

1 The Roma of Burgenland

The Roma residing in present Burgenland, which is the farthest eastern Austrian federal state bordering on Hungary, belong to the group whose members are called *Ungrian Roma*, *Ungrika-Roma* and *Romungri* in the older literature.¹ These Roma living in the west of the region of Hungarian influence ranging from southern Slovakia to northern Slovenia are characterized by their long-term settlement and thus by the strong influence of Hungarian culture on their own.

Primarily but not only due to linguistic criteria, within these »Hungarian Roma« the so-called »Vend-group« can be distinguished. It consists of three subgroups who settle in the region where the three countries of Austria-Slovenia-Hungary meet: these are the southwest Hungarian »Vend-Gypsies« (Vekerdi 1984), the Roma living in northern Slovenian Prekmurje (see Štrukelj 1980), and the Roma of Burgenland.²

1.1 History

At the end of the 14th century, Roma are first mentioned in western Hungary, to which present Burgenland belonged at that time. Starting at the beginning of the 15th century, larger Roma groups begin to enter the western Hungarian Pannonic border area, among them predecessors of today's Roma of Burgenland. At the beginning, they are tolerated and to some degree even supported by some Hungarian nobility. This was most likely the case because the Roma did active service in the war as soldiers or blacksmiths. These conditions led to the first settlements: in the second half of the 17th century, there are documentary proofs of the founding of villages under Christoph Batthyány. In contrast to the liberal Batthyány, who controlled southern Burgenland, the Esterházy from northern Burgenland expelled the Roma from the area of their power; this is a contrast that shows the situation of the Roma at that time as situated between acceptance and discrimination.

After the end of the Ottomanic Reign in Hungary in 1688, the situation of the Roma living in western Hungary changes: it is laid down that they be banned from the country; in case of disobedience, they are to be executed. Another negative turning point for the Roma is the reign of Charles VI (1711–1740). He outlaws them and thus simultaneously with the cultural highlight of the Baroque sets off the so-called „gypsy hunts.“ In the second half of the 18th century, the Roma are affected by the inhuman program of assimilation launched by the successors of Charles VI, Maria Theresa and Joseph II: the leading of nomadic lives and the use of their language is prohibited, the Roma are forced to *marry interracially*, the children are taken from their families and educated in farming families, etc.

After Joseph II, these prescriptions are followed less rigidly. However, discrimination and persecution of the Roma in no way end. The Roma live at the edge of society in so-called „gypsy houses“ situated at the outskirts of town, practicing mobile

1 It needs to be noted that the term *Romungri*, which is frequently used by other groups for the Roma that have been living for a long period of time in the region of Hungarian influence, has pejorative connotations.

2 The unity of the Roma of Burgenland and the Prekmurski-Roma is exemplified among other things by their partly identical family names: *Horvath*, *Baranyai*, *Sarközi* in Burgenland as opposed to *Horvat*, *Baranja*, *Šarkezi* in Slovenia. These names are at the same time definitions of origin: *Baranja* and *Sárköz* are definitions for two areas at the Hungarian western bank of the Danube. Furthermore, the Roma of Burgenland have among others, the family names of *Papai* and *Nardai*, which can be traced back to the two western Hungarian locations of *Papa* and *Narda*. The most common family name among the Roma of Burgenland, by the way, is *Horvath* (with its diverse varieties of writing). It is also very common for the non-Roma population of eastern Austria.

jobs such as basket weaving and forging; they work as knife-grinders, broom- and brush-makers, etc. Otherwise they are professional musicians or do agrarian seasonal work.

In the five-ethnicities-region of western Hungary (German speakers, Hungarians, Croats, Roma, and until the time of national socialism also Jews), the Roma are at the very bottom of the scale of ethnic value. This, by the way, is still true today. Of the about 7.000 to 8.000 Roma of Burgenland before 1938, who are already discriminated against by the authorities of the First Republic in the inter-war period (»gypsy-survey«), only few survive the time of nationalism. Here, a »Commemorative writing by the prime minister of Burgenland PG Dr. Portschy« from August 1938 plays an important role. According to this commemoration, the Roma of Burgenland are considered half-breeds by the nazis, a fact which at the time of an ideology of the »sick« race and of purity in a negative sense meant more than merely being »gypsies.« It is primarily the grandparent generation of the time, that is that group within each minority which carries and passes on the culture, which falls prey to the genocide of the nazis' machinery of extinction.³

The few survivors – in entire Burgenland there are only a few hundred – are faced with absolute ruin after their liberation: settlements have been destroyed, the little property once owned is lost. Still more problematic than this material loss is, however, the social structure ruined by genocide, along with the fact that the end of the war in no way means an end of stigmatization and discrimination. The survivors are hardly supported at all; often, they are even denied the compensations granted to other victims of the concentration camps. Moreover, Roma today are still confronted with the cynical question more and more frequently heard at pubs of why they got away.

