

Double Case

Agreement by
Suffixaufnahme

EDITED BY

Frans Plank

New York Oxford
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
1995

8

Slavonic's Closest Approach to Suffixaufnahme: The Possessive Adjective

Greville G. Corbett

1. Introduction

One of the aims of this volume on Suffixaufnahme is to see the phenomenon in terms of a broader typology of attributive constructions. It is in this area that the evidence of the Slavonic possessive adjectives is particularly important. Possessive adjectives clearly show similarities to Suffixaufnahme constructions; indeed, as Plank (1990: 1039) points out, some researchers have tried to treat even prototypical examples of Suffixaufnahme as adjectives. I shall show that Slavonic possessive adjectives, to varying degrees, do indeed show similarities to undisputed instances of Suffixaufnahme, but that there are also important differences. These can be explained by reference to the nature of the morphological systems of the Slavonic languages. In a nutshell, I claim that some Slavonic possessive adjectives come as close to Suffixaufnahme as is possible without contravening major regularities in the morphology.

First the essential background data are presented (Section 2). Then we compare Slavonic possessive adjectives with a notion of the ideal case of Suffixaufnahme (Section 3). We finally examine why it is that Slavonic possessive adjectives are prevented from giving rise to prototypical Suffixaufnahme constructions (Section 4).

2. Background

2.1. *The Slavonic Languages*

The Slavonic family is a fairly conservative branch of Indo-European. It is traditionally divided into three groups—East, South, and West Slavonic—though there are shared changes which cut across these boundaries. Word

order within the clause is generally determined by information structure, with old, shared information coming before new. To the extent that this effect can be neutralized, the most common basic word order is subject-verb-object.¹ Within the NP the order is more rigid, though there is variation among languages. Slavonic preserves a rich inflectional morphology, primarily fusional in nature. Most of the family retain around six cases, including a genitive case with various functions (such as marking government by verbs and prepositions), and there are distinct declensional types. There is little difficulty in establishing a word-class of adjectives and a word-class of nouns, though certain items may be seen as transitional between the two.

2.2. *The Possessive Adjective*

The possessive adjective is widely used in Slavonic. A detailed discussion and extensive bibliography can be found in Corbett (1987).² We repeat the salient points here, drawing material especially from those languages where the possessive adjective has the widest range, particularly from Upper Sorbian.³ For example, in Upper Sorbian the possessive adjective is the normal method of expressing what is conveyed by the genitive in many other languages. It would be unusual to find a one-word adnominal genitive referring to a definite person, as in (1):

- (1) ?kniha Jan-a
 book Jan-GenSg
 'Jan's book'

The normal expression in the spoken language would be:⁴

- (2) Jan-ow-a knih-a
 Jan-Poss-NomSgFem book-NomSgFem⁵
 'Jan's book'

Here we have a possessive adjective, formed from the noun *Jan*, by means of the suffix *-ow-*. In Upper Sorbian, as in other Slavonic languages, possessive adjectives are formed from nouns by suffixation. There are two suffixes, *-in/-yn/-n-* and *-ow-* in Upper Sorbian, and *-ov/-ev-* for the latter suffix in certain other languages. The distinctions within each are partly phonological and partly orthographic and need not concern us. We shall refer to the pair as *-in/-ov-*. There are other suffixes used in Slavonic for forming denominal adjectives, but these will not concern us here.

The selection of the possessive adjective suffix is interesting. In Upper Sorbian, the criterion is gender: feminine nouns take *-in/-yn-* (thus, *žona* 'woman' gives *žoniny* 'woman's'), and masculine nouns take *-ow-* (for example, *nan* 'father', *nanowy* 'father's'; *starosta* 'headman', *starostowy* 'headman's').⁶ Some other languages, like Russian, preserve an older situation (as found in Old Church Slavonic, the oldest recorded Slavonic language) in

which the determining feature was declensional class. For most Slavonic nouns gender is predictable from the declensional class, so that in these instances both criteria give the same result. Simplifying somewhat, we may say that nouns with no ending in the nominative singular and which follow a particular declension (declensional class I) are masculine, and form the possessive with *-ov-*; nouns with the ending *-a* in the nominative singular follow a different declension (II), are feminine, and form the possessive adjective with *-in-*. However, there is a group of nouns like Russian *papa* 'Daddy' which follow declension II but which are masculine. Originally the possessive adjective suffix was determined by the declensional class, giving forms like Modern Russian *papin* 'Daddy's'. In those Slavonic languages that have gone over to the gender criterion, such nouns take the *-ov-* suffix (as in Upper Sorbian *starosta* 'headman', *starostowy* 'headman's'). These are Czech, Slovak, Upper and Lower Sorbian in the West Slavonic branch (but not Polish), Slovene, Bulgarian, with Macedonian moving in this direction in South Slavonic (but not Serbo-Croat), and Belorussian in East Slavonic (but not Russian and Ukrainian). This is a surprising list of languages to undergo a similar change. (There is considerable though not complete overlap with the list of languages that modify the declension of masculine class II nouns to make them more like the majority of masculines, the class I nouns.) While following one or the other criterion, languages may show sporadic exceptions. Thus Bulgarian has gone over to the gender criterion, but preserves *baštin* 'father's' from *bašta* 'father'.⁷ The important point is that the selection of the suffix is determined by the "underlying" noun; these suffixes do not attach freely.

