Filipin

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

University of Zagreb

ipesa@ffzg.hr

nzupanov@ffzg.hr

The linguistic situation in Molise Croatian dialect is characterised by absolute language contact in which the borrowings from the adstrate and superstrate Romance varieties are so numerous that the Molise Croatian linguistic community is threatened with extinction. From this perspective of *language decay* we will try to examine the changes of the morphological features of cases and verb phrases modified by indirect objects in an oblique case (genitive, dative and instrumental case). The direct and indirect objects are noun phrases which are a part of a verb phrase, i.e. they are complements required by the thematic structure of the verb. In our discussion we will describe the main changes in the system of inflection of the oblique cases in Molise Croatian (including the role of case markers), and examine their different syntactic and semantic characteristics. Special attention will be paid to the causes of the weakening of the inflection system as well as on those factors which, on the other hand, help maintain the strength of the inflection system which, although with forms and structures which greatly differ from the original ones, continues to function in Molise Croatian dialect.

*Key words:* Molise Croatian, language decay, oblique case, syntactic and semantic case features, inflectional change

### 1. Introduction

The grammatical case in Croatian and Slavic languages in general is a morphological category that expresses various morphosyntactic and syntactic relations of dependence between the syntagms in the sentence. These relations are expressed by case endings, accents and prepositions. In Molise Croatian they are primarily expressed by case endings and prepositions.<sup>1</sup> Italian is a language

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<sup>1</sup> The more frequent usage of prepositions can be explained by the obvious influence of the Italian language.

without morphological cases, but according to contemporary linguistic theory even these languages have cases, the so-called *abstract Cases*.<sup>2</sup>

In traditional grammar, the distinction of cases is based on their relations with the rest of the sentence. If the case depends on other syntagms in the sentence, it is distinguished as oblique (dependent); if, however, some important sentential relations depend on it, the case is distinguished as independent.<sup>3</sup>

In Standard Croatian (SC) and Shtokavian-Ikavian (SI) the independent cases (*casus rectus*) are nominative (indicates the subject) and vocative (indicates the addressee), while genitive, dative, accusative, locative and instrumental function as dependent cases (*casus obliqui*). In Molise Croatian (MC) the vocative case was lost due to the influence of Italian (as is visible in following examples: *svakoga je zvao brat* (MC) / *zvao brate* (SC, SI) 'he called everyone brother'; *Muž moj* (MC) / *Mužu moj* (SC, SI) 'oh my husband!'). The connection between the semantics of a case and other syntagms in a sentence can be internal, narrow and necessary for the understanding of the meaning of the sentence, or it can be external and looser when it provides only additional information or circumstances under which the main action of the sentence took place. In contemporary linguistics this necessity is expressed through relations between the verbs (predicates) and their arguments.<sup>4</sup>

The necessary connection is expressed with:<sup>5</sup>

- a. accusative, the case which indicates the direct object of a verb
- b. genitive, the case which indicates belonging, origin, partialness, spatial relations, cause, material, quality, quantity, etc.<sup>6</sup>

Facultative information on the predicate is indicated by:

- a. dative, which indicates the indirect object of a verb, directionality, purpose, giving, etc.
- b. instrumental, which indicates the means used to perform an action, company, circumstances, location where the action takes place, etc.
- c. locative, a static case which indicates the location and time of the action, etc.

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<sup>2</sup> In generative linguistics *Case Theory* (It. *Teoria del Caso*, Cro. *Padežna teorija*), every phonetically realized noun phrase has to be marked by a case. Therefore, even the languages without case inflections like Italian have a fully developed system of abstract Cases. The notion of abstract Cases is an important part of *Government and Binding Theory*. Instruments provided by the Case Theory have been efficiently applied both to Slavic and Romance languages because they explain some important formal characteristics of noun phrases and enable the integration of traditional case theory into contemporary theory. See more in Graffi (1994); Chomsky (1995); Radford (2003); Donati (2008); etc.

<sup>3</sup> Nominative is the case that appears in the role of subject. Its semantic ( $\pm$ alive,  $\pm$ human, etc.) and grammatical traits (plural/singular, etc.) determine, for instance, the agreement with other phrases in the sentence, as well as other important morphosyntactic and semantic relations.

<sup>4</sup> See more on this theory in Graffi (1994); Chomsky (1995); Poole (2002).

<sup>5</sup> This kind of semantic characterization is typical of traditional grammar; see Pavešić *et alii* (1991); Barić *et alii* (1997).

<sup>6</sup> In the discussion of this case's features, we have drawn on Tekavčić (1972: 115-118).

Contemporary linguistic theories, especially those based on generative grammar, perceive obligatoriness as being derived from verb (predicate) valency, i.e. from verb argument structure. Hence the necessary verb argument (which is most frequently the direct object) can be the indirect object expressed by the genitive, dative or instrumental cases, for example: *Udovoljila sam zahtjevima-D<sup>7</sup> svojih studenata* ('I have satisfied my students' demands); *Sjećao se nesretnih dana-G* ('he remembered the unhappy days'); *Hvali se svojim novim automobilom-I* ('he is bragging about his new car').<sup>8</sup>

Apart from semantic and formal criteria, when identifying the cases the well-known questions can also be helpful (however, their value is solely operational).

In traditional grammar, the cases answer the following questions:<sup>9</sup>

1. nominative (=N): *who? what?*
2. genitive (=G): *whose?*
3. dative (=D): *to whom? for what?*
4. accusative (=A): *whom? what?*
5. vocative (=V): *hey!*
6. locative (=L): *where? about whom? about what?*
7. instrumental (=I): *with whom? with what?*

In short, in this study we primarily identified the cases based on their endings and accents, then by the questions they answer and finally, based on their meaning or function. In Italian, a language without morphological cases, we primarily identified them based on their meaning or function and the prepositions that introduce them (*case markers*).

## 2. Case system in Molise Croatian, an overview

In Molise Croatian the cases are formed by two declension classes. Depending on their genitive singular ending (G<sub>sg</sub>), they are called the *a-type* and the *e-type* declension class.

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<sup>7</sup> The abbreviations used in this paper are as follows: D = dative, G = genitive, L = locative, I = instrumental.

<sup>8</sup> Case assigners (It. *assegnatori di Caso*, Cro. *pridruživači padeža*) are lexical heads, most frequently verbs and nouns. In nominative-accusative languages, the nominative case is assigned by the functional head *Inflection*, the accusative case is assigned by transitive verb to its argument, while the aforementioned oblique cases are assigned by intransitive verbs; see Chomsky (1995).

<sup>9</sup> When formulating the questions we drew on Pavešić *et alii* (1991) and Barić *et alii* (1997).

**Table 1.** Molise Croatian case endings<sup>10</sup>

Number	case	a- type		e-type	
		1	2	3	4
Singular	N	Ø, o, e, (a)	Ø	A	Ø
	G	a, (a), l-a	en-a, et-a	E	er-e, (a)r-e
	D	u, (u), l-u	en-u, et-u	Ø, (u)	er-Ø, ar-(u)
	A	Ø, a, (a), =N	Ø, et-a	u, (u)	er-u, ar-(u)
	V	=N, e	=N	=N, Ø	ma-Ø
	L	=N/D	=N	Ø	=D
	I	em, om, am, l-em, l-om, l-am	en-em, et-em	Om	er-om, (a)r-om
Plural	N	a, e, en-a	l-e	E	er-e, ar-(e)
	G	Ø/i, en-i, ov	l-i	Ø, i, ak, ov, ac, av	er-i, (a)r-i
	D	ami/i, en-i/ami	l-ami	Ami	er-ami, (a)r-i, r-ami
	A	=N	=N	=N	=N
	V	=N	=N	=N	=N
	L	=N	=N	=N	=N
	I	=D	=D	=D	=D

<sup>10</sup> The table was based on the data elicited from Sammartino (2004: 33-64); Marra (2009: 95-121); Breu / Piccoli (2000: 390-402), Breu / Piccoli (2011, 2012) and the results obtained from the research conducted on Molise Croatian corpus we compiled for this occasion. Sammartino's analyses mainly refer to the variety of Molise Croatian spoken in Montemitro; see Sammartino (2004: 9): „[...] questa grammatica è basata principalmente sull'analisi della parlata di Montemitro; [...] nelle altre due comunità di Acquaviva Collecroce e San Felice del Molise gli idiomi presentano alcune varianti che incidono – sempre in maniera non significativa – sia a livello lessicale che morfosintattico.“ On the other hand, Marra's analyses are based on „un corpus raccolto da 30 informanti di Acquaviva Collecroce“ (Marra 2009: 95). Dictionary, varieties, grammar and texts contained in Breu / Piccoli (2000: v) are also based „esclusivamente sulla lingua che si parla ad Acquaviva“, while Breu / Piccoli (2012) contain texts registered in San Felice del Molise. The table therefore depicts the noun case endings used in all three varieties. The case endings in brackets designate weak vowels (It.: *vocale debole o sussurata*). According to Marra (2009: 99), weak vowel endings do not indicate the weakening of the flecational principle maintained in Molise Croatian.

