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И ПЕРСПЕКТИВЕ
РОМСКОГ ЈЕЗИКА У СРБИЈИ

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Књига CLXXV

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Књига 40

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ПРЕДГОВОР

Српска академија наука и уметности и њен Одбор за проучавање живота и обичаја Рома Одељења друштвених наука на скуповима и трибинама посвећеним Ромима редовно се баве и питањима ромског језика и језика Рома. Тако је у тематским зборницима радова, почевши од 1992. године до данас, увек било места за лингвистичке студије или студије које су се из угла других хуманистичких дисциплина на неки начин дотицале и лингвистичких тема. Зборник радова *Очување, заштита и перспективе ромског језика у Србији* – у целини је посвећен ромском језику и први је такав у издањима Одбора.

У првом објављеном зборнику Академијиног Одбора за проучавање живота и обичаја Рома *Развитак Рома у Југославији. Проблеми и тенденције* (М. Мацура, ур.) (Београд: САНУ, 1992) објављене су лингвистичке студије Марсела Куртијадеа, Јанардан Синга Патаније и Шаипа Јусуфа. У следећем по реду зборнику *Друштвене промене и положај Рома* (М. Мацура, А. Митровић, ур.) (Београд: САНУ, 1993), није било лингвистичких радова.

Зборник *Цигани/Роми у прошлости и данас* (М. Мацура, ур.) (Београд: САНУ, 2000), објавио је радове са трећег по реду ромолошког скупа, одржаног 1996. Овај зборник садржи посебно поглавље посвећено теми „Језик и образовање“, у оквиру које су и две лингвистичке студије: Трифуна Димића и Ибрахима Османија. Уводну реч за зборник написао је лингвиста Павле Ивић (стр. 5–7). Два кључна питања која ова студија покреће и сада су, после више од двадесет година, актуелна у савременој ромологији. Први став Павла Ивића тиче се стандардизације ромског језика и имплицитно указује на званичан став лингвиста у Србији крајем 20. века:

Учење стандардног ромског, који неизбежно мора садржати мноштво импровизованих речи из цивилизацијске и апстрактне сфере, стављаће

сваког појединца пред озбиљан задатак, знатно тежи од учења стандардног језика средине, који се не мора посебно савладавати, него се, пошто испуњава човеково окружење, из њега неосетно упија у човека. (...) Ромски језик је од свих језика најмање подесан за амбициозну, друштвено релевантну стандардизацију. Нема изгледа да би неки ромски стандардни језик, било општи или регионални, могао постати заједнички комуникациони медиј Рома у Европи, или у некој европској земљи. (...) Бојим се да би наметање неког ромског стандардног језика у школама могло само отежати ионако не баш једноставан процес школовања ромске деце.

Лингвистичка ромологија, бележи даље Павле Ивић, веома је захвално поље истраживања: она од истраживача захтева вансеријска знања која превазилазе оквире опште и посебне лингвистике, њој се као науци предвиђа лепа будућност. Друго питање тицало се односа дијалеката и стандарда:

Управо оне околности које отежавају његову стандардизацију чине га фасцинантним предметом лингвистичких истраживања. Када наука буде располагала подробним описима свих ромских дијалеката, то ће омогућити да се утврде њихове сличности и разлике, да се реконструишу путеви и донекле хронологија њиховог гранања. (...) једном речју, за лингвистичка проучавања језичка ситуација европских Рома остаће елдорадо.

После скоро десетогодишње паузе, следећи зборник у овом низу *Друштвене науке о Ромима у Србији* (Београд: САНУ, 2007) објављује и радове нове генерације лингвиста – Биљане Сикимић, Светлане Ћирковић и Мирјане Мандић. У још једном зборнику са скупа *Промене идентитета, културе и језика Рома у условима планске социјално-економске интеграције* (Београд: САНУ, 2012) већ у наслову се појављује „језик“ као једна од основних тема, па садржи и четири лингвистичка рада: Игора Лакића, Биљане Сикимић, Петра Радосављевића и Анамарије Сореску Маринковић, ови радови се тичу како ромског језика, тако и румунског којим говоре Бањаша. У зборнику *Прилози стратегији унапређења положаја Рома* (Т. Варади, Д. Б. Ђорђевић, Г. Башић, ур.) (Београд: САНУ и Заштитник грађана Републике Србије, 2014), рад о румунофоним Бањашима објављује Анамарија Сореску Маринковић. У зборнику *Роми Србије у XXI веку* (Т. Варади, ур.) (Београд: САНУ, 2018), могу се наћи и лингвистички радови Марсела Куртијадеа (о стандардизацији ромског језика) и Биљане Сикимић (о спорном идентитету Ковача у Санџаку).

Тек радови настали у 21. веку отварају питање изједначавања ромског језика и језика којим говоре Роми, што даље, са своје стране, отвара још једно широко дискутовано питање – ко су све Роми у Србији и које све језике говоре као свој први и други језик (будући

да постоји широко прихваћен став, како у академској заједници, тако и међу ромским активистима, да су сви Роми у Србији – двојезични). Ситуација је у пракси ипак сложенија: двојезични или вишејезични су сви Роми осим оних који су већ напустили ромски језик, било да су у питању целе заједнице или само поједине породице.

Сви ови радови, мада садрже вредне научне увиде, у целини узевши ипак не дају репрезентативну слику о стању ромског језика у Србији, нити су довољни да се може говорити о постојању ромолошке лингвистике као развијене дисциплине у Србији.

Одбор за проучавање живота и обичаја Рома САНУ покушао је да, прво организацијом међународног научног скупа „Очување, заштита и перспективе ромског језика у Србији“ у Београду 21–22. 10. 2016, и сада издавањем тематског зборника радова под истим именом, допринесе афирмацији ромологије у Србији и да представи реално стање у заштити ромског језика. На скупу је било изложено 18 радова, од којих се 15 објављује у овом зборнику.

Идеја организатора скупа била је да окупи истраживаче који би изложили своје ставове на основу актуелног пресека стања у заштити ромског језика и унапред понуђеног сета питања. Скуп је остао отворен и за теме ван задатог оквира које су као актуелне предложили сами истраживачи. Међу темама је и листа угрожених језика Унеска која класификује ромски језик у Србији као „дефинитивно угрожен“ (*definitely endangered*). У целом свету, према проценама Унеска, има око три и по милиона говорника ромског језика. Међутим, у Србији не постоје тачни научни подаци о броју говорника ромског језика, нити о стању његове социолингвистичке виталности. Не постоје ни тачни научни подаци о ромским дијалектима и локалним говорима (о броју говорника и географским ареалима). Не постоје ни тачни подаци о Ромима мигрантима и стању њиховог језика, као ни увиди у социолингвистичку ситуацију репатрираних Рома.

Организатори су желели да радови на скупу предложе основне мере заштите. Међу такве мере спадало би, на пример, снимање локалних говора и њихово мапирање, а у следећој фази постављање базе података о ромским говорима. База података би укључивала усмене и писане изворе како за све дијалекте, тако и за ромски стандард. Поставило се и питање конкретних начина обједињавања свих постојећих, већ обављених истраживања, у једну централну базу података и умрежавање истраживача. Организатори су имали у виду чињеницу да у Србији не постоји Завод за културу Рома, који би могао да буде носилац таквог посла, као и да је број компетентних истраживача веома мали. Очекивало се да скуп иницира оспособљавање тима истраживача који би могли да обаве сложене теренске задатке (дијалектолошке и социолингвистичке природе), а који би истовремено радили на другим обли-

цима очувања ромског језика, пре свега у настави. Жеља је била да се на основу радова помогне увођењу ромског језика и културе на академском нивоу у оквиру факултетских наставних планова и програма.

Још један од циљева скупа било је стицање увида у лингвистичка истраживања ромских говора у Србији и мапирање свих варијаната ромских говора уз евентуалну процену броја говорника сваког од њих. Други постављени циљ била је подршка академској настави ромског језика: успостављање консензуса око језичког стандарда, преглед постојећих искустава у настави ромског језика и препоруке за савремену методiku наставе ромског језика као матерњег и нематерњег и, посебно, српског као нематерњег језика репатрираних Рома.

Учесницима скупа биле су предложене следеће оквирне теме: Ромски говори у Србији: дијалектолошки и социолингвистички увиди, Граматички опис ромског језика, Документовање ромских говора у Србији, Лингвистичка виталност ромског језика у Србији, Језичка политика у Србији о ромском језику, Инструменти заштите ромских говора у Србији, Ромски стандардни језик у Србији, Настава ромског језика на свим образовним нивоима, Ромски као нематерњи језик и Ромски језички пејзаж (*linguistic landscape*). А како је увид у стање заштите ромског језика у земљама у региону неопходан да би се боље осветлила ситуација у Србији, на скуп су били позвани и истраживачи из Босне и Херцеговине, Мађарске, Словеније, Хрватске и Црне Горе, уз истраживаче који су омогућили увиде у европске и светске оквире заштите ромског језика.

Зборник радова је уреднички обликован према научним изазовима које су понудили сами радови. У оквиру језичке политике посебно се издвајају радови са још увек нерешеном темом стандардизације ромског језика, уз посебан преглед актуелне језичке политике са акцентом на положај ромског језика у Србији, аутора Горана Башића. Следе радови који се баве очувањем и заштитом ромског језика у земљама у региону (Игора Лакића и Вере Клопчич, донекле и прилог Хедине Тахировић Сијерчић).

Настава ромског језика била је планирана као једна од основних тема: ипак, стањем наставе ромског језика у Србији бави се само коауторски рад Јелене Филиповић и Јулијане Вучо, а студија Масако Ватабе аутоматском језичком обрадом ромске граматике и њеном применом у формалној настави.

У зборнику следи тематски блок радова који се баве анализом садашњег стања у ромолошкој лингвистици у Србији: применом корпусне лингвистике бави се студија Свенке Савић, актуелним теренским истраживањима ромског језика студија Светлане Ћирковић, а стањем у ромолошкој лексикографији студија Љубице Ђурић. Нека конкретна питања лексикографске обрађености ромских модалних

глагола проблематизује прилог Рајка Ђурића. Домену историје ромологије у Србији (са анализираним узорцима говора београдских Рома са краја 19. века) припада студија Биљане Сикимић, а прилог Анамарије Сореску Маринковић из угла антрополошке лингвистике прати феномене употребе ромског језика у литургијској пракси малих верских заједница и тиме анализира звучни ромски језички пејзаж из савремене, неспорно ефемерне перспективе.

Радови који се у коначној форми објављују у зборнику припадају следећим лингвистичким поддисциплинама: језичка политика и заштита језика, методика наставе ромског језика, историја и преглед ромолошке лингвистике у Србији као и лингвистичка антропологија. Тематски блок језичке политике почиње уводним радом Горана Башића о службеној употреби ромског језика у Србији. Неке радове прожима одјек актуелне расправе о различитим задацима ромологије као науке и као примењене дисциплине, односно разматрања о приоритету лингвистичког описа у односу на активности у раду на стандардизацији. У зборник су укључена различита, понекад међусобно супротстављена мишљења о стандардизацији и начинима стандардизације ромског језика као и посебне улоге ромске (а не само ромолошке) академске заједнице у тим процесима.

Осим ових, у савременој ромологији и иначе актуелних тема, око којих ни данас у светској академској заједници нема јединственог става, кроз радове се може сагледати и слика знатно унапредовалог стања у ромологији на некадашњем југословенском простору који, између осталог, одликује пролиферација аматерских лексикографских покушаја, употреба и (зло)употреба лексикографије. О овом феномену посебно реферишу студије Вере Клопчич, Љубице Ђурић, Рајка Ђурића, Свенке Савић, али и других аутора који се ове теме узгредно дотичу, свако на свој начин.

Већина радова у зборнику обухвата по неколико лингвистичких и сродних ромолошких тема, а аутори се често међусобно допуњавају и тематски надовезују: питањима стандардизације ромског језика, свака из свог угла, баве се студије Свенке Савић, Баје Саитовића, Љатифа Демира и Марсела Куртијадеа. Значајне предлоге за рад на корпусу дају Свенка Савић и Светлана Ћирковић. Валоризацијом преводилаштва са ромског и на ромски баве се посебно Свенка Савић и Хедина Тахировић Сијерчић.

Зборник као целина показује и то да је у Србији и у региону стасала нова генерација лингвиста ромолога, способна да се бави ромолошком лингвистиком као универзалном научном дисциплином, која, и када се бави анализом локалног, мора уважавати достигнућа светске науке.