Returning to example (2), we note that besides the possessive suffix the adjective carries an agreement marker for gender, number, and case. Throughout Slavonic,⁸ the possessive adjective marks just the same distinctions in agreement as do other adjectives. In Upper Sorbian, the endings of the possessive adjective are phonologically identical with those of other adjectives; in some other Slavonic languages, like Russian, the possessive adjective has some endings that are phonologically distinct from other adjectives, though marking the same distinctions.

There is an obvious contrast between (1) and (2): the adnominal genitive follows the main noun, while the possessive adjective precedes. There is variation across Slavonic, but the pattern here is the most common one, and again the possessive adjective shows the same behavior as normal attributive adjectives.

2.3. Restrictions on the Possessive Adjective

There are several interacting restrictions on the possessive adjective, which apply to varying degrees in the different Slavonic languages. In some instances it is difficult to determine exactly where the restriction should be stated. However, the restrictions can be classified into two types: restrictions on formation and restrictions on use.

2.3.1. Restrictions on Formation

There are restrictions on formation of a straightforward morphological type: certain stem types preclude the addition of the possessive adjective suffix. Thus in Upper Sorbian female surnames and names in *-ki* do not allow the formation of the possessive adjective: given a name like *Čišinski*, no possessive adjective can be formed (Fasske 1981: 382). The precise restrictions vary from language to language; see, for example, Huntley (1989: 25) for the restrictions in Old Church Slavonic.

There are other, more interesting restrictions on the formation of the possessive adjective. In Upper Sorbian, the possessive adjective can be formed when the referent is human, and occasionally also when it is an animal. Furthermore, the referent must be singular and it must be definite. These possessive adjectives cannot be used with a plural referent (Fasske 1981: 383):

- (3) *naš-ich muž-ow-e praw-o
 our-GenPl husband-Poss-SgNeut right-SgNeut
 'our husbands' right'

(We return to the case of attributive modifiers like *našich* in Section 3.2 below.) In such an instance the genitive must be used and not the possessive adjective:

- (4) praw-o naš-ich muž-ow
 right-SgNeut our-GenPl husband-GenPl⁹
 'the right of our husbands'

As just mentioned, Fasske states that a definite referent is required for the use of the possessive adjective. Thus the possessive adjective *mužowy* must indicate a specific husband; it cannot be used generically. Nor can it have an indefinite referent:

- (5) *nekajk-eho muž-ow-e praw-o
 some-GenSg husband-Poss-SgNeut right-SgNeut
 'some husband's right'

Again, the adnominal genitive must be used. The particular restrictions vary from language to language, but one remains constant: with the suffixes we are discussing the referent must be singular in all the Slavonic languages.

More generally in Slavonic, the possessive adjective is more likely to be formed when the referent is human than when it is an animal. Some languages, like Upper Sorbian, allow the formation in both cases, but favor a human referent. In others, such as Russian, the possessive adjective is normally formed only when the referent is human. If the possessive adjective can be formed when the referent is an animal (as in Serbo-Croat and Slovene), then usually higher animals are involved. Occasionally inanimates are in-

cluded; Stevanović (1974: 185) gives *sunčev* 'sun's' and *mesečev* 'moon's' as possible in Serbo-Croat.

A definite referent is a requirement in Upper Sorbian, and also in Modern Russian (Trubetzkoy 1939: 82) and in Bulgarian (Andrejčin 1978: 262). In Serbo-Croat, when common nouns are involved and there is a definite human referent, the possessive adjective is much the more frequent. If the referent is indefinite, the possessive adjective may still be used, but so may the genitive (Stevanović 1974: 183–184). It is significant that the inanimates given as having a possessive adjective are 'sun' and 'moon', which typically have definite referents. This factor also has an effect on the choice between the possessive adjective and the genitive in Czech and Slovak.

The conditions are not equally well studied in the different Slavonic languages (but see especially Huntley 1984 on Old Church Slavonic and Ivić 1986 on Serbo-Croat). On the basis of the existing evidence, two hierarchies may be proposed (Corbett 1987: 324):

- (6) a. human > animal > inanimate
- b. definite > indefinite

The higher the referent on the hierarchies, the more likely the possessive adjective is to be formed, the prototypical case being reference to a definite human. Of course, these hierarchies are familiar from other studies. Different languages have different cut-off points for the formation of the possessive adjective. Upper Sorbian requires a definite referent; Serbo-Croat and Slovene do not. Russian requires a human proper noun or other human referent while Serbo-Croat does not. The history of the competition between the possessive adjective and the genitive can be seen as a progressive tightening of the restrictions on the possessive adjective in terms of the two hierarchies above, though their influence was evident even in Old Church Slavonic. When a particular noun can never fall within the constraints operating at the time, it may be said normally not to form the possessive adjective, though the latter may be possible in special circumstances.

2.3.2. *Restrictions on Use*

We have examined the conditions under which a possessive adjective may be formed. However, its use, rather than that of the genitive, depends on two further sets of conditions.

First, as is well known, the genitive can be used for a wide variety of roles. The possessive adjective is not available in all of these to an equal degree. Thus in nominalization constructions, we find subjective and objective genitives. Staying with Upper Sorbian (Fasske 1981: 386) we find that the possessive adjective can take on either role:

- (7) Hilž-in-y wopyt
Hilža-Poss-NomSgMasc visit (NomSg)
'Hilža's visit'

- (8) Jur-ow-y pohrjeb
 Juro-Poss-NomSgMasc burial (NomSg)
 'Juro's burial'

In Slovene, in contrast, informants accepted the possessive adjective in the subjective role but were very reluctant to accept it in an objective role (where the genitive was much preferred). More generally "the range and frequency of use of the possessive adjective for the subjective genitive are at least as great as for the objective genitive" (Corbett 1987: 330).