The a-type declension is used for:

(1) masculine nouns ending in a consonant (*ljud* 'man', *grad* 'town'), masculine nouns of Italian origin ending in *-o* (*tito* 'roof', *škito* 'cloak'), masculine nouns ending in *-al/-o* with infix *-l-* (*kota* 'cauldron', *posto* 'shoe'); and

(2) formerly neuter nouns with extended stem (with infixes *-en-*, *-et-*).

The e-type declension is used for feminine nouns ending in *-a* (see 3). The only exception is the noun *mat* ('mother'), whose paradigm can be seen under (4).<sup>11</sup>

The endings are added to the stem which is usually obtained by omitting the genitive singular ending.

The a-type and e-type declensions are found in Standard Croatian and Shtokavian-Ikavian as well.<sup>12</sup> Molise Croatian has lost the *i-type* declension used for feminine nouns ending in consonant with the genitive singular ending in *-i* (*smrt* 'death', *zapovijed* 'order'). However, two masculine nouns have kept the genitive plural ending in *-i*: *oči* ('eyes') and *uši* ('ears'; both are neuter nouns in SC and SI).

In Molise Croatian feminine nouns ending in a consonant have received a final vowel if the corresponding Italian noun is feminine (for example: SC *noć<sub>F</sub>*; SI *noć<sub>F</sub>*; MC *noča<sub>F</sub>*; IT *la notte<sub>F</sub>* 'night'). They have thus changed their declension class and now belong to the e-type declension. Furthermore, feminine nouns ending in a consonant that have become masculine nouns under the influence of Italian belong to the a-type declension (for example: SC *sol<sub>F</sub>*; SI *so<sub>F</sub>*; MC *sol<sub>M</sub>*, *solu*, etc.; IT *il sale<sub>M</sub>* 'salt').

Throughout its history, Molise Croatian has always been a spoken language without any written norms; therefore, in order to analyse its case system diachronically we can only compare the present situation in Molise Croatian with the existing data that document the case system of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Shtokavian-Ikavian (see Matasović 2008: 185, Kačić Miošić 1999), as well as with the contemporary Standard Croatian.

It is obvious that Contemporary Molise Croatian has undergone a considerable simplification of the system. Apart from the fact that it has only two declension classes, the neuter gender has been lost, as well as most vocative and locative forms. Furthermore, we notice the presence of case syncretism but with different, archaic endings which resemble the 15<sup>th</sup> century Shtokavian-Ikavian:  $G_{pl}$  ends in  $-(ov)Ø$ ,  $D_{sg}$  is equal to  $L_{sg}$ , while  $D_{pl}$  and  $L_{pl}$  are both equal to  $I_{pl}$  and they all share the endings *-ami* and *-i*.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> In the variety spoken in Acquaviva Collecroce we found the form *matre-G*: *A ono sa vazela, ono moje matre-G...* (MC) 'I have taken those as well, those that belonged to my mother'; see also *I ono sam uzela, ono moje majke-G...* (SC) / *I ono san uzela, ono moje matere-G...* (SI).

<sup>12</sup> We include Shtokavian-Ikavian in our analysis because Molise Croatian is best defined as a continuation of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Shtokavian-Ikavian (see paragraph 4).

<sup>13</sup> In comparison, the 15<sup>th</sup> century SI had the following morphological characteristics:  $G_{pl}$  ended in  $-(ov)Ø$ ,  $D_{pl}$  in *-om*, *-im*, while  $L_{pl}$  and  $I_{pl}$  ended in *-ami*, *-imi*, *-im* (see Matasović 2008: 187; Kačić Miošić 1999).

One of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Shtokavian-Ikavian's main morphological features was the high variability of oblique case endings, which has remained characteristic of the dialect up to the present day. Contemporary Standard Croatian shows a higher level of case syncretism: D, L and I have the same plural ending (-*ama*, -*ima*; this fusion was finalized in the 19<sup>th</sup> century), D and L have the same singular ending and -*â* is one of the most frequent genitive case endings (see Barić *et alii* 1997, Pavešić *et alii* 1991).

### 3. Structural and inherent Cases

Within the category of case, Chomsky (1995: 114) distinguishes two different types – *structural* and *inherent Cases*:

“We then distinguish the structural Cases accusative and nominative, which are assigned solely in terms of S-Structure configuration, from inherent Cases, including genitive, which are associated with  $\theta$ -marking.<sup>14</sup> That is, inherent Case is assigned by  $\alpha$  to NP only if  $\alpha$   $\theta$ -marks NP. Structural Case has no such thematic requirement.”<sup>15</sup>

The assignment of structural Cases nominative and accusative<sup>16</sup> is primarily based on configurational properties of elements within the phrase marker (tree diagram), that is, on syntactic properties, and less frequently refers to logical and semantic functions of the elements in themselves. In fact, the subject and object can assume various thematic roles depending on the central verb of the sentence. For example, the subject can be an Agent, an Experiencer, a Patient, and the same is true for the object. These two cases can be assigned based on purely structural motives.<sup>17</sup>

In Italian, however, the genitive case also often demonstrates the traits of structural Cases, that is, it does not depend on thematic roles:

- (1) a. La descrizione della festa (Theme)
- b. La descrizione di Mario (Theme/Agent)

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<sup>14</sup> This is one of the ways that the Case theory is connected to the thematic role theory within the general theory of generative grammar.

<sup>15</sup> It is well known that generative grammar stipulates that only arguments endowed with a case can be assigned a thematic role; see more in Chomsky (1995: 114-116).

<sup>16</sup> As previously mentioned, nominative is the case assigned to NPs that function as subjects in sentences with temporalized verbs, while accusative indicates the direct object of the verb and can be accompanied by a preposition, for example Eng. *John is moving towards him-A*; It. *Gianni si muove verso (di) lui-A*. In Croatian as well there are verbs that require a prepositional object in accusative case: *Ne uvedi nas u napast-A* ‘lead us not into temptation’.

<sup>17</sup> We are dealing with a purely structural relationship between case assigners and elements assigned a case, while the inherent Case is defined solely by thematic relations between case assigners and elements assigned a case. This is why nominative and accusative are typical structural Cases while genitive and dative are typical inherent Cases.

The same applies to the dative case:

- (2) Alla mia amica ne capitano dei brutti guai. (Experiencer)  
Alla mia amica ho dato un bel libro. (Beneficiary)  
Ho dato una lavata alla macchina. (Theme)  
Non fate caso a me. (Beneficiary)  
Ho lavato le mani a mio figlio. (Possessor; = Ho lavato le mani di mio figlio).

As can be seen from the examples of deverbal nouns that assign thematic roles, a NP in the genitive case can have the thematic role of an Agent as well as the role of a Theme. The same is true for Molise Croatian: *povidanje lipih fabula* 'the narration of beautiful stories' (Theme) / *povidanje Marijina sina* 'the narration of Mary's son' (Agent). The genitive case that indicates the direct object of the verb has a clear semantic motivation which means that it is an inherent Case because a case that depends on the meaning is a non-structural Case.

As far as lexical heads that assign inherent Cases are concerned, it is widely accepted that they are categories with features [+N], meaning nouns and adjectives, while lexical heads that assign structural Cases contain features [-N], meaning they are verbs and prepositions.<sup>18</sup>

We will not discuss this issue further as the above established facts are enough to identify these characteristics of cases in Molise Croatian.

