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12 Morphosyntactic changes in Slavic micro-languages: The case of Molise Slavic in total language contact

1 Introduction

Several Slavic micro-languages are spoken in non-Slavic countries in the western and southern periphery of the Slavic language area. Examples of such micro-languages would be the well-established literary languages Lower and Upper Sorbian (Germany), but also include lesser-known varieties like Burgenland Croatian (Austria, Slovakia, Hungary), Carinthian Slovene (Austria), Slovene-based Resian (Italy) and Molise Slavic (Italy). All of them have been in situations of language contact for centuries and have now entered a stage of “total” (or “absolute”) language contact. This means that all the speakers of these varieties are fully bilingual (and have been so for a long time), as they use at least one variety of the dominant language of the country in question in addition to their own minority language. As a result of the historical and present influence of the dominant languages and varieties many contact-induced changes have manifested themselves in these Slavic micro-languages on all linguistic levels.

Such cases of long-term collective bilingualism drift towards a kind of compound bilingualism, characterized by the formula “one form – two substance systems”, as Sasse (1992: 61) puts it. It is in such situations that the concept of a common diasystem or diagrammar of the two (or more) languages in question becomes evident. The concept of “diagrammar” is a theoretical model based on the hypothesis that multilingual speakers do not strictly separate the grammars of their two or more languages but combine them in the most economical way possible. One could argue that the grammars of the individual languages in contact are synchronically derived from such a diagrammar, in terms of a common deep structure, by means of language-specific rules. The fewer the rules, the more economical the management of the languages is. Therefore, the reduction of the rules by means of a more and more comprehensive diagrammar is the overall purpose of language change in total contact situations (see Breu 2011a: 440). We will show in the following that there are two main procedures leading to such a favorable diagrammar, the “adaptation of the semantic structure” of the replica language to that of the dominant model (semantic calque) and the “loan translation” (formal calquing) of periphrastic elements from the dominant language system.

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Although contact-induced developments in phonology/phonetics and in the lexicon are more obvious to speakers and linguists at first glance, changes in grammatical categories have a deeper effect on the structure and the typological characteristics of the replica languages. This is why this chapter will be concerned with the morphosyntactic changes that characterize convergences between the contact languages involved. We will focus largely on one special case, i.e., Molise Slavic in Southern Italy, while other Slavic varieties in non-Slavic speaking countries will only be considered as points of comparison for the developments found in Molise Slavic.¹ As syntactic questions of word order also deeply affect language structure, we will at least marginally touch on the contact-induced changes in this sphere, too, especially with regard to the order of clitics.

Morphosyntactic changes in Molise Slavic and the other micro-languages do not involve changes in the “external” morphology, in the sense that no inflectional endings have been borrowed (= no matter borrowing), but rather in that they concern the internal structure of the categories (= pattern borrowing).² In Molise Slavic we find changes in the oppositions and functions of the grammemes of all grammatical categories of the verb and the noun, making this micro-language, in many respects, distance itself from what could be called the common Slavic basis and bringing it closer to typically Romance structures. As for the developments themselves, even some Slavic “diachronic constants” of language change have been cancelled out by Romance diachronic constants.

By “diachronic constants” we mean evolutionary tendencies (loss, preservation, restructuring) in a language family (*phylum*) that ideally are observed by all its members with respect to a certain linguistic phenomenon. Examples are the Slavic languages’ strong tendencies to lose synthetic tenses, to preserve their case and aspect systems, to not develop articles, and especially to follow a certain pathway in a given change. An example for the latter type of constants certainly is the loss of the imperfect *before* the loss of the aorist, whenever a Slavic language reduces its system of past tenses (see Breu 2006: 71–73). In the present chapter we claim that all violations of the diachronic constants of Slavic in the micro-languages in question are due to contact with languages belonging to families that have different diachronic constants. On the other hand,

¹ For a direct comparison of most of the aforementioned minority languages with respect to verbal aspect and to their article systems, see Breu (2011a).

² For the terms “matter loan” and “pattern loan”, corresponding to the traditional concepts of *Materialentlehnung* and *Strukturentlehnung*, see Sakel (2007).

the cases of resistance against the dominance of foreign diachronic constants should not be neglected, especially in the case of total language contact, which displays a general tendency towards maximal isomorphism.³

After presenting a wide range of contact-induced developments, we will include a short discussion about the effect of these changes on the position of Molise Slavic in the SAE (Standard Average European) typology in our conclusion at the end of this paper.

2 The actual and the historical situation of Molise Slavic

Molise Slavic is still spoken in the coastal hinterland of the Province of Campobasso, about 35 kilometres away from the Adriatic Sea, in the Southern Italian Region of Molise. Nowadays, this Slavic-speaking area, having been larger in the past, is restricted to the territory of three bordering municipalities with the villages of Acquaviva Collecroce, Montemitro, and San Felice del Molise in their centers. There are only about one thousand persons left who actively use Molise Slavic or at least are able to understand it, out of an overall number of less than two thousand inhabitants of these villages.⁴ Language knowledge and behavior differs from one village to another, with the smallest village, Montemitro, being most conservative with respect to both the influence of language contact and language usage. In San Felice only very few older people still use the language, while Acquaviva, which historically was considered the cultural center of the Molise Slavs, is situated in the middle between these two extremes, at least as far as everyday usage of Molise Slavic is concerned,

³ See Sasse's (1992: 61) claim with respect to totally bilingual communities: "The ideal goal over the long term in such a situation is a total isomorphism of the two languages". On the use of the term "isomorphism" in contact linguistics see Heine (2013). When applied specifically to parallel structures in grammar we also use the term "isogrammatism", following largely Gołab (1956; 1959). For the concept of "diachronic constants", see Guxman (1981) who, however, applied it only to language-internal rather than contact-induced developments.

⁴ The last 2013 official census resulted in a total number of 1784 inhabitants, after 2081 in 2001 and 4883 in 1951, a reduction that is mainly due to emigration into major centers of Italy but also to other European countries and overseas, especially to West Australia. The actual numbers for the individual villages are the following: Acquaviva and San Felice 674 each, Montemitro 436 (Source: Italian National Institute of Statistics ISTAT).

and shows the effects of language contact most clearly. The grammars of the three villages show considerable dialectal variation, for example through three different forms for the feminine dative singular: *-u* (Acquaviva), *-i* (San Felice) and *-Ø* (Montemitro).⁵ If not stated differently, our examples come from the dialect of Acquaviva.

From a genetic point of view, Molise Slavic belongs to the Štokavian-Ikavian dialect group in the Central South Slavic (Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian) language continuum, contrary to the (I)jekavian and Ekavian Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian standards, e.g., *mblika* 'milk' ≠ *mlijeko*, *mleko* and *lit* 'summer' ≠ *ljeto*, *leto*, respectively. This and other linguistic characteristics show that, in addition to determining the moment in time in which the separation of the main body of Štokavian speakers occurred, the ancestors of Molise Slavs probably immigrated to Italy from the Neretva valley in Herzegovina (part of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina today) in the 16th century (Rešetar 1911: 50–139).

After the immigration, their South Slavic variety came under the influence of the Molisian dialect of Italian first. After Italy's unification in 1861, standard Italian acquired its role as an additional donor language. With respect to loanwords we find two types, of which one reflects source forms of the nearby Molisian dialect, while more recent borrowings are nearer to standard Italian.⁶ As for grammar, most contact-induced changes in Molise Slavic seem to go back to the first centuries after the Slavic settlement in Molise, as they can best be explained from dialectal models. Italian (together with its southern varieties) has always been the only umbrella language for Molise Slavic, while Slavic

⁵ Diachronically the initial form is *-i* (coming from the *ja*-stems), which has been preserved in the San Felice dialect. The ending *-u* in Acquaviva is introduced analogically either from the masculine dative or, more probably, from the feminine accusative, while *-Ø* in Montemitro is the result of the phonological rule **i > Ø* in word-final position: *žen-i*, *žen-u*, *žen-Ø* 'wife-DAT.SG.F'.

⁶ There is, however, also some kind of analogical integration of newer borrowings on the basis of existing loans. For example Standard Italian verbs of the *-ere* classes (both accented and unaccented) are integrated into the *-it*-class instead of passing to the phonetically nearer class with infinitives in *-et*. This integration type ultimately derives from the fact that in Southern Italian dialects the classes in *-ere* and *-ire* had collapsed, resulting in an integration of older loans from dialectal Molisian (irrespective of their historical endings in Latin) into only the infinitive class in *-i(t)*, see Molise Slavic *lejit* (with dialectal phonetics and morphology) unlike Italian *leggere* 'to read'. So only this classes in *-i(t)* had become productive for borrowings in older times (alongside the class in *-a(t)* which is not of importance here). As a consequence new borrowings from the Italian classes in *-ere* become part of this class, too, instead of the *-et*-class, as we would expect from a purely synchronic point of view; e.g., *kuredžit* (← Italian *correggere* 'to correct'). A more detailed analysis of the analogical integration of verbs (proportionally adapted to an older stratum) in situations involving different source languages in Europe is found in Breu (1991: 40–50).

standard varieties, for example standard Croatian, have never played any substantial role in everyday life in the Molise Slavic villages.⁷

3 Molise Slavic and the Slavic diachronic constants of grammatical change

3.1 The categories of the Molise Slavic Verb

3.1.1 The category of TENSE

Besides the cumulative aspectual-temporal grammemes imperfect and perfect, which will be dealt with in the section on verbal aspect, there are the following tense grammemes in Molise Slavic: the present, two modally differentiated future tenses, two modally differentiated future tenses in the past and the past perfect. All of them – with the sole exception of the present tense – are formed analytically with the help of the clitic forms of the three modal auxiliaries *bit* ‘to be’, *jimat* ‘to have’, and *tit* ‘to want’. They are combined with the infinitive in the future tenses and with the *l*-participle and a specialized particle in the past perfect. It is this particle that differentiates the past perfect from the (present) perfect, incorporating the *l*-participle, too.

The present tense is of Slavic origin, and so is the volitive future, formed with the help of the clitic present of *tit* ‘to want, will’. But contrary to the Balkan varieties of Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian, in Molise Slavic the *tit*-future is restricted to situations marked for “possibility, probability”, while its opposite, the *jimat*-future of “necessity, obligation” is used for all other cases, including those situations in which plans or fixed time schedules exist. The modern opposition of two modal futures has been induced by language contact, with the *jimat*-future being a calque from the future tense in the dialects of Southern Italy, especially also of Molise, formed by the auxiliary *avé*, meaning both ‘to have’ and ‘must’ (Giammarco 1968: 282). The de-obligative meaning of the dialectal future goes back, of course, to its partial meaning ‘must’, which is confirmed by the use of *dovere* ‘must’ as a future auxiliary in the modern colloquial varieties of Italian in Molise.

⁷ For an extended overview of the grammatical structures and the lexical characteristics of Molise Slavic together with a large text corpus (commented and fully glossed) of all three Molise Slavic dialects, see Breu (2017).

In Molise Slavic, *jimat* has also become the overall modal verb for expressing obligation outside the future sphere, replacing in this respect other candidates like the corresponding forms *morati*, *treba* in Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian. It seems reasonable to claim that after the Slavs' immigration to Italy the lexical meaning of South Slavic (*j*)*imat* 'to have' was initially expanded to include 'must' by following the Italian dialectal polysemic model of *avé*, whose logical consequence was also the development of a future of necessity. This new deobligative future contrasted with the native *tít*-future from the very beginning, which, as a consequence, led to the latter being kept within the bounds of a future of probability.

This procedure of copying an existing polysemy from the model language to the replica language, leading to the isomorphism in question, which we call “adaptation of the semantic structure”, may be symbolized by the two-stage scheme in Figure 1 with respect to the lexical change in *jimat* ‘to have’.⁸ The historically initial stage before the change, showing an asymmetry between the polysemy in the dominant language L₂ and different expressions for the two concepts (meanings) in the minority language L₁, figures here as IS (= initial stage). RS symbolizes the resulting situation after the polisemization in the minority language, being changed in this way to an L₁’. The Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian form *treba* ‘must’ is inserted here as a “dummy”, as we are not informed about the form actually used in earlier Molise Slavic:

Figure 1: Polisemization of Molise Slavic *jimat* ‘to have’.

The subsequent or parallel grammatical development of a new necessitative (de-obligative) future in Molise Slavic, ultimately leading to the new modal opposition within the future formations, is presented in Figure 2 (see Breu 2011b: 156–157).⁹ Here, again, contact-induced polisemization was the main cause of language change:

8 Further examples from Molise Slavic showing an adaptation of its semantic structure to a polysemic model in the sphere of the lexicon are furnished in Breu (2003: 354–358).

