

# *II Sorbian (Upper and Lower)*

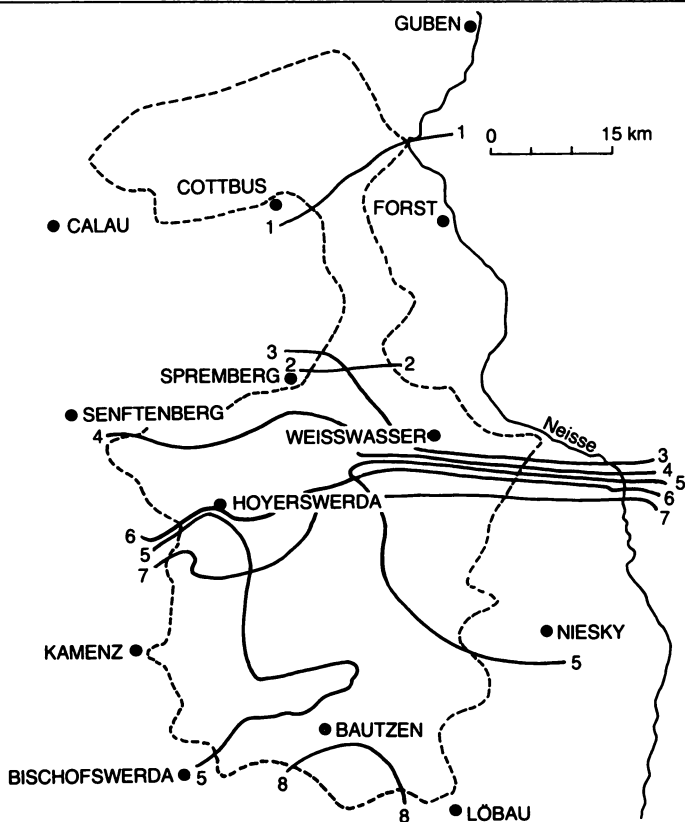
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## **1 Introduction**

The Sorbian speech area has no precisely defined boundaries, natural or otherwise. In the tenth century the Sorbian-speaking population was settled in an area between the rivers Saale (in the west) and Bober and Queis (in the east). In the north it extended to where Berlin and Frankfurt-an-der-Oder now stand. In the south it was bounded by the Erzgebirge and the Lausitzer Gebirge. The neighbouring languages were Polabian (to the north), Polish (to the east), Czech (to the south) and German (to the west). Sorbian was thus spoken in an area which extended east of the Neisse into what is today (1993) Polish territory and included, in the west, the land where the towns of Halle, Leipzig, Zwickau and Chemnitz were later to appear. In the course of the succeeding centuries it contracted steadily until by the nineteenth century it had become what is still regarded as the Sorbian speech area with its northern limits about 50 miles (80 km) to the south-east of Berlin (see map 11.1). It extends for about 57 miles (92 km) from north to south and is roughly 41 miles (66 km) wide at its widest point measured from east to west. The southern limits are less than 5 miles (8 km) north of the Czech frontier. Within this area until the early twentieth century the rural population was predominantly Sorbian-speaking, but the main towns (Cottbus, Spremberg and Bautzen) were always predominantly German-speaking from the time of their foundation in the Middle Ages.

The area inhabited by the Sorbs formerly constituted the margraviates (border provinces) of Upper Lusatia (on the upper reaches of the River Spree) and Lower Lusatia (on the lower reaches). For this reason the language is sometimes known in English as *Lusatian*. In German the most common term until the Second World War was *wendisch*, though *sorbisch* was also used. After the war *sorbisch* was given official support and is now (1993) dominant, though *wendisch* was revived in Lower Lusatia in 1991. In English *Sorbian* is standard, but *Wendish* also exists. The equivalent adjective in both Upper and Lower Sorbian is *serbski* (derived from *Serb* 'a Sorb'). The varieties spoken in Upper Lusatia are referred to in English as Upper Sorbian, those spoken in Lower Lusatia as Lower Sorbian. The

Map 11.1 The Sorbian speech area



German and Sorbian equivalents are *Obersorbisch* (USo. *hornjoserbšćina*, LSo. *gornoserbšćina*) and *Niedersorbisch* (USo. *delnjoserbšćina*, LSo. *dolnoserbšćina*); for further information on the Sorbs generally see Stone (1972) and Urban (1980).

Long before the nineteenth century the Sorbian speech area had become an island surrounded by German-speakers and isolated from both Poles and Czechs. During and since the nineteenth century the Sorbian-speaking population has been steadily diluted by German immigration, by Sorbian emigration and by the tendency for Sorbs to transfer their allegiance from Sorbian to German. Today (1993) the area is overwhelmingly German-speaking, but Sorbian is far from being dead. In a cluster of about forty villages to the north-west of Bautzen which are both mainly Catholic and mainly Sorbian there is a fairly close-knit speech community. This is the nucleus of a larger loose-knit community scattered throughout Lusatia. A survey conducted in 1987 put the number of Sorbian-speakers at around

## KEY:

- - - - approximate external boundary of Sorbian in the mid-1960s  
 1        supine retained  
       supine lost  
 2        northern limit of transitional dialects  
 3        nom. and acc. dual of masc. nouns ends in *-a*  
       nom. and acc. dual of masc. nouns ends in *-aj*  
 4        PSI. *g* retained  
       PSI. *g* → *h*  
 5        verbal nouns in *-e* (e.g. *twarjenje* 'building')  
       verbal nouns in *-o* (e.g. *twarjenjo*)  
 6        southern limit of transitional dialects  
 7        aorist and imperfect lost  
       aorist and imperfect retained  
 8        dual retained  
       dual lost

The river Neisse constitutes the border between Germany and Poland.

67,000. Of these more than half are Lutherans, about a quarter are Catholics and the rest have no denominational allegiance.

The Constitution of the German Democratic Republic from 1949 to 1990 guaranteed and supported the cultural rights of the Sorbs. These rights are also recognized in the treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic signed in September 1990. Provision is made in certain schools for most subjects to be taught through the medium of Sorbian or for Sorbian to be taught as a subject. Between 1948 and 1984 over 2,350 Sorbian titles were published by the state-supported Domowina publishing house. The Upper Sorbian daily newspaper *Serbske Nowiny* and the Lower Sorbian weekly *Nowy Casnik* are successful thanks to state subsidies. The German-Sorbian theatre in Bautzen presents plays in Sorbian from time to time. Sorbian has so far not managed to become a regular feature of German television, but there are daily radio broadcasts in Sorbian. The Sorbian Ethnological Institute

(*Institut za serbski ludospyt*) in Bautzen, founded in 1951, was replaced in 1992 by a new Sorbian Institute (*Serbski Institut*) in the same premises but with a Lower Sorbian branch in Cottbus. Its activities include research into the language, history and folklore of the Sorbs.

A central role in the maintenance of Sorbian is played by the Lutheran and Catholic Churches. Mass in Sorbian is said regularly in the Catholic parishes. Lutheran services are also held in Sorbian, but less regularly. The Churches publish the Upper Sorbian newspapers *Katolski Posol* (twice monthly) and *Pomhaj Bóh* (monthly). The latter occasionally has a Lower Sorbian supplement.

The earliest surviving texts in Sorbian date from the sixteenth century, but fragmentary evidence from earlier centuries also exists in the form of Sorbian words, phrases or even short sentences scattered here and there in Latin and German documents. One of the main early sources of this kind is the Chronicle of Bishop Thietmar of Merseburg, written in 1012–18. The first Sorbian text is the Bautzen Burghers' Oath (1532), a formula by which citizens of Bautzen swore allegiance to the king and the town authorities. It is only forty-two years older than the first Sorbian printed book, Albin Moller's *Wendisches Gesangbuch* (Bautzen, 1574), which consists of a hymnal and catechism in Lower Sorbian. The first Upper Sorbian printed book is a catechism translated and published by Wenceslaus Warichius (Bautzen, 1595). The local features in these early texts are very clear and, in fact, things were to stay that way until the eighteenth century. A manuscript New Testament of 1548, translated from German by Mikławš Jakubica, is in the dialect once spoken to the east of the Neisse in the vicinity of Sorau (Żary in present-day Poland). Like the other translations of devotional works at this time it was intended solely for local use.

The seventeenth century saw the appearance of three Sorbian grammars, but only one of them was printed. This was the *Principia linguae wendicae quam aliqui wandalicam vocant* of Jacobus Xaverius Ticinus (Prague, 1679), based on the northern Catholic dialect of Wittichenau (Sorbian Kulow). Georgius Ludovici's manuscript 'Rudimenta grammaticae Sorabo-Vandalicae idiomatis Budissinatis', written before 1673, is based (as the title indicates) on the Bautzen dialect. The earliest of these three grammars, however, is Johannes Chojanus's Lower Sorbian 'Linguae Vandalicae ad dialectum districtus Cotbusiani formandae aliqualis conatus', a manuscript dated 1650.

The main sphere of activity of the literary languages before the nineteenth century was the Churches. Therefore the translation of the Bible was of crucial importance in their development. The printing of the Upper Sorbian Bible for Lutherans began with the appearance in 1670 of Michał Frencl's translation of the gospels of St Matthew and St Mark. This was followed in 1706 (the year of his death) by his translation of the whole New Testament. Frencl wrote in the subdialect of the Bautzen dialect,

spoken to the east and south of the town, known as the Hill Dialect (German *Gebirgsdialekt*, USo. *přihórska narěč*). In 1703, however, the Upper Lusatian States (Oberlausitzer Landstände) set up a committee to translate the whole Bible using a literary variety based broadly on the whole Bautzen region. The translation was published in 1728 and established this variety as the literary standard for Lutherans. Events of similar significance for Lower Sorbs were the publication of Gottlieb Fabricius's translation of the New Testament in Kahren in 1709 and of Johann Friedrich Fryco's Old Testament in Cottbus in 1796. They established the Cottbus dialect as the basis for the Lower Sorbian literary language.

The Upper Sorbian literary standard for Catholics in the seventeenth century was based on the dialect of Wittichenau (Sorbian Kulow). The special influence of this little town, situated about 7 kilometres south of Hoyerswerda (see map 11.1), was probably due to the fact that it had a grammar school and that consequently it was able to produce a number of influential clerics. Ticinus (see above) came from Wittichenau and chose to base his grammar on its dialect. It was also the birthplace of Jurij Hawštyń Swětlik (1650–1729), who between 1688 and 1707 translated the entire Vulgate into a literary language based on the same dialect. Swětlik's translation has never been printed, but a by-product of this work was his *Vocabularium Latino-Serbicum* (Bautzen, 1721), the first Sorbian dictionary. It served to confirm further the prestige of the Wittichenau dialect. In the mid-eighteenth century, however, Catholic Sorbs from the Crostwitz area (south-east of Kamenz) gained an increasingly influential position in the ruling circles of the Catholic hierarchy, and the literary language for Catholics may by about 1750 be said to be based on the Crostwitz dialect. A confusing custom emerged of calling the Crostwitz dialect the Catholic dialect despite the fact that the Sorbs of the Wittichenau parish are also Catholics. The Crostwitz-based literary variant was codified by Franz Schneider in his *Grammatik der wendischen Sprache katholischen Dialekts* (Bautzen, 1853).

Ticinus's orthography was based on that of Czech and, although a number of changes were made later, his influence on the Catholic spelling system remained perceptible until it ceased to exist as a separate entity. The orthography used in Protestant publications was mainly based on German. In 1841 Jan Ernst Smoler introduced a new orthographic system for Upper Sorbian, based on those already in use in some other Slavonic languages, notably Czech, and involving the use of Roman type. Hitherto, Sorbian had always been printed in the Black Letter typeface known as *Fraktur*, an example of which is reproduced in figure 11.1. In 1843 Smoler's system was used for the first time to print Lower Sorbian. In both Upper and Lower Sorbian, however, the new orthography was slow to acquire popularity.

In the 1840s secular matters began to be discussed with increasing



frequency in Upper Sorbian publications and the vocabulary of the literary language underwent far-reaching changes. Words to denote new concepts were introduced from international terminology (though the immediate source for such words was naturally German): for example, *anthropologa* 'anthropologist', *grammatika* 'grammar', *musika* 'music', *werb* 'verb'. Simultaneously, there was a tendency to reject non-international German borrowings and to replace them with Slavonic words, usually based on Czech models.

Smoler was the main instigator of the foundation in 1847 of the *Maćica Serbska*, a scientific and cultural body, which published the *Časopis Maćicy Serbskeje*, a learned journal which influenced the development of the literary languages. It was printed in Smoler's new spelling system (known as the 'analogical' orthography), with Roman type, and in the new Upper Sorbian literary language, purged of many of the results of German interference. In the mid-nineteenth century there were five ways of writing and printing Sorbian. These were (a) that of the *Časopis Maćicy Serbskeje* (Upper Sorbian for secular purposes in the analogical orthography and in Roman type); (b) that of the Upper Sorbian Lutherans (based on the composite literary language of the 1728 Bible and in Black Letter); (c) that of the Upper Sorbian Catholics (based on the Crostwitz dialect, but vestigially Ticinian, and in Black Letter); (d) Lower Sorbian Black Letter (exemplified in figure 11.1); and (e) Lower Sorbian in the analogical orthography and in Roman (this was extremely rare).

From 1842 onwards there was a weekly newspaper for Upper Sorbs entitled *Tyžděnska Nowina*, printed in the Protestant orthography and in Black Letter. The Lower Sorbian weekly *Bramborski serski casnik* (Black Letter) first appeared in 1848. A significant new departure was the monthly *Lužičan*, which from 1860 appeared under the joint auspices of Smoler (a Protestant) and Michał Hórník (a Catholic priest) and printed in the analogical orthography in Roman type. Gradually a series of concessions were made by both Catholic and Protestant Upper Sorbian writers and editors. Nevertheless, even by the 1930s some Catholic publications were still reflecting certain peculiarities of the Crostwitz dialect and the daily *Serbske Nowiny* was still using Black Letter and the old orthography. Complete Upper Sorbian unification had still not been achieved when, in 1937, all printing in Sorbian was banned. Only the *Katolski Posoľ*, protected from the ban by the Nazi Concordat with the Vatican, continued to appear until 1939, when it too was closed down. It was not until after the Second World War that a single set of norms for Upper Sorbian was adopted, using a slightly modified version of the analogical orthography and Roman type.

Lower Sorbian has only with great difficulty maintained its separate status as a literary language. A Lower Sorbian section of the *Maćica Serbska* was established in 1880, but the society's journal, the *Časopis*

*Maćicy Serbskeje*, only rarely published items in Lower Sorbian. It announced that it carried items 'in the Lower Sorbian dialect, when possible', but it also published articles by Lower Sorbian authors on Lower Sorbian topics, written in Upper Sorbian. Compared with Upper Sorbian, the number of books and periodicals published in Lower Sorbian has always been small. Until the 1930s most publications in Lower Sorbian were printed in Black Letter and in the old orthography, but since the revival of Sorbian activity after the Second World War it has been printed exclusively in the new spelling and in Roman type.

## 2 Phonology

### 2.1 Segmental phoneme inventory

The segmental vowel phonemes of both Upper and Lower Sorbian are as follows:

i		u
ě		ó
e	o	
	a	

/u/, /ó/ and /o/ are labialized. The tongue position for /ě/ and /ó/ is higher than for /e/ and /o/, and in slow speech /ě/ and /ó/ are both subject to diphthongization ([ie] and [uo] respectively).

The segmental consonant phonemes of Upper Sorbian are shown in table 11.1.

**Table 11.1** Consonant phonemes of Upper Sorbian

	<i>Labio-</i>	<i>Pre-</i>	<i>Post-</i>	<i>Velar</i>	<i>Laryngeal</i>
	<i>Bilabial</i>	<i>dental</i>	<i>Dental</i>	<i>Alveolar</i>	<i>palatal</i>
Plain	p	ɸ	t		k
stop	b	ɸ̣	d		g
Affricate			ts	tʃ	
Fricative		f	s	ʃ	x
	w	ɰ	z	ʒ	h
Nasal					
	m	ɱ		n	ɳ
Lateral				l	
Trill				r	ʀ
Semi-vowel					j



Following the spelling reform of 1 December 1948 the Upper Sorbian alphabet consists of the following thirty-four symbols: A a, B b, C c, Č č, D d, Dž dž, E e, Ě ě, F f, G g, H h, Ch ch, I i, J j, K k, Ľ ě, L l, M m, N n, Ní ní, O o, Ó ó, P p, R r, Ř ř, S s, Š š, T t, Č č, U u, W w, Y y, Z z, Ž ž. The reform substituted b for b', m for m', p for p', r for r', w for w' and ch for kh. The alphabetical order shown above is occasionally subject to variation. Normally (but not always) ó is not treated as a separate item from o. Therefore, for example, *hódny* 'worth, worthy' comes after *hober* 'giant' and before *hody* 'Christmas'. Only in the case of pairs of words that are in all other respects identical does o have precedence over ó (thus *ton* 'tone' precedes *tón* 'that'). But it is not unknown for o to have general precedence over ó, in which case *hódny* would follow *hody*. The unusual position occupied by č is due to the fact that it results from the metaphony *t* (before front vowels) > č (as in *čěto* 'body' < \**tělo*). In some alphabetical lists it may follow not t but č, or it may even precede č.

In both Upper and Lower Sorbian the letters Q q, V v and X x are used only in foreign proper nouns, such as *Quebec*, *Voltaire*, *Marx*. In borrowings these letters are replaced by kw, w and ks: USo. and LSo. *kwality* 'quality', USo. and LSo. *wila* 'villa', and USo. and LSo. *ekspedicija* 'expedition'.

The graphemes of present-day Upper Sorbian orthography correspond to the phonemes as follows:

## Vowels

<i>Grapheme</i>	<i>Phoneme</i>	<i>Example</i>
a	a	<i>nan</i> /nan/ 'father'
e	e	<i>čelo</i> /tʃelo/ 'calf'
ě	ě	<i>wěm</i> /wěm/ 'I know'
	e (if unstressed; even then, only inconsistently) <i>njewěm</i> /nɛwɛm/ or /nɛwěm/ 'I don't know'	
i (indicates that the preceding consonant is soft)	i	<i>bič</i> /biʧ/ 'to beat'
y (indicates that the preceding consonant is hard)		<i>byč</i> /bitʃ/ 'to be'
o	o	<i>pos</i> /pos/ 'dog'
	ó	<i>tón</i> /tón/ 'that'
ó	o (if unstressed; even then, only inconsistently) <i>rozhtós</i> /rózwos/ or /rózwós/ 'radio'	
u	u	<i>tu</i> /tu/ 'here'

## Consonants

p	p	<i>kopor</i> /kopor/ 'copper'
p (before i or ě)	} p	<i>pěc</i> /pěts/ 'stove'
pj		<i>pjasć</i> /pastsʃ/ 'fist'
b	b	<i>być</i> /bitʃ/ 'to be'
b (before i or ě)	} b	<i>bić</i> /bitʃ/ 'to beat'
bj		<i>njebjo</i> /nĕbjo/ 'sky, heaven'
m	m	<i>štom</i> /ʃtom/ 'tree'
m (before i or ě)	} m̄	<i>měc</i> /mĕtʃ/ 'to have'
mj		<i>mjaso</i> /mjaso/ 'meat, flesh'
ł	w	<i>hłós</i> /wós/ 'voice'
w	w	<i>wóz</i> /wós/ 'cart, car'
	∅	(before initial consonants) <i>wzac</i> /zatʃ/ 'to take'
	v	(in foreign words) <i>kolektiwny</i> /kolektivni/ 'collective'
w (before i or ě)	} w̄	<i>wić</i> /wiʃ/ 'to wind'
wj		<i>w rowje</i> /rowĕ/ 'in the grave'
f	} f	<i>foto</i> /foto/ 'photo'
hw		<i>hwězda</i> /fĕzda/ 'star'
n	n	<i>nan</i> /nan/ 'father'
n (before i or ě)	} n̄	<i>ně</i> /nĕ/ 'no'
nj		<i>njebjo</i> /nĕbjo/ 'sky, heaven'
ń	jn	<i>džen</i> /dĕejn/ 'day'
r	r	<i>raj</i> /raj/ 'paradise'
r (before i or ě)	} r̄	<i>hrib</i> /rip/ 'mushroom'
rj		<i>rjek</i> /rĕk/ 'hero'
		(both /r/ and /r̄/ are normally uvular; lingual /r/ and /r̄/ are archaic)
t	t	<i>tón</i> /tón/ 'that'
d	d	<i>do</i> /do/ 'to'
l	l	<i>lěto</i> /lĕto/ 'year'
c	ts	<i>cuzy</i> /tsuzi/ 'foreign'
tř	} tʃ	<i>tři</i> /tʃi/ 'three'
tč		<i>wótčina</i> /wótʃina/ 'fatherland'
tš		<i>krótsi</i> /krótsi/ 'shorter'
dš		<i>młódsi</i> /mwótʃi/ 'younger'
dč		<i>swědčíc</i> /swĕtʃitʃ/ 'to witness'

tř	ʦ	(rarely: for example, <i>třasc</i> /ʦastʦ/ 'to shake')
č } ć }	ʧ	<i>čin</i> /ʧin/ 'action'; <i>čicho</i> /ʧixo/ 'quiet'
dž	dʒ	<i>džen</i> /dʒejn/ 'day'
s	s	<i>so</i> /so/ 'self'
z	z	<i>zo</i> /zo/ 'that'
š } ř }	ʃ	<i>šat</i> /ʃat/ 'frock'; <i>křik</i> /křik/ 'cry' (ř occurs only in the combinations <i>tř</i> (see above), <i>kř</i> and <i>př</i> )
ž	ʒ	<i>hižo</i> /hiʒo/ 'already'
j	j	<i>ja</i> /ja/ 'I' (also to soften certain consonants: <i>pj</i> , <i>bj</i> , <i>mj</i> , <i>wj</i> , <i>nj</i> , <i>rj</i> )
k	k	<i>kerk</i> /kerk/ 'bush'
g	g	<i>grat</i> /grat/ 'equipment'
ch	x	<i>čicho</i> /ʧixo/ 'quiet'; /x/ is a velar spirant except at the beginning of a morpheme (where it is replaced by an aspirated plosive [k <sup>h</sup> ] (for example, <i>chodźić</i> /k <sup>h</sup> oɖʒitʃ/ 'to walk, go'))
		<i>chcu</i> /tsu/ 'I want' (initially before c)
		<i>hat</i> /hat/ 'pond' (initially before a vowel)
		<i>hrěch</i> /rěx/ 'sin' (initially before a consonant); <i>sněh</i> /sně/ 'snow' (finally); <i>wuhlo</i> /wulo/ 'coal' (internally before a consonant), but in a few words <i>h</i> internally before a consonant may be [ɣ] (a voiced variant of /x/), for example, <i>nahty</i> /naɣwi/ 'steep'
h	j	<i>kniha</i> /kɲija/ 'book' (between vowels) (colloquial variant of /kɲiha/)
		<i>noha</i> /nowa/ 'foot, leg' (between vowels) (colloquial variant of /noha/)
		<i>w</i>

The paired hard/soft consonant phonemes are: /p/:/p̥/, /b/:/b̥/, /m/:/m̥/, /w/:/w̥/, /n/:/n̥/, /r/:/r̥/, /ts/:/ts̥/. The phoneme /v/ is of extremely low frequency; its phonemic status is controversial. It occurs in oblique cases of certain foreign words (like *kolektiwa* /kolektiva/, genitive singular of *kolektiw* /kolektif/ 'collective') and in derivatives of the same words (*kolektiwny* /kolektivni/). The only Slavonic words in which it occurs are derivatives of *thać* /fatʃ/ 'to lie', namely *zetharny* /zevarni/ 'deceitful' and

*zetharnosc* /zevarnostʃ/ 'deceitfulness'. These words are typically used only by speakers of the Bautzen dialect. In the Catholic dialect they are replaced by *žec* /bʒetʃ/ and its derivatives. The phoneme /f/ occurs mainly in foreign and onomatopoeic words. The soft counterparts of /f/ and /v/ are extremely rare and not normally regarded as phonemes. The phonemic status of /tʃ/ is controversial.

The following are some of the main restrictions on phoneme distribution in Upper Sorbian:

- 1 Owing to the fact that in both Upper and Lower Sorbian Proto-Slavonic words and German borrowings acquired prothetic consonants (as in USo. *hić*/LSo. *hys* < \**iti* 'to go', USo. and LSo. *wokoło* < \**okolo* 'around', USo. *wolbyrny* 'foolish' (compare German *albern* 'foolish')) hardly any Upper Sorbian words begin with a vowel. Initial /a/ occurs in *a* 'and', *ale* 'but', *abo* 'or' and *ani* 'nor'; otherwise it is restricted to recent borrowings, such as *algebra* 'algebra' and *awto* 'car'. The phonemes /ě/ and /ó/ never appear initially; /e/, /o/, /i/ and /u/ appear initially only in recent borrowings (such as *energija* 'energy', *idyl* 'idyll', *objekt* 'object', *uniwersita* 'university'). Initial vowels are normally preceded by a glottal stop (Михалк/Мичалк 1974: 474): thus *ale* /ʔale/ 'but', *abo* /ʔabo/ 'or', *institut* /ʔinstitut/ 'institute'; but prothetic /h/ may also be heard: /hale/, /habo/ and so on.
- 2 The contrast between voiced and voiceless paired consonants (/d/ and /t/, /b/ and /p/, /z/ and /s/, /dʒ/ and /tʃ/, /g/ and /k/, /ʒ/ and /ʃ/) is neutralized in word-final position. The resultant sound is phonetically voiceless: *pad* /pat/ 'case', *snadž* /snaʃ/ 'perhaps', *nóż* /nóʃ/ 'knife'. The contrast is also neutralized in the position immediately before any one of these consonants owing to assimilation: *ličba* /lidʒba/ 'number', *susodka* /susotka/ '(female) neighbour'.
- 3 Post-vocalic soft consonants (including the historically soft *ń*) are preceded by epenthetic /j/, producing a diphthong: *kaž* /kajʃ/ 'as', *tež* /tejʃ/ 'also', *zemja* /zejma/ 'land', *džen* /dʒejn/ 'day'. If the vowel is /e/ or /ě/, the preceding consonant is often hard, notwithstanding the spelling, and /e/ is substituted for /ě/: *knjeni* /knejni/ 'lady', *běži* /bejʒi/ 'runs', *wječor* /wejtʃor/ 'evening' (Šewc 1968: 30–1).
- 4 The contrast between hard and soft paired consonants is, in the literary language, neutralized in word-final position. The sole phonetic function of the letter *ń* is to represent hard /n/ preceded by epenthetic /j/: *džen* /dʒejn/ 'day'.

