

S U M M A R Y *

1. BACKGROUND

Most of the minority communities in Hungary today undergo language shift: different phases of a process ending in the monolingualism of Hungarian language. In everyday, political or scientific discourse and in the institutionalized practice of scientific policy as well, linguistic processes are often characterized by the approach, which - in contrast to the processes in Hungarian communities of the Carpathian basin - consider the linguistic assimilation of minorities in Hungary a natural phenomenon accompanying socio-economic changes. This duality in approaches appears just as spectacularly in the internal categorization of Hungarian minorities. The terminological distinction itself: *national* and *ethnic minority* refers to this duality.

An indication of the latter (*ethnic minority*), the largest linguistic-ethnic minority in Hungary is represented by the Romani, Boyash and Hungarian speaking communities, collectively referred to as *Gypsies/Roma*. Issues about these communities are mostly considered social problems and have been present in scientific and everyday discourse for a long time. Research on Gypsies itself has a history of more than a hundred years. Still, the communities themselves received a status - theoretically - equivalent to the status of the other national minorities only as late as in 1993, when the *LXXVII. law on the rights of national and ethnic minorities* was passed.

In political and social-scientific discourse about the *Gypsies*, the role of the linguistic aspect (language maintenance, language development, mother-tongue education, language rights, etc.) is still marginal. It is even more surprising and worrying from a linguistic human rights point of view how often the negligence of the language issue is explained with arguments underlining the "evanescent number" of native speakers of the given minority group. Despite international criticism there are still different social and political practices prevailing about whether Roma issues are to be regarded as social or ethnic-cultural-linguistic questions.

Apart from the early dialectological and descriptive grammatical studies with often controversial or refuted notions (Hutterer and Mészáros 1967; Erdős in Vekerdí ed. 1989; Vekerdí and Mészáros 1974) there is still no comprehensive monograph or course-book in higher education about linguistic researches of the languages of Roma and Boyash communities in Hungary and the Carpathian basin. Although in the past few years more and more anthropological, sociological, pedagogical, etc. work have appeared in the context of Roma and Boyash folklore and education, the collection of essays *Romology - Gypsy Studies* edited by Katalin R. Forray (Dialog Campus, Pécs, 2000.) is perhaps the first work to devote a separate chapter, the one by Andrea

* If we consider the internal self-identification of the ethnically and linguistically heterogeneous groups known as "Gypsies" in Hungary, we can see that mainly the Romani speakers use the ethnonym "Roma" and linguonym "Romani" as their self-identification, whereas neither the native Hungarian-speaking Gypsies nor the Boyash speakers identify themselves by these terms when speaking in their mother tongue. Therefore we differentiate between native Romani, native Boyash and native Hungarian speakers. We will use the term "Gypsy" in certain contexts, when a) we refer to non-Romani speaking group(s); b) when we want to include the whole Gypsy group living in Hungary, not only the Roma or the Boyash; c) in quotations when this term is used in the original text.

Szalai, to basic linguistic facts and theories.

Reasoning about the languages of Roma communities (as well as research and publishing) before the change of the political system was greatly determined by the work of József Vekerdi, the "major ideologist of the Gypsy issue". His viewpoint is linguistically unsustainable and rejectable. It claims that the vocabulary of the Romani language is extremely poor, insufficient to seize cultural-social reality. Moreover, he also claims that cognitive skills of speakers of this restricted language becomes inferior and restricted too (see criticism in Réger 1988, 1995; Kovalcsik 1993; Rostás és Karsai 1991; Tálos 1997). However, due to the pioneering scientific work of Zita Réger, considerable and internationally relevant Romani linguistic research has been going on since the 1970es.

One of the most relevant of these works is *Ways to Language*, monograph by Zita Réger (Akadémiai Publishing House, Budapest, 1990), based on her own research results, as well as on international psycholinguistic and ethnographic literature on language socialization. In this work she emphasizes that: 1) there are other language socialization patterns just as efficient as the child centered model normative in Europe; 2) if education and society does not take notice of these differences and regards the different socialization and language use patterns as deficiency, on a longer perspective it might become a major social disadvantage.

With the death of Zita Réger many felt some halt in Romani linguistic research whereas different studies were conducted by several researchers individually, independently from each other in a rather disorganized way.