The other type of restriction on use appears to be clearly syntactic; the question is whether the possessive adjective may have dependents of certain types or not. Consider the following Upper Sorbian example (Michalk 1974: 510):

- (9) moj-eho bratr-ow-e džěć-i
 my-GenSgMasc brother-Poss-NomPl child-NomPl
 'my brother's children'

Bratrowe is a possessive adjective formed from the noun *bratr* 'brother'. The ending *-e* shows agreement with the head noun *džěći*. The problem is the form *mojeho*; clearly this does not agree with *džěći*, since it carries the wrong features. It seems rather that its agreement controller is the possessive adjective *bratrowy*,¹⁰ which in some sense includes the noun *bratr* 'brother', which is masculine singular. This means that the possessive adjective may be used in Upper Sorbian even when the corresponding expression with the adnominal genitive includes an adjectival form dependent on the genitive noun:

- (10) džěć-i moj-eho bratr-a
 child-NomPl my-GenSgMasc brother-GenSgMasc
 'the children of my brother'

Besides controlling an attributive modifier as in (9), the possessive adjective may control relative and personal pronouns. Upper Sorbian is unusual in this respect, with the possibilities of most of the Slavonic languages being more restricted.

The behavior of the possessive adjective in (9) is unusual both within Slavonic and beyond it. Normally in Slavonic the presence of an adjectival modifier as in (10) means that the genitive is the required form. Another way of looking at the problem is to say that the suffix (*-ow-* in this instance) marks the phrase (*mój bratr* 'my brother') rather than just the noun to which it is attached. It is this construction which is most closely related to *Suffixaufnahme*, and so will be discussed more fully in Section 3. Before moving to that, it should be said that there are other types of syntactic constraint: for example, Old Church Slavonic allowed a possessive adjective to be conjoined with an adnominal genitive, while Upper Sorbian does not; for this and other such restrictions see Corbett (1987: 332–337).

Table 8.1. Frequency of Use of the Possessive Adjective (Based on Data from Ivanova 1975, 1976).

	overall	in situations of choice only
East Slavonic		
Russian	10%	22.3%
Belorussian	36%	64.6%
Ukrainian	23%	48.9%
South Slavonic		
Slovene	66%	98.2%
Serbo-Croat	52%	93.1%
West Slavonic		
Polish	3%	5.8%
Czech	51%	94.3%
Slovak	42%	83.0%

2.3.3. Relative Frequency of Possessive Adjective and Adnominal Genitive

Given the different interacting conditions on the formation of the possessive adjective and on its use, it is not surprising that its frequency relative to the adnominal genitive varies widely from language to language. The comparative data available are less good than might be hoped for, but they are suggestive. Ivanova (1976: 9–10) gives figures based on contemporary literature, criticism, and journalism. For each language investigated she scanned 1,000 pages (counting 2,000 characters as a page). She gives the approximate frequencies of use of the possessive adjective,¹¹ which are expressed as a percentage of the total instances of the possessive adjective and of the genitive (without preposition) in the first column of Table 8.1. These figures illustrate the difference in usage of comparable constructions in related languages (bear in mind that in some instances the possessive adjective would be excluded by the restrictions discussed above). In an earlier publication (Ivanova 1975: 151) we find comparable figures for instances where the use of the possessive adjective is theoretically possible in these languages (for a singular referent; with no modifier in the corresponding genitive phrase;¹² and not expressed by an adjectival noun, which could not form a possessive adjective). These data are given in the righthand column of Table 8.1. Naturally, the possessive adjective achieves a higher frequency under these conditions, but the differences among the languages investigated are equally clear.

3. The Possessive Adjective and Suffixaufnahme

We now consider the characteristics of Suffixaufnahme in turn, and examine whether the possessive adjective can be said to exhibit Suffixaufnahme.

3.1. Double Marking of Case

The defining characteristic of Suffixaufnahme is "for nouns in an attributive relation to agree with their head nouns in case" (Plank 1990: 1039). Specifically, the attributive relation is marked by case (normally genitive) on the attributive noun and this has a second, agreeing case marker; that is to say, it has a double inflectional marking. Let us look again at one of our Upper Sorbian examples (2) in this light:

- (11) Jan-ow-a knih-a
 Jan-Poss-NomSgFem book-NomSgFem
 'Jan's book'

The *-a* ending on *Janowa* does indeed mark agreement in case with the head noun *knih-a*, and this part of the requirement is met.¹³ The difficulty is whether we have precisely a noun showing agreement in case. This problem relates directly to the means of marking of the attributive relation, namely the suffix *-ow-*, which is not the normal case marker. The straightforward case marker would here, by coincidence, be *-a*, as in (1), repeated as (12).

- (12) ?knih-a Jan-a
 book-NomSgFem Jan-GenSg
 'Jan's book'

For forms like *Jan-ow-a* there are, then, two related questions to be asked: the first is whether we have a noun here, and the second is whether we have two inflections or one. Correspondingly, we must decide between two possible structures:

- | | | | |
|-----|------------|----------------------------|------------|
| (X) | Jan | -ow | -a |
| | NOUN | INFLECTION | INFLECTION |
| (Y) | Jan | -ow | -a |
| | [NOUN ROOT | DERIVATION] _{Adj} | INFLECTION |

If structure (X) is correct, then we would seem to have an instance of Suffixaufnahme, since we would have a noun marked inflectionally for case to show its attributive function and marked a second time to show agreement with the head. If (Y) is correct, then this is not an instance of Suffixaufnahme, since there is no noun directly involved and there is only one instance of inflectional marking of case.

