

The Transitional Latin Case System of the 8th Century in Tuscany and Alemannia

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the regional characteristics of the decline of the Latin case system in Tuscany (formerly the province of *Etruria*) and Alemannia (essentially the former *Germania Superior* and *Raetia*) based on the 8th century documents of the *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores* (ChLA). The results of this study confirm that the Gallo-Romance type two-case system still clearly existed in 8th-century Alemannia, while in Tuscany, it seems that a virtually case-less system had been established by the 8th century, i.e., the case system had been largely disintegrated.

KEYWORDS

Vulgar Latin, case system, charters, dialectology

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1. INTRODUCTION

The reduction of the Latin case system during the first millennium A.D. is a relatively well-known process, both in terms of its general tendencies¹ and its regional peculiarities.² The starting point, the five-case declension system (or six-case with vocative), is well known from Classical Latin, and the end point is the caseless system of Romance languages, where the former syntactic functions of cases have largely been taken over by prepositions and word order. Romanian is kind of an exception to the general development, since there feminine nouns preserve a distinction between a nominative-accusative and a genitive-dative inflection. Another exception is Gallo-Romance, which retained a two-case system for masculine nouns for very long, well into the Old French and Old Occitan period: masculine nouns had one form used for the verbal subject (descending from the original nominative), and another for all other cases (usually descending from the original accusative), both in singular and plural. The same two-case system may have existed in the contemporary but unwritten Western Rhaeto-Romance as well (and probably also in old Friulian³). At the same time, as Herman (2000a: 58) formulates, “in some areas including Africa and probably parts of Italy and Hispania, the nominative and the accusative came together earlier than in Gaul, so it is probable that the Romance spoken in these areas, at least in some declensions, ended up quite soon with just one inflection for each noun in the singular and another in the plural, which effectively means that in those regions there was no longer a system of inflections at all.”⁴

Research on the territorial aspects of this process of reduction has so far been based primarily on the study of inscriptions.⁵ However, due to the disappearance of local epigraphic culture in the 6th–7th centuries, inscriptions cannot provide data on the final phase of the process during the so-called transitional Latin period⁶ which concerns especially the 8th century and which led to the emergence of Romance languages.

The research of 8th-century conditions can receive new impetus if we involve the private charter material published in the first series of the *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores*.⁷ This material was written before the Carolingian linguistic normalisation process and is full of Vulgar Latin phenomena, including case-confusions indicating the reduction and transformation of the case system. Currently, this charter material is being processed in the framework of an ERC project (<https://pric.unive.it/projects/diladi/home>), and deviations from the normative language are being recorded in the LLDB Database (<https://lldb.elte.hu/>). For certain areas, such as Tuscany (the former province of Etruria) and Alemannia (essentially the former Germania Superior and

¹Cf. e.g., OESTERREICHER (1996) 283–284 or LÜDTKE (1998) or HERMAN (1985=1990).

²Cf. e.g., HERMAN (2000a) 51–59 or GAENG (1984).

³Cf. BENINCA–VANELLI (2016) 145.

⁴On all this see HERMAN (2000a) 51, 55, 58–59; see also ADAMIK (2019a) 33–35, esp. Table 5: *Different regions of the Vulgar Latin declension system* on p. 35. For the concept of the case system in Latin, see PINKSTER (2015) 1205–1209.

⁵Cf. e.g., GAENG (1984) or GALDI (2004) or especially ADAMIK (2014) for Dalmatia, Venetia et Histria and Gallia Narbonnensis, and ADAMIK (2019a) for Africa Proconsularis and Numidia.

⁶Cf. ADAMIK (2015) 647–648.

⁷See BRUCKNER–MARICHAL (1954–1998).

Raetia), the number of records has already reached a volume that allows for the exploration and in-depth analysis of linguistic processes.⁸

In light of the above, the following working hypotheses can be formulated: 1) The material of Alemannia (mostly associated with St. Gall) may reflect a case-confusion pattern that is structurally close to the two-case system still recorded in Old French and Old Occitan, and which is also probable for contemporary Rhaeto-Romance; this should not be surprising given the geographical proximity of Alemannia, which presumably had a mixed Latin and German-speaking population at that time.⁹ 2) The material from Tuscany (largely associated with Lucca) may already reflect a case-mixing pattern which, in terms of its structural features, may anticipate or even reflect the Italian development displaying the complete disintegration of the case system through the complete merge of the nominative and the accusative.¹⁰ Ultimately, this paper aims to answer whether and to what extent these hypotheses can be confirmed by the ChLA material recorded in the LLDB Database.

2. METHODOLOGY AND DATA

In light of the above, let us look at the 8th-century material recorded in the LLDB Database from ChLA and see what it tells us about the restructuring and disintegration of the case system in Alemannia and Tuscany.¹¹ The relevant data for the two areas under study can be found in Fig. 1 and Table 1 for Alemannia, and Fig. 2 and Table 2 for Tuscany. Figs 1 and 2 include a pie

⁸According to the status of the Computerized Historical Linguistic Database of Latin Inscriptions of the Imperial Age – LLDB (see <http://lldb.elte.hu/>, referred to as the Database or LLDB hereafter) on 6 March 2025.

⁹Cf. HAUBRICHS (2003) 699–702.

¹⁰Certain aspects of which have already been analysed by KORKIAKANGAS (2016).

¹¹The following charters were included in the investigation, based on their processing status as of 6 March 2025: from Alemannia ChLA vol. 1: 44–69, 71–83, 85, 90, vol. 2: 109–139, 156; and from Tuscany vol. 23: 730–750, vol. 24: 751–759, 761, vol. 30: 894, vol. 34: 985–1009, vol. 35: 1010–1020, 1032, vol. 37: 1069, vol. 38: 1096–1125, vol. 39: 1126–1149, 1151–1154, and vol. 40: 1159, 1167, 1170, 1184. Data forms containing the data may be retrieved with the Extended Search module of the LLDB Database (http://lldb.elte.hu/admin/search_2.php) using the following settings, where [] denotes the search groups: [Excluding import and including export from equal Raetia OR Excluding import and including export from equal Germania superior]/[Excluding import and including export from equal Etruria/Regio VII] AND [Period [A] From equal 701 AD To equal 800 AD AND Date of recording <20250306 AND Fortasse Recte? equal No AND Title equal ChLA] AND [Volume equal 1 OR Volume equal 2] (in the case of Etruria, no volume number was required) AND [Nominalia equal voc. pro nom. OR ... Alternative Nominalia equal voc. pro nom. OR ...]. By “...,” I mean that this final search group includes all 44 codes listed in Tables 1 and 2 below, whether they appear as primary codes or alternative codes (with one exception: I did not consider the code *abl. pro acc. in obiecto directo* as an alternative code due to the restriction stated in footnote 13). The two relevant search settings (and the resulting data forms) can be viewed on the Extended Search page of the LLDB database under “Saved queries,” with the IDs Adamik_ActAntHung_66_2026_Alemannia and Adamik_ActAntHung_66_2026_Tuscany. After visualizing the search results using the Code 2 diagram module, the numbers listed in the tables below can be found in the “Nominalia” section.