Академик Тибор Варади и др Биљана Сикимић

CONSOLIDATING THE STANDARDIZATION OF THE RROMANI LANGUAGE – PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE, IN RESPECT OF DIALECTAL DIVERSITY WHILE GRANTING EASY WORLDWIDE COMMUNICATION IN MOTHER TONGUE

Marcel Courthiade¹

A b s t r a c t.– The paper begins with the consideration of the circumstances in which Romani language is currently being developed, compared to the main languages in Europe. Furthermore, the paper deals with different stereotypes and explains the Romani dialectal structure not only from the aspect of heritage and as a mother tongue, but in the light of the measurement of inter-dialectal involvement proven by mathematical methods. This process leads to a clear clarification of the term 'dialect'. The natural occurrence of concepts of common, standard, literary, national, etc. in language is explained (according to different schools) as well as the present situation of the Romani language, with a focus on the prospects of its further development (the principle of butterfly) in the social context: the role of parents, family, church, society, school, media and various institutions in codification and normalization – also from the aspect of developing brakes. Some didactic tools are presented as instruments that also contribute to a better understanding of codification and normalization among Roma, leading to the harmonization of different dialects in the spirit of mutual respect for diversity. Such endeavors, however, are useless if they are not understood by users and if they are not really rooted in their culture. The above elements lead to the problem of direct codification and its connection with communication, in particular modern communication on social networks and multiple academic levels – because its ultimate purpose is to provide the Roma with a widespread modern language, with the ability to express all the nuances of human thinking. The paper ends with examples of some good practices in Romania and the

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former Yugoslavia – bearing in mind that negating or destroying one language is only one element in a wider mechanism of ethnic prejudice against the people speaking it.

Key words: Romani language, standardization, dialectal diversity

0. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

One of the most challenging aspects of the Rromani language's standardization is how to reconcile a legitimate respect of its dialectal diversity with a reasonably easy communication among speakers of various vernacular varieties. The work aiming at this purpose is known as 'linguistic harmonization' and it is the subject of this contribution. This task is of notable difficulty in Rromani, due to the many misstatements circulating about the Rroms, the language itself, its dialectal structure, its genuine use in everyday life, its literature and many other aspects – these misstatements being much more of ideological than scientific nature. Therefore the present paper will focus on the impact of linguistic standardization and policy on pedagogical activities and their outputs; as such it is aimed at helping teachers of all levels to better understand their task.

0.1 The two main historical streams of Rromani language standardization

Beside several local and/or individual, mainly spontaneous, attempts of writing in Rromani, we may consider mainly two major undertakings in this respect: the one developed in the 20'ies in the USSR and the one developed by the Linguistic Commission (later Commission for language and linguistic rights) of the International Rromani Union as early as its first Congress in London in 1971, leading to the endorsement of the Common (Integrative, or Polylectal) Rromani Alphabet in 1990 as one of the major achievements of its Fourth Congress in Jadwisin-Serock, near Warsaw.

The Soviet standardization of Rromani of 1925 was quite coherent as such but it was meeting none of the two crucial requirements mentioned above: there was no respect of any dialectal diversity, because it was based exclusively on the so called North-Russian dialect of the Gypsy language (*северно-русский диалект цыганского языка*), being a deeply russified variety of the Baltic branch of the O Superdialect without mutation (O-bi) and at the same time there was no easy communication with speakers of other varieties. The written form was also as a rule inaccessible to readers with a different dialectal background because the Cyrillic spelling in use was sticking so closely to Russian that any flexibility in reading was

excluded. Besides, the high number of lexical borrowings from Russian was an obstacle for foreign Rroms – anyway the texts were not exported. It would be pointless to criticize this undertaking, which was motivated by a sincere wish to recognize Rromani as a modern language and the Rroms as citizens equal to all others. The method used was just inappropriate, actually due to the then stage of knowledge in linguistics in the USSR of the 20'ies and also because the 'standardization' was trusted to a Russian scholar, Maksim Vl. Sergievski (1892–1946) – who initially didn't know a single word of Rromani, and two young Rromani activists, Nina A. Dudarova (1903–1993) and Nikolai A. Pankovo (1895–1959) who taught him some Rromani. “Through a few months the Rromani alphabet was achieved – one may read in the first issue of *Rromani Zòrã* (November 1927). It came into sight in this work that the Rromani sounds are the same as the *gəzıkane* (Russian) ones [...]. Professor Sergievski brought his work to the National commission of education and now this alphabet is accepted. Today all Rroms may write in mother tongue with Russian letters, to which it was appropriate to add two: дж and г. These letters are not in the Russian alphabet, the Rromani children do not know them, when they say such words as *джюкэл, джэв, дживэса, тамо, гэрой* and others.” This text is meaningful because it discloses that the Soviets believed they were carrying out a real standardization, whilst they were just transcribing down in Russian script a Rromani vernacular which, as a result of centuries in Russia, has made its sound system identical to the system of the surrounding language – a well known phenomenon in minority languages of all countries. Unfortunately still today, well into the 21st century, quite a few improvised standardizers have not got out of this approach. Note that the attempts of Soviet standardization were discontinued in 1938, when Stalin decided to get back to Marx' views on linguistic and cultural diversity, which he considered as a deceit produced by bourgeoisie to brake the emergence of communism's victory.

0.2 *The situation today*

We arrive now at a crossroad and a choice between promoting and developing further Rromani or leaving it die. Many peoples, nations, civilizations died in the past and two dozens of mother tongues probably disappear every year. Why not Rromani as well? Indeed it would be probably a pity to accept its death after 1000 years of vivid life outside the Indian soil and while some 8 millions of Rroms can speak it, even though only some 5 millions use it on a daily basis. I do believe that all of us here are willing to support the further life and blossoming of Rromani. Yet, it is not only a matter of will, even if a wide political will is a *sine quã non* condition for

this, but there is a series of three other preconditions: some are external (the 'context'), some are inherent to the language itself and others depend on the Rroms themselves.

1. EXTERNAL PRECONDITIONS: THE 'CONTEXT'

It is pivotal to operate in a realistic context, not in a world of imagination, political mythology and scientific (or institutional and political) creeds. Among the main erroneous prejudices encountered, most relate to the official main language of the country:

- the 'national language' of the host country is supposed to be one and lone language, with no internal variations;
- there are no differences between its speakers;
- it is a noble and stable language, subject to no change;
- it is rich and expressive, it was always so and all languages are supposed to be so;
- it is used mainly for communications of precise information and all languages are supposed to do so;
- any discrepancy from the official norm is a mistake;
- no human action upon the language is possible (a romantic creed);
- Rromani needs to fulfil all these prerequisites to exist.

As a matter of fact, all this is fictitious because there are several languages in all countries, be they autochthonous or not, and within each of these languages there is an impressive range of varieties, or 'lects' – to which a part of this presentation will be devoted. Despite the common belief, no language is totally monolithic but on the contrary always in a situation of dynamic diversity. In addition everyday speech conveys much more 'empty' messages, in a simple style, for emotional and sociable purpose than elaborated information.

1.1 *The internal diversity of Rromani: one language – four dialects, various local sub-dialects*

However how diverse is Rromani? Is it one language with various dialects or a cluster of different languages? Many people take on account what they call 'dialects' but in fact the diversity goes beyond this factor and extends to baby talk, individual style, abnormalities of pronunciation due to the age, a disease or a deficient teething. A very widespread problem is the lack of awareness about the real scientific meaning of the word 'dialect' among people using this word. The acquisition of the notions of isoglosses

and bundles of isoglosses is a prerequisite to any further learning and action. Unfortunately few people have access to it. For this purpose, the online course of Rromani language and culture (www.red-rrom.com) introduces these notions through a series of exercices (interactive games) on the basis of local languages (English, Polish, Bulgarian etc.) as a prerequisite to the discovery of the Rromani genuine dialectal system.

The unity of the Rromani language has been a long-lasting topic of debate but statistical methods of dialectometry have put an end to speculations – at least among people working in good faith: a Swadesh-list based calculation of the distances between the four dialects of Rromani, grounded on phonetic, phonemic and lexical data, indicates that distances between dialects, taken two by two, are all smaller than the unity of reference (a distance higher than the unity denotes a language-to-language relationship – details on this calculation in Courthiade 1985; also available on line). This confirms that these distances are indeed of dialect-to-dialect, not language-to-language, magnitude, as illustrated by Fig. 1.

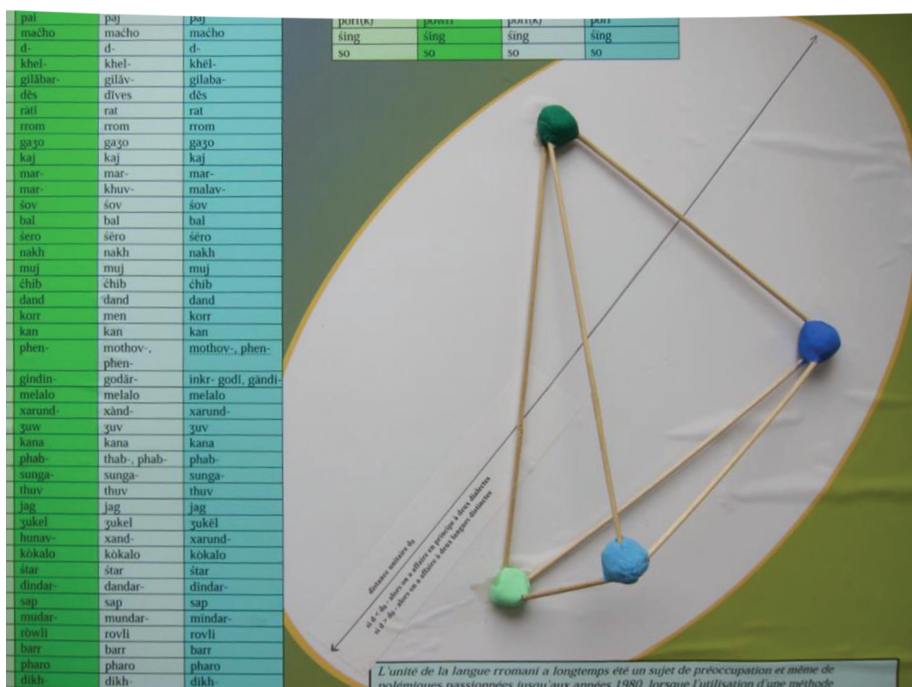


Fig. 1 – A three dimension representation of the dialectometric distances between the four dialects of the Rromani language taken two-by-two (from the exhibition “The Rromani Language : an Asset for Diversity and Education” – Council of Europe 2014)

Dialectological data brought into sight that Rromani as such, under its form used by over 90% of all the speakers, consists in two *superdialects* (or *archidialects*), called O and E (after a discriminating verbal ending), each of them divided into two dialects: one with the affricates *čh* and *ʒ* remaining as in the Indian prototype [ʧh] and [dʒ], the other one in which these affricated underwent a specific mutation and acquired respectively the pronunciations [e] and [z]. Each dialect encompasses more or less *endajolekts*, among which the most famous are Arli, Spoitòri, Gurbet, Kelderaś, Lovari etc. as one may see in the Fig. 2.

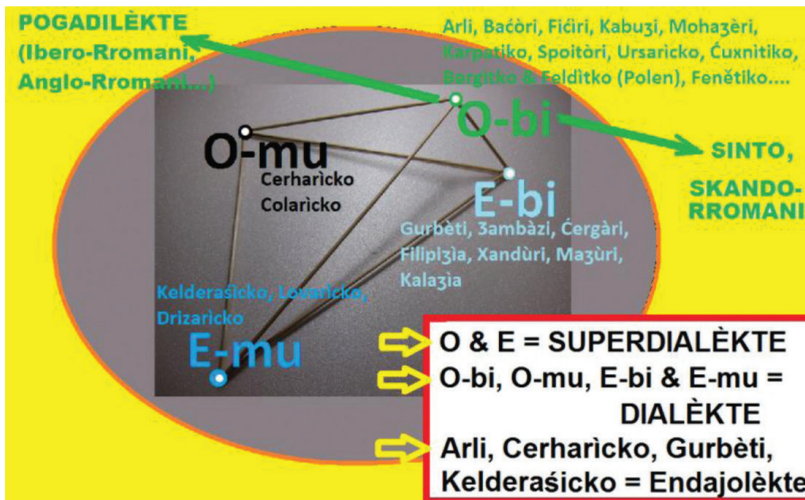


Fig. 2 – The three dimension representation of the dialectometric distances between the four Rromani dialects with specification of local vernaculars (or sub-dialects)

In addition to these four dialects inside the language itself, there are several idioms mainly based on local mainstream languages with a handful of Rromani words inserted into them, as a rule for socio-linguistic purpose; such idioms are called Pogadilekts and concern less than 10% of the Rroms – they derive from the O-superdialect without mutation.