Without any support and security in the functioning larger group, which until the inter-war period had made stigmatization and discrimination more bearable, or rather, more possible to digest psychologically, only very few of the survivors manage to digest the traumatic experiences suffered in the extermination camps, the treatment by non-Roma, as well as the ignorance of the authorities. Many no longer want to be »gypsies« and thus »inferior.« The symptoms resulting from this more or less »self-enforced assimilation« are denial of the language, changing of names, a tendency to marry interracially, and migration to the anonymity of the cities of eastern Austria. Those who stay in Burgenland, however, by no means dissolve into the majority population: for most of them, their status changes from »ethnic minority« to »social minority«, with all the negative components remaining intact due to their exclusion.

The first real possibility to break out of their social isolation presents itself to the Roma of Burgenland during the economic boom of the 60ies and 70ies. For those who at that time manage to participate in the society of prosperity and achieve to climb socially, there is also an increase of self-esteem: being Rom no longer means nothing but poverty and hopelessness.

1.2 Present Situation

Today, the Roma of Burgenland estimate their share in the Austrian total population between 2.500 bis 5000. Larger settlements are found in the *Wart* (= Oberwart and

³ On the fate of the Austrian Roma during the time of national socialism see among others Steinmetz (1966) und Thurner (1983); on the history of the Roma of Burgenland consult among others Mayerhofer (1987).

surrounding communities), some Roma or Roma families live in middle and northern areas of Burgenland or, as mentioned before, have settled in cities of eastern Austria. Primarily due to their individual social situations, three subgroups can be distinguished:

- those who have assimilated, who no longer consider themselves Roma or have dissolved into the majority population, who are thus not part of the estimation mentioned above, and who today mostly live in the cities of eastern Austria,
- those who have become emancipated to some degree, who openly accept their ethnic identity, who live fairly well and to some extent live with the majority population, and
- those who still live as a stigmatized and discriminated (social) minority on the »edge« of society, in both senses of the word.

The »gypsy houses« on the outskirts of villages and towns still exist today. Not only the Roma settlement near Oberwart, the economic center of southern Burgenland, due to its location seems like a ghetto on the edge of the town. When looking for jobs or dealing with authorities, Roma still are discriminated against, and prejudices are as strong as ever.⁴ The majority population knows the names of the Roma families. Where there are doubts, the Roma are bluntly asked whether they are »gypsies,« and if they confirm this assumption, most often their petitions are refused or treated unwillingly. This happens for example, when Roma are looking for apartments, when they apply for jobs or apprenticeships or for permissions of all kinds. Violations of the rights of the individual are not rare; sometimes young Roma are banned from pubs. Such a ban, to be more precise, such a prohibition pronounced on young Roma to enter a discotheque in 1989 was what caused the foundation of the Roma Association in Oberwart. Within a short amount of time, this led to the founding of a publicly financed *Counselling Center for Roma*.⁵ Since its foundation, this counselling center has developed into a refuge, primarily for the members of the ethnic group living in the district of Oberwart. It meanwhile has great, if unspectacular, achievements to show for itself, such as a supervised study group for Roma children of school age, work training for young Roma, and the possibility of support and advice concerning work place and training. The center moreover has successfully resolved a variety of other social problems.

Due to the political, cultural and social activities both of the association *Roma* in Oberwart and the *Cultural Association of Austrian Roma* located in Vienna, self-esteem has increased within the group itself. Although decades late, the official recognition of the Roma as an Austrian ethnic group in December of 1993 has a certain share in this positive development.

4 It is to be hoped for that after the bomb attack of February 4th of 1995, which claimed for deaths on the part of the Roma, a change of attitude has come about and that the initial general consternation within the Austrian public finally leads to a serious way of dealing with the problems not only of the Roma of Burgenland, but of all Roma living in Austria, who are thus Austrians.