The segmental consonant phonemes of Lower Sorbian are shown in table 11.2.

The Lower Sorbian orthography was last reformed in 1952. The alphabet now has the following thirty-five symbols: A a, B b, C c, Č č, Ć ć,

**Table 11.2 Consonant phonemes of Lower Sorbian**

	Labio-dental		Dental	Pre-Alveolar		Post-palatal	Velar	Laryngeal
Plain stop	p	ɸ	t				k	
stop	b	ɸ̣	d				g	
Affricate			ts	tʃ	tʃ			
Fricative		f	s	ʃ	ʃ	x	h	
	w	ɰ	v	ʒ	ʒ			
Nasal				n	ɲ			
Lateral	m	m̥						
Trill				l				
Semi-vowel				r	ɾ		j	

D d, DŽ dž, E e, Ě ě, F f, G g, H h, Ch ch, I i, J j, K k, Ł ł, L l, M m, N n, Ń ń, O o, P p, R r, Ř ř, S s, Š š, Ś ś, T t, U u, W w, Y y, Z z, Ž ž, Ž ž.

The vocalic grapheme–phoneme correspondences of Lower Sorbian are identical with those of Upper Sorbian except in one respect. The letter ó, which before 1952 was used to represent /ó/, was abolished on the grounds that /ó/ is always substituted for /o/ when it occurs in a stressed syllable immediately following a velar or labial (but not *ʃ*) and is not itself immediately followed by a velar or labial: for example *gora* /góra/ ‘hill’. According to this view /ó/ is merely a positional variant of /o/, not a phoneme, and its distribution is therefore predictable. In some dialects this is indeed the situation, but in the literary language *ʃ* and *w* have coalesced as /w/ and between /w/ (< *ʃ*) and a consonant that is neither a velar nor a labial /o/ is not replaced by /ó/ (for example *włose* /wose/ ‘hair’). Therefore, the distribution of /o/ and /ó/ can be deduced only by taking the orthography into account. The grapheme o represents the two phonemes /o/ and /ó/.

The consonantal grapheme–phoneme correspondences of Lower Sorbian differ from those of Upper Sorbian in the following respects:

- 1 *ń* (written only finally and before consonants) is phonetically [ɲ].
- 2 *dž* represents not a phoneme, but a positional variant of /ʒ/ which occurs only immediately after /z/ or /ʒ/, as in *pozdžej* ‘later’, *droždžije* ‘yeast’.
- 3 *ž* /ʒ/, *š* /ʃ/ and *tš* /tʃ/ (rarely written *č*) are contrasted with soft *ž* /ʒ/, *ś* /ʃ/ and *tś* (or *ć*) /tʃ/: *žywy* ‘alive’ : *žiwy* ‘wild’; *koše* ‘baskets’ : *koše* ‘kitten’; *tšmjen* ‘swamp’ : *tšmjen* ‘stirrup’.

- 4 PSl. *č* has become *c* (for example, *cas* 'time'). Consequently, the grapheme *č* occurs only in loan-words like *čaj* 'tea'. However, the phoneme /tʃ/ is not rare owing to the fact that PSl. *tr* (before back vowels) has become *tš*, as in *tšach* 'fear' < \**straxъ*.
- 5 The grapheme *ć* usually occurs after sibilants, for instance, *gosc* 'guest'. It is otherwise found only in the word *žowčo* 'girl' and its derivatives. However, the phoneme /tʃ/ is not uncommon, owing to the fact that PSl. *tr* (before front vowels) is represented by *tš* (thus \**tri* 'three' > *tši*).
- 6 There is no soft /tʃ/ and no grapheme *ř*.
- 7 *ch* in all positions represents a voiceless velar spirant: *chojžiš* /xojʒiʃ/ 'to walk'.
- 8 Since /ɣ/ can occur finally or immediately before consonants there is a separate grapheme to represent this: for example, *šlodař* 'tailor'. The letters *b*, *f*, *m*, *p* and *w* were abolished in the reform of 1952.

The following are some of the main restrictions on phoneme distribution in Lower Sorbian:

- 1 /ě/ occurs only after soft consonants and *l*. The phonemes /ě/ and /ó/ never occur at the beginning of a word. A few conjunctions (such as *a* 'and', *ako* 'when', *ale* 'but', *až* 'that') can begin with *a*, but otherwise initial vowels are written only in recent loan-words, mainly from international terminology (for example, *awto* 'car', *ideja* 'idea'). Slavonic words and old German loan-words are written with prothetic *h* or *w*: *hynak* < \**inakъ* 'different', *hodlař* 'eagle' (compare German *Adler*), *worjech* < \**orěxъ* 'nut', *wuznaš* < \**uznati* 'to recognize'. There is, however, much uncertainty about words which originally began with a vowel, and this uncertainty even affects the German spoken by Lower Sorbs. Their tendency to insert and delete initial /h/ (for example, *himmer* for German *immer* 'always'; *immel* for German *Himmel* 'sky, heaven') was noted as early as 1761 (Hauptmann). Until the Second World War pre-vocalic prothesis was most commonly written as *h-*: for example, *hucho* 'ear', *hokoło* 'around', but since 1952 *h-* has been replaced by *w-* wherever this brought Lower Sorbian into line with Upper Sorbian: thus *wucho* and *wokoło* are the modern spellings in both Upper and Lower Sorbian. In fact, words with initial orthographic *w* are often pronounced without prothesis: /uxo/, /okowo/ and so on. The conjunctions *a*, *ale* and so on are in no way exceptional phonologically, for they too sometimes have prothetic /h/. Prothetic /w/ is, however, not lost where this would result in initial /ó/: for instance *woko* 'eye' may be realized as /hoko/ or /oko/, but the dual is only *wocy* /wótsi/ (Fasske 1964: 77 and 119). The phonemic status of /h/ is disputed.
- 2 As in Upper Sorbian (see p. 601) the distinction between /o/ and /ó/,

- /e/ and /ě/ is weakened or lost in unstressed syllables (Janaš 1984: 36–8): *špa* ‘room’ : *we jšpě* /wějʃpe/ ‘in the room’; *dwor* /dwór/ ‘yard’ : *na dworje* /nádwoře/ ‘in the yard’).
- 3 As in Upper Sorbian, the distinction between voiced and voiceless paired consonants is neutralized word-finally (Janaš 1984: 45): *lod* /lot/ ‘ice’, *woz* /wós/ ‘cart, car’. The voiced member is replaced by its voiceless counterpart. However, this statement applies only to the literary language. In Lower Sorbian dialects and in the transitional dialect of Hoyerswerda final voicing (and thereby the distinction) is retained. Within the word, whether in dialects or in the literary language, the voiced/voiceless distinction is neutralized in the position before a consonant belonging to a voiced/voiceless pair: *glažk* /glaʃk/ ‘glass’, *pšosba* /pʃozba/ ‘request’, *roztajaš* /rostajaʃ/ ‘to thaw’, *rozdwójš* /rozdwojʃ/ ‘to halve’.
  - 4 Unlike Upper Sorbian, Lower Sorbian has two pairs of hard/soft consonants (/n/:/n̄/ and /r/:/r̄/) capable of preserving the hard/soft distinction word-finally and before a consonant, as in *goń* /gón̄/ ‘drive!’ : *gon* /gón/ ‘field’; *měř* /měř̄/ ‘measure!’ : *měr* /měř/ ‘peace’. Otherwise the hard/soft distinction is neutralized except before vowels.
  - 5 /f/ only occurs in loan-words and onomatopoeic words; its voiced counterpart /v/ only occurs in loan-words.

The Proto-Slavonic nasal vowels have been replaced in Sorbian by oral vowels. The date of denasalization cannot be determined, but there may be some significance in the spelling of certain proper names in medieval German documents which appear to record nasal vowels. Thirteenth-century documents, for example, contain references to the village of *Welintin* or *Willentin* (now German *Wilthen*, USo. *Wjelećin*), which appear to reflect the front nasal  $\epsilon$ . However, there are no nasal vowels in the first continuous texts (sixteenth century). In all parts of Sorbian territory and in both literary languages PSl.  $\rho > u$  (for example, \**rǫka* ‘hand, arm’ > USo. and LSo. *ruka*); but the developments of \* $\epsilon$  vary. Broadly speaking, in Lower Sorbian  $\epsilon > ě$  (\**męso* > LSo. *měso* ‘meat, flesh’) and in Upper Sorbian  $\epsilon > ’a$  (USo. *mjaso*); but in Upper Sorbian the nominative and accusative of nouns of the type *ćelo* (< \**telę*) ‘calf’ and undeclined present participles (gerunds), such as *stojo* < \**stoje* ‘standing’, represent  $\epsilon > ’o$  (Stieber 1934: 45–7).

*Jers* in weak positions disappeared (\**дъно* > USo. and LSo. *dno* ‘ground’), but the distribution of weak and strong was not always uniform (\**дъска* > USo. *deska*, LSo. *cka* (only early sources) ‘board’) and the operation of analogy has produced some unusual results, such as USo. *son* (< \**сънъ*) ‘dream’, which has stem *son-* throughout (genitive *sona* and so on) except in the phrase *we snje* (or *wosnje*); but note *w stódkim sonje* ‘in a sweet dream’. Analogy is also the cause of the loss of the vowel in the

nominative and accusative singular of words of the type USo. and LSo. *kusk* 'piece' (< \**kusъkъ*) and USo. *kónc*, LSo. *końc* 'end' (< \**końьcъ*), which has been re-formed to match the oblique cases (for instance genitive singular *kuska*, *kónca*). The Upper Sorbian toponyms *Moztech* (that is, \**mostek* 'bridge (DIMIN)'), *Camenech* (\**kamjenec* (diminutive of *kamjeń* 'stone')), and *Winichopez* (including the word \**kopjec* 'mound'), recorded in a Latin document of 1241, are said to attest the full vocalization of *jer* before the operation of analogy removed it.

In Upper Sorbian strong ь > o (which in some cases in closed syllables > ó): *moch* 'moss' < \**mъxъ*, *woš* 'louse' < \**vъšъ*, *son* 'dream' < \**sъnъ*, *bóz* 'elderberry' < \**bъzъ*. However, there are also cases of e < ь: *deska* 'board' < \**dъska*, *dešč* 'rain' < \**dъšъ*, *ze wsy* 'from the country' < \**zъ vъsi*.

In Lower Sorbian strong ь > e: *mech* 'moss', *weš* 'louse', *dešč* 'rain', *ze jsy* 'from the country'. Exceptions: *son* 'dream' (sparsely attested; the normal Lower Sorbian word for 'dream' is *cowanje*), *baz* 'elderberry'.

In Upper Sorbian strong ь > 'e: *wjes* 'village' < \**vъsъ*, *džen* 'day' < \**dъnъ*, *len* 'linen' < \**ьnъ*. Exceptions: *pos* 'dog' < \**pъsъ*.

In Lower Sorbian (before soft consonants) strong ь > 'e: *cesć* 'honour' < \**čъstъ*, *žen* 'day' < \**dъnъ*, but before hard (including depalatalized) consonants strong ь > 'a: *wjas* 'village', *lan* 'flax', *pjas* 'dog'.

The development in Sorbian of the Proto-Slavonic syllabic liquids ʀ, ʀ', ʀ and ʀ' is of crucial importance in establishing genetic relationships. The fact that before hard dentals (*t, d, s, z, n, r, l*) the soft vocalic liquids (ʀ' and ʀ') were hardened and thus produced the same results as their hard counterparts ʀ and ʀ' links Sorbian to the Lechitic languages (that is, to all the other West Slavonic languages except Czech and Slovak) where the same feature is observed, and distinguishes it from Czech and Slovak, where it is absent.

Proto-Slavonic syllabic ʀ and ʀ' are represented in Upper Sorbian as follows:

ʀ > or: *kormić* 'to feed' (< \**kъrmiti*); *hordy* 'proud, magnificent' (< \**gъrdъ*);

ʀ' before a hard dental (*t, d, s, z, n, r* or *l*) also > or: *porst* 'finger' (< \**pъrstъ*); *sorna* 'roe' (< \**sъrna*);

ʀ' otherwise > 'er: *wjerch* 'top' (< \**vъrxъ*); *pjeršćen* 'ring' (< \**pъrstenъ*) (compare *porst* above).

Proto-Slavonic syllabic ʀ and ʀ' are represented in Upper Sorbian as follows:

ʀ > ot: *doth* 'debt' (< \**dъlgъ*); *tołsty* 'fat' (< \**tъlstъ*);

ʀ' before a hard dental also > ot: *połny* 'full' (< \**pъlnъ*); *žołty* 'yellow' (< \**žьltъ*);



ʃ otherwise > 'el: *wjelk* 'wolf' (< \**вѣлкѣ*); *mjelčec* 'to be silent' (< \**мѣчати*).

In Lower Sorbian:

ʀ > ar: *kjarmiš* 'to feed'; *marchweј* 'carrot' (< \**мѣрку*) (*k* > *kj*, *g* > *gj* when preceding *ʀ*);

ʃ before a hard dental also > ar: *sarna* 'roe'; *twardy* 'hard' (< \**твѣрдѣ*);

ʃ otherwise > 'er: *wjerch* 'top'; *serp* 'sickle' (< \**сѣрпѣ*);

ʃ > tu: *thusty* 'fat', *dtug* 'debt';

ʃ before a hard dental > ot: *połny* 'full'; *žoły* 'yellow';

ʃ otherwise > 'el: *wjelk* 'wolf'; *mjelcaš* 'to be silent'.

That LSo. ʃ becomes *tu* is significant. It links Lower Sorbian to Polish and Czech (for example, Polish *dtug*, *thusty*; Czech *dluh*, *thustý*) and separates it from Polabian (for example, Polabian *dāug* 'debt'). Toponomastic evidence from areas Germanized before the sixteenth century (for example, *Dolgen*, the name of a lake to the north of Lübben) shows that the Polabian type began on the western and northern edges of Lower Sorbian territory.

The metathesis *CorC* > *CroC*, *ColC* > *CloC*, *CerC* > *CreC* and *CelC* > *CleC* (C stands for any consonant) occurred consistently over the entire Sorbian area: USo. and LSo. *sroka* 'magpie' < \**sarka*, USo. and LSo. *młody* 'young' < \**moldъ*, USo. and LSo. *drzewo* 'wood' < \**dervo*, USo. and LSo. *mloko* 'milk' < \**melko*. The metathesized vowels were subject to lengthening (if bearing a rising tone) and to the metaphony *e* > *o* if before a hard consonant (*mloko* < \**mleko*).

Sorbian has none of the phonemic distinctions of stress, pitch or length known to some of the other Slavonic languages. In Upper Sorbian the stress is always on the first syllable of polysyllabic words. It is a strong stress, sometimes causing vowels in unstressed syllables to be obscured or deleted, which has left its traces even in the literary language, as in USo. *rukajca* 'glove' < \**рѣкавица*, *poskać* 'to listen' < *posłuchać* (both forms of the latter are now used in the literary language). This weakening of unstressed syllables is less prominent in Lower Sorbian (compare USo. *pinca* 'cellar' < \**ривница*, but LSo. *piwnica*). Prepositions in Upper Sorbian form a rhythmic group with a following noun or pronoun and bear the stress: *dó města* 'to the town', *wóte mšě* 'from mass', *zé mnu* 'with me'. Words containing more than three syllables may have a secondary, weaker stress on the third or fourth syllable: *džiwadžělnik* 'actor', *Njěbjelčicach* 'in Njebjelčicy (Nebelschütz)'. If the noun is preceded by an attribute and a preposition, the stress is not on the preposition but on the first syllable of the attribute: for example, *do wúlkeho města* 'to the big town'. It may also be on the noun itself if this has more than two syllables: *do Budyšina* 'to

Bautzen'. Foreign words almost always have an anomalous stress: for example *problém* 'problem', *uniwersita* 'university', but in dialects the transposition of accent onto the first syllable may be observed: *cúrik* 'back' (German *zurück*).

Lower Sorbian is described normatively as having an initial stress accent, but this accent is weaker than in Upper Sorbian and, as there is a strong secondary stress on the penultimate syllable, there is even controversy as to the primacy of initial and penultimate accents.

Vestiges of the Proto-Slavonic system of stress, length and pitch can in certain circumstances be detected in the contrast between *ó* (< \**ō*) and *o*, and between *ě* (< \**ē*) and *e*. For example, in Upper Sorbian words embodying the results of the metathesis of *CorC*, *ColC*, *CerC* and *CelC*, *o* and *'e* represent Proto-Slavonic circumflex pitch, whereas *ó* and *ě* represent acute pitch or a pre-tonic long syllable: *złoto* 'gold' < \**zōlto* (compare Russian *zóloto*, Czech *zlato*, SCr. *zlāto*), *drjewo* 'wood' < \**děrho* (Russian *děrevo*, Czech *dřevo*, SCr. *drěvo*), *klóda* 'stocks, pillory, prison' < \**kólda* (Russian *kolóda*, Czech *kláda*, SCr. *klāda*), *brěza* 'birch' < \**běrza* (Russian *berěza*, Czech *břiza*, SCr. *brěza*). Proto-Slavonic circumflex is represented in Russian by stress on the first syllable, in Czech by a short syllable and in Serbo-Croat by a long falling tone. Proto-Slavonic acute is represented in Russian by stress on the second syllable, in Czech by a long syllable and in Serbo-Croat by a short falling tone. In masculine nouns in Upper Sorbian the position has been obscured by the fact that *o* became *ó* in syllables closed by the loss of final *jer* (as in \**golsъ* > \**glosъ* > *htós* 'voice'), but this only affects the nominative singular. Thus, for example, *htós* (oblique cases: *htos-*) represents the circumflex, but *mróz* 'frost' (oblique cases: *mróz-*) represents the acute (Дыбо/Dybo 1963).

## 2.2 Morphophonemic alternations inherited from Proto-Slavonic

Alternations resulting from the first palatalization may be seen in:

### 1 Conjugation:

- k-č*: USo. *pjeku* 'I bake' : *pječe* 'bakes (3 SG)',  
*g-ž*: LSo. *gnaś* 'to drive' : *ženjo* 'drives (3 SG)',  
*ch-š*: USo. *běch* 'I was' : *běše* 'was (3 SG)';

### 2 the vocative:

- k-č*: USo. *čłowjek* 'man' : *čłowječe* 'man!',  
*g-ž*: USo. *Bóh* 'God' : *Božo* 'God!';

### 3 Comparatives and superlatives:

- ch-š*: LSo. *suchy* 'dry' : *sušej* 'drier';

### 4 Derivation:

- g-ž*: USo. *noha* 'leg, foot' : *nóžka* 'leg, foot (DIMIN)',  
*ch-š*: LSo. *stuchaś* 'to listen' : *stuchaś* 'to belong'.

Alternations resulting from the second palatalization occur in:

- 1 the nominative plural (masculine personal) (only Upper Sorbian):  
*k-c*: *wojak* 'soldier' : *wojacy* 'soldiers',  
*h-z*: *wbohi* 'poor (NOM SG)' : *wbozy* 'poor (NOM PL M personal)',  
*ch-š*: *paduch* 'thief' : *paduši* 'thieves';
- 2 the nominative/accusative dual (feminine and neuter):  
*k-c*: USo. and LSo. *jabluko* 'apple' : *jabluce* 'apples (DU)';
- 3 the locative singular (masculine and neuter):  
*k-c*: LSo. *bok* 'side' : *na boce* 'on the side',  
*g-z*: USo. *sněh* 'snow' : *w sněze* 'in the snow' (PSl. \**g* > USo. *h*).

The number of masculines and neuters capable of forming locatives involving these alternations is limited. The predominant tendency is to avoid the alternation by means of the ending *-u* (for instance, USo. *kruh* 'circle' : *w kruhu* 'in the circle').

- 4 Dative and locative singular (feminine and masculine *a*-stems):  
*k-c*: USo. and LSo. *banka* : *w bance* 'in the bank',  
*g-z*: USo. *kniha* 'book' : *w knize* 'in the book',  
*ch-š*: USo. *třecha* 'roof' : *na třěše* 'on the roof'.

In the dative and locative singular of *a*-stems (feminine and masculine) this alternation is fully systematic. It affects borrowings from German (compare *banka* above). USo. *kniha* 'book' is realized as /knija/; the alternation is therefore capable of being perceived as *-ija*:*-ize* and may lead to such non-standard forms as /biologize/ 'in biology'.

In Upper Sorbian /*g*/ is of such low frequency (PSl. *g* having become *h*) that there is some doubt as to the correct alternation in such words as *figa* 'fig', *synagoga* 'synagogue' (borrowed from German). Both these words are attested with *-dz-* in the dative/locative singular, but the intuition of native speakers, unencumbered by philological complexes, always chooses *-z-*, and this is now recommended as the norm (Jenč 1976).

Vowel-zero alternations arising from the loss of the weak *jers* may be observed in:

- 1 conjugation:  
*e-∅*: USo. and LSo. *bjeru* 'I take' : USo. *brać*/LSo. *braš* 'to take',  
*o-∅*: USo. *přewozmje* 'will seize (3 SG)' : *přewzac* 'to seize';
- 2 declension:  
*e-∅*: LSo. *žen* 'day' : *dnja* 'day (GEN SG)',  
*o-∅*: USo. *pos* 'dog' : *psa* 'dog (GEN SG)',  
*a-∅*: LSo. *pjas* 'dog' : *psa* 'dog (GEN SG)';
- 3 derivation:  
*e-∅*: LSo. *gerc* 'musician' : *graš* 'to play'.

Many vowel-zero alternations have been lost owing to the operation of analogy. For example, USo. *kozot* 'goat', *kotoť* 'kettle', *posot* 'messenger' and *wosot* 'donkey' may retain the vowel throughout the paradigm (thus genitive singular *kozota*, *kotota* and so on). The zero forms (*kózta*, *kótta* and so on) are only optional variants. In the case of the common suffixes \*-ькѣ and \*-ьць (< \*-ькѣ), however, even before the appearance of our first texts, analogy operated in the opposite direction (in favour of the zero form): for instance, USo. and LSo. *kusk* (< \*кѣскѣ) 'piece', USo. *kónc*, LSo. *końc* (< \*копѣць) 'end'. This type is also found in Cassubian (see chapter 13).

A unique case (and not the result of the loss of a weak *jer*) is the *i-∅* alternation in *rić* (< \*ritь) 'arse': *do rće* (*rće* occurs only with the preposition *do* 'to, into').

### 2.3 Morphophonemic alternations resulting from changes after Proto-Slavonic

PSl. *t* + front vowel > USo. *ć*/LSo. *ś*:

USo. *čert* 'devil' : *čerći* 'devils',

LSo. *stat* 'state' : *w staše* 'in the state';

PSl. *d* + front vowel > USo. *dź*/LSo. *ź*:

USo. *blido* 'table' : *na blidže* 'on the table',

LSo. *blido* 'table' : *na bliže* 'on the table';

PSl. *zd* + front vowel > LSo. *zdź*: LSo. *gwězda* 'star' : *dwě gwězdzje* 'two stars';

PSl. *st* + front vowel > LSo. *śc*: LSo. *město* 'town' : *w mėsće* 'in town';

PSl. *tr* + front vowel > USo. *tř* /*ṛ*/: USo. *sotra* 'sister' : *sotře* 'sister (DAT SG)';

PSl. *b* + front vowel > *bj* /*ḡ*/: LSo. *klěb* 'bread' : *w klěbje* 'in the bread';

PSl. *p* + front vowel > *pj* /*ḡ*/: USo. and LSo. *kupa* 'island' : *na kupje* 'on an island';

PSl. *r* + front vowel > *rj* /*ṛ*/: USo. *wučer* 'teacher' : *wučerja* 'teacher (GEN SG)';

PSl. *m* + front vowel > *mj* /*ḡ*/: LSo. *bom* 'tree' : *na bomje* 'on the tree';

PSl. *n* + front vowel > *nj* /*ḡ*/: USo. *kana* 'pot, vessel' : *w kanje* 'in the pot';

PSl. *w* + front vowel > *wj* /*ḡ*/: LSo. *głowa* 'head' : *dwě głowje* 'two heads';

PSl. *l* + back vowel > *ł* /*w*/: USo. and LSo. *doła* 'of the valley' : *w*

PSl. *l* + front vowel > *l* /*l*/: *dole* 'in the valley'.

(Since *ł* and *w* now represent a single phoneme /*w*/, there is sometimes confusion in non-standard Upper Sorbian between /*w*/ < *l* and /*w*/ < *w*, producing such forms as /*doŵe*/ for /*dole*/.)

The alternations which might be expected as a result of PSl. *t* + *j* > *c*, *d* +

*j* > *z* are barely detectable, having been all but swept away by various kinds of morphological change. The *t:c* alternation may be seen in the contrast between the infinitive and present tense of a few verbs:

LSo. *šepotaš* 'to whisper' : *šepocu* 'I whisper';

USo. *mjetać* 'to throw' : *mjeceš* 'you throw'.

The *d:z* alternation is attested only in derivation:

USo. *howjado* 'cattle' : *howjazy* 'cattle' (adjective).

The first person present of USo. *widzieć* 'to see' (in which one might expect to find *z* < *d + j*) is *widžu* (PAST PART PASS *widžany*). The Lower Sorbian equivalents are *wizeš*, *wižim*, *wižony*.

PSl. *s + j* > *š* is reflected in, for example, USo. *prosyć* 'to ask' : *prošu* 'I ask';

PSl. *z + j* > *ž* is reflected in, for example, USo. *mazać* 'to smear' : *mažu* 'I smear'.