9 As stated by Rešetar (1911: 226) the formation of a “*habeo*-future”, as he calls it, has nothing to do with similar formations in Old Church Slavonic, which had already disappeared in the

Figure 2: Development of the modal opposition in the future by polisemization.

On the whole, the *jimat*-future is a case of the contact-induced development of a new grammatical opposition (of grammemes) in a contact situation. Examples of the two futures in modern Molise Slavic are presented in (1) and (2)¹⁰:

- (1) *Si riva znat jenu stvaru do tihi*
 if arrive.PFV.3SG know.INF one.ACC.SG.F thing.ACC.SG.F of those.GEN
Ndžik ča nasa ubit.
 PR.NOM.SG AUX.FUT.3SG us.ACC kill.INF
 ‘If he comes to know anything of it, Ndžik will (probably) kill us.’
- (2) *Ono ka je prola, je veča lipo*
 that.NOM.SG.N REL AUX.PRF.3SG go.PFV.PTCP.SG.N is more nice.NOM.SG.N
do no ka ma dokj.
 than that.NOM.SG.N REL AUX.FUT.NEC.3SG come.INF
 ‘What has passed is better than what will (necessarily) come.’

The contact-induced developments of the future have not yet reached their final stage, as there is a certain tendency towards dropping the original Slavic *tit*-future in Acquaviva. At least some younger speakers seem to replace it more

oldest Serbo-Croatian texts. The Molise Slavic future of obligation must also be regarded separately from the Ukrainian future of the type *pysaty-mu* ‘write=FUT.1SG’, which contrary to the Romance future formations goes back to the amalgamation of the infinitive with enclitic forms of the present of **jeti/jaty* ‘to take’ as an auxiliary, with an inceptive connotation (Danylenko 2011). This means that the Ukrainian future of this type differs not only from the Italian synthetic future in standard Italian *scriverò* (< *scribere habeo*) ‘I shall write’ but also from the periphrastic *avé*-type in Southern Italian dialects.

10 Molise Slavic examples in this chapter are exclusively first-hand examples, coming from recordings done during field research (Breu and Piccoli 2011, 2012; Breu 2017) or, to a lesser extent, from the modern Molise Slavic literature in the Acquaviva dialect, especially from Nicola Gliosca’s novels, for instance *Sep aš Mena* ‘Sep and Mena’ (2010). They are cited, as a rule, in abridged form or with omissions.

or less completely with the *jimat*-future, with the result of losing the modal differentiation again and arriving at a 1:1 correspondence of only one future in both languages in contact (see Marra 2005). This means that the contact-induced modal opposition only existed at an intermediate stage of the long-term development. Nevertheless it has been stable for more than one hundred years as is evidenced from the texts in Rešetar (1911), and continues to be functional for most language users, especially if we do not consider “semi-speakers”. Interestingly, Rešetar (1911: 225–226) mentions both futures, but without any hint at their functional differentiation.¹¹

The case of the past perfect seems still more complicated; see below Table 1. Traditionally, the past perfect, lost or very much restricted in usage in most modern Slavic languages, with the exception of Bulgarian and Macedonian, was formed with the help of the imperfect of *bit* ‘to be’ and the *l*-participle of the main verb, which was parallel to the construction of the perfect derived with the help of the present of *bit* and the *l*-participle. In spite of the conservation and productivity of both the ancient imperfect and the analytic perfect in Molise Slavic and in spite of the Italian model being formed in a similar way as the traditional Slavic one (i.e., like a present perfect but with the imperfect of the auxiliary instead of the present), the past perfect of Molise Slavic shows a form of its own. Most surprising is the development of the past-perfect particle *bi* (Acquaviva) or *ba* (Montemitro) or both (San Felice), being inserted into the perfect formation. Its etymology is not quite clear, but we may assume that it derives from the *l*-participle of *bit*, which in its full form

Table 1: Past perfect of *dat* ‘to give’ in the Molise Slavic dialect of Acquaviva.

	SINGULAR		PLURAL
	masculine	feminine/neuter	
1.	<i>zbi da ~ sa bi da</i>	<i>zbi dala ~ sa bi dala</i>	<i>zbima dal (< *sma bi dal)</i>
2.	<i>zbi da ~ si bi da</i>	<i>zbi dala ~ si bi dala</i>	<i>zbita dal (< *sta bi dal)</i>
3.	<i>je bi da</i>	<i>je bi dala</i>	<i>zbi dal ~ su bi dal</i>

¹¹ It is worth noting that, unlike the dialect of Acquaviva, in the more conservative dialect of Montemitro, the *tit*-future is used far more frequently than the (*j*)*imat*-construction (Marra 2005: 154–155), still restricted, as it seems, to certain types of obligation with only secondary reference to the concept of future. Nevertheless direct opposition has been noted even with aged speakers, for example: *Ono ke ma do, ja verjem sfe ke ċe do grubo* ‘What will (necessarily) come, I always believe that it will (probably) come bad’ (Breu and Piccoli 2012: 76).

nowadays is *bija* (masculine), *bila* (feminine; also neuter in Acquaviva and San Felice), *bilo* (neuter in Montemitro) and *bil* in the plural (with the variant *bili* in San Felice).

If this etymology is true, then the past perfect of Molise Slavic must be derived from a double perfect, functioning as a secondary pluperfect, with two *l*-participles (analytic present perfect of the auxiliary *bit(i)* + past participle of the main verb). A double perfect of this type was used in many Slavic languages and still exists in Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian, e.g., *bili smo dali* '(we) had given'. As it seems, this type of double perfect had already fully replaced the traditional past perfect of the type *bjesmo dali* (imperfect of *biti* + *l*-participle) in those parts of Herzegovina which the ancestors of today's Molise Slavs came from. Otherwise the Italian model would certainly have cancelled out the double perfect, by supporting the use of the ancient type with the imperfect of the auxiliary. Nevertheless, the question remains as to why the Italian model was not copied, which would have resulted in a renewal of the ancient form. It is worth noting, however, that Molise Slavic, though not copying the Italian construction directly, approximated to it by reducing the analytic form of the auxiliary in the past perfect of the double-perfect type to only one inflected form.

As a matter of fact, this was the very result of the transformation of the *l*-participle of *bit*, originally inflected for gender and number in the *l*-participle, into an uninflected particle. Molise Slavic even further followed this pathway in reducing the auxiliary complex of its past perfect to a mono-inflectional auxiliary as found in Italian. The most surprising result of this way of adapting was a partial incorporation of the particle into the auxiliary wherever it was possible, i.e., in the bisyllabic forms of the first and second person plural. In the other cases the auxiliary forms were reduced and amalgamated with the particle. Only with the third person singular such an amalgamation was not possible because of the syllable structure of Molise Slavic, disallowing a combination featuring *jɔ-* word-initially.

In the end, these different reconstructions resulted in a new periphrasis which still does not correspond directly to the Italian auxiliary construction in the imperfect but nevertheless consists of only one inflected auxiliary and an *l*-participle and nothing else, which could be claimed to be a maximum adaptation without fully copying the model of the dominant language. While in the Acquaviva dialect the insertion of the particle into the auxiliary (a case of infixation, rare in Indo-European) is obligatory, it is optional in Montemitro with older non-amalgamated forms still in use.

The paradigm in Table 1 shows the maximally adapted forms of the past perfect in the dialect of Acquaviva together with their more analytic historical source, still in use in the 1st and 2nd person singular as well as in the 3rd

person plural¹². The sentences (3) and (4) are examples of the Molise Slavic past perfect:

- (3) *Je poša napri jene butege,*
 AUX.PRF.3SG go.PFV.PTCP.SG.M in.front one.GEN.SG.F shop.GEN.SG.F
di je bi sta jenu votu
 where AUX.PRF.3SG PTL.PQP be.PTCP.SG.M one.ACC.SG.F time.ACC.SG.F
s tatom.
 with father.INS.SG.M
 'He passed in front of a shop, where he had once been with his father.'
- (4) *Mi ni z-bi-ma vidil maj vuca fina nonda.*
 we not AUX.PRF-PTL.PQP-1PL see.PTCP.PL never wolf.ACC.PL until then
 'We had never seen wolves before.'

The Molise Slavic past perfect confirms that contact influence in analytic constructions does not necessarily lead to formal calquing by means of loan translation, but that other ways of parallelism may be selected. On the other hand, the conservation and productivity of the past perfect as such, in spite of the conservation of the aspectual system allowing for an alternative expression of taxis relations outside the relative tense, finds its basis in the high productivity of the Italian past perfect as a relative tense (taxis). This influence of the contact language is indirectly confirmed by a relatively restricted usage of the past perfect or even its loss in most Slavic languages outside the contact areas. This means that the past perfect is a good example for the conservation of a historical form due to language contact in contrast to a global tendency towards its loss in the Slavic language family as a whole, constituting one of the diachronic constants of Slavic.

The Italian model of using relative tenses for the expression of taxis relations is the reason behind the formation of "futures in the past", too. These two relative tenses, which had to be introduced into Molise Slavic as a consequence of taking over the Italian principle of the agreement (concordance) of tenses (see Breu 2011b),¹³ are formed by the imperfect of the auxiliaries *tit* and *jimat* in combination with the infinitive. Just like in the case of the two simple futures,

¹² By omitting the particle *bi* in the individual forms, this paradigm also serves as an example for the analytic perfect.

¹³ An example showing the imperfect *biša* 'WAS.3SG' as the past tense form of the present *je* 'is' agreeing with the perfect is: *Za hi držat kalm je njimi reka ka ova biša sama prija gvera* 'In order to keep them calm, he told them that this was only the first war'.

this does not correspond to the standard Italian future in the past, homonymous with the conditional. Once again the Molise Slavic tenses reflect the Southern Italian construction, in this case the imperfect of the auxiliary *avé* with the infinitive. Initially, it was this construction which was copied. The creation of a “future of probability in the past” is a language-internal reaction to the asymmetry with respect to the simple futures, going back to this development of the “future of necessity in the past”. This subsequent development shows that even in situations of total language contact internal processes of analogy continue to be at work.

Note that in the more conservative dialect of Montemitro only the first step of forming a “necessitative future in the past” formed with *(j)imat* ‘to have, must’ has been taken, while there is no volitive “future of probability in the past”. A past tense of the *tit*-clitic does not even exist, unlike *čahu* ‘will.pst.1SG’, etc. in the Acquaviva variety.¹⁴ Whenever obligation is absent, Montemitro simply does not apply temporal concord at all, by using the imperfect instead of a future.

Examples for both futures in the past in the Acquaviva dialect are provided under (5)¹⁵:

- (5) a. *Botin* *čaša* *bit* *veča* *velki* *aš* *veča*
 prey.NOM.SG.M AUX.FUT.PST.3SG be.INF more big.NOM.SG.M and more
boghat.
 rich.NOM.SG.M
 ‘[In the future] the prey would (probably) be bigger and richer.’
- b. *Napri* *čuminere* *čekaša* *ka* *Ndžeta*
 before chimney.GEN.SG.F wait.IPRF.3SG COMP PR.NOM.SG.F
maša *mu* *ponit* *džurnal.*
 AUX.FUT.PST.NEC.3SG him bring.INF journal.ACC.SG.M
 ‘In front of the chimney, he waited that Ndžeta would (necessarily, as planned) bring him the journal.’

Unlike Italian, Molise Slavic has not formed a future perfect (*futurum exactum*) of the Romance type and it has even dropped – if it had existed at all in the original émigré dialect – the future perfect of the Slavic type formed with the help of the future of the auxiliary *bit* ‘to be’ and the *l*-participle. This is probably

¹⁴ See for example its absence in the paradigm of *tit* in the grammar of Sammartino (2004: 98–100), which, contrary to what it says in the title, only refers to the dialect of Montemitro.

¹⁵ Full paradigms of the two futures in the past can be found in Breu (2011b: 158).

due to the fact that this tense is rarely used in colloquial discourse in Italian. Actually, Molise Slavic matches colloquial Italian in introducing the perfect instead of the missing future perfect as in (6):

- (6) *Čaš* *ga* *pitat* *dòp*,
 AUX.FUT.NEC.2SG him.ACC ask.INF then
kada sma *čil* *funera*.
 when AUX.PRF.1PL make.PTCP.PL funeral.ACC.SG.M
 ‘You will ask him later, when we have made the funeral.’

3.1.2 The category of ASPECT

Molise Slavic has a double aspect system, consisting of the typically Slavic “derivational type”, the so-called opposition of perfectivity, expressed in all verb forms, and an “inflectional type”, restricted to the past, traditionally based on the opposition of imperfect vs. aorist, but transformed in Molise Slavic into a formally more complex opposition of (inflected) imperfect vs. (analytic or, periphrastic) perfect.

