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Part III: **Perspectives on translanguaging  
educational practices in the Tiszavasvári  
Roma neighbourhood**



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## 7 Linguistic Repertoire: A despised “mixed” language as a resource for learning

The linguistic repertoire of the Roma in Tiszavasvári and Szímő (Zemné) is linked to more than one named language. At home, most of them speak in ways which most monolingual listeners would identify as Romani and Hungarian, and in Szímő (Zemné) also as Slovak. This chapter shows, based on observations in Tiszavasvári, that local Roma experience their repertoire somewhat differently from speakers of standardised languages. They formulate statements about the unitary nature of their repertoire, for instance they emphasise that children acquire Romani and Hungarian simultaneously. Generally speaking, they are not preoccupied with drawing boundaries between these two named languages. Local Roma share the opinion that the Romani they speak is not proper, not the ideal form of the language. This is illustrated by metalinguistic statements such as: *Hát roma nyelvet, de nem a tiszta roma nyelvet beszéljük. Hanem ugye itt már nem is úgy beszélnek, mint például Budapesten, vagy másfele;* ‘Well, it is Romani, but we don’t speak pure Romani, well, you see, here they don’t speak the way they do in Budapest or elsewhere’; *Akik már nincsenek, öregek, elmentek, vagy elköltöztek már, nincsenek már az élők sorában, tehát igazából ők tisztán tudták beszélni* ‘Those who are no longer with us, the elderly, they are gone, they have left, they are not among the living, they really knew how to speak it purely’ (also cited in Heltai 2020a: 102–103). This language ideology underpins everyday life and the Roma’s ways of speaking and their linguistic behaviour in and outside of school. It can be traced in our classroom recordings, too.

This chapter consists of four parts. 7.1 summarises Heltai’s (cf. 2020a, 2020b, 2020c for more detailed accounts) recent ethnographic work on local understandings of current sociolinguistic processes and practices among the Roma in Tiszavasvári. 7.2 discusses the consequences of these perceptions at school. 7.3 elaborates possible pedagogical responses whose aim is to engage with the learners’ entire repertoire. This is followed in 7.4 by an overview of pupils’ reflections on their own repertoire. Finally, 7.5 gives an outlook on how the points discussed in this chapter are relevant to educational contexts where the children’s monolingual repertoire is partly based on elements which are different from the standard language of education.

## 7.1 The linguistic repertoire of the Roma in Tiszavasvári

Groupism (which assumes clear and separable ethnic groups [Brubaker 2002, 2004] with their respective distinct languages, cf. Chapters 2 and 3) has had less influence among Roma speakers in Tiszavasvári than among most other, non-Roma speakers in Hungary and Central-Europe. In academic categorisations regarding Roma ethnicity, it can be a complicated issue to establish and distinguish Roma groups and subgroups (cf. Chapter 3). However, this is different in Tiszavasvári. When asked in Tiszavasvári, people state that they are Roma, eventually adding, that they are “Vlach Roma”. Any further subgrouping is avoided. What is more, local Roma always stress the diversity of their ways of speaking, adding examples of dissimilarity in language use. People said for example, that they speak differently in one part of the neighbourhood than in the other. They also voiced an opinion that Roma with different surnames speak differently. (Most of the more than 2000 bilingual Roma in Tiszavasvári share six or seven surnames. These are names pointing to old Roma occupations, and in Hungary people generally associate these names with the Roma.) Local Roma also stated that language practices in the community are different in several ways. They highlighted that there are differences between the young and the elderly, between the poor and the wealthy, or for example between those who were born in the town and those who were not. A further dimension of difference was mentioned between those who have a spouse from the town and those who do not. In this community, the relationship of languages is conceived differently from mainstream European standard-language and double-monolingual ideologies. Rather than citing typical European dualities like “either-or” and “and”, the local Roma describe the tensions and dynamics of their speech and highlight its heterogeneity, presupposing a unity of the repertoire (cf. Heltai 2020a: 90–91). For example, a grandfather spoke about the language socialisation of his grandchild as follows: *Ő már cigányul sírt, mikor beszélünk hozzá cigányul. Tehát ugyanúgy magyarul is. Tehát a kettőt egybe tanulja meg. Nem külön-külön a magyart meg a cigányt.* ‘He used to cry in Gypsy when we spoke to him in Gypsy. So, in the same way as in Hungarian. So, he learns two in one, not separately Hungarian and Gypsy’ (also cited in Heltai 2020a: 96).