The main Upper Sorbian vowel alternations are as follows:

- 1 The change *o* > *ó* in syllables closed by the loss of final *jer* has produced the *ó/o* alternation: *hród* 'castle, palace (NOM and ACC SG)' : *hrod-* in all other cases and numbers, for instance, dative singular *hrodej*.
- 2 The corresponding change *e* > *ě* in syllables closed by the loss of final *jer* has produced a few cases of the *ě/e* alternation: *pěc* 'stove (NOM and ACC SG)' : *pjec-* in all other cases and numbers, like genitive singular *pjegy*.
- 3 The change *a* (between soft consonants) > *e* has resulted in numerous cases of the '*a/e*' alternation: *rjad* 'row' : *w rjedže* 'in the row', *pjata* 'heel' : *pjeće* 'heels (DU)', *Jendželčan* 'Englishman' : *Jendželčenjo* 'Englishmen'.
- 4 The change *w'* > *j* has resulted in the *-ej/-w'* alternation: *cyrkej* 'church' : *cyrkwje* 'church (GEN SG)'; *solotej* 'salad' : *solotwje* (GEN SG); *krej* 'blood' : *krwě* (GEN SG).

In Lower Sorbian vowel alternations are extremely rare: /*o*/:/*ó*/ can occur only in connection with consonant alternation, as, for example, in *woko* 'eye' /*woko*/ : *wocy* 'eyes (DU)' /*wótsi*/, *bok* 'side' /*bok*/ : *na boce* 'on the side' /*na bótsē*/.

### 3 Morphology

#### 3.1 Nominal morphology

##### 3.1.1 Nominal categories

The three numbers, singular, dual and plural, are retained in both Upper and Lower Sorbian. The dual is still a systematic component of the category of number in both literary languages and nearly all dialects. However, in the dialects various dual forms are, with varying degrees of frequency, replaced by plural forms. The tendency to substitute plural forms for dual is greatest in the case of naturally paired referents (hands, feet, cheeks, shoes, and so on). However, in nearly all Lower Sorbian dialects and in the transitional zone (according to the *Sorbischer Sprachatlas* (hereafter *SS*) 11: 19–36) the dual, even in the case of natural pairs, is rarely replaced by the plural. The frequency with which dual forms are replaced by plural increases as one moves from north to south, but it is only in the extreme south of Upper Sorbian territory that the dual is no longer a systematic component of the category of number.

Upper Sorbian has seven cases (nominative, vocative, accusative, genitive, dative, instrumental and locative). Lower Sorbian, having lost the vocative, has only six cases. All the dialects have at least six cases (*SS* 11: 36). The vocative isogloss divides all Upper Sorbian dialects and the dialect of Nochten from the remaining transitional dialects and the whole of Lower Sorbian territory (*SS* 11: map 5). Even in Upper Sorbian it is only masculine nouns that have a separate vocative form (and only in the singular). There is one exception to this rule: USo. *mać* 'mother' has vocative singular *maći*. The Lower Sorbian vocative is attested only in Jakubica's New Testament (1548). Otherwise, even the earliest Lower Sorbian texts reveal only isolated fossilized vocatives (like *knězo* 'o Lord' in the Bible). However, some masculine nouns ending in *-o* (such as *wujko* 'uncle', *šesko* 'cousin' and certain Christian names, including *Hanzo*, *Hajno*) are believed to be vocatives by origin.

In both Upper and Lower Sorbian the independent, prepositionless function of the instrumental has been lost. It is always accompanied by a preposition and in paradigms is usually preceded by *z(e)* 'with'. The question whether Sorbian has a prepositionless locative is debatable. The preposition *w* 'in' is written before locatives, but is in fact silent: USo. *w Budyšinje* /budiʃine/ 'in Bautzen'. This may seem to be a phonological matter, for there is a rule which prevents /w/ from standing immediately before another consonant (thus USo. *wzać* /zatʃ/ 'to take'). However, the orthographic preposition *w* is always silent even before vowels: USo. *w instituce* /institutʃe/ 'in the institute', *w awće* /awtʃe/ 'in the car'. There is a facultative variant *we* /we/ 'in', which does have a phonic realization.

The position is the same in both literary languages and all dialects. In paradigms the locative forms are usually preceded by *w(e)* 'in' or *wo* 'about'.

In addition to the three genders, masculine, feminine and neuter, Sorbian has a flexible subgender expressed in the separate status given, in certain circumstances, to masculine nouns denoting human beings and animals (the animate subgender), and, in other circumstances, only to those denoting human beings (the masculine-personal subgender). Feminines and neuters are unaffected.

The animate subgender is expressed primarily in the accusative and determines whether the accusative will have the same form as the genitive (animates) or the nominative (non-animates). Throughout the whole of Sorbian territory and in the literary languages in all three numbers (singular, dual and plural) masculine non-inanimates have the same form in the accusative as in the nominative (for instance, USo. *mam wóz* 'I have a cart'). Similarly, in all Sorbian dialects and in both literary languages masculine animate nouns (other than *a*-stems, such as USo. *čěsla* 'carpenter') in the accusative singular have the same form as in the genitive singular, and, in the singular at least, all such nouns (including the *čěsla* type) take genitive-accusative agreement (USo. *mam dobreho konja*, LSo. *mam dobrego konja* 'I have a good horse', USo. *znam dobreho čěslu* 'I know a good carpenter').

In the accusative dual, however, only Lower Sorbian (both literary language and dialects) has the same form as the genitive dual for all masculine nouns denoting animates (LSo. *mam dweju konjowu* 'I have two horses', *mam dweju wucabnikowu* 'I have two teachers'). In Upper Sorbian the subgender in the dual includes not all animate nouns, but only those denoting human beings (USo. *mam dweju wučerjow* 'I have two teachers', but *mam dwaj konjej* 'I have two horses').

In the accusative plural masculine nouns referring to animals (unless used with the numerals *tři* '3' and *stjry* '4' in the case of Lower Sorbian) have the nominative-accusative in all dialects and both literary languages (USo. and LSo. *mam konje* 'I have horses'). Nouns referring to male human beings in Upper Sorbian have the genitive-accusative in the plural (as in both other numbers). In Lower Sorbian, however, it is only if used with the numerals *tři* or *stjry*, or after the accusative plural pronouns *nas* 'us' and *was* 'you', that masculine plural animates (whether human beings or animals) take the genitive-accusative (LSo. *mam tšoich konjow* 'I have three horses', *mam tšoich wucabnikow* 'I have three teachers', *woni chwale was wucabnikow* 'they are praising you teachers'). Otherwise masculine plural animates in Lower Sorbian (even in the case of human beings) take the nominative-accusative (LSo. *mam dobre wucabniki* 'I have good teachers'). The rule to be found in some Lower Sorbian grammars ordaining that nouns denoting persons shall, in the plural, have a

genitive-accusative is artificial and modelled on Upper Sorbian (Janaš 1984: 73–4).

The masculine-animate (not the masculine-personal) category is also manifested in Lower Sorbian in special forms of the numerals *tši* and *styri* embodying the vowel *-o-*. In Upper Sorbian the masculine personal is expressed in the accusative dual, the accusative plural and in the nominative plural. Nouns, adjectives, pronouns and numerals all have separate nominative plural endings to distinguish masculine personals: thus *nanojo* ‘fathers’ (nominative plural of *nan*), but *borany* ‘rams’ (nominative plural of *boran*); *třo młodži Serbja* ‘three young Sorbs’, but *tři młode jabłony* ‘three young apple trees’. In Lower Sorbian only numerals from ‘3’ to ‘10’ have separate forms in the nominative and their role is to distinguish masculine animates (persons and animals): *styrjo konje* ‘four horses’, but *styri jabłoni* ‘four apple trees’.

### 3.1.2 Noun morphology

The basic declension pattern for Upper Sorbian masculine nouns is shown in table 11.3. The main variations are:

- 1 The *ó/o* alternation is characteristic of nouns with stem ending in a single consonant, whereas *ó* is usually retained throughout the paradigm of nouns whose stem ends in a double consonant (*chtódk/chtódka* ‘shadow’), but there are exceptions to both types (*mróz/mróza* ‘frost’; *móst/mosta* ‘bridge’).
- 2 Some nouns have an alternative vocative in *-e* (*Jakubo* or *Jakubje*). This may involve consonant alternation (*čłowjeko* or *čłowječe* ‘man!’).
- 3 *Hród* is one of a number of monosyllabic, inanimate nouns that have an alternative genitive singular ending in *-u* (from the Proto-Slavonic *u*-stems). The *u*-ending is never obligatory.
- 4 The dative singular ending *-ej* comes from the Proto-Slavonic *u*-stems (*\*-evi* > *-ej*) (Mucke 1891: 311 n.). A few nouns may take the alternative ending *-u* (from the PSI. *o*-stems), when they follow the prepo-

**Table 11.3 Declension of USo. *hród* ‘palace, castle’**

	SG	DU	PL
NOM	hród	hrodaj	hrody
VOC	hrodo	hrodaj	hrody
ACC	hród	hrodaj	hrody
GEN	hroda (hrodu)	hrodow	hrodow
DAT	hrodej	hrodomaj	hrodam
INST	z hrodom	z hrodomaj	z hrodami
LOC	w hrodze (hrodu)	w hrodomaj	w hrodach



- sition *k* 'to': *k wobjedu* 'to lunch'. The only noun which must have *-u*, even without *k*, is *bóh* 'god' (dative singular *bohu*).
- 5 The locative singular ending *-u* (inherited from the PSI. *u*-stems) must be used after sibilants (*na wozu* 'on the cart'), soft consonants (*wo mužu* 'about the man') and *k*, *g*, *h* and *ch* (*w běhu* 'in the course'); elsewhere it is optional. However, some nouns ending in *k*, *g* and *h* have alternative locatives involving consonant alternations (*w sněhu/w sněze* 'in the snow').
  - 6 In the nominative plural nouns referring to human beings take the endings *-ojo* (*mužoj* 'men'), *-jo* (*Jendželčenjo* 'Englishmen'), *-a* (*Serbja* 'Sorbs'), *-i* (which may cause consonant alternation as in *studenći* 'students', and may itself alternate with *-y*: *wojacy* 'soldiers' (nominative singular *wojak*)), or (after *-c*) *-y* (*hólcy* 'boys'). The ending *-ojo* (< \*-*ove*) comes from the *u*-stems. Its older variant *-owje* (*mužowje* 'men') was characteristic of the separate Catholic literary tradition. The choice of ending is partly morphologically and partly lexically determined.
  - 7 The genitive dual is almost always the same as the genitive plural, which usually has the ending *-ow* for all genders. However, a few nouns, particularly *pluralia tantum*, take the  $\emptyset$ -ending: thus *Drježdžany* 'Dresden' has genitive *Drježdžan*, *pjenjezy* 'money' has *pjenjez*.
  - 8 Masculine nouns with a soft stem vary from the hard-stem declension in: (a) the nominative/vocative/accusative dual, which has *-ej* (*mužej* 'men'); (b) the genitive plural, which has an alternative ending in *-i* (*muži* as well as *mužow*); inherited from the PSI. *i*-stems, this ending is prevalent in the Catholic dialect and popular with Catholic writers; (c) the nominative/vocative/accusative plural, which has *-e* (not human beings) (*koše* 'baskets'); this too comes from the *i*-stems; (d) the instrumental plural, which has *-emi* (*mužemi*); and (e) the locative singular (see item 5 above).

The basic declension pattern for Lower Sorbian masculine nouns is shown in table 11.4. The main variations are:

- 1 As in Upper Sorbian, some inanimate, monosyllabic nouns have an alternative genitive singular in *-u*.
- 2 The dative singular in *-oju* is made up of elements from both the *o*-stem (*-u*) and *u*-stem (*-ovi*) endings. Many nouns have an alternative dative in *-u*: *końcoju/końcu* (dative singular of *końc* 'end').
- 3 There are no separate endings in the nominative plural for nouns denoting male persons (unlike Upper Sorbian): thus *nany* 'fathers' is comparable to *grody* 'castles'.
- 4 The alternative locative singular ending *-u* has a similar distribution to that in Upper Sorbian (for example, *wo mužu* 'about the man'), but it

**Table 11.4 Declension of LSo. *grad* ‘palace, castle’**

	SG	DU	PL
NOM	grad	groda	grody
ACC	grad	groda	grody
GEN	groda	grodowu	grodow
DAT	grodoju	grodoma	grodam
INST	z grodom	z grodoma	z grodami
LOC	wo grože	wo grodoma	wo grodach

may be used with nouns of any type (*na swětu* ‘in the world’ as well as *na swěše*).

- Soft stems vary from hard stems in (a) the dative singular, which, in the case of stems ending in *-ar* and *-al*, has *-eju* (not *-oju*) (thus *murjarjeju* ‘to the mason’); (b) the nominative plural (*konje* ‘horses’, *muže* ‘men’); and (c) the genitive plural, which may have the alternative ending *-i* (*konjow* or *koni* ‘of horses’).

The basic declension pattern for Upper Sorbian neuter nouns is shown in table 11.5. The main variations are:

- The dative singular, which in the literary standard ends in *-u*, has a colloquial variant in *-ej*: *městej* ‘to the town’.
- Soft-stem neuters (like *polo* ‘field’) usually have nominative singular in *-o*. The only category which regularly has *-e* is that of verbal nouns (like *wučenje* ‘teaching’), but even these used to have *-o* in the Catholic literary language and may still retain it in the works of Catholic writers. There is also a number of words which vary between *-e* and *-o*, such as *zbože/zbožo* ‘happiness, luck’.
- Soft-stem neuters have endings varying from *město* in (a) the locative singular, which has *-u* (*na polu* ‘in the field’); (b) the nominative/accusative dual, which has *-i* (*poli* ‘(two) fields’); (c) the instrumental plural, which has *-emi* (not *-ami*): *z polemi* ‘with fields’.

The declension of Lower Sorbian *město* differs from that of Upper Sorbian *město* only in the following cases: (a) dative singular *městoju* or *městu*; (b) genitive dual *městowu*; (c) dative, instrumental, and locative dual *městoma*. LSo. *polo* ‘field’ differs from LSo. *město* in: (a) the locative singular (*na polu* ‘in the field’) and (b) the nominative/accusative dual (*poli* ‘(two) fields’).

The basic declension pattern for Upper Sorbian feminine nouns is shown in table 11.6. The main variations are as follows:

**Table 11.5 Declension of USo. město 'town'**

	SG	DU	PL
NOM	město	měšće	města
ACC	město	měšće	města
GEN	města	městow	městow
DAT	městu	městomaj	městam
INST	z městom	z městomaj	z městami
LOC	w měšće	w městomaj	w městach

**Table 11.6 Declension of USo. žena 'woman, wife'**

	SG	DU	PL
NOM	žona	žonje	žony
ACC	žonu	žonje	žony
GEN	žony	žonow	žonow
DAT	žonje	žonomaj	žonam
INST	ze žonu	ze žonomaj	ze žonami
LOC	wo žonje	wo žonomaj	wo žonach

- 1 A few feminines have  $\emptyset$  in the genitive plural. This may involve vowel alternation *o/ó*: *do horow/ do hór* 'to the hills' (*hora* 'hill, mountain').
- 2 Soft feminines (like *duša* 'soul' (or 'shower')) vary from the *žona* paradigm as follows: (a) genitive singular *duše*; (b) dative and locative singular *duši*; (c) nominative and accusative dual *duši*; (d) nominative and accusative plural *duše*; and (e) instrumental plural *z dušemi*.
- 3 Some feminines (old *i*-stems) have a  $\emptyset$ -ending in the nominative/accusative singular: for example, *kósc* 'bone'. They otherwise follow the soft feminine declension (like *duša*), unless they have a stem ending in *s* or *c*, in which case they follow the *žona* paradigm apart from the dative and locative singular and the nominative/accusative dual, which end in *-y*, thus *nóc* 'night' has *nocy*.

Lower Sorbian *žona* 'woman, wife' and *duša* 'soul' (or 'shower') differ from their Upper Sorbian counterparts only in details which are systematic, that is Lower Sorbian dual endings *-owu* and *-oma* correspond to USo. *-ow* and *-omaj*, Lower Sorbian has *-šy*, where Upper Sorbian has *-ši*, and Lower Sorbian has instrumental plural *z dušami* (USo. *z dušemi*). There is, however, a significant distinction between Upper and Lower Sorbian in the declensional type represented by LSo. *kósc* 'bone' (the old *i*-stems). Lower Sorbian, by preserving *-i* in those cases where Upper Sorbian has sub-

stituted *-e* (in the genitive singular and the nominative/accusative plural), has remained closer to the original paradigm (LSo. *košći* (GEN SG and NOM/ACC PL)).

Upper Sorbian masculine *a*-stems vary from the *žona* paradigm in (a) the accusative dual and plural (since they refer to male persons); these coincide with the genitive dual and plural: for instance, accusative dual and plural *herbow* (from *herba* 'heir'); (b) the nominative dual: *herbaj*; (c) the nominative and vocative plural: *herbojo* or *herbja*. Lower Sorbian masculine *a*-stems differ from their feminine counterparts only in so far as, being masculine animates, they have genitive-accusative in the dual and after the numerals *tši* and *styri*.

Original consonant stems have been fully absorbed into the Upper and Lower Sorbian declensional systems, but vestiges of their former existence survive in:

- 1 the stem of such masculines as USo. and LSo. *kamjeŋ* 'stone' (genitive singular *kamjenja*; PSI. \**kamy*/\**kamene*);
- 2 the extended stem of neuters in *-en* and USo. *-eć/-et* (LSo. *-eš/-et*): USo. *ramjo* 'shoulder' / *ramjenja* (GEN SG), USo. *ćelo* 'calf' (genitive singular *ćeleća*, nominative plural *ćelata*), LSo. *šele* 'calf' (genitive singular *šeleša*, nominative plural *šeleta*);
- 3 the extended stem in *-er(j)* of USo. *mać* 'mother' (genitive singular *maćerje*), LSo. *maš* (genitive singular *mašerje*). USo. *mać* is unique in that it has vocative singular *maći* (the only feminine vocative in Sorbian) and an optional accusative singular *maćer* (otherwise *mać*);
- 4 the USo. plural stem *njebjes-* (nominative plural *njebjesa*, genitive plural *njebjes*) of *njebjo* 'sky, heaven' (the plural occurs only in religious usage).

### 3.1.3 Pronominal morphology

The declension of Upper Sorbian personal pronouns is shown in table 11.7 and of Lower Sorbian personal pronouns in table 11.8.

#### Notes

- 1 The items shown in parentheses are used exclusively with prepositions.
- 2 Variation between the items divided by an oblique line (for example USo. *wo nas/wo nami*) has a regional basis, but in the literary language the choice is facultative.
- 3 In the case of items separated by a comma, the second is clitic or semi-clitic: it cannot appear in a prepositional phrase or bear stress and does not normally stand in the first position in the clause.
- 4 Where items are separated by a colon, the first is masculine animate.
- 5 When governed by a preposition, a pronoun beginning with *j-* (like *jeho*) acquires an initial *n-* (*bjez njeho* 'without him'). If followed by

**Table 11.7 Declension of Upper Sorbian personal pronouns****1st person**

	SG	DU	PL
NOM	ja	mój	my
ACC	mje (mnje)	naju	nas
GEN	mje (mnje)	naju	nas
DAT	mi (mni)	namaj	nam
INST	ze mnu	z namaj	z nami
LOC	wo mni	wo namaj	wo nas/wo nami

**2nd person**

NOM	ty	wój	wy
ACC	tebje, će	waju	was
GEN	tebje, će	waju	was
DAT	tebi, či	wamaj	wam
INST	z tobu	z wamaj	z wami
LOC	wo tebi	wo wamaj	wo was/wo wami

**3rd person singular**

	M	N	F
NOM	wón	wono/wone	wona
ACC	jeho : jón	jo/je	ju
GEN	jeho		jeje
DAT	jemu		jej, ji
INST	z nim		z njej
LOC	wo nim		wo njej

**3rd person dual**

	<i>Masculine personal</i>	<i>Non-masculine personal</i>
NOM	wonaj	wonej
ACC	jeju	jej
GEN	jeju	
DAT	jimaj	
INST	z nimaj	
LOC	wo nimaj	

**3rd person plural**

NOM	woni	wone
ACC	jich	je
GEN	jich	
DAT	jim	
INST	z nimi	
LOC	wo nich/wo nimi	

**Reflexive**

NOM	–
ACC	sebje, so
GEN	sebje, so
DAT	sebi, sej
INST	ze sobu
LOC	wo sebi

**Table 11.8 Declension of Lower Sorbian personal pronouns**

1st person			
	SG	DU	PL
NOM	ja	mej	my
ACC	mě (mnjo)	naju	nas
GEN	mje (mnjo)	naju	nas
DAT	mě (mnjo)	nama	nam
INST	ze mnu	z nama	z nami
LOC	wo mnjo	wo nama	wo nas
2nd person			
NOM	ty	wej	wy
ACC	tebje, śi	waju	was
GEN	tebje, śi	waju	was
DAT	tebje, śi	wama	wam
INST	z tobu	z wama	z wami
LOC	wo tebje	wo wama	wo was
3rd person singular			
	M	N	F
NOM	won	wono	wona
ACC	jogo : jen	jo	ju
GEN	jogo		jeje
DAT	jomu		jej
INST	z nim		z njeju
LOC	wo njom		wo njej
3rd person dual			
NOM	wonej		
ACC	jeju : jej	jej	
GEN	jeju		
DAT	jima		
INST	z nima		
LOC	wo nima		
3rd person plural			
NOM	woni		
ACC	jich : je	je	
GEN	jich		
DAT	jim		
INST	z nimi		
LOC	wo nich		
Reflexive (all genders)			
NOM	-		
ACC	sebje, se		
GEN	sebje, se		
DAT	sebje, se		
INST	ze sobu		
LOC	wo sebje		

- i- the *j-* is deleted (thus *jich*, but *wokoto nich* 'around them'), because the *n-* in the orthographic sequence *ni-* is always soft.
- 6 The second person plural pronoun *wy* may also be used as an honorific form to address one person (or two).
  - 7 In both Upper and Lower Sorbian after prepositions taking the accusative or genitive it is (contrary to the normal rule governing clitics) the short form of the reflexive pronoun that is most commonly used: for instance, USo. *na so* 'onto (my etc.) self/selves', LSo. *na se*. In the dative after prepositions, however, the long form is obligatory, except in the case of LSo. *ku se* 'to (...)self/selves'.

The hard-stem pronominal declension in Upper Sorbian is exemplified by the demonstrative pronoun *tón* 'this, that' in table 11.9. Lower Sorbian pronominal declension is exemplified by the demonstrative pronoun *ten* 'this, that' in table 11.10. The soft-stem pronominal declension in Upper Sorbian is demonstrated by *naš* 'our' in table 11.11. The distinction between hard and soft stems does not exist in the declension of pronouns in Lower Sorbian.

**Table 11.9 Declension of USo. *tón* 'this, that'**

Singular		M	N	F
NOM		tón	to/te	ta
ACC		toho : tón	to/te	tu
GEN		toho		teje
DAT		tomu		tej
INST		z tym		z tej
LOC		wo tym/tom		wo tej
Dual				
		<i>Masculine personal</i>		<i>Non-masculine personal</i>
NOM		taj		tej
ACC		teju		tej
GEN		teju		
DAT		tymaj		
INST		z tymaj		
LOC		wo tymaj		
Plural				
NOM		ci		te
ACC		tych		te
GEN		tych		
DAT		tym		
INST		z tymi		
LOC		wo tych		

**Table 11.10** Declension of LSo. *ten* 'this, that'

Singular			
	M	N	F
NOM	ten	to	ta
ACC	togo : ten	to	tu
GEN	togo		teje
DAT	tomu		tej
INST	z tym		z teju
LOC	wo tom		wo tej
Dual			
NOM	tej		
ACC	teju : tej	tej	
GEN	teju		
DAT	tyma		
INST	z tyma		
LOC	wo tyma		
Plural			
NOM	te		
ACC	tych : te	te	
GEN	tych		
DAT	tym		
INST	z tymi		
LOC	wo tych		

*Notes*

- 1 Adjectival pronouns in Upper Sorbian with alternative forms in the neuter nominative singular are *to/te* 'this, that', *wšo/wšě* (from *wšón* 'all'), *wšitko/wšitke* (from *wšitkón* 'all'), *samo/same* (from *sam* 'self').
- 2 In Upper Sorbian texts dating from before the Second World War *teho* may be found as an alternative to *toho*, and *temu* as an alternative to *tomu*. In the old Protestant norm the only pronoun with *-oho* and *-omu* was *štó* 'who' (*koho*, *komu*). The present-day *o*-variants come from the Catholic norm. In the case of *što* 'what' the *e*-variants are still predominant (*čeho*, *čemu*), but *čoho* and *čomu* may be found in the work of Catholic writers.
- 3 The Upper Sorbian locative singular variant (*wo*) *tom* is archaic and rare.
- 4 Where items are separated by a colon, the first is masculine animate.
- 5 As in the case of other parts of speech in Upper Sorbian, the attempt to impose the personal/non-personal distinction in the masculine



Table 11.11 Declension of USo. *naš* 'our'

Singular			
	M	N	F
NOM	naš	naše	naša
ACC	našeho : naš		našu
GEN	našeho		našeje
DAT	našemu		našej
INST	z našim		z našej
LOC	wo našim		wo našej
Dual			
	<i>Masculine personal</i>		<i>Non-masculine personal</i>
NOM	našej		
ACC	našejju	našej	
GEN	našejju		
DAT	našimaj		
INST	z našimaj		
LOC	wo našimaj		
Plural			
NOM	naši	naše	
ACC	našich	naše	
GEN	našich		
DAT	našim		
INST	z našimi		
LOC	wo našich		

nominative dual (*taj/tej*) has been only partly successful (Faßke 1981: 691).

