Factors influencing the dative/genitive variation in Croatian

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Overview

1. The problem, aim
2. Background: the dative (in Croatian)
3. Results and discussion
4. Implications and future research
1. Introduction: the problem

(1) *palač[a] koja se nalazi nasuprot crkvi* (across from *church*-DAT) sv. Mateja…
‘… the palace which is across from St. Matthew’s church…’

(2) …*žuta zgrada … koja se smjestila nasuprot župne crkve* (across from *parish church*-GEN) sv. Ćirila i Metoda
‘…the yellow building … across from the parish church of Saints Cyril and Methodius’
1. Introduction: the problem

(3) **koji bi usprkos dokazane krivnje** (despite proven guilt-GEN) … **mogao izaći iz zatvora**

‘… who might, despite being proven guilty, get out of jail…’

(4) **Ova osoba … skrivala se u Bosni godinama usprkos dokazanim vezama** (despite proven connections-DAT) s … **Osamom bin Ladenom**…

‘This person was hiding in Bosnia for years, despite proven connections with Osama bin Laden’
1. Introduction: the problem

• Similar variation in:
  – *nasuprot* ‘across from, as opposed to’,
  – *nadomak* ‘close to’,
  – *nadohvat* ‘within reach’,
  – *usuprot* ‘in opposition to’,
  – *unatoč* ‘despite’,
  – *usprkos/uprkos* ‘despite’

• But only dative in:
  – *prema* ‘towards’
  – *k* ‘towards, to’

• Similar variation in:
  – *naprama* ‘to’
1. Introduction: the aim

• The variation between the dative and the genitive is the result of the interplay between semantic, ecological, and structural factors:
  – mental contact?
  – influence of current prototype?
  – influence of number inflection?
  – structural influence?
• the big picture?
Background

• vast literature on the dative in Slavic and non-Slavic languages...
• e.g. Smith 1987; Maldonado 2002; Lee-Schoenfeld 2006; van Belle and van Langendonck 1996;...
1. Introduction: the dative

- synchronic prototype: transfer
  (1) Također je *data potpora* novoj *Vladi* (new Government-DAT)
     ‘Support was also given to the new government.’

- assessment of an entity
  (2) Važno je to *stranim vladama* (foreign governments-DAT) *i javnosti* (the public-DAT)…
     ‘This is important to foreign governments and the public…’
3. Introduction: characteristics of the transfer and assessment patterns

- movement of a thematic element (physical, abstract, energy, communication...)
- dominion/personal sphere/sphere of control –
- dative = conscious non-initiative participant establishing mental contact with the thematic element
- potential affectedness of the dative
- potential activity of the dative
- nouns and pronouns (transfer) and pronouns (assessment)

cf. Janda 1993; Maldonado 2002; Dąbrowska 1997; Stanojević and Geld 2008; Stanojević and Tuđman, forthcoming
1. Introduction: the dative

• “dative of possession”
  (3) Da smo izgubili, srce bi mi (me-DAT) puklo
  ‘If we had lost, that would have broken my heart’ (lit.
  “(my) heart would have broken on me”)

• diachronically oldest: allative senses
  (4) Čamac se primače obali (shore-DAT)
  ‘The boat has moved towards the shore’
cf. ex. (3)

cf. ex. (4)
1. Introduction: the dative

- diachronically oldest: competitor senses

(5) *Hrvatski šumari oštro se protive proglašenju (declaration-DAT) novih zaštićenih područja*

‘Croatian foresters are adamantly opposed to new protected areas being declared’ (lit. to the declaration of new protected areas)

term after Janda 2002
1. Introduction: characteristics of competitor and allative

• no dominion
  – the element is not available for interaction (the dative need not be aware of the trajector’s movement/energy)
• no conscious participant necessary; no mental contact
• may be a non-affected reference point
• diachronically oldest
• self movement (may be marked by se = refl.)
• only 2 participants – no thematic item
• primarily nouns!