1.2 Human intervention on languages: from basilekts to 'high level languages'

The belief that no human action on languages is possible is another fiction which belongs to romantic naturalism and physiocracy. Some agents of the languages' dynamic diversity are natural but many others are due to

human intervention, through decisions, from taboos and fashions to deliberate language engineering: “there exist no ‘natural language’, free of any regulation or normative process aiming at satisfying the needs of ‘linguistic communities’ [...]. In reality, be it at the micro- or macro-sociolinguistic level, there is always construction of languages [...] and all degrees are possible, from the simple norming of any human group to the most radical undertakings of linguistic dirigisme” (Eloy 2004: 19–20). One may mention the deliberate creation of a two-case system in Bulgarian morphology in the 19th century (-*ъm/-a*²), the thousands of words created in Hungarian at the same period and the coining of words like *Beruf* by Martin Luther³ – and many others (an excellent analysis of these interventions is given in the seminal work “Language Reform” by Claude Hagège and István Fodor –1983–1994).

Interesting enough, Eloy considers that “dominating languages are the object of a greater elaboration than dominated languages” (ibid.).

Another erroneous belief is that a written language is the mirror of its spoken counterpart. The reality is different: it is a new independent code, with a widely different lexicon, substantially different grammar, new stylistics and separates rules of expression. To understand this somehow amazing phenomenon, one has to consider first the situation of the spoken language as a set of home varieties, usually known as ‘basilects’. There are various approaches to the concept of ‘basilect’. The word was first used by creolists as the ‘lowest and less prestigious’ linguistic form, then viewed as degenerated, of an elaborated language of domination, which is referred to as ‘acrolect’. These words were coined by William Stewart (1965) – and there was in his view a continuity of registers of the same language spanning from basilect to acrolect in a relationship of diglossia, but they were used later by Derek Bickerton (1973) in a wider context. In Rromani linguistics, we don’t consider basilects as ‘fallen forms’ of languages of culture, but as their origin – we share here widely Clanet dit Lamanit’s approach (2007). Basilects consist of a restricted vocabulary: 500 to a maximum of 2000 lexical units, a simplified grammar with two or three tenses and the imperative, hardly ever compound sentences, very few available structuring words to produce them and an important use of anaphoric words, gestures, onomatopoeias and ellipsis. It is always oral due to its chaotic and imprecise nature, because writing would impose a deep reorganisation of its elements. In some cases, the routine of life is so simple and shared by all the users of a basilect, that communication is reduced to its most rudimental form and most notions are expressed by general and

² Each of these articles originates from a different dialect, but both of them were endings of the unique case of genuine natural Bulgarian.

³ ‘Profession’ but coined after Latin *vocatio* (*vocare* = ‘call’).

imprecise hyperonyms, while pronunciation is oversimplified because no precise expression is needed: everybody knows everything about everybody and has not interest in any wider knowledge. This is the case in so-called *palankas*, a concept developed in former Yugoslavia⁴; oversimplified idioms used in *palankas* are called 'frustolects'.



Fig. 3 – Various basilects as used in neighbouring settlements; on the right reduction of one of them to a *frustolect*

Basilects cannot be written, hardly transcribed in phonetic alphabet with extra symbols (for stuttering, interruptions, onomatopoeias etc.) and the result can be used only for scientific purposes, not for normal communication. Try to tape 5 minutes of spontaneous conversation between unlearned persons and write down the result – you will be convinced that only recording is suitable to “keep it for oncoming generations”, who will probably not understand a lot of it, due to the number of implicit allusions. In fact, some authors (in France Jean Giono and Marcel Aymé) have tried sporadically to render the actual pronunciation of their characters by means of dots, accents, slashes, apostrophes, hyphens etc... for the sake of literary realism but this can be done only for short passages because reading is then heavily hampered and such writing would be counterproductive for texts in which priority is given to the transmission of knowledge, ideas and messages, not to the imitation of the speakers’ social features.

When speakers of various kindred basilects meet in a public place (market, fair, pilgrimage, army etc.), they adapt their speech to the new interlocutors and they create an ‘interlect’ or ‘mesolect’. This is the case for example in Šutka municipality near Skopje, where Roms blend their home idioms (Arli, Žambàzi, Mažuri, Gurbèti, Prišteovski, Konoplàri etc...) for social and commercial purposes: you may then hear in the same sentence a past tense in *-em* (a feature of the E-superdialect) and a long form of the possessive postposition *-qoro* (a feature of the O-superdialect) – creating a totally mistaken combination, yet used as a strategy to capture the good-

⁴ The reason why a hamlet develops into a *palanka* while neighbouring villages remain open-minded has not yet been identified. Furthermore, a *palanka* tends to destroy by mockery, exclusion and/or violence any person (including children) who would have higher aspirations and interests than the other members of the *palanka*. Despite its name, a *palanka* is not necessarily situated in rural areas, there are *palankas* also in towns – it is a mental, not geographical, concept. Some political (and religious) regimes tend to encourage the formation of *palankas*.

will of the interlocutor in business (much more than for mutual understanding, because everybody know all the idioms of the area). Note that such combinations as a rule are not used at home in family talk.

As a rule, a mesolect never emerges as a home language among Rroms, because most women switch to the idiom of their new home when entering their spouse's house. As a result, males command usually only one Rromani idiom, while females are fluent in their both parents', and in their husband's, idioms – viz three varieties. Mixed idioms of mesolect type are typical for persons who did not inherit Rromani as a mother tongue but acquired it only later through social contacts.⁵

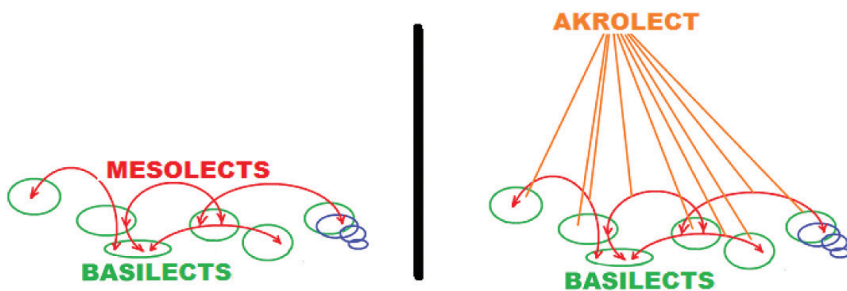


Fig. 4 – Additive blending of various basilects through contact, resulting in the creation of mesolects; on the right emergence of an akrolect from basilects and mesolects

Acrolects are generated by human will through intellectual elaboration. Although most akrolects have a written form, there is no direct connection between elaboration and writing: Sanskrit was elaborated almost only as an oral language, whilst some mesolects are written for immediate purpose: interviews, correspondence, some religious texts, etc. The European (but also Indian) belief that the written language is the real one and its spoken varieties are corrupted forms is but an ideological construction; note that it was common since the Antiquity as the word 'grammar' (γραμματική), deriving from γράφω 'to write', may attest. This belief – also related to the Semitic overrating of written texts as religious references, to which only privileged persons had access, led to a severe depreciation of spoken languages throughout European history. This is true for all languages but this attitude reaches a peak in so far Rromani is concerned.

⁵ Cf. Courthiade 2015.

1.3 Behind the word 'dialect'

In reality, the word 'dialect' is not precise enough to identify all the kinds of varieties within a language and it conveys also a very negative undertone in popular speech – not to mention that it has quite different values in different languages, in spite of its seemingly international character: *dialect*, *dialecte*, *dialetto*, *dialecto*, *Dialekt*, *диалект*, *διάλεκτος* etc. One should rather use the terms basilect, acrolect, mesolect/interlect and frus-tolect in terms of register, as well as topolect (geographical variety), sociolect (social variety), thriscolect (denominational variety), phylolect (variety related to gender) and idiolect (individual variety) in these various aspects. There are two further notions, widely used in Rromani studies:

- pogadilect “a linguistic form resulting from the shift from an heritage language to a surrounding language but retrieving some lexical elements of the former and inserting them into the latter, as identity markers” (it is the case of Anglo-Rromani and Ibero-Rromani pogadilects, but this phenomenon is encountered also in other languages – see above).
- endajolect “the specific linguistic variety of a Rromani socio-professional (and usually familial) group – *endaj*⁶ in Rromani” (Kelderaš, Lovari, Žambàzi, Erli etc... are endajolects).

1.4 “In language, everything is worth, there's nothing to reject” (Rajko Đurić)

Language is much more than a mere instrument aimed at communicating information. It conveys a very strong emotional dimension with all kinds of feelings which give us our vision of the world around us and inside us. “Language is what supports us. And we in turn support our language. It is our skeleton, our vehicle. It inhabits us, crosses us, influences us. It is our treasure” (Blanquer 2017). Numberless poets have praised their mother tongue in their language – this would not have made sense if it were only a practical device of soulless and cold notification.

Basically the human world is made of mental representations (from beliefs to sporting, from art to fashion, from emotions to ideology, from rituals to social networks etc...) much more than objective facts (pain, hunger, hard sciences) and these representations differ from one linguistic community to another – because they are conveyed by the language at stake

⁶ The Rromani word *endaj* (*endanã* in Bulgarian Erli) is of Armenian origin; it has been replaced in Kelderaš by the Romanian word *vița* '1. grape (as 'viță de vie'); 2. Descendant, scion, offshoot; P. Ext. (wide) family, kin, sort, kind.' This concept is areal: the same meanings are encountered in Serbo-Croatian *loza* – but not in Albanian *hardhie*.

and elaborated out of elements defined by this language. This is the reason why its survival and blossoming are pivotal conditions for any nation and its members' cultural, emotional and therefore human self-fulfilment and happiness. Its fate should not be left to amateur speculations.

2. THE STAGES OF STANDARDIZATION

Standardization may be split in two stages: primary and secondary. Primary standardization is divided in two parts:

- codification (adaptation of a graphic system to the requirements of the given language and elaboration of the appropriate rules of writing and reading) and punctuation (including letter capitalization). The elaboration of a writing 'code' (*codification, alphabet, создание алфавита...*) is very technical, it follows well known linguistic methods of standardization and does not imply much human intervention.
- basic normalization of grammar rules and frame-work principles for lexical consolidation and development: how to deal with derivation, composition, archaisms, putting back less used words into wide circulation, treatment of borrowings, internationalisms, loan-translations, neology etc...

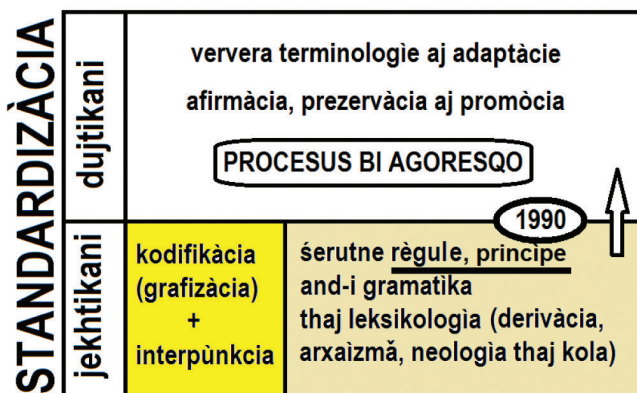


Fig. 5 – The two stages of language standardization with the pivotal date of 1990: adoption of the primary standardization and the and ongoing process of secondary standardization

As displayed on Fig. 5, this stage has been completed in 1990 (Warsaw Congress) in terms of codification and around the same date in terms of grammar and lexical normalization. This corresponds to Vuk S. Karadžić'

work on Serbian, an undertaking completed in his lifetime and still reliable today. In this respect, Rromani is 'standardized'.

However, there is a second stage of standardization which never ends, because a language never stops developing, as long as it is alive. It is called secondary standardization and deals with specific terminologies, adaptation to new *realia* as well as with the affirmation, preservation and promotion of the language and its rules, among others in the sphere of new technologies of communication (for example adapting to the language commands and interfaces on-line, spellcheckers, corpus processing, automatic translation etc.). Over one hundred languages all over the world have a specific institution devoted to this task, be it an academy, a ministry, a university, an NGO etc. In the case of Rromani, this function is carried out by the Commission for language and linguistic rights of the International Rromani Union.