The Proto-Slavonic pronoun \**sb* 'this' has been lost in Sorbian apart from such sporadic vestiges as USo. *lětsa*, LSo. *lětos* (and *lětosa*) 'this year' < \**lěto se*. PSI. \**ьхъ* is inherited in USo. *wšón*, whose paradigm is shown in table 11.12. A synonym of *wšón* is *wšitkón*, which is declined like an adjective apart from the masculine nominative singular. LSo. *wšen* 'all' follows the paradigm of *ten*. The question whether Sorbian words for 'all' can have a dual, tested by sentences of the type LSo. *Wobej mazańca stej wšej* (compare German *beide Kuchen sind alle*) 'both cakes are all gone', is reported on in SS 10 (map 100). It transpires that sentences of this type are acceptable in Lower Sorbian and the transitional dialects, but not in most Upper Sorbian dialects.

In Upper Sorbian PSI. \**кѣто* 'who' has been replaced by *štó* ([*tu*] not [*tó*]). The question of its etymological relationship to \**кѣто* and \**čѣто* has

**Table 11.12** Declension of USo. *wšón* 'all'**Singular**

	M	N	F
NOM	wšón	wšo/wšě	wša
ACC	wšeho : wšón	wšo/wšě	wšu
GEN	wšeho		wšeje
DAT	wšemu		wšej
INST	ze wšěm		ze wšej
LOC	we wšěm		we wšej

**Plural**

	<i>Masculine personal</i>	<i>Non-masculine personal</i>
NOM	wšitcy	wšě
ACC	wšěch	wšě
GEN	wšěch	
DAT	wšěm	
INST	ze wšěmi	
LOC	wo wšěch	

not been satisfactorily resolved (see Schuster-Šewc, *Wörterbuch*, under *štó*; SS 10: map 96). Its paradigm is as follows:

NOM	štó
ACC	koho
GEN	koho
DAT	komu
INST	z kim
LOC	wo kim

The Lower Sorbian equivalent is *chto*, which declines as follows:

NOM	chto
ACC	kogo
GEN	kogo
DAT	komu
INST	z kim
LOC	wo kim

Upper Sorbian *što* 'what' (< \*člto) declines as follows:

NOM	što
ACC	što (but after prepositions čo)
GEN	čeho (rarely čoho)

DAT	čemu (rarely čomu)
INST	z čim
LOC	wo čim

Its Lower Sorbian equivalent is *co*:

NOM	co
ACC	co
GEN	cogo
DAT	comu
INST	z cym
LOC	wo com

In both Upper and Lower Sorbian indefinite pronouns are formed with the prefix *ně-*: USo. *něchtó* 'someone' follows the paradigm of *štó* (except in the nominative); LSo. *něchten* 'someone' follows the paradigm of *chto* (except in the nominative). Compare also USo. *něšto* 'something' and LSo. *něco* 'something'. Indefinite pronouns may be semantically adapted by the addition of the suffix *-žkuli* (in both Upper and Lower Sorbian): for instance, USo. *něštožkuli* 'many a thing'.

#### 3.1.4 Adjectival morphology

Modern Sorbian has no separate short-form adjectives, but it is not possible to determine whether some of the nominative and accusative forms now in use are the results of contraction (for example, \**dobra-ja* > *dobra* 'good' (F NOM SG)) or original short forms. There is, however, textual evidence that a separate masculine nominative singular short form (ending in  $-\emptyset$ , not  $-y$ ) existed formerly: LSo. (sixteenth century) *ja som twojogo sluba wěst* 'I am sure of your promise' (*wěst* for *wěsty* 'sure') (Moller 1959: 91v.). There may be some significance in the fact that in the same sixteenth-century source the short masculine nominative singular is more frequently attested for past passive participles than for other adjectives:

Wjeżon njezbožnym' lužoju,  
 Fa[l]šnje wobskerżony,  
 Zapluwan a sromošon,  
 Ak to pismo groni.

'Led to a godless man, fasely accused, spat upon and shamed, as the scripture says.'  
 (Moller 1959: 35v)

The short-form masculine singular in the Upper Sorbian phrase *Bóh wjeršen* 'God the most high' survives to the present day (*wjeršen* for *wjeršny*) and in the unpublished 'Senftenberger Kirchenbuch' (1697) the adjective in this phrase is said to follow the short-form declension:

*Bóhwjeršin, Bohawjersna*, and so on (Mucke 1891: 379). Vestiges of the short-form declension may also be seen in USo. *swjedžen* 'feast' (< \**swjat džen*) (first recorded in the seventeenth century as *swjadžen*), in undeclined Upper Sorbian adjectives of the type *nabět* 'whitish', *nakisat* 'sourish', undeclined adjectives of the type *zwulka* 'haughty, snobbish', *ścicha* 'quiet' and in adverbs such as *dočista* 'completely', *z daloka* 'from far off'. The genitive singular short form also survives (fossilized) in USo. *połdra* 'one and a half' (< \**pol druga*), *potřeća* 'two and a half' and so on (LSo. *połtera* 'one and a half', *połtšeša* 'two and a half' and so on). The dative singular short form lives on in phrases of the type *po němsku* 'in the German manner', and in *pomatu* 'slowly'.

Upper Sorbian adjectival declension is demonstrated by *dobry* 'good' in table 11.13.

**Table 11.13 Declension of USo. *dobry* 'good'**

Singular					
		M	N		F
		<i>Animate</i>	<i>Non-animate</i>		
NOM		dobry		dobre	dobra
ACC		dobreho	dobry	dobre	dobru
GEN		dobreho			dobreje
DAT		dobremu			dobrej
INST		z dobrym			z dobrej
LOC		wo dobrym			wo dobrej
Dual					
		<i>Masculine personal</i>		<i>Non-masculine personal</i>	
NOM		dobraj		dobrej	
ACC		dobreju		dobrej	
GEN		dobreju			
DAT		dobrymaj			
INST		z dobrymaj			
LOC		wo dobrymaj			
Plural					
NOM		dobri		dobre	
ACC		dobrych		dobre	
GEN		dobrych			
DAT		dobrym			
INST		z dobrymi			
LOC		wo dobrych			

## Notes

- 1 In the endings containing *-y* the latter is replaced by *-i* after stems ending in velars (*h, k, ch*) and soft consonants (*š, ž, č, ć, l, ŋ*): *serbski* 'Sorbian (NOM SG)', *kušimaj* 'short (DAT/INST/LOC DU)'.
- 2 In the nominative plural before the ending *-i* the stem consonant *d* is replaced by *dž* (*młody* 'young' – *młodzi*), *t* by *ć* (*bohaty* 'rich' – *bohaći*) and *ł* by *l* (*mały* 'small' – *mali*). Before this ending too *h* alternates with *z*, *ch* with *š* and *k* with *c* (compare the discussion of the second palatalization in section 2.2); *z* and *c* are then followed by *-y* in accordance with the normal phonological rule (thus *nahi* (NOM SG) 'naked' – *nazy* (NOM PL M personal)).
- 3 The distinction in the nominative dual between masculine personal *-aj* and non-masculine personal *-ej* has no counterpart in the dialects. Until the twentieth century *-aj* was used in the nominative dual without distinction. Following the incursion of *-ej* into the literary language, however, there was a gradual tendency to restrict *-aj* to masculine personal referents. This was eventually made into a formal rule in normative grammars, but literary usage has remained only moderately consistent. In dialects *-aj* is attested only in the south of Upper Sorbian territory and its use is only facultative (Faßke 1981: 380).

Lower Sorbian adjectival declension is demonstrated in table 11.14.

## Note

- 1 After stems ending in *g* or *k* the ending has *-i* not *-y* (for instance, *wjeliki* 'big (NOM SG)'), but in contrast to Upper Sorbian this rule does not apply to *ch* (thus *suchy* 'dry'; compare USo. *suchi*).

The Upper Sorbian comparative is formed synthetically by adding the suffix *-iš* or *-š* to the stem of the positive form: *nowy* 'new' – *nowiši* or *nowši* 'newer'. If the stem ends in a single consonant the suffix is usually *-š* (*stary* 'old' – *starši* 'older'); if it ends in more than one consonant the suffix is usually *-iš* (*spěšny* 'quick' – *spěšniši* 'quicker'). But there are several exceptions and a few adjectives are capable of forming comparatives in both ways. In these cases the longer form is stylistically elevated: thus *nowiši* is stylistically higher than *nowši* (Šewc 1968: 108). If the stem ends in *-c* or *-z* the comparative suffix is *-yš*: *horcy* 'hot' – *horcyši* 'hotter'. The stem often undergoes consonant alternation: *suchi* 'dry' – *sušiši* 'drier'. A syllable may be dropped (*daloki* 'far' – *dalši* 'further') and some comparatives are formally unrelated to their positives: *dobry* 'good' – *lěpsi* 'better'.

The Upper Sorbian superlative is formed by prefixing *naj-* to the comparative: *stary* 'old' – *starši* 'older' – *najstarši* 'oldest'. A yet higher degree of comparison (the absolute superlative) is expressed by prefixing *na-* to the superlative: *nanajstarši* 'the oldest of all'.

**Table 11.14** Declension of LSo. *dobry* 'good'

Singular					
	M	Non-animate		N	F
	Animate				
NOM	dobry		dobre		dobra
ACC	dobrego	dobry		dobre	dobru
GEN			dobrego		dobreje
DAT			dobremu		dobrej
INST			z dobrym		z dobreju
LOC			wo dobrem		wo dobrej
Dual					
	Masculine animate		Non-masculine animate		
NOM	dobrej				
ACC	dobreju			dobrej	
GEN			dobreju		
DAT			dobryma		
INST			z dobryma		
LOC			wo dobryma		
Plural					
NOM	dobre				
ACC	*dobrych			dobre	
GEN			dobrych		
DAT			dobrym		
INST			z dobrymi		
LOC			wo dobrych		

*Note:* \* after numerals *tši* or *styri*, or after pronouns *nas* 'us' or *was* 'you' (see section 3.1.1).

Analytic comparatives consist of the positive adjective preceded by the adverb *bóle* 'more': *bóle stary* 'older' (= *starši*). Not every adjective is capable of forming a synthetic comparative, but when both synthetic and analytic comparatives exist, they are semantically interchangeable. Analytic superlatives and absolute superlatives are formed with *najbóle* and *nanajbóle*: *najbóle stary* 'oldest', *nanajbóle stary* 'oldest of all'.

In Lower Sorbian the comparative suffixes are *-ejš* and *-š*: *spěšny* 'quick' – *spěšnjejšy* 'quicker', *stary* 'old' – *staršy* 'older'. Consonant alternations include *d-ž* (*gjarady* 'proud' – *gjaržejšy* 'prouder'), *t-š* (*kšuty* 'firm' – *kšujejšy* 'firmer') and *ch-š* (*suchy* 'dry' – *sušejšy* 'drier'). The Lower Sorbian equivalent of USo. *naj-* is *nej-*: *nejstaršy* 'oldest'. There is also a variant form, *nejž-*: *nejžlěpšy* 'best'. Absolute superlatives are formed with

*nanej-* and *nanejž-*: *nanejstaršy* 'oldest of all', *nanejžlěpšy* 'best of all'. The Lower Sorbian equivalents of USo. *bóle* are *wěcej* 'more' and *lěpjej* 'more'. They can be used to form analytic comparatives, such as *lěpjej kisaŕy* 'sourer' (= *kisaŕšy*) from *kisaŕy* 'sour'. *Nejwěcej*, *nejlěpjej* and *nanejwěcej* are used to form analytic superlatives and absolute superlatives.

Adverbs are derived from adjectives most commonly by means of the suffix *-e*, which causes a change in the preceding consonant: *b-bj*, *p-pj*, *w-wj*, *m-mj*, *n-nj*, *r-rj*; for example, USo, and LSo. *staby* 'weak' – *stabje* 'weakly'. The velars undergo the alternations resulting from the second palatalization: USo. *stódky* 'sweet' – *stódcy* 'sweetly', LSo. *stodki* 'sweet' – *stodcy* 'sweetly', but many adjectives can also form their corresponding adverbs by means of the suffix *-o* and this avoids palatalization. Thus USo. *stódko* and LSo. *stodko* 'sweetly' also exist. The dentals alternate with the results of palatalization before front vowels: USo. *twjerdy* 'hard' – *twjerdže* 'hard' (adverb) (LSo. *twardy* 'hard' – *twarže/twardo* 'hard' (adverb)), USo. *kruŕy* 'firm' – *kruŕce* 'firmly' (LSo. *kšuty* 'firm' – *kšuse* 'firmly').

Particularly interesting are Upper Sorbian adverbs derived from adjectives with the suffix *-sk* referring to languages: for instance, *serbsce* (from *serbski* 'Sorbian'), as in *rěčiŕce wy serbsce?* 'do you speak Sorbian?'. This type is unknown in Lower Sorbian, where it is replaced by the adverbial type derived from the instrumental plural of the short-form adjective: *powědašo wy serbski?* 'do you speak Sorbian?'. In sentences of this kind in Lower Sorbian one may also hear the type *serbske* or *na serbske*. In Upper Sorbian the type *serbski* is dialectal or archaic. A further type formed with the preposition *po* and what is historically the dative singular of the short-form adjective (*po serbsku*) may also be encountered in both Upper and Lower Sorbian, but it is archaic.

Comparative and superlative adverbs in Upper Sorbian are in most cases derived from comparative and superlative adjectives, by substituting *-o* for the adjectival endings: *sylnišo* 'more strongly' (from *sylniši* 'stronger'). Some comparative adverbs, however, are derived from the adjectival stem (often with the loss of *-ok* or *-k*) by means of *-e*: *htuboky* 'deep' – *htubje* 'deeper' (adverb), *blisky* 'near' – *bliže* 'nearer' (adverb). The prefixes *naj-* and *nanaj-* are used in the same way as with adjectives to form superlatives and absolute superlatives: *najsylnišo* 'most strongly'.

There is a marked contrast between Upper and Lower Sorbian in their methods of forming comparative adverbs. In Lower Sorbian they are formed with the suffix *-ej*: *stabjej* 'more weakly' (from *staby* 'weak'), *sušej* 'more drily' (from *suchy* 'dry'), *bližej* 'nearer' (adverb; from *blisky* 'near'). The prefixes *nej-*, *nejž-* and *na-* are used as with adjectives: *nanejždalej* 'furthest of all'.

### 3.1.5 Numeral morphology

The declension of the Upper Sorbian cardinal numeral *jedyn* '1' is shown in

table 11.15. It has no dual and the plural exists mainly to modify *pluralia tantum* (thus *jedne durje* 'one door'). Masculine-personal forms are shown in the paradigm for the sake of completeness, but it is doubtful whether they have any real existence with numerical meaning. The indefinite pronoun *jedyn* 'certain, some', however, has a full paradigm, including masculine personal forms and the dual.

The declension of Lower Sorbian *jaden* '1' is shown in table 11.16. As in Upper Sorbian, it has no dual and its plural exists mainly to modify *pluralia*

**Table 11.15 Declension of USo. *jedyn* '1'**

	Singular		F
	M <i>Animate</i>	N <i>Non-animate</i>	
NOM	jedyn		jedna
ACC	jednoho	jedyn	jednu
GEN	jednoho		jedneje
DAT	jednomu		jednej
INST	z jedynym		z jednej
LOC	wo jedynym		wo jednej
<b>Plural</b>			
	<i>Masculine personal</i>		<i>Non-masculine personal</i>
NOM	jedni		jedne
ACC	jednych	jedne	jedne
GEN	jednych		
DAT	jednym		
INST	z jednymi		
LOC	wo jednych		

**Table 11.16 Declension of LSo. *jaden* '1'**

	SG		F	PL
	M <i>Animate</i>	N <i>Non-animate</i>		
NOM	jaden		jadna	jadne
ACC	jadnogo	jaden	jadnu	jadne
GEN	jadnogo		jadneje	jadnych
DAT	jadnomu		jadnej	jadnym
INST	z jadnym		z jadneju	z jadnymi
LOC	wo jadnom		wo jadnej	wo jadnych



*tantum*. The Lower Sorbian indefinite pronoun *jaden* 'certain, some' has a full paradigm.

The declensions of Upper Sorbian *dwaj* '2' and Lower Sorbian *dwa* '2' are shown in table 11.17.

The numerals '3' and '4' (USo. *tři/štyri*, LSo. *tši/styri*) are declined as shown in table 11.18. They have no singular and no dual. In Upper Sorbian *tři* and *štyri* in colloquial and dialectal speech, if used attributively, may be indifferent to gender and undeclined (for example, *před štyri lětami* 'four years ago' (literally: before four years)). If used absolutely they are inflected normally. This tendency to lose declinability has not been observed in Lower Sorbian dialects (SS 11: 58).

The declension of Upper Sorbian numerals from '5' upwards is exemplified by *pjeć* '5' in table 11.19. When used absolutely and referring to persons, numerals from five upwards are always declined in all varieties of Sorbian (LSo. *ze wšyknyimi pěšomi* 'with all five'). When used attributively, they tend not to be declined. This tendency is greater in Upper than in Lower Sorbian, and greatest when the attributive numeral does not refer to male persons. Until 1937 the situation in the Upper Sorbian literary language was different. With referents other than male persons the forms *pjećich* (GEN), *pjećim* (DAT), *z pjećimi* (INST) and *wo pjećich* (LOC) were predominant in both attributive and absolute use. Locative *pjećich* and the corresponding forms of other numerals from '5' to '12' survive as fossilized adverbial forms denoting the time of day (as in *w pjećich* 'at five o'clock') (FaBke 1981: 513–19, 533). Such forms are sometimes written without the *w*, which is, in any case, silent.

In Lower Sorbian the numerals from '5' (*pěš*) to '99' (*žewješažewješa-set*), when declined, follow the model provided by *tši* '3'. With the exception of numerals from '11' (*jadnašćo*) to '99' in the nominative (when they are indifferent to gender), they can take the *o*-forms agreeing with animates. If used absolutely, the numeral must be in the *o*-form (if appropriate) and declined. For example, *pěš* '5' has the oblique cases (non-animate) *pěšich* (GEN), *pěšim* (DAT), *z pěšimi* (INST), *wo pěšich* (LOC), and (animate) *pěšoch* (ACC and GEN), *pěšom* (DAT), *z pěšomi* (INST), *wo pěšoch* (LOC).

## 3.2 Verbal morphology

### 3.2.1 Verbal categories

In almost all finite verbs in Upper and Lower Sorbian the categories of person (first, second and third) and number (singular, dual and plural) are expressed. A minor degree of ambiguity as to person occurs in the dual in all tenses (for example, USo. 2 DU and 3 DU *džětataj* 'you work' or 'they work') and in the singular in the aorist and imperfect (USo. 2 SG and 3 SG *džětaše* 'you were working' or 'he/she/it was working'). Ambiguity as to

**Table 11.17** Declensions of USo. *dwaj* '2' and LSo. *dwa* '2'

	M	N and F
USo. <i>dwaj</i>		
	<i>Personal</i>	<i>Non-personal</i>
NOM	dwaj	
ACC	dweju	dwaj
GEN	dweju	
DAT	dwěmaj	
INST	z dwěmaj	
LOC	wo dwěmaj	
LSo. <i>dwa</i>		
	<i>Animate</i>	<i>Non-animate</i>
NOM	dwa	
ACC	dweju	dwa
GEN	dweju	
DAT	dwěma	
INST	z dwěma	
LOC	wo dwěma	

**Table 11.18** Declension of the numerals '3' and '4'

USo. <i>tři</i> '3' and <i>štyri</i> '4'		
	<i>Masculine personal</i>	<i>Non-masculine personal</i>
NOM	třo/štyrjo	tři/štyri
ACC	třoch/štyrjoch	tři/štyri
GEN	třoch/štyrjoch	
DAT	třom/štyrjom	
INST	z třomi/štyrjomi	
LOC	wo třoch/štyrjoch	
LSo. <i>tši</i> '3' and <i>stjri</i> '4'		
	<i>Masculine animate</i>	<i>Non-masculine animate</i>
NOM	tšo/styrjo	tši/stjri
ACC	tšoch/styrjoch	tši/stjri
GEN	tšoch/styrjoch	tšich/stjrich
DAT	tšom/styrjom	tšim/stjrim
INST	z tšomi/styrjomi	z tšimi/stjrimi
LOC	wo tšoch/styrjoch	wo tšich/stjrich

**Table 11.19 Declension of USo. *pječ* '5'**

	<i>Masculine personal</i>	<i>Non-masculine personal</i>
NOM	pječo	pječ
ACC	pječoch	pječ
GEN	pječoch	pječ
DAT	pječom	pječ
INST	z pječomi	z pječ
LOC	wo pječoch	wo pječ

number arises from the honorific use of ostensibly plural forms to address one person or two persons (thus USo. *što činiće?* 'what are you doing?' may be addressed to one, two or more persons). An attempt to reduce ambiguity is made by an artificial rule affecting both literary languages which says that if only one person is addressed the *l*-participle must be in its singular form, though the honorific meaning may still be expressed by the plural form of the auxiliary (USo. *što sće činila?* 'what did you (F) do?'). The Upper Sorbian rule is that the plural form of the *l*-participle is to be used only if two or more persons are addressed (for instance, *što sće činili?* 'what did you do?' should be addressed only to two or more persons) (Faßke 1981: 551). Literary Lower Sorbian often follows the same practice, though the rule appears not to have been codified in Lower Sorbian grammars. In colloquial Sorbian, however, both Upper and Lower, the *l*-participle is in the plural even when only one person is addressed, if the utterance is honorific.

Gender is expressed in the singular of tenses involving the *l*-participle (for example, USo. *nan je džětał* 'father worked', *holca je džětała* 'the girl worked'). In Upper Sorbian the *l*-participle is capable of expressing the distinction between masculine personal and non-masculine personal (*mužojo su džětali* 'the men worked', *žony su džětate* 'the women worked'); but this is not obligatory. The type *džětali* may be used whether the subject is masculine personal or not. Support for the distinction in dialects is found only to the south of Bautzen. The *džětate* type agreeing with a third-person non-masculine personal subject is not unusual in present-day literature, but with the first and second persons such forms are bookish (Faßke 1981: 298). In Lower Sorbian gender is not expressed in the *l*-participle in the plural.

The following tenses are expressed synthetically: present, perfective future, aorist and imperfect. The perfect, pluperfect, and imperfective future are expressed analytically. The aorist is formed only from perfective verbs; the imperfect only from imperfective verbs. In some analyses the aorist and imperfect are treated as a single synthetic preterite. The endings

are the same for both aorist and imperfect, except in the second and third person singular. The aorist and imperfect refer specifically to past historic events isolated in time from the time of speaking. They are used in both literary languages, but have disappeared from Lower Sorbian dialects (see map 11.1, p. 594). In Upper Sorbian dialects the possibility of their being replaced by the perfect is greater in the north than in the south (SS 11: 100). In all varieties of Sorbian the perfect tense is formed analytically from verbs of both aspects by means of the present tense of the verb 'to be' and the *l*-participle (USo. *ja sym džětała* 'I (F) worked'). The pluperfect is also formed with the *l*-participle, but in conjunction with the imperfect of the auxiliary (thus USo. *ja běch džětała* 'I (F) had worked'). The iterative perfect is formally identical with the conditional (USo. *ja bych džětała* 'I (F) would/used to work'). Another type of pluperfect, composed of the perfect tense of the auxiliary and the *l*-participle (USo. *ja sym była džětała* 'I (F) had worked') is occasionally found in dialects, but is not used in the literary languages (Šewc 1968: 179).

Verbs of motion exist in the following determinate/indeterminate pairs: USo. *hić/chodźić* 'to go (on foot)', *běžec/běhać* 'to run/go (on foot)', *jěć/jězdźić* 'to travel/go (not on foot)', *wjesć/wodźić* 'to lead', *wjezć/wozyć* 'to convey', *lećeć/lětać* 'to fly', *ležć/łazyć* 'to crawl', *hnać (čěrić)/honić* 'to drive', *njesć/nosyć* 'to carry', *cahnyć/cahać* 'to move (ITR)', *hnać (čěrić)/hanjeć* 'to run'; LSo. *hyś/chojźiš* 'to go (on foot)', *běžas/běgas* 'to run/go (on foot)', *jěš/jězdźiš* 'to travel/go (not on foot)', *wjasć/wozys* 'to lead/convey', *lešeš/lětas* 'to fly', *ležć/łazys* 'to crawl', *gnaš/gonis* 'to drive', *njasć/nosys* 'to carry', *šěgnuš/šěgas* 'to move (ITR)', *gnaš/ganjaš* 'to run'.

The perfective future is expressed by the non-past tense of perfective verbs (USo. and LSo. *ja napišu* 'I shall write'). However, when the speech act is itself the action denoted by the verb, a perfective verb may have present meaning (USo. *přeprošu was* 'I invite you' (PRFV) is synonymous with *přeprošuju was* (IMPFV) (Faßke 1981: 183, 255; Šewc 1968: 182–3)). In colloquial Sorbian certain verbs of motion are particularly prone to German influence. For example, USo. *přinć* 'to come' (PRFV) is equated with German *kommen* 'to come' and the sense of its relationship with *hić* 'to go' (IMPFV) is lost, following the German model in which *gehen* 'to go' and *kommen* 'to come' are not formally related. Therefore *přindže* (PRFV 3SG) may mean either 'will come' or 'comes', although in the literary language it is expected to have future meaning. Nevertheless, by and large, the aspectual system of both Upper and Lower Sorbian (even of colloquial and dialectal varieties, where German influence is strongest) is intact.

The future tense of the Upper Sorbian verb *być* 'to be' is as follows:

	SG	DU	PL
1	budu	budźemoj	budźemy

2	budžeš }	budžetaj/budžetej	} budžeće budžeja
3	budže }		

It is used as an auxiliary to form the imperfective future by adding the imperfective infinitive (USo. *budu pisać* 'I shall write'). Lower Sorbian follows the same pattern (LSo. *budu pisaś*). Colloquially and in dialects a compound future may be formed with a perfective infinitive (USo. *ja budu napisać* 'I shall write', LSo. *ja budu napisas*). Since the nineteenth century there have been attempts to exclude this type from the literary languages and to replace it with the perfective future. However, the latest authority on Upper Sorbian (FaBke 1981: 253) says that the analytic perfective future is permissible if the infinitive, for the sake of emphasis, is placed in first position in the clause (as in *přinjesć jemu nichto ničo njebudže* 'no one will bring him anything').