#### 4. Some sociolinguistic aspects of Molise Croatian

Similar to the varieties spoken by other linguistic minorities in Italy, the varieties of Croatian spoken in the Molise region have for centuries coexisted with the Romance varieties.<sup>19</sup> There are three bilingual localities in the Molise region whose inhabitants use their original dialect after living in an Italian-speaking area for five centuries. During its long coexistence with the Romance varieties,

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<sup>18</sup> Thus, for instance, transitive verbs and prepositions assign the accusative case. However, this theory produces various empirical and theoretical problems that are rather difficult to solve because proposed solutions do not take in consideration the possible changes of case assigners' features, such as their varied usage and meanings, nor the usage and meanings of the elements to which a case is assigned (for example: *Ho servito un cliente. Questo libro non serve a nessuno. / Bisogna vestire gli ignudi. Mi vesto di lungo. / Mario teme i suoi avversari. Mario teme per i propri cari.*). Furthermore, the thematic role theory isn't precisely defined by generative grammar and the number and type of thematic roles are not completely determined; see more in Baker (1988); Radford (2003); Van Valin / LaPolla (1997).

<sup>19</sup> Molise is among Italian regions with the highest levels of dialectophony. The varieties spoken in Molise belong to central and southern Italo-Romance group. In all its varieties, as well as in Standard Italian, case relations are expressed with prepositions: *M. na pezzulèlle de casce salate* / *It. un pezzettino di formaggio salato*; *M. nasciuta da na lacrema de mèle* / *It. nata da una lacrima di miele*; see Avolio (2002).

the Molise Croatian dialect has undergone numerous changes that have strongly affected its system on various linguistic levels.<sup>20</sup>

We can safely say that today's Molise Croatian is an endangered dialect spoken by only a few hundred people in three bilingual localities in the Molise region (Acquaviva Collecroce or Kruč, San Felice del Molise or Filić and Montemitro or Mundimitar).<sup>21</sup> The ancestors of today's inhabitants settled in this area fleeing from Turkish invasions in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. Molise Croatian is a continuation of the Biokovo-Cetina Shtokavian-Ikavian dialect which inherently contains a number of Chakavian elements (see Brozović 1970; Lisac 2003, 2009, 2011).

However, almost 500 years of complete physical isolation have contributed to the development of various features, making this variety significantly different compared to Croatian dialects spoken on the other side of the Adriatic Sea.

Breu (2009:10) established three different periods which characterize the bilingualism of the majority of Molise Croatian speakers: the first period lasted until the end of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, encompassing the time in which neighbouring Molise varieties were the only crosslinguistic influence. In the second period the unification of Italy introduced Italian as another source of crosslinguistic influence, while in the third period, which started in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Italian language established itself as the only crosslinguistic influence.

The standardization of Molise Croatian did not start until the publication of the first dictionary *Dizionario dell'idioma croato-molisano di Montemitro* (Piccoli / Sammartino) in the year 2000, while the grammar book *Grammatica della lingua croato-molisana* (Sammartino) was published in 2004.

In recent years we have seen numerous publishing activities, such as the publications of local papers, anthologies, poetry books, etc.<sup>22</sup>

Nevertheless, literature written in Molise Croatian is still very scarce. It can even be questioned whether it really exists since its only poetic expressions are traditional folk songs. First written literary works appeared in 1950s with the intention of preserving the mother tongue.

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<sup>20</sup> See paragraph 2; for further reference, see Sammartino (2004); Marra (2001: 9); Breu (2005: 11).

<sup>21</sup> According to ISTAT's statistical data from 2001, Acquaviva Collecroce has a population of 800 inhabitants, while San Felice del Molise and Montemitro have 813 and 468 inhabitants respectively. Not all of the inhabitants are speakers of Molise Croatian. According to Breu (2009: 9), in San Felice there are almost no Molise Croatian speakers among young people. The dialect is still vital in Montemitro and fairly present in Acquaviva, especially from the diastatic and diaphasic point of view; see Avolio (2002).

<sup>22</sup> For example, *Duga staza postojanja: antologija pjesama na hrvatsko-moliškom jeziku / Il sentiero lungo dell'esistenza: antologia di poesie in lingua Croato-Molisana* a cura di Sandro Galantini / uredništvo Ilda Begonja Vidović, Društvo prijatelja Moliških Hrvata, Split, 1993; *Riča živa*, periodico dei Croati del Molise; all titles from the series *Collana Scripta manent*, Fondazione "Agostina Piccoli", Montemitro, edited by Antonio Sammartino; for instance the anthology *S našimi ričimi* (2007), and so on.



## 5. Methodology

In order to examine the changes of the morphological, semantical and syntactic features of the cases in Molise Croatian, we compiled a corpus using data gathered from native speakers, original texts published in Sammartino (2004), Breu / Piccoli (2000, 2011, 2012) and Marra (2009), literary works written in Molise Croatian (poetry books and anthologies) and, most of all, from the local paper *Riča živa* (issues dating from 2004 to 2011).<sup>23</sup>

We established four basic criteria for analysing oblique cases:

1. morphological markedness / unmarkedness;
2. the usage of prepositions
3. semantics
4. verbal rection

Under the semantic criteria we tried to encompass all possible meanings of the examined cases. For example, in the genitive case we examined origin, structure, cause, quality, quantity, mode, cause, time, plenty, lack, separation, etc.

When analysing verbal rection we drew from all indirect object rections described in Katičić's *Syntax of Standard Croatian* (1986). To verify the rection in Shtokavian-Ikavian, we used Kačić Miošić (<sup>57</sup>1999).

## 6. Oblique cases' analysis

### 6.1. Genitive

#### 6.1.1. Morphological markedness/unmarkedness

In Molise Croatian the genitive case is very frequently morphologically marked in all of the examined varieties. Usually all NP constituents are morphologically marked, including the pro-forms.

Genitive is almost always marked when it expresses origin, accompanied by the preposition *iz* ('from'):

- (1) *Aminištracijune komunale iz Kruča-G, Mundimitra-G, Filiča-G, Kambo-marina-G, Mundžalfuna-G, Portokanona-G oš UruriØ-G*

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<sup>23</sup> To avoid overloading the text with too much information, the examples cited will not be accompanied by their source. Most of our corpus is available online (see <http://www.mundimitar.it/montemitro.it.htm>). All other sources are cited in the *Corpus sources* at the end of this paper.

<sup>24</sup> Although the preposition 'do' is much more frequent, in San Felice di Molise we noted the usage of the preposition 'od', that is in use in contemporary SC and SI in the meaning 'of, by': *Ovi, spodar od fabrike-G [...]* 'that man, the owner of the factory' (see Breu / Piccoli 2012). However, SC and SI require the usage of the genitive case without preposition:  *vlasnik tvornice-G*.

(‘the community’s administration from Acquaviva Collecroce, Montemitro, San Felice del Molise, Campomarino, Montecilfone, Portocannone e Ururi’).

It is also marked when introduced by the preposition *do* (to/of):<sup>24</sup>

- (2) *smo vidil prve džornalište do “Famiglie Cristiane-G”*  
(‘we saw the first journalists of the newspaper “Famiglia Cristiana”’).

The preposition *okolo* (‘around, about, over’) also introduces morphologically marked genitive case: *okolo jene riče-G* (‘around a word’).

Genitive is morphologically marked when ending in consonant, in loanwords and in proper nouns (see example 1). Toponyms belong to a-type declension because they have maintained the masculine gender; toponym *Kambovaš* usually isn’t morphologically marked, except with preposition *iz*: *kundziljir iz Provindže-G Kambovaša-G*.

Genitive is morphologically unmarked in oxytones; when ending in a vowel (*Aminištracijune komunale iz UruriØ-G*) or in proper nouns when accompanied by a common noun functioning as an apposition (3).

- (3) *krsten jena put s imenem-I grada-G OmišØ-G*  
(‘the name of the city of Omiš was given to a road’)

In SC and SI genitive is always morphologically marked.