First of all, one should keep in mind another Slavic diachronic constant, which was mentioned in the introduction, saying that if only one component of the old inflecting opposition of imperfect vs. aorist is lost, it is always the imperfect. Even in those Slavic varieties outside the contact areas, where both inflecting forms were replaced by the perfect, the imperfect was always to disappear first (Breu 2011a: 442–444, 2011b: 162–169, Broj [Breu] 2006: 71–74). In Molise Slavic, however, we find the opposite development with the imperfect still being highly productive, while the aorist has been replaced completely by the perfect. On the other hand, a look at the history of the Romance languages shows that here, whenever one of the two components of the inflectional aspect category was lost, it was always the aorist. Thus, we could call this type of reduction a “Romance diachronic constant”. The neighboring Italian dialects of Molise Slavic underwent this type of reduction (which originally came down from Northern Italy along the Adriatic coast) and influenced the Slavic minority language in such a way that – instead of following the Slavic diachronic constant of losing the imperfect first – it copied the aforementioned Romance reduction type. In other words, language contact made Molise Slavic to replace its “genetic” diachronic constant with that borrowed from the foreign model language. In this respect, we could say that Molise Slavic stopped behaving like a Slavic language. That this development is indeed a result of the language contact with a Romance variety is confirmed by the Resian micro-language in

Northern Italy, showing the same preference for losing the aorist before the imperfect. In this case the model for the non-Slavic development came from the Romance dialects in the region of *Friuli – Venezia Giulia*. Although nowadays – contrary to Molise Slavic – the perfect in Resian (just like in Slovene or in Russian) is the only productive past tense, we know that this is a relatively recent development patterned on a historical stage corresponding to that in Molise. As a matter of fact, there are still many formal relics of the imperfect, while the aorist forms have completely disappeared (Breu 2011a: 445; Breu 2011b: 175–177; Broj [Breu], Pila, and Šol’ce [Scholze] 2017: 71–72).

Apart from this succession of mergers violating a diachronic constant of Slavic, the coalescence of the aorist with the perfect in itself might be viewed as a case of adaptation of the semantic structure by copying the polysemy in question from the neighbouring Italian dialects, but only if the necessary polysemy of the perfect (for aoristic and perfect functions) already existed at the time of the Slavic immigration in Lower Molise. Alternatively, this development could have happened simultaneously in both the Slavic and the Romance varieties of Molise in compliance with the Romance diachronic constant. An independent merger in Molise Slavic is excluded, precisely because in this case the imperfect would have been lost instead of the aorist, according to the diachronic constant of Slavic in question.

With respect to the other aspect category in Molise Slavic, expressed by pairs of perfectives and imperfectives, i.e., by “grammatical derivation” with the help of suffixes, prefixes and suppletion, the opposite holds true. All the morphological means needed to form aspectual pairs continue to exist (Breu 2006: 74–75). We find, for example, prefixation in *sijat/posijat* (ipf./pf.) ‘to sow’, *krest/ukrest* (ipf./pf.) ‘to steal’, suffixation in *kupit/kupivat* (pf./ipf.) ‘to buy’, *umbrit/umirat* (pf./ipf.) ‘to die’, and suppletion in *vrč/mečat* (pf./ipf.) ‘to put’ or *hot/pokj* (ipf./pf.) ‘to go’. This “derivational” aspectual opposition encompasses all verb forms, including the imperfect and perfect with the “contradictory” combinations of a perfective imperfect and an imperfective perfect having functions of their own. The sentences under (7) are examples of all four possible combinations, with an imperfective imperfect in (7a), a perfective perfect in (7b), a perfective imperfect in (7c) and an imperfective perfect in (7d).¹⁶

¹⁶ The main functions of the imperfective imperfect and the perfective perfect correspond to those of the imperfective and the perfective *l*-past respectively, for example in Russian or Croatian. This means that the first combination expresses, for instance, *processual*, *habitual*, and *static* situations, as in (7a), while the perfective perfect fits into the realm of single total (completed) states of affairs; see (7b). Yet the perfective imperfect as in (7c) expresses, among

- (7) a. *One kumbatahu sendza elmeta.*
 they fight.IPFV.IPRF.3PL without helmet.GEN.SG.M
 ‘They fought / were fighting without a helmet.’
- b. *Ja sa pa nazjamu, sa*
 I AUX.PRF.1SG fall.PFV.PTCP.M on.the.earth AUX.PRF.3SG
zvenija.
 faint.PFV.PTCP.3PL
 ‘I fell to the ground, I fainted.’
- c. *Večaru, kada ostanahma rabi, jope nasa*
 in.the.evening when stop.PFV.IPRF.1PL work again us
vamjahu.
 take.PFV.IPRF.3PL
 ‘In the evening, when we stopped working, they used to take us again.’
- d. *Sa rabija na gošta mbača jene*
 AUX.PRF.1SG work.IPFV.PTCP one year at ART.INDF.GEN.SG.F
magine.
 engine.GEN.SG.F
 ‘I worked for one year on an engine.’

Even in loan verbs derivational aspect is fully productive, though restricted to suffixation as the only morphological means of forming aspectual pairs. The integration rule is very strict: all telic verbs are integrated as perfectives, forming an imperfective partner with the help of the suffix *-iva-*, e.g., *calare* ‘to sink’ → *kalat* (pf.) => *kalivat* (ipf.), *promettere* ‘to promise’ → *prmitit* (pf.) => *prmičivat* (ipf.), *partire* ‘to depart’ → *partit* (pf.) => *parčivat* (ipf.); for more details, see Broj [Breu] (2006: 82–85), Breu (2017: 65–66). The reason for the stability of the opposition of perfectivity comes from the very absence of such a category in the dominant varieties. Again, we find the same situation in Resian, with the full conservation of

other things, habitually repeated sequences of events, while the imperfective perfect in (7d) is used for the temporal delimitation of atelic actions and states (see Broj [Breu] 2006, 2014). Out of all these forms only the perfective imperfect may be replaced with another form (the imperfective imperfect) without any major change in its meaning, with only the marked reference to the subsequence of situations being lost. But it is impossible to replace the imperfective perfect as in (7d) with the imperfective imperfect, which – in accordance with the Italian imperfect – does not allow for the expression of a situation delimited in time. It is equally impossible to replace the imperfective imperfect in (7a) with the imperfective perfect since the Molise Slavic imperfective perfect – just like the Italian perfect – never refers to unlimited *processual*, *habitual* or *static* situations, contrary to the imperfective *l*-past in other Slavic languages, e.g., Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian or Russian.

aspectual pairs and the high productivity of the suffixation type found in borrowings (Benacchio 2009: 189–190).

In contact situations of Slavic minorities with German, the situation is different. In colloquial Upper Sorbian, for instance, most telic German verbs are integrated biaspectually. Here the suffix *-owa-*, historically related to Molise Slavic *-iva-*, serves as an integration suffix without any aspectual properties. In the relatively rare cases of aspectually paired borrowings they are characterized by prefixation, probably due to the telicizing function of German prefixes (a characteristic absent from Italian as the contact language of Molise Slavic). German does not have grammatical aspect, neither of the inflectional nor of the derivational type. This is why the opposition of perfectivity has been changed with respect to the inherited Slavic vocabulary, too. Even though pairs of verbs of the Slavic derivational type continue to exist not only in standard Upper Sorbian but also in its colloquial variety, colloquial Upper Sorbian transformed their usage in such a way that a new category was born, the grammatical opposition of telicity, strongly influenced again by the characteristics of prefixation in German (Scholze 2008: 230–255).

Unlike lexical telicity, the distribution of the partners in these pairs follow grammatical rules, which often make the use of “perfective” (= telic) or “imperfective” (= atelic) verbs compulsory. This means that the German influence on Slavic aspect in Sorbian resulted in something entirely new with components from both sides. Burgenland Croatian has not (yet?) developed such an opposition. But it is similar to colloquial Upper Sorbian in that it only uses prefixes for the secondary formation of aspectual pairs in borrowings, again as a consequence of the role of the prefixes in German.

In spite of the full conservation of the derivational aspect in Molise Slavic, we find clear evidence of its subordination to the inflectional category, whose components are supported by their Italian equivalents. First of all, we see that the usual development of the imperfective perfect to a grammeme expressing “process”, “iteration” and “habituality”, as in Russian and Croatian, was completely blocked, presumably because these functions are incompatible with the perfect in Italian, where only the imperfect expresses these functions.

Another piece of evidence comes from the treatment of the so-called inceptively static verbs, in which, for example in Russian, the perfective verb (irrespective of the type of derivation of the aspectual pair) expresses the beginning of the state denoted by the imperfective verb, e.g., in *videt’/uvidet’* ‘to see’ (derived by prefixation) and *ponjat’/ponimat’* ‘to understand’ (derived by suffixation, with a subsequent root alternation). In Molise Slavic such verbs are normally biaspectual on the derivational level, while the opposition between the state and its beginning is expressed through the inflectional aspect

(imperfect vs. perfect), just like in Italian. The following Molise Slavic examples come into consideration: *vidahu* ‘I could see’: *sa vidija* ‘I saw, caught sight’, *kapahu* ‘I understood, was in the state of understanding’: *sa kapija* ‘I understood, comprehended’, *znadahu* ‘I knew’: *sa znaja* ‘I learnt, came to know’, and even *jimahu* ‘I had’: *sa jima* ‘I got’, just like in Italian, *vedevo: ho visto*, *capivo: ho capito*, *sapevo: ho saputo* and *avevo: ho avuto*, respectively.

Apart from the changes in the derivational and inflectional aspect oppositions we also find contact-induced developments in the field of periphrastic constructions. Here the syntagmatic principle of formal calquing is at work, to wit, the loan translation of single parts of the construction. In Italian there is a progressive, formed by the auxiliary *stare* ‘to be, to stay’ and the gerund, while southern Italian dialects prefer other constructions. In the latter case, the most widespread type is the use of the grammaticalized particle *mo* ‘now’ in combination with the present in order to express ongoing actions. Molise Slavic has copied this model, according to the syntagmatic principle of language contact by translating *mo* with its own particle *sa* ‘now’, whence, e.g., *sa gre* ‘s/he is coming’. A periphrastic model was also copied in the case of the “imminensive”, expressing actions at the point of being realized or in their very initial phase, e.g., *stoji za partit* exactly translating the Italian periphrasis *sta per partire* ‘is about to leave’, literally ‘is for leave’. The same holds true for the corresponding forms of the imperfect, in this case *stojaša za partit*, calquing Italian *stava per partire* ‘was about to leave’. Just like in Italian all these periphrases individualize (grammatize) specific functions of the highly polyfunctional imperfect.

3.1.3 The category of MOOD

Within the category of mood the most important changes have taken place with respect to irreality. Like all other Slavic languages, Molise Slavic has an analytic conditional, expressing, in particular, both potential and counterfactual situations.¹⁷ It is used either independently as in (8a) or in both parts of the hypothetical period as in (8b)¹⁸:

¹⁷ There is some terminological confusion in the sphere of unreal moods. In this chapter, we adopted a terminology in which “irreality” is the opposite to “reality” and serves as a cover term for unreal situations that could potentially still be fulfilled and counterfactual situations, where this is not the case.

¹⁸ Example (8a) contains a still accomplishable (potential) condition, while (8b), referring to a situation in the past, is counterfactual. Without the wider context, which is omitted here,

- (8) a. *Kisa benja si bima si vazal*
 who.knows perhaps if AUX.COND.1PL REFL.DAT take.PFV.PTCP.SG.M
oni dite?
 that.ACC.SG.M child.ACC.SG.M?
 ‘How is it, if we possibly would adopt that child?’ (= What about adopting that child?)
- b. *Ona si bi bila drita bi jiskodila*
 she if AUX.COND be.PTCP.SG.F right AUX.COND pass.PFV.PTCP.SG.F
vrata!
 door.ACC.PL.M
 ‘If she had been intelligent, she would have passed the door!’

Although Italian differentiates between counterfactual and potential conditions,¹⁹ this model could not be transferred to Molise Slavic, as it would have required the contact-induced disambiguation of a polysemy in L₁. But as it seems, even in situations of total language contact, new oppositions cannot develop on their own. They are only possible as a by-product of copying a polysemy in other fields. This was the case with the above-mentioned development of the de-obligative future as a secondary result of copying the polysemic model of *avé* which included also its function as a future auxiliary besides its two lexical meanings of ‘to have’ and ‘must’.²⁰

In the given case the impossibility of introducing a new differentiation becomes even more surprising as Italian has a specialized form for the counterfactual that, indeed, has been copied by means of the adaptation of the semantic structure. We are referring to the imperfect, which in colloquial Italian, besides its aspectual-temporal indicative function of expressing an imperfective past,

both could be easily understood the other way round. Sentence (8a) is from a text from the conservative dialect of Montemitro, where the *bi*-conditional is still used frequently, while in Acquaviva it tends to lose its hypothetic functions, which preferably are expressed by the imperfect; see below.