Writing has taken anew a central position in communication, due to the everyday use of small screens and Hagège's statement "A language which is written is much more granted an assurance to remain alive than if it is only spoken" is truer than ever. 'Written' here means "written with a coherent system, not only transcribed in foreign spellings". Let us have a look at the following exchange of SMS, all in Rromani, but written in local Serbian, Hungarian, Romanian and mixed varieties of the Latin alphabet:

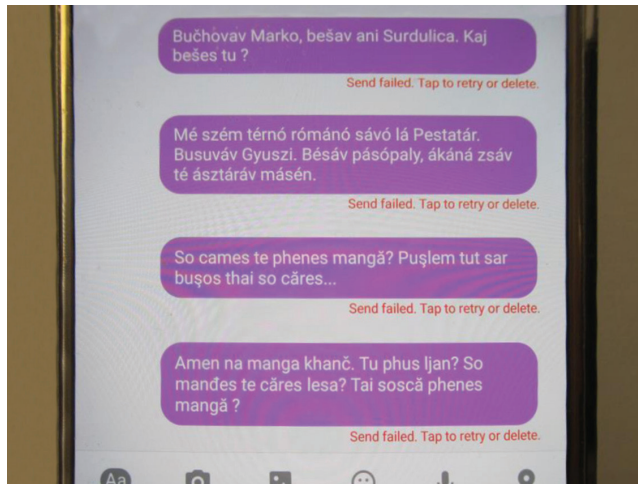


Fig. 6 – Attempts of exchanges in Rromani language through a messaging app platform while using various local languages alphabets (all Latin based) – resulting in a total lack of understanding

It is clear that, even for these very simple sentences, any communication is severely hindered. How could messages of this kind convey real messages of reflection and culture? Even humour?

Therefore, the first stage, namely coherent spelling, is the alpha and the omega of any project of linguistic preservation and promotion. Let us illustrate the line of argument followed before the Warsaw Congress to elaborate the integrative alphabet which was proposed and endorsed in 1990.

2. 1 *How many words do we have in Rromani to say 'language/tongue'?*

According to phonetic data, there are four forms, as one may see on Fig. 7:



Fig. 7 – The pronunciations of the Rromani word for 'language/tongue': they are four (written in International Phonetic Alphabet or IPA)

However, if each of these four forms are written in the various local alphabets of Europe, the number raises to 60 – see Fig. 8:

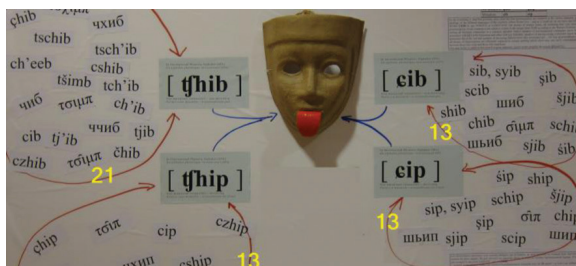


Fig. 8 – The rendering in the various European alphabets of the four pronunciations of the Rromani word for 'language/tongue': they are sixty – resulting a great confusion

Spellings of this kind are often referred to as 'phonetic' by most people. However we have to distinguish two quite different approaches: the first one may be called 'endogen phonetic transcription' when a given alphabet is used to write the language it was coined for, while the second one is an

'exogen paraphonetic transcription', when one writes a given language with an alphabet designed for another one. The use of local alphabets (exogen paraphonetic transcription) to write Rromani is thus blatantly an act of language murder, in so far four close to each other pronunciations of a given word are rendered in dozens of written shapes, hindering normal communication.

However there exist another option, namely to use a single common spelling, here *čhib*, while setting rules of reading; in this case two:

- speakers of dialects which have not undergone the mutation of *čh* pronounce it as [tʃh] and speakers of dialects who have undergone it pronounce *čh* as [ɕ];
- speakers of dialects which have not undergone the devoicing of final *-b* pronounce it as [b] and speakers of dialects who have undergone it pronounce final *-b* as [p]:

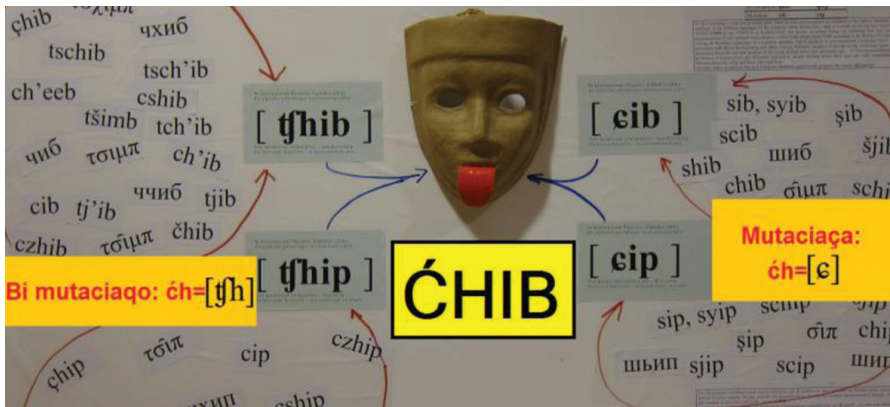


Fig. 9 – The common spelling of the Rromani word for 'language/tongue', beyond superficial (and meaningless) discrepancies of pronunciation

This rule is true not only for all words in *čh* (*čhavo*, *čhuri*, *ačhol*, *ričh* etc.) but rigorously in parallel for all words in *ɕ* (*ɕal*, *ɕanel*, *ɕazo*, *laɕ*, *panɕ* etc.). There is no exception and therefore a common grapheme may quite well cover both pronunciations in each case.

The teacher may teach the rule itself at the level of 1st and 2nd grade and explain the polylectal process at higher levels.

2.2 Extension of this rule to further dialectal discrepancies in pronunciation

A similar rule is posed for the various pronunciations of velar stops in front of front vowels *e* and *i*:

<i>Common spelling</i>	<i>Palatalization</i>	
	<i>without</i>	<i>with</i>
kerel, kiri	kerel, kiri	ćerel/ćerel, ćiri/ćiri
khelel, khil	khelel, khil	ćhelel/ćhelel, ćhil/ćhil
gele, gili	gele, gili	đele/d'ele/džele, đili/d'ili/džili
kamel, koro, kuri	kamel, koro, kuri	
kham, khoro, khurmi	kham, khoro, khurmi	
gav, gono, guruv	gav, gono, guruv	
<i>Cf. Italian</i>		
centro, cinque		čentro, činkwe
Carla, conto, cupola		Karla, konto, kupola
gentile, giro		džentile, džiro
gabineto, gomma, gusto		gabineto, gomma, gusto

Fig. 10 – Rules of palatalization (or not) of dorsal stops (k, kh, g) in front of various vowels, depending on their position and the kind of vernacular (palatalizing or not). A rule similar to that of palatalizing vernaculars exists in Italian and examples are given as illustration

So some speakers pronounce always these consonants as stops like their Serbian counterparts κ and z , while others adopt this pronunciation in front of *a*, *o* and *u* while palatalizing them before front vowels *e* and *i* – just as in Romance languages (Italian examples are given in Fig. 10 – bottom).

2.3 Didactic use of the parallel between the obverse and reverse of Euros and the sound and letter in a word

As early as the 3rd grade, one may explain to the pupils that the written letter represents the functional value of the word-composing entity and the various pronunciations are only its accidents of utterances, depending on contingent factors. A parallel may be done with the European coins, in which the reverse, called 'common side', indicates the value of the coin and is the same for all countries, whilst the obverse, called national side, differs from one country to another, just like the pronunciation of some letters differs from one Rromani group to another – the functional value remaining the same:⁷

⁷ Cf. also Courthiade 2017, Куртијаде 2018.



	European coins	Word-composing entities
<i>Specific side</i>	National symbols [obverse, frontside]	Pronunciation (sound)
<i>Common side</i>	Value in € [reverse, backside]	Value to make words (letter)

Fig. 11 – The obverse *versus* reverse of a Euro coin as an analogy to the pronunciation *versus* semantically meaningful discrimination value in a word

The implicit knowledge of dialectal variety to which 3rd grade pupils have been faced to in everyday life enable them to understand this phenomenon. In addition, this phenomenon is encountered in many other languages and we may mention here Spanish and German examples:

SPANISH	GERMAN	RROMANI
$/l/ \left\{ \begin{array}{l} [lj] \\ [j] \\ [ʒ] \end{array} \right. \quad \text{ll}$	$/-ig/ \left\{ \begin{array}{l} [-ik] \\ [-ie] \end{array} \right. \quad \text{-ig}$	$/\text{ch}/ \left\{ \begin{array}{l} [y^h] \\ [e] \end{array} \right. \quad \text{ch}$
$/sc/ \left\{ \begin{array}{l} [sk] \\ [hk]/sp \\ [k] \end{array} \right. \left\{ \begin{array}{l} [sp] \\ [hp] \\ [p] \end{array} \right. \quad \text{sc} \quad \text{sp}$	$/ich/ \left\{ \begin{array}{l} [-ik] \\ [-ie] \end{array} \right. \quad \text{ich}$	$/z/ \left\{ \begin{array}{l} [dʒ] \\ [z] \end{array} \right. \quad \text{z}$
		$/gi/ \left\{ \begin{array}{l} [gi] \text{ } [gi] \\ [dʒi][zi] \end{array} \right. \quad \text{gi}$

Irrespectively of its various pronunciations, the Spanish letter *ll* is always written changelessly *ll*; similarly the Spanish groups */sc/*, */sp/* and */st/* are also written in a unique manner, whatever the pronunciation of */s/* [s], [h] or totally mute. The same can be said of German */-ig/* and */ich/* with various pronunciations and a constant spelling. In many cases, there is not only one series of variations in a word, but two or more, as in the following case (verbal form meaning 's/he did/made'):

1. Dialects with endings [-djas], [-deas], [-d'as], [-dʒas] etc.

		Palatalization of the initial velar k				
Palatalization of the dental in the verbal ending	kerdjas	k'erdjas	ʃerdjas	t'erdjas	kərdjas	
	kerdɛas	k'erdɛas	ʃerdɛas	t'erdɛas	kərdɛas	
	kerd'as	k'erd'as	ʃerd'as	t'erd'as	kərd'as	
	kerdʒas	k'erdʒas	ʃerdʒas	t'erdʒas	kərdʒas	
	kerdʒas	k'erdʒas	ʃerdʒas	t'erdʒas	kərdʒas	
	kerɟjas	k'erɟjas	ʃerɟjas	t'erɟjas	kəɟjas	
	kerɟas	k'erɟas	ʃerɟas	t'erɟas	kəɟas	
	kerzas	k'erzas	ʃerzas	t'erzas	kəzas	

>>>>> **ONE UNIQUE SPELLING: kerdǎs** for 8x6= 40 pronunciations.

2. Dialects with ending [-das]

[d]	kerdas	k'erdas	ʃerdas	t'erdas	kərdas
-----	--------	---------	--------	---------	--------

>>>>> **ONE UNIQUE SPELLING: kerdas** for 5 other pronunciations.

Fig. 12 – Cross-combination of two ranges of phonetic discrepancies, leading to a high number of pronunciations – and the use of one spelling rendering all of them with the help of reading rules

This principle of one spelling covering different pronunciations extends to grammar, namely in the system of postpositions as in the illustration below, where *-ça* 'with' covers the dialectal pronunciations [sa], [ha], [ja], [a] and [va] (after vowel) but also [tsa] and [dʒa] after *-n*. The same applied to *-qe* 'for' with an even higher number of pronunciations (10 of which are indicated here, but in reality they are much more numerous).

In fact, each postposition represents one and sole functional and semantic entity ('with', 'for' etc.) and the various dialectal pronunciations arise through a comparatively complex but strictly consistent system of *sandhi* (concretely here three levels of *sandhi* operating one after the other: 1. sonority [or voicing], 2. palatalization, 3. additional/isolated – Courthiade 2016).

