

[Prepositional categories and prototypes: contrasting some Russian, Slovenian, Croatian and Polish examples in Issue 1](#)

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This analysis is a part of a planned cognitive linguistic study of the main spatial prepositions in Slavic languages inherited from the Old Church Slavic prepositional inventory. These prepositions show the compatibility of the main spatial senses in different Slavic languages. However, prepositional usage varies to a certain extent from language to language, even between historically closely related languages, in what seems to be an unpredictable manner at first glance. It is a challenge to contrast examples of prepositional usage that do not show compatibility and to attempt to explain the differences in terms of structuring the prepositional categories differently. For our analysis we examined one language from each branch of Slavic: Croatian (South), Polish (West) and Russian (East). Slovenian (South) was also chosen in order to provide a comparison within one branch. A complete analysis of the spatial and related meanings of the preposition *na* in Croatian, Slovenian, Polish and Russian has already been worked out (Šarić & Brlobaš 2000). In this study the following problems will be discussed: 1) The interface between the prepositions *na* and *u* (Rus, Sln *v*, Pol *w*) in some spatial uses, 2) the meaning of the preposition *nad* and the interface between the prepositions *nad* and *na*, i.e., the relation of the meaning of the prepositions *nad* and *na* in the three languages. This last topic raises our third point of interest: 3) The meaning of the prepositions *na* and *nad* and their related prefixes.