chart showing the distribution of case-confusions, all according to the methodology of József Herman.¹² Tables 1 and 2 include the absolute numbers (both singular and plural) and ratios of relevant case-confusions,¹³ an illustrative example for each,¹⁴ and in the separate lower sections you can see the absolute numbers of morphological and morphosyntactic phenomena which, although not directly part of the case system, influenced the changes in the case system to at least some extent;¹⁵ these will be discussed in the following analysis.¹⁶

Before we go on and compare the data of Alemannia and Tuscany, let me explain why they allow for a meaningful comparison. At first glance, it is obvious that the two regions have yielded very different volumes of data to the Database, with Alemannia offering 1,119 and Tuscany 4,121 entries. However, this covers similar data densities. If we consider the average number of data forms collected per document in the two areas, we see that the apparent data density, or the average number of deviations per document from Tuscany ($4,121:132 = 31.2$), is exactly twice ($31.2:15.3 = 2$) the data density of the documents from Alemannia ($1,119:73 = 15.3$). At the same

¹²For Herman's methodology in general see HERMAN (2000b) 124–127 and ADAMIK (2012) 134–138; for the methodology as applied to the analysis of the case system see ADAMIK (2019a) 15–16. In short, the methodology involves analysing, separately for each region, the relative frequency or distribution of different types of case confusion in the 8th-century texts under examination. The resulting distribution patterns are then compared with the general distribution pattern of cases in the Latin language (based on the LASLA database, see footnote 22 below). This comparison will then yield conclusions regarding the restructuring of the case system in the 8th century with respect to both areas under examination.

¹³The most common case confusions are highlighted in bold. Concerning the case-confusion codes, I did not take into account the following two code pairings: *-m > 0* together with the code *nom./abl. pro acc. in obiecto directo*, and *-m > 0* together with the code *abl. pro acc. in obiecto directo*; e.g. LLDB-155960: *-m > 0 / nom./abl. pro acc. in obiecto directo, vindedi () terra = vendidi () terram* and LLDB-163134: *-m > 0 / abl. pro acc. in obiecto directo, aveat parte = habeat partem*; in these cases, the absence of *-m* is more likely to have a phonological rather than a morphosyntactic explanation (that is, these are accusatives without *-m*), cf. ADAMIK (2019b) 107–108. For the formal categorisation of the relevant data in the LLDB database see footnote 29 below.

¹⁴Labels such as 'Nom.~Acc.' in Figs 1 and 2, as well as in Tables 1 and 2, refer collectively to codes in the LLDB database such as 'nom. pro acc.' and 'acc. pro nom.', which essentially refer to the same change, e.g. in this case, the merging of the nominative and accusative cases. It should be noted that in the LLDB's categorisation practice (as with all other relevant subsystems), codes for case variations are only used for the same number, even if the form could technically be either singular or plural; for example, in the case of '*fuert antecessori = fuert antecessores*' (LLDB-148712, nom. pl. -I pro -es / decl. II pro III), it is not possible to use a code 'dat. sing. pro nom. plur.', just as in the case of '*de () mariti nostri = de () maritis nostri*' (LLDB-156785, nom. pro abl. /-s > 0), it is not possible to use a code 'gen. sg. pro abl. plur.'; in both cases, the deviation from standard language is categorised in the same number, here in the plural.

¹⁵This applies primarily to prepositional structures replacing genitive and dative. The *-as* (nominative plural) and *-i* (nominative plural) endings (replacing *-ae* and *-es*, respectively), on the other hand, arose as the results of complex morphological and phonological processes, cf. HERMAN (2000a) 55 and FARAONI (2014), which had little or no direct influence on the general processes of the transformation of the case system.

¹⁶I should note here that in the material I examined, I did not specifically address the problem frequently mentioned in the literature, e.g., by SABATINI (1965=1996) 101ff and (1968=1996) 225ff, regarding whether there is a difference in the distribution of substandard linguistic phenomena between the formulaic (fixed-form) and non-formulaic (free-form) parts of these documents, simply because this was not among the objectives of the present study. After all, from the perspective of the present quantitative distribution analysis, it is irrelevant in which part of a given document a substandard linguistic phenomenon or deviation from standard language occurs: regardless of where it appears in the document, it attests to the same linguistic fact.

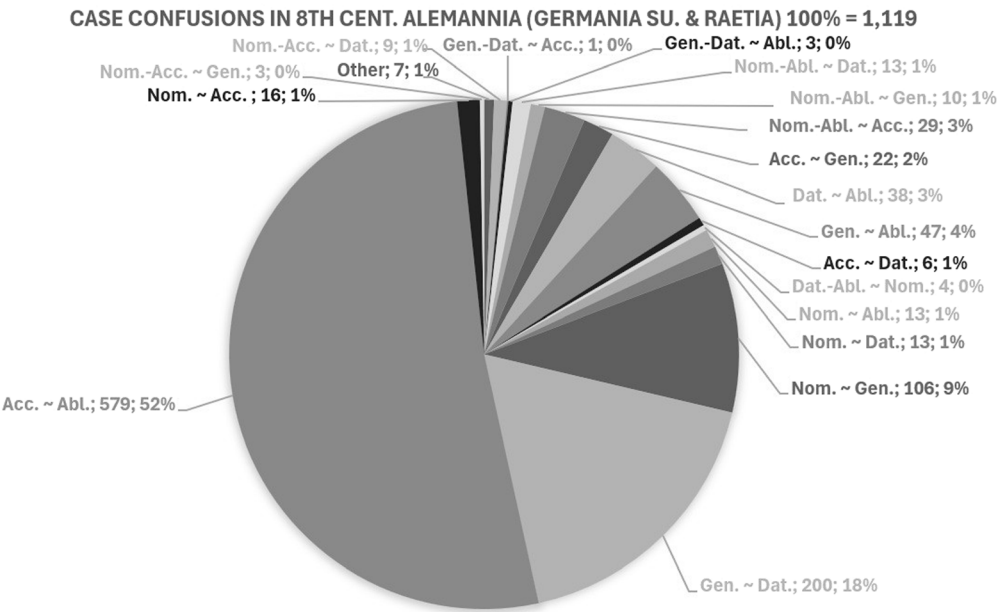


Figure 1. Alemannia, chart and main data

Table 1. Alemannia (Germania Superior & Raetia), 8th century, ChLA, 1-2: data and examples