19 In the case of potential conditions standard Italian applies the imperfect subjunctive in the protasis (e.g., *fossi* ‘I were’) and the simple conditional (*sarei* ‘I would be’) in the apodosis, whereas counterfactual situations are expressed by the past perfect subjunctive (*fossi stato* ‘(if) I had been’) and the analytic conditional (*sarei stato* ‘I would have been’). See also the standard Italian translations of (8a) ‘Chissà, forse, se ci prendessimo quel bambino’ and (8b) ‘Se fosse stata intelligente, avrebbe varcato la porta!’.

20 For the discussion of the difficulties in differentiating polysemic entities of the lexicon in contact situations, see Breu (2003: 358–360). Obviously it is very difficult for the bilingual speakers to accept the necessary monosemization in their L₁, so that even borrowing new terms is not a general way for removing cases of polysemy.

Figure 3: Transfer of the counterfactual meaning of the imperfect by polisemization.

also appears in counterfactual situations. This polysemy is regularly conferred to Molise Slavic by expanding the functions of the imperfect from the indicative into the field of irrealis, too. In Figure 3 this adaptation process is again symbolized in a two-stage scheme, which encompasses not only the imperfect and its functions, but also the existing polysemy of the *bi*-conditional²¹.

As can be seen from this scheme, the imperfect not only follows the Italian model in becoming polysemic for the imperfective past and counterfactuality, but contrary to Italian this new means of expressing irrealis has become just as polysemic as the *bi*-conditional, in expressing both counterfactual and potential situations; see examples (9a) and (9b) respectively²²:

²¹ The auxiliary of the Molise Slavic *bi*-conditional is inflected only in the first and second person of the plural (*bima*, *bita*), otherwise the uninflected form *bi* is used. Though the *bi*-conditional is formed just like the past perfect with the *l*-participle and in spite of the partial homonymy of the particle *bi* of the past perfect and the auxiliary of the *bi*-conditional, the complete analytic forms are always distinct, as only the past perfect additionally has the perfect auxiliary, e.g., *ona bi dala* ‘she would have given’ ≠ *ona je bi dala* ‘she had given’.

²² The aspect used in hypothetical constructions mainly depends on the feature of telicity: for atelic situations imperfective verbs are used, while telic situations have a preference for the perfective aspect. Alleged exceptions of the type *čakivahu* in (9a) result from the distributive or habitual iteration of telic states of affairs. Thus we could render a situation like (9a) more explicitly by “would have destroyed us all one after the other”. But the imperfective imperfects in (9b) could, indeed, indicate that in the case of potential irrealis, referring to the future, the imperfective aspect is preferred also in the case of single telic situations. So possibly the Slavic derivative category of aspect could secondarily allow for a formal differentiation between potential and counterfactual irrealis, but, of course only with telic verbs. Special research will have to be done, in order to find an adequate answer to this open question. In any case sentence (9a) demonstrates that the perfective imperfect also has functions outside the abovementioned field of habitual sequences of situations (see Broj [Breu] 2014: 345–347).

- (9) a. *One dojahu s jenme karamatam*
 those.NOM come.PFV.IPRF.3PL with ART.INDF.INS.SG.M tank.INS.SG.M
a nasa čakivahu tuna!
 and us.ACC destroy.IPFV.IPRF.3PL all
 ‘Those would have come with a tank and would have destroyed us all!’
- b. *Si sa skinjivahu kude kundrada “Pietrafitta”,*
 if REFL descend.IPFV.IPRF.3PL towards location.NOM.SG.F PR.NOM.SG.F
rivivahu prije di fundica.
 arrive.IPFV.IPRF first where fountain.NOM.SG.F
 ‘If they descended at the location of “Pietrafitta”, they would arrive at the fountain first.’

Even if the *bi*-conditional were to disappear as a superfluous synonym in the field of irreality – and there is a certain tendency of this occurring – the imperfect will continue expressing its polysemy in the realm of irreality.²³ This case actually shows that there are, indeed, differences in the grammatical structure of two languages in contact that cannot be levelled out, due to an existing polysemy in L_1 . In other words, an adaptation of the semantic structure of two languages in contact only happens in the case of a polysemy in L_2 , while a polysemy in L_1 prevents it. On the contrary, the polysemy in L_1 leads to corresponding mistakes in Italian in this area: By transferring the function of potentiality to the Italian imperfect, this form becomes as polyfunctional as the genuine Slavic conditional (Breu 2011b: 175), meeting in its own way the requirement of maximal isomorphism as the prerequisite for an ideal diagrammar.

3.2 The categories of the Molise Slavic noun

3.2.1 The category of CASE

In principle, Molise Slavic has preserved the Slavic category of CASE, except for the old vocative and the locative. While the vocative disappeared elsewhere in

²³ This does not necessarily mean that the *bi*-conditional will disappear completely, as it also has functions outside the field of irreality, for example in rendering the Italian conditional in its function of politeness, e.g., *vorremmo = bima til* ‘we would like’ (conditional of *volere = tit* ‘to want’), for example: *Mi bima sa til ffermat odeka vičeras* ‘We would like to settle here this evening’. In addition, it also functions as a modally neutral alternative to the two aforementioned modal futures in the past, in this case by copying one of the functions of the Italian past conditional, e.g. *ona bi dola*, Ital. *sarebbe venuta* ‘she would have come [in the future]’.

Slavic, for instance in Russian or Slovene, the loss of the locative needs an explanation. We cannot simply say that losing this case is a reaction to Italian not having it. This should be true then for the instrumental, too, or even for the entire case system. The reason for the full coincidence of the locative with the accusative, found in the dialects of Acquaviva and San Felice, lies deeper. It comes from the Italian polysemy for the indication of “place” and the “motion towards a place”, for example, with *in Italia* meaning both ‘in Italy’ and ‘to Italy’. Traditionally, the regular way of expressing indications of place in modern Slavic is by means of the locative, while the indication of motion to a place is expressed by the accusative as, for instance, in Russian *v Italii* ‘in Italy.LOC’ vs. *v Italiju* ‘to Italy.ACC’. The Italian model has led to the formal merger of this opposition in Molise Slavic,²⁴ according to the principle of the adaptation of the semantic structure in the replica language; see Figure 4.²⁵ Because of the wider field of functions the accusative had in comparison with the locative, the forms of the accusative survived, and those of the locative disappeared, with the exception of some fossilized adverbial constructions.

Figure 4: Loss of the locative in Molise Slavic.

The examples in (10) demonstrate this contact-induced ambiguity of the accusative in Molise Slavic, with a movement towards a target in (10a) and the indication of a state (place) in (10b):

24 The Molise Slavic development is, of course, different from the general loss of the category of case in the Balkan languages, as in this micro-language only the opposition between place and motion is lost, whereas the case system as such continues to be used.

25 For the sake of simplicity the polysemic case in this scheme is called “accusative” in caseless Italian, too. But for bilingual speakers even some psychological reality seems to be involved in such an equation as Molise Slavs express isolated nouns in the accusative, when translating them from Italian to Molise Slavic. They say for example *ženu* (ACC.SG) instead of the nominative form *žena*, when asked for a translation of the (isolated) word (*la*) *donna* ‘(the) woman’.

- (10) a. *Nosahu divojku u crikvu.*
 carry.IPFV.IPRF.3PL girl.ACC.SG.F in church.ACC.SG.F
 ‘They used to accompany the girl (= the bride) to the church.’
- b. *Z-bi-ma prisegl u crikvu, però.*
 AUX.PRF-PTL.PQP-1PL marry.PTCP.PL in church.ACC.SG.F however
 ‘We had married in the church, however.’

In the dialect of Montemitro the situation is more complicated. In fact, we find the same merger of the locative with the accusative with an exception of the feminine nouns, which today belong exclusively to the historical *a*-declension in all the Molise Slavic dialects.²⁶ It is the traditional homonymy of the locative with the dative in this declension that has blocked its formal coincidence with the accusative in the Montemitro dialect. This is true only with respect to the form itself, however, as the adaptation of the semantic structure, i.e., the formal transfer of the polysemy of “place” and “motion to a place” of the dominant model language to the replica one has occurred in this case as well. This means that the “task” of merging the expression of the two functions in question was fulfilled also in this special case, with the homonymy of dative and locative preserved in this declension, by transferring the function “motion to a place” in the opposite direction, namely, from the accusative to the dative (locative). As a matter of fact, the pressure coming from the dominant model was so strong that even the resulting complication within the case system as a whole was adopted, to wit, the joint expression of “place” and “motion” by the accusative in one declension and by the dative in the other. This situation is further complicated by the fact that the functions of “place” and “motion” of the dative are restricted to non-attributed feminines, while an attribute obligatorily entails its regular replacement by the accusative.

We might speculate that in the future Montemitro’s non-attributed feminine nouns will follow the rest in also using the accusative throughout. But this is only a hypothesis about possible processes of internal restructuring not directly connected with language contact. Things could develop quite unexpectedly, as was the case in Acquaviva. As a matter of fact, what looks like an overall formal dominance of the accusative here is only a synchronic surface phenomenon. Again it is the (feminine) *a*-declension to disturb this pattern, at least from a historical point of view, by bringing about a merger of the ending of the dative with that of the accusative. In this way, both problems have been resolved.

²⁶ For the transformation of the old system of declensions intersecting with gender towards a purely gender-based inflectional system of the nouns in Molise Slavic, see Section 3.2.2.

The system acquired the joint expression of “place” and “motion” in one form and the different behavior of the functions of the cases dependent on the declension/gender class. However, all this was achieved to the detriment of a linguistic constant of Slavic, violated by such a merger of dative and accusative in part of the nominal paradigm. The dialect of San Felice, on the other hand, does not show any of these complications. Here the accusative expresses “place” and “motion” in both declensions/genders with its original endings, i.e., with dative and accusative remaining heteronym throughout the nominal system.²⁷

As for the vocative, it has merged with the nominative completely. Given the productivity of the vocative in the modern Štokavian varieties as used in the countries of Ex-Yugoslavia, this coalescence can also be attributed to the influence of the corresponding polysemy of functions of the nominative in Italian.²⁸

Apart from the loss of the locative and the vocative, there is at least one more development which makes the Molise Slavic case system interesting in terms of language contact, namely the new roles of prepositions. Contrary to the procedure of the adaptation of the semantic structure, affecting the paradigmatic structure of the system of the replica language, we are dealing in this case with the syntagmatic pressure coming from the model language, resulting, again, in a type of loan translation.

Unlike the Balkan Slavic languages Bulgarian and Macedonian, which due to their language contact of the substrate type²⁹ lost entirely their nominal inflection by replacing it with prepositional phrases, Molise Slavic did not lose its case endings. Nevertheless the Italian prepositional model, actually, exerted its

²⁷ For more details about the complex interplay of dative, accusative, and locative in developing the modern case systems of the three dialects, see Breu (2008).

²⁸ A new type of the vocative, however, is emerging, based on a procedure copied from colloquial Southern Italian (see Rohlfs 1966: 448–449), namely, the omission of the final syllable or consonant in proper names, for example *Duna'!* (vs. *Dunat* NOM.SG) = Italian *Dona'!* (vs. *Donato*) or *Li'!* (vs. *Lina* NOM.SG). This development is, of course, independent of a similar phenomenon found in proper names of the *a*-declension (both genders) of colloquial Russian, i.e., the omission of the final vowel (see Comtet 2003): *Nataš'!* (vs. *Nataša* NOM.SG.F), *Volod'!* (vs. *Volodja* NOM.SG.M).

²⁹ We are speaking here about the supposed language change from Balkan Latin to Balkan Slavic (Bulgarian/Macedonian) in the early Middle Ages. For the two opposite types of contact-induced language change, which we call the adstrate/superstrate type (*L*₂ is active), found for example in Molise, and the substrate type (*L*₁ is active), found in Balkan Slavic, see Breu (2011a: 430–431, 2011b: 151–152).

influence on Molise Slavic by adding prepositions to the nouns with preserved case endings.