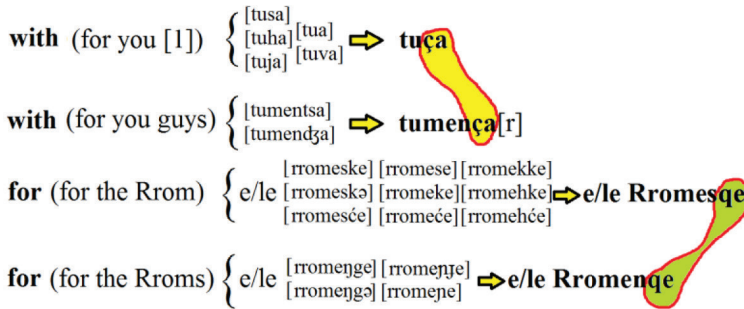


Fig. 13 – The system of common spelling for various pronunciation of a single unit, as extended to postpositions

All these aspects were discussed in the wake of the London Congress in 1971, which proclaimed that “all spoken Rromani dialects are of equal merit and that no one dialect is superior to any other dialect. Nevertheless there is a significant need for an international standard which could be used in periodicals and in congresses”. The exchanges were more intensive after the Sarajevo seminar (9–11.06.1986) and the Paris conference at Beaubourg Cultural Center (5–6.12.1986), leading to the three days of consultation at the eve of the Warsaw congress which finally proposed to the Congress the following alphabet: **aA äÄ bB cC éĆ éhČH dD eE ěĚ fF gG hH xX iI ŷ Ÿ jJ kK khKH lL mM nN oO őŎ pP phPH rR rrRR sS śŚ tT thTH uU ůŮ vV zZ źŻ ʒŽ qQ çÇ θΘ** with a set of 21 rules⁸ of writing and reading, adapted to all Rromani vernaculars. The diæresis is also used for the transcription of some odd vernaculars (especially loan-words), as well as **ɸP** and **ðÐ** for the same purpose (Greek and Albanian loans). This common (integrative, polylectal) alphabet was endorsed in plenary on 08 April 1990 by the Congress and it is in use in Romanian (with ministerial agreement and a wide use in schools, where over 30.000 pupils learn it every year since the last decade of the past century), France, Italy, Spain, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, Croatia, Germany and Montenegro. Many documents of the Council of Europe have been issued in this alphabet. At present some 75% of all significant works in Europe are printed in this alphabet and according to its integrative (polylectal) rules.

2.4 *The illusion of the so-called 'phonetic principle'*

From the practical and scientific point of view, the Warsaw common alphabet is slightly more abstract than non-Rromani alphabets pinned to Rromani on the sole ground that the pronunciation is seemingly simi-

⁸ These rules are given in annex to the present contribution.

lar to the one of the local mainstream language. However the underlying phonemic system is totally different and giving priority to the superficial level leads to language split, while giving priority to the underlying level (the one used in the speakers' mind) leads to easier communication. We already met the illusion of Russian type writing system supposed to render Rromani in the case of Soviet graphization. Such simplistic approaches, called 'branch store alphabets/spellings' are presently totally outdated at the world wide level and "those who propose graphic systems no longer seek to separate linguistic varieties by endeavouring to render the tiniest differences of pronunciation, but on the contrary to allow greater inter-understanding between dialects by using a slightly more abstract graphical representation" (Hazaël Massieux 2000: 207).

A major problem is that people proposing 'branch store alphabets' first believe that the spelling of the majority language is 'phonetic' (as it is affirmed in local schools) and secondly they do not understand that the more a phonetic transcription is 'faithful', the more it separates the dialects. They are not aware of what Hazaël (*ibid.*: 209) clearly explains:

A phonetic transcription is literally illegible – even if the most disconcerting signs of the IPA are replaced by more common graphic signs, which can even be digraphs. One may observe this kind of practice everywhere. The so-called 'phonetic principle' is meant only to retransmit a given pronunciation but it neglects the fact that languages are devised to communicate information. If one can recognize directly a word behind its various morphophonological variants, one will read much more quickly than if one reads in a drone and discovers the word and its meaning hidden inside only after that. (Hazaël Massieux 2000: 209)

Phoneticism, due to its utilitarian origin (namely rendering as faithfully as possible, on the basis of their oral productions, utterances of given languages in order to describe them for the use of specialists or enlightened amateurs), even if taking account of technical criteria (such as for example, availability of typefaces), has not modified its objectives when the task moved from a descriptive practice to a communicative practice. The latter is a system aimed at serving in an inseparable way both sides of communication: encoding and decoding, yet not of languages as such but of the utterances allowed by these languages. In short, narrow phoneticism is a nearsighted practice that confuses transcription and writing (Bernabé 2000: 242).

As Caubet, Chaker and Sibille also write:

Phonetic type spellings are more immediate, more spontaneous for the writer (for encoding), but they are much more difficult for the reader (for decoding), who can lose with them a substantial part of the morphosyntactic (and accordingly semantic) information; the reader will often be condemned to remain

at the stage of decipherment and reading in a drone. With such spellings it is necessary to restore first aloud the pronunciation in order to understand the message; they facilitate encoding but they can make decoding problematic. Conversely, incorporative spellings of morphophonological (or macro-phonological) type, presuppose a prior training of the writer, who must be able to master the rules of morphemic segmentation, phenomena of assimilation, as well as dialectal variations; in compensation they provide the reader with ease and comfort due to stability of the graphical representation and a maximum of information can be found in the written text for its correct interpretation; while making encoding slightly more difficult, they do facilitate decoding. (Caubet et alii – 2000: 9).

There is, in fact, no other solution for the future of minority languages, namely for their extension to writing and accordingly for their survival – both of which being very closely linked in our society of modern communication, than getting free of ‘village quarrels’ and accepting to learn ‘to write and read a language’; this means that one accepts to take cognizance of writing conventions, including when the spelling does not directly represent each detail of pronunciation of each geographical place, of each social group, of each person, but while preserving the fundamental grammatical consistence of the language at stake (Hazaël Massieux 2000: 209).

This is indeed the only way allowing languages and cultures, beyond the spelling aspect, to access the scriptural dimension, namely writing, under all its declensions, the most prestigious of which is literature. Literature is based on thinking, evoking, fancying, reasoning and meaning – only very exceptionally on imitations of individual or local speech.

3. THE FOLLOWING STEP: NORMALIZATION

Once the codification (or graphization) is completed, it is time in principle to proceed to normalization. In fact a part of the normalization, especially in the grammar realm, was elaborated in parallel with the spelling due to the morpho(pho)nological nature of many grammatical phenomena, so the results are inseparable. Normalization – the emergence of a common ‘norm’, mainly in terms of lexical resources, differs from codification because it implies a series of choices and decisions by specialists, while codification is an almost automatic mechanism, which emerges practically without any human interference, just as the result of combined phonological laws.

Normalization can be divided in primary (or basic; as explained above, this step has been completed almost 30 years ago) and secondary. The experience of other languages’ normalization, in terms of both successes

and failures, is welcome to optimize the same task in Rromani. Not all languages have recourse to the same techniques to enrich their means of expression. Derivation is predominant in most Slavic languages, while Germanic develop much more composition – until recently, until English loan-words began to rush into their vocabulary. Hungarian uses all three techniques, after a long period of deliberately assigning new meanings to old regional and/or rural words, as Finnish and Estonian did also, but English has borrowed to all possible foreign languages and it is now using massively metaphors – a prevailing technique in modern English: let us mention only *mouse*, *bug*, *sanctuary*, *shuttle*, *black box* (which is red⁹), *cookies*, *green washing*, *class action*, *stock options* etc... Some odd coinages, like *Brexiter* or *JLosphere*¹⁰ can be also encountered. In other languages, lexicographers do not hesitate to integrate new words into dictionaries, but the predominant attitude in Rromani lexicography is over-scrupulous purism.

However expanding the lexical resources is needed for the modernization and adaptation of any language to our modern living world. This evolution is closely related to extra-linguistic new events like the official recognition of the language, or the fight for this, the acquisition of a new independent status, efforts for protection and promotion, introduction into teaching processes and new (modern) cultural activities. However we are facing in Rromani a hindering paradox: people want for it a new status but many refuse modernization under the pretext that “my grand-mother didn’t know this word” or “my father would not understand this” (yet those very ‘purists’ do not hesitate to speak of *Facebook*, *Duldung*, *skateboards* and similar things). Such timorous responses were common also in other languages 100 years ago but users understood that the interest of their culture and people is to comply to linguistic norms and requirement. Unfortunately, in the Rromani case, most stake holders have no idea of other languages’ standardization, they stick to simplistic views widespread by elementary school and media, while many outsiders, ‘experts’ with no knowledge of Rromani – and most often very poor knowledge of linguistics, encourage them to stagnate at the lowest possible level, sometimes out of naive good will, but as a rule with the purpose to hinder any development of a language, culture and people which are not supposed to rise above the stereotypes, in which history and gypsophobia have confined them.

One of the most pernicious attitudes may be observed in some European structures, which order the translation into Rromani of very specialized administrative texts but at the same time support the instinctive and timorous reaction of some unlearned purists, who reject any enrichment and modernization of the language itself, in the name of its ‘preservation’.

⁹ ‘Black box’ didn’t refer primarily to the well known concrete recording box in airplanes, but to an epistemological concept of physics, elaborated in the 19th century.

¹⁰ Sphere of Jennifer Lopez’ followers.

But what kind of preservation? Probably preservation of the gaps, lacks of development and injuries of alienation which have been left in Rromani by a pitiless history of exclusion.

4. THE LEVELS OF ACCESS TO RESOURCES AMONG STAKE-HOLDERS

It is important to analyse the access to knowledge of the various stake-holders involved in the fate of Rromani, because it is the result of intricate socio-linguistic factors. Accordingly any concept of guilt of culpability is irrelevant to this mechanism. Fig. 14 mirrors the ways how people usually deal with various languages in both the artistic (left) and the scientific (right) spheres – a distinction based on Snow's division in 'two cultures' to make short.

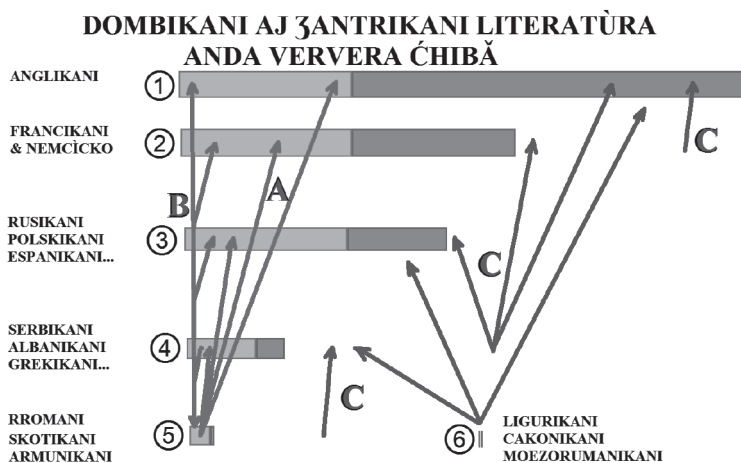


Fig. 14 – Ways how users of various classes of languages address printed material in languages of other classes, according to the level of 'universality' of the languages under consideration

Languages are sorted on six levels according to the size of the corpus available in them (these are taken only as examples and the size are but approximate):

1. on the top, English with its rich literature and huge scientific corpus;
2. then languages like French and German, with their respective quantity in both areas: quite as much literature but less scientific production;

3. we may find further Russian, Polish and Spanish: all these have a substantial literary corpus but the amount of their published scientific corpus is slightly more reduced;
4. 'smaller' languages like Serbo-Croatian, Albanian or Greek, have a more reduced – although appreciable, library of both artistic and scientific production;
5. Rromani, Scots or Aromanian have a clearly more reduced published literature and an insignificant scientific production (often translations, as in the case of groups 2 to 4);
6. languages like Ligurian, Tsakonian and Pontic (Greek languages) or Moeso-Romanian (or Bajaš) have no artistic or scientific production at all.

As a result most users of languages with a low literary production (bottom of the diagram) read, in addition to their own literature, works in languages of more substantial production, provided they have learnt these languages. Most usually they acquire the 'languages of wide communication' or 'languages of the school': mainly English, to a lesser extent French and German, also sometimes Russian, Spanish, Polish and, when they live in the corresponding countries, Serbo-Croatian, Albanian and Greek – compulsory at school. The opposite situation is less frequent, but there are native speakers of the higher groups who learn less used languages and enjoy their literature. The same may occur also horizontally, as between Russian and Spanish or (albeit more seldom) Greek and Albanian or Serbian.

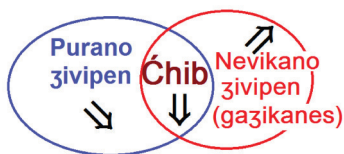
The picture is totally different in the field of scientific production (including linguistics, standardization, psychology, history and other humanities): people read material only in 'higher languages'¹¹ and those speaking languages which belong to groups 5 or 6 most often do not have access to higher languages and their corpus but, due to socio-educational reasons, only to the dominating language of their small country, while speakers of intermediate groups (including those of those 'small' countries) reach much more easily publications in languages of wide communication. The opposite movement, namely the recourse to scientific publications in languages of narrow diffusion is exceptional – and as a rule limited to research about the given culture, not for access to general knowledge. One may say more or less the same for media and journalistic publications.