There is a long-running debate about these structures, though not exactly in these terms. The debate goes back to Trubetzkoy (1937: 16), who examined the situation in Old Church Slavonic and claimed that since every noun denoting an animate has a possessive adjective, the latter should be considered a

part of the paradigm of the noun (just as participles were considered to be part of the paradigm of the verb). The conclusion from this line of argument (essentially that of productivity) would be that the forms called possessive adjectives should be treated as a matter for inflectional rather than derivational morphology, which would favor analysis (X). The subsequent debate is reviewed in Corbett (1987: 304–307), and only the main points will be repeated here.

The second main line of argument, namely the syntactic argument, goes back to Löttsch (1965); he considered data from various Slavonic languages and claimed that certain syntactic characteristics of the possessive adjective, in particular control facts, are shared with the noun. Consider the following example, which shows that the possessive adjective is able to control a relative pronoun in Upper Sorbian¹⁴ (Löttsch 1965: 378; for more examples see Fasske 1981: 385):

- (13) slyšetaj Wićazowy hlós, kotryž je zastupil
[they] hear Wićaz's voice, who is gone=in
'They hear Wićaz's voice, who has gone in'

The relative pronoun *kotryž* is masculine singular; the sense shows that its antecedent is *Wićaz*, the noun underlying the possessive adjective, and not *hlós* (which is also masculine singular). This is behavior more like that of a noun (strictly an NP) rather than that of an adjective, favoring analysis (X). And this line that emphasizes the syntactic facts is in accord with Anderson's view that "inflectional morphology is what is relevant to the syntax" (1982: 587). The control possibilities of possessive adjectives in Slavonic show that their formation is relevant to syntax.

The third argument is that in Upper Sorbian the suffixes *-in/-ow-* may mark NPs, even though they attach just to nouns. We consider this phenomenon in Section 3.2 below. At this point it is only necessary to note that marking a phrasal feature on a single item is something which regularly occurs in inflectional morphology.

Against this, and again without repeating the detail given in Corbett (1987), there are three strong arguments in favor of analysis (Y). The first concerns word-class membership. If we look first at syntax, then, as noted earlier, Upper Sorbian attributive adjectives typically precede the head noun, while nouns in an attributive relation follow (as in (4)). The possessive adjective precedes the noun, copying the behavior of undisputed adjectives. And when we turn to morphology, then we note that the possessive adjective agrees with the noun in gender, number, and case. This is what we expect of adjectives, rather than nouns. However, Suffixaufnahme is unusual in precisely this respect, so the mere fact of agreement does not make the point. But the purely morphological data do support the adjective analysis (Y); the point is that noun endings and adjective endings are not identical in Upper Sorbian, and when they differ, the possessive adjective takes endings identical with those of other adjectives:

- (14) wučerj-ow-eje džowk-i
 teacher-Poss-GenSgFem daughter-GenSg
 'of the teacher's daughter'
- (15) starš-eje džowk-i
 elder-GenSgFem daughter-GenSg
 'of the elder daughter'

This identity is not always found in other Slavonic languages, and there are instances where particular endings are as those of nouns; however, I believe that the patterns of syncretism within the paradigms always match those of other adjectives and not those of nouns. There are, then, good arguments that possessive adjectives are indeed adjectives, and so in favor of structure (Y); this would mean that the formation of possessive adjectives involves a change of category, which many take as a sufficient condition for a phenomenon to be recognized as derivational in nature (Anderson 1982: 586).

A second argument in favor of the derivational account concerns the ordering of affixes. It is well known that derivational affixes are typically found "inside" inflectional affixes (closer to the root). Moreover, in Slavonic we generally find a single inflectional affix per stem. Since *-in-/ow-* occur inside the undisputed inflectional affixes, this supports the claim that they are derivational.

The third argument in favor of the derivational analysis is that derivational morphology allows idiosyncratic gaps and idiosyncratic possibilities to a much greater extent than does inflectional morphology. Thus nouns may decline or not decline, but we do not find nouns in Slavonic which have, say, only a dative singular form, nor which have all forms except a dative singular.¹⁵ But there are countless examples of items which allow or do not allow particular derivational formations. Richter (1980: 116–117) points out that Upper Sorbian has a small number of indeclinable nouns, such as *abbé* 'priest'. These nouns cannot take inflectional endings, but they may form possessive adjectives, as in the case of *abbéowy* 'priest's', which again suggests that possessive adjectives are derivational formations.

Given these strong but conflicting arguments, it would appear that (as suggested in Corbett 1987: 327–329) the possessive adjective shows features both of inflectional and of derivational behavior, to varying degrees in different Slavonic languages. This illustrates a more general claim that there is no clear dividing line between inflectional and derivational morphology (compare Plank 1991). Rather than being able to assign the possessive adjective to structure (X) or (Y), we need to place it somewhere in between, varying according to language. Fasske (1981: 381–388) assigns it to a separate part of speech; certainly we are dealing with an unusual object, and the lack of items with similar behavior in the relevant languages makes it hard to classify. It seems clear, however, that we cannot assign the possessive adjective in Upper Sorbian uniquely to structure (X). It does not therefore represent a prototypical case of

Suffixaufnahme. The rest of this section will be concerned with other aspects of its behavior measured against the standard of typical Suffixaufnahme.