Nom.~Acc. 1% - 16	9	nom. pro acc.	[sg. 9] LLDB-157753: <i>donamus () Odaluuinus = donamus () Odaluuinum</i>
	7	acc. pro nom.	[sg. 7] LLDB-156736: <i>hanc cartola facta e = haec chartula facta est</i>
Acc.~Abl. 52% - 579	98	acc. pro abl.	[sg. 58] LLDB-170744: (/ -ø > -m) <i>pro amore = pro amore</i>
			[pl. 40] LLDB-159178: <i>cum casas = cum casis</i>
	115	nom./acc. pro abl.	[sg. 67] LLDB-155624: <i>pro () remedium = pro () remedio</i>
			[pl. 48] LLDB-147324: <i>pro () res = pro () rebus</i>
	45	abl. pro acc.	[sg. 45] LLDB-158795: (/ -m > ø) <i>trado in dominatione = trado in dominationem</i>
	2	abl. pro acc. in obiecto directo	[sg. 2] LLDB-155893: (/ -um > 0) <i>tra () accepi () alio = terram () accepi () aliam</i>
	54	dat./abl. pro acc.	[sg. 42] LLDB-147918: (/ -um > 0) <i>ad monastirio = ad monasterium</i>
			[pl. 12] LLDB-177521: <i>ad nobis veniens = ad nos veniens</i>

(continued)

Table 1. Continued

	265	dat./abl. pro acc. in obiecto directo	[sg. 41] LLDB-164748: (/ -um > 0) dono () servo = dono () servum
			[pl. 224] LLDB-159475: (/permixtio syntagmatum) dono () pascuis = dono () pascua
Gen.~Dat. 18% - 200	3	gen. pro dat.	[sg. 2] LLDB-178623: (/ -ø > -s) tradimus () rectoris = tradimus () rectori
			[pl. 1] LLDB-178660: seculariu hominu () prestare = saecularibus hominibus () praestare
	15	dat. pro gen.	[sg. 15] LLDB-157939: (/ -s > ø) anno septimo regi = anno septimo regis
	182	dat./abl. pro gen.	[sg. 173] LLDB-177563: sig () decano = signum () decani
			[pl. 9] LLDB-173387: ad eius rectorib dominationem = ad eius rectorum dominationem
Nom.~Gen. 9% - 106	104	nom. pro gen.	[sg. 104] LLDB-178845: sig Uincentius = signum Vincentii
	2	gen. pro nom.	[sg. 2] LLDB-178606: (/nomina barbara non in casus inclinata) hec sunt nomina () Imma () Lantheri = haec sunt nomina () Imma () Lantherius
Nom.~Dat. 1% - 13	10	dat. pro nom.	[sg. 10] LLDB-170677: (/ e > l) ego ipsi = ego ipse
	3	nom. pro dat.	[sg. 2] LLDB-168664: Rihpaldus () Uuerdo abb = Rihpaldo () Verdo abbas (salutem)
			[pl. 1] LLDB-147594: (/ -s > ø) dare here dis mei omnia = dare heredibus meis omnia
Nom.~Abl. 1% - 13	7	nom. pro abl.	[sg. 6] LLDB-147548: (/ litterae omissae) iussio abbtis scripsi = iussione abbatibus scripsi
			[pl. 1] LLDB-159780: (/ -s > ø) cum () ortiferi = cum hortiferis (i.e. hortis)
	6	abl. pro nom.	[sg. 6] LLDB-173296: Ego () vinditore = Ego () venditor
Dat.~Abl.~Nom. 0% - 4	4	dat./abl. pro nom.	[sg. 3] LLDB-170723: bresbitero donat = presbyter donat
Acc.~Dat. 1% - 6	5	acc. pro dat.	[sg. 5] LLDB-159541: rectorem () trado = rectori () trado
	1	dat. pro acc.	[sg. 1] LLDB-157900: ad illi venio = ad illum venio
Gen.~Abl. 4% - 47	3	gen. pro abl.	[sg. 3] LLDB-157979: p anime salutis = pro animae salute
	44	abl. pro gen.	[sg. 44] LLDB-165596: Sig Adaloldi auctore = Signum Adaloldi auctoris
Dat.~Abl. 3% - 38	28	dat. -i > E	[sg. 28] LLDB-157913: (/ i: > E) donavi uxore = donavi uxori
	10	abl. -e > l	[sg. 10] LLDB-149555: (/e > l) pro () eterna retribucioni = pro () aeterna retribucione

(continued)

Table 1. Continued

Acc.~Gen. 2% - 22	19	acc. pro gen.	[sg. 18] LLDB-160222: <i>sig Uualtharti () consentientem</i> = <i>signum Valtharti () consentientis</i>
			[pl. 1] LLDB-173669: <i>aliquid tres meas</i> = <i>aliquid terrarum mearum</i>
	3	gen. pro acc.	[sg. 3] LLDB-157917: <i>sit ad sci Callone</i> = <i>sit ad sanctum Gallonem (i.e. Gallum)</i>
Nom.-Abl.~Acc. 3% - 29	29	nom./abl. pro acc.	[sg. 29] LLDB-147569: (/ -m > ø) <i>ad ecclesia</i> = <i>ad ecclesiam</i>
Nom.-Abl.~Gen. 1% - 10	10	nom./abl. pro gen.	[sg. 10] LLDB-157821: <i>sig () filia</i> = <i>signum () filiae</i>
Nom.-Abl.~Dat. 1% - 13	13	nom./abl. pro dat.	[sg. 13] LLDB-164797: <i>ecclesia () condonare deberem</i> = <i>ecclesiae () condonare deberem</i>
Gen.-Dat.~Abl. 0% - 3	3	gen./dat. pro abl.	[sg. 3] LLDB-156181: (/a: > E) <i>pro aeternae retributione</i> = <i>pro aeterna retributione</i>
Gen.-Dat.~Acc. 0% - 1	1	gen./dat. pro acc.	[sg. 1] LLDB-181595: <i>ad ecclesiae</i> = <i>ad ecclesiam</i>
Nom.-Acc.~Dat. 1% - 9	9	nom./acc. pro dat.	[sg. 1] LLDB-158241: <i>monasterio () constructu</i> = <i>monasterio () constructo</i>
			[pl. 8] LLDB-176808: <i>monachis () servientes trado</i> = <i>monachis () servantibus trado</i>
Nom.-Acc.~Gen. 0% - 2	3	nom./acc. pro gen.	[sg. 1] LLDB-159521: <i>anno () regnu</i> = <i>anno () regni</i>
			LLDB-174786: <i>dono () infantis ea</i> = <i>dono () infantis eorum</i>
Other 1% - 7	7	commutatio casuum aliorum	LLDB-159660: (/ a/á > 0) <i>signaculo continentur</i> = <i>signacula continentur</i>
Uninflected names	331	nomina barbara non in casus inclinata	[Sg. 331] LLDB-173725: (/ nom. pro gen.) <i>sig Chunipert</i> = <i>signum Chuniperti</i>
Replacement of the dative	265	ad + acc. pro dat. (263) ad + dat. pro dat. (2)	[sg. 238] LLDB-178753: <i>ad ipsu monasteriu () trado</i> = <i>ipsi monasterio () trado</i>
			[pl. 23] LLDB-175576: <i>ad () loca () dare deberem</i> = <i>locis () dare deberem</i>
Replacement of the genitive	161	de + abl. pro gen.	[sg. 80] LLDB-178813: <i>siclas de cervisa</i> = <i>situlas cervesiae</i>
			[pl. 81] LLDB-178239: <i>quilibet de heredib meis</i> = <i>quilibet heredum meorum</i>
Repl. of the 1st decl. nom. pl. end.	8	nom. pl. -AS pro -ae	LLDB-163882: (/acc. pro nom.) <i>ipsas res () permaneat</i> = <i>ipsae res () permaneat</i>
Repl. of the 3rd decl. nom. pl. end.	2	acc. pl. -I pro -es	LLDB-149575: <i>visus sum abire () casali</i> = <i>videor habere () casales</i>