The determinate verbs of motion (see above) have only one future; this is formed with the prefix *po-* (USo. *ponjesu* 'I shall carry', LSo. *ponjasu*). Similarly, the verb 'to have' (USo. *měć*, LSo. *měś*) has only a synthetic future formed with *z-* (USo. and LSo. *změju* 'I shall have').

Despite German interference every Sorbian verb is either perfective or imperfective, but bi-aspectual verbs are not uncommon and are perfective or imperfective depending on their context. Perfectives are most commonly derived from simple imperfectives by prefixation (USo. *pisać* 'to write' (IMPFV) – *napisać* (PRFV)). Conversely, imperfectives can be derived from perfectives by suffixation (USo. *přepisać* 'to transcribe' (PRFV) – *přepisować* (IMPFV)). The aspectual distinction may be expressed solely by suffixation (neither aspect bearing a prefix) (USo. *kupować* 'to buy' (IMPFV) – *kupić* (PRFV)) or by verbs that are formally unrelated (LSo. *braś* 'to take' (IMPFV) – *wześ* (PRFV)). However, the proportion of unprefixated perfective verbs is small and there are very few imperfective verbs that have a prefix but no suffix. The latter category consists principally of verbs which have come into existence as loan-translations of German prefixed verbs (USo. *wobsedžeć* /LSo. *wobsejžeś* 'to possess' based on German *besitzen*). This process has been taken further in non-standard Sorbian, involving the use of adverbs as prefixes: for example, USo. *nutřcahnyć* 'to move in' (German *einziehen*); the standard Upper Sorbian form is *zacaħnyć*. In literary Upper Sorbian the adverb *nutř* 'in' can never be a verbal prefix.

The imperative in Upper Sorbian is formed from the short present stem to which is added the imperative morpheme *-j* or *-i* followed by the personal endings *-∅* (2 SG), *-moj* (1 DU), *-taj/-tej* (2 DU), *-my* (1 PL) or *-će* (2 PL) (*kopaj!* 'hack!' from *kopać*). If the stem ends in a consonant the morpheme *-j* may be represented in consonant alternation (*n-ń, d-dź, t-ć, k-č*), thus *stan!* 'stand up!' from *stanyć*, unless the consonant is already

soft or incapable of being softened when in final position. If the short stem consists solely of consonants, the imperative morpheme is *-i* (*spi!* 'sleep!'). The morpheme *-i* may also be used after groups of consonants (*wotewri!* 'open!'). A few imperatives are simply irregular (*jěs!* or *jěž!* 'eat!' from *jěśc*). The third person (only singular) imperative is extremely rare and largely restricted to formulaic utterances, such as *přindź k nam twoje kralestwo* 'thy kingdom come (to us)'. Clauses similar in meaning to imperatives may be created with the particle *njech* (*njech čita, štož chce* 'let him read what he likes') (Faßke 1981: 291). The Lower Sorbian imperative does not differ significantly as a verbal category from that of Upper Sorbian. The Lower Sorbian equivalent of *njech* is *daš* or *daši* (*daš te luže powědaju* 'let the people talk').

The Upper Sorbian conditional is formed with the *l*-participle in conjunction with a special set of forms of the verb *być* 'to be':

	SG	DU	PL
1	bych	bychmoj	bychmy
2	by	byštaj/-štej	byšće
3	by	byštaj/-štej	bychu

For example: *bych džětał* 'I (M) would work', *by džětała* 'you (F) or she would work', *bychu džětali* 'they would work'.

In the conditional of modal verbs the auxiliary is often omitted (Faßke 1981: 275), for instance, *to njesměto so stać* 'that should not happen'. A type of conditional involving the *l*-participle of the verb *być* 'to be' is also found, but is regarded as both archaic and bookish (*bych był džětał* 'I would have worked'). It is thought to have been modelled on a similar form in Czech. On the other hand, a form of the conditional involving the following auxiliary was undoubtedly once a true vernacular feature of Upper Sorbian, but it is now archaic or defunct:

	SG	DU	PL
1	budžech/-ich	budžechmoj (budžichmoj)	budžechmy (budžichmy)
2	budžeše/-iše	budžeštaj/-štej	budžešće (budžišće)
3	budžeše/-iše	budžeštaj/-štej	budžechu (budžichu)

(The forms with *-i-* were characteristic of the old Protestant norm; Faßke 1981: 275.)

In Lower Sorbian all personal endings have been dropped from the auxiliary, leaving an invariable particle *by* (*ja by žětał* 'I would work', *woni by žětali* 'they would work', *wej by žětatej* 'you (DU) would work').

The Upper Sorbian reflexive is formed with the particle *so* (*nan so truha* 'father is shaving' (*truhać so* 'to shave')). The Lower Sorbian equivalent is *se* (*nan se goli* 'father is shaving'). The passive may be formed in Upper

Sorbian and Lower Sorbian either with the verb 'to be' in conjunction with the past passive participle (USo. *wona je wuzamknjena* 'she is excluded', *wona budže wuzamknjena* 'she will be excluded'; LSo. *wona bužo wuzamknjona* 'she will be excluded') or with a special part of the verb 'to be':

	SG	DU	PL
1	buch	buchmoj	buchmy
2	bu	buštaj/-štej	bušće
3	bu	buštaj/-štej	buchu

The Lower Sorbian equivalents vary from the above only in the dual (*buchmej*, *buštej*) and the second person plural (*bušće*). The forms like *buch* are the Sorbian equivalents of German *werden* 'to become' and like *werden* are used both to form the passive and with the meaning 'to become' (USo. *buchmy wuzamknjeni* 'we were excluded' (masculine personal), *wón bu wučer* 'he became a teacher'; LSo. *buchmy wuzamknjone* 'we were excluded', *won bu wucabnik* 'he became a teacher'). These forms are exclusively past tense. In colloquial and dialectal Upper Sorbian the passive may be formed with the German loan-word *wordować* (USo. *wón je wončisnjeny wordował* 'he was thrown out'). The Lower Sorbian equivalent *wordowaś* is used in the literary language (*ja worduju bity* 'I am being beaten').

The sense of the passive may also be expressed by means of the reflexive (USo. *a pon so zas posleni khěrluš spěwa* 'and then the last hymn is sung again' (T 9: 42), LSo. *wuknik se wot direktora chwali* 'the pupil is praised by the headmaster'). Reflexive verbs are also used in impersonal expressions, such as USo. *a tam so tež spěwa* 'and there is singing there too' (T 9: 42), but it is also possible to use an impersonal passive with *bu* (provided it is in the past tense) (USo. *pozdžišo bu spěwane* 'later there was singing'). When *wordować/wordowaś* is used there is no restriction on the tense (USo. *dyž předžene worduje* 'when there is spinning' (T 9: 14)). Impersonal passives are commonly formed from intransitive verbs (USo. *jemu bu pomhane* 'he was helped' (*pomhać* 'to help' takes the dative), *potom bu spane* 'then there was sleeping' (compare German *dann wurde geschlafen*).)

The Upper Sorbian infinitive nearly always ends in *-ć* (for example, *pisać* 'to write'), but a very small number of verbs belonging to the *e*-conjugation (those with velar stems) have an infinitive in *-c* (like *pjec* 'to bake'). A longer infinitive ending in *-ći* is attested in early texts, in folk-songs and in dialects. In Lower Sorbian most infinitives end in *-ś* (*pisaś* 'to write'), but after sibilants *-ś* is replaced by *-ć* (*kłasać* 'to lay'). As in Upper Sorbian, verbs with velar stems have infinitives in *-c* (*pjac* 'to bake'). Longer infinitives in *-ši* and *-šći* are found in folk-songs and early texts.

They survived in dialects until the late nineteenth century (Mucke 1891: 533). Only Lower Sorbian has a supine. It is derived from the infinitive by replacing *-s* or *-ć* with *-t*, for example *pisat* (from *pisas*), *kłast* (from *kłasć*), but in the case of infinitives in *-c* the supine ending *-t* is added to the infinitive, as in *pjact* (from *pjac*). The supine is properly used only after verbs of motion (*žom spat* 'I am going to sleep'). It is a feature of literary Lower Sorbian and of Lower Sorbian dialects except those to the east and south-east of Cottbus (SS 12: map 41).

Both Upper and Lower Sorbian have a single active participle, formed only from imperfective verbs and ending, in the masculine nominative singular, in *-cy* (USo. *džětac* 'working', LSo. *žětajucy*). It declines like an adjective. The masculine nominative singular of the passive participle, which also declines like an adjective, ends in both Upper and Lower Sorbian in *-ny* or *-ty* (USo. and LSo. *zebrany* 'gathered', *bity* 'beaten'). Passive participles are used to form finite passive verbs (see above). The Upper Sorbian present gerund ends in *-o*, *-icy*, or *-(j)cy*. It is indeclinable. Some verbs can form more than one type (*stupajo/stupajcy* 'stepping', *so smějo/so smějicy* 'laughing'). The Lower Sorbian equivalent is identical in form with the masculine nominative singular of the active participle (*stojecy* 'standing'). Upper Sorbian in addition has a past gerund formed with the ending *-wši* (after a vowel) or *-ši* (after a consonant): *rozbiwši* 'having smashed', *priwježši* 'having brought'. Lower Sorbian has no equivalent of this form.

The *l*-participle, used in both Upper and Lower Sorbian to form certain compound tenses, is composed of the infinitive stem and the affix *-t/-l* (USo. *wón je pisał* 'he wrote').

### 3.2.2 Conjugation

On the basis of the thematic vowel used to form most or all parts of the present tense Upper Sorbian verbs fall into the following three conjugations:

- 1 *e*-conjugation (USo. *bić* 'to beat': *biju, biješ* and so on; *njesć* 'to carry': *njesu, njeseš; minyc so* 'to pass by': *minu so, minješ so*). This conjugation occasionally involves consonant alternations (as in USo. *wjesć* 'to lead': *wjedu, wjedžeš; pisać* 'to write': *pišu, pišeš*). Infinitive stems in *-owa-* regularly correspond to present stems in *-uje-* (*darować* 'to give': *daruju, daruješ*).
- 2 *i*-conjugation (*rozumjeć* 'to understand': *rozumju, rozumiš* and so on; *chodźić* 'to walk': *chodžu chodžiš*). The substitution of *-y-* for *-i-* occurs after *s* and *z* (*prosyć* 'to ask': *prošu, prosyš; kazyc* 'to spoil': *kazu, kazyš*). As shown by *prosyć* and *kazyc*, there are occasional consonant alternations.
- 3 *a*-conjugation (*dzětać* 'to work': *džětam, džětaš* and so on; *třělec* 'to shoot': *třělam, třěleš*). There are no consonant alternations, but



between soft consonants *-e-* is substituted for *-a-*. The infinitive stem always ends in *-a*, except after a soft consonant, when the *e*-substitution rule operates. The *a*-conjugation is distinguished also by its first person singular ending *-m* (as opposed to *-u* in other conjugations). Some verbs can be conjugated optionally according to either the *e-* or *a*-conjugation (for instance, *pisać* 'to write': *pišu, pišeš* and so on, or *pisam, pisaš*).

The present stem also forms the basis for the allocation of Lower Sorbian verbs into the following four conjugations:

- 1 *o-* or *jo-*conjugation (LSo. *njasć* 'to carry': *njasu/njasom, njasoš* and so on; *braš* 'to take': *bjerju/bjerjom, bjerjoš*). Consonant alternations occur (as in *wjasć* 'to lead': *wjedu/wježom, wježoš*, third person plural *wjedu*; *pisaš* 'to write': *pišu/pišom, pišoš*). The infinitive stem in *-owa-* regularly corresponds to the present stem in *-ujo-* (*studowaš* 'to study': *studuju/studujom, studujoš*). The *-u* and *-om* forms in the first person singular are equally acceptable in the literary language. The ending *-u* is characteristic of western Lower Sorbian dialects (except the extreme west), whereas *-om* occurs in eastern dialects and the extreme western dialect of Vetschau (Wětošow).
- 2 *i-*conjugation (*spas* 'to sleep': *spim, spiš* and so on; *chojžiš* 'to walk': *chojžim, chojžiš*). After *c, s, z, š* and *ž*, the substitution of *-y-* for *-i-* occurs (*stýšaš* 'to hear': *stýšym, stýšyš*). The first person singular always ends in *-m* and there are no consonant alternations.
- 3 *a-*conjugation (*žětaš* 'to work': *žětam, žětaš* and so on). There are no consonant or vowel alternations. The infinitive stem always ends in *-a*.
- 4 *j-*conjugation (*stojaš* 'to stand': *stojm, stojš* and so on). There are no consonant or vowel alternations.

The first person singular ending *-m* has spread much further in Lower than in Upper Sorbian. In Lower Sorbian, in fact, it is only in the *o-/jo-*conjugation that the vocalic ending *-u* is retained, and even here, in the literary language, there is a facultative variant in *-m*.

#### *Upper Sorbian reflexes of Proto-Slavonic verb classes*

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	
Theme in <i>-e/-o</i>		
njes-	njese-	'carry'
wjes-	wjedže-	'lead'
čita- ( <i>čitać</i> is a nineteenth-century neologism)	čita-	'read'

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	
†kčě-	kće- or kčěje-	'bloom'
hi-	dže-	'go'
jěcha-	jěcha-	'ride'
jě-	jědže-	'drive'
(*gre- not attested)		
†hrjeba-	hrjeba-	'dig, bury'
ži-	žije-	'heal'
<i>rjec</i> 'say' has only infinitive and <i>l</i> -participle <i>rjekt</i>		
†rěče-	rěči-	'speak'
nače-	načnje-	'cut the first slice' (the meaning 'begin', given in dictionaries, is artificial; see Schuster-Šewc, <i>Wörterbuch</i> , under 'načec')
wumrě-	wumrje-	
	wumrěje-	'die'
sta- (only reflexive)	stanje-	'happen'
(*sъsa- not attested)		
†cyca-	cyca-	'suck'
(*zъva- not attested)		
†žwa-	žuje-	'chew'
bra-	bjerje-	'take'
Theme in <i>-ne</i>		
(*dvignŋ- not attested)		
†wukny-	wuknje-	'learn'
miny- (only reflexive)	minje-	'pass by, disappear'
Theme in <i>-je</i>		
ču-	čuje-	'feel'
(*pě- attested only in spēwać)		
†spěwać	spěwa-	'sing'
kry-	kryje-	'cover'
bi-	bije-	'beat'
(*bor- not attested)		
†wobró-	woborje-	'restrain, defend'
mlě-	mjele-	
	mlěje-	'grind'
džěła-	dzěła-	'work'
(*umě- not attested)		

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	
†smě-	smě-	'make bold' (= German dürfen)
kaza-	kaza-	
pisa-	kaže-	'order'
jima-	pisa-	'write'
darowa-	piše-	'grasp'
sy-	jima-	'give'
	daruje-	'sow'
	syje-	
Theme in <i>-i</i>		
modli- (only reflexive)	modli-	'pray'
chodži-	chodži-	'walk, go'
(* <i>velě-</i> not attested)		
†woli-	woli-	'choose'
słyše- ( <i>słyša-</i> )	słyši-	'hear'
spa-	spi-	'sleep'
Athematic		
by-	(1 SG sym, 2 SG sy, 3 SG je; 1 DU smój, 2/3 DU staj/stej, 1 PL smy, 2 PL sće, 3 PL su)	'be'
jěs-	jě-	'eat'
da-	da-	'give'
wědže-	wě-	'know'
mě-	ma-	'have'
Irregular		
chcy-	chce-	'want'

*Note:* †substituted for root/stem not attested in Upper Sorbian.

#### *Lower Sorbian reflexes of Proto-Slavonic verb classes*

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	
Theme in <i>-e/-o</i>		
njas-	njaso-	'carry'
wjas-	wježo-	'drive, lead'
cyta- (nineteenth-century neologism)	cyta-	'read'

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	
†plas-	plešo-	'plait'
hy-	žo-	'go'
jěcha-	jěcha-	'ride'
jě-	jěžo-	'drive'
†(*gre- not attested)		
grěba-	grěbjo-	'scratch, dig'
žy-	žyjo-	'heal'
rja-	rjaco-	'say'
nace-	nacejo-	'broach' (the meaning 'begin', given in dictionaries, is artificial; see Schuster-Šewc, <i>Wörterbuch</i> , under 'načec')
wumrě-	wumrějo-	'die'
sta- (only reflexive)	stanjo-	'happen'
(*sъsa- not attested)		
†cyca-	cyca-	'suck'
(*zъva- not attested)		
†žu-	žujo-	'chew'
bra-	bjerjo-	'take'
Theme in <i>-ne</i>		
(*dvignǫ- not attested)		
†zwignu-	zwignjo-	'raise'
minu- (only reflexive)	minjo-	'pass by, disappear'
Theme in <i>-je</i>		
cu-	cujo-	'feel'
(*pě- attested only in spěwaš)		
†spěwa-	spěwa-	'sing'
kšy-	kšyjo-	'cover'
bi-	bijo-	'beat'
(*bor- not attested)		
†proj-	proj-	'undo, separate'
mła-	mjelo-	
	mlejo-	'grind'
žěta-	žěta-	'work'
wumě-	wumějo-	'understand, be able'
kaza-	kažo-	'order'
pisa-	pišo-	'write'

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	
(* <i>jbma</i> - imperfectly attested – sixteenth–seventeenth century)		
† <i>łama</i> -	łamjo-	‘break’
(* <i>darova</i> - not attested)		
† <i>kupowa</i> -	kupujo-	‘buy’
se-	sejo-	‘sow’
Theme in <i>-i</i>		
modli- (only reflexive)	modli-	‘pray’
chojži-	chojži-	‘go, walk’
(* <i>velě</i> - not attested)		
† <i>woli</i> -	woli-	‘choose’
słyša-	słyšy-	‘hear’
spa-	spi-	‘sleep’
Athematic		
by-	(1 SG som, 2 SG sy, 3 SG jo; 1 DU smej, 2/3 DU stej; 1 PL smy, 2 PL sćo, 3 PL su)	
jěs-	jě-	‘be’
da-	da-	‘eat’
da-	dajo-	‘let’
wěže-	wě-	‘give’
mě-	ma-	‘know’
		‘have’
Irregular		
kšě-	co-	‘want’

*Note:* †substituted for root/stem not attested in Lower Sorbian.

### *Upper Sorbian illustrative paradigms*

*e*-conjugation: *njesć* ‘to carry’

Present

	SG	DU	PL
1	njesu	njesemoj	njesemy
2	njeseš	} njesetaj/njesetej	njeseće
3	njese		njesu (njeseja)

The 3 PL type *njeseja* is colloquial

## Imperfect

SG	DU	PL
1 njesech	njesechmoj	njesechmy
2 } njesese	} njesestaj/njesestej	njeseseće
3 }		njesechu

## Aorist

1 nanjesech	nanjesechmoj	nanjesechmy
2 } nanjese	} nanjeseštaj/nanjeseštej	nanjesešeće
3 }		nanjesechu

*l*-participle: SG *nješ*, -o, -a; DU *nještoj/nještej*; PL *nješli/nješle*

Present gerund: *njeso* (some verbs have -icy: for instance, *bijo* or *bijicy* from *bić* 'to beat')

Past gerund: attested only for verbs whose infinitive stem ends in a vowel and for compounds of *hić* 'to go': for example, *napisawši* from *napisac* 'to write', *wušedši* from *wurić* 'to go out'

Present participle: cannot be formed from verbs whose present stem ends in *s*, *z* or *r*; but from *bić* 'to beat', for example, we have *bijacy*

Past participle: *njeseny*

Imperative: *njes*

Verbal noun: *njesenje*

*i*-conjugation: *stýšeć* 'to hear'

## Present

SG	DU	PL
1 stýšu	stýšimoj	stýšimy
2 stýšiš	} stýšitaj/stýšitej	stýšiće
3 stýši		stýša

## Imperfect

1 stýsach	stýsachmoj	stýšachmy
2 } stýšeše	} stýšeštaj/stýšeštej	stýšešeće
3 }		stýšachu

## Aorist

1 zastýšach	zastýšachmoj	zastýšachmy
2 } zastýša	} zastýšeštaj/zastýšeštej	zastýšešeće
3 }		zastýšachu

*l*-participle: SG *stýšať*, -o, -a; DU *stýšatoj/-ej*; PL *stýšeli/stýšate*

Present gerund: *stýšo* or *stýšicy*

Past gerund: *zastýšawši*

Present participle: *stýšacy*

Past participle: *stýšany*

Imperative: *stýš*

Verbal noun: *stýšenje*

*a*-conjugation: *dźětać* 'to work'

Present

SG	DU	PL
1 dźětam	dźělamoj	dźělamy
2 dźětaš	} dźěłataj/dźěłatej	dźěłaće
3 dźěta		dźěłaju/dźěłaja

The third person plural ending *-u* is literary and archaic

Imperfect

1 dźěłach	dźěłachmoj	dźěłachmy
2 } dźěłaše	} dźěłaštaj/dźěłaštej	dźěłašće
3 }		dźěłachu

Aorist

1 nadźěłach	nadźěłachmoj	nadźěłachmy
2 } nadźěła	} nadźěłaštaj/nadźěłaštej	nadźěłašće
3 }		nadźěłachu

*l*-participle: SG *dźětał, -o, -a*; DU *dźěłatoj/-ej*; PL *dźěłali/dźěłale*

Present gerund: *dźěłajo* or *dźěłajcy*

Past gerund: *nadźěławši*

Present participle: *dźěłacy*

Past participle: *dźěłany*

Imperative: *dźětaj*

Verbal noun: *dźětanje*

*Lower Sorbian illustrative paradigms*

*o*-/*jo*-conjugation: *njasć* 'to carry'

Present

1 njasu/njasom	njasomej	njasomy
2 njasoš	} njasotej	njasošo
3 njaso		njasu

Imperfect

1 njasech	njasechmej	njasechmy
2 } njasešo	} njaseštej	njasešće
3 }		njasechu

Aorist

1 donjasech	donjasechmej	donjasechmy
2 } donjase	} donjaseštej	donjasešće
3 }		donjasechu

*l*-participle: SG *njasł, -o, -a*; DU *njastej*; PL *njasli*

Present participle: *njasecy* (*njasucy*)

Past participle: *njasony*

Imperative: *njas*

Verbal noun: *njasenje*

*i*-conjugation: *stýšaś* 'to hear'

Present

	SG	DU	PL
1	stýšym	stýšymej	stýšymy
2	stýšyš	} stýšytej	stýšyšo
3	stýšy		stýše

Imperfect

1	stýšach	stýšachmej	stýšachmy
2	} stýšašo	} stýšaštej	stýšaščo
3			stýšachu

Aorist

1	wustýšach	wustýšachmej	wustýšachmy
2	} wustýša	} wustýšaštej	wustýšaščo
3			wustýšachu

*l*-participle: SG *stýšať*, -o, -a; DU *stýšatej*; PL *stýšali*

Present participle: *stýšecy*

Past participle: *stýšany*

Imperative: *stýš*

Verbal noun: *stýšanje*

*a*-conjugation: *žětaś* 'to work'

Present

	SG	DU	PL
1	žětam	žětamej	žětamy
2	žětaś	} žětatej	žětašo
3	žěta		žětaju

Imperfect

1	žětach	žětachmej	žětachmy
2	} žětašo	} žětaštej	žětaščo
3			žětachu

Aorist

1	nažětach	nažětachmej	nažětachmy
2	} nažěta	} nažětaštej	nazeťaščo
3			nažětachu

*l*-participle: SG *žětať*, -o, -a; DU *žětatej*; PL *žětali*



Present participle: *žětajucy*

Past participle: *žěłany*

Imperative: *žětaj*

Verbal noun: *žěłanje*

*j*-conjugation: *projś* 'to undo, disentangle'

Present

SG	DU	PL
1 projm	projmej	projmy
2 projš	} projtej	projšo
3 proj		proje

Imperfect

1 projach	projachmej	projachmy
2 } projašo	} projaštej	projašćo
3 } projašo		projachu

Aorist

1 rozprojch	rozprojchmej	rozprojchmy
2 } rozproj	} rozprojštej	rozprojšćo
3 } rozproj		rozprojchu

*l*-participle: SG *projł*, -o, -a; DU *projtej*; PL *projli*

Present participle: *projecy*

Past participle: *projty*

Imperative: *proj*

Verbal noun: *projenje*

### 3.3 Derivational morphology

#### 3.3.1 Major patterns of noun derivation

Sorbian nouns are formed by the use of prefixes and suffixes or by composition. Suffixation is sometimes accompanied by vowel or consonant alternations in the stem. The following are some of the main types of noun derivation by the use of suffixes:

Suffix	Semantic components	Examples
-ak	agent (pejorative)	U/LSo. <i>pisak</i> 'scribbler'
-an (Upper Sorbian only)	place of origin	USo. <i>měšćan</i> 'town-dweller' (compare LSo. <i>měšćanar</i> )
USo. -ar/LSo. -ař	USo. agent LSo. agent/place of origin	USo. <i>spěwar</i> 'singer' LSo. <i>spěwar</i> 'singer' LSo. <i>molar</i> 'painter' LSo. <i>Chošebuzar</i> 'Cottbuser'