3.2. Noun or Noun Phrase?

A question that was alluded to in the discussion of (13) above concerns the root of the possessive adjective, specifically whether this root is a noun or an NP. Since case marking typically affects NPs, then a construction would be deemed closer to prototypical Suffixaufnahme if whole NPs were involved rather than just nouns. So we must ask whether possessive adjectives can be "formed from" NPs rather than just from nouns. Consider this Upper Sorbian example (Fasske 1981: 385):

- (16) To je naš-eho wučerj-ow-a zahrodk-a. Wón wjele w njej džěła.
 that is our-GenSgMasc teacher-Poss-NomSgFem garden-NomSgFem.
 He=NomSgMasc a=lot in it works.
 'That is our teacher's garden. He [our teacher] works in it a lot.'

The personal pronoun *wón* takes as its antecedent the NP *naš wučer* 'our teacher', which underlies the phrase headed by the possessive adjective (something that is not possible for other types of adjective). In other words, in Upper Sorbian the suffixes *-in-/ow-*, though they attach to nouns, may mark NPs. This phenomenon, the marking of a single item for a feature which rightly belongs on a whole phrase, is often found in inflectional morphology (Carlson 1983: 73): case may be marked just on the noun which heads an NP, definiteness may be marked just on an adjective but not on its head noun, and so on. If a construction allows the attributive relation to be marked in this way, we should consider it closer to prototypical Suffixaufnahme than one in which only bare nouns were involved. There is a terminological problem here: the Slavonic languages regularly allow possessive adjectives to control anaphoric pronouns, though most do not allow examples like (16); yet it is normally assumed that NPs, not nouns, control anaphoric pronouns. It would be more precise, therefore, to say that the formation of the possessive adjective is restricted in many languages to NPs consisting of a bare noun, while some, notably Upper Sorbian, allow it to be formed from more complex NPs.

We have already seen an example of control of a relative pronoun ((13) above). The remarkable thing about Upper Sorbian is that it allows the possessive adjective to control an attributive modifier (equivalently, it allows the possessive adjective to be formed from an NP consisting of attributive modifier and noun). We can see this again in the next example (from Fasske 1981: 382–383):

- (17) moj-eho muž-ow-a sotr-a
 my-GenSgMasc husband-Poss-NomSgFem sister-NomSgFem
 'my husband's sister'

In (17), the suffix *-ow-* may be thought of as marking the phrase *mój muž* 'my husband'. To it is added the inflectional marker for nominative singular feminine, showing agreement with the head noun *sojra* 'sister'. The particularly interesting form is *mojeho*; this is masculine because *muž* 'husband', which "underlies" *mužowa*, is masculine. It is singular for the same reason (recall that the formation of the possessive adjective requires a singular referent). However, its case is genitive. The genitive is the typical attributive case, but this case is not shown directly on the head of *mojeho*. There is no possibility of a marker showing the case of the main head of the NP being added to *mojeho* (**moj-eho-a*). Thus the possessive adjective is possible in Upper Sorbian, even though the NP consists of more than a bare noun; but the case of the main head is marked by the possessive adjective itself, and not by its modifiers. Looking at (17) in a slightly different way, we may say that the phrase *mojeho mužowa* 'my husband's' does show a type of Suffixaufnahme, in the sense that the modifier *mojeho* marks the attributive (by means of the genitive), while the possessive adjective *mužowa* marks agreement in case with the head noun; thus two members of the phrase "cooperatively" show Suffixaufnahme.

This construction in Upper Sorbian is indeed remarkable; the only other modern Slavonic language which has it, and to a more limited extent, is Slovak. Control of the relative pronoun, as in (13) above, is much more common, while control of the anaphoric pronoun, as in (16), is general (except for being limited in Polish). There is an implicational hierarchy of targets for the possessive adjective:

(18) attributive < relative pronoun < personal pronoun

This control hierarchy can in turn be subsumed under the Agreement Hierarchy (Corbett 1987: 318–319).

3.3. Attraction

We saw in the last section that an attributive modifier controlled by a possessive adjective stands in the genitive, irrespective of the main head noun, and that it cannot take an additional suffix-copying marker to agree in case with the main head noun. In this respect, the phenomenon known as attraction is especially relevant. The following example is as expected, comparable to (17) above:

(19) w naš-eho nan-ow-e chěž-i
 in our-GenSgMasc father-Poss-LocSgFem house-LocSgFem¹⁶
 'in our father's house'

Besides such examples, it is possible for the attributive modifier to take on the same features as those of the possessive adjective and head noun, thus showing "attraction." This example is from Šewc-Schuster (1976: 27); see also Šewc-Schuster (1968: 103) and Fasske (1981: 384):¹⁷

- (20) w naš-*ej* nanow-*ej* chěž-*i*
 in our-LocSgFem father-Poss-LocSgFem house-LocSgFem
 'in our father's house'

In (20) *našej* agrees in case (and gender and number) with the main head noun *chěžī* (which is locative, singular, and feminine).¹⁸ Note that in order to do this, it "drops" its normal agreement inflection and so does not agree with the noun underlying the possessive adjective. Thus (20) is closer to a prototypical Suffixaufnahme construction than is (19), but the fact that one suffix is dropped to make way for the other means that it is certainly not a prototypical Suffixaufnahme construction.