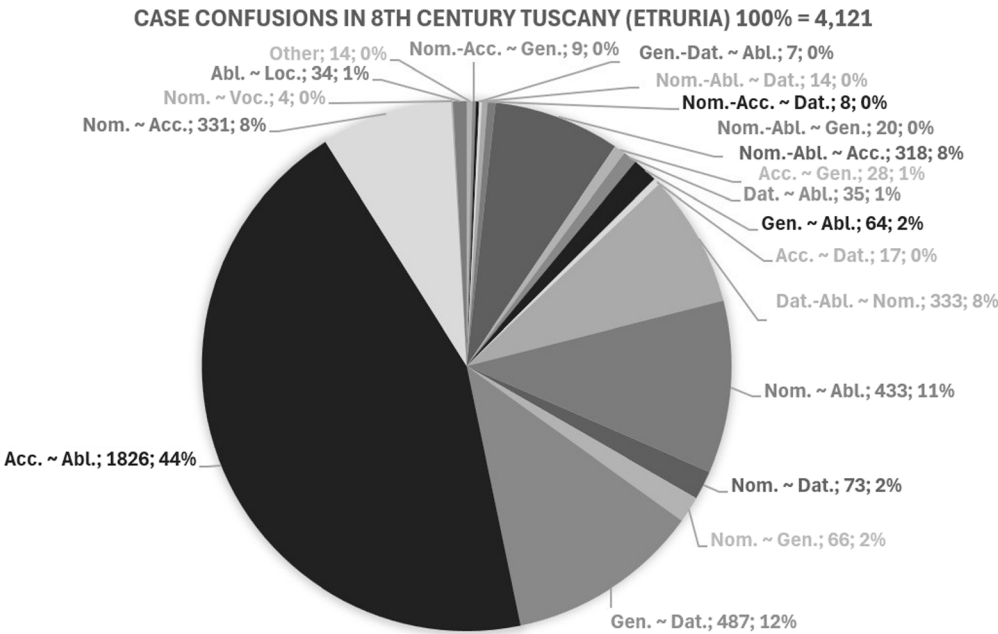


Figure 2. Tuscany, chart and main data

Table 2. Tuscany (*Etruria*), 8th century, ChLA 23–24, 30, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40: data and examples

Nom.~Acc. 8% - 331	190	nom. pro acc.	[sg. 91] LLDB-162566: <i>Georgius iscrivere rogavi</i> = <i>Georgium scribere rogavi</i> [pl. 99] LLDB-169792: <i>inter ambe ipse petie</i> = <i>inter ambas ipsas petias</i>
	141	acc. pro nom.	[sg. 114] LLDB-179341: <i>cartulam () stabilem permaneat</i> = <i>chartula () stabilis permaneat</i> [pl. 27] LLDB-171354: <i>servos () in tua sint potestatem</i> = <i>servi () in tua sint potestate</i>
Acc.~Abl. 44% - 1,826	608	acc. pro abl.	[sg. 502] LLDB-152995: <i>rogatus a Donatum</i> = <i>rogatus a Donato</i> [pl. 106] LLDB-177982: <i>cum () vineas</i> = <i>cum () vineis</i>
	453	nom./acc. pro abl.	[sg. 195] LLDB-179253: <i>pro remedium</i> = <i>pro remedio</i> [pl. 258] LLDB-179478: <i>cum alia edificia</i> = <i>cum aliis aedificiis</i>
	120	abl. pro acc.	[sg. 120] LLDB-179502: <i>p quolibet ingenium</i> = <i>per quodlibet ingenium</i>
	153	abl. pro acc. in obiecto directo	[sg. 153] LLDB-177847: <i>terra () latere tene</i> = <i>terra () latus tenet</i>
	244	dat./abl. pro acc.	[sg. 209] LLDB-179534: <i>(/-um > 0) per () ingenio</i> = <i>per () ingenium</i> [pl. 35] LLDB-175931: <i>p singulis annos</i> = <i>per singulos annos</i>

(continued)