This was clearly the case in the instrumental, resulting in an obligatory preposition *s* ‘with’ for this case when expressing the “means” with which an action is being carried out, e.g., *s nožam* (knife.INS.SG.M) ‘with (the) knife’, corresponding exactly to Italian *con il coltello*. Actually, this development was doubly motivated, as it also copes with the pressure coming from a semantic asymmetry within the realm of the instrumental functions of the two languages in contact. As a matter of fact, already before the addition of the preposition *s* to the “instrumental of means” the corresponding prepositional phrase existed in Molise Slavic. But it only had a comitative function, roughly meaning “together with the knife”, which the corresponding Italian phrase ambiguously also expressed. So, the syntagmatic change in question was automatically accompanied by an adaptation of the semantic structures. In other words, Molise Slavic adapted to the polysemic model of the Italian *with*-phrase, in our example *con il coltello* ‘by means of the knife / together with the knife’, by expanding the meaning of its own prepositional phrase.³⁰

Actually, the adaptation of the semantic structure would only have led to a merger of the expression of both functions be it with or without a preposition in both cases, but the principle of the syntagmatic adaptation to the structure of the model language led to the dominance of the prepositional phrase with the pure instrumental becoming obsolete.³¹

In the genitive we also find a preposition, but contrary to the instrumental it is optional. The preposition used here is *do*, which in all other Slavic languages means ‘until, towards’, while in Molise Slavic it corresponds to the Italian *di* ‘of, from’. The usual explanation for this semantic change comes from the phonetic similarity of dialectal *də* with Slavic *do*, leading to an amalgamation of form and

30 See Nomachi and Heine (2011) for a development parallel to Molise Slavic in minority varieties influenced by German. Danylenko (2015) proposes an alternative explanation of comitative-instrumental polysemy, based on the fact that it is also found in Slavic varieties outside the areas in which contact has a strong influence. We do not exclude a general tendency towards analytic constructions nor do we deny an overall possibility of the comitative-instrumental distinction being lost, but we claim that language contact is one of the criteria favoring the manifestation of such a tendency, especially when a clear analytic model exists in the dominant contact language.

31 There are some remnants of the instrumental used without a preposition in adverbial function as in *putam* (road.INS.SG.M) ‘on the road’, referring to a motion taking place on the road, in Italian *per la strada*.

meaning with the inherited preposition **od* ‘of, from’. Be that as it may, the Molise Slavic expansion of the genitive to an analytic construction of the type *hiža do jene žene* ‘the house of a woman’ corresponds syntagmatically to the Italian *la casa di una donna*, but, just like in the instrumental case, the genitive ending is preserved. The optionality of the preposition *do* in the genitive could be an intermediate stage before reaching the final stage of an obligatory preposition that we find in the instrumental.

In addition to the nominative and the accusative, lacking a preposition in the model language as well, only the dative remains without a preposition, and not even an optional one. In Italian the case functions, expressed by the dative in Molise Slavic, always require a preposition accompanying the nouns in question, normally *a* ‘to’. As of now, it is hard to explain convincingly why the dative fails to follow the model of the genitive and the instrumental, though, for instance, *na* ‘on’, used in Balkan Slavic, would have been a candidate in Molise Slavic, too. In a way, the very preposition *a* in Italian could give us a clue, as it is absent in the local Romance dialects in many cases in which the standard has it. The most striking fact is again the indication of “place” and “motion to a place”, in this case with respect to place names. There are, indeed, place names which combine with a fossilized preposition, normally well-known villages or towns of the neighbourhood like *na Palatu* ‘in/to Palata’, *u Napulu* ‘in/to Naples’. But the only really productive means is $\emptyset$ (no preposition), for instance, *grem/stojim Kambavaš* ‘I go to Campobasso/I stay at Campobasso’, corresponding to the Italian *vado/sto a Campobasso* and even *grem/stojim Mundimitar* ‘I go to Montemitro/I stay at Montemitro’ as a variant of *grem/stojim na Mundimitar*. As is demonstrated by the feminine nouns, having distinct forms for the nominative and accusative, the place name itself appears in the accusative: *grem/stojim Čelendzu* (nom. *Čelendza* ‘Celenza sul Trigno’). All in all, Italian *a* corresponds to $\emptyset$ in many such cases, so it might not have been conceived as a model meant to expand the Molise Slavic dative through a preposition either. There is also a syntactic reason, giving the dative a special position among the three cases in question, namely, object doubling, which could also have influenced its special treatment with respect to prepositions; see Section 4.3 below.

The data from the Molise Slavic case system show therefore that the cases with a prepositional model in the dominant language do not copy this model in the same way. Apart from the full preservation of the case endings, there is a scale which ranges from complete copying (instrumental) to partial copying (genitive) to no copying at all (dative).

3.2.2 The categories of GENDER and DECLENSION

Molise Slavic has restructured its system of declensions and genders.³² As far as declensional classes are concerned, the most radical development is the complete loss of the old feminine *i*-declension (zero-ending in the nominative singular). Contrary to a possible language-internal gender-based change of simply passing over to the productive feminine *a*-declension, language contact was decisive for the behavior of individual nouns in Molise Slavic. Whenever a feminine *i*-noun had a masculine equivalent in the dominant contact language, it changed its gender to masculine and entered the masculine declension with the zero ending in the nominative-accusative singular. In the opposite case, it remained feminine and passed over to the *a*-declension, for example with a new nominative in *-a*, instead of its original zero-ending. Examples are *kost* ‘bone’ and *peč* ‘oven’, having become masculine because of Italian *osso* M, *forno* M, contrary to **noč* > *noča* ‘night’ and **stvar* > *stvara* ‘thing’, keeping their feminine gender due to the Italian *notte* F, *cosa* F, but having changed their endings (see Breu 2013: 99–103).³³

As for the grammatical category of gender itself (defined in agreement with attributes, predicates and pronouns), the neuter was completely lost in nouns.³⁴ The model for this was, of course, the Italian two-gender system. Again neutral nouns did not simply pass over to the masculine gender, as one might presume, given their identity of endings in most cases. Nor did they simply assume the gender of their Italian equivalent, as one might have expected, given the behavior of the nouns of the former *i*-declension.

The whole picture, however, is not so simple (Broj [Breu] 2013: 94–97). While in the Montemitro dialect all former neuters, indeed, became masculine,

³² For a detailed presentation of the individual processes involved in creating a pure two-gender declension system, which we will sum up only briefly in the remainder, see Broj [Breu] (2013).

³³ A tendency towards the reduction of nouns inflecting according to the old *i*-paradigm also exists in other Slavic languages, for example in Ukrainian or in Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian. On the other hand, we find the substitution of individual endings of the *i*-declension with those of the *a*-declension, e.g., in the genitive singular of Upper Sorbian. But to the best of our knowledge, there is no other Slavic language or variety which shows a complete transition of former feminine *i*-nouns into the *o*- or the *a*-declension triggered exclusively by the gender of their correspondents in the contact language.

³⁴ In other spheres the neuter was preserved, especially in substantivized adjectives and adverbs, but also in impersonal sentences. The preservation of the third gender in these cases is also based on language contact, in particular on the model offered by Italian varieties in Central and Southern Italy (Broj [Breu] 2013: 105–111).

in the Acquaviva variant there are several exceptions which could only partially be interpreted as an analogy to the feminine gender of their Italian equivalents, e.g., **sedlo* N > *sedla* F ‘saddle’ (Italian *sella* F, Montemitro *sedlo* M), **zvono* N > *zvona* F ‘bell’ (Italian *campana* F, Montemitro *zvono* M). There are clear counterexamples, contradicting any such rule,³⁵ e.g., *nebo* N > *neba* ‘sky’ F (≠ Italian *cielo* M, Montemitro *nebo* M) or *gn(j)izdo* N > *njizda* ‘nest’ F (≠ Italian *nido* M, Montemitro *gnjizdo* M). This means that, notwithstanding the contact-induced character of the loss of neutral nouns as such, the subsequent distribution we find today is not a direct consequence of language contact.

The other question is why the dialects of Montemitro and Acquaviva behave differently. Here we actually can offer a contact-based explanation. As the aforementioned examples show, we find different endings for the former neuters in the nominative in these two variants. While Montemitro has kept the original ending *o*, we find *a* in Acquaviva. This change, however, is not due to morphology but is the result of a contact-induced phonological change of *e*, *o* to *a* in unstressed syllables in Acquaviva and San Felice, the so-called “Molise Slavic Akan’e” (Broj [Breu] 2013: 83). The resulting form *-a* of the nominative singular ending coincided with the original ending of the feminine nouns, which opened a way (but not a requirement) to a transition from the original declension to the feminine *a*-declension. The reasons for actually making use of this possibility, missing in the Montemitro variant, have to be explored individually for each noun in question.

Apart from the loss of the neuter and the *i*-declension, there is still another change which eventually turned the Molise Slavic declension into a fully two-gender-based system, the passing over of the masculine nouns that traditionally belonged to the *a*-declension into the remaining only masculine declension. Morphologically they normally keep their *a* in the nominative singular, just as most ex-neuters do, but their inflection follows the other masculine nouns, for example, *tata* ‘father’ (NOM, GEN, ACC), *tatu* (DAT), *tatam* (INS), and so on. Italian borrowings of the masculine gender ending in *-a* normally even replace their nominative form with the unmarked masculine *zero*-ending, for example, *statista* ‘statesman’ M → *statišt*.

³⁵ As a matter of fact, some authors have followed Muljačić (1973: 35) in positing a development based on the gender of the Italian equivalents of the ex-neuters. But, unfortunately, his examples are wrong. For instance, the former neuter *meso* N > *mesa* M ‘meat’ (dialects of Acquaviva and San Felice, *meso* M in Montemitro), contrary to what Muljačić said, became masculine in all three dialects, in spite of the feminine gender of its Italian equivalent *carne*.

Unlike the Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian standards and also Italian, Molise Slavic has completely lost its gender distinction in the plural. Yet this effect is secondary to the merger of the nominative, the only form distinguishing masculine and feminine gender in the attributes, with the accusative, a coalescence that follows a diachronic constant of Slavic, realized, for example, also in Russian. This diachronic constant was not blocked but rather spurred by the caseless structure of the Romance contact varieties, showing a model with identical subject and object forms. In addition, this model seems to be an important factor for the rise of a tendency in Molise Slavic to lose the distinction of animacy, based on the differentiation of animate masculine nouns from inanimates in the accusative singular in opposition to the nominative.³⁶ Like in the case of the neuter, the loss of the animate gender represents an instance of the reduction of gender distinctions in accordance to Italian expressing only two of them.

3.2.3 The category of NUMBER

With respect to number Molise Slavic is conservative. Just like in Italian, singular and plural continue to exist, and just like in the standard Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian varieties or in Russian, the former dual has transformed into a paucal. This paucal was not affected by the Italian two-number system, probably because it is not a free number grammeme, but is governed by the numbers 2–4. It is worth noting, however, that the number category also seems to be especially conservative in contact situations outside Molise Slavic, as is shown, for example, by the preservation of the (free) dual in Slovene and standard Upper and Lower Sorbian, three languages strongly influenced by German without such a number grammeme. Only in very recent times, colloquial Upper Sorbian has reduced its independent dual to a governed form of the numerals meaning ‘two’ and ‘both’ (Scholze 2008: 135–139).

3.2.4 The category of DEFINITENESS

Slavic languages outside the contact areas do not have a grammaticalized opposition of definiteness expressed by articles. The absence of an article system

³⁶ By now, special animate accusatives like *popa* (ACC.SG) ‘preast’, formally coinciding with the genitive, have become optional and are normally replaced by the forms that overlap with the nominative, whence *pop*.

Figure 5: Creation of an indefinite article by copying the polysemic model of *UNO*.

might even be claimed to be a diachronic constant of Slavic.³⁷ Molise Slavic is different in this respect, as it shows an obligatory indefinite article in all the relevant positions in which Italian also uses it. The obvious model for creating an indefinite article comes from the Italian polysemy of the form *UNO* for the number ‘one’ and the indefinite article, which was copied in Molise Slavic (adaptation of the semantic structure),³⁸ see figure 5.

This development took place not only in contradiction to the above-mentioned diachronic constant of Slavic, but it also violated a typological universal, according to which an indefinite article emerges only after the creation of a definite article, still missing in Molise Slavic. Interestingly enough, this situation is also due to the mechanism of the adaptation of the semantic structure, in this case in terms of the absence of a polysemic model in Italian. In particular, the Italian article *IL* does not have a demonstrative function, thus banning even a language-internal creation of a definite article in Molise Slavic from its demonstratives, found in many languages. Such a development would have infringed upon the parallelism between the replica and the model language, by introducing a polysemy in Molise Slavic which is not found in Italian.

Nevertheless, the Molise Slavic article system, based only on an indefinite article, became fully functional by reinterpreting the absence of the *indefinite* article as a “*definite* zero-article”. This was possible due to the fact that besides pragmatic definiteness (anaphoric, cataphoric and so on), the Italian definite article also expresses innate definiteness (semantic definiteness of

³⁷ Though it is true that Slavic languages outside the areas of strong language contact may have articloids in the sense of demonstratives and the numeral ‘one’ expressing some article functions, it is also true that such articloids have by no means acquired the status of fully grammaticalized articles. The (postponed) definite article in Balkan Slavic is, of course, one of the cases of contact-induced developments, and so is the Macedonian indefinite “article”, still missing some characteristic functions (Breu 2012: 280–294).