Furthermore, genitive without infix is much more frequently used than the forms with infix which are required in contemporary SC and SI: *gradi* (MC) / *gradova* (SC, SI). The form *gradi* (‘to/of/from the cities’) is an archaic Chakavian trait, while in contemporary SC the infix is obligatory.

The inconsistency is visible in the morphological marking of proper names. If proper names are masculine, they are morphologically unmarked; feminine names are marked (4).<sup>25</sup> However, the corpus shows several exceptions to this rule, i.e. examples of morphologically marked masculine names and surnames (5):

- (4) *Delegacijuna kroata biše kumbunjena do mbašatura DragoØ KraljevićØ oš njegove-G žene-G Ede-G, Lidije Lukine-KarajkovićØ do ambasate, AndrijaØ JakovčevićØ (Ministarstvo vanjskih poslova), NikolaØ JelinčićØ (direktor Matice).*

(‘Croatian delegation was accompanied to the Embassy by the Ambassador Drago Kraljević and his wife Eda, Lidija Lukina Karajković, Andrija Jakovčević (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Nikola Jelinčić (the head of the Centre).’)

- (5) *...do mbašatura Tomislava Vidoševića-G.*  
(‘by the Ambassador Tomislav Vidošević’).

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<sup>25</sup> In contemporary SC and SI male names and surnames, as well as female names are morphologically marked, while female surnames are morphologically unmarked.

6.1.2. *The usage of prepositions*

Genitive in SC and SI is introduced by a large number of prepositions. The same is true for MC. According to the data obtained by corpus analysis, it can be concluded that a vast majority of prepositions can introduce this case. We found instances of genitive being introduced by the following prepositions: *iz, s, kurto, di, dop, do, kod, kraj, krajem, međ, na kraj, naza, na vrho, niz, okolo, pozadi, posli, sendza, sred, ume, usri, unutra, vers, zgora, zdola* ('from, around, of, after, at, by, between, on the top of, down, around, behind, without, in the middle of, inside, from above, under').<sup>26</sup>

- (6) *Dop toga-G, kurto ovoga života-G, kurta ci Filumene-G,*<sup>27</sup> *naza onihi stolicØ-G, okolo prlja-G, usri kjace-G, napri vrata do crikve-G,*<sup>28</sup> *okolo jene riče-G, unutra kafeja-G, unutra šene-G, među čeljadi-G, sendza pendziri-G, vers hiže-G* ('after that; around this life; near aunt Philomena; behind those chairs; around the log; in the middle of the square; in front of the church door; around a word; inside a coffee shop; inside the scene; among the people; without the thoughts; towards the house')

The corpus provides substantial evidence of the use of genitive without prepositions:

- (7) *jena toc Verone-G; dan fešte-G; patrimonj naše kulture i našoga-G lipoga-G jezika-G, presidend Kroacje-G; vičeminištrØ ešteri-G*

<sup>26</sup> The prepositions introducing genitive case in MC and SC/SI mostly overlap (MC: *Basa je zdola hiže-G* 'the basement is under the house'; SC/SI: *Podrum je ispod kuće-G*). However, there are a few discrepancies. For instance, the preposition *vers* 'toward' (IT 'verso'; SC/SI 'prema') requires the dative case in SC and SI, while in MC it requires the genitive case: *vers ove nove hiže-G*.

<sup>27</sup> In the variety spoken in San Felice del Molise we found the example *kurta kambisanda-G* 'near the cemetery'; *blizu groblja-G* (SC/SI). Having in mind the Italian *vicino al cimitero*, we can conclude that this preposition in Italian bears dative as abstract Case, while in MC, SC and SI the abstract Case remains in genitive.

<sup>28</sup> In the variety spoken in Acquaviva Collecroce as well the genitive case is almost always accompanied by preposition when it expresses belonging: *Biša onu jistru do Sti Mikela-G* (MC) 'it was the morning of Saint Michael's day'; *bilo je jutro svetog Mihaela-G* (SC/SI). We found only a few examples of genitive expressing belonging without preposition: *cila Dženza Kindrina-G, nevista Dženza Kindrina-G* 'Vincenzo di Kindr's uncle, Vincenzo di Kindr's daughter-in-law'. While SC expresses belonging without preposition (*ujak Dženza Kindrova-G, nevista Dženza Kindrova-G*), preposition is possible in SI and other informal Croatian varieties: *ujak Dženza Kindrova-G, nevista Dženza Kindrova-G / ujak od Dženza Kindrova-G, nevista od Dženza Kindrova-G* (SI). In all three MC varieties genitive which expresses material is usually used with preposition 'do': *pa jidahu sfe povaču do granja-G* (MC, Acquaviva Collecroce variety) 'they have always eaten corn bread'. SC expresses material with an adjective: *no uvijek su jeli kukuruznu pogaču-A*, while SI and other informal Croatian varieties use the same structure as MC, *od+genitive: uvik su (j) ili pogaču od kukuruza-G* (SI).

(‘a piece of Verona; the day of the celebration; the heritage of our culture and our beautiful language; the president of Croatia; deputy minister of foreign affairs’).

The analysis shows that genitive appears without prepositions mostly when it is partitive:

- (8) *čeljada su dal Ndoniju eš Guidu-D jaja, peca do sirØ-G, kobasce-G eš vina-G za “Maja”, kaka sa činaša nu votu.*<sup>29</sup>

(‘people gave Anthony and Guido some eggs, a piece of cheese, some sausages and some wine to celebrate “Maja” the way our elders once used to.’),

or when it is abstract: *espozicijuna botanika-G* (‘the exposition of botanics’). Genitive is also used with adjectives *pun* (‘full’) i *čuda* (‘plenty’).

The preposition *iz* in SC and SI has a precise meaning of origin. The same is true for MC, but our corpus also contains examples of the usage of the preposition *do* (originally ‘to, of’): *do ufcia-G* in the meaning ‘from the office’, SC and SI ‘iz ureda’). In MC, just like in SC and SI, origin can also be expressed with the preposition *s*: *s Falkuna-G* ‘from Falkun’; *ona biša s Filiča-G* ‘she was from San Felice del Molise’.

*Do* is used even when it is morphologically redundant because the entire NP is already morphologically marked:

- (9) *jezik do naše minorandze-G = jezik naše minorandze-G; numer do ovoga-G džurnala-G = numer ovoga-G džurnala-G; večeru prije do Bošča-G = večeru prije Bošča-G; do vrimena do Boga-G*

(‘the language of our minority; the number of this journal; the evening before Christmas; from the time of Jesus’).

Very often both versions coexist in the same text (*večeru prije do Bošča* and *večera prije Bošča*) which shows inconsistencies in the usage of cases.

*Do* is usually used when enumerating NPs in the genitive case:

- (10) *Su bil presende ovi dan pur rapresendande do Ambašate kroate, Kondzolata kroata iz Moliza, Redžijune, Provindže oš Kumuni-G; Pur dva-tri na vot: do Zvicere, Kroacije, Džermanije, Italije-G*

(‘on that day the representatives of Croatian Embassy, Croatian Consulate from Molise, the region, the province and the municipality

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<sup>29</sup> In Acquaviva Collecroce variety as well the partitive function of the genitive case (which is very frequent) is achieved without preposition: *pijemo na bukir vina-G* ‘we are drinking a glass of wine’; see also SC/SI: *pijemo čašu vina-G*. In the following example partitivity is expressed with genitive, while the second object in the sentence is expressed with accusative case, just like in SC: *...su si kupil njive-G, su kupil tuna stoare-A* (MC) ‘they bought some fields, they bought all things’; *...kupili su njive-G, kupili su sve stvari-A* (SC/SI); *...comprarono dei terreni, comprarono tutte le cose* (IT). The same type of partitivity can be observed in San Felice del Molise: *Zbama pol či jena mala žita-G* ‘we went to grind some grain’; IT. *Eravamo andati a fare un po’ di grano*.

were all present; even two or three at the time: to Switzerland, Croatia, Germany, Italy’).