A research group on the languages of Gypsy communities was formed in the autumn of 2002 in the Research Institute for Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Among its many objectives the primary ones are 1) to continue research on Boyash and Romani languages using the theoretical and methodological apparatus of different linguistic paradigms; 2) to start applied researches that can directly be incorporated in education, governmental work and that contribute to the social integration as well as to the strengthening of identity of these communities; 3) to coordinate research projects and to set out new research directions. Due to the work of this group new, coordinated researches have been initiated besides individual studies. A conference was organized with the title *Gypsy communities and their languages in the Carpathian basin* in cooperation with the Research Institute for National and Ethnic Minorities at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 2003. In the linguistic sections of the conference new sociolinguistic, anthropological linguistic, ethnographic, language policy and educational approaches could be introduced for the first time based on the collected research material. The positive response on our work from researchers, students and teachers working in general education - confirmed that there is a strong need for more comprehensive work introducing Boyash and Romani languages spoken in Hungary and in communities in connection with the Hungarian communities of the Carpathian basin, discussing the state of these languages, the language use of their speakers, their linguistic needs on a truly scientific standard, but at the same time in a form easy to understand for a wider professional audience too.

2. ABOUT THE CONTENT OF THE VOLUME

In our volume we wish to offer different perspectives for the introduction of the extremely complex situation of Gypsy population in Hungary, which is linguistically divided into at least three, completely separate major groups. One of these groups

consists of Hungarian monolingual speakers, the other two groups use Romani and Boyash in their everyday communication, two languages that consist of different dialects and that are mutually not intelligible for each other.

We need to emphasize that most of the speakers of Gypsy (Romani or Boyash) languages as their first language are bilingual nowadays. The most populous in number monolingual Roma community in Hungary is just as diverse linguistically as in their social identity. We considered it important to present the relation of language, society and culture in its virtual and disciplinary complexity. The three studies on researches outside Hungary wish to geographically widen the context in which issues concerning Romani and Boyash languages and speech communities are interpreted in Eastern Europe.

Since the Gypsy minority is extremely diverse linguistically, dialectally, geographically, socially, economically and religiously alike (the diversity might be present even within a single settlement) and because there are no even approximate data on the proportion of Romani-Hungarian and Boyash-Hungarian bilingual speakers among those claiming Hungarian as their mother tongue, we consider it essential to introduce the processes going on in local communities too, beyond conveying a more general knowledge on Romani and Boyash linguistics.

The linguistic issues presented in the volume are grouped around some major topics represented mainly by essays not having been published yet. Some studies of major importance that have been hardly accessible for the readers so far (they were published in foreign periodicals or Hungarian publications with a very limited number of copies accessible only for a small professional audience) have also been included. Since it is not possible to introduce each essay in a detailed way, after a brief introduction of authors, titles and themes we are going to focus on works that outline the general concept of selecting the essays into the volume.

In the three essays of the chapter *Gypsy communities and their languages in Hungary* readers get a detailed sociolinguistic characterization, a description of the social, regional and functional diversity of the languages of the Gypsy communities in Hungary. The opening study of the chapter, as well as of the volume itself, is the comprehensive work of **Andrea Szalai: *Gypsy minority and linguistic diversity***, focusing on the linguistic diversity of communities speaking Romani language and on some aspects of the diversity of Romani. Romani is a significant minority language in Europe both regarding the number of its speakers and its geographical distribution. Most of the bilingual Roma communities speak a variant of this language besides the surrounding languages. The first part of the study is a brief review on the sociolinguistic situation of the Romani as a minority language. Great emphasis is put on some characteristics of the language and language use, the formation of which is greatly influenced by the peculiarities of minority situation. The author pays attention to some theoretical problems concerning the overgeneralization of the bilingualism with diglossia model frequently applied in the description of Romani-paired bilingualism. She argues for an approach more dynamic and more sensitive to the social and stylistic variability of Romani language and language use. The third part of this chapter gives an overview of the latest international results of Romani linguistic research, based on their approach to the different aspects of linguistic diversity. Researches so far have primarily been studying dialectal diversity of Romani language. The chapter introduces the approach offered by research results describing dialectal diversity in the last one and a half decades. It briefly outlines the theory, which explains the formation of present-day Romani dialects with geographical

diffusion of language change, then enumerates the linguistic variables considered most important in describing the interdialectal differences and the isoglosses representing the geographical distributional patterns of their variants.

The second part of the study focuses on linguistic diversity of the Gypsy minority in Hungary and the Romani varieties in Hungary. When examining the linguistic representation of linguistic and ethnic diversity, the author pays special attention to statistics and the questions of using ethnonyms and linguonyms and the questions of linguistic and ethnic classification (e.g. ethnonyms and linguonyms). She gives a critical analysis of the linguistic and ethnic categorization used in Hungarian statistical discourse and points out some problems of the homogenizing, essentializing view of linguistic and ethnicity: linguistic and ethnicity approach. Finally -using her own field-work experiences - the author draws attention to the limitations of dialectological researches connected to field-work methods and argues for the necessity of linguistic field-work using anthropological methods, for the examination of linguistic practices in social context.