<i>Suffix</i>	<i>Semantic components</i>	<i>Examples</i>
-c	agent/bearer of attribute	U/LSo. <i>kupc</i> 'merchant' U/LSo. <i>starc</i> 'old man'
-dło	instrument	U/LSo. <i>létadło</i> 'aircraft'
USo. -ec(y)	family or members thereof	USo. <i>Nowakecy</i> 'the Nowaks' <i>Hanka Nowakec</i> 'Hanka Nowak' (unmarried)
USo. -er (allomorph of -ar)	agent	USo. <i>wučer</i> 'teacher'
-isko	augmentative	USo. <i>štomisko</i> 'a huge tree' LSo. <i>bomisko</i> 'a huge tree'
-išćo	place	USo. <i>mrowišćo</i> 'ant-hill' LSo. <i>mrojowišćo</i> 'ant- hill'
-k	diminutive	U/LSo. <i>kusk</i> (DIM of <i>kus</i> 'piece')
-ka	diminutive	USo. <i>nóżka</i> (DIM of USo. <i>noha</i> 'leg, foot')
-ka	female	LSo. <i>nožka</i> U/LSo. <i>Němka</i> 'German woman'
-ko	diminutive	USo. <i>kolesko</i> (DIM of <i>koleso</i> 'wheel'), LSo. <i>kolasko</i> (DIM of <i>kolaso</i> )
-nik	agent, bearer of attribute	U/LSo. <i>pomocnik</i> 'helper' USo. <i>dožnik</i> 'debtor' LSo. <i>dlužnik</i> 'debtor'
-nja	place	USo. <i>kowarnja</i> 'smithy' LSo. <i>kowalnja</i> 'smithy'
LSo. -ojc	family or members thereof	LSo. <i>Nowakojc</i> 'the Nowaks' LSo. <i>Hanka Nowakojc</i> 'Hanka Nowak' (unmarried)
-ość	attribute	U/LSo. <i>młodosć</i> 'youth'
-stwo	place/collective	U/LSo. <i>sudnistwo</i> 'law court' U/LSo. <i>rybarstwo</i> 'fishery'

<i>Suffix</i>	<i>Semantic components</i>	<i>Examples</i>
USo. -čel	agent	USo. <i>stworiciel</i> 'creator'
LSo. -šel		LSo. <i>stworisiel</i> 'creator'

Derivation by prefixation is demonstrated by the following examples:

<i>Prefix</i>	<i>Semantic components</i>	<i>Examples</i>
do-	continuation/ completion	U/LSo. <i>dostłowo</i> 'epilogue'
pa-	false	USo. <i>parod</i> 'miscarriage'
pra-	old, original	USo. <i>pradžęd</i> 'great-grandfather' U/LSo. <i>prapremjera</i> 'first performance'
roz-	separation	U/LSo. <i>rozdžěl</i> 'difference'
sobu-	with (English <i>co-</i> )	USo. <i>sobudžětačer</i> 'collaborator' LSo. <i>sobužětašer</i> 'collaborator'

(*sobu-* is widely used in German calques to translate *mit-*)

wu-	out	USo. <i>wuwzaće</i> 'exception' LSo. <i>wuwžeše</i> 'exception'
-----	-----	--

In cases of composition (combination of two words or stems) the elements are commonly linked by means of the morpheme *-o-*: U/LSo. *wodopad* 'waterfall', USo. *časopis* 'journal'. USo. *runowaha*/LSo. *rownowaga* 'equilibrium'; but they may be joined directly to each other without any linking element: USo. *knihiwjazar*/LSo. *knigtywžar* 'bookbinder'. USo. *koto-džij*/LSo. *kotožej* 'wheelwright'

### 3.3.2 Major patterns of adjective derivation

Possessive adjectives are derived from nouns by means of the suffixes *-ow-* (with masculines and neuters) and *-in-* (with feminines): U/LSo. *nanowy* 'father's' (from *nan* 'father'), USo. *sotřiny*/LSo. *sotřiny* 'sister's' (from *sotra/sotša* 'sister'). The suffix *-ow-*, however, has a wider derivational function in both Upper and Lower Sorbian: for example, USo. *dróhowy* (from *dróha* 'road'). Further common adjectival suffixes are:

USo. *-aty* (*brodaty* 'bearded' from *broda* 'beard'), *-acy* (*džěcacy* 'childish, childlike' from *džěčo* 'child'), *-liwy* (*pohibliwy* 'mobile' from *pohibać* 'to move'), *-ny* (*měřny* 'peaceful' from *měr* 'peace'), *-ojty* (*barbojty*

'coloured' from *barba* 'colour'), *-ski* (*přecelski* 'friendly' from *přecel* 'friend');

LSo. *-aty* (*brodaty* 'bearded' from *broda* 'beard'), *-jšny* (*žěnsajšny* 'today's' from *žěnsa* 'today'), *-ecy* (*žěsecy* 'childish, childlike' from *žěše* 'child'), *-liwy* (*pogibliwy* 'mobile' from *pogibaś* 'to move'), *-ny* (*měryny* 'peaceful' from *měr* 'peace'), *-owaty* (*barwowaty* 'coloured' from *barwa* 'colour'), *-ojty* (*barwojty* 'coloured'), *-ski* (*psijaśelski* 'friendly' from *psijaśel* 'friend').

### 3.3.3 Major patterns of verb derivation

In both Upper and Lower Sorbian many verbs have been derived from nouns and adjectives by means of suffixes; thus by means of the suffix *-je* USo. *čěmnyjeć* 'to grow dark' has been derived from *čěmny* 'dark'. Similarly, LSo. *chromjes* 'to be/become lame' from *chromy* 'lame'. USo. *chwalić* and LSo. *chwaliś* 'to praise' are derived by means of the suffix *-i* from U/LSo. *chwata* 'praise' (also USo. *sušić* and LSo. *sušys* 'to dry' from *suchy* 'dry'). By means of *-ny* USo. *twjerdnyć* 'to harden' is derived from *twjerdy* 'hard' (corresponding to LSo. *twardnuś* from *twardy* 'hard', using the Lower Sorbian suffix *-nu*). The Upper Sorbian suffix *-ować*, with which, for example, the verb *čěsłować* 'to carpenter' is derived from the noun *čěsla* 'carpenter' (corresponding to LSo. *-owaś*) is still productive in the creation of borrowings from German and from international terminology, as in USo. *transformować*, LSo. *reklaměrowaś*.

Verbs are derived from other verbs by means of the prefixes: *do-*, *na-*, *nad-*, *po-*, *pod-*, *pře-* (LSo. *pše-*), *před-* (LSo. *pšed-*), *při-* (LSo. *pši-*), *roz-*, *wo-*, *wob-*, *wot-*, *wu-*, *za-* and *z(e)-/s-*. The addition of a prefix to an imperfective verb normally produces a perfective verb (as in USo. *pisać* 'to write' (IMPFV) – *napisać* 'to write' (PRFV)), but the prefix may also introduce a new semantic component which is not only aspectual (USo. *předpisać*/LSo. *pšedpisaś* 'to prescribe', USo. *podpisać*/LSo. *podpisaś* 'to sign'). Imperfective verbs are derived from perfectives by suffixation: LSo. *podpisowaś* 'to sign' (IMPFV) from *podpisaś*. Other imperfectivizing suffixes are: *-je* (USo. *wotmołwjeć* 'to answer' (IMPFV) from *wotmołwić* (PRFV)) and *-wa* (USo. *rozbiwać* 'to smash' (IMPFV) from *rozbić* (PRFV)). Prefixes are often used to calque German prefixed verbs: USo. *wobsedźec* 'to possess' calques German *besitzen* (*sedźec* 'to sit' = German *sitzen*), LSo. *zacwiblowaś* 'to despair' calques German *verzweifeln* (*cwiblowaś* 'to doubt' = German *zweifeln*). Such calques, despite prefixation, are usually imperfective or bi-aspectual.

## 4 Syntax

### 4.1 Element order in declarative sentences

In Upper Sorbian, if the verb is simple (not compound), the unmarked

order of main constituents in the clause is Subject + Object + Verb:

S O V  
 Nan trawu syče.  
 father the grass is mowing

S O V  
 Awto Marju do chorownje dowjeze.  
 the car Marja to the hospital took

The unmarked position for the verb, whether in a main or a subordinate clause, is at the end:

S V [S not expressed] O  
 Hela měnješe, zo swoje njepočinki wěšće  
 Hela thought that [he] his bad habits surely

V [S not expressed] O V  
 wostaji, hdyž ju za žonu změje.  
 will abandon, when [he] her as wife will have

There is thus a partial similarity between Upper Sorbian and German in the order of elements in sentences containing a simple verb, for German too, in subordinate clauses, places the verb at the end. However, the similarity is indeed only partial, for German (unlike Sorbian) cannot have a finite verb standing at the end of a main clause. Even in subordinate clauses, in fact, there is a difference between the two languages, for in German final position is obligatory, whereas in Sorbian it is merely unmarked and can be avoided for reasons of emphasis.

If the verb is compound, the auxiliary or other finite component (including the parts of the verb *być* used to compose the conditional) stands in second position (Michałk 1956-7: 20-7; Jenč 1959: 7-12) and the participle or infinitive stands at the end of the clause:

S V  
 Wona je (auxiliary) młoda była (participle)  
 she is/has young been

S V  
 Ja sym (auxiliary) z lěkarjom porěčała (participle).  
 I am/have with the doctor spoken

This is the construction known in German grammar as the *Rahmenkonstruktion* (frame construction) and in main clauses the unmarked order of Upper Sorbian corresponds to the obligatory order in German:

Wona  $\overline{\text{je młoda była}}$ .  
 Sie  $\overline{\text{išt jung gewesen}}$ .

Ja sym z lěkarjom porěčała.

Ich habe mit dem Artzt gesprochen.

As in German, the length of the frame may be substantial:

Naš reformator Měrćin Luther je nam hłowne tři artikule našeje křescijanskeje wěry wukładował.

(*Pomhaj Bóh*, čo. 5, May 1989, p. 1)

'Our reformer Martin Luther has for us the main three articles of our Christian faith explained.'

However, the frame construction is normal in Upper Sorbian not only in main but also in subordinate clauses:

Main clause: Wona je młoda była.

Subordinate clause: Hdyž je wona młoda była ...  
when is/has she young been ...

In German, since in a subordinate clause the finite verb must go to the end, this is impossible. In view of this important distinction between the two languages it is uncertain whether the Upper Sorbian frame construction is the result of German interference or not. Opinions vary (Michałk 1956-7: 23, 27; Jenč 1959: 32). The position is complicated by the fact that the German spoken in Lusatia sometimes exhibits anomalous ordering of constituents.

In Upper Sorbian clitics are: (a) the short forms of personal and reflexive pronouns (*mje, mi, će, či, jón, je, ju, ji, so* and *sej*); (b) the present and conditional parts of the auxiliary verb *być* 'to be' (and *bě* 'was'); and (c) certain conjunctions and particles (such as *pak, drje, wšak*). Clitics normally occupy the second position in the clause (*Bóh će žohnuj!* 'God bless you!'). The rules for the position of the clitics relative to one another are: (a) *so* always stands as the first pronoun; otherwise dative precedes accusative; (b) a verb precedes a pronoun; (c) *pak* and *wšak* precede both verb and pronoun:

Ja wšak sym či je rjenje wumył.  
I however am/have you (DAT) them (ACC) nicely washed  
'but I washed them nicely for you'

Ja so će prašam.  
I self you (GEN) ask  
'I ask you.'

(Михалк/Michalk 1974: 511)

As clitics, parts of the auxiliary *być* 'to be' cannot normally stand in first position in the clause, but in literary works they are often found in this position:

Sym z lěkarjom porěčała.  
 'I have spoken to the doctor.'

Je wšo wopušćić mět, swójbu a domiznu.  
 'He had to leave everything, family and homeland.'

In normal spontaneous speech this does not occur. The auxiliary is always preceded by a pronoun:

Ja sym z lěkarjom porěčała.  
 Wón je wšo wopušćić mět, swójbu a domiznu.

The fact that writers do not always write like this is explained as resulting from the overzealous application of the advice found in grammars to the effect that personal pronouns are unnecessary (Jenč 1959: 16–17, 39–40).

The normal position for an Upper Sorbian adjective is immediately before the noun it modifies (*wulka wjes* 'a large village', *serbscy spisowaceljo* 'Sorbian writers' and so on). In the Bible, however, there are a number of well-known nominal phrases in which the adjective follows the noun (such as *duch swjaty* 'the Holy Ghost', *wótče naš* 'our father', *město Dawidowe* 'the city of David') and these phrases are also used in sermons and religious publications. Adverbs normally precede adjectives (*poměrnje wulka wjes* 'a relatively large village', *jara čěžki nadawk* 'a very difficult task'). Prepositions stand obligatorily before their nouns or nominal phrases (*z mjehkim, chłódnym wětrom* 'with a soft, cool wind'), but *dla* 'for the sake of' or 'on account of', which takes the genitive, normally follows its noun or nominal phrase (*njedostatka bydlenjow dla* 'on account of the lack of housing').

Element order in Lower Sorbian is a subject that has been little studied. Šwjela (1952: 103–4) devotes less than a page to it, but reveals certain essentials which appear to conform to the same pattern as Upper Sorbian. The verb has a preference for final position in the main clause:

Zmilny Bog, my tebje we takem swětem casu chwalimy a cesćimy.  
 'Merciful God, at such a sacred time we praise and honour thee.'

and the auxiliary in compound verbs prefers an early position even in a dependent clause:

Sused wulicowašo, až jo na wonem drogowanju wjele rědnego nazgoniř.  
 'The neighbour related that on that journey he had experienced much that was pleasant.'

It as been observed, however, that the simple verb's preference for final position is less distinct than in Upper Sorbian and that it may therefore be found in second or middle position. The frame construction too, it is noted,

operates less consistently than in Upper Sorbian (Waurick 1968: 126, as quoted in Michałk 1970: 1 n.). In Lower Sorbian dialects the predominant tendency is for the finite verb to appear in a later position than in Upper Sorbian, sometimes resulting in the disappearance of the frame construction altogether. Recalling the Upper Sorbian example *hdyž je wona młoda była ...* 'when she was young ...', we may use *ako wona jo była młoda* to exemplify the Lower Sorbian frameless type (Michałk 1970: 9–11). This loss of the frame may be connected with the tendency, following the loss of the synthetic preterite, to treat the auxiliary and its *l*-participle as a unit (Michałk 1970: 11–19).

#### 4.2 Non-declarative sentence types

A statement may be converted into a 'yes–no' question by inverting the subject and the verb:

USo. Nan je doma. (LSo. Nan jo doma)

'Father is at home.'

USo. Je nan doma? (LSo. Jo nan doma?)

'Is father at home?'

But a question may equally well be marked solely by means of intonation (*nan je doma?*) and, since personal pronouns are often not expressed, the option of inversion does not always exist. The Upper Sorbian statement *maće sotru tež* '(you) have a sister too', for example, would normally become a question as *maće sotru tež?* The pronoun may naturally be added, but this is not normally felt to be necessary. Both *maće sotru tež?* and *maće wy sotru tež?* are well formed. Another possibility is to use the particles (USo. *hač*/LSo. *lěc*) which, as conjunctions, serve to introduce indirect questions (see below):

USo. Hač sy snadź chory?

'Are (you) perhaps ill?'

LSo. Lěc su teke wšyknio derje wugotowali?

'Have (they) also prepared everything nicely?'

The use of the particle *-li* (as in U/LSo. *maš-li to?* 'have you got that?') is nowadays rare and limited to literary usage. Lower Sorbian also has the alternative form *-lic* with the same function (*maš-lic to?*).

The primary possible responses to 'yes–no' questions are USo. *haj* 'yes' and *ně* 'no' and LSo. *jo* 'yes' and *ně* 'no'. (The *haj/jo* isogloss is plotted in SS 10: map 130.) *Haj* and *jo* both confirm the underlying statement:

USo. A maće sotru tež?

'And have you a sister too?'

Haj, tři sotry mam hišćen.

'Yes, I have three sisters too.'



- LSo. Wumjeju te žěši něco na serbski se modliš?  
 'Can the children say some prayers in Sorbian?'  
 Jo, knjez doglědowaf.  
 'Yes, inspector.'

In both Upper and Lower Sorbian *ně* negates the underlying positive statement:

- LSo. Pšízoš zasej raz sobu?  
 'Will (you) come again with (us)?'  
 Ně, žěnsa nic.  
 'No, not today.'

A response may also involve repeating part of the question (usually a verb):

- USo. Sy to hižo rozsudził?  
 'Have (you) already decided that?'  
 Sym. or Njejsym  
 '(I) have (= yes).' '(I) haven't (= no).'
- LSo. Njocoš teke pšís?  
 'Don't (you) want to come too?'  
 Njok  
 '(I) don't want (= no).'

Very commonly, the response repeats something from the question *in addition* to *haj*, *jo* or *ně*:

- LSo. A mašo hyšći stašiwy?  
 'And have (you) still got the loom?'  
 Jo, stašiwy mamy ...  
 'Yes, (we) have the loom ...'

(T 10: 42)

In Upper Sorbian an underlying negated statement is negated by *haj*, *ow haj*, *haj wšak*, *ju* or *tola*:

- USo. Njepřinǎdžeš džěnsa?  
 'Aren't (you) coming today?'  
 Ju, přinǎdu.  
 'Yes, (I) am coming.'

In Lower Sorbian this is done by means of *jo wšak* or by repeating part of the question:

- LSo. Nježěta wěcej w Žylowje?  
 'Isn't (he) working in Sielow any more?'  
 Žěta.  
 '(He) is working (= yes, he is).'

(Šwjela 1952: 107)

Negated questions in the second person are considered by Sorbs to be less direct and therefore more polite than non-negated questions. Sorbs can consequently be recognized, when speaking German, by the fact that they put questions in a negated form, whereas a German monoglot would not:

Können Sie mir nicht sagen, wie spät es ist?  
 'Can you not tell me what the time is?'  
 (compare USo. Njemóžeće mi prajić, kak na času je?)  
 (for Können Sie mir sagen, wie spät es ist?)

Indirect 'yes-no' questions are formed with USo. *hač* 'if, whether' and LSo. *lěc* 'if, whether':

USo. a wona praji, hač sym ja ta Serbowka ...  
 'and she asked (literally: said) whether I was the Sorbian girl ...'  
 (Michalk and Protze [1974]: 141)

Questions are also formed with interrogative pronouns, such as USo. *hdy* 'when', *hdže* 'where', *što* 'what', *štó* 'who', and LSo. *ga* (or *gdy*) 'when', *žo* 'where', *co* 'what', *chto* 'who':

USo. Hdy so wróciš?  
 'When will (you) return?'  
 LSo. Chto jo to był?  
 'Who was that?'

They also introduce indirect questions:

USo. Woprašach so jeho, hdy so wróci.  
 '(I) asked him when (he) would return.'  
 LSo. Ja cu wěžeš, chto jo to był.  
 'I want to know who that was.'

Commands are issued primarily by means of the imperative. An imperfective imperative is said to be less categorical than the corresponding perfective (for instance, USo. *sydajće so!* (IMPFV) 'sit down!' is less categorical than *sydńće so* (PRFV)). In negated imperatives, it is claimed, the same distinction exists, but in reverse. The negated perfective imperative (*njesydńće so!*) is less categorical than the corresponding imperfective (*njesydajće so!*). However, there is some uncertainty and controversy as to the aspectual values of imperatives (Faßke 1981: 289; Šewc-Schuster 1976: 13). Commands may also be issued in the form of infinitives (a highly categorical type), as in *změrom sedžeć!* 'sit quietly!', and by means of verbless phrases, for example, *won ze jstwy!* '(get) out of the room!'.

### 4.3 Copular sentences

The main copulas in Upper Sorbian are *być* 'to be' and *stać so* 'to become' (a special synthetic past tense of *być*, namely *buch*, *bu* and so on, also translates 'to become'). Nouns and nominal phrases in the complement linked to the subject by either of these verbs may stand in the nominative:

Jan je wučer.  
'Jan is a teacher.'

Or they may stand in the instrumental preceded by the preposition *z* 'with' (there are no circumstances in which the instrumental may stand without a preposition):

Jan je z wučerjom.  
'Jan is a teacher.'

The zero copula is unknown.

Since *stać so* is stylistically marked and characteristic of a professional and journalistic style it takes the instrumental more commonly than *być* (Faßke 1981: 83, 471):

Stachu so z prodrustwownikami.  
'They became collective farmers.'

The instrumental with the copula is a distinctly literary device which does not normally occur in colloquial Sorbian (Upper or Lower). It is never obligatory and some writers avoid it. A wholly adjectival complement can never appear in the instrumental. Adjectives used in the complement are in no way distinct from those used attributively (there are no short forms).

The bookish nature of the instrumental complement suggests that it may result from the influence of other Slavonic languages in which it has a firmer base. However, it is attested in Upper Sorbian in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (when the influence of other Slavonic literary languages was weak or negligible) and it is found in Upper Sorbian folk-songs:

Hdyž mój wujk mi z krawcom běše ...  
'When my cousin was a tailor ...'

(Haupt and Schmalzer 1841: 212)

The fact that it had ceased to be systematic and tended to be associated with particular nouns (*z knjezom* 'lord, master', *z hrěchom* 'sin', *z wudowu* 'widow' and so on) is apparent from eighteenth-century sources.

The instrumental complement is only rarely used in Lower Sorbian, and only in the literary language. A Lower Sorbian variant of the folk-song noted above contains the nominative:

Ak moj foter šlodaf běšo ...  
 'When my father was a tailor ...'

(Haupt and Schmalzer 1843: 104)

Hauptmann (1761: 388) states unequivocally: 'The verb *ja som* "I am" has before and after it the nominative: *Krystus jo wěrnny bog a človjek* "Christ is a true god and man".' The zero copula is unknown. There are no distinct adjectival forms for predicative use (there are no longer any short forms, but see section 3.1.4).

#### 4.4 Coordination and comitativity

The main means of co-ordination in Upper Sorbian are the conjunctions *a* 'and', *abo* 'or' and *ale* 'but':

džeń a nóc  
 'day and night'  
 džensa abo jutře  
 'today or tomorrow'  
 džěłamy, ale čakamy  
 'we are working, but waiting'

Not only individual words, but also whole phrases and clauses can be coordinated by means of these conjunctions:

Wčera sy přijěł a džensa chceš so zaso wrócić.  
 'Yesterday you arrived and today you want to go back again.'

In a series of more than two items the conjunction *a* normally stands before the last component:

Wstań, wzmi swoje łożo, a dži do swojeho domu.  
 'Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house.'

(Mark 2.11)

Both the repeated use of the conjunction (polysyndeton) and the use of zero (asyndeton) are stylistically marked:

... ale su tam tež palmy wšěch družinow a cypresy a cedry a eukalptusy a banany a draceny a pod nimi nic mjenje pyšne kerki ...  
 (M. Nowak; Šewc-Schuster 1976: 86)

'... but there are also all kinds of palms there and cypresses and cedars and eucalyptuses and bananas and dracaenas, and beneath them no less magnificent shrubs ...'

Štyri króć běch [...] přepućował Juhosłowjansku, jako moler, jako nowinar, jako Sokol ...

(M. Nowak; Šewc-Schuster 1976: 87)

'Four times I had travelled through Yugoslavia, as a painter, as a journalist, as a Sokol [member of the Sokol gymnasts' organization].'

Normally the predicate agreeing with two or more conjoined nouns is in the dual or plural, as appropriate:

Haj, tež knjeni a džowka měještej tehdy čerwjenej, zapłakanej woči.  
'Yes, then even the mistress and her daughter had (DU) eyes red from weeping.'

Jeničce młynk, kowar a korčmar su so z roboty wukupili.  
'Only the miller, blacksmith and inn-keeper bought (PL) themselves out of serfdom.'

But, notwithstanding the real duality or plurality of the conjoined subject, the singular may occasionally occur (Faßke 1981: 296):

hatk a rěka mjerznje ...  
'pond and river freeze (SG) ...'

Its likelihood is increased by inversion and the presence of attributes:

W nim so zwuraznjuje cyłe bohatstwo, rjanosć a móc našeje rěče.  
'In it is/are (SG) expressed the entire richness, beauty and power of our language.'

In distributive expressions dual agreement is usual, notwithstanding arithmetic plurality:

A wón přinđže zaso, a namaka jich spjacych; přetož jich woči běštej wobčeženej.  
'And he came again and found them (PL) sleeping, for their (PL) eyes were heavy (DU).'

(Matthew 26.43)

Comitative subjects of the type *mój z maćerju* 'my mother and I' or *bratr ze sotru* 'brother and sister' normally take dual agreement:

Mój z bratrom wotjědźechmoj.  
'My brother and I departed.'

The pronoun need not be expressed:

Z mandźelskej staj prawidłownje na serbske kemše chodźiŕoj.  
'(He) and (his) wife went regularly to Sorbian church services.'  
(*Rozhlad* 1990, no. 9, p. 272)

The comitative subject (constituting a unit) and the predicative attribute linked to the subject by *z* may be distinguished either by verbal agreement (dual or singular) or by word order:

Tuž džěše Jank z pućowarjom na hońtwu.  
'So Jank went on the hunt with the traveller.'  
Tuž Jank z pućowarjom na hońtwu džěštaj.  
'So Jank and the traveller went on the hunt.'

(Faßke 1981: 472-3)

In Lower Sorbian the main means of coordination are the same as in Upper Sorbian: *a* 'and', *abo* 'or' and *ale* 'but':

žeń a noc  
 'day and night'  
 žěnsa abo witsě  
 'today or tomorrow'  
 žěłamy, ale čakamy  
 'we are working, but waiting'

They can conjoin not only individual words, but also (as in Upper Sorbian) whole phrases and clauses. In a series of two or more items the conjunction normally stands only before the last component:

Stań gorej, wezmij twojo łožyšćo, a žij do twojogo domu.  
 'Arise, take up thy bed and go unto thy house.'

(Mark 2.11)

However, the repeated use of the conjunction (polysyndeton) and the use of zero (asyndeton) are also found:

Mašerina rěc, jatšowne spěwanje, ludna drastwa su radnje wobryte.  
 'The mother tongue, Easter singing, national costume are in a fairly poor state.'

The question of verb agreement with conjoined phrases is dealt with by Hauptmann (1761: 372) as follows:

Two substantives, namely a dual, take the verb in the dual, three or several in the plural, e.g. *Mojzes a Aaron běštej bratša* "Moses and Aaron were brothers" ... *Ja moj foter a maš Smy strowe* "I, my father and mother are well", *Ehebracharstwo, hurstwo, žraše a žrěše, gněw a zawisć, su statki togo šěta* "Adultery, fornication, gluttony and drunkenness, anger and envy, are the works of the flesh".

Subsequent grammars of Lower Sorbian (none of which deals specifically with syntax) have not challenged this assertion; but occasional exceptions may be observed:

Zamrěł nama nan a moterka.  
 'Our father and mother have died.'