2. Results and discussion

• corpus studies:
  – Croatian National Corpus (http://www.hnk.ffzg.hr/)
  – Croatian Language Corpus (http://riznica.ihjj.hr/)
2. Results and discussion

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(8) jer je ponovno otišla mužu u Zagreb, unatoč njegovim prijetnjama (his threats-DAT)
‘because she went to (live with) her husband in Zagreb, in spite of his threats’
A divide?

- clear competitor meaning = dative
- \textit{u+...}
- \textit{unatoč} – which is more frequent in recent texts – allows less variation, others allow more variation
- genitives appearing only recently in journalistic texts
- genitives appearing with numbers

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(9) *Cibona nadomak finala* (finals-GEN)

‘Cibona a step away from the finals’
A divide?

- clear reference point meaning = genitive
- *na*+...
- 20th century texts
- genitives appearing only recently in journalistic texts
- genitives appearing with numbers

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Variation

When/why dative?
• Competitor meanings = still clearly present overall*
• Require activity in the target domain – more frequent with persons, relations = similar with the transfer prototype
• older use, literary style and journalistic use
• use with singular nouns

When/why genitive?
• reference-point patterns = similar to the genitive meaning (non-affected reference point); possible “taking away from” patterns being lost in the dative (Janda 1993b: 546)
• more recent use
• mainly journalistic use
• use with plural nouns and numbers (inflection)

*roughly 25% of examples in CNC; Stanojević and Tuđman forthcoming)
## A divide: problem

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naprama ‘to’

(9) Takav odnos, šest naprama tri (three), ...
‘this relation, six to three’

• numbers = loss of inflection
• examples with numbers = journalistic texts
• frequency: 0.02-0.04 per 10000 (CNR) 1950-2010

➢ change in meaning to include only numbers
➢ taken over by prema (only dative) with other referents

(10) ...vazda galantan naprama gospođama (ladies-DAT)...
‘always generous to the ladies’

• examples with other referents: only in literary or older texts
• frequency: around 0.2 per 10000 (CNR) 1850-1950
A divide: problem

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Nasuprot ‘across from, as opposed to’

(11) …žuta zgrada … koja se smjestila nasuprot župne crkve (parish church-GEN) sv. Ćirila i Metoda
‘…the yellow building … across from the parish church of Saints Cyril and Methodius’

(12) …nikada nije mogao sakriti da, nasuprot prvoj dami (first lady-DAT), preferira Hercegovce
‘he could never hide that, unlike the first lady, he didn’t mind people from Hercegovina’
**Nasuprot** ‘across from, as opposed to’

**Genitive**
- meaning: mostly ‘across from’
- goes with numbers in the plural

**Dative**
- meaning: mostly ‘as opposed to’
- goes with singular

**significant difference between groups (ANOVA):**
- F(5,925)=87.672; p<.01

**significant difference (t-test):**
- t=-3.349; p<.01
**Nasuprot** ‘across from, as opposed to’

**Genitive**
- meaning: mostly ‘across from’
- goes with numbers in the plural
- more recent reference-point meaning
- similar to other genitive prepositions (\textit{na}+…)

**Dative**
- meaning: mostly ‘as opposed to’
- goes with singular
- older competitor meaning
- similar to other dative prepositions

\begin{itemize}
  \item frequency: 0.57-0.60 per 10000 in 1950-2010
  \item frequency: 0.26 per 10000 in 1900-1949
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Factors

• meaning (competitor or allative)
  – closer to the dative (competitor = implies activity) or genitive prototype (allative = only reference point)
• form (clear relation to adverb), incomplete grammaticalization; postpositions require dative
• numbers prefer genitive or no inflection; person/metonymies prefer dative
• influence of other constructions: idiomatized (nadohvat ruke-GEN); competition of naprama with prema
• general loss of prepositions with the dative for meanings closer to the prototype (Šarić 2008)
Why are prema/k dative only?

• older = they grammaticalized
• not divisible – not coming from adverbs (because similar variation in adverbs, e.g. blizu)
• k coming closer to the contemporary prototype – used with people (Šarić 2008)
• prema may be subjectified to mean dative assessor (prema autorima ‘according to the authors’)
Implications, future work: the bigger picture

• Split between patterns – evident in other Slavic languages?
• hierarchy of factors – speakers’ judgments?
• L1/L2?
Thank you!

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