Speakers mentioned in interviews and conversations that not everybody among the local Roma speaks Romani. Discussion partners often mentioned that they also speak Hungarian in the family. There are differences between families, due to a range of factors such as place of residence within the settlement, financial situation, or the family’s memories about one or more non-Roma ancestors (grandparents or great-grandparents). Some families register also “Hungarian Roma”

ancestors. According to local opinion, those are the people who consider themselves Roma but do not speak Romani. (This does not necessarily coincide with the category of “Karthian” or “Hungarian Roma”, also called “Romungro”, mentioned in the scholarly tradition of Romani studies in Hungary as a group with longer residence in the area of the historical Hungarian Kingdom and coined on the basis of a distinct, today mostly forgotten Romani dialect, cf. Erdős 1958, 1959; Vekerdí 1981; Réger 1988; Szalai 2006). The term Hungarian Roma used by the Roma in Tiszavasvári does not reflect ethnic and historical distinctiveness as a separate group; it expresses instead social status and synchronic cultural closeness to non-Roma Hungarians.

Local Roma usually say that their language is not identical with the language they call *Romani* or sometimes *Lovari*. Lovari is the name of the standardised Romani variety in Hungary, named in this way because the variety spoken by the people identifying themselves as “lovar vlach Roma”, served as a basis of the standard (Szuhay 2005). Most of the Roma proponents of standardisation in Hungary are Lovar Vlach Roma. (For more on this topic cf. Chapter 14). The Roma in Tiszavasvári say that real Romani is spoken “elsewhere” or by the “old folks” of bygone times (see above). They also highlight that the local Romani is different from everything else; it has a different pronunciation; it is a special local language, and it is not a pure way of speaking. There is no consensus about whether the local Romani is a new, emerging way of speaking or it has always been the way it is today. Speakers estimate the proportion of Romani-dominant conversations among local Roma much higher than that of Hungarian-dominant conversations. These percentages reflect two different domains. First, speakers describe the proportion of conversations in Romani compared to Hungarian-language conversations. They usually estimate that the proportion of Romani is more than 70%. Second, they often illustrate the proportion of Hungarian resources within their Romani-dominant conversations by calling their way of speaking a “mixed language”. They consider that the proportion of Romani resources is 50% or more (for details, cf. Heltai 2020a: 89–126, 2020b).

Speaking Hungarian, or at least conveying the image of speaking Hungarian, is linked to breaking away from stigmatised and marginalised life in the Roma neighbourhood. According to our observations among young Roma in the school and kindergarten, speaking Hungarian in local Roma families is a discursive trope rather than reality. Linguistic socialisation takes place typically in Romani but people always add that Hungarian plays an important role in it. People mentioned two different strategies regarding this topic. First, that family members speak Romani with the child, but before attending the compulsory kindergarten (from the age of 3 in Hungary), they teach them some Hungarian with conscious and controlled effort. The second strategy involves communication linked to both languages. In this way children are bilingually socialised and speak Hungarian from kindergarten age.

It is difficult to establish categories of named languages regarding linguistic socialisation and practice among local Roma families. Utterances of local Roma are organised according to the momentary dynamics in the local context. However, metalinguistic activity is based on the notion of languages, just like elsewhere in the western world. In this way, reports on linguistic practices focus on the mixing of languages and the proportion of their presence in different utterances. Linguistic practices are organised in a dynamic and unitary way but ways of speaking about them follow the binary logic of groupism. The result of this is that participants' accounts are often contradictory, variable, or even confusing. Below, three examples illustrate these strategies (cited and discussed also in Heltai 2020a: 96–98).