As a result of this mechanism, self-proclaimed standardizers of Rromani originating from linguistic groups in the bottom of the diagram, and accordingly with practically no scientific training and socio-linguistic or psychological awareness, should not be entitled to impose poorly

¹¹ It is clear that the term 'higher' is not used here in terms of quality or worth, but only of statistical presence in publications and on the web (both aspects are taken under consideration in the diagram).

grounded solutions, because the future of the language of millions is at stake. There is no point to criticize their approach, on the contrary their linguistic 'patriotism' deserves often admiration, but standardization requires, just as other very sensitive and pivotal issues, much more than good will and enthusiasm. Nevertheless high quality sources do exist: in their impressive collective work in six volumes "Language Reform", Hagège and Fodor (1983–1994) have gathered articles covering the history of standardization of 120 languages and this publication is indeed a real Bible for standardizers. Other seminal works are to be found among others in "Collateral Languages" (Eloy & alii 2004) or "Social history of languages in France" (Kremnitz & alii 2013) and quite a lot of similar publications. Unfortunately practically no player in the Rromani field is aware of the existence of these pivotal publications. Most of them have even no idea about the history and present state of the standardization in the dominant language of their country, not to mention efforts in the Rromani domain. Access to important publications are therefore much more a matter of fate (place of birth) than of will and/or intelligence, but the impact on given languages relies on consistent results of effective work, not on moods toward such and such. In this case, outsiders promoting inappropriate solutions devised by unprepared people, whatever their good intentions, bear the historical responsibility of jeopardizing the language of an entire nation, just for the sake of blind compassion or egalitarianism – or possibly less worthy motivations. Note that those very authorities promoting this kind of egalitarianism in the Rromani field would never accept to do the same in their own language and culture, putting it so at risk.

5. WHO ARE THE OPPONENTS TO THE BLOSSOMING OF RROMANI AS A MODERN LANGUAGE OF CIVILISATION?



First of all nationalists and chauvinists who are scared of the emergence of a new language and identity in their country. They understand that the existence of a standard language model can play a fundamental role in the cohesion of a linguistic community (the Rromani community) by consolidating among the speakers the awareness of sharing a common identity. So such politicians prefer to sacrifice the language (which any way is not theirs) and relegate the Rroms to their historical position of marginal victims, generating social problems, and delinquents reluctant to, or unable of, any 'integration' (allegedly).

An other class of opponents to the affirmation of Rromani on a foot of equality with other idioms are those inspired by romanticism and racism, who are unable to view Rromani as a normal language, as well as who

take pleasure in emphasizing the most miserable aspects of the Rroms and consider them as unable to develop their mother tongue, due to a social handicap or a congenital backwardness. They are followed by 'integrated' Rroms (*romanizați* in Romania), who share uncritically all mainstream views, as well as by those who seek through such an attitude some political or occupational benefits (for example in some NGOs).

There are also persons with problems of ego, who can exist only through criticism and aggressiveness – albeit with no other argument than “it is no good (*ништа не вреди*)”, and they do rejoice when they find support among authorities, irrespectively of the motivation of these authorities. Reluctance toward Rromani as a regular European language is closely related of a sort of blind rejection of the European (not to say worldwide) dimension of Rromani language, culture and people. Conversely, prominent authors have defended brilliantly the opposite and correct view, as Günther Grass, who wrote about the Rroms: “They are what we all try to be, true Europeans. [...] Among us all, they are the most European”.

One cannot raise over night the awareness of all the European population but it is realistic and necessary to do so at least with students of pedagogical schools, journalists and other people involved in culture and publications, especially school books.

6. CHANGES ARE INESCAPABLE – HOW TO MANAGE THEM?

Many things change around us and even within us as elements, practices and objects of the 'old life' decrease and often disappear, while new ones, related to 'modern life', emerge in our experiences. This common place statement is often disregarded in the Rromani field. In fact we should not forget the rich means and resources allowing the expression of the 'old life', because they belong to culture and are very much needed to express it in history and literature. Accordingly it is really shocking to hear persons criticizing Rromani dictionaries, as “containing archaic words related to passed realities”. In reality we need to develop jointly new means of expression able to depict 'modern life' and therefore one must accept the widening of lexical resources. Modernization should not be the privilege of the sole non-Rromani languages.

Well established methods have been used with success in other languages, but there are some prerequisites:

- a) users have to understand the need of a specific word. This means their need to know about the corresponding notion, be it old or new. In order to be aware of this notion they need a wide culture in the domains at stake, not only a 'culture of *palanka*'. This is true also for the maintaining of archaisms – in literal as well as figurative meaning. Someone who has no clue about the

- elements of the horse's harness will never feel the need to preserve the respective terminology. So before extending vocabulary with new items, a foregoing task is to safeguard the one extant;
- b) neology has to be wisely devised for an easy memorization, with a frequent preference for 'motivated' coinages rather than unclear borrowings;
 - c) in the case of Rromani, coinages have to be appropriate in several countries: understandable and compatible to local languages taboo (avoiding something new which could sound inappropriate);
 - d) one should also avoid, when possible, semantic overlapping with meanings in local languages: for example the seemingly international term *garnitur(a)* is in fact a trap because it refers to a suit in Polish, a part insuring thermal operation in a steam boiler in Russian, a headphone system in German and Russian, vegetables on a dish in Albanian etc. The mere direct inclusion of *garnitùra* to Rromani creates thus blatant misunderstandings.
 - e) it is necessary to have access to a wide circulation of the texts containing new wording in order to make it widely known among users;
 - f) gypsologists and Rroms depending from them should not discourage Rromani speakers from using their mother tongue in all kinds of contexts and situations;
 - g) last but not least, Rroms have to read texts produced and/or accept to listen to video and audio tapings conveying new information. Conversely, attractive texts in Rromani have to be accessible on pocket screens.

Be it as it may, all these steps are possible only in a context of respect toward the language, by both users and outsiders, and this may occur only if its prestige is enhanced by public authorities'.¹² Campaigns aimed at promoting linguistic diversity as a national asset have to be carried out: it is a duty of State authorities. If there is no social prestige, parents will just give up their mother tongue, especially if it is poor and deemed as not suitable for modern life (its emotional dimension is often disregarded in our societies). Such is the situation in European societies.

Therefore resources have to be sufficient to express modern experience if we want to avoid a general skip to the mainstream language and the relegation of Rromani to a more and more marginal role, until total extinction. Accordingly, all these tasks have to be carried out in parallel: awareness raising, prestige promotion and enhancement, wise elaboration of appropriate neology, broad circulation and finally effective use of the

¹² There are many other ways to rise the prestige of Rromani. Just to give an interesting Hungarian example, we may mention the recent publication of the correspondence in Rromani language between archduke Joseph von Habsburg and Hungarian Rroms in 1890, a book with a definitely very strong symbolic value, among both Rroms and Hungarians.

production by a critical mass of users. The task is huge and success is not granted. Even languages supported by a State and a government failed, as in the case of Irish: in 1942, 20 years after the independence of Ireland and the linguistic laws on Irish, Daniel Corkery wrote: “The work is finished, the language is safe, the native government will not dare to neglect it, everything the Irish League has been trying to do will now get done, with, in addition, a hundred others that the League would not allow itself to dream of.” We all know Irish is in a dreadful situation of agony. This means that we have to be aware of the difficulties for Rromani and find out efficient strategies, far from self-satisfaction and enthusiasm.

7. THE DIVERSITY PARADOX IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF GLOBALIZATION

It is clear that the 'old life' and the way of expressing it was sharply distinct from one people to another in the past. This is recognized as linguistic and cognitive diversity (glossodiversity and gnossodiversity). Yet, the extension of all languages to modern life covers experiences which are more and more similar all over the world and this poses a crucial question, beyond the respectable wish to safeguard both aspects of diversity: if the experiences of urban middle class societies is the same, is it really useful to develop a series of languages which differ only in lexicon but are finally just translations one of another, or rather are all translation of the main language of the area? In fact this question seems a little exaggerated, because not all exchanges concern technology and administration. There is a lot of topics devoted to intimate, cultural and emotional life, domains in which globalization is much less pregnant. To mention just one example, political and social life would gain a lot from a real diversity of new fresh views on it, beyond administrative terminology. As a result the use of Rromani with its cultural and human background in politics is also a choice of society: maybe less bureaucratic and with a more powerful insight into non-formal social reality.

Be it as it may, it is of the utmost significance to consolidate the inherited vocabulary, namely the 800 Indo-Aryan, the 70 Persian (including Kurdish), the 35 Armenian, the 5 Georgian, the 200 Anatolian Greek stems and other relevant borrowings from European languages. We should not forget that some words, seemingly new for some users, are quite plain for others. In addition, some local borrowings bear a cultural dimension for the Rroms and such words should not be disregarded but introduced into common Rromani with the appropriate explanation, as an asset depicting elements of the Rroms' relationships with surrounding society in the past. As a rule, Rromani speakers use the lexicon of languages at hand as synonymic resources to enrich their expression, in addition to the Rromani

common vocabulary when speaking inside their community but resort to old Rromani in international exchanges. One should note that grammatical influences of surrounding languages on Rromani are extremely limited.

Beside their inherited stock, all languages have used derivation and to a smaller extend composition to develop their capacity of expressing new messages; there is no reason to deprive Rromani of such resources, even if newly coined words seem unusual at the beginning – just because they are new. The same can be said of international terminology, widely prevailing in modern communication, but Rromani may also draw on Indian words – without exaggeration. One has to be careful also because there is no point to express some spheres of activity in Rromani and on the other hand some concepts are of little use and/or disappear after a short fashion. This may occur also for some objects – as (floppy) disks, which are not any more in use.

In terms of vocabulary, a language may be compared to the butterfly of Fig. 15.

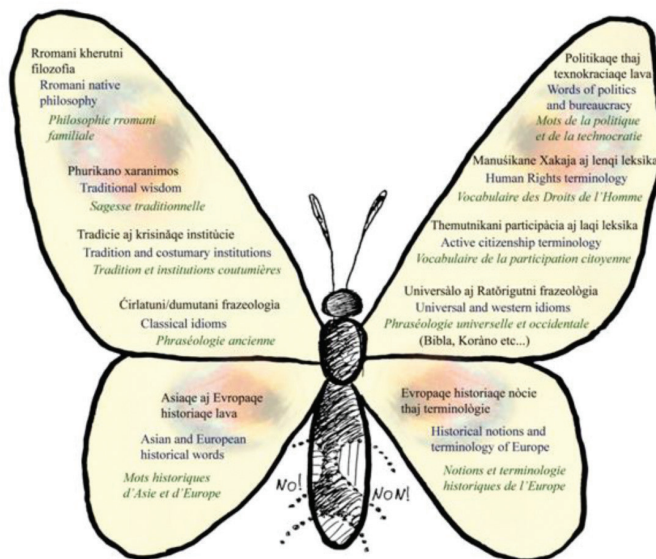


Fig. 15 – Symbolic representation of the various categories of vocabulary in Rromani

Its kernel is the body of the insect but this body is but a worm without its wings, which are essential: they represent not only all the Rromani traditional heritage but also all the acquisitions of modern world political and democratic culture, as well as scientific vocabulary (history, geography, ethnology and other sciences, techniques etc.), that we all need, as symbol-

ised in the drawing below and explained in detail in Courthiade 2007. To make short, the left wings symbolize the Rromani vocabulary and the right wings the borrowings, while the back wings symbolize words inherited from the past and front wings modern vocabulary.

In its popular stage of spontaneous use, Rromani language has not developed, not integrated or even not accepted a good part of its lexical wings. In some cases – due to various developments, local vernaculars have even lost vocabulary belonging to its lexical core (body of the butterfly). The subtractive approach, quite common among investigators (and Rromani purists), consists in promoting the rejection of all words which are not understood by all Rromani speakers, while outlawing in wide communication the use of words forgotten in such or such specific area and therefore restricting Rromani vocabulary to a handful of words. As a result, the Rromani butterfly would be reduced to a severely wounded worm, with hardly any chance to survive.

The opposite view is promoted by the Linguistic Commission of the International Rromani Union: namely every single Rromani lexeme, even when locally not understood in some areas, is a precious part of our heritage, mirroring a unique historical, cultural and emotional background. As such its actual use needs to be fostered through schooling in mother tongue and circulation of all kinds of literary and non-literary works, just as it takes place in any other language. In addition, the acquisitions of the fields symbolized by the wings of the butterfly will not only broaden the oncoming generation's horizons but also bring *ipso facto* the Rromani vocabulary to a foot of equality with other languages.