In MC, case marker *do* introducing genitive is preferred over possessive determiners which are required in SC and SI:

- (11) *boletín do Redžijune-G* (MC) ‘regional bulletin’/ *regionalni buletin* (SC/SI) / *bollettino regionale* (IT); *kor do divojki-G* (MC) ‘female choir’/ *il coro femminile* (IT) / *djevojački zbor* (SC, SI); *velike čeljade do Crikue-G* (MC) / *autorità della Chiesa* (IT) / *veliki crkveni ljudi* (SC, SI) ‘great men of the Christian church’.

Our corpus contained only one example of genitive expressed with a possessive adjective (*Baketonin sutit*).

### 6.1.3. Semantics

The genitive case in MC expresses its prototypical meanings: possession, origin, partitivity, composition and quantity. Possession and origin are the most frequent. Genitive can also express time reference. This case typically bears the ‘Agent’ thematic role with passive voice introduced by agentive preposition *do*:

- (12) *su bil kažene do Ledže-G 482/99; Smo imal s nami jenu delegacijunu iz Kroacije, bijana do presidenta-G do Parlamenda-G* [...].  
(‘they were declared by the law 482/99; we hosted a delegation from Croatia that was invited by the speaker of the Parliament’).

This kind of passive construction is an archaic Shtokavian trait, typical of the 15<sup>th</sup> century SI (see Kačić Miošić 1999) and is highly unusual in contemporary SC and SI.

In MC there appears to be no Slavic genitive, which still exists in both SC and SI, but in all other aspects we note a semantic extension in the domain of genitive case. The MC uses genitive with phrases in which both SC and SI use locative, instrumental, dative or accusative case. This tendency has probably developed under the influence of Italian. Here are some examples:

- (13) *Se govore pur do inicijativi-G za našu minorandzu-A*.  
IT: *Si parla anche delle iniziative in favore della nostra minoranza-G*.  
(‘the initiatives for our minority are being discussed’)

Under the influence of Italian ‘complemento di argomento’, MC uses genitive; SC and SI use the locative case (*govori se o inicijativi-L*).

- (14) *Kana nazanje 3 gošta-G Asočacijuna kulturala-G “Naš Život” skupa kandželarije-G s Kruča-G je organidzala feštu do “Maja” za lu 2004*.  
(‘just like in the last three years, the cultural association “Naš Život” together with the municipality of Acquaviva organized the celebration of “Maja” for the year 2004’)

In (14), MC uses the genitive case, while SC and SI use instrumental (*zajedno s općinom-I Acquaviva...*).

An unusual usage of genitive in the meaning of dative was noted in the following sentence:

- (15) *još jena pas veče za hot skupa vers ove nove hiže-G.*  
Ancora un passo di più per camminare insieme verso questa nuova casa.  
(‘another step forward in the joint walk toward this new house’).

The Italian sentence displays the dative case (‘complemento di termine’), and both SC and SI use dative (*prema ovoј novoј kući-D*).

In the following example MC uses genitive where SC, SI and Italian use the accusative case:

- (16) *snig je za dicov-G*  
La neve è **per** i bambini-A  
(‘the snow is for children’)  
SC and SI: *snijeg je za djecu-A*.

Although primarily introducing the accusative case, the preposition *za* (‘for’) in SC and SI is in accordance with genitive when it introduces the meaning of ‘time in which an action is taking place’ (*Za moje mladosti-A život je bio mirniji*; ‘in my youth life was more peaceful’). Even though the genitive case in MC often indicates time, in our analysis we haven’t found it in that meaning.

#### 6.1.4. Verbal rection

In our study we tried to analyze Molise Croatian verbs which assign the oblique cases, like in the following example:

- (17) IT: *aver paura del buio-G*;  
SC/SI: *plašiti se mraka-G*;  
MC: *sa strašiti do škura-G*  
(‘to be afraid of the dark’).

Typological research (Katičić 1986) has shown that Standard Croatian has eighteen different types of verb groups which assign genitive case. These verbs are much less frequent in Molise Croatian. In the example (17) we can see the influence of Italian: in MC, the use of the case is the same as in Italian, and it differs typologically from the genitive case in SC and SI.

The examples (18) – (21) further demonstrate the influence of Italian on the case system in Molise Croatian. In all of the examples the choice of the case in Molise Croatian follows the Italian model:

- (18) MC: *Naša Fondacijuna jese nderesala do manifestacijuni-G ke jesu vežene s našem jezikom.*  
IT: *La nostra Fondazione si è interessata delle manifestazioni-G legate alla nostra lingua e alla nostra cultura.*

(‘our foundation is interested in events dedicated to our language and culture’).

While both MC and IT use the genitive case, SC and SI use accusative: *interesirati se za što-A*)

(19) MC: Saki dan mečemo *no malo kolura-G*[...].

IT: Ogni giorno mettiamo *un po' di colore-G*.

(‘every day we put on a little bit of colour’).

There are two possible cases applicable to this example in SC and SI: accusative (*svaki dan stavljamo boju-A*) and partitive genitive (*svaki dan stavljamo boje-G*).

(20) MC: Govoru oš pišu *do nas-G*.

IT: Parlano e scrivono *di noi-G*.

(‘they are talking and writing about us’)

SC and SI use the locative case: *pisati o nekom-L*.

(21) MC: Na vu okazijunu Fernanda Pugliese je govorala *do Albanezi-G*.

IT: In questa occasione Fernanda Pugliese ha parlato *degli Albanesi-G*.

(‘on this occasion Fernanda Pugliese talked about the Albanians’)

Again, SC and SI use the locative case: *govoriti o nečemu-L*.

The following example describes a case of inherent development analogous to Croatian:

(22) MC: Sa vi nosita zdola smerčke *vina-G, karanjula-G, mustačuola-G, fritra-G, povaču-A...*

IT: Ora voi portate sotto la smerčka *vino, caragnole, mostaccioli, fritte, pizza-A...*

(‘now you put under the juniper some wine, caragnoli, mostaccioli, frita and a pizza’).

While all the NPs functioning as direct object in Italian require the accusative case, in MC, SC and SI they are perceived as partitive elements which require the genitive case: *Povača/pizza* is the only NP in the accusative case, because it is perceived as a whole.

(23) MC: Kumun iz Mundimitra je mislija *joke, kučinu oš ativita za dicaØ-A*.

IT: Il Comune di Montemitro si è preoccupato *dei giochi, della cucina e delle attività per i bambini-G*.

(‘the municipality of Montemitro took care of games, food and activities for children’)

SC and SI: Općina Mundimitar pobrinula se *za igre, hranu i aktivnosti za djecu-A*.

The following examples show cases of inherent development different from Croatian and Italian:

- (24) MC: Gošte ke je pena proša je nas mbinja *na čuda ativita* Ø-G za naš jezik oš našu kulturu.  
IT: L'anno appena trascorso ci ha visti impegnati *in molte attività*-L in campo linguistico e culturale.  
(‘the year that has just passed got us involved in many linguistic and cultural activities’)  
SC and SI: *zaokupiti se s čim*-I.
- (25) MC: ...ove dvi žene ke saki dan pojahu *dol Prstamandžeja*-G.  
IT: ...due donne che ogni giorno andavano giù *a Sant' Angelo*-D.  
(‘two women who went down to Sant' Angelo every day’)  
SC and SI: dative case
- (26) Nako smo organidzal s Gabrijelem Blažeta, ke je nas čeka na njegov gradič Mali Borištof, *joke do pljočki*-G, *tinje*-G, *kukanju*-G, *pet kanduniči*-G, *pinjate*-G.  
(‘with Gabrijele Blažeta, who waited for us in his little town Mali Borištof, we have organized various games’)  
IT, SC and SI: accusative case.

To conclude our discussion on the genitive case, we can say that genitive is an inherent Case when it is assigned by a verb because it bears the *agent* thematic role. This is the case with passive constructions. Partitive genitive has a thematic requirement as well, and it is always the theme, like in the example „*su donel vina*-G, *biru*-A *eš vodu*-A” ‘they brought some wine, beer and water’. Genitive is an inherent Case with verbs which require a genitive object (imamo *čuda čeljadi*-G ‘we have a lot of people’). When assigned to an NP, genitive is a structural Case because it can perform different thematic roles, like in the already cited examples *povidanje lipih fabula* (‘the narration of beautiful stories’, where it performs the role of Theme) and *povidanje Marijina sina* (‘the narration of Mary’s son’, where it performs the role of Agent) mentioned in the paragraph 2 of this study. In Italian as well genitive can have some traits inherent to structural Cases, that is, it does not depend on thematic roles, like in the following examples already discussed in the paragraph 2:

- a. La descrizione della festa (where it functions as Theme)
- b. La descrizione di Mario (where it can either function as a Theme or as an Agent).