³⁸ *UNO* and *JENA* symbolize the whole paradigm of their forms, including the short forms *na* and *nu*. For the whole range of functions of the Molise Slavic indefinite article compared with Colloquial Upper Sorbian and Macedonian see Breu (2012), presenting also the full paradigm of *JENA* (Breu 2012: 279). See also Heine (this volume) for their interpretation of the development of the Molise Slavic indefinite article.

Figure 6: Missing polysemic model in Italian for the creation of a definite article in Molise Slavic.

unique referents) and generic definiteness; see figure 6. Therefore, it did not leave any special function to be claimed by the absence of an article which otherwise would have impaired the supposed model of exactly two articles represented in Molise Slavic by the opposition of *na* (indefinite article): $\emptyset$ (definite zero-article). Here is just one example showing the interplay of these two “articles”, with the indefinite article *na* introducing the rheme *zvizda* in (11a) and $\emptyset$ anaphorically referring to it as the theme in (11b):

- (11) a. *Je ju pala na zvizda*
 AUX.PRF.3SG her fall.PFV.PTCP.3SG ART.INDF.NOM.SG.F star.NOM.SG.F
 do zlata na čelu.
 of gold.GEN.SG.M on forehead.ACC.SG.F
 ‘A golden star fell on her forehead.’
- b. *E ova divojka je pola doma,*
 and this.NOM.F girl.NOM.SG.F AUX.PRF.3SG go.PFV.PTCP.SG.F home
 a $\emptyset$ zvizda sfitlaša na čelu.
 and DEF star.NOM.SG.F glow.IPRF.3SG on forehead.ACC.SG.F
 ‘And this girl went home, and the star glowed on her forehead.’

Just like Molise Slavic, colloquial Upper Sorbian developed an article system, too, in this case by adapting to the semantic structure of the German indefinite article *EIN*, polysemous with respect to the number ‘one’ and the indefinite article. As a consequence, we find in this variety an obligatory indefinite article *JEN*, homonymous with the number ‘one’. But in this variety of Upper Sorbian, one also encounters a definite article modelled on the German one whose form *DER*, unlike Italian *IL*, has demonstrative functions in addition to that of a definite article. This model was copied by making the existing Sorbian demonstrative *TÓN* a polysemous form, expressing also the function of an obligatory pragmatic definite article. It did not, however, include the level of semantic definiteness which is still expressed by means of the absence of articles, or, in other words, there is a semantic definite zero-article $\emptyset$ in opposition with the pragmatic one (Breu 2012: 304–306). We could claim this to be an intermediate stage, but we should keep in mind that in German, contrary to Italian, the absence of articles also has functions of its own, for example, with regard to mass

nouns and partly so in the case of genericity, which could have helped to grammaticize $\emptyset$ as an article of its own. In addition, a system with two definite articles is in no way alien to historical and actual varieties of German, e.g., Bavarian *dea* (M) ‘the (pragmatically definite)’: *da* (M) ‘the (semantically definite)’.³⁹

3.3 The category of COMPARISON of adjectives and adverbs

Like all Slavic languages, Molise Slavic has a category of comparison for adjectives and adverbs. In this section we will concentrate on the grammemes “comparative” and “superlative”, traditionally expressed by suffixes in Slavic. In general, the synthetic type remains unchanged in most Slavic languages, while others, especially Russian and even more so Balkan Slavic show a clear development towards analyticity. In language contact, a development from synthetic to analytic constructions is defined by the syntagmatic principle. Therefore it is no wonder that the Italian model of expressing the comparative by means of a comparator and the absolute (positive) form of the adjective or adverb has been copied by Molise Slavic, to wit, with the help of the adverb *veča* ‘more’, corresponding to Italian *più*, while the Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian standards continue to use the suffix type almost exclusively (see Breu 2009). In contact with German, which contrary to Italian expresses comparison synthetically, the Sorbian varieties⁴⁰ and also Burgenland Croatian have preserved their suffixed type as well.

³⁹ At first glance, the fact that we find a formal definite article in Resian seems to contradict our line of argumentation with respect to Italian-Slavic language contact (Benacchio 1996). But it should be borne in mind that in the Resia valley, besides Italian and Friulian, German historically also played an important role and could therefore be held “responsible” for the differing developments in Resian and Molise Slavic (Breu 2011a: 441).

⁴⁰ In colloquial Upper Sorbian there is a stronger tendency than in the standard variety towards an analytic expression of comparison by means of the comparator *bóle*, the comparative of the adverb *jara* ‘very’, which corresponds to the Russian comparator *bole*, the comparative of *očen* ‘very’, and differs from *jace* (standard *wjace*), the comparative of *wyle* (standard *wjele*) ‘much’, just like in Russian *bole* from the adjectival *bol’she* ‘more’ (see Scholze 2008: 88–90). Further investigation of this conspicuous correspondence between Russian and Upper Sorbian might be useful. As long as we do not have a contact-related explanation for the Russian analytic comparative, we could perhaps claim that language contact is not the only reason for changing the morphosyntactic expression of the category of comparison in Slavic. However, the Balkan Slavic languages Bulgarian and Macedonian with their fully analytic type of comparison, using the particle *po* as a comparator, e.g., Bulgarian *po-dobăr* ‘CMP-good = better’, have to play a role in any discussion about the influence of language contact on the overall development of Slavic comparatives (and superlatives).

In accordance with Italian, Molise Slavic has also preserved some suppletives. Thus, we find *bolji* ‘better’ (adjective) and *bolje* (adverb), corresponding to Italian *migliore* and *meglio* respectively, and in the same way *gori* ‘worse’ (adjective) and *gore* (adverb), corresponding to Italian *peggiore* and *peggio*, and also *manji*, *manje* ‘less’, the negative counterparts of *veča* ‘more’, which just like Italian *più* does not distinguish between an adjectival and an adverbial form. There are some more instances of isogrammatism with respect to comparison, especially between Molise Slavic and its closest contact variety, the Romance dialects of Basso Molise. Among other things, at this point we could nominate the normal way of expressing the superlative function by means of the formal comparative, again with the definite $\emptyset$ -article corresponding to the Romance article, for instance, *veča velki* ‘(the) biggest’ corresponding to Italian *il più grande*, alongside a more explicit way by means of the synthetic superlative *naveča* ‘most’, functionally corresponding to Italian *il più*, plus the positive form, e.g., *naveča velki* ‘the biggest one’.

Just like in the Romance dialects of the neighbourhood, analytic variants or pleonastic extensions are possible for the suppletives, i.e., *bolji* = *veča dobri* = *veča bolji* ‘better’, including a pleonastic variant even in the case of *veča* ‘more’ = *veča čuda* (see Italian dialectal *più molto*, literally ‘more much’). The most striking correspondence, induced by language contact, is certainly the complete replacement of adjectival comparatives (and superlatives) by adverbial ones in the suppletives, for example *bolje* ‘better’ (and its analytic and pleonastic variants), which now has expanded its original adverbial character to including adjectival use like Italian *meglio*, replacing the adjective *migliore* in colloquial speech.⁴¹ Like Italian, Molise Slavic has two types of syntactic linkers, the preposition *do* (with the genitive), corresponding to Italian *di* ‘of’, and the conjunction *ka*, corresponding to (or rather borrowed from) Italian *che* ‘that’. Both can be used with compared nouns, but *do* refers to subjects, *ka* to objects and compared properties, a rule perhaps even more consistently observed than in Italian. For the superlative both languages exclusively use the corresponding conjunctions *ka*, *che*.

⁴¹ See Breu (2008) for more details, including a contact-based explanation for the preservation of the separate adjectival form *manji* ‘less’ in spite of its absence in Italian, the lack of a synthetic superlative **namanje* and a scenario explaining the sequence of adaptations leading to the almost complete isogrammatism between the Molise Slavic and the Italian comparison.

4 Some syntactic characteristics of Molise Slavic

4.1 The position of the attribute

Molise Slavic has in many respects adapted to Italian word order, following the syntagmatic principle of contact-induced change. This is especially evident in the case of the position of Molise Slavic adjectival attributes as compared with other Slavic languages, including the Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian standards as its closest relatives. In Molise Slavic, just like in Italian and contrary to Croatian,⁴² “differentiating” attributes are placed after the noun, for example, adjectives meaning colours like *crni* ‘black’, *crnjeli* ‘red’, nationalities like *tedesk* ‘German’, *taljan* ‘Italian’ or participles like *kuhani* ‘cooked’, *dizgracijani* ‘miserable’. On the other hand, descriptive adjectives, in accordance with Italian usage, should be placed before the noun, e.g., *lipi* ‘beautiful’. On the whole, postpositive attributes are by far more frequent than prepositive ones.

The different positions of the attributes lead in some cases to oppositions of the type *Je na brižna žena* ‘She is a poor woman’ (pitiable, because something awful has happened to her) ≠ *Je na žena brižna*. ‘She is a poor woman’ (she has no money) as in Italian: *È una povera donna* ≠ *È una donna povera*; similarly, *na dobri ljud* ‘a good man’ (good character) ≠ *na ljud dobri* ‘a talented man’.

The contact-induced dominant rule of postposing the attribute brought about in some cases “hypercorrect” usage, thus resulting in a preference for the position after the noun where even Italian would place the adjective before it. For instance, in the case of *na hiža nova* ‘a new house’ only postposition is possible whereas in Italian one encounters a difference between *una casa nuova* ‘a newly built house’ and *una nuova casa* ‘a different house’.⁴³ The same is true of *na hiža stara* ‘an old house’. Other adjectives displaying a clear tendency to postposition are *velki* ‘big’, *mali* ‘small’ unlike their Italian equivalents *grande* and *piccolo*, where the unmarked position of the attribute is before the noun and postposition gives them a special meaning. Of course, such a discrepancy

⁴² In general, in Slavic the position of attributes before the noun is basic, while placing them after it, is rare and “symptomatic”. Some instances of unmarked postposition occurring in Polish, however, are probably due to the influence of Latin. For some examples of postpositive attributes in the standard languages, see Uhlířová (2014: 2228–2230). In the areas of contact, postposition may be found more often. This is especially true in cases of contact with Romance languages as, for instance, in Resian.

⁴³ In other combinations, in which ‘new’ cannot be understood as ‘newly built’, both positions are possible, e.g., *na žena nova* = *na nova žena* ‘a new wife’, with no difference in meaning.

can lead to errors in L_2 when Molise Slavs speak Italian, like in the above-mentioned case of the contact-induced hypothetical imperfect, expanding its functional range from counterfactual to potential irreality.

In other words, semantic rules regulating a syntactic alternation in the model language disallow direct calquing of its word order in the recipient language. They correspond to the lexical or grammatical polysemies in L_1 impeding the induction of an opposition existing in L_2 into L_1 . In both cases an isogrammatism reducing the differentiating rules of their two languages in the diagrammar of the bilinguals can emerge only from transferring L_1 characteristics into L_2 , which is equivalent to mistakes in the dominant language. This is a clear contrast to the adaptation of the semantic structure of L_1 to L_2 , based on a polysemy in the model language L_2 , and to direct calquing by loan translation from the model language in cases without specific alternation rules.⁴⁴

4.2 Position of the clitics

Traditionally Slavic clitics follow Wackernagel's law, i.e., they are placed in the second position after the first word with full accent.⁴⁵ If a sentence has more than one clitic, they follow each other in a fixed order with the whole cluster of clitics in Wackernagel's second position. In Italian (and its southern varieties), clitics are verb-adjacent. Without going into greater detail, we can say that they precede the verb in declarative and interrogative clauses, while they follow it in the imperative.

The ranking of clitics in Molise Slavic is a rather complicated question that warrants further research. Generally speaking, Molise Slavic has fully adapted to the Italian positioning of clitics, without remnants of the former Wackernagel rule. This happened, of course, in accordance with the syntagmatic principle of contact-induced language change. Thus we find declarative sentences like (12a) and questions like (12b), with clitics preceding the verb,

⁴⁴ There is a rather similar case of copied word order in total language contact which ultimately leads to complications, namely the effect of the German sentence-final verb position (V-end) on Upper Sorbian. While it was easy to copy the German model, it was impossible for Sorbian to restrict this new word order only to subordinate clauses as German does, while displaying "verb second" position (V2) in the main clause, as in Sorbian subordinate and main clauses traditionally do not behave differently (Breu and Scholze 2006: 46–55). As a result, Upper Sorbian now exhibits V-end as a general rule in its syntax, leading to compensatory mistakes in the German word order of untrained Sorbian bilinguals.