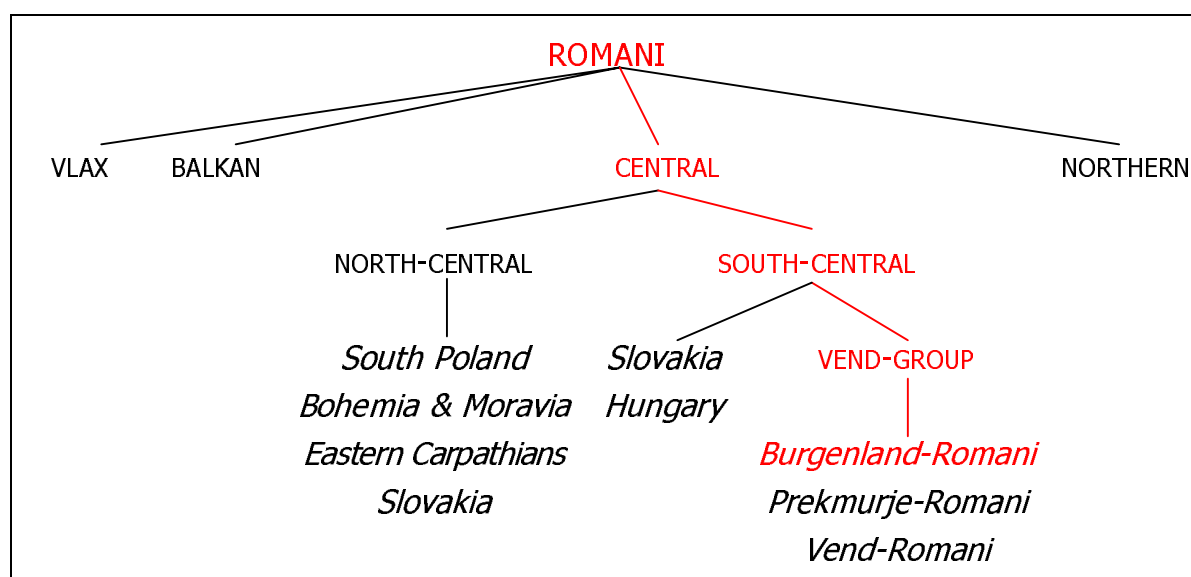
5 The background of the self-organization and the resulting activities is a study of minorities: in 1987, the Austrian president asked for a confrontation of the Roma's situation. On occasion of the commemoral year under the motto »50 years later – 1938-1988,« a study titled »Registration of the living conditions of the gypsies and Jews of Burgenland with respect to needed social, cultural and other supportive projects« is carried out.

2 Burgenland-Romani / *Roman*

The great majority of the Roma of Burgenland-Roma calls »their language« *Roman*; this is a proper name which resulted from the phonological reduction of final syllables for highly frequent adjectives and adverbs in Burgenland-Romani. Another result of this reduction is the term for the language of the majority population – *gadschikan*. Both *roman(e)* and *gadschikan(e)* are to be classified as modal adverbs in the following examples, while *roman* and *gadschikan* function as nouns:

<i>Amen roman(e) vakeras.</i>	'We speak »Roma«/Roman.'
<i>Amaro vakeripe roman hi.</i>	'Our language is Roman.'
<i>Tumen gadschikan(e) vakeren.</i>	'You speak »not-Roma«/German.'
<i>Tumaro vakeripe gadschikan hi.</i>	'Your language is German.'

Burgenland-Romani or *Roman*, respectively, along with the *Vend-Romani* spoken in southwestern Hungary and the Romani varieties of the Roma living in north-east-Slovenian *Prekmurje* form the so-called *Vend-group* among the south-central varieties of Romani. Due to strong Hungarian influence common to all the varieties, which primarily affects the lexicon, they are often summarized in literature as *Romungro*, a term with negative connotations,⁶ as already mentioned.



2.1 Characteristics of *Roman*

The apparent and thus most striking characteristics of Romani-varieties in most cases are the so-called more recent loans, which – in contrast to the inherited Asiatic lexicon, the lexemes from the Indian, Persian, Armenian and Byzantine-Greek – stem from European languages. As far as *Roman* is concerned, they are loans from southern Slavic, from Hungarian, which – as already mentioned – is typical of all south-central varieties, and from the German, that is from the German dialect of former

6 Since the speakers of central varieties of Romani for the great part are Roma groups that have been settled for a long time who do not dispose of any differentiated ethonyms, the varieties are defined according to geographical criteria.