In excerpt 1, Zorán, a grandfather, and Ildikó and Jázmin, who are young mothers, talk with János Imre Heltai in a recorded conversation. A few younger mothers and their children are present in the same classroom, picking up the children after school. Names of local participants are pseudonyms.

- (1) Zorán *Nem hát ez úgy van, hogy- tegyük fel, nekem már van egy- nem csak egy, a 16 közül most csak egyet említénék meg, 8 hónapos kis unoka, hogy ő már cigányul sírt, mikor beszélünk hozzá cigányul. Tehát ugyanúgy magyarul is. Tehát a kettőt egybe tanulja meg. Nem külön-külön a magyart meg a cigányt.*

'No, well, the way it is, is that let's assume I have one – not just one but out of 16 I am mentioning only one now, so, an 8-month-old grandchild, he cried in Gypsy when we spoke to him in Gypsy. So, in the same way as in Hungarian. So, he learns two in one, not separately Hungarian and Gypsy.'

János *Igen, persze, értem. És így volt maguknál is?*

'Yes of course, I see. So, was it like that with you as well?'

Ildikó *Igen.*

'Yes'.

Jázmin *Így- így- így születik szerintem az ember.*

'That's it, I think that's the way people are born.'

Ildikó *És ugyanúgy rátalál a cigány nyelvre is, mint a magyar nyelvre.*

'And you find your way to the Gypsy language in the same way you find Hungarian.'

Zorán claims that the child "cries" in Romani when they speak to him in Romani. Then he says that the two (languages) are learned "as one". This language ideology is shared by the mothers present in the conversation. Statements such as

those cited above refer to local linguistic practices as united, without separating languages in the socialisation process.

In except 2, an older woman, Zsófia speaks with János Imre Heltai:

- (2) János *Minden unoka, a kicsik is tudják, és jól? Úgy akkor itt a telepen minden gyerek cigányul beszél?*  
 ‘All grandchildren know it, even the little ones, and they speak it well?  
 So, here in the settlement all children speak Gypsy?’
- Zsófia *Minden gyerek. Nincs az a gyerek, ha ne tanuljon cigányul, de van köztük olyan [##], akinek- azok magyarul beszélnek- egymás- az anyjukhoz.*  
 ‘All children. There are no children that do not learn Gypsy, but there are such that- they speak Hungarian – among each other – to their mothers.’
- János *Kik?*  
 ‘Who?’
- Zsófia *Az anyjukhoz, az apjukhoz, akik-*  
 ‘To their mothers, to their fathers, who-’
- János *De érteni mindegyik megérti?*  
 ‘But they all understand, don’t they?’
- Zsófia *Igen, de mink már így [###] cigányul beszélünk.*  
 ‘Yes, but we speak in this way [###] we speak Gypsy.’
- János *És akkor a gyerekek többségével otthon cigányul beszélnek, vagy magyarul?*  
 ‘And so do you speak Gypsy or Hungarian with most children at home?’
- Zsófia *Cigányul. De tudnak a gyerekek is magyarul.*  
 ‘Gypsy. But the children know Hungarian as well.’

This speaker also uses the concept of named languages to describe the local practices but it is difficult for her to describe the linguistic reality in such terms. When asked whether all children speak Romani, she considers it important to add that some also speak Hungarian. To the repeated query, whether most children are spoken to in Hungarian or in Romani, she again delivers an ambiguous answer. Her statements suggest that language questions are not “either/or” choices in the local context. Excerpt 3 is from a discussion between János Imre Heltai and a young married couple in the couple’s home.

- (3) Gabi *Ha százalékokban mondanám, szerintem ők [a településrész „felső” végén lakó, magukat „magyarabbnak” tartó családok] 70 százalékban beszélnek cigányul, mondjuk Zsolték, vagy lentebb, a Keskeny utca lentebbik felén*

*mondjuk- mondjuk 85 százalékkal. Szóval nem olyan nagy a különbség egyébként . . .*

'If I would say it in percentages, I think they [the families on the upper end of the settlement, who hold themselves as "more Hungarian"] speak 70 % in Gypsy, let's say Zsolt's family, or those at the lower end say 85 %. So the difference is not so big, actually . . .'