8. HOME *VERSUS* SCHOOL

In the past, pupils were supposed to learn languages under their acrolectal form at school. Today weak discipline and low standards in learning prevail everywhere, especially in areas where Rromani children are schooled. So school learning of languages is less and less possible. Furthermore no mother tongue has ever been transmitted in school. School may only improve language fluency but the basis, under its basilectal form, must be acquired in 'spontaneous' milieu, as a rule at home. Improvement of language fluency may be developed eventually by formal tuition but an atmosphere of prestige, recognition and valorisation is necessary: official declaration of support, school programs, media, cultural activities etc... The importance of home transmission for a mother tongue is essential because many words and idioms can be acquired only in the concrete context of everyday life; let us mention for example *uś, śiśik, dōpo, mixil, manuśorro, andurś, tros, piśot, plima* etc... Some words, specific to Rromani, do not exist in other languages and a Gazikani-to-Rromani approach will never

encompass this vocabulary: *kilodori, berand, haravli, beli, brivel, peklärel, lokočinel (i čik), xonòta, paparinòl, phučivel, žambàla, xumeralo, caxraqi podĩ* etc... Not all words can be translated from one language to another: real riches and diversity lay in that. Accordingly formal teaching without basilect rooting usually leads to a shadow language, a mere loan-translation of the mainstream language, without real glossodiversity.

Many structures can not be acquired in the Gažikani-to-Rromani approach, as for example the causatives, iteratives, the use of tenses, moods and diathesis – when different from the surrounding language (imperfect and pluperfect do not exist in some of them), the appropriate use of diminutives etc. The same is true for idioms like *Mukh man te lav jekh jakh lindra, De man xàrica manro te xoxavav/phagav mi bokh, Manuś nanàrdo loneça (savo pharravel sig gada), ʒal amaro thuv duz/vòrta* etc... and also blessings, curses, proverbs, humour, connotations etc. One has to encompass all these dimensions of the mother tongue through home learning, not to limit one's knowledge to a kind of xerox of the mainstream language lacking emotional expressivity.

In this context, one has to take into consideration 'rare' words, viz with a sporadic use of Rromani. While frequent words like *zukul, šero, bul, laʒ* or *love*, as in the lower level in Fig. 16, are acquired swiftly, those in rarer use (higher level) need a more frequent use of Rromani to create opportunities of acquisition, and so on up to the highest level: *uś, gud, kuʒum, plima, šišik, čiken* etc... This is a situation shared by all languages: preservation and transmission depend on the frequency of their use in everyday life.

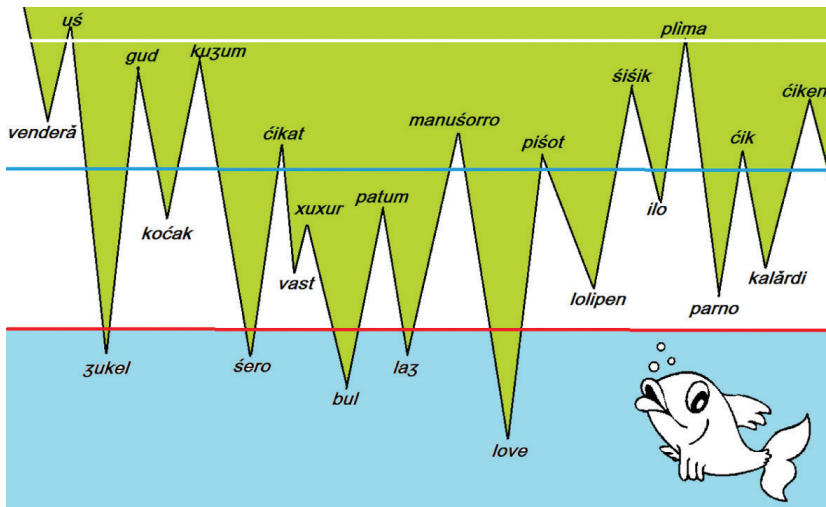


Fig. 16 – The various levels of frequency (bottom) and rarity (top) of vocabulary in Rromani

In fact, even a scanty knowledge of the vocabulary, using mainly hyperonymes, as in palankas, may give the impression of a regular command of the language – but it is then limited in practice to very general communication, a communication which doesn't stimulate parents to use it with their children. They may even get the impression that this language is a useless burden for them. The relationship between the register (including lexical resources) and the ease of communication for more and more sophisticated topics may be illustrated by Fig. 17.

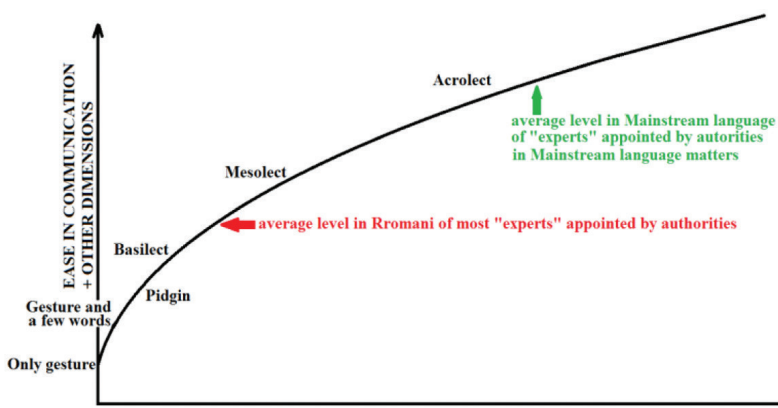


Fig. 17 – Curve showing the relationship between the ease in communication (y-axis) and the fluency of the speaker (x-axis) in Rromani (the level of requirements among experts is also shown)

Communication based on mere non-verbal communication (gestures etc.) without a single common word is possible but it limits exchanges to simple and immediate messages: it occurs between totally foreign to each other partners, in charades (guessing games with hand or body gestures), some cases of secret communication etc. With a handful of words added to non-verbal communication, the quality of the message is at once substantially improved. In the second stage we find pidgins, frustolects, basilects etc... Further enrichment of the vocabulary keeps improving the ease and quality of communication in terms of information. However, as already mentioned, this is only one part of the functions of languages: emotional exchanges are also pivotal in life and non-verbal expression is very significant in this field, as well as during the child's learning. However (except in the case of sign languages), it is but an additional means to verbal communication. This can lead to misunderstanding and to the impression that a few Rromani words, if accompanied by ad hoc gesture, represent a language.

The purpose of school education in mother tongue is to extend fluency from the basilect to mesolect and later acrolect. This is true and well recognised for non-Rromani languages, in which a high command of the

acrolect is demanded for teaching. However, the average level of Rromani required from 'experts' appointed by authorities is usually limited to the basilectal level. This may be illustrated by the degrees delivered by the Hungarian House of Exams in Budapest, at Rigó u.: the preparation to the first level of English, German or Spanish requires some 600 to 800 hours of classes, while the same degree may be reached with 120 hours of Rromani classes. This is very destructive, not only because it lowers the prestige of Rromani, but also allows under-prepared persons to acquire a diploma and 'teach' later young Rroms in schools.

This means that a fair fluency in Rromani requires a combination of home transmission plus school learning; none of them is sufficient for a reasonable acquisition. If public use (weddings, meetings, discussion, pubs, fairs, markets, churches, social games, pilgrimages, cyclic celebrations, movies, media etc.) is available the results are definitively much better.



Fig. 18 – Complementarity and mutual fostering of linguistic uses at home, at school and in public life

9. AN ATTEMPT OF PEDAGOGICAL AGENDA

The first and most important thing to do is to teach all children that Rromani is a real language, on a foot of equality with all other languages, and that linguistic and cultural diversity is an asset for the entire society, not only for bearers of languages at stake. The functions of languages in society (including the basilect-to-acrolect system) have also to be taught early (as early as the 4th or 5th grade) in a spirit of complementarities of, not

conflict between, languages. It is also important to teach that languages are living bodies in unceasing movement and evolution, and that a definitive standard cannot exist. Only flexible standards are efficient. Europe has to leave behind myths coined for political (often nationalist) purposes: the unity and uniformity of standard national languages, the denial of linguistic registers and misrepresentation of its actual uses among average speakers, the various stories circulating behind the term 'dialect', the purported incapacity of human societies to shape and mold their language, the confusion between standard, official, literary, written etc. language, appalling alarms about an alleged endangerment of present-day Rromani, unclear scientific notions on 'endangered languages', still fuzzy data on Rromani vernaculars and their speaking communities in both qualitative and quantitative terms (Serbia, diaspora and rest of the world) and so on. Pupils have to learn since the 1st grade through stories and games how to enjoy all emotional and intellectual aspects of languages, including the concept of 'untranslatable', with a special emphasis on spoken, not only written, language. Pupils will discover very early in schooling that 6,000 languages are identified world-wide, with very different status and some examples of their original visions of the world (especially those of their own regional area). They will also discover a few scripts and alphabets with their main principles (syllabic, morphemic, pictographic, with no vowels etc...). Later, at the secondary level, they have to understand what is primary and secondary standardization in both mainstream and Rromani languages, in a spirit of respect for their different varieties – and against contempt for rural forms. The concept of *endajolect* will also be introduced. This is an important factor of social integration.

In fact the question of safeguarding Rromani as a modern integrated European language through the life and vividness of its four dialects is closely related to all these issues and so is equally the question of how to teach it while reconciling communication efficiency with care for creation in vernacular forms – and encouragement to pupils to do so during all their schooling. All this requires only a few hours of discussion in the whole curriculum.

In terms of prestige, Rromani will be linked to India and Sanskrit, with a mention of the exodus (*Baro telāripen*) from Kannauj in 1018 and an explanation of the Sanskrit origin of the word Rrom, fem. Rromni, from डोम्ब [romba]¹³, fem. डोम्बनी [rombnī] 'drummer, musician, singer, dancer and actor – mainly for spiritual performances'; also डोम्बी 'artistic performance'). The pupils will also be informed of international events related to Rromani language: the 5th of November – a UNESCO date, the International Day of the Rromani Language, Exhibitions devoted to Rromani, as

¹³ The letter ड [d] was probably pronounced as a cerebral ढ [ɽ = ɽ = ɽɽ] long before the diacritical dot for was devised (Woolner 1928: 9).

in Strasbourg (2014) and New-Delhi (2016) and similar events. Clips with famous Rromani singers, actors and other performers from all over the world will be screened in classes with Rromani and non-Rromani pupils, leading to discussion and exchanges.

All these noble intentions would be totally vain, if there is no concomitant State campaign of promotion for reading and culture, carried out in order to create among oncoming generations hunger for intellectual life. Rromani is at risk of disappearing mainly due to the collapse of thinking as such among the young of social classes in which Rroms have been historically relegated. It is possible – even indispensable, to combat this trend, provided there is a real political will at the highest level.

10. INTERDIALECTAL TEACHING

We dispose today a series of educational tools allowing to make compatible a satisfactory efficiency in wording easily intelligible messages (encoding), not only within a domestic scope but also in formal registers, with a rich diversity of expression in Rromani mother tongue:

- a) the first tool is the polylectal ABC-book (see below) which provides in parallel a same text in both superdialects as shown on Fig. 19 (when there are differences – it is not always the case; note that differences between non-mutational and mutational dialects dwell mainly on pronunciation and they are not encoded as such in written, so two versions, not four, of a given text are sufficient as a rule to cover, through various pronunciations, all varieties);

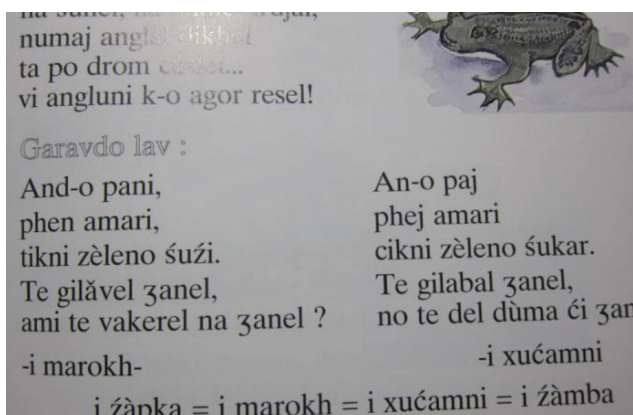


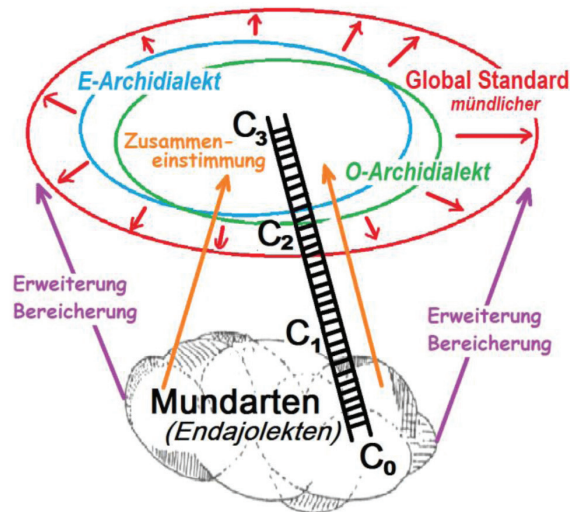
Fig. 19 – A page of a Rromani ABC-book, showing the parallel use of the two superdialects of Rromani in order to make the pupils aware of the dialectal diversity (but also proximity) of Rromani – which they usually experiment everyday without paying attention to it