⁴⁵ For a comparison of the realizations of Wackernagel's law in Slavic standard languages, see Uhlířová (2014: 2226–2228).

and imperatives like (12c) with clitics postpositioned as in Italian. The clitics are marked with the equals sign pointing towards the verb as their host. For the sake of simplicity the following sentences all contain a loan construction based on the Italian idiomatic phrase *andarsene* ‘to leave’⁴⁶:

- (12) a. *Su= bi= si= ga= pol tuna.*
 AUX.PRF.3PL= PTL.PQP= REFL.DAT= 3.SG.N= go.PFV.PTCP.PL all.NOM
 ‘They all had left.’
- b. *Si= ga= gre?*
 REFL.DAT= 3.SG.N= go.IPFV.PRS.3SG
 ‘Is s/he leaving?’
- c. *Po =si =ga!*⁴⁷
 go.PFV.IMP.2SG =REFL.DAT =3.SG.N
 ‘Leave!’

Unlike variation in the Italian model, in which clitics either follow the infinitive or precede the modal verb, as shown in (13), the Molise Slavic infinitive accepts only proclitics. While blocking postposition could be a special restriction on the Molise Slavic infinitive, the impossibility of putting the clitics before the modal verb seems to be linked to the fact that the modal verb *mam* in (13), functioning also as the auxiliary of the de-obligative future, is part of the cluster of clitics.

- (13) *Mam= si= ga= po.*
 must.PRS.1SG= REFL.DAT= GEN.SG.N= go.PFV
 (Italian **Me=ne=devo andare** ~ **Devo andar=me=ne.**)⁴⁸
 ‘I must leave’ or ‘I will (necessarily) leave.’

⁴⁶ In the infinitive (written in one word according to the Italian orthography) this phrase consists of the elements *andar-se-ne* (‘go’ + reflexive pronoun + partitive particle), giving *si ga pokj* in Molise Slavic with a different (but nevertheless verb-adjacent) word order. In the present tense we have *se ne va* ‘s/he is leaving’, giving *si ga gre* in Molise Slavic. The clitic *ga* in this phrase is originally the genitive singular neuter of the anaphoric pronoun, but it is used in this construction as an equivalent of the Italian partitive particle *ne*. This example shows that even if there is no direct equivalent to a syntactically separable form of the model language, the replica language is able to replace it by a functionally similar one.

⁴⁷ The Molise Slavic imperative corresponds exactly to Italian *vattene* (va=te=ne)! ‘Leave!’.

⁴⁸ According to a general rule of the Italian orthography, prepositive clitics are written separately, while postpositive ones are attached to the verb: *me ne devo andare* ~ *devo andarmene*. This rule is also responsible for the opposition between indicative forms like *se ne va*, corresponding to the question in (12b), and the imperative *vattene*, corresponding to (12c).

The same restriction allies to the future of probability, formed with the help of the auxiliary *tīt* ‘to want, will’, in which only *ču= si= ga= po* ‘I will (probably) leave’ would be possible. However, variation is, indeed, possible with non-clitic modal verbs like *moč* ‘can, may’, i.e., *si ga moraš po leč ~ moraš si ga po leč* ‘you may go to bed’, corresponding to the Italian variation *te ne puoi andare ~ puoi andartene*. This means that, while the use of clitics after the infinitive corresponding to the Italian *andartene* is excluded here, too, they optionally precede the modal.

But here we have to take into consideration once again the question of the specific model language in question. As a matter of fact, Southern Italian, the only model for Molise Slavic at the beginning, prefers pre-modal clitics to the detriment of the post-infinitival position which is commonplace in standard Italian. Especially in older times, but to a certain extent also in modern dialects, even the same variation of clitics before and after the modal verbs as in Molise Slavic existed (Rohlf 1968: 173–174). So it could well be the case that, apart from the special rule determining the clustering of clitics, Molise Slavic copied an older local model and refrained from additionally copying the later model of the literary standard. A more detailed analysis of the restrictions and variations in the clustering of clitics in Molise Slavic, as well as their exact model in the local dialects, must be left for further research. But from what we know now, we could argue that even the combination with the infinitive does not contradict the rule that Molise Slavic clitics, if used in a declarative sentence, are always oriented towards the verb and no longer used in Wackernagel position.

So, while the orientation of the cluster of clitics towards the verb has, actually, been copied, the internal ranking of clitics is not necessarily identical in the two languages in contact; see (14) with the perfect auxiliary *je* at the beginning of the cluster in Molise Slavic unlike the corresponding auxiliary *è* at the end of the cluster in Italian.

- (14) *Je= si= ga= pošā.*
 AUX.PRF.3SG= REFL.DAT= GEN.SG.N= GO.PFV.PTCP.SG.M
 ‘He left.’ (≠ Italian *Se n’è andato*.)

This means that the slot for clitics as such has changed its position in accordance with the Italian model, but inside the cluster clitics still entertain their own ranking, not susceptible to language contact. A reason for this may be that, due to their high degree of grammaticalization, clitics are similar to inflectional endings, and therefore behave similarly in certain respects like bound morphemes, being less influenced by language contact than other syntagmatic

elements. In other words, the internal ranking of clitics is comparable to that of suffixes. Another case of this type is the position of the negative clitic which in Molise Slavic always occurs at the end of the cluster, while the corresponding negative adverb *non* in Italian precedes it: *si ga ne gre* ≠ Italian *non se ne va* ‘s/he does not leave’. Apart from these peculiarities, the internal structure of the clitics cluster in all the above-cited examples exactly matches the Italian clitic ordering: *si-ga* = Italian *se-ne*.

There is no doubt that the syntactic change from Wackernagel’s second position to a verb-adjacent position, found in Molise Slavic, also corresponds to the overriding of a Slavic syntactic constant by the corresponding Romance one. We find a similar change in Balkan Slavic, probably also due to the Romance (or Vulgar Latin) influence, especially on Macedonian.⁴⁹

4.3 Double negation

It is a diachronic constant of Slavic that negative pronouns or adverbs are doubled by the negative particle, normally more or less immediately proclitic to the verb. Italian has also a double (pleonastic) negation which, however, has some restrictions, the most important being that negative pronouns or adverbs preceding the verb are not doubled. Such an asymmetry between L_2 and L_1 is, of course, another area where the syntagmatic principle of contact-induced change could apply, in this case not simply in the sense of the adaptation of word order but with respect to the number of elements concerned. This means that in trying to rectify this asymmetry a special type of formal calquing could be claimed to be relevant that again translates element by element, but with one of the elements transferred as a zero-element ($\emptyset$).

This is, indeed, what happened. The Italian model requires the omission of the negative particle if a negative pronoun like *nessuno* ‘nobody’, *niente* ‘nothing’, or an adverb like *mai* ‘never’ precedes the verb. This model is copied in Molise Slavic by replacing the traditional negative particle *ne*, *ni-* with $\emptyset$ in such cases, i.e., whenever the corresponding negative pronouns and

⁴⁹ Cimmerling (2013: 56–57) considers Molise Slavic to be the only Slavic language fully corresponding to a “V-system”, in which chains of clitics are localized in the “verb group” without a fixed place in the sentence, surpassing in this respect even Macedonian. His hypothesis is based on only three single-clitic translations from Italian to Molise Slavic (1 clitic pronoun + finite present), but it is corroborated by the first-hand examples in the present paper with real chains of clitics. However, as evidenced from the examples in Benacchio (2009: 185), the Slovene-based Resian dialect in Friuli is also a candidate for a full “V-system”.

adverbs *nikor* ‘nobody’, *nišča* ‘nothing’, *maj* ‘never’ and so on precede the verb. Here are two such examples, in which the corresponding Italian translations are added:

- (15) a. A **nikor** Ø je vasa pita si
 and nobody.NOM Ø AUX.PRF.3SG you.PL.ACC ask.PTCP.SG.M if
tijahta stat s tedeski?
 want.IPRF.2PL stay.INF with German.INS.PL
 (= Italian *E nessuno Ø vi ha domandati se volevate stare con i tedeschi?*)
 ‘And nobody asked you, if you wanted to stay with the Germans?’
- b. Je bi dža dečidija e **nišča**
 AUX.PRF.3SG PTL.PQP already decide.PFV.PTCP.SG.M and nothing.NOM
 e **nikor** mu Ø morahu čit kanjat
 and nobody.NOM him Ø can.IPRF.3PL make.INF change.INF
moždane.
 mind.ACC.PL
 (= Italian *Aveva già deciso e niente e nessuno Ø potevano fargli cambiare idea.*)
 ‘He had already decided and nothing and nobody could make him change his mind.’
- c. **Maj** mangu jena čita merikan Ø
 never not.even one.NOM.M city.NOM.SG.M American.NOM.SG.M Ø
 je bi mu para
 AUX.PRF.3SG PTL.PQP him.DAT seem.PFV.PTCP.SG.M
naka lip.
 so beautiful.NOM.SG.M
 (= Italian *Mai nemmeno una città americana Ø gli era parsa così bella.*)
 ‘Never not even one American city had seemed to him so beautiful.’

Nevertheless, double negation of the Slavic type, showing the negative particle before the finite verb (auxiliary), is still possible and even seems to be preferred. This means that we have a case of variation in which the Italian model is retained only partially as an optional rule; consider sentence (16) containing double negation.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ The pleonastic negative particle appears here in the form *ni-*, combining with some auxiliaries, instead of *ne* with full verbs. Transformed into the (imperfective) present, the second part of (16) would be: ... **nikor ne** *rispunjiva*.

- (16) Su *mitraljival*, **nikor** **ni-je**
 AUX.PRF.3PL machine.gun.IPFV.PTCP.PL nobody.NOM not-AUX.PRF.3SG
rispunija.
 answer.PFV.PTCP.SG.M
 (≠ Italian *Hanno mitragliato, nessuno Ø ha risposto.*)
 ‘They machine-gunned (for a while),⁵¹ nobody answered.’

When the negative pronoun is positioned after the verb, like *nikor* ‘nobody’ in (17a), then, of course, nothing happens, as the traditional Slavic and the Italian constructions coincide, i.e. we regularly find the pleonastic negation before the verb. The same is true for the negative adverb *maj* in (17b)⁵²:

- (17) a. *Nonda ni-maša nišča nikor!*
 there not-have.IPRF.3SG nothing.ACC nobody.NOM
 (= Italian *Lì non aveva niente nessuno!*)
 ‘Nobody did not have anything there.’
 b. *Ni-sa ukrela maj nišča nikromu.*
 not-AUX.PRF.1SG steal.PFV.PTCP.3SG.F never nothing.ACC nobody.DAT
 (= Italian *Non ho rubato mai niente a nessuno.*)
 ‘I have never stolen anything from anybody.’

The incomplete adaptation to the Italian model could be again explained by the fact that the contact-induced new rule is not followed consistently inasmuch as it led to a complication of the once simple rule of redoubling. Just like in the case of the contact-induced partial postposition of the attributes, mistakes in the Italian of Molise Slavs, here in the form of undesired redoubling, serve as a kind of remedy for, nonetheless, creating a syntactic parallelism between L_1 and L_2 .

We should, however, also consider the hypothetical possibility of local or dialectal Italian usage of the negation being different from the standard, in that it could presumably allow optional doubling with preverbal negative pronouns. But all the examples attested up to now in the neighboring village of Palata show omission of the negative particle like in the standard variety, e.g.,

⁵¹ One should remember that the Molise Slavic imperfective perfect never expresses an unlimited process or state in the past (see fn 16 above), but only temporally delimited ones, explained here with “for a while”. An ongoing process would require the imperfective imperfect, i.e., *mitraljivahu* in this case.

⁵² Another example of this type, but with only one negative pronoun, is (18b) in Section 4.4 below.

[nɪʃʃunə Ø ɛ mmeʎʎə də issə] (= Italian *nessuno Ø è meglio di questo*) ‘Nobody is better than this one’.⁵³ The same holds true for the relevant examples recorded in Apulia by Poletto and Rasom (2006: 81–85), which indirectly confirm Rohlf’s (1968: 215) observation that in the northern dialects doubling in the case of a preverbal negative pronoun is optional, while he does not mention any southern dialects in this respect.

In any case the omission of the negative particle in the cases in question is not a recent phenomenon. Rešetar (1911) cited it in several sentences with verb-preceding *nikor* ‘nobody’, for instance (in Rešetar’s own transcription): *Nikor d’onihi mičiciji, ka on je bi mitiva, Ø zovaše ņega* (=Italian *Nessuno di quegli amici che aveva invitato Ø lo chiamava*) ‘None of those friends he had invited called him’. As a matter of fact, the omission was just as optional as today; consider the following example with preserved pleonastic negation, contrary to Italian: *tûna kačatûr su-potégnilì òvu kôz – nîkor nîje ju-kòlij!* (≠ Italian *tutti i cacciatori spararono a questa capra – nessuno Ø la colpì!*) ‘All hunters shot at this goat – nobody hit it’. From all this follows that both possible models as found in standard and Southern Italian, were only partially copied by Molise Slavic, with mistakes occurring in Italian as the secondary language of the Molise Slavic bilinguals.