It is worth comparing the possibilities shown by (19) and (20) with prototypical Suffixaufnahme. If we have an NP in an attributive relation to another NP, then in a language with prototypical Suffixaufnahme we would expect this structure:

- (21) [_{NP₁} [_{NP₂} ADJ-CASE2-CASE1 N-CASE2-CASE1] N-CASE1]

The attributive NP (NP₂) "should" be marked by case, indicated as 'CASE2' (probably the genitive). The main NP (NP₁) "should" also be marked by case (CASE1), according to its role in the sentence. This same case should appear on the attributive NP, outside the attributive case marking, thus showing a mirror-image effect (Plank 1990: 1042–1043). What we actually get in Upper Sorbian is a marker of the attributive relation on the noun in NP₂, but not one which is a normal case marker, as discussed earlier; this is followed by the marker of CASE1. The adjective usually marks the attributive relation (CASE2: genitive) as in (19) above. It may instead show CASE1, in the attraction examples such as (20). But it must show one or the other case; it may not show both.

3.4. Recursion

A final yardstick against which we can measure the possessive adjective construction is that of recursion; the most developed Suffixaufnahme systems allow recursion. This is very rare with the possessive adjective; however, Löttsch (1965: 378) quotes the following Upper Sorbian example:

- (22) přez Mar-*in-eje* maćer-*n-u* smjerć
 through Marja-Poss-GenSgFem mother-Poss-AccSgFem death (AccSgFem)¹⁹
 'through Marja's mother's death'

The possessive adjective *maćernu* controls the preceding possessive adjective *Marineje*, which is therefore genitive singular. Informants accept (22) but say that the use of the adnominal genitive would be much more likely, especially in the spoken language.²⁰ This is perhaps the severest test—examples are rare

even in undisputed Suffixaufnahme languages—and so it is not surprising that such recursion is rare in Slavonic.

4. The Problem

We have seen that the possessive adjective construction in Slavonic, and particularly in Upper Sorbian, shares several features with Suffixaufnahme, and yet could not be called an instance of prototypical Suffixaufnahme. It appears that this is not only the closest that Slavonic²¹ comes to a Suffixaufnahme construction but also the closest it can come. We now consider why. There are two types of reason, though they are related: the first concerns the morphological type of the Slavonic languages, and the second concerns general morphological and phonological patterns.

The Slavonic languages are typical fusional languages (though less so in the cases of Bulgarian and Macedonian). Individual inflectional formatives are associated with particular categories (such as noun or adjective), and even within a category they are often restricted to particular sets of stems (inflectional classes). They are not free to attach promiscuously to items of different types. There is no genitive inflection as such: rather there is an inflection marking genitive and singular on nouns of inflectional class I, another for class II, two more for the plural, and so on. This is an unwelcoming environment for Suffixaufnahme.

However, the suffixes *-in-/-ov-*, which are an unusual pairing of suffixes, partially compensate for the problem of fusional morphology. The distribution of the two according to the gender or inflectional class of the host noun varies within Slavonic, as discussed earlier. But they are not a complete pair; for example, as the possessive adjective has declined in Russian, the forms in *-in-* have been better preserved than those in *-ov-*. They do not really fulfill the role of “catalytic affix” (Plank 1990: 1040), since they do not attach freely and since they form a stem which in turn accepts formatives only of the appropriate type. They cannot escape from the fusional nature of the morphological system.

The only other way in which Slavonic might achieve Suffixaufnahme is by attaching a second set of case endings directly to the genitive ending. This would be totally contrary to the underlying grain of the morphology, as already described. Nevertheless, Suffixaufnahme is unusual in any case, and so this possibility should not be rejected out of hand. But besides the general type of reasons already advanced, which apply equally here, there is a second, more specific, type of reason why Suffixaufnahme of this nature could not appear in Slavonic. Nominal stems in Slavonic typically end in a consonant (compare Stankiewicz 1986: 279). Inflections typically begin with a vowel and end in a vowel or consonant, more usually a vowel (and certainly genitive endings are usually vowel-final, often consisting of a single vowel). Combinations of vowel plus vowel are avoided, to varying degrees in different languages. Thus the possibility of adding a second ending to a genitive ending is all but excluded: the genitive does not provide a stem for further inflections.

This can only be done by formatives like *-in-/ov-* and, as we have already seen, there are insuperable problems with this route as far as prototypical Suffixaufnahme is concerned.

5. Conclusion

Constructions with possessive adjectives vary considerably within the Slavonic languages. In languages where they have the greatest possibilities, notably Upper Sorbian, there are constructions which share characteristics with Suffixaufnahme. However, these do not have all the features we associate with prototypical Suffixaufnahme. This is because the fusional morphology of these languages prevents the free combining of formatives, which is one of the requirements of Suffixaufnahme.

Notes

I am grateful to Dr. Gerald Stone and to participants at the Suffixaufnahme Conference (Konstanz, September 1991) for helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper. Errors are mine.

1. In Upper Sorbian, which will figure prominently, in the unmarked order the verb stands in final position (in main and subordinate clauses) except that auxiliaries, which are clitics, stand in second position (see Stone 1993: 652–656).

2. Additions to the bibliography there include: Ermakova (1986), Ivić (1986), Mološnaja (1987), Bräuer (1988), Golovčeva, Ivanov, Mološnaja, Nikolaeva and Svešnikova (1988), Huntley (1989), and Ivanov (1989).