The essay of Boyash linguist *Anna Orsós* (*The Boyash language in Hungary*) gives a general overview of the Boyash, the other language spoken by a Gypsy ethnic group of Hungary. The Boyash represent the smallest group of the Gypsy population in Hungary, they are only about 40-50 000 in number and mainly live in southern Transdanubia. The history of their origin is less known than the history of the Hungarian-speaking Roma or the Romani-speaking groups. Out of their three dialects (*Ardjelan*, *Muncan*, *Tican*) *Ardjelan* is the most widespread, a Romanian dialect of Banat from the period before standardization. It keeps its archaic dialectal character even today when they are in nearly complete isolation from the standard variant of the Romanian language. The *Ardjelan* use this dialect in Somogy, Tolna, Zala, Baranya counties. *Muncan* dialect is spoken in southern Transdanubia, in and around Alsószentmárton. Similarly to *Tican*, the third Boyash dialect group in Eastern Hungary, *Muncan* takes a lot more from modern Romanian language. The vocabulary of the two dialects of southern Transdanubia is nearly the same, the *Ardjelan* and the *Muncan* understand each other easily. Besides the linguistic characterization, the essay mentions the steps of standardization and maintenance of Boyash but the chances for that are described in a subsequent chapter within the frames of the results of a particular sociolinguistic research.

The central notion of the study of *Endre P. Tálos: Borrowing phonological rules in Romani language* is the bi- and multilingualism of Romani speakers. It naturally results in the fact that the Romani language is consequently influenced by the surrounding languages, similarly to other contact patterns. The author underlines both the unity of the European Romani language and its diversity resulting from the co-existence with particular European languages. In the second part of the study we can find examples for the borrowing of phonological rules by Romani speakers from English and Finnish as well as contact situations with the Latvian language. The study provides important data for both areal and contact linguistics.

The title of the second chapter of the volume is *Language socialization, linguistic disadvantage and education*. It is more than obvious today that the social integration (or the lack of it) of Gypsy communities is greatly determined by education. First Zita Réger and her research, then a number of studies of her followers drew attention to the fact that most of the learning difficulties of Roma children have a linguistic origin and this linguistic disadvantage transposed to other areas results in complete social disadvantage. In fact the collected research material indicates that most of the reasons

of (linguistic) difficulties in school lie in differences of linguistic socialization. If socialization patterns of the home are not supported-what is more, are rejected-by the school, the difference turns into deficiency. By getting into school many children face tension between the linguistic reality experienced at home, local group norms and the linguistic expectations (also) conveyed by the school. Zita Réger's researches reveal that " the linguistic disadvantage of Roma children mostly originates in the fact that their connection with the written language is usually missing from the linguistic pattern learnt at home. [...] At the same time, the peculiar ways of language use a child brought up in traditional Roma culture is taught by their native community, are completely irrelevant in school context. (Our experiences show that cultural-linguistic knowledge of children in families with traditional, Romani-medium oral culture is completely unknown for the school - and school is completely uninterested.) (Réger 2001: 89; 1974; 1978)". All that is often regarded by school and teachers as lack of ability, as deficiency instead of difference and systematic linguistic and differences in language use due to cultural, socializational (as well as regional, social and economical) differences are instantly stigmatized.

Zita Réger raised these problems in many of her works. Still, the study that details them most has so far been hardly accessible for the general public. Thus, we have decided to re-publish the study *Language socialization and linguistic practices in Romani speech communities in Hungary* written in 1987 as the introductory essay of the chapter on education in our volume.

The study of *Katalin R. Forray* entitled *Conflicts of the school and the Gypsy family* gives real content to the notion of 'alternative' family socialization, looking for answers to the question why children from Gypsy families are not successful in school even if the family is in good financial state. The problem of poor school achievement is approached in a complex way, from the expectations, values and objectives of the school on the one hand, and from the role Gypsy families attribute to school, the interpretation of school concept in these families on the other. The author convincingly proves that in order to successfully fight against ethnic conflicts and to help Roma children become more achieving in school, favorable changes in their social status are not sufficient in themselves. Increase in tolerance towards different cultures, increase in knowledge about the lifestyle of the different Gypsy communities and about their expectations towards schooling is just as important.

Questions of linguistic human rights and language planning are strongly connected to education. Debates are going on up to the present days all over Europe about the problems of exercising rights of the Roma communities. The three essays of the chapter: *Language rights: from linguisticism to pluralism* discuss the issues of linguistic rights, language policy and language planning concerning Romani and Boyash languages.