(Haupt and Schmalzer 1843: 25)

(note ellipsis of the auxiliary)

Lěto a žeń se njebě minuło.  
 'A year and a day had not passed.'

First- and second-person comitative constructions of the type *mej z nanom* and *wej z nanom* may refer to either two or three persons in total, depending on the context. The pronoun need not be expressed. Janaš (1984: 171–2) gives the following examples:

Som nježelu doma była. Smej z nanom šach grałej.  
 ‘On Sunday I was at home. Father and I played chess.’  
 Som z psijašelku k nanoju woglědał. Smej z nanom w žiwadle byłej.  
 ‘Together with my girl friend I visited father. We and father went to the theatre.’

Third-person constructions of this type (*wonej z nanom*) always refer to three persons (‘the two of them and father’).

#### 4.5 Subordination

The main types of subordinate clause in Sorbian (Upper and Lower) are noun clauses, relative clauses and adverbial clauses.

**Noun clauses** (declarative, interrogative, imperative/optative):

USo. Wěm, zo maš prawje.  
 ‘I know that you are right.’  
 LSo. Wěm, až maš pšawje.  
 ‘I know that you are right.’ (literally: ‘have right’)

**Relative clauses:**

USo. Bě tam jedyn z přěnich, kiž nowe mašiny postaji.  
 ‘He was one of the first there who put in the new machines.’  
 LSo. Wšykne, kenž su pšišli, su nam derje znate.  
 ‘All those who have come are well known to us.’

(Janaš 1984: 187)

The relative pronouns introducing relative clauses are in most cases derived from interrogative pronouns by the addition of *-ž* (for instance, USo. *štóž* ‘who’, *štož* ‘what’, *kotryž* ‘who, which’, *hdžež* ‘where’, *hdyž* ‘when, if’; LSo. *chtož* ‘who’, *což* ‘what’, *kotaryž* ‘who, which’, *žož* ‘where’, *gaž* ‘when, if’). There are, however, no attested interrogative forms in Sorbian corresponding to USo. *kiž* ‘who, which’ and LSo. *kenž* ‘who, which’. They are invariable and used only in the nominative and accusative (but not in conditions where the accusative coincides with the genitive). Their synonyms are USo. *kotryž* and LSo. *kotaryž*, both of which have full paradigms. In non-standard Upper Sorbian, however, it is possible to use *kiž* in cases other than the nominative and accusative by adding the anaphoric pronoun in the second or third position in the clause:

muž, kiž jeho znaju  
 ‘the man that I know’ (literally: ‘the man that him (I) know’)

The corresponding construction in Lower Sorbian is formed with *ak(o)* 'who, which' and is not excluded from the literary language:

Tam seǰžitej golca, ako som z nima grał.  
'There sit the two boys with whom I was playing.'

If the cases in the main clause and subordinate clause coincide, it is not necessary to insert the anaphoric pronoun:

Won jězo z tym awtom, ako cora jo jěł.  
'He is going with the car with which he went yesterday.'

(Janaš 1984: 188)

**Adverbial clauses:** these are introduced by such conjunctions as USo. *zo* 'that', *dokelž* 'because', *jeli/jelizo* 'if', *hdy* 'if', *hačrunjež* 'although'; LSo. *až* 'that', *dokulaž* 'because', *joli až* 'if', *gaž* 'when, if', *lěcrownož/rownož* 'although', *gaby* 'if'. In conditional sentences, if the condition is real, both main and subordinate clauses may be in the indicative:

USo. Jelizo budžeš strowy, móžeš hrać.

LSo. Joli až bužoš strowy, možoš graš.

'If you are fit, you can play.'

Sentences expressing hypothetical conditions have the conditional in both main and subordinate clauses:

USo. Mać by so wjeseliła, hdy by ju farar wopytał.

LSo. Mama by se wjaseliła, gaby k njej faraf woglědał.

'Mother would be pleased if the priest visited her.'

(In Lower Sorbian the conditional particle *by* has become an inseparable part of the conjunction *gaby* 'if', which occurs only in clauses embodying hypothetical conditions.)

The present gerund (verbal adverb) is formed only from imperfective verbs. It expresses action which is simultaneous with that of the main verb:

USo. Druzy trubku pachajo so rozmołwjachu.

others pipe smoking were chatting

'The others were chatting, while smoking a pipe.'

LSo. Wona jo tam hyšći chylku seǰzeczy wostała.

'She remained sitting there for a while longer.'

It may refer to the subject (as in the above examples) or to the object:

USo. Ja sym jeho tam stejo widźał.

LSo. Ja som jogo tam stojecy wiźeł.

'I saw him standing there.'



The past gerund (only Upper Sorbian) expresses an action which precedes that of the main verb. It is formed exclusively from perfective verbs:

USo. Tak ju hišće rano stanywši z łoža namakach.  
 thus her still early having risen from bed (I) found  
 'Thus I found her still, having risen from my bed in the morning.'

The gerunds are predominantly literary forms. The present gerund is, however, found in dialects, though here it is formed almost exclusively from USo. *stać*/LSo. *stojas* 'to stand', USo. *ležec*/LSo. *lažas* 'to lie', USo. *sedžec*/LSo. *sejžes* 'to sit', USo. *wisac*/LSo. *wisas* 'to hang' and USo. *tčec* 'to be (located)', and is used mainly in conjunction with USo. *wostać*/LSo. *wostas* 'to remain', USo. *wostajic*/LSo. *wostajis* 'to leave', USo. *męc*/LSo. *měš* 'to have', USo. *widžec*/LSo. *wižes* 'to see', USo. *namakać*/LSo. *namakas* 'to find' and USo. *zetkać*/LSo. *trefiš* 'to meet' as main verb (SS 12: 309).

In both Upper and Lower Sorbian the infinitive is widely used in constructions which are synonymous with subordinate clauses:

USo. Prošu će so wrócić. = Prošu će, zo by so ty wrócić.  
 '(I) ask you to return.' = (literally: '(I) ask you that you would return')

But infinitive constructions with modal and phasal verbs (and certain other verbs, including USo. *bojeć so*/LSo. *bojas se* 'to be afraid', USo. *spytać*/LSo. *spytas* 'to attempt', USo. *pomhać*/LSo. *pomagas* 'to help', USo. *zabyć*/LSo. *zabyš* 'to forget') are not normally capable of conversion into subordinate clauses: thus USo. *bojach so nana prašec* '(I) was afraid to ask father' cannot be converted (Faßke 1981: 329). There are also numerous nouns and adjectives in both Upper and Lower Sorbian which regularly form part of infinitive constructions: USo. *prawo*/LSo. *pšawo* 'right', USo. and LSo. *šansa* 'chance', USo. *móžno*/LSo. *možno* 'possible'. Among the verbs commonly followed in Upper Sorbian by infinitives are the verbs of motion (like USo. *hić/chodžic* 'to go (on foot)'), but in Lower Sorbian verbs of motion are followed by the supine:

Žensa wjacor pojžomy rejowat.  
 'This evening (we) shall go dancing.'

The infinitive construction with verbs of perceiving exemplified in USo. *město je widžec* 'the town is visible' (literally: 'town is to see') is synonymous with a construction involving the verbal noun and the preposition *k* 'to' (USo. *město je k widženju*, literally: 'town is to seeing').

The only natural way of translating the English sequences (1) *the man that I think that you saw* and (2) *the man that I think saw you* is to avoid the extraction:

- 1 USo. muž, kotrehož sy po zdaću widžať  
 (non-standard: muž, kiž sy jeho po zdaću widžať)  
 LSo. muž, kotaregož sy ako se zda wižet  
 or: muž, ak sy jogo ako se zda wižet
- 2 USo. muž, kiž je će po zdaću widžať  
 LSo. muž, kenž jo še ako se zda wižet

*I think* may also be translated as USo. *ja sej myslu* or *mi so zda*, LSo. *ja se myslim* or *mě se zda*.

#### 4.6 Negation

Sentence negation in both Upper and Lower Sorbian is expressed by means of the negative particle *nje-*, which is written together with the verb to form a single word. The particle *nje-* thus bears the stress. For example, *piju* '(I) drink' : *njepiju* '(I) do not drink'. There are a few exceptions to this rule. In Upper Sorbian the modal verb *chcyc* 'to want' has two irregular negated forms: *nochcyc* and *njechać*, as in *nochcycše swojimaj samsnymaj wočomaj wěrić* '(he) did not want to believe his own eyes', *wón njechaše ničo nowe słyšeć* 'he did not want to hear anything new'. *Nohcyc* is stylistically literary or bookish; *njechać* is stylistically neutral and preferred in colloquial speech. USo. *měć* 'to have' has negative *njeměć*, but in the present tense *nje-* → *ni-*: *nimam*, *nimaš*, *nima* and so on. In the present tense of USo. *njebyc* (the negated *być* 'to be') a *-j-* is inserted: *njejsym* '(I) am not', *njejsy* '(you) are not' and so on, (compare *njeńdu* '(I) shall not go', *njeńdžeš* '(you) will not go' and so on from the negated *hić* 'to go (on foot)').

In Lower Sorbian the negated form of *kšěš* 'to want' is *njekšěš*. Its present tense is as follows:

	SG	DU	PL
1	ja njok	mej njocomej	my njocomy
2	ty njocoš	wej njocotej	wy njocošo
3	won njoco	wonej njocotej	woni njekšě

In the present tense of *njeměš* (negated form of *měš*) and all tenses of *njamoc* (negated form of *moc* 'to be able') the negative particle takes the form *nja-*: *njamam* '(I) have not', *njamaš* '(you) have not' and so on, *njamogu* '(I) cannot', *njamožoš* '(you) cannot', *njamožach* '(I) could not'. As in USo., *-j-* is inserted in the present tense of *njebys*: *ja njejsom*, *ty njejsy*, *won njejo* and so on, and also in the present tense of *njehys* (negated form of *hys* 'to go'): *ja njejdu*, *ty njejšoš*.

In analytical constructions it is to the auxiliary that the negative particle is usually attached:

USo. *Njejsym na to myslit*.  
 '(I) did not think of that.'

LSo. Njejsy nic groniť.  
'(You) have not said anything.'

In the case of conditional verbs the negative particle may be attached to either the auxiliary or the *l*-participle:

USo. either: zo by přescěhany njebyť  
or: zo njeby přescěhany byť 'so that (he) should not be persecuted'

In sentences containing negative adverbs or pronouns such as USo. *nihdy* 'never', *nihdže* 'nowhere', *ničo* 'nothing', *nichtó* 'no one', *ženje* 'never'; LSo. *nigda/nigdy* 'never', *niži* 'nowhere', *nic* 'nothing', *nichten* 'no one', *žednje* 'never', the verb must be negated:

USo. Jan njeje nikoho zetkať.  
'Jan met nobody.'

LSo. Won how niži njejo.  
'He is nowhere here.'

It is possible to have several negative words in one sentence:

USo. Ty ženje nihdže ničo nimaš.  
'You never have anything anywhere.'

LSo. Nježycym žednje nikomu nic złego.  
'(I) never wish anyone anything bad.'

The pronouns *žadyn* (USo.) and *žeden* (LSo.) often occur in negated clauses with the meaning 'no, none, any' (USo. *nimam žadyn čas*, LSo. *njamam žeden cas* '(I) have no time'), but they may also appear in affirmative clauses with an indefinite meaning 'any, some, a few' (LSo. *něto žo won žedne kšocenki doprědka* 'now he's walking a few steps ahead').

In constituent negation in both Upper and Lower Sorbian the particle *nic* stands before or after the constituent negated. It occurs frequently in adversative constructions, for example, USo. *nic ja, ale ty sy na tym wina* 'it is not my fault, but yours' (literally: 'not I but you are of that guilty'). The particle *nic* (in both Upper and Lower Sorbian) may also be substituted for a negated verb:

USo. Ja to wěm, ty nic  
'I know that, not you.'

(Faßke 1981: 769–70)

LSo. Styri punty možoš braš; ale wěcej nic.  
'(You) can take four pounds, but no more.'

In both literary languages the direct object of a negated verb may appear in the genitive as a facultative variant of the accusative, but the genitive in these constructions is never obligatory:

USo. My nimamy žanoho chlěba wjac. (GEN)

'We have no more bread.'

or: My nimamy žadyn chlěb wjac. (ACC)

LSo. My njamamy žednogo klěba wěcej. (GEN)

or: My njamamy žeden klěb wěcej. (ACC)

A survey of direct objects of negated verbs in Upper Sorbian literature (Faßke 1981: 458) found the genitive to be relatively rare and mainly associated with particular verbs. In the material examined 42 per cent of all cases of the genitive occurred with *měć* 'to have'. In colloquial and dialectal Sorbian the genitive is also rare, but more common in Lower than in Upper Sorbian. The likelihood of its occurring is greater with the emphatic negative particles *ani* and *nic* than with the simple negated verb:

LSo. Nic jadnogo zernka njejo tym kokošam daća.

'She didn't give the chicken a single grain.'

The genitive may also occur with negated verbs as a facultative variant of the nominative:

USo. Jeho row běše nahi, ani kamjenja tam njebě.

'His grave was bare, there wasn't even a stone (GEN) there.'

But this too is rare. In colloquial Upper Sorbian it can occur only with the particle *ani* (Faßke 1981: 459).

#### 4.7 Anaphora and pronouns

The person and number of nearly all finite verbal forms are expressed by means of inflections: for example, in USo. *spěwam* 'I sing' the ending *-m* expresses the first person singular, in *přindžechu* 'they came' the ending *-chu* expresses the third person plural. Consequently, the nominative personal pronoun is frequently omitted:

USo. Džěłam we Serbskim wučerskim wustawje.

'(I) work in the Sorbian teachers' institute.' (omitting *ja* 'I')

LSo. Witše maju šulsku ekskursiju.

'Tomorrow (they) have a school excursion.' (omitting *woni* 'they')

Omission of the pronoun is, however, more common in the literary languages than in colloquial and dialectal Sorbian (compare 4.1 above). The expression of the nominative pronoun in cases where it is redundant is attributed to the influence of German. This influence may also be observed in the colloquial use of an indefinite pronoun in such sentences as:

USo. Wono było 'žon jary pozdže.

'It was already very late.'

USo. Wone je so sněh šow.  
'It snowed.'

(Michalk and Protze [1974]: 107 and 119)

*Wono* and *wone* here translate German *es* (*es war schon sehr spät/ es hat geschneit*). In literary usage such constructions are usually avoided and the verb stands in first position:

USo. Běše patoržica.  
'It was Christmas Eve.'

LSo. Jo se wopšestało deščowaš.  
'It stopped raining.'

In literary Upper Sorbian the nominative personal pronouns are supposed to be omitted unless there is a positive reason for their inclusion, such as: (a) to avoid leaving the auxiliary in first position; (b) for emphasis; (c) the existence of a noun in apposition (as in *my džěći robočanskeho luda znajachmy jenož chudobu* 'we, the children of menial workers, knew only poverty' (Šewc 1968: 115)); (d) with an imperative to soften the force of the command (*nano, dži ty jónu k lěkarjej z twojej bolacej nohu* 'father, go to the doctor with your bad foot'); (e) in reported speech to impart a colloquial tone.

An anaphoric function similar to that of the personal pronoun is performed by the demonstrative pronoun *tón, ta, to* 'this/that'. For example:

Wróću so jutře zaso a to z... prawiznikom. Tón budže mje zastupować.  
'(I'll) come back tomorrow with... a lawyer. He'll represent me.'

The Upper Sorbian equivalents of *dieser* 'the latter' are *tón, tutón* and *tónle*; the equivalents of *jener* 'the former' are *tamny* and *tamón*. The latter form is used only by writers from the Catholic dialect area (Šewc 1968: 125-6).

The position with regard to personal pronouns and their omission is similar, but not identical, in Lower Sorbian. In the literary language omission occurs slightly less frequently than in Upper Sorbian and grammars are less categorical about it: 'The nominative of the non-reflexive personal pronoun in the subject may be omitted' (Janaš 1984: 171). The anaphoric use of *ten* 'this/that' corresponds closely to that of *tón* in Upper Sorbian.

#### 4.8 Reflexives and Reciprocals

Reflexivity is expressed by means of the reflexive personal pronoun (the forms of which were given in tables 11.7 and 11.8 above) and the reflexive possessive pronoun (USo. *swój*/LSo. *swoj*). Verbs are made reflexive by

the addition of the accusative or dative reflexive personal pronoun (in Lower Sorbian there is no difference between them), the case corresponding to that of a non-reflexive noun phrase in the same position:

USo. *myć* 'to wash' → *myć so* 'to wash (oneself)', *dowolić* 'to permit' → *dowolić sej* 'to permit (oneself)';

LSo. *mys'* 'to wash' → *mys' se* 'to wash (oneself)', *dowoliś* 'to permit' → *dowoliś se* 'to permit (oneself)'.

Both Upper and Lower Sorbian also have a substantial number of *reflexiva tantum* (verbs which are reflexive in form but not in meaning and have no non-reflexive counterparts), such as: USo. *bojeć so*/LSo. *bojaś se* 'to fear', USo. *modlić so*/LSo. *modliś se* 'to pray', USo. *zdać so*/LSo. *zdaś se* 'to seem'.

The short forms of the reflexive personal pronouns are generally enclitic, but the rule prohibiting their use in the first position in the clause is not without exception. The long forms are used if stressed (USo. *kupich sebi nowu košlu* 'I bought *myself* a new shirt') or for contrast (USo. *njemóžach sebi, ani jemu pomhać* 'I could not help myself nor him'). With prepositions taking the accusative or genitive both long and short forms are found (USo. *wot so* or *wot sebje* 'from self'), but in the dative the long form is preferred, with the exception of *ku se* 'towards self' in Lower Sorbian (USo. *k sebi*).

As a rule, the antecedent of both reflexive and reflexive possessive pronouns is the subject of the clause (USo. *holca so česa* 'the girl is combing herself (that is, her hair)', LSo. *won pišo ze swojim wotojnikom* 'he is writing with his (own) pencil'). But the reflexive may refer to the logical rather than the grammatical subject, for instance the dative subject in such impersonal sentences as USo. *jemu bě swojeje džowki žel* 'he was sorry for his daughter' (literally: 'him (DAT) was his daughter (GEN) sorry'). The subject may also be the understood subject of an infinitive, as in USo. *prošu was na so kedźbować* 'I ask you to take care of yourselves'. Here the antecedent is an unexpressed *wy* forming the subject of a finite verb underlying the infinitive *kedźbować* 'to take care'.

Sentences embodying reflexive pronouns are often ambiguous (as in USo. *Jan bě će prosył položiť knihu na swoje městno* 'Jan had asked you to put the book in its/his/your place'). Therefore, a non-reflexive form is sometimes preferred in order to avoid even the possibility of ambiguity. There is, moreover, a tendency, even in sentences containing only one verb, to use the non-reflexive possessive pronouns, if the subject is the first or second person (USo. *smy našu chěžu předali* '(we) have sold our house' for *smy swoju chěžu předali*). This practice is now acceptable in both literary languages. However, in the third person the reflexive pronoun is an aid to avoiding ambiguity: for example, LSo. *won jo se swoje crjeje wzeł* 'he has

taken his (own) shoes', but *won jo se jogo crjeje wzet* 'he has taken his (own or someone else's) shoes'.

Reciprocity is expressed by means of reflexive personal pronouns, but many clauses formed in this way are ambiguous: for example, USo. *kedžbujemy na so* may mean 'we are looking after one another' or 'we are looking after ourselves'. Ambiguity may be removed by the context or by simple logic: for example, USo. *mój sebi napřečo sedžachmoj* means 'we (two) were sitting opposite each other'. The interpretation 'each of us was sitting opposite himself' is eliminated by its own absurdity. Ambiguity may also be eliminated by the addition of USo. *mjez sobu* and LSo. *mjazy sobu*:

USo. To wam přikazuju, zo byšće mjez sobu so lubowali.

LSo. Take psikažu ja wam, aby se mjazy sobu lubowali.

'These things I command you, that ye love one another.'

(John 15.17)

The same meaning may be conveyed by USo. *jedyn druhi* and LSo. *jaděn drugi* 'one another':

USo. Wonaj jedyn druhemu njedowěritaj.

'They do not trust each other.'

#### 4.9 Possession

Both Upper and Lower Sorbian have a strong inclination to express possession by means not of an adnominal genitive but of an adjectival construction. The simplest form of this construction is the possessive adjective, derived from a noun by means of the suffix *-owy* (for masculines, including *a*-stems) or *-iny* (*-yny*) (for feminines), for example, *nanowy dom* 'father's house'. The use of the adnominal genitive (*dom nana* 'father's house') is also possible, but rarer. It either imparts the stylistic connotation of formality or it puts emphasis on the noun in the genitive. If the modifier is composite, only the last element forms an adjective; the preceding elements are in the genitive singular: *Handrija Zejlerjowe basnje* 'Handrij Zejler's poems', *Karla Marxowa uniwersita* 'the Karl Marx University' (from the last example it can be seen that the meaning is not always strictly possessive).

If the noun underlying the possessive adjective itself has a modifier, the latter takes its gender from the underlying noun and is usually in the genitive singular: *našeho nanowy dom* 'our/my father's house' (*naš* is always substituted for *mój*, when speaking of older persons). The possessive adjective thus controls the gender and case of the modifier. It is also able to control relative pronouns:

Běchu słyšeć ... stupy Dietrichowe, kiž ... na konja skoči a wotjěcha.

'One could hear ... Dietrich's steps, who ... jumped on the horse and rode off.'

And personal pronouns:

To je našeho wučerjowa zahrodka. Wón wjele w njej džěta.  
 'This is our (my) teacher's garden. He works a lot in it.'

The antecedent of *wón* is *naš wučer* 'our (my) teacher', which underlies the adjectival phrase *našeho wučerjowa*. However, in the last two examples the head noun is inanimate (*stupy* 'steps', *zahrodka* 'garden'). If the head noun is animate, the subject pronoun of the following clause will take this (and not the noun underlying the possessive adjective) as its antecedent. For example, in:

To je Janowy bratr. Wón je jemu knihu dał.  
 'This is Jan's brother. He's given him the book.'

the antecedent of *wón* is unambiguously *bratr*, not *Jan* (Corbett 1987: 338).

The possibilities in Lower Sorbian are similar to those in Upper Sorbian, but with one significant additional constraint. The unexpressed noun underlying the possessive adjective may (as in Upper Sorbian) be the antecedent of a personal or relative pronoun:

te dny mamineje smjerši a jeje zakopowanje  
 'those days of mother's death and her burial'

(W. Bjero, *Na Katpjenicu*)

(example quoted by Corbett 1987: 317 from Richter 1980: 102–3). But the possessive adjective cannot control attributive modifiers. In other words, the type *našeho nanowy dom* does not exist. It is replaced by a type in which an adnominal genitive phrase *precedes* the head noun (LSo. *našogo nana dom* 'our (my) father's house'). In Upper Sorbian this type is virtually unknown.

#### 4.10 Quantification

A noun or phrase quantified by a noun stands in the genitive, as in USo. *měch běrnaw* 'a sack of potatoes', LSo. *strus rožow* 'a bunch of roses'. The case of the quantifier is determined by its syntactic function in the clause, but the element quantified remains in the genitive:

USo. Kupi sej trubu płata.

'She bought herself a roll (ACC) of linen.'

LSo. Żowća rozwjaselichu mě z wjelikim strusom cerwjenych żywych rožow.

'The girls gladdened me with a big bunch (INST) of red, bright roses.'

However, in colloquial and dialectal speech the phenomenon known to



Sorbian grammar as 'attraction' sometimes occurs, causing the quantified element to appear in the same case as the quantifier:

USo. z měchom (INST) běrnami (INST)

'with a sack of potatoes'

USo. w karanje (LOC) piwje (LOC)

'in a jug of beer'

A noun or phrase quantified by a pronominal quantifier (such as U/LSo. *mało* 'little, few', *wjele* 'much, many'; USo. *něšto*/LSo. *něco* 'some') is in the genitive only if the whole phrase of which it forms part is the subject or direct object of the clause:

USo. Na mužacych ławkach je džensa wjele próznych městnow.

'In the men's pews today there are many empty places.'

LSo. Mam mało casa.

'I have little time.'

Otherwise the quantified element is in the case required by its syntactic function:

USo. W kak wjele eksemplarach daš dramatisku přiložu ćišćeć?

'In how many copies will you have the drama supplement published?'

(Ćišinski, quoted in Faßke 1981: 612)

The numerals '1' to '4' are syntactically adjectives and agree in gender and case with the nouns they modify; '2' takes the dual, '3' and '4' the plural.

USo. Wón ma jednu dźowku.

'He has one daughter.'

LSo. Turjańska šula mějašo za moj cas 150–180 žěši w tšich klasach.

'The school in Tauer in my time had 150–180 children in three classes.'

USo. Tři traktory na polu woraju.

'Three tractors are ploughing in the field.'

Numerals from '5' to '99' and pronominal quantifiers are syntactically neuter singular nouns. The noun quantified stands in the genitive plural, if the quantified phrase is in the nominative or accusative. The verb is singular and, in the perfect tense, neuter:

USo. Pjeć traktorow na polu wora (SG).

'Five tractors are (literally: is) ploughing in the field.'

LSo. Pěš mužow jo pšišo (N SG).

'Five men arrived.'

However, logical agreement may also be observed. It is particularly common in colloquial Sorbian, but rarer in the literary languages:

LSo. ... glja tog až wjele tych młodych du na žěło  
 '... because many young people go to work'

(T 10:14)

USo. Te sydow wsow podłu rěčki su čiste.  
 'Those seven villages along the stream are clean.'