Table 2. Continued

	248	dat./abl. pro acc. in obiecto directo	[sg. 138] LLDB-179010: (/ -um > 0) <i>reddere () porco = reddere () porcum</i> [pl. 109] LLDB-171972: (/permixtio syntagmatum) <i>dedi () silvis = dedi () silvas</i>
Gen.~Dat. 12% - 487	96	gen. pro dat.	[sg. 85] LLDB-176268: (/ -ø > -s), <i>tradidi tivi () hemtoris = tradidi tibi () emptori</i> [pl. 11] LLDB-149026: <i>promittimus () monachorum tuorum = promittimus () monachis tuis</i>
	129	dat. pro gen.	[sg. 129] LLDB-158393: (/ -s > ø) <i>manus () curaturi = manus () curatoris</i>
	262	dat./abl. pro gen.	[sg. 246] LLDB-153807: <i>manus Donato = manus Donati</i> [pl. 16] LLDB-161306: <i>medietatem reb suis = medietate rerum suarum</i>
Nom.~Gen. 2% - 66	54	nom. pro gen.	[sg. 48] LLDB-162190: <i>Signus () Rixsolfus = Signum () Rixsolfi</i> [pl. 6] LLDB-172900: <i>nihil () alicue () reservantes = nihil () aliquidum () reservantes</i>
	12	gen. pro nom.	[sg. 11] LLDB-172185: <i>ubi Teuselmi () esse videtur = ubi Teuselmus () esse videtur</i> [pl. 1] LLDB-149413: <i>missarum precum () deferatur = missarum preces () deferantur</i>
Nom.~Dat. 2% - 73	32	dat. pro nom.	[sg. 32] LLDB-148363: (/ e > i) <i>Dicebat ipsi Iohanni = Dicebat ipse Iohannes</i>
	41	nom. pro dat.	[sg. 35] LLDB-178892: <i>Manifestum est mihi () havitator = Manifestum est mihi () habitatori</i> [pl. 6] LLDB-152962: (-s > ø) <i>eridibus tui compunituri = heredibus tuis composuituri</i>
Nom.~Abl. 11% - 433	366	nom. pro abl.	[sg. 262] LLDB-163174: <i>rogatus a Iacobo = rogatus a Iacobo</i> [pl. 104] LLDB-156785: (/ -s > ø) <i>de () mariti nostri = de () maritis nostris</i>
	67	abl. pro nom.	[sg. 67] LLDB-147843: <i>ego () rectore = ego () rector</i>
Dat.~Abl.~Nom. 8% - 333	333	dat./abl. pro nom.	[sg. 259] LLDB-148604: (/ -us > 0) <i>filiu meo () natus est = filius meus () natus est</i> [pl. 74] LLDB-181854: (/ -ø > -s) <i>ego () et subcessorib meis = ego () et successores mei</i>
Acc.~Dat. 0% - 17	11	acc. pro dat.	[sg. 7] LLDB-160737: <i>meum () conplacuit animum = meo () conplacuit animo</i> [pl. 4] LLDB-155424: <i>tibi () aut tuos () supra here = tibi () aut tuis () subtrahere</i>
	6	dat. pro acc.	[sg. 6] LLDB-172728: <i>contra te () Iohanni = contra te () Iohannem</i>
Gen.~Abl. 2% - 64	24	gen. pro abl.	[sg. 22] LLDB-176527: <i>in tuo iuris = in tuo iure</i> [pl. 2] LLDB-173519: <i>ab ambas partiu = ab ambabus partibus</i>
	40	abl. pro gen.	[sg. 40] LLDB-178904: <i>in presentia () congregatione = in praesentia () congregationis</i>

(continued)

Table 2. Continued

Dat.~Abl. 1% - 35	7	dat. -ī > E	[sg. 7] LLDB-170402: (/i: > E) <i>repromitto () tibi emtore = repromitto () tibi emptori</i>
	28	abl. -e > I	[sg. 27] LLDB-158105: (/ e > I) <i>una te () rectori = una tecum () rectore</i>
Acc.~Gen. 1% - 28	13	acc. pro gen.	[sg. 11] LLDB-152988: (/ -ø > -m) <i>in nm () lesum = in nomine () lesu</i> [pl. 2] LLDB-153229: <i>reddere () medieta tem () olivas = reddere () medietatem () olivarum</i>
	15	gen. pro acc.	[sg. 15] LLDB-176689: <i>post traditionis = post traditionem</i>
Abl.~Loc. 1% - 34	31	abl. pro loc.	[sg. 31] LLDB-177470: <i>Act Luca = Actum Lucae</i>
	3	loc. pro abl.	[sg. 1] LLDB-162232: (/nom. pro abl.) <i>in Montenonni = in Montenonno / Montenonnis</i>
Nom.~Voc. 0% - 4	4	voc. pro nom.	[sg. 4] (/gen. pro nom.) LLDB-177268: <i>ego Aeuleutieri = ego Eleutherius</i>
Nom.~Abl.~Acc. 8% - 318	318	nom./abl. pro acc.	[sg. 318] LLDB-153205: (/ -m > ø) <i>ad ipsa casa = ad ipsam casam</i>
Nom.~Abl.~Gen. 0% - 20	20	nom./abl. pro gen.	[sg. 20] LLDB-177826: <i>muro civitatis ista = murum civitatis istius</i>
Nom.~Abl.~Dat. 0% - 14	14	nom./abl. pro dat.	[sg. 14] LLDB-179030: <i>offerim Do et () eccle sia = offerimus Deo et () eccle siae</i>
Gen.~Dat.~Abl. 0% - 7	7	gen./dat. pro abl.	[sg. 7] LLDB-157018: <i>rogatus a () Gheriose = rogatus a () Gheriosa</i>
Nom.~Acc.~Dat. 0% - 8	8	nom./acc. pro dat.	[pl. 8] LLDB-163005: <i>Manifestum est nobis () habitores = Manifestum est nobis () habitatoribus</i>
Nom.~Acc.~Gen. 0% - 9	9	nom./acc. pro gen.	[sg. 3] LLDB-175473: <i>vinu puru medietate = vini puri medietatem</i>
			[pl. 9] LLDB-1793111: <i>post () offertores decessu = post () oblaturum decessum</i>
Other 0% - 14	14	Commutatio casuum aliorum	LLDB-157023: <i>rogatus a () sorori = rogatus a () sororibus</i>
Uninflected names	360	nomina barbara non in casus inclinata	[sg. 360] e.g. LLDB-177263: (/ nom. pro abl.) <i>a Lampert = a Lamperto</i>
Replacement of the dative	154	ad + acc. pro dat.	[sg. 44] LLDB-150375: <i>ad () ecclesia dare = ecclesiae dare</i>
			[pl. 110] LLDB-175913: <i>ad successores () reddere = successoribus () reddere</i>
Replacement of the genitive	463	de + abl. pro gen. 456	[sg. 301] LLDB-172189: <i>anima de filio = anima filii</i>
		de + gen. pro gen. 7	[pl. 162] LLDB-176440: <i>aliquis de filiis meis = aliquis filiorum meorum</i>
		(ad + acc. pro gen. 5)	[(pl. 5] <i>in tua emtori () aut a hds () potesta tem = in tua emptoris () aut ad heredes, i.e. heredum () potestate)</i>
Repl. of the 1st decl. nom. pl. end.	21	nom. pl. -AS pro -ae	[pl. 21] LLDB-171355: (/ acc. pro nom.) <i>ancillas () in tua sint potestatem = ancillae () in tua sint potestate</i>
Repl. of the 3rd decl. nom. pl. end.	18	nom. pl. -I pro -es	[pl. 19] LLDB-148712: (/ decl. II pro III) <i>fuert antecessori = fuerunt antecessores</i>
	24	acc. pl. -I pro -es	[pl. 22] LLDB-164240: <i>recipi () tremissi = recepi () tremisses</i>

time, we should also consider the length of these documents. Since the texts from Tuscany are more than twice as long as the texts from Alemannia (54,159 words vs. 19,515 words, i.e. 2.77), we can conclude that the data density of the two groups of texts is very similar. As a result, their value as linguistic historical sources is also very similar, and the material from the two areas may safely be compared in the present study.