3. Upper Sorbian belongs to the West Slavonic group and is spoken in Lusatia, in the eastern part of Germany. Its cultural center is Budyšin (Bautzen). Taking Upper Sorbian together with the related Lower Sorbian, the total number of speakers is around 70,000. All adult speakers are bilingual with German, though some speak Sorbian better than German. However, the construction under consideration—in particular the control of adjectival modifiers by the possessive adjective—is not found in German but is found in other Slavonic languages, so there is no reason to suggest it is of German origin. For data we rely heavily on Fasske (1981: 381–388).

4. The genitive as in (1) is possible if the logical accent falls on *Jana*, or in high literary style. There is a third alternative, which was judged the second most common variant, after (2); it is a colloquial and dialectal form:

kniha wot Jana
book of Jan
'Jan's book'

The inclusion of the preposition *wot* is a Germanism.

5. *Kniha* is a feminine noun, with which *Janowa* agrees. However, while the *-a* ending is nominative and singular, it is not necessarily feminine: most, but not all, nouns of this declensional class are feminine. For simplicity we shall continue to gloss gender as in this example, and this caveat for nouns should be borne in mind.

6. The stems are *nan-* and *starost-* respectively; in the nominative (citation) form, *nan-* takes *-ŝ* while *starost-* takes *-a*.
7. For simplicity we omit original *i*-stems; few form possessive adjectives.
8. In some southern and western dialects of Czech discussed by Vachek (1954; 1961: 29–31) the possessive adjective has become indeclinable.
9. In this example the *-ow* is an inflectional marker (the genitive plural for this paradigm) and not the suffix for forming the possessive adjective.
10. This is the citation form, the nominative singular masculine.
11. The number of actual instances is not given by Ivanova.
12. This restriction does not apply fully to Slovak, as mentioned in Section 3.2, but Ivanova does not comment on this.
13. In this instance the agreeing case marker on the attributive adjective matches exactly that of the head; this phonological identity is not a requirement for Suffixaufnahme (Plank 1990: 1040), and there are other instances in Upper Sorbian where the agreeing case marker is not identical to the marker on the head noun.
14. Around half the Slavonic languages allow this; see Corbett (1987: 319). For recent discussion of Slovene see Orešnik (1992).
15. There are isolated instances of Russian nouns that have no genitive plural.
16. While we have translated *naš nan* as 'our father' it may also mean 'my father'. Even an only child can use it with this meaning, which may well be connected with the previously widespread use of the plural *wy* 'you' as a form of respect for father or mother (for which see Stone 1976: 190–191). *Mój nan* 'my father' occurs, but some Sorbs find it odd (Gerald Stone, personal communication).
17. Fasske (1981: 384) suggests that attraction requires that the possessive adjective (and therefore its head noun) be in the singular. But Šewc-Schuster (1968: 103) gives examples with the plural, like *naše nanowe pola* 'our father's fields'. For attraction in Old Church Slavonic see Huntley (1989: 28) and for rare dialect examples of attraction in Slovak see Štolc (1966: 26).
18. The preposition *w* 'in' is phonetically null, though it has a variant *we* which is pronounced (Stone 1993: 614–615).
19. The accusative singular of *smjereć* 'death' has a null ending, like the nominative; it is feminine.
20. See Huntley (1989: 28) for examples of how the stacking of possessive adjectives is avoided in Old Church Slavonic.
21. According to Watkins (1967: 2195), within Indo-European the possessive adjective is best represented in Slavonic and in Aeolic Greek. See also Plank's introduction for similar patterns in Romany and Anatolian Indo-European languages.

References

- Anderson, Stephen R. 1982. Where's morphology? *Linguistic Inquiry* 13, 571–612.
- Andrejčič, Ljubomir D. 1978. *Osnovna bālgarska gramatika*. Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo. [First edition 1944; minor corrections in the 1978 edition.]
- Bräuer, Herbert. 1988. Die possessiven Adjektiva auf *-ov* und *-in* des Russischen der Gegenwart und ihre Possessivität: Teil II. *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie* 48, 1–61.
- Carlson, Greg N. 1983. Marking constituents. In *Linguistic Categories: Auxiliaries and*