On the structuring of Romani into four variety-groups see Bakker (1999) or consult the informative chapter in the general description of Romani.

western Hungary, of present Burgenland. Roman lexemes from southern Slavic (sslav.), from Hungarian (hung.) and from the dialect of Burgenland (gdial.), among others, are listed below:⁷

<i>griha</i>		< sslav. <i>grijev</i>	'sin'
<i>mischa</i>		< sslav. <i>miša</i>	'mass'
<i>pomoschinav</i>		< sslav. <i>pomoći</i>	'help'
<i>srida</i>		< sslav. <i>srijeda</i>	'Wednesday'
<i>subota</i>		< sslav. <i>subota</i>	'Saturday'
<i>medva</i>	< ung. <i>Medve</i>	< sslav. <i>medvjed</i>	'bear'
<i>bika</i>		< hung. <i>bika</i>	'bull'
<i>hordo</i>		< hung. <i>hordó</i>	'life'
<i>ileto</i>		< hung. <i>élet</i>	'life'
<i>keden</i>		< hung. <i>kedd</i>	'Tuesday'
<i>niró</i>		< hung. <i>nyír(fa)</i>	'birch'
<i>roka</i>		< hung. <i>róka</i>	'fox'
<i>tschereschna</i>		< hung. <i>cseresznye</i>	'cherry'
<i>lekvar</i>	< ddial. <i>/lekva/</i>	< hung. <i>lekvár</i>	'jam'
<i>auteri</i>		< gdial. <i>/a^uta/</i>	'car'
<i>bejg</i>		< gdial. <i>/veik/</i>	'weg'
<i>hokono</i>		< gdial. <i>/hokn/</i>	'ax'
<i>roasinav</i>		< gdial. <i>/ro^asn/</i>	'travel'
<i>kaunlina</i>		< gdial. <i>/ka^ũnl/</i>	'pot/can/pail'

As insinuated by the German dialectal loans, both the phonetical system of Roman and phonetic realizations of individual phonemes are characterized by the primary language of contact, that is, by the German dialect: the phonetical inventory contains the diphthongs /a^u/, /o^a/ – *kaunlina*, *roasinav* – and also /u^a/ – *fuat* 'away, away from here', *muam* 'Tante' – in extended form. The dichotomy [voiced : voiceless] is substituted by the Lenis-Fortis opposition. Furthermore, there are devoicings and lengthenings. In some cases, stressed vowels are diphthongized, primarily by /é/:

<i>drab</i>	/d ^ɔ rap/	'medical herb'
<i>dad</i>	/d ^ɔ at/	'father'
<i>hanig</i>	/hanik/	'well'
<i>khér</i>	/k ^h e:r/, /k ^h e:r/	'house'
<i>phérav</i>	/p ^h e:raf/	'I fill'

Further phonological characteristics of Roman are the intervocalic consonant loss of consonants. It primarily affects /-v-/ and, to a small degree /-n-/ and /l/:

* <i>khuvav</i>	→ <i>khujav</i>	/k ^h u ^ʷ af/	'I plait, I weave'
* <i>sivas</i>	→ <i>sijas</i>	/si ^ʷ as/	'we sew'
* <i>phabalin</i>	→ <i>phabajin</i>	/p ^h aba ^ʷ in/	'appletree'
* <i>pani</i>	→ <i>paj</i>	/pa ^ʷ /	'water'

7 The linguistic contact between these three »contact languages«, all of which still exist today in multiethnic Burgenland, is best demonstrated by the lexem for 'King'. Ist origin is the German royal name *Karl* (*the Great*), which is adopted into the Slavic via metathesis as *kralj*. It is then borrowed from Hungarian and realized as *királyi*. Taken from Hungarian, it finally becomes *kirali* in Roman.

As the first three examples show, the loss of /v/ results both in biphonemic diphthongs as the loss of /l/, whereby <j> functions as something like a transients marker. In the fourth example demonstrating the loss of /n/, what results are both nasalisation and the nasalised diphthong itself.