The two areas under study have another important feature in common. Both of them had significant Germanic population, especially Alemannia, which belonged to the Frankish Empire. In fact, Alemannia was by this time predominantly Germanic in both population and language, while it also had a (constantly) assimilating Latin-speaking population.¹⁷ At the same time, Tuscany was under similar influence, thanks to the Longobard conquest in 568, where, however, the Germanic population had presumably already assimilated into the Latin population by the 8th century.¹⁸ The Germanic influence in both areas is most obvious in the large number of names of Germanic origin in Latin documents. These names were very often inserted into Latin texts without inflection, as shown by the examples in the separate lower section of the [Tables 1](#) and [2](#), under 'Uninflected names': from Alemannia, the phrase '*sig(num) Chunipert*' instead of '*signum Chuniperti*,' and from Tuscany, the phrase '*a Lampert*' instead of '*a Lamperto*'. In addition, although I do not wish to discuss this in detail here, I would like to mention that the texts from both areas include plenty of Germanic loanwords.¹⁹

Now that we have established that the corpora of texts from the two areas are largely comparable from a quantitative and qualitative, as well as linguistic and sociolinguistic point of view, let us take a look at the case-confusion patterns in both areas, focusing on the case-confusions that are most important in terms of the restructuring and disintegration of the case system, as outlined in the introduction. These are: the confusion between nominatives and accusatives (Nom.~Acc.), accusatives and ablatives (Acc.~Abl.), genitives and datives (Gen.~Dat.) and nominatives and ablatives (Nom.~Abl.).²⁰

During the analysis, I will also take into account the frequency of occurrences of prepositional structures used to replace cases, such as the prepositional structure '*de*' replacing the genitive as in e.g., '*aliquis de filiis meis*' instead of '*aliquis filiorum meorum*,' and the prepositional structure '*ad*' replacing the dative as in e.g., '*ad ipsu(m) monasteriu(m) trado*' instead of '*ipsi monasterio () trado*'. The data for these (both singular and plural) are given in the lower sections of [Tables 1](#) and [2](#), accompanied by an example for each.

¹⁷HAUBRICHS (2003) 699–702.

¹⁸Cf. PEISTER (1998) 239–240 (with a discussion of differing views). Lombard rule here was succeeded by Frankish rule in 774, which was felt more in political and administrative terms than in linguistic and cultural ones, cf. DI GIOVINE (2003) 582.

¹⁹For example, in Tuscany we have *sala*, i.e., *domus* 'a major single-room building' (LLDB-177976, vox Germanica / vox medii aevi), and in Alemannia *marca*, i.e., *finis vel provincia limitanea* 'borderland district' (LLDB- 158311, vox Germanica / vox aetatis posterioris).

²⁰In my use of the term 'confusion,' I follow HERMAN (2000a), e.g., 55 "confusion between nominatives and accusatives" or 56 "the semantic and functional confusion between the accusative inflections and, in particular, those of the ablative."

3. THE CASE SYSTEM IN ALEMANNIA

Let us start with Alemannia. Turning to the four main types of case confusions mentioned above, it is immediately noticeable that two of them are very frequent, namely the accusative-ablative confusion at 52% (with 579 entries) and the genitive-dative confusion at 18% (with 200 entries), while the third and fourth types, the accusative-nominative and nominative-ablative confusions, are very rare at 1% each (with 16 and 13 entries, respectively). At first glance, this distribution pattern would seem to suggest a three-case system (nominative, accusative-ablative and genitive-dative),²¹ which is a standard feature in Vulgar Latin variants. This would be supported by how the 18% rate of confusion of the genitive and the dative completely corresponds to the combined 18% rate of occurrence of genitive (12%) and dative (6%) in Classical Latin prose texts (see Fig. 3 based on the LASLA database).²²

However, before jumping to conclusions, data on the prepositional structures replacing genitive and dative must also be considered (see the lower sections of Tables 1 and 2).

The prepositional structure '*ad*' replacing the dative is recorded 265 times in the corpus of Alemannia, which in itself exceeds the number of confusions between genitive and dative (200). The prepositional structure '*de*' replacing the genitive occurs 161 times, which is less than the number of confusions between genitive and dative (200). Adding up the figures for both case-replacing prepositional structures, we get 426, which is slightly more than double (more precisely, 2.1 times) the number of genitive-dative confusions (200). It is worth noting that the prepositional structure '*ad*' replacing the dative is more than one and a half times (1.6 times) more frequent than the prepositional structure '*de*' replacing the genitive ($265:161 = 1.6$), which is particularly striking because in Latin, i.e., in Classical Latin prose texts, the genitive occurs just twice as often as the dative (12% vs. 6%, respectively; see Fig. 3 based on the LASLA database above). It can be seen, therefore, that the prepositional structures replacing the genitive and especially the dative have put so much pressure on the merger of the genitive and the dative that it eventually prevented the creation of a merged genitive-dative case, or, if the merged case was created (as can be inferred from the relatively high, 18% rate of genitive-dative confusions), the pressure made it impossible for the merged case to survive.²³

If we compare this with the very low proportion of nominative and accusative confusions (at 1%, with 16 entries), which is particularly striking in comparison with the high overall

²¹The three-case system appears not to have become established throughout the entire Latin-speaking area, cf. HERMAN (2000a) 110.

²²See LASLA (Laboratoire d'Analyse Statistique des Langues Anciennes, directed by Dominique Longrée) Opera Latina: <https://laslabd.uliege.be/OperaLatina/> (accessed 6 March 2025). Using the case distribution ratios of Classical Latin prose texts in the LASLA database as a reference value was necessary because, to my knowledge, there is no database with the same classification system available for Late Latin prose texts or 8th-century charter texts. Nevertheless, comparison with the general case distribution pattern in Classical Latin corresponds to the method used by József Herman, in which, for example, he compared the proportions of letter confusions indicating the merger of front and back vowels in Latin inscriptions from the early and late imperial periods with the general frequency of front and back vowels in Classical Latin, cf. e.g., HERMAN (1971=1990) 139.