The Hungarian publication of the study of *Yaron Matras: The future of Romani: towards the policy of linguistic pluralism*, originally published in English, is of special importance. The overview it gives of the steps necessary in Romani language planning is embedded in a European context, with an analysis by countries (Hungary appears in the analysis too). It points at the seemingly forcing power of linguistic rights instruments and the barriers of the de facto situation. Within this frame, the steps necessary for the success of standardization, for the strengthening of Romani language and the realization of an effective linguistic pluralism are also enlisted. The study puts light on the fact that our neighboring countries face similar problems and one of the most renowned international researchers of Romani language offers important

solutions too.

Miklós Kontra has devoted a number of studies to the question of linguistic discrimination of the Roma in education. In his study *Our Gypsies, their languages and their rights*, he paints a critical but realistic picture of the language policy situation in Hungary. The author underlines that although a number of publications on language policy and linguistic rights came out in the past decade in Hungary, their influence on Hungarian language policy is still small, or, rather they have influence limited, as the Republic of Hungary does not seem to have any principled, systematic and explicit language policy. Existing language policy acts, laws and measures are not completely harmonized: one law or regulation often discredits or even extinguishes the effect of the other. The study illustrates the rather chaotic situation - mostly impairing the Roma and Boyash- through the discrimination based on the medium of instruction. Three types of such discrimination appear: (1) restriction of the use of minority languages in education based on students' age or school subject (some subjects are taught in the minority language, others are not), (2) language-based discrimination (some minority languages are allowed to be used as media of instruction but others are not), and (3) only a part of the minority pupils can participate in minority education because of obfuscation of who is entitled to participate. This method of disenfranchisement is often realized in such a way that the state or the majority society "homogenizes" a heterogeneous minority.

The work of *Katalin R. Forray: Language policy - The state of education of Gypsy (Romani and Boyash) languages* introduces the characteristics and the general legal frame of national and ethnic minorities in Hungary. She then faces the legal background of Roma community education with the real situation from general education through special education and teacher training to language exams. After listing the most striking tendencies and problems of Romani- and Boyash-speaking communities in recent years, the author also offers some possible solutions.

There are three essays in the next - anthropological linguistic-interactional - chapter of the volume entitled *Ways of speaking, cultural representations, language ideologies*. The essays represent the micro-analyses, which help understand the different language ideologies of Gypsy communities and their peculiar interaction norms. By introducing them as values, free of prejudice they contribute to a more realistic and dynamic interpretation of the content of "Roma culture/s", to the breakdown of communication barriers between Roma and non-Roma mainly in schools. The volume - similarly to real life - draws no line at the state frontier: one of the three studies presents the research results of a Gypsy (Rudar) community in Romania.

It is the first time one of the last works of *Zita Réger* is accessible in Hungarian. The study entitled *Teasing* is a remarkable part of the interactional sociolinguistic paradigm having a long international history, but less known in Hungary. Teasing can be an important culture-specific way of language socialization in different linguistic and social groups. The study examines the different structural and pragmatic characteristics of teasing of young children in a traditional Romani-speaking community in Hungary. Teasing in caretakers' speech directed to babies and toddlers from the earliest age turned out to be a widespread phenomenon in Roma communities. The study examines the culturally specific characteristics of early teasing and the formation of patterns by age. Our knowledge about the linguistic socialization of Roma children is further refined by the fact that this communication skill is recognized by Roma children at a very early age and they use some of the specific "contextualization cues" lying under the surface and necessary to the teasing

intention.

The study of **Katalin Kovalcsik: *Symbolic culture-representations in an Oltenian Rudar community*** examines traditional discourses of identity and culture, the representational elements of narrative identity and connected language ideologies in a Romanian speaking community living in Oltenia. The community is considered Gypsy by their surroundings. In the second part of the study the author introduces two important elements of cultural identity of the group: the occupation and the *gurbane*, originally a healing sacrifice turning gradually into a family celebration accompanied by lamb sacrifice. The study ends with the interpretation of the conflicting relation of traditional Rudar cultural ideologies and the values represented by the new Pentecostal community. Besides photographic illustrations music is attached to illustrate the artistic representation of Rudar culture.