## 6.2. Dative

### 6.2.1. Morphological markedness/unmarkedness

In Molise Croatian the dative case is characterised by a high level of variability in terms of markedness. We found examples of similar expressions that were sometimes marked and sometimes unmarked. For instance, the expression „*hvala Bog*Ø” (thank you, God!), an example of typical dative usage, is registered



unmarked. However, the same source offers a very similar, but marked example „našomu Bogu”.

#### 6.2.2. The usage of prepositions

In Standard Croatian and Shtokavian-Ikavian dative appears both with prepositions (*k(a)*, *prema*, *protiv*, *nadohvat*, *nadomak*, *nasuprot*, *unatoč*, *usprkos*, see Barić *et alii* 1997: 279) and without them. In Molise Croatian dative appears mostly without prepositions. In the analysed corpus we haven't found a single example of a preposition + dative construction.

#### 6.2.3. Distribution

Dative appears mostly in pronouns (accentuated and unaccentuated: *nam*, *nami*, *mu*, *vam*, *njim*, etc.) and somewhat less frequently in possessive adjectives (*njihovimi muži*, *našimi gradi*, *našoj minorandzØ*; 'to their husbands; to our towns; to our minority') and proper names (*Ndonju*, *Guidu* 'to Antonio, to Guido').

If unaccentuated, pronouns appear between the auxiliary and the participle:

- (27) MC: mačka je *mu*-D rekla  
IT: la gatta *gli*-D ha detto  
SC/SI: mačka *mu*-D je rekla  
(‘the cat told him’).

Dative often precedes the verb and appears with long complements, mostly in accusative case (*su njim*-D *dal permes*-A; 'they gave them the permit'; *su til presendat našoj minorandz*“-D *ativita*-A *za naše čeljade*-A; 'they wanted to present to our minority some activities for our people'), sometimes in genitive (*e mu*-D *pitaju za imat čuda žita*-G; 'and ask him to have a lot of grain').

Dative can often be divided from the verb by a long string of syntagms:

- (28) *E ovomu životu*-D *na našeØ grada*-L, *ke saki gošte kano ke opetaj nikni, serou ove sinje oš njihov ajut*.

(‘these signs and their help are useful to the life of our town, that every year blooms again’).

Dative frequently appears with long adjuncts:

- (29) *Su til presendat našoj minorandz*-D *ativita*-A *za naše čeljade*-A  
(‘they wanted to present to our minority some activities for our people’)

- (30) [...] je činila nu imbortandu vizitu-A *našimi gradi*-D  
(‘made an important visit to our towns’)

- (31) [...] *su njim*-D *dal permes*-A;  
(‘they gave them the permit’)

- (32) [...] *e mu*-D *pitaju za imat čuda žita*-G, *čuda vune*-G, *čuda sekolike stvare*-G;  
(‘and ask him to have a lot of grain, a lot of wool, a lot of everything’)

- (33) [...] su dal Ndoniju eš Guidu-D jaja, peca **do** sirØ-G, kobasce-G eš vina-G [...].  
(‘they gave Anthony and Guido some eggs, pieces of cheese, sausages and wine’).

The VP ‘*voler bene*’ which requires the dative case introduces the relative invariable pronoun *ke*:

- (34) MC: Džin Zara je nas osta kada biše fešta u njegov grad **ke**-D toko hočaše dobro.  
IT: Luigi Zara ci ha lasciato durante la festa del suo paese che tanto amava.  
(‘Luigi Zara has left us on the festive day of his town which he loved so dearly’).

#### 6.2.4. Semantics

Most Indo-European languages share the same basic meaning which semantically defines the dative case. More precisely, there are two prototypical meanings: giving and purpose, which are reflected on the thematic roles of the ‘goal’ (...*sa ju da mojmu*-D *šurjaku*-D; ‘I gave it to my brother-in-law’; SC/SI: *dao sam je mom šurjaku*-D) or the ‘receiver’ (*Ja moram po na jurnatu komu*-D;<sup>30</sup> ‘I must work for someone for a daily wage’; SC/SI: *Moram poći u nadnicu nekomu*-D).

Dative typically marks the indirect object. It also indicates the direction of the action.

The dative case in MC is used to express giving and purpose; while the direction of the action is expressed in the accusative case:

- (35) Mesar na Kašteja umi kundendat *saku guliju*.-A  
(‘the butcher’s shop at Castello knows how to please your every wish’).

Standard Croatian and Shtokavian-Ikavian use dative case: *udovoljiti svakoј želji*-D. Ethical dative is frequent and indicates possession:

<sup>30</sup> In the above cited sentence ‘*na jurnatu*’ is an example of the morphologically marked locative case. In MC locative is usually morphologically unmarked and morphological case marking is preserved only in the variety spoken in Montemitro. The following examples of the unmarked locative case were obtained from the variety of Acquaviva Collecroce: *Oni je si ga pošā Lardžendina*-L ‘he went to Argentina’; *On je otišao u Argentinu*-A (SC/SI); *Dža biša Lamerika*-L? ‘has he already been to America?’; *Već je bio u Americi* L? (SC/SI); *Ona sa je Laustralija*-L ‘she is now in Australia’; *ona je sad u Australiji*-L (SC/SI); *Je doša doma, pa se ženija na Mundimitar*-L ‘he came home and then he got married in Montemitro’; *došao je doma pa se oženio u Mundimitru*-L (SC/SI). The oscillations are present in the variety of San Felice del Molise where we noted both marked (*bihu na fabriku*-L ‘I was at the factory’) as well as the unmarked locative case (*da Lazvicera*-G *je s’ ga pošā Ladžermanija*-L ‘from Switzerland he went to Germany’; *iz Švicarske*-G *je otišao u Njemačku*-L (SC/SI); [...] *ke mahu po Ladžermanija*-L ‘since I had to go to Germany’; *kako sam morao poći u Njemačku*-L (SC/SI)). In SC and SI the locative case is always introduced by a preposition. In MC preposition is usually omitted in front of the names of foreign countries. If it does appear, it is of Italian origin (for example: *da Lazvicera*).

- (36) Otac *mi* se zove Đin.  
(‘my father’s name is Luigi’)
- (37) Mat *ti* čini za ist.  
(‘your mother is preparing you something to eat’)
- (38) Ščera *njim* nije se udala.  
(‘their daughter isn’t married’)
- (39) Zet *mu* rabi čuda.  
(‘his son-in-law is working very hard’)
- (40) Zava *joj* čini tege do doma.  
(‘her sister-in-law is doing household chores’).

On the other hand, the meaning of ethical dative in Croatian is less precise and includes pragmatic and communication values.<sup>31</sup>

In SC and SI dative is used to express the possibility, as well as the place at which the motion will stop (*ide k mami-D* ‘he is going to his mum’). There is the possessive dative, like in the example *ja sam suncu sestra* ‘I’m the sun’s sister’ and the dative of possibility (for example, *da je meni leći pa zaspati* ‘if only I could lie down and fall asleep’). No such usages were found in MC.

#### 6.2.5. Verbal rection

Croatian has nineteen types of verb groups which assign the dative case (Katičić 1986). The following examples will illustrate this phenomenon in Molise Croatian:

- (41) MC: zaupijat sekolic*imi-D*  
IT: gridare *a tutti-D*  
SC/SI: vikati *svima-D*  
(‘shout to everyone’).

In certain cases, like with the verb ‘shout’, all examined varieties require the dative case, but the examples we encountered most frequently were those where cases follow the Italian model:

- (42) MC: Hočem personalmend ringracijat *Crnobori-A*.  
IT: Voglio personalmente ringraziare Orietta *Crnobori-A*.  
(‘I want to thank Orietta Crnobori personally’).

Italian crosslinguistic influence is obvious since SC and SI require the dative case: *zahvaliti nekomu-D*.