(Faßke 1981: 296)

## 5 Lexis

### 5.1 General composition of word-stock

Sorbian has been in contact with German for about 1,000 years and during that time has absorbed and assimilated a large number of German lexical borrowings. Nevertheless, the Sorbian vocabulary remains overwhelmingly Slavonic. Bielfeldt's classic study of German loan-words in Upper Sorbian (1933), which was intentionally restricted to the most widespread and philologically most interesting borrowings, dealt with about 2,000 such words. If we estimate the total number of Upper Sorbian words at around 50,000, Bielfeldt's selection constitutes about 4 per cent of the total. In colloquial Upper Sorbian the percentage is higher, but it is not easy to say what is a fully integrated borrowing and what is merely the result of code-switching. However, excluding loan-translations and ignoring the distinction between true loan-words and substitutions resulting from code-switching, we find that the proportion of *nouns* of German origin in dialect texts may even exceed 50 per cent (Michalk and Protze 1967: 31). In literary varieties of Upper Sorbian, on the other hand, it seems likely that the proportion of German loan-words does not normally exceed 5 per cent, unless words from international terminology are included. The proportions in Lower Sorbian are probably similar, but the Lower Sorbian literary language is a little more tolerant of Germanisms than literary Upper Sorbian.

Borrowings from other Slavonic languages are mainly restricted to the literary languages. They are nearly all of Czech origin and in normal literary usage probably constitute about 1 per cent of the total. In dictionaries the proportion of Slavonic borrowings may be greater. The largest foreign element in both literary languages is supplied by international terminology (Europeanisms). In view of the contact situation these may, in a sense, be regarded as a subcategory of German borrowings.

### 5.2 Patterns of borrowing

So far as the spoken language is concerned (both Upper and Lower Sorbian) the main source of borrowings has always been and still is German. Loan-words still in common colloquial use include the following (the source-word is given in its New High German form except where specified): USo. *běrna* 'potato' (*Erdbirne*), *běrtl* 'quarter' (*Viertel*), *caŕta*

'roll (bread)' (Middle High German *zēlte*), *dyrbjeć* 'must' (*dürfen*), *faler* 'mistake' (*Fehler*), *krydnyć* 'to get' (*kriegen*); LSo. *bjatowaś* 'to pray' (*beten*), *głażk* 'glass' (*Glas*), *holowaś* 'to fetch' (*holen*), *šlodar* 'tailor' (Middle High German *schroder*), *wjazym* 'state, understanding' (*Wesen*).

Most early borrowings from other Slavonic languages are the subject of controversy. This applies in particular to much of the Christian terminology, which may or may not be of Czech or even Old Church Slavonic origin, such as: USo. *cyrkej*/LSo. *cerkwja* 'church' (perhaps from OCS *cirky* or Old Czech *cierkev*, but possibly direct from Old High German *kirihha*), USo. *žid*/LSo. *žyd* 'Jew' (compare Czech *žid*). However, the form of U/LSo. *kral* 'king' (attested since the sixteenth century) indicates its Czech origin unambiguously. The main flood of Slavonic borrowings came to Sorbian from Czech after 1841 as part of the national pro-Slavonic movement of that time. Among the common words from this source are: USo. *hudžba* 'music' (Czech *hudba*), U/LSo. *lětadło* 'aircraft' (Czech *letadlo*). USo. *železnica*, LSo. *zeleznica* 'railway' (Czech *železnice*). Writers have been at pains to exclude German borrowings from their works, but greater tolerance is normally shown to words with cognates in many European languages (even if the immediate source is German). The following are examples of this category: *administracija*, *aktiwny*, *biologija*, *centralny*, *demokratija*, *fabrika*, *idealny*, *objektiwny*, *telewizija*. (The form of all these examples is identical in Upper and Lower Sorbian.)

### 5.3 Incorporation of borrowings

It is not always possible to distinguish between integrated loan-words and substitutions resulting from code-switching. A word may be considered integrated, if it has been adapted in some way to the Sorbian phonological or morphological systems, but only certain parts of speech are capable of morphological adaptation. Adverbs, for example (such as *blows* 'only' (German *bloß*), *feste* 'firmly, thoroughly' (German *fest*), *fort* 'away' (German *fort*)) cannot be adapted morphologically, yet some of them are of such high frequency that they can only be regarded as integrated loan-words. Nouns and adjectives, on the other hand, are capable of morphological adaptation, but only in certain grammatical circumstances. When the word *brawtpor* 'bridal pair' (German *Brautpaar*), for example, occurs in the nominative or accusative singular, it is not possible to say whether it is integrated or not, but in the phrase *při toh' brawtpora* 'with the bridal pair (GEN SG)' integration has clearly taken place. The absence of integration is demonstrated when a word capable of acquiring a Sorbian morpheme in an oblique case fails to do so (for instance, *ze Serbien* 'from Serbia (GEN SG)'). Adjectives may remain unadapted (*tamle jo tón richtich ptačk* 'there is the right bird', German *richtig* 'right') or they may be adapted by derivation (*abnormalny* 'abnormal' (German *abnormal*), *wot tejele žony, tajkejele gajcneje žony* 'from this woman, such a mean woman')

(German *geizig* 'mean')) (Michalk and Protze [1974]: 141).

Verbs, however, are always adapted (except participles): for example, *hač sym ja ta holčka, kiž je so anonksěrowawa* 'whether I am the girl who announced herself' (German *sich annonciieren* 'to announce oneself'), *wječor potom zaso naše kofry zpakwachmy* 'then in the evening we packed our bags again' (German *packen* 'to pack') (Michalk and Protze [1974]: 201). Participles may be unadapted (*to su jich dobre ludže, dobre, gebildet ludže* 'they are good people, good educated people' (German *gebildet* 'educated'), but the attested examples indicate that they remain unadapted only when they are functionally adjectives. As part of a compound verb they are declined (*sem tež wjele, wjele wobšenk' wana boša* 'I also received many, many presents'; German *ich bin auch viel, viel beschenkt worden*; German *be-* is regularly translated as *wob-*) (T 6: 62). The only part of speech that is impervious to the borrowing process (so far as one can tell from published texts) is the preposition. German prepositions, it is true, may be found in Sorbian texts, but they always occur in phrases including other German words, like *zum Militär, in Leipzig, in Ordnung*. There is, however, no shortage of other grammatical words (such as *als* in *Salowčenko su prjede přec znate po nas als bóle htupo ludže bóli* 'the people of Saalau were formerly always known among us as rather stupid people' (T 4: 16), *cu* (German *zu*) in *tam Nowom Poršicam cu* 'off to Neu-Purschwitz' (German *dort nach Neu-Purschwitz zu*) (T 5: 52)).

Many of the German loan-words in Sorbian are of great antiquity and, having undergone sound changes and semantic changes long since completed, are often not easily associated with the corresponding words in modern German. For example, some were borrowed before the German diphthongization  $\bar{i} > aj$  (usually written *ei*). We consequently have USo. *cwiblować*/LSo. *cwiblowaś* 'to doubt' (Middle High German *zwīvelen*, New High German *zweifeln*), USo. *šrybar* 'schoolmaster' (Middle High German *schrībære*, New High German *Schreiber* 'writer'), USo. *žida* 'silk' (Middle High German *sīde*, New High German *Seide*). Sorbian words borrowed before the German diphthongization  $\bar{u} \rightarrow au$  include USo. *bruny* 'brown' (Middle High German *brūn*, New High German *braun*), USo. *rum* 'room' (Middle High German *rūm*, New High German *Raum*). In the case of the cognate words in Lower Sorbian (that is, *cwiblowaś, šrybar, žyže, bruny* and *rum*) the monophthongs are capable of a different explanation, for in the Low German dialects adjacent to Lower Sorbian diphthongization did not occur.

The metaphony of Middle High German  $\bar{e}$  to *a* in East Central German dialects is widely reflected in Sorbian borrowings (the source-words are given in their New High German form): U/LSo. *blach* 'tin' (*Blech*), USo. *blak*/LSo. *flak* 'spot, place' (*Fleck*), USo. *lazować*/LSo. *lazowaś* 'to read' (*lesen*), USo. *plahować*/LSo. *plagowaś* 'to raise, cultivate' (*pflügen*). Also reflected in Sorbian loan-words is the East Central German shift of *a* to *o*,

as in: USo. *hodler*/LSo. *hodlar* 'eagle' (*Adler*), USo. *kofej* (but LSo. *kafej*) 'coffee' (*Kaffee*), USo. *ladować* 'to load' (*laden*). Loan-words with a corresponding to standard German *a* (like USo. *barba*/LSo. *barwa* 'colour, paint' (*Farbe*), USo. *hamt* 'office' (*Amt*)) are, however, not uncommon.

Verbs are most commonly borrowed by means of the suffix *-ować/-owaś* (present stem in *-uj-*) and taken into Sorbian as imperfectives (thus USo. *pakować* 'to pack', compare German *packen*) which acquire a corresponding perfective by prefixation (*zapakować*; see section 3.3.3).

## 5.4 Lexical fields

### 5.4.1 Colour terms

white	USo./LSo. <i>běty</i>
black	USo. <i>čorny</i> /LSo. <i>carny</i>
red	USo. <i>čerwjeny</i> /LSo. <i>cerwjeny</i> . Hauptmann (1761: 21) has <i>zerwōni</i> (that is, <i>cerwjony</i> ), but says some pronounce it as <i>zerwāni</i> . Also USo./LSo. <i>ryzy</i> 'fox-coloured'
green	U/LSo. <i>zeleny</i>
yellow	U/LSo. <i>žoŕty</i>
blue	USo. <i>módry</i> , LSo. <i>modry</i> . In some Lower Sorbian dialects <i>plowy</i> (SS 4: map 40)
brown	U/LSo. <i>bruny</i> . Also <i>ryzy</i> 'reddish-brown'
purple	U/LSo. <i>purpurowy</i> denotes several tones between red and a half-way point between red and blue. USo. <i>fijałkowy</i> 'violet' is probably close to purple in the spectrum.
pink	USo. <i>różowy</i> , <i>różojty</i> , <i>różowaty</i> /LSo. <i>rožany</i> , <i>rožowaty</i> , <i>rožowy</i>
orange	U/LSo. <i>oranžowy</i> ; also USo. <i>pomorancojty</i>
grey	USo. <i>šěry</i> /LSo. <i>šery</i> , USo. <i>šědziwy</i> /LSo. <i>šežiwy</i> , USo. <i>sywy</i> . The distinction between <i>šěry/šery</i> and <i>šědziwy/šežiwy</i> is subtle. Both may be used of the hair of the head of human beings.

### 5.4.2 Body parts

head	USo. <i>hlowa</i> /LSo. <i>głowa</i>
eye	USo. <i>wóčko</i> /LSo. <i>woko</i> . The originally diminutive USo. <i>wóčko</i> has lost its diminutive meaning and is now the unmarked word for 'eye'. USo. <i>woko</i> means (a) 'drop of grease floating on broth' and (b) 'noose, loop' (SS 6: map 11).
nose	USo. <i>nós</i> /LSo. <i>nos</i>
ear	U/LSo. <i>wucho</i> (dual and plural USo. <i>wuši</i> /LSo. <i>wušy</i> ). U/LSo. <i>wucho</i> also means 'handle, eye of a needle, eyelet', in which meaning it has plural <i>wucha</i> .

- mouth USo. *huba*/LSo. *guba*. In western Lower Sorbian dialects *prampa*. In western Lower Sorbian and transitional dialects *mula* (SS 6: map 15). In literary Upper Sorbian *ert* (the variants *ort*, *rt*, *ert*, *rót*, *hort* and *wort* are also recorded); *huba* is distinctly colloquial. Literary Lower Sorbian has *wusta* (*plurale tantum*). USo. *huba*/LSo. *guba* also has the meaning 'lip'.
- hair USo. *włós/włosy*, LSo. *włós/włose*. The collective meaning expressed by the plural *włosy/włose* occurs in all varieties, but the word for 'a hair' varies regionally: (a) *włós* (F) in almost all Lower Sorbian territory and eastern transitional dialects, but *włós* (M) in a few villages to the north and south of this area; (b) *włosa* in most Upper Sorbian dialects; (c) *włóska* in addition to *włós* (F) and *włosa* in both Upper and Lower territory; (d) *włosanka* in the Hoyerswerda dialect and some adjacent villages. Before the field-work for the SS, *włós* (F) had not been recorded, yet the signs are that *włós* (M) is secondary. This raises the question of a Proto-Slavonic \**volsь* (F) (SS 6: map 7).
- neck Equivalents of German *Hals* (front of the neck) are USo. *šija*/LSo. *šyja*. Equivalents of German *Nacken/Genick* (nape of the neck) are in the literary languages USo. and LSo. *tył* and *tyło*, but SS 6 (map 32) shows a more complex picture. The main isogloss is that of the German loan-words *knyka* and *nyka*, which occur in the Lower Sorbian dialects and in the eastern part of the transitional zone. *Knyka* is to the north of *nyka*. *Tył* was found only here and there in both Upper and Lower Sorbian. *Tyło* was found in only one Lower and two Upper Sorbian villages. In many Upper Sorbian villages *šija* was noted in reply to a request for a translation of *Nacken*. It is possible that the *Nacken/Hals* distinction does not occur here.
- arm/hand U/LSo. *ruka*
- finger USo. *porst*/LSo. *palc*. The *porst/palc* isogloss coincides with the line dividing territory where the word for 'thumb' is *palc* (Upper Sorbian and Nochten dialect) from territory where it is *wjeliki palc* (the remainder) (SS 6: map 25).
- leg/foot USo. *noha*/LSo. *noga* has the general meaning 'leg and foot'. A question eliciting translations of German *Bein* 'leg' for the SS produced only *noha/noga*. However, a request for translations of German *Fuß* 'foot' (SS 6: map 42) produced *stopa* (variants *stowpa* and *stowpja*) for most dialects, *stop* (variant *stowp*) in the Wittichenau and

	Catholic dialects, and <i>noha/noga</i> in eleven scattered villages (mainly Upper Sorbian).
toe	In both standard languages the words for 'finger' and 'toe' are the same: USo. <i>porst</i> /LSo. <i>palc</i> . This is also true of most dialects, but in a group of villages to the east, south and west of Bautzen the word for 'toe' is the same as that for 'thumb' ( <i>palc</i> ) ( <i>SS</i> 6: map 27). Some Upper Sorbian dictionaries give the meaning 'big toe' for <i>palc</i> .
chest	USo. <i>hrudź</i> and LSo. <i>gruž</i> (F) (also LSo. <i>gruža</i> ) are literary words, dating from the nineteenth century and based on Czech <i>hrud'</i> 'chest'. The colloquial, older words for 'chest' (recorded since the sixteenth century) are USo. <i>bróst</i> /LSo. <i>brost</i> . It is, however, evident that there were other words, not loan-words, referring to this part of the body. Swětlik's dictionary (1721) under <i>pectus</i> has <i>hutrobno</i> . It is clear that USo. <i>wutroba</i> /LSo. <i>wutšoba</i> 'heart' formerly had the wider meaning 'heart and chest'. It was last recorded with this double meaning in the 1930s.
heart	USo. <i>wutroba</i> /LSo. <i>wutšoba</i> . PSI. * <i>sъrdьce</i> 'heart' is attested only in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century sources from the east Lower Sorbian region. It seems that the disappearance of <i>serce</i> , the borrowing of <i>bróst</i> 'chest' and the narrowing of the meaning of <i>wutroba/wutšoba</i> until it meant only 'heart' were interdependent.

### 5.4.3 Kinship Terms

Writing in 1905, Šwjela (1952: 101) noted 'Several of these words [that is, kinship terms] have fallen into oblivion', and it is indeed a striking fact that Lower Sorbian, in particular, has replaced even such basic terms as these with loan-words from German. Kinship terms are mapped in *SS* 8 (maps 5–19 and 26).

mother	USo. <i>mać, maćer, mama</i> /LSo. <i>maš, mama</i> . Lower Sorbian dialects also have <i>muterka</i> , but the most common form in Lower Sorbian is <i>mama</i> ; <i>maš</i> is now an exclusively literary word. Outside the literary languages PSI. * <i>matъ</i> is attested only in Upper Sorbian ( <i>SS</i> 8: map 15). LSo. <i>muterka</i> is a loan-word (German <i>Mutter</i> ).
father	USo./LSo. <i>nan</i> . Dictionaries also give the children's forms USo. <i>tata</i> and LSo. <i>tato</i> . <i>Nan</i> is attested in all Upper Sorbian dialects and the entire transitional area. It is also found in central Lower Sorbian dialects around Cottbus, but is bounded to the south, west and east by the loan-word <i>foter</i> (or <i>feter</i> ) (German <i>Vater</i> ). In the extreme

- north *ato* is found. *Tato* has been found in two villages on the north-west periphery (SS 8: map 6). *Foter* is recorded as early as 1761 (Hauptmann). Early sources (sixteenth century) attest USo. *wótc*/LSo. *wośc* (< PSI. \**otьcь*), but these are now only literary and mean 'ancestor'. They also survive in the Lord's Prayer: USo. *wótče naš*/LSo. *wośc naš* 'our father'.
- sister USo. *sotra*/LSo. *sotša*. The phonetic variants *sostra* and *šotša* exist in dialects. USo. *přirodna sotra*/LSo. *pširodna sotša* 'step-sister' is distinguished from USo. *prawa sotra*/LSo. *pšawa sotša* 'full sister'.
- brother USo. *bratr* (colloquially *brat*)/LSo. *bratš*. USo. *přirodny bratr*/LSo. *pširodny bratš* 'step-brother' is distinguished from USo. *prawy bratr*/LSo. *pšawy bratš* 'full brother'.
- aunt USo. *ćeta*/LSo. *šota*. These are also used as terms of respectful address to women older than the speaker who are not kin. USo. *wujowa* 'mother's sister' and *trykowa* 'father's sister' are known to have existed formerly, but are now no longer in use.
- uncle USo. *wuj*/LSo. *wujk* (*wujko*). These have a respectful function analogous to that of *ćeta/šota*. The SS (8: map 10) broadly confirms *wuj* as the only Upper Sorbian form and *wujk* as the main Lower Sorbian form with *wujko* in the extreme north. The latter was probably originally a vocative. USo. *tryk* 'father's brother' existed formerly, but has long since fallen out of use.
- niece USo. *bratrowka*, *sotrjenca*/LSo. *sotšine žowčo*, *bratšowa žowka*. In Lower Sorbian dialects *šešenica* sometimes has the meaning 'niece' in addition to the basic meaning 'female cousin'. Elsewhere (that is, in much of Lower Sorbian territory, the transitional dialects and the whole of Upper Sorbian) the meaning 'niece' is conveyed periphrastically (USo. *sotřina holca* and so on) or by means of the loan-word *nichta* (German *Nichte*) (SS 8: 54).
- nephew USo. *bratrowc*, *sotrjenc*, *sotrowc*/LSo. *bratšowy syn*, *sotšiny syn*. In Lower Sorbian dialects *šeško* and *šešenik* sometimes mean 'nephew' (in addition to 'male cousin'). Otherwise, throughout the whole Sorbian speech area the meaning 'nephew' is conveyed periphrastically (USo. *bratrowy hólca* and so on) or by means of the loan-word *nefa* (German *Neffe*) (SS 8: 54).
- cousin (female) USo. *wujowka*, *kuzina*/LSo. *šešenica*. The latter is found in almost all Lower Sorbian dialects. Upper Sorbian and



- transitional dialects have *kuzina* (SS 8: map 11). In older sources USo. *ćeta*/LSo. *śota* (now 'aunt') are found with the meaning 'female cousin'.
- cousin (male) USo. *wujowc*, *kuzenk*/LSo. *šeško*. The latter is found in almost all Lower Sorbian dialects, but *šešenik* 'male cousin' has been recorded once (SS 8: map 11). Upper Sorbian and transitional dialects have *kuzenk*. Older sources also attest USo. *bratrowski*, *trykowski*, *wuj* and *tryk* with this meaning.
- grandmother USo. *wowka*/LSo. *starka*, *stara mama*. Almost all Upper Sorbian dialects have *wowka*, but elsewhere the position is complex (SS 8: map 17). Transitional dialects have *baba*, *stara mać* and *wowa*. Lower Sorbian dialects have *starka*, *stara mama*, *tejka*, *dowda* and *grosa*.
- grandfather USo. *džěd*/LSo. *stary nan*. Upper Sorbian and western transitional dialects have *džěd*, but in the eastern transitional zone and Lower Sorbian *stary nan* predominates. Further terms found in Lower Sorbian dialects are *grosnan*, *nanstar*, *grosfeter* and *dowdan* (SS 8: map 8).
- wife USo. *žona*, *mandželska*, *mandželka*/LSo. *žona*, *žeńska*, *manželska*. The two words *žona* and *žónska* 'woman' occur in all Upper Sorbian dialects, but in most points only *žona* can have the additional meaning 'wife' (German *Ehefrau*) (SS 8: map 14). In Lower Sorbian dialects *baba* and *žeńska* generally mean both 'woman' and 'wife'. In the field-work for the SS *mandželska* and *manželska* 'wife' were found to be widely attested, but they are nevertheless thought to be literary words which reach the dialects through church usage.
- husband USo. *muž*, *mandžel*, *mandželski*/LSo. *muž*, *manželski*, *ćowjek*. In Upper Sorbian dialects the most common word with this meaning is *muž*, but (like German *Mann*) it means both 'man' and 'husband' (SS 8: map 5). In Lower Sorbian dialects the predominant word for 'man' and 'husband' is *ćowjek* (the meaning 'human being' is here expressed by *luž*), but *muž* is found sporadically. The position is complicated, not least by the fact that *žěd* (normally 'grandfather') is also widely attested in Lower Sorbian dialects with the meaning 'man/husband'.
- daughter USo. *džowka*/LSo. *žowka*
- son USo./LSo. *syn*

## 6 Dialects

The same social conditions which enabled Sorbian to survive at all (isolation, economic self-sufficiency, stability, immobility) also resulted in an extraordinarily high degree of regional variation. In the early 1960s Sorbian dialectologists began a new project to describe this variation, and its results are now being published in the *Sorbischer Sprachatlas* (SS). Of a projected fifteen volumes, thirteen have already appeared. The atlas is a record not of the present state of the dialects, but of their condition in the early 1960s, as represented by the oldest inhabitants at that time. When the field-work began, it was still possible to gather information from 138 villages spread over an area measuring about 57 miles (92 km.) north to south and 41 miles (66 km.) east to west, but since then from some of them Sorbian has disappeared. Even today (1993), however, field-work continues, and in many villages (mainly Catholic) even the youngest generation still speaks Sorbian.

The concentrations of isoglosses mapped in the *Sorbischer Sprachatlas* confirm the previously postulated division of Sorbian into three zones: Upper Sorbian in the south, Lower Sorbian in the north, and a transitional zone between them (see map 11.1 on p. 594). The degree of internal variation is lowest in the Lower Sorbian zone, somewhat higher in Upper Sorbian and highest in the transitional zone. The eastern transitional dialects of Schleife (Slepo) and Muskau (Mužakow) have a pronounced individuality. They are separated by many isoglosses not only from Upper and Lower Sorbian, but also from the adjacent transitional dialects to the west. The individuality of the Catholic (or Kamenz) dialect spoken to the north and west of Bautzen, though clear, is not as pronounced as the former existence of a separate literary variant might lead one to suppose.

Some of the main isoglosses are as follows:

### *Phonological*

- 1 In Lower Sorbian PSl. \*g is retained (LSo. *gora* 'mountain, hill'), but in Upper Sorbian PSl. \*g > h (USo. *hora*). Western transitional dialects have h; Schleife and Muskau have g.
- 2 In Lower Sorbian PSl. \*č > c (LSo. *cas* 'time'), whereas in Upper Sorbian č is retained (USo. *čas*). Western transitional dialects have č; Schleife and Muskau have c.
- 3 In Lower Sorbian PSl. \*t before front vowels > ś (LSo. *swěšenje* 'lamp-oil' < \**světenje*). In Upper Sorbian \*t before front vowels > ć (USo. *swěćenje*). The affricate ć is also found in almost the whole of the transitional zone.
- 4 In Lower Sorbian PSl. \*d before front vowels > ź (LSo. *žen* 'day'). The corresponding reflex in Upper Sorbian is dź (*džen* 'day'). The affricate dź is also found throughout the entire transitional zone.

*Morphological*

- 1 The synthetic past tenses (aorist and imperfect) are not found in Lower Sorbian or transitional dialects, but are in common use in most Upper Sorbian dialects.
- 2 The masculine-personal category is present in Upper Sorbian, but missing from Lower Sorbian and transitional dialects (see 3.1.1).
- 3 In Lower Sorbian and the eastern transitional dialects the nominative dual of masculine nouns ends in *-a* (*Serba* '(two) Sorbs'); in the remaining transitional dialects and in Upper Sorbian the corresponding ending is *-aj* (*Serbaj*) (soft stems may optionally end in *-aj* or *-ej*).
- 4 In most dialects, Upper and Lower Sorbian, verbal nouns in the nominative singular end in *-e* (*twarjenje* 'building'), but there are two areas of Upper Sorbian where the ending is *-o* (*twarjenjo*). These are in the east (to the south of Weisswasser) and in the west (the Catholic dialect). Verbal nouns in *-o* were one of the characteristic features of the Catholic literary language.

*Lexical*

- 1 The verb 'to say' in Lower Sorbian dialects is *groniś*. In Upper Sorbian and the transitional zone it is *prajić*. (In some parts of Upper Sorbian territory the optional alternative *rjec* is also found.)
- 2 'Yes' in Lower Sorbian and in the Schleife and Muskau dialects is *jo*. In Upper Sorbian and some transitional dialects the equivalent is *haj*. In addition, in many parts of the *haj*-area an additional, more emphatic form *ju* or *jow* is attested.
- 3 'Wedding' in Upper Sorbian and some transitional dialects is *kwas*. In Lower Sorbian and some transitional dialects the equivalent is *sważba*. In the dialects of Schleife and Muskau the form *swarba* or *swarba* is found.
- 4 'Who' in most Lower Sorbian dialects is *chto*, but in two villages in the extreme west *ko* is recorded. Upper Sorbian has *štu* (conventionally spelled *štó*). The corresponding form in the transitional dialect of Hoyerswerda and Spreewitz is *do* (recorded in the eighteenth century as *hdo*).

**Acknowledgement**

I am indebted to the late Dr Frido Michalk, of the Institut za serbski ludospyt, Bautzen, for valuable comments on a draft of this chapter.

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