Motivated by contact with Hungarian dialects, the so-called »sharpening« or affricization of /j/ to the Fortis-Afriakta /tʃ/ frequently causes pairs, whereby the affricated varieties are generally used more often:

jak : *tschak* 'eye'
khangerja : *khangertscha* 'churches'
thojom : *thotschom* 'I washed'

Furthermore, the sound change of /x/ → /h/ and of /xt/ → /st/ respectively, needs to be mentioned: the following examples from Roman are – just like the ones listed below – contrasted by lexemes from Kalderaš-Romani:⁸

huhur : *xuxur* 'mushroom'
bast : *baxt* 'luck'

Finally, the the change of /s/ → /h/ → /∅/ needs to be mentioned. This sound change causes among other things the reduction of the adverbial ending and of the obliquus suffix in absolute final position: /-s#/ → /-∅#/.⁹

bare : *bares* 'big' (adv.)
rome : *romes* 'Rom' (akk.)

In initial position, however, the /h/ persists. This is demonstrated for instance by the imperfect endings of /-ahi/ that are typical of all south-central varieties. In the other varieties, they are realized as /-as/. Consequently an underlying form /-asV/ is assumed:

* *keresasV* → *ker^hahi* 'you made'
 * *kerasasV* → *ker^hahi* 'we made'

The *ahi*-ending does not only characterize the imperfect derived from the presental stem, but also the identical conditionalis potentialis as well as the conditionalis irrealis derived from the preterital stem:

	Imperfect = Potentialis		Irrealis	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1. Person	<i>ker-ahi</i>	<i>kerah-ahi</i>	<i>kertschom-ahi</i>	<i>kertscham-ahi</i>
2. Person	<i>ker^h-ahi</i>	<i>kern-ahi</i>	<i>kertschal-ahi</i>	<i>kertschan-ahi</i>
3. Person	<i>kerl-ahi</i>	<i>kern-ahi</i>	<i>kertsch-ahi</i>	<i>kertschan-ahi</i>

kerav 'I make'

Another feature of Roman verbs, which by the way also exists for other Romani varieties that are characterized by German, are the so-called »particle- and prefix-verbs«:

8 The phoneme /x/ which likewise exists in Roman only appears in most recent loans from German: *biachlina* /bi³xlina/ ← ddial. /bi³xl/ 'book'.

9 Most likely due to possible semantic problems, the suffix that forms the 2. person present indicative singular /-es/ is not affected by this development: *keres* 'you make'

<i>ari dschal</i>	'he/she goes out'
<i>dahea alo</i>	'he came by'
<i>fuat rajtinel</i>	'he/she rides off'
<i>mit dschav</i>	'I go along'
<i>upre beshti</i>	'she sat on'
<i>cadshal</i>	'it dissolves'
<i>fadschal</i>	'it passes'

Idiomatically and syntactically, Roman is also strongly characterized by the German dialect. This is exemplified by the sentences marked in the following excerpt:

Linaj sina, o divesa schukar taj Tate.
MRA DAJÁKERO MURSCH BI GRA NA
DSCHÁNLAHI TE ATSCHEL. Jek di phen-
tscha: »ISTE DIKAV, kaj valakaj graste
te uschtidav. Fatschú, urtschavas
amen, ladas la srastrunaha.

It was summer, the days beautiful and warm. **My mother her husband could not stay without a horse.** One day, he said: »I must see that I get a horse somewhere. Child, let us get dressed, we are going to go by train.

In this respect, stereotypical formulas such as *Sar dschal?* 'How do you do?' need to be mentioned. This idiom, which must be classified in Roman as a loan translation, appears in other varieties that are not influenced by German as *Sar san?* 'How are you?'

2.2 Writing System

As can be seen from the examples presented so far, the writing system of Roman is primarily derived from the pattern of German. This is exclusively based on sociolinguistics. A writing system according to the example of the southern Slavic Latin writing, which generally corresponds best to Romani, was vehemently rejected by the speakers. The Roma of Burgenland wanted to distinguish themselves through »their« writing system both from the other ethnic minorities of Burgenland such as Hungarians and Croats, who in their own writing systems use diacritics, as well as from other Roma-groups. This has less to do with rejecting the others, than it is an expression of their newly growing self-esteem.¹⁰

The following tables give an overview of the inventory of phonemes and graphemes of Roman. Phonemes and graphemes that primarily or exclusively exist in loans from German or the German-dialect are shaded:

Vowels

high front unrounded	/i/	<i>
high front rounded	/y/	<ü>
high back rounded	/u/	<u>
middle front unrounded	/e/	<e>
middle front rounded	/œ/	<ö>
middle back rounded	/o/	<o>
low	/a/	<a>

/.../ = Phonemes; <...> = Graphemes

¹⁰ Here see workreport 2. For more specific grammatical information as well as texts, etc. please also consult the listed publications on the project.