- Related Puzzles, vol. 1: *Categories*, ed. by Frank Heny and Barry Richards, 69–98. Dordrecht: Reidel.
- Corbett, Greville G. 1987. The morphology/syntax interface: Evidence from possessive adjectives in Slavonic. *Language* 63, 299–345.
- Ermakova, M. I. 1986. Kategorija posessivnosti v serbolužickom jazyke: Nekotorye osobennosti ee vyraženiya. In *Slavjanskoe i balkanskoe jazykoznanie. Problemy dialektologii: Kategorija posessivnosti*, ed. by L. È. Kalnyn' and T. N. Mološnaja, 220–229. Moscow: Nauka.
- Fasske, Helmut. 1981. *Grammatik der obersorbischen Schriftsprache der Gegenwart: Morphologie*. Bautzen: VEB Domowina Verlag.
- Golovačeva, A., V. Ivanov, T. Mološnaja, T. Nikolaeva, and T. Svešnikova. 1988. Tipologija funkcionirovanja posessivnyx konstrukcij v slavjanskix jazykax. In *Slavjanskoe jazykoznanie: X Meždunarodnyj s'ezd slavistov: Sofija, sentjabr' 1988 g.: Doklady sovet'skoj delegacii*, ed. by N. I. Tolstoj, 103–116. Moscow: Nauka.
- Huntley, David. 1984. The distribution of the denominative adjective and the adnominal genitive in Old Church Slavonic. In *Historical Syntax*, ed. by Jacek Fisiak, 217–236. Berlin: Mouton.
- Huntley, David. 1989. Grammatical and lexical features in number and gender agreement in Old Bulgarian. *Paleobulgarica* 13, 4, 21–32.
- Ivanov, Vjačeslav V. (ed.) 1989. *Kategorija posessivnosti v slavjanskix i balkanskix jazykax*. Moscow: Nauka. [Contributions by A. V. Golovačeva, V. V. Ivanov, T. N. Mološnaja, T. M. Nikolaeva, and T. N. Svešnikova.]
- Ivanova, T. A. 1975. Nekotorye aspekty sopostavitel'nogo analiza posessivnyx konstrukcij. (Na materiale sovremennyx slavjanskix literaturnyx jazykax.) *Slavjanskaja filologija* (Leningrad) 3, 148–152.
- Ivanova, T. A. 1976. K voprosu o sootnošenii upotrebljaemosti posessivnyx konstrukcij v sovremennyx slavjanskix jazykax. *Voprosy filologii* (Izdatel'stvo Leningradskogo universiteta) 5, 3–10.
- Ivić, Milka. 1986. On referential strategies: Genitivization vs. adjectivization in Serbo-Croatian. *Linguistische Arbeitsberichte* (Leipzig) 54–55, 23–27.
- Lötzsch, Ronald. 1965. Das sog. Possessivadjektiv im Slawischen, speziell im Sorbischen, und seine Stellung im System der Redeteile. *Forschungen und Fortschritte* 39, pt. 12, 377–379.
- Michałk, F. 1974. Kratkij očerk grammatiki sovremennogo verxnelužickogo literaturnogo jazyka. In *Hornjoserbski-ruski slovník*, compiled by K. K. Trofimovič, 472–511. Bautzen/Budyšin: Ludowe nakladnistwo Domowina.
- Mološnaja, Tat'jana. 1987. Pritjažatel'nye prilagatel'nye v slavjanskix jazykax. *Sopostavitel'no ezikoznanie* (Sofia) 12, No. 6, 5–12. [This material is expanded in Ivanov 1989, 133–148.]
- Orešnik, Janez. 1992. O neki skladdenjski posebnosti slovenskih svojilnih pridevnikov. *Miklošičev zbornik* 1992, 263–267.
- Plank, Frans. 1990. Suffix copying as a mirror-image phenomenon. *Linguistics* 28, 1039–1045.
- Plank, Frans. 1991. Inflection and derivation. *EUROTYP Working Papers* VII/10.
- Richter, Heinz. 1980. *Die Possessivadjektive im Sorbischen unter Berücksichtigung der benachbarten slawischen Sprachen*. Dissertation zur Promotion A, Karl-Marx-Universität, Leipzig.
- Šewc[-Schuster], Hinc. 1968. *Gramatika hornjoserbskeje rěče, 1. zwjazk: Fonematika a morfologija*. Bautzen/Budyšin: Ludowe nakladnistwo Domowina.

- Šewc-Schuster, H[inc]. 1976. *Gramatika hornjoserbskeje řeče, 2. zwjazk: Syntaksa*. Bautzen/Budyšin: Ludowe nakładnistwo Domowina.
- Stankiewicz, Edward. 1986. Slavic morphophonemics in its typological and diachronic aspects. In *The Slavic Languages: Unity in Diversity*, by Edward Stankiewicz, 266–300. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Stevanović, M. 1974. *Savremeni srpskohrvatski jezik (gramatički sistemi i književnojezička norma)*, 2: *Sintaksa*. 2d ed. Beograd: Naučna knjiga.
- Stone, Gerald. 1976. Pronominal address in Sorbian. *Lětopis Instituta za serbski ludospyt* (Bautzen) Rjad A, 23/2, 182–191.
- Stone, Gerald. 1993. Sorbian (Upper and Lower). In *The Slavonic Languages*, ed. by Bernard Comrie and Greville G. Corbett, 593–685. London: Routledge.
- Štolc, Jozef. 1966. Vyjadrovanie posesivneho vzťahů v slovenčine a jeho slovanská súvislosť. *Slavica Slovaca* 1; 3, 259–267.
- Trubetzkoy, N. S. 1937. O pritižatelj'nyx prilagatel'nyx (possessiva) starocerkovno-slavjanskogo jazyka. In *Zbornik lingvističkih i filologskih rasprava A. Beliču o četrdesetogodišnjici njegova naučnog rada posvećuju njegovi prijatelji učenici*, 15–20. Beograd: Mlada Srbija.
- Trubetzkoy, N. 1939. Le rapport entre le déterminé, le déterminant et le défini. In *Mélanges de linguistique offerts à Charles Bally*, 75–82. Geneva.
- Vachek, Josef. 1954. K problematice českých posesivních adjektiv. *Studie a Práce Linguistické* 1, 171–189.
- Vachek, Josef. 1961. Some less familiar aspects of the analytical trend of English. *Brno Studies in English* 3, 9–78.
- Watkins, Calvert. 1967. Remarks on the genitive. In *To Honor Roman Jakobson: Essays on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, vol. 3, 2191–2198. The Hague: Mouton.