²³All of this is consistent with the developmental trend outlined by HERMAN (2000a) 61: "To sum this section up, all the functions that had been fulfilled by the inflections, other than the subject function expressed by the nominative and the direct-object function expressed by the accusative, came more and more to be generally expressed by prepositional phrases instead, which replaced the comparatively slippery and disorganized case system."

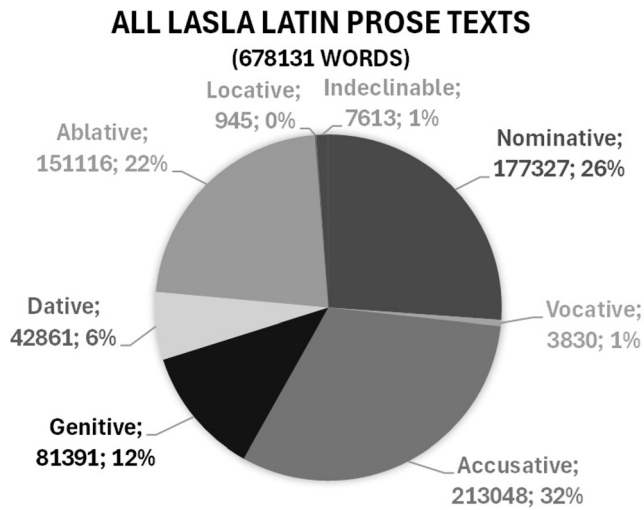


Figure 3. General case distribution in Latin prose text

proportion of nominatives in Classical Latin prose texts (26%, cf. Fig. 3 based on the LASLA database data), we can conclude that the case system of the language of the gradually Germanised Latin population in Alemannia was just like the two-case system known from early Gallo-Romance, and reconstructible for early Western Rhaeto-Romance.²⁴

4. THE CASE SYSTEM IN TUSCANY

If we now turn to the analysis of the case-confusion pattern of 8th-century Tuscany using the chart in Fig. 2, and compare it with the corresponding chart of Alemannia in Fig. 1, the similarities and differences become immediately apparent. Of course, I focus my attention on the most important case confusions in terms of the restructuring and disintegration of the case system, i.e., the confusions of nominative and accusative, accusative and ablative, genitive and

²⁴ At the same time, it is also reasonable to presume that the autonomy of the nominative could not be compromised by its relatively frequent confusion with the genitive (Nom.~Gen. 9% with 106 entries, see Table 1). Almost all the examples occur in the form “Signature of X” in listings of witnesses, where the listing nominative may have had an effect on the lack of grammatical agreement. Moreover, besides these morphologically attested occurrences recording the use of nominative instead of genitive, such as ‘sig(num) Uincentius’ for ‘signum Vincentii’ (LLDB-178845: nom. pro gen.), there are also several examples recorded like ‘sig(num) Utto’ for ‘signum Uttonis’ (LLDB-148653: nom. pro gen. / nomina barbara non in casus inclinata) where the name might not only be nominative but also uninflected, as indicated by the alternative code on the LLDB data form (i.e. nomina barbara non in casus inclinata).

dative and nominative and ablative, while still taking into account the frequency of prepositional structures used to replace cases.

In the material of Tuscany, it is immediately noticeable that out of the four important case-confusions, one is very frequent, namely the accusative-ablative confusion at 44% (with 1,826 entries),²⁵ while the other three are still quite frequent, the genitive-dative confusion at 12% (with 487 entries), the accusative-nominative confusion at 8% (with 331 entries) and the nominative-ablative confusion at 11% (with 432 entries). At the same time, there are two other types of confusions which are equally frequent but of which the former is relevant and the latter irrelevant to my argument: the confusion of the nominative and the dative-ablative (Dat.-Abl.~Nom.) at 8% (with 326 entries), and the confusion of the accusative with the nominative-ablative (Nom.-Abl.~Acc.) at 8% (with 318 entries).²⁶ However, before we turn to these, let us consider the genitive-dative confusion and the prepositional structures used to replace these two cases.

First of all, it is striking that the rate of genitive-dative confusions in Tuscany (12%) is exactly two-thirds (0.66) of the rate in Alemannia (18%). This 12% rate is also much lower than the combined 18% rate of genitive (12%) and dative (6%) in Classical Latin prose texts already mentioned (see Fig. 3). The ratio in Tuscany is therefore only two thirds of the reference ratio (12:18 = 0.66), which suggests that here the chance of the formation of a separate dative-genitive case was even lower than in Alemannia. However, while in Alemannia the formation, stabilisation, or survival of a separate dative-genitive case was prevented by the predominance of the prepositional structure '*ad*,' which replaced the dative, in Tuscany the same result was achieved through a different route, in a more balanced way, as we shall see.

²⁵This category includes case confusions between the accusative and ablative in direct object positions, such as '*dedi () silvis*' instead of '*dedi () silvas*' (LLDB-171972, dat. / abl. pro acc. in obiecto directo / permixtio syntagmatum), which can obviously be traced back to the so-called *pertinentia* formula formed with the preposition *cum* (*dedi terram / casam cum silvis*) as indicated by the alternative code permixtio syntagmatum; nevertheless, the omission of *cum* and the (very frequent) reinterpretation of the remaining ablative form as a direct object (on the part of the scribes) can clearly be attributed to the merging of the accusative and the ablative (as indicated by the main code dat./abl. pro acc.). This is clear when considering the context of the relevant text passages (in this case, text sheet LLDB-ChLA-24-758).

²⁶Although the confusion of the accusative with the nominative-ablative in the first declension (Nom.-Abl.~Acc.) is also significant in Tuscany (with 8% and 318 entries; example *ad ipsa casa* for *ad ipsam casam*, nom./abl. pro acc. / -m > ø, LLDB-153205), I will not discuss that here, because first-declension words did not participate in the development of a Gallo-Romance type two-case system. The disappearance of the final -m and the shortening of the final unstressed long vowels that had taken place in the imperial period (by the third century the latest, cf. HERMAN [2000a] 28 and 39-40) merged the nominative, accusative and ablative into an unchanged form ending in '-a' (e.g., '*terra*'). In this declension, at most a Balkan or Romanian-type two-case system could have been created through the merger of the genitive and the dative, which could have been contrasted with a form that merged the nominative, accusative and ablative. However, in Alemannia, as we have seen, the merger of the genitive and the dative was blocked by the success of prepositional structures for words belonging to the 2nd and 3rd declensions. The only thing that still needs an explanation here is the 3% rarity of the confusion of the accusative with the nominative-ablative in Alemannia (Nom.-Abl.~Acc. 3% with 29 entries, e.g., '*ad ecclesia*' for '*ad ecclesiam*', nom./abl. pro acc. / -m > ø, LLDB-147569).