The VP ‘to teach someone something’ in SC and SI requires the accusative case: *naučiti nekog-A nečemu*:

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<sup>31</sup> In SC and SI, ethical dative is a pleonastic form which expresses a close relationship.

- (43) MC: Tu rečitu je *njim-D* naučila meštrica Orietta.  
IT: Questa recita è stata *loro-D* insegnata dalla maestra Orietta.  
(‘teacher Orietta taught them that recital’).

The VP ‘to feel pain in a body part’ in SC and SI requires the accusative case:  
*bole ga-A koljena/kolina*:

- (44) MC: *Njim-D* bolu kolina.  
IT: *Gli-D* fanno male le ginocchia.  
(‘their knees ache’).

Inherent development analogous to Croatian can be observed in the following example:

- (45) Master se ne plača, a je tvoren *za laureane-A*.  
Il Master è gratuito ed è aperto *a laureati-D*.  
(‘master is free of charge and it is open for all those who graduated’)  
In SC and SI: *otvoren za koga-A*.

The elicited data present dative as an inherent Case in both Molise Croatian and two examined Croatian varieties because it is defined by the thematic role of Goal or Receiver. If we compare the number of verbs which assign dative case in Standard Croatian with verbs of the same type in MC, we can see that they are far less frequent in MC. On the other hand, in Italian dative is a structural Case, because it can assume various thematic roles. In the example *A mia sorella dicono cose molto brutte*, it is an Experiencer; in the example *Al mio amico ho fatto un bel favore* it is a Beneficiary, while in the example *Ho dato una rimodernata alla mia cucina* it is a Theme.

### 6.3. Instrumental

#### 6.3.1. Morphological markedness/unmarkedness

In MC, instrumental without infix is much more frequent than the forms with infix which are required in contemporary SC and SI:

- (46) MS: s našimi misti  
SC/SI: s našim mjestima  
(‘with our towns’).

The most typical suffixes in MC are *-om* and *-am* (*s njegovom fizarmonikom* ‘with his accordion’) and they coincide with the most frequent suffixes in SC and SI.

Great variability in markedness is present in this case as well. It often happens that in phrases which contain instrumental case one constituent remains unmarked: *s gradem-I Dubrovnik-Ø-I oš Dalmacijom-I* (‘with the city of Dubrovnik and Dalmatia’).

Croatian feminine gender nouns ending in *-a* (*općina, grupa*) in MC belong to a-type declension: *s komunem, s grupem sportivem* (‘with the municipality, with the sports group’). This noun gender change is influenced by Italian.

The e-type suffix *-om* is preserved and used in Italian loanwords (*s tercom fazom* 'with the third phase').

We found the suffix *-am* that is not mentioned in Sammartino's paradigm (2004): *putam*, *siram* ('with road, with cheese').

The morphological marking of proper names is inconsistent: see for example *s Vesnom BilušićØ*, but: *s Majom Mozarom*.

### 6.3.2. The usage of prepositions

In SC and SI, instrumental case is introduced by prepositions *s(a)*, *za*, *među*, *na*, *nad*, *pred*, *po*, *pod* (see Barić et alii 1997). In our Molise Croatian corpus we found similar results:

- (47) *s muzikom, na nogami*,<sup>32</sup> *jena za Crikuom a druga Cumbaturem, po svito, po grado, po masariji*  
 ('with music; on their feet; one to the church and other to Cumbatur; over the world; around the city; around the farm').

The most frequent preposition 's' is sometimes emphasized with adverb *skupa* ('together'). This preposition can also be repeated, as in the following example:

- (48) MC: *povaču s siram-I eš s kobascom-I, kruh s vindričinom-I, s kapikuolam-I*  
 IT: la pizza con formaggio e salsiccia, il pane con ventricina, con capocollo  
 ('pizza with cheese and sausage, bread with ventricina, with capocollo (type of salami)').

However, in all of the examined varieties, instrumental case can be introduced by a preposition, but it can also appear without it, like in the following example:

- (49) MC: *kumbanjivana našim salutī*–Ins  
 IT: accompagnata dai nostri salutī  
 ('accompanied by our greetings').

### 6.3.3. Distribution

Instrumental is found in relative pronouns, possessive and demonstrative adjectives (*s kojimi riči*, *s ovimi degi*, *s našimi riči* 'with what words, with this work, with our words'). With loanwords, case marker indicates the case (*s salutī*, *s joki*, *s mackari*, *s nikimi serati*, *s našimi poeziji*, *s drugimi sindiki* 'with greetings, with games, with masks, with some evenings, with our poetry, with other mayors'). Under the influence of Italian, instrumental is used in predicative expressions with participle:

<sup>32</sup> The same form is found in Acquaviva Collecroce: *One su dol na nogami-I* 'they came on foot'. Other examples from this variety were: *A je dola, on(a) sasmi dicom-I, beščom-I* [...] 'she came, with children and with a donkey [...]'; *došla je, s djecom i magarcem-I* [...] (SC/SI); *Ja gonahu s jenmi-I vričam-I ka pa mahu* [...] 'I was carrying it in a sack because later I had to...[...]; *prenosio sam s vrečom-I jer sam poslije morao* [...] (SC/SI).

- (50) MC: (*koje su*) *vežene s našime jezikem oš tradicijuni*  
IT: (*che sono*) *legate alla nostra lingua e alle nostre tradizioni*  
SC/SI: (*koje su*) *vezane za naš jezik-A*  
(‘which are tied to our language’).

#### 6.3.4. Semantics

Indo-European languages share two prototypical meanings of the instrumental case: it indicates a means by which the action is carried out and an entity which accompanies the action. Instrument and company are the most frequent meanings, and the most widespread in all of the examined varieties. In 15<sup>th</sup> century Shtokavian-Ikavian instrumental case had some other meanings as well: it indicated circumstances, possession, place, time, instrument, cause, direction, purpose, etc. None of those have been found in our corpus.

In contemporary SC and SI the instrumental case often expresses circumstances in which the action takes place (*srećom* ‘fortunately’, *kradom* ‘secretly’). However, this meaning is not found in Molise Croatian.

The instrumental case denotes space in which the action spreads:

- (51) SC and SI: *on putuje svijetom-I*  
IT: *lui viaggia per il mondo*;  
(‘he travels around the world’).

This kind of usage is found in MC: *po svito-I*, *po grado-I*, *po masariji-I*.

Deverbal nouns require arguments in the instrumental case. In SC this argument is usually without proposition: *vožnja avionom-I* / *viaggio con l’aereo-I* (‘plane flight’); *trgovina voćem-I* / *commercio di frutta-I* (‘fruit shop’). In our corpus we found no such examples.

In SC and SI the instrumental case can express the cause: *smrcu muža obudovi već za godinu dana* ‘due to the death of her husband, she became widow in a year’. We found no such usage in MC.

In SC and SI instrumental can also express time continuity: *subotom i nedjeljom / di sabato e di domenica* (‘on Saturday and on Sunday’).

The corpus attested to the following meanings of the instrumental case in MC: company, instrument, means and the space in which the action spreads, while the others weren’t found.

#### 6.3.5. Verbal rection

Let us observe an example of a verb which assigns the instrumental case in MC. We can see that in all examined varieties the verb requires the instrumental case:

- (52) MC: *salutat s rukom-I*  
IT: *salutare con la mano-I*  
SC/SI: *pozdraviti rukom-I*  
(‘to greet with hand’).