- b) pupils using the ABC-book (primary school) are invited to draw their own *ad hoc* handwritten customized version of the ABC-book with the words (local borrowings) of their basilect, but always in common integrative script. A tale about the two faces of the €-currency to explain the functioning of phonology would be useful (see above);
- c) interactive exercises help reinforcing active use of the student's home endajolect and improving her/his passive understanding in other vernaculars; this is continued in higher classes, with the titles "My First Book of Sentences" and "The Road of Reading". In this latter book, all left pages are in O-superdialect and printed in green, while right pages are in E-superdialect and printed in blue; the texts slightly differ from one page to the other, but allow to grasp the commonality of both dialects (over 80%);
- d) in the case when local pronunciation has merged two different phonemes, or in the case of archi-graphemes, *ad hoc* exercises teach the right spelling, the one granting understanding by Rroms of a different back-ground;
- e) the use of *readalong* and *pop-up* technologies for literary texts online help teach idiosyncratic features of authors' vernaculars. These technologies have been extended to scientific, administrative or heavily dialectal texts by regionalist authors in order to make them accessible to all users. They have been developed by the Italian company Smallcodes and have no counterpart in other languages. They may be download from the online course of Rromani language, history, literature and civilization (www.red-rrom.com; password *r3drr0m*) leading to the level of Bachelor of Arts (university level – training of teachers)
- f) the use of voice taping of literary heritage and creation on handy telephones and tablets aims also at promoting them among youth. A similar undertaking covers music and scientific subjects etc... The anthology of Rromani female poetry, recently published in Belgium, displays QR codes near each poem, allowing its hearing when scanning the code (cf. bibl.).

11. HARMONISATION OF SCHOOL MATERIAL

These tools have been elaborated in the perspective of a pan-European harmonization of Rromani school material. This undertaking ought not be carried out separately within the frontiers of each member-State, while merging at random local vernaculars, but simultaneously all over Europe, while integrating each vernacular into one of the four dialects,

the one corresponding to the State's profile, and the two written standards, both written in the same spelling – namely the Warsaw common alphabet, with specific dialectal reading rules (cf. annex 1). This pyramid type progression in step by step discovering of other *endajolects* is materialized in term of teaching in the above mentioned online course (www.red-rrom.com), through the systematic use of cross-dialectal subtitles in the movies in order to train the ear to different native pronunciations: the student may change the dialect of the subtitles by a click on a dedicated button and the dialect of the sound track by a click on the button of the voice dubbing. Through combining the dialect of hearing and the dialect of the subtitles, the secondary school student gets used to the dialectal variation and learns how to understand all dialects while using actively his own or the one he has chosen at the beginning of the course. There is to date no counterpart in other languages.¹⁴



The point is to avoid a double trap: a common standard which would be uniform and without any variation, locked in a unique inflexible standard on the one hand (cf. annex 2), or a showroom with a series of separate languages, which fall into isolation and from isolation into death, on the other hand (cf. annex 3).

The process is the following: as observed in natural life, vernaculars (endajolects) are not separated from one another, they do not make up a 'mosaic' of separated speeches but are in contact among themselves with a

¹⁴ Cf. Courthiade 2015.

wide overlapping between them (most of the basic vocabulary is common to all). An acrolect, with two written standards – O and E, emerges from them through enrichment and widening of the resources (arrows on both sides of the diagram above). These two written varieties are uttered according to four fundamental pronunciation types (and locally much more, symbolized by the broad ellipse on the upper part of the diagram). For each act of speech, users select the most appropriate level on a scale going from their basilect up to the common acrolect: C_0 among their folks or in very emotional literature up to C_3 for informative texts – as journalism, reports, articles for encyclopedia etc... with all the intermediate stages.

As in all languages, experience through contacts, school and reading of literature enlarges the user's lexical stock and expressiveness, as featured in annex 4: Rroms outside Finland are astonished by the word *rikkarav tut*, just as *dexav tut* amazes Rroms outside Bulgaria (some of them understand *xav tut...*); however when both use the common word *kamav tut* (archaic variant *kamam tut*), they understand each other and in addition acquire a passive knowledge of the word used by the interlocutor or the author of the book they are reading.

CONCLUSION

In reality, the main obstacles to the affirmation of the Rromani language are not any more of technical-linguistic nature but they originate from erroneous outdated concepts instilled by mainstream school systems of most European States as well as gypsophobic rejection of the Rromani heritage as such. These concepts have been created and even promoted by the chauvinist stake-holders of the past and it is necessary to deconstruct and combat them, as harmful for the entire society, not only for Rroms. A specific education has to be designed for this purpose, in a wide action of glossodiversity and gnossodiversity valorization. In this perspective, Rromani educational tools – especially but not only R.E.D.-RRROM, represent a pioneering work, in terms of strategy and linguistic policy, in order to grant Rromani students an efficient implementation of the corresponding strategy. One of the main assets is that the Rromani view of the world and society is taken as the core of education – a step without which no inclusion of the Rroms could be complete, satisfactory or even possible. If implemented, this will lead to the real affirmation of Rromani language and culture in most spheres of modern life, keeping in mind the traditional *pativ* between Rroms, as mirrored in their long-established respect of other Rroms' *endajolects* – for the best of the entire European society.

It is our intention to develop further the didactic strategy at the school level, taking on account the specific needs of pupils who already

speak Rromani as a home language, and of those who have not benefited of an early exposition to Rromani as a mother tongue, as well as all the intermediate situations. Be it as it may, any further development would be vain until teachers understand and integrate the process of standardization from the pedagogical perspective and if political stake-holders impose the use of a foreign spelling, namely a spelling which has been devised on the basis of other languages, not in accordance to the Rromani phonological system and its polylectal functioning.

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Марсел Куртџаде

КОНСОЛИДАЦИЈА СТАНДАРДИЗАЦИЈЕ РОМСКОГ ЈЕЗИКА
– ПРОШЛОСТ, САДАШЊОСТ, БУДУЋНОСТ УЗ ПОШТОВАЊЕ
ДИЈАЛЕКАТСКОГ ДИВЕРЗИТЕТА И ОМОГУЋАВАЊЕ ЈЕДНОСТАВНЕ
КОМУНИКАЦИЈЕ
НА МАТЕРЊЕМ ЈЕЗИКУ ШИРОМ СВЕТА

Резиме

Прилог почиње разматрањем околности у којима се тренутно развија ромски језик, у поређењу са главним језицима у Европи. Даље се бави различитим стереотипима и објашњава ромску дијалектолошку структуру не само са аспекта баштине и као матерњег језика, већ и у светлу мерења међудијалекатске удаљености, доказане математичким методама. Тај процес води до јасног разјашњавања појма 'дијалекат'.

Објашњава се природно појављивање појмова заједничког, стандардног, књижевног, националног итд. језика (према различитим школама) као и данашња ситуација ромског језика, са фокусом на перспективе његовог даљег развоја ('принцип лептира') у друштвеном контексту: улога родитеља, породице, цркве, друштва, школе, медија и разних институција у кодификацији и нормализацији – такође са аспекта кочница у развоју.

Неки дидактички алати су представљени као инструменти који такође доприносе бољем разумевању кодификације и нормализације међу Ромима, што води до хармонизације различитих наречја у духу међусобног поштовања различитости. Такви су подухвати ипак бескорисни ако их не разумеју корисници и ако нису стварно укореењени у њиховој култури.

Наведени елементи доводе до проблема директне кодификације и њених веза са комуникацијом, нарочито модерном комуникацијом на друштвеним мрежама и разним академским нивоима – зато што је њена крајња сврха да Ромима пружи широко распрострањен модеран језик способан да изрази све нијансе људског мишљења. Презентација се завршава примерима неких добрих пракси у Румунији и бившој Југославији – имајући у виду да је негирање или уништавање једног језика само један елемент у ширем механизму етничких предрасуда против народа који датим језиком говори.

Кључне речи: ромски језик, стандардизација, дијалекатски диверзитет

Annex 1: Decision: "The Rromani alphabet"

Warsaw, 07 of IV 1990

The Commission for the Standardization of the Rromani Language gathered in Warsaw on the 5th and 6th of April 1990 under the patronage of UNESCO and took the following decisions:

1. written Rromani is one language with minor variations, and Rroms read it with flexibility, each according to the pronunciation of his/her own dialect;
2. the Rromani alphabet is specific and based upon the Latin script with some small modifications and we are not supposed to use the alphabet of any other language;
3. one grapheme or diacritic may fulfill only one function;
4. in the standard language, there are 5 (five) vowels: **a e i o u**; some of them are in lexical variations but this phenomenon does not pertain to phonetics or phonemics;
5. in the standard language there are no centralized vowels; such may be encountered only in texts with dialectal character. They are then indicated by two dots " (**ä** as Romanian **â** [or **î**], Russian **ы**, Polish **y**, Turkish **ı** etc.), **ë** as Romanian **ă**, Albanian **ë**, Bulgarian **ь** etc.) and **ö** and **ü** as in the Germanic languages [or in Hungarian]);
6. constricted vowels are not accepted in the standard language;
7. there are no diphthongs with [w] in the standard language;
8. 8. preytisation is indicated by means of the 'ćiriklo': **ˇ** (*inflex* or *caron*);
9. there are no other vowels;
10. there is only one **l** in Rromani language and it has two variants according to its position;
11. one distinguishes between **h** (laryngeal) and **x** (velar);
12. dorsal stops **g**, **k** and **kh** are spelled after the ProtoRromani system and everyone reads them according to his/her own dialect (palatalized or not);
13. aspirated consonants are indicated by means of the grapheme **h**: **ph**, **th** etc.;
14. there is a tendency to keep the opposition between two **r**'s: one simple and one not (pronounced as retroflex, nasal, etc.) in all the dialects where this opposition does exist. In these dialects it is spelled **rr**;

15. the principle of postpositions is retained; they indicate the sandhis I, II and III and are characteristic for neo-Indic languages. Their first graphem (archigraphem) is **q**, **ç** and **θ** (instead of **8**, which has been rejected from standard spelling);
16. the spirants are written **c**, **ć**, **čh** (or **ch**), **s**, **ś**, **z**, **ź** and **ż** (or **z**);
17. the symbol \sqsupset [dz] is rejected since it has no phonemic value;
18. the spirants (affricates) **čh** and **ż** (**z**) are pronounced resp. [tʃh] and [dʒ] in the dialects I and II and smooth [ç] and [ʒ] in the dialect III. The neutral-ization between [f] and [ɸ] and between [ʒ] and [z] is not accepted in the standard language;
19. the stress is generally final (oxytonic). Where it is not final, its place is indicated by means of the grave accent (**à**, **è** etc.);
20. there are no short and long vowels in opposition. All are medium;
21. when there are two possible constructions (one analytic and the other one synthetic) the synthetic one is preferred.

Warsaw (Jadwisin-Serock) 07. IV. 1990 — signed by S. Balić, R. Djurić, G. Demeter, Š. Jusuf, M. Heinschink, A. Lewkovicz, I. Danka, R. Gsell, L. Manuś, A. Jòši, I. Šabàni, S.-K. Thakkar, M. Courthiade, I. Hancock, A. Daróczi, T. Poboźniak, L. Čerenkov and V. Koptilov (UNESCO special representative).

Annex 2: “As a common standard, we do not want a language with no variation and uniform, locked within one single pattern and stop.”



“Sar khetano standardi, amen na kamas jekh ĉhib bi variacienqo ta uniformo, phandini anda jekh jekhutno modelo ta stop. Pe aver rig, na kamas ni jekh vitrina bute ulavde ĉhibenqiri, save peren and-i izolacia thaj kotar-i izolacia and-o meripe...”

Annex 3: “On the other hand, we do not want a showcase of many separate languages, which fall into isolation and from isolation into death.”



Annex 4: Common Rromani vocabulary *versus* regional lexemes