Diphthongs

/aj/	/uj/	/oj/	/ej/	/a ^u /	/o ^a /	/u ^a /	/i ^a /	/e ^a /
<aj>	<uj>	<oj>	<ej>	<au>	<oa>	<ua>	<ia>	<ea>

Consonants and Affricates

		lab.	dent.	dentoalv.	alv.	pal.	vel.	glot.
plosive	f.	/p/	/t/				/k/	
		<p>	<t>				<k>	
plosivef.	asp.	/p ^h /	/t ^h /				/k ^h /	
		<ph>	<th>				<kh>	
plosive	l.	/b/	/d/				/g/	
			<d>				<g>	
affricates	f.		/ts/	/tʃ/				
			<c>	<tsch>				
affricates	l.		[dʒ]	/dʃ/				
			<c>	<dsch>				
fricatives	f.	/f/	/s/	/ʃ/			/x/	/h/
		<f>	<s>	<sch>			<ch>	<h>
fricatives	l.	/v/	[z]	[ʒ]		/j/		
		<v>	<s>	<sch>		<j>		
nasals		/m/			/n/	/ɲ/	/ŋ/	
		<m>			<n>	<ɲj>	<ng>	
liquids/vibrant					/r/			
					<r>			
liquids/lateral					/l/			
					<l>			

2.3 Sociolinguistic Situation of Roman

2.3.1 Multilingualism and Language Use

Reconstructing the linguistic competence and use during the inter-war period from tales of the ethnic group's older members and the sparse written reports, the following collective repertoire can be abstracted:

Repertoire in the inter-war period

Acrolect	GERMAN		Hungarian	u/o	Croatian	
Mesolect	German		Hungarian	u/o	Croatian	Roman
Basilect	German	u/o	Hungarian	u/o	Croatian	ROMAN

Basilect: Diatypes of the social microcosm, which are used in private/informal domains within the family, in contact with close friends, etc.

Mesolect: Diatypes of the social macrocosm, which are used in partly public domains in contact with acquaintances, at the work place, etc.

Acrolect: Diatypes of the public, which are used in public/formal domains in contact with authorities, at school, etc.

Diatype: functionally defined linguistic variety

SMALL CAPITAL: primary diatype

Roman was the primary intimate variety; along with it, independently of the individual village population that spoke a different language, German, Hungarian or Croa-

tian were used as basilectal diatypes in the social microcosm. The composition of the mesolect, of the mesolect and of the diatypes likewise depended on the immediate surrounding context. Hungarian speech-islands used Hungarian alongside with German, while in Croatian village Croatian was used beside German. Roman was diatype of contact between the larger families residing in various parts of the country. It is to be assumed that a part of the Roma, due to the mobile jobs still practiced at that time, disposed of a quadrolingual mesolect. The primary acrolectal diatype, of course, was German. Hungarian or Croatian were spoken at school, at church and with the authorities, independently of the surrounding majority population.

The reasons for the decreasing use of Roman in the second half of this century are primarily, as mentioned above, of sociohistorical nature: it is due to the genocide, which erased almost the total grandparent generation of the time, and in this relation also to the »self-inforced assimilation,« that is, the attempt to break out of an existence »as gypsies.«¹¹

The present grandparent generation – those over 50 years of age – disposes of a bilingual, and only to a small degree still of a trilingual repertoire. Roman is basilectal intimate variety and functions, if rarely, as mesolectal diatype in contact with other Roma. Generally, German is spoken almost nexclusively in the social macrocosm among Roma who know each other little or not at all. Depending of the immediated surrounding, of whether it is a Hungarian or a Croatian village, Hungarian or Croatian varieties are used; they are, however, rather used as mesolectal diatypes and less in the social microcosm. The decrease in the use of other minority languages on the one hand has to do with the fact that the kinds of mobile jobs mentioned before are no longer practiced today; on the other hand it has to do with a general decrease in the use of Hungarian and Croatian, which also holds for their formal functional dimensions, due to which the acrolect in the repertoire of those Roma over 50 years of age is monolingually German.