Zsolt *Így van, így van.*

'True, true.'

The couple speaking in excerpt 3 lives outside the Roma settlement, in the city centre. Gabi is non-Roma and Zsolt is Roma, his family members live in the Majoros settlement. Gabi tries to compare the percentages of Romani-dominated conversations in families who consider themselves "more Hungarian" with conversations in families which do not claim that, and establishes that the difference is actually not a big one and linguistic practices can be characterised as Romani dominant in all families.

Local views about the proportion of Romani and Hungarian in local conversations can hardly be treated as clear-cut. What is more, local Roma conceptualise the belonging of resources to one or the other named language differently from local non-Roma. There are many resources in local Romani talk which are described by speakers of Hungarian as Hungarian words with a Romani suffix. From the perspective of historical and contact linguistics, they can be described as "borrowings" or "loan words" of Hungarian origin. For local Roma children, however, they are Romani words. The Roma often perceive them as part of both Romani and Hungarian, as we will see the following excerpts. Excerpts 4 and 5 (cf. Heltai 2020a: 94) display a discussion between the researchers and the mothers, where one of them, Magda talks about this topic as follows:

- (4) Magda *A- mi cigányul beszélünk, majdnem egyforma a magyarral. Tehát vetezsik. Valamit cigányul elmondunk, és azt megérti a magyar is, hogy én most mit mondtam. Igen. Hát mondjuk van egy, mondjuk ez pohár. Mi cigányul is annak mondjuk.*

'Wh-e we speak Gypsy, it is almost the same as Hungarian. They are equal. We say something in Gypsy and the Hungarians understand what I just said. Yeah. Lets' say that is a *pohár* [glass]. We call it in the same way in Gypsy.'

Later in the conversation, the other mother, Móni, considers these elements to be not Hungarian words, but words which are *like* Hungarian words:

- (5) Móni *Mert mink, van olyan kifejezésünk, hogy magyar. Mintha magyarul mondanánk el, csak másként. De magyarok is megértik.*

‘Because we, we have such expressions which are Hungarian. As if we said it in Hungarian, just differently. But the Hungarians understand it too.’

In a recorded discussion with some Roma men in a yard the question of how to say *broom* in Romani was raised (excerpt 6). Three expressions were mentioned, one of them, *seprüvo* appears to be of clearly Hungarian origin for Hungarian speakers (Hu. *seprű* ‘broom’). It also contains a Romani suffix marking grammatical gender which Hungarian does not have (for details, cf. Heltai 2020a: 106–107).

- (6) Endre *Na most például egyszer megfogtam egy cigányembert ott Máriapócs-on [nevezetes roma búcsújáró hely]. Azt mondja a feleséginek- ott árulták a seprűket. hogy vegyen egy- mondja cigányul, hogy kin ekh motora.*

‘So for example I heard a Gypsy man in Máriapócs [a small town which is the most famous Roma pilgrimage site in and around Hungary]. He says to his wife- they were selling brooms there, that she should buy one, she should say it in Gypsy, BUY A BROOM’

Ferenc *De itten már, itten mifelénk azt mondják, seprüvo. Már maga is-*

‘But here, where we live, they say, SEPRÜVO. Already that-

Endre *Neeem úgy mondják, aki tudja!*

No, that’s not how they say it, those who know [it]

Andor *Hogy kell mondani a seprűnek akkor?*

‘What should we call a broom then?’

Ferenc *Hogy mondod a seprűnek? Sepreget anyád, cigányul, mondd ki! [valaki közbeveti:] seprüvo. Na tessék, fél magyar!*

‘How do you say broom? Your mother is sweeping with a broom, in Gypsy, say it! [someone says:] BROOM] There you go, it’s half-Hungarian!’

Endre *Hát mer magyarul van tisztán!*

Well because that is pure Hungarian!

Ferenc *A cigányul a seprűnek lehet mondani silágyi.*

‘In Gypsy we can say SILÁGYI to a broom.’