4.4 Object doubling

The last instance of syntagmatic copying we will briefly deal with is the doubling of nouns and pronouns in object position by means of clitic short pronouns, which, in some respect, seems to mirror what has happened in the case of negation in the opposite way. Once again we do not have to deal with a simple reordering of words but with a different number of elements in the two languages in contact. In the case of object doubling contrary to negation it was Molise Slavic that had fewer elements than the dominant model language. The adaptation of L_1 to L_2 is therefore tantamount to the addition of elements in the replica language.

As is well-known, (pleonastic) object doubling is a feature of Bulgarian and Macedonian and also of other languages of the Balkan *Sprachbund*, following special rules triggered by features like object type (direct, indirect), position of the object and definiteness. The Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian standard languages do not share this property. Molise Slavic, on the other hand, also has object

53 My thanks go to Domenica Catino for this and other examples from Palata.

doubling, but it clearly differs from the Balkan Slavic rules. This is, of course, due to its specific contact situation.

As a matter of fact, object doubling is a property of Southern Italian and – with different rules – of standard Italian. While standard Italian, in principle, only doubles objects that precede the verb, Southern Italian allows for doubling also in other cases (Rohlf's 1968: 169). Both models are copied by Molise Slavic, revealing a result that lies in between both rules: obligatory doubling in the case of objects preceding the verb and optional doubling in other cases. Such a situation inevitably leads to mistakes in the Italian of Molise Slavs, too, because just like Southern Italians they transfer their wider usage to the Italian standard.

Let us have a look at some examples showing object doubling as a contact-induced feature of Molise Slavic. As we can see, the clitic pronoun *hi* in (18a) pleonastically doubles the verb-preceding noun *Greka* ‘the Greeks’, while *ga* in (18b) doubles the verb-preceding, fully accented demonstrative pronoun *toga*, just like in standard Italian *li* and *l'* (=lo) respectively.⁵⁴

- (18) a. *Nondeka mi Greka ni-sma hi vidil*
 there we Greek.ACC.PL not-AUX.PRF.1PL ACC.PL see.PTCP.PL
penjend.
 at.all
 (= Italian *Lì noi i Greci non li abbiamo visti per niente.*)
 ‘There, we did not see the Greeks at all.’
- b. *Toga ni-je ga potegnija*
 DEM.MID.ACC.SG.M not-AUX.PRF.3SG ACC.SG.M shoot.PFV.PTCP.SG.M
nikor,
 nobody
ta je sa potegnija sam!
 DEM.MID.NOM.SG.M AUX.PRF.3SG REFL shoot.PFV.PTCP.SG.M alone
 (= Italian *Costui non l'ha sparato nessuno, costui si è sparato da solo!*)
 ‘Nobody has shot that one, he has shot himself alone!’

On the other hand, we also found pleonastic objects in Molise Slavic in positions, in which standard Italian, unlike the local Romance dialects, does not allow for doubling as, for instance, *ga* doubling the postverbal proper noun *Matija* in (19a) and the postverbal fully accented personal pronoun *njega* in (19b). The wrong pleonastic forms that Molise Slavs at least optionally use when speaking Italian are given in brackets in the Italian translations:

⁵⁴ For similar constructions in Resian, see Benacchio (2009: 186).

- (19) a. *Ga vidahu Matija: jimaša*
 ACC.SG.M see.IPRF.1SG PR.ACC.SG.M have.IPRF.3SG
goča do pota velke.
 drop.ACC.PL of sweat.GEN.SG.M big.ACC.PL
 (≠ Italian [*Lo*] *vedevo Mattia: aveva gocce di sudore grosse.*)
 ‘I saw Mattia: he had big beads of sweat.’
- b. *Pa su kalal zdolu,*
 then AUX.PRF.3PL descend.PFV.PTCP.PL down
su ga vazal njega.
 AUX.PRF.3PL ACC.SG.M take.PFV.PTCP.PL him.ACC.SG.M
 (≠ Italian *Poi sono scesi, [lo] hanno preso lui.*)
 ‘Then they went down, they took him.’

In addition, pleonastic object clitics also refer to whole sentences as in (20a) and relative clauses as in (20b). Such cases once again emerge as mistakes in the Italian of the Molise Slavs, while they would be possible, as it seems, in Southern dialects.

- (20) a. *Ga ne kapaša*
 ACC.SG.N not understand.IPRF.3SG
ka maša mu da patrusinulu.
 COMP must.IPRF.3SG him give.INF parsley.ACC.SG.F
 (≠ Italian *Non [lo] capiva che gli doveva dare il prezzemolo.*)
 ‘She did not understand that she should give him the parsley.’
- b. *Je bi vidija priju votu*
 AUX.PRF.3SG PTL.PQP see.PTCP.SG.M first.ACC.SG.F time.ACC.SG.F
jenga
 ART.INDF.ACC.SG.M
nimaldža ka ni-je bi ga
 animal.ACC.SG.M REL not-AUX.PRF.3SG PTL.PQP ACC.SG.M
vidija maj.
 see.PTCP.SG.M never
 (≠ Italian *Aveva visto per la prima volta un animale che non [lo] aveva mai visto.*)
 ‘He had seen an animal for the first time that he had never seen (before).’

5 Conclusion

This chapter was devoted to several morphological and syntactic characteristics of Molise Slavic, a South Slavic micro-language still spoken in three small villages in Southern Italy in the hinterland of the Adriatic coast. In some cases other Slavic minority languages served as points of comparison, especially Resian in North-Eastern Italy and colloquial Upper Sorbian in East Germany. The ancestors of today's Molise Slavs immigrated to Molise roughly 500 years ago. Since then Molise Slavic has been in a situation of total language contact with the dominant Romance varieties of its new homeland. Most differences between Molise Slavic and its nearest cognates of the Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian language continuum were induced by language contact. But in spite of the far-reaching changes, total isomorphism with the dominant Romance varieties has not developed, especially where no corresponding categories existed in standard Italian and in the local Molisian dialects. One can cite here, for example, the category of aspect of the Slavic derivative type; the very absence of a model for the reconstruction of Molise Slavic might be claimed responsible for preserving such categories unchanged.

With respect to morphology or, rather morphosyntax, two main areas were examined, the verbal complex, comprising a lot of changes in the categories of Tense, Aspect and Mood, on the one hand, and the grammar of the noun, regarding the categories of Case, Gender/Declension, Number, and Definiteness, on the other. As for the adjective and the adverb, the morphosyntactic characteristics of the category of comparison were shown to have developed completely from the Slavic synthetic type to the Romance analytic one. In the syntax, changes in the position of the attribute (from pre-position to postposition) and of the clitics (from Wackernagel's position to verb-adjacent) were explained by language contact, and so were the reduction of double negation and the introduction of object doubling.

In theoretical terms, the far-reaching isomorphism between the languages in contact was the result of a tendency to reduce the rules necessary for the derivation of language-specific forms from the common diagrammar as conceived by the bilinguals. In most cases the isogrammatism in question was reached with the help of the adaptation of the replica to the dominant language. Two major procedures served to fulfil this task, a semantic and a syntagmatic one. The most evident changes with respect to the grammatical categories of Molise Slavic were triggered by the "adaptation of its semantic structure" to that of the dominant varieties by means of copying polysemies existing in L_2 to L_1 . This procedure led to such grammatical developments in Molise Slavic as the development of modal differentiation in the future tense, the rise of a hypothetical

imperfect, the merger of the locative with the accusative case, the loss of the neuter gender, and the formation of an indefinite article. It blocked, however, the development of a definite article because of a missing polysemy in L_2 , so that an article opposition could emerge only language-internally through the opposition between the contact-induced indefinite article and a definite zero-article.

The syntagmatic procedure contributing to grammatical isomorphism in Molise Slavic was loan translation (in the broadest sense). In addition to word-for-word copies of the dominant models of its contact languages leading to the development of periphrastic constructions like a progressive and an imminentive, Molise Slavic also followed the syntagmatic principle as applied to the word order of existing elements. In this respect, it adapted the position of its attributes and clitics to that of their equivalents in the model languages, even omitting or adding some syntactic elements. All this led to the formation of new rules for double negation and object doubling respectively.

In general, the main bulwark against contact-induced changes should have been constituted by the diachronic constants of Slavic, a theoretical concept describing the overall parallelism of language change and persistence within the Slavic language group. But the contact with dominant varieties from another group with its own diachronic constants largely resulted in overriding the constants of their own genetic group (*phylum*). As a consequence, Molise Slavic followed in many respects typically Romance changes, for example, in developing an indefinite article or in losing the aorist instead of the imperfect.

Unlike polysemies in L_2 , being copied to L_1 , an existing polysemy in L_1 impeded the rise of isogrammatism due to a change in L_1 . For example, it was not possible to disambiguate the potential and the counterfactual functions, neither in the traditional conditional nor in the newly acquired hypothetical imperfect, in spite of distinct forms for these functions in the model language. In this case, isogrammatism could be achieved only by transferring the problematic polysemies from Molise Slavic to Italian, which brought about mistakes in L_2 in terms of an imperfect with the (incorrect) function of potentiality in Italian. Other mistakes of the Molise Slavic bilinguals in Italian are due to the incomplete transfer of complex syntactic rules requiring additional information, in order to ascertain if they would apply or not. Such cases show a tendency towards hypercorrect usage of the postposition of attributes and the optionality of pleonastic double negation with pre-verbal negative pronouns.

Bernd Heine asks in the conclusion of his chapter in this volume whether, as a consequence of the substantial transformations in its grammatical and

semantic structure due to massive language contact, Molise Slavic has “moved up the scale of types from peripheral to core or from core to the nucleus SAE” (Standard Average European). He argues that there is no information on most of the twelve features of Haspelmath (2001) and claims “on impressionistic grounds” that, in spite of all the transformations, Molise Slavic has retained an overall Slavic typological profile.

This is not the place to give a final answer to this question which has to be addressed in a separate study. But apart from the fact that Haspelmath (2001: 1492) already includes the Romance and the Balto-Slavic languages in the “core European languages” forming the SAE area, Molise Slavic has certainly moved up the scale further in the direction of the nucleus of this area as a result of its far-reaching adaptation to Italian. In fact, Italian itself does not belong to the nucleus of SAE constituted by German and French which are characterized by nine convergent features, according to Haspelmath (2001: 150). This language has only eight of them, thus predetermining the maximum result to be reached by Molise Slavic as a result of language contact as compared with only five features shared by the genealogically close Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian and other standard Slavic languages.

As evidenced from the foregoing analysis, Molise Slavic developed an article system (SAE feature 1) and adapted the lack of verbal negation in the case of negative pronouns to the Italian rules, at least optionally (SAE feature 8). The only different feature remaining, the ‘have’-perfect (SAE feature 3), has not been dealt with in the present chapter, and, indeed, the Slavic ‘be’-construction with the *l*-participle still remains the central way of deriving the perfect. But if Czech purportedly belongs to the Slavic languages which have a *have*-perfect (Haspelmath 2001: 1495), in spite of its many restrictions in terms of a resultative perfect and its low level of grammaticalization (Giger 2003), then we could at least marginally attribute this feature to Molise Slavic as well. Indeed, this language knows *have*-perfects with the resultative meaning of the type *Jimaš* (have.PRS.2SG) *tuna redžištrana?* ‘Have you recorded all?’, derived with the help of the *have*-auxiliary and the past passive participle.

Consequently, in terms of its grammatical structure, Molise Slavic moved indeed away from its nearest cognates and came much closer to the nucleus of SAE. It remains open to discussion, however, if the features used in the SAE classification really fit for deciding on a Slavic or Romance “typological profile”.

Abbreviations and glosses

1,2,3	1st, 2nd, 3rd person
=	clitic (boundary)
ACC	accusative
ART	article
AUX	auxiliary
COMP	complementizer
COND	conditional
DAT	dative
DEF	definite
DEM	demonstrative
F	feminine
FUT	future
GEN	genitive
IMP	imperative
INDF	indefinite
INS	instrumental
IPF., IPFV	imperfective
IPRF	imperfect
IS	initial stage
LOC	locative
L ₁	primary language
L ₂	secondary language
M	masculine
MID	middle
N	neuter
NEC	necessitative
NOM	nominative
PF., PFV	perfective
PL	plural
PQP	past perfect
PR	proper noun
PRF	perfect
PROB	probability
PRS	present
PTCP	participle
PTL	participle
REFL	reflexive
REL	relative
RS	resulting stage
SAE	Standard Average European
SG	singular
SUBJ	subjunctive

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