The most populous group of the Gypsy population in Hungary is represented by the now Hungarian monolingual speakers. For a long time no research was conducted about the vernacular variants of these monolingual for generations communities about their rules of language use and about their speech patterns. Systematic examination of the question is still missing. How do these Hungarian monolingual Gypsy communities and their non-Gypsy surroundings and its institutions relate to these Hungarian language discourses, what ideologies and attitudes do they have towards them? What characterizes their everyday interactions? In what discursive practices is 'Gypsy' as difference constructed in situations when people represent themselves as Gypsies? Answers to these questions are given in the study of **Kata Horváth: *"What do you pack yourself?: "The discursive construction of 'Gypsiness' as difference in everyday interactions.*** The author is the first in Hungary to open up the many-sided linguistic practice of a Hungarian-speaking Roma community - as an infiltrating participating observant. The author analyzes details of real discourse from different pragmatic -socio-linguistic approaches, partly as linguistic practices and partly as power functions in the Foucaultian interpretation. It is important to underline that the study does not aim to collect language use features characteristic to the Gypsies, Gypsy communities and Gypsy culture(s) in general, just the opposite: she is far from intending to contribute to the reproduction of this difference-based approach to these cultures from a linguistic side. She intends to trace how "discursive practices creating Gypsies in certain situations work".

The last chapter of our volume is entitled *Language maintenance or language shift? - Sociolinguistic researches in Roma and Boyash communities*. What are the chances of language maintenance and revitalization in the case of Romani and Boyash? What language policy and language planning decisions are necessary to achieve them? These questions require sophisticated answers. Large-scale national, representative surveys

or native language census data linguistically doubted by sociolinguists working with linguistic minorities do not seem to be sufficient. Researches systematically unveiling the way and extent of linguistic assimilation of a certain traditional Roma community with sociolinguistic methods are still missing in Hungary. The study by **Csilla Bartha: *Language maintenance and language shift in two Vlach Roma communities in Hungary*** interprets the process of language shift. She gives a summary of the major results of the first sociolinguistic language shift research in two villages in Szabolcs-Szatmár county and tries to answer the following questions: (1) To what extent can Romani-speaking communities maintain their ethno-cultural characteristics in relatively closed (settlement) and not closed communities? 2) Which

are the factors strengthening language shift and which are the ones strengthening language maintenance? 3) What is the extent of language shift in certain communities and what are the conclusions deriving from it?

The study of *Anna Orsós: The possibilities of the maintenance of the Boyash language* presents the results of a complex sociolinguistic research about the language use of a Boyash community in Hungary (Mánfa). Besides examining the reasons for decrease in the use of Boyash language and other reasons of language shift, the author discusses options for maintaining ethnicity and ethnic identity as well as the necessary steps in education and language policy planning indispensable for the emancipation of the language.

The study of *Tibor M. Pintér - József Menyhárt: Languages of Malomhely and their future chances* also focuses on a Roma community outside Hungary. The essay introduces the language use of the Roma population of a Hungarian majority settlement in Slovakia. The topic is extremely important, since we often experience tri-lingualism in the Roma communities living in contact situations in a multiple minority position. The results of the sociolinguistic bilingualism research conducted between 2002 and 2004 show the role of Romani, Hungarian and Slovakian languages in the life of a closed community living within a Hungarian community in Slovakia. Even in the diglossic pattern, Romani has a primary role, Hungarian, however, is more and more popular among the young. Speakers are less forced to use Slovakian actively, even if communication in Slovakian is sometimes unavoidable. Communication in Slovakian is realized with the help of the three people speaking Slovakian; without them linguistic conflicts are frequent.

The study mentions the domains the particular languages are used. It also shows the possibilities and levels of the command of particular languages. Besides the description of language use the analysis gives an overview on the educational situation and sociological background of the community too.

Our volume is the result of a selection procedure and due to lack of space it cannot give a complete representation of all the researches on languages spoken in different, Roma and non-Roma Gypsy communities conducted in the past few years. In order to forward further research of university students and lecturers as well as researchers two bibliographies are attached at the end of the volume.

The first bibliography is a selected literature on Romani and Boyash languages in Hungary, containing the complete bibliography of the work of Zita Réger, including a recommended list of dictionaries and fiction written in the languages in question. The second part of the attachment is selected for those intending to study the international professional literature of the questions raised and discussed in the volume: it is a selected international bibliography completed with Internet sites of the free-access studies on the web.

As the editor of the volume I would like to express my thanks to a number of colleagues. First and foremost to Zita Réger, who was always willing to helpfully share with me her research experiences and professional dilemmas during our long conversations, this way making me more sensitive towards the problems of linguistic disadvantage and minority position. She provided me with advice in the Research Institute for Linguistics through many years. Many of us feel that the space her death left behind is impossible to fill.

Thanks are due to the authors for their cooperation. Some of them have agreed to include their already published studies in the present volume, others have offered their new studies in order to present the languages of Gypsy communities in an inter- and

multi-disciplinary frame.

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