In the examples (53) – (57) we note that all of the other analysed varieties require the same case(MC: I; IT, SC and SI: I):

- (53) Maja je počela *s feštom-I* na Kruč, ke organidziva asočacijuna “Naš život”.  
(‘the month of May started with a celebration in Acquaviva Collecroce that was organized by the association “Naš život”’)  
IT: Maggio è iniziato *con la festa-I* ad Acquaviva, che organizza l’associazione “Naš Život”.  
SC/SI: Svibanj je započeo *proslavom-I* u Kruču koju je organizirala udruga “Naš život”.
- (54) ...ove tri stvar, ke su se indegral jena *s drugom-I*  
(...‘these three things that have become integrated’...)  
IT: ...queste tre cose, che si sono integrate *una con l'altra*.  
SC/SI: ...ove tri stvari koje su se spojile jedna *s drugom-I*...
- (55) Kako je počela, nako gošte će funit *s kumbanjijom!-I*  
(‘judging by the way it started, the year will end with company’)  
IT: Come è iniziato, così l’anno finirà *in compagnia!-I*  
SC/SI: Kako je počela, godina će završiti *s društvom!-I*
- (56) Kada “Maja” prohoda *putam-I* čeljade mu kandaju naza staru kandzunu.  
(‘when “Maja” is carried in the streets, people sing him an old song’)  
IT: Quando il “Maja” passa *per strada* la gente al seguito gli canta l’antica canzone.  
SC/SI: Kad “Maja” prođe *putem-I*, ljudi mu pjevaju staru pjesmu.
- (57) Nako smo se nal skupa *s Albanezi-I* presendat naš jezik oš našu štorju.  
(‘and thus we met the Albanians to present our language and our history’)  
IT: Così ci siamo trovati insieme *agli Albanesi-I* a presentare la nostra lingua e la nostra storia.  
SC/SI: Tako smo se našli *s Albancima-I* kako bismo predstavili naš jezik i povijest.

On the other hand, (58) is an example of inherent development analogous to Croatian:

- (58) Aminištracijune komunale [...] su se vrl skupa *s jenom konvendzijunom-I*.  
(‘the municipal administration has accepted a convention’)  
IT: Le amministrazioni comunali [...] hanno aderito a una convenzione-D.  
SC/SI: Općinska uprava se vratila *s konvencijom-I*.  
(MC: I; IT: D; SC and SI: I)

In Standard Croatian there are seventeen different types of verb groups which assign the instrumental case. Again, on the basis of the elicited data we can conclude that verbs which assign instrumental are much less frequent in Molise Croatian than in SC or SI. We found only six verb groups in MC compared to seventeen in Croatian.

In SC and SI the instrumental case changes its thematic roles, depending on the structure of the sentence. We therefore assume that instrumental without a preposition is a structural Case, because it is not defined by thematic roles:

(59) Frane broke the car window with a baseball bat.

(60) The baseball bat broke the car window.

In (59) instrumental bears the thematic role of Instrument, and in (54) 'baseball bat' is the Theme.

The following example demonstrates the same pattern:

(61) Nako mi ga kumbanjivamo našimi saluti-I

In (61) again we are talking about a structural Case, because the instrumental can have the thematic role of Theme ('our greetings are accompanying him') and that of Company ('we are accompanying him with our greetings').

On the other hand, in MC, in most cases instrumental is an inherent Case, a case with thematic requirement: in the following example its thematic role is that of an Agent:

(62) Moštra je bila kumbanjana s grupem-I iz Austrije.

('the exhibition was accompanied by the Austrian group').

## 7. Conclusion

In conclusion, we present the results of the quantitative analysis of the data elicited from our corpus. We can see that reduction is at work in all of the examined features. In comparison to SC and SI, MC has significantly fewer prepositions that function as case markers, the semantic domains of all analysed cases have undergone reduction and the number of verb groups which require an object in the oblique case is significantly smaller (see Table 2).

Table 2: Quantitative analysis of oblique cases in Molise Croatian

CASE Criterion	GENITIVE			DATIVE			INSTRUMENTAL		
	N° of prepositions	N° of meanings	verbal rection	N° of prepositions	N° of meanings	verbal rection	N° of prepositions	N° of meanings	Verbal rection
Molise Croatian (MC)	25 <sup>33</sup>	7	5	Ø	3	2	3	3	4
Standard Croatian (SC)	49 <sup>34</sup>	15	17	7	11	16	6	9	16
Shtokavian-Ikavian (SI)	49	15	18	7	10	19	6	10	17

However, it must be noted that in all three examined varieties of Molise Croatian the case system, although heavily influenced by Italian, shows no signs



of disappearing. Numerous simplifications as well as various inconsistencies that have been found (see paragraphs 5.1., 5.2. and 5.3.) shouldn't be regarded as a symptom of disappearance of the case system, but rather as an indicator of the strength of Italian influence and as further evidence that Molise Croatian lacks standardization.

Another significant tendency visible from the data concerns the use of the accusative case, the case which verbs prototypically assign to their objects. There is a significant number of verbs which require an object in an oblique case in SC, SI and IT, while in MC they require an object in the accusative case, which is yet another simplification of the system.

In the example: *Je bilo inderesando čut kako naš jezik je se moga lipo adatat na tešte-A do rečite-G* 'it was interesting to hear how our language could be beautifully adapted to texts for recital', the verb 'adatat' requires an object in the accusative case, whereas both Italian (*adattare ai testi*) and Croatian varieties (*prilagoditi tekstovima*, 'adapt to the texts') require an object in dative case.

It can be said that in all three Molise Croatian diatopic varieties (Montemitro, Acquaviva Collecroce, San Felice del Molise) the examined oblique cases (genitive, dative and instrumental) haven't lost their flexional endings that express certain important morphosyntactic and semantic relations within the sentence. The research has shown that the case system is more resistant to the influence of Italian than other parts of Molise Croatian grammar.

Furthermore, it has been proved that traditional grammar is needed in the description of the system of oblique cases because its concepts and methods are correct and adequate and help describe the cases accurately. The application of the traditional grammar can complete and clarify the analysis of the cases which can sometimes remain inconclusive if only the thematic role theory and case theory are applied.

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<sup>33</sup> As always when corpus analysis is involved, it needs to be stated that this method has certain shortcomings. Most importantly, the results obtained by this kind of analysis can't be unconditionally indicative of the entire system of the analysed variety but only of the examined part. In our case, this means that there might be few more prepositions which can be used with Molise Croatian cases, or few more meanings or verbal rections that possibly haven't been encompassed by our corpus. However, general tendencies of the examined system can be clearly observed.

<sup>34</sup> According to Barić et alii (1997: 279).

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## Promjene u sustavu kosih padeža u moliškohrvatskom dijalektu

U radu se donosi opis sustava kosih padeža u moliškohrvatskom dijalektu, kao i pregled morfosintaktičkih i semantičkih promjena kroz koje su kosi padeži prošli pod utjecajem unutarnjih promjena te talijanskoga jezika kao superstrata. Unatoč naporima koji se ulažu u njegovo očuvanje, moliškohrvatski dijalekt danas je pred izumiranjem. Utjecaj talijanskoga jezika daleko je najizraženiji faktor koji utječe na promjene na svim razinama; ponajprije na leksičkoj, ali i na sintaktičkoj, morfološkoj i fonološkoj. Kako bi se što bolje opisale promjene morfosintaktičkih i semantičkih osobina kosih padeža, za potrebe ovoga rada analiziran je korpus moliškohrvatskih tekstova dobiven ekstrahiranjem iz novina, knjiga poezije, antologija i stručne literature te ispitivanjem izvornih

govornika. Obuhvaćena su sva tri varijeteta suvremenog moliškohrvatskog, a analiza je uključivala i usporedbu sa standardnim varijetetima talijanskoga i hrvatskoga jezika, kao i štokavsko-ikavskoga dijalekta kojega je moliškohrvatski kontinuum. Teorijski okvir radu daje generativna gramatika, točnije Teorija padeža prema kojoj se svakoj tematskoj ulozi pridružuje apstraktni padež. Kao kriteriji za analizu korpusa odabrani su morfološka obilježenost ili neobilježenost, upotreba prijedloga, semantika i glagolska rekcija padeža. Na temelju analize korpusa zaključuje se da je padežni sustav moliškohrvatskog pod velikim utjecajem talijanskoga znatno pojednostavljen u svim svojom vidovima. Ipak, ni jedan od tri moliška govora nije izgubio svoje fleksijske nastavke koji izriču neke važne morfosintaktičke i semantičke odnose unutar rečenice. Može se zaključiti da padežni sustav uspješnije odolijeva utjecaju talijanskoga jezika od drugih dijelova gramatike moliškohrvatskoga dijalekta.

*Ključne riječi:* moliški hrvatski, jezično izumiranje, sintaktička i semantička obilježja padeža, promjene u fleksiji