Endre *Na! Ez a cerhar.*

‘Yep. That’s Cerhar [a vlach Roma identity category and a variety of Romani].’

- Ferenc *Na tessék. Köszönöm szépen!*  
 ‘There you go. Thank you very much!’
- János *És azt itt nem mondja senki?*  
 ‘And nobody says that here?’
- Endre *Nem.*  
 ‘No.’
- János *És akkor maga honnan tudja?*  
 ‘And then how come you know it?’
- Ferenc *Azért mert tanultam.*  
 ‘Because I learnt it.’
- Endre *Ez az eredeti, silágyi.*  
 ‘That’s the original, BROOM.’
- János *És maga is ismeri ezt, silágyi?*  
 ‘And do you know it as well, BROOM?’
- Andor *Most hallottam.*  
 ‘This is the first time I hear it.’

The term *silágyi* is introduced by Ferenc, who moved into the community and was not brought up in Tiszavasvári. For the others, the term *silágyi*, which he brings into the conversation, is new. They use the term *seprűvo*. In the discussion, this resource is evaluated in three ways. Ferenc categorises it as half-Hungarian. The elder, Endre, notes that it is actually Hungarian. It is interpreted by other speakers as part of Romani, as is clear from the answer to Ferenc’s question (probably by Andor). This illustrates the lack of a group consensus and the fluidity of language boundaries in speakers’ mind.

## 7.2 Consequences at school

The video recordings illustrate that pupils share the view that some resources belong to more than one language. They include new resources in their Romani with ease. They use, and make sense of, these resources in the same way as the adults in above examples: as Romani words which are alike or similar to Hungarian words. Video 13 (*The teacher as language learner in the translanguaging classroom*) contains an excerpt from a history lesson in the fifth grade. The teacher, Tünde, has written four Hungarian words on the board: *király* ‘king’, *szolga* ‘servant’, *pásztor* ‘shepherd’ and *ikrek* ‘twins’. The words have to do with the foundation myths of Ancient Rome, which the class covered in previous lessons. The pupils’ task was to build sentences using the words on the board, in Romani or in Hungarian, as they

wish. After completing this task, the pupils reported their sentences as follows (excerpt 7, video 13: 0.59–2.32):

- (7) Tünde [egy diák utolsó mondatát ismételve]: *O ikri pásztora hile. Nem értem. Kérhetek segítséget?*  
 [repeating the last sentence of a learner]: ‘THE TWINS WERE SHEPHERDS. I don’t understand. May I ask for your help?’
- pupil 1 *Azt mondta, az ikrek pásztorok.*  
 ‘He said that the twins were shepherds.’
- Tünde *Húha! Tegyük rendbe ezt a mondatot! Hogy kapcsolódnak egymáshoz a pásztor meg az ikrek? Igen?*  
 ‘Oh, careful! Let’s sort this sentence out! What does the shepherd have to do with the twins? Yes, please?’
- pupil 2 *A pásztor rátalált a két ikerre.*  
 ‘The shepherd found the twins.’
- Tünde *A pásztor talált rá az ikrekre. Emlékszel? Akkor most így mondj nekem egy cigány mondatot!*  
 ‘The shepherd found the twins. Do you remember now? Now then, tell me a Gypsy sentence like this!’
- pupil 3 *O pásztori opre találingya po ikri.*  
 ‘THE SHEPHERD FOUND THE TWINS.’
- Tünde *Na, ez már így nagyon jó! És akkor, hogyan átvitod a mondatodat, akkor pipálhatod, jó?*  
 ‘That’s it. This is very good. And if you correct your sentence here, you can tick it off, ok?’
- pupil 4 *O pásztori sungye vorbi- roven o ikri*  
 ‘THE SHEPHERDS HEARD THE TWINS CRY.’
- Tünde *Húha! Segítesz, kérlek?*  
 ‘Whoops! Are you going to help me, please?’
- pupil 5 *A pásztor azt mondta, hogy . . . a pásztor meghallotta, hogy az