The prepositional structure ‘*ad*’ replacing the dative is recorded 154 times in the Tuscan corpus (see the lower section of Table 2), which is far below the number of genitive and dative confusions (487). The prepositional structure ‘*de*’ replacing the genitive,²⁷ however, occurs 463 times (see the lower section of Table 2),²⁸ which is almost equal to the number of genitive and dative confusions (487). Adding up the figures for the two case-replacing prepositional structures, we get 617, which is less than one and a half times (1.27 times) the number of genitive and dative confusions (487). It is worth noting that the prepositional structure ‘*de*’ replacing the genitive occurs three times as often as the prepositional structure ‘*ad*’ replacing the dative ($463:154 = 3$), which considerably exceeds the overall ratio 2 of the two cases in Latin, since in Classical Latin prose texts the genitive (12%) occurs just twice as often as the dative (6%), see Fig. 3 based on the LASLA database above. As a result, in contrast to Alemannia, where the merger of the genitive and the dative was mainly blocked by the prepositional structure ‘*ad*’ replacing the dative, in Tuscany the two prepositional structures participated in blocking the process of merging the genitive and the dative roughly at the same rate these cases would have been expected to occur (likely with a more prominent role for the prepositional structure ‘*de*’ replacing the genitive). This means that, unlike in Alemannia, in Tuscany there was no chance for the emergence of a merged genitive-dative case, or if there was, the prepositional structures that replaced these cases efficiently sabotaged it.

In 8th-century Tuscany, therefore, we cannot infer the existence or survival of a three-case system. Moreover, as we shall see, we cannot even suggest a two-case system in this area and period, while that was still clearly in place in contemporary Alemannia.

While in Alemannia the rate of confusion between nominative and accusative was very low at 1% (16 entries), in Tuscany it was 8% (331 entries), which clearly shows the weakening or disappearance of the boundary between nominative and accusative in Tuscany. The 8% rate of nominative and accusative confusion in Tuscany is much lower than the reference rate of 26%, which corresponds to the overall rate of nominatives in Classical Latin prose texts (26%; see Fig. 3 based on the LASLA database above). However, if we add to this the confusion rates of nominative and ablative (Nom.~Abl.) i.e. 11% (with 433 entries) and of nominative and dative-ablative (Dat.-Abl.~Nom.) i.e. 8% (with 333 entries), we obtain a rate of 27%, which not only meets but slightly exceeds the reference rate of 26%.

We have every right to add the confusions of nominative and ablative as well as the confusions of nominative and dative-ablative to the confusions of nominative and accusative, since in the 8th century we can only speak of ablative (3rd declension) or dative-ablative (2nd declension) as categories of a long-gone, former linguistic system (which is used in the LLDB database for formal categorisation of the relevant data).²⁹ By this time, these cases were merged

²⁷For a detailed analysis of this replacement process in a similar corpus, see VALENTINI (2018).

²⁸I did not include the five instances where the genitive was replaced by the preposition ‘*ad*’ (coded as *ad* + acc. pro gen.), so relevant data are shown in parentheses in Table 2.

²⁹This formal categorisation in the LLDB database, whereby any phenomenon deviating from standard Latin is always defined in relation to its corresponding standard form within each linguistic subsystem (for example, as for the case system: acc. pro nom., dat. pro gen., etc.), was already applied in the predecessor of the current LLDB database (cf. https://lldb.elte.hu/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Herman_Late-Latin-Data-Base_Guidelines.pdf), which was created by József Herman in the early 1990s; for its history, see ADAMIK (2016) 14–15. For the current LLDB database Code System, see: https://lldb.elte.hu/admin/abbrev_codes.php.

into the “accusative as the general case for all non-subject uses” also known as the “oblique case” in late Vulgar Latin, formed by the merger of the accusative and the ablative.³⁰ This is well illustrated by the examples of these case-confusions, such as *rogatus a Iacobus* for *rogatus a Iacobo* (nom. pro abl., LLDB-163174), *ego () rectore* for *ego () rector* (abl. pro nom., LLDB-147843) for ‘Nom.~Abl.’ and *filio meo () natus est* for *filius meus () natus est* (dat./abl. pro nom./-us > O, LLDB-148604) for ‘Dat.-Abl.~Nom.’. These three types of case-confusions thus all show the same thing, the disappearance of the boundary between nominative and (oblique) accusative, as is clearly demonstrated by their combined share of 27%, which not only meets but slightly exceeds the reference rate of 26%.³¹

In Alemannia, these three case-confusion types show the opposite, the preservation of the boundary between nominative and (oblique) accusative, which is clearly evidenced by their aggregate rate of only 2%, far below the reference rate of 26% (Nom.~Acc. 1% + Nom.~Abl.1% + Dat.-Abl.~Nom. 0% = 2%).

5. CONCLUSIONS

All in all, the assumptions I made at the beginning of my paper, which were based purely on my impressions formed while studying these texts and their linguistic features (for I noticed during my work with the Database that in these two areas the nominative seems to be confused with the accusative much more often in Tuscan documents than in Alemannic ones), have been largely confirmed by a detailed quantitative and qualitative distribution study based on the data recorded in the LLDB Database. In 8th-century Alemannia, we have found evidence for the existence of the Gallo-Romance type two-case system, while in Tuscany, it seems that a virtually case-less system had been established by the 8th century, i.e., the case system had been largely disintegrated. This way, my presentation has also clearly demonstrated that the ChLA corpus, which has never been studied in this respect and with such a systematic approach, is an invaluable source of dialectological evidence regarding the so-called transitional Latin period which immediately preceded the emergence of Romance languages.³²

³⁰Cf. HERMAN (2000a) 54, 57–58.

³¹In this study, I do not specifically address the characteristics of the so-called extended accusative (i.e., the accusative used to replace the nominative in a subject role) in conjunction with transitive and intransitive/passive verbs, nor the role of (in)animacy in this process – areas in which notable results have been achieved, for example, by ROVAI (2005), CENNAMO (2009), KORKIAKANGAS (2016), etc. Here I discuss the merging of these two cases from a more general perspective, particularly because in the Tuscan corpus under consideration, the nominative – which appears in the object function instead of the accusative, or in place of the prepositional accusative – is noticeably more frequent than the so-called extended accusative (cf. Table 2: 190 nom. pro acc. vs. 141 acc. pro nom).

³²Of course, ChLA is also an invaluable source of linguistic-historical evidence (for phonological evidence of this in Tuscan material, see ADAMIK [2026]). The Italian ChLA material under study here shows a much more advanced state of the degradation of the case system, especially with regard to the merger of nominative and (oblique) accusative than the earlier Christian (4th–7th century) inscriptional material, for which see ADAMIK (2019a) 29–33.

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