Repertoire of today's grandparent generation

Akrolect	GERMAN
Mesolect	GERMAN (Hungarian or Croatian) [Roman]
Basilect	DEUTSCH [Hungarian or Croatian] Roman

() little use; [] very little use

For none of the age groups, Roman is primary basilectal diatype. Some few families, use Roman in informal domains equally with German, and the youth still have active and passive competence: topics of the household are discussed in Roman, in the course of which 'conversational code switching' takes place. For topics dealing with the »world of the Gadsche« such as school, work, etc, German is generally used.

The majority of today's young Roma dispose of a de facto monolingual repertoire and most often retains only passive competence of the primary intimate variety used within the ethnic group 60 years ago. Hungarian or Croatian are also used very rarely. Due to the changed social conditions, they have – not only among the Roma but also among the other ethnic groups – almost totally lost their significance as mesolectal diatypes.

11 Natürlich hat auch der – nicht nur in Westeuropa – durch die veränderten gesellschaftlichen Bedingungen gewachsene Assimilationsdruck auf Minderheiten im allgemeinen eine gewisse Rolle gespielt.

Repertoire of today's youth

Acrolect	GERMAN
Mesolect	GERMAN [Hungarian or Croatian]
Basilect	GERMAN [Roman]

2.3.2 Language Attitude

In a survey carried out in the summer of 1994 about language use and language attitude, out of 320 individuals questioned – »Which language would you call your mother tongue?« – 92% stated »Roman«, among them individuals – primarily but not exclusively young people – who consider their competence of Roman to be *rather poor*. In response to questions concerning the Roma's desires for the future, there are likewise almost only positive answers: as a rule, 90% wish for more use of Roman in internal contact. They wish for more newspapers, journals, and books in Roman, and for the use of their language in kindergardens and hope for an individual subject of Roman to be taught at school. This, in turn, creates the call for newspapers, dictionaries, etc., which has been answered in the meantime. Grammars and study materials. Those questioned can by no means imagine Roman becoming the language of teaching or to be used at offices or at court. To this question there were negative or, for the most part, no answers at all, which, again is an indication of a kind of inferiority complex in relation to one's own language. It is simply unthinkable for the Roma of Burgenland that their intimate variety, such as those of other Austrian ethnic groups, could also be accepted for formal or partly ritualized language use such as at court and at offices. Sometimes members of the ethnic group also voice their opinion that Roman is a »mixed language«, a fact which most likely not only has to do with the knowledge about the origin of more recent loans, but also with the fact that the Roma of Burgenland were considered »half-breeds « by the nazis. It is unclear to which extent the opinion among other Roma groups that the settled Romungri, as the Roma of Burgenland are also called, are (partly) assimilated and therefore no »authentic Roma« plays a role. Fact is that the consideration as »half-breeds« along with the knowledge of loans from German, Hungarian, and the Slavic languages causes the general view of Roman as a mixed language.

The majority of the Roma of Burgenland, however, identifies in spite of this inferiority complex with their own language. Today, Roman is an important component of the newly grown self-esteem has, at least for a part of the group, become the primary factor of identification. The fact that this process was initiated externally and that the present language awareness has grown through the self-organization and its contacts to the outside, can be demonstrated with a few incidents of the last years:

- At the foundation of the Association (1989), Ceja Stojka, a famous member of the Austrian Lovara, was invited. At this occasion, she spoke Romani, which made a deep impression on the Roma of Burgenland attending the celebration.
- Thanks to the foundation of the Association, the representatives of the Roma of Burgenland entered into contact with other groups, such as the Kalderas living in Vienna, among which Romanes dominates contacts within the groups. Due to such experiences, an awareness of their own language developed and its little use began to be felt as a loss and a threat to the persistence of the ethnic group from that moment on developed rapidly from that moment.

- The new language awareness was strengthened, among other things, by the wish of the prime minister of Burgenland that he be read a fairy tale which then was presented on the radio and finally published by a journal.
- Also, the experience of Roman as a medium of communication and thus cohesive element with neighboring Roma in Hungary and Slovenia, has led to the fact that now, for the Roma of Burgenland – at least at the level of the Association – the maintenance and revival of their own language has become an issue of primary concern.

It is still unclear to what extent this newly developed language awareness works against the continual decrease in language use, and whether the codification, which at the level of the Association already results in teaching activities at primary schools and in the training of adults, can help stop the death of the language. The development outlined above merely decreases the probability that Roman will die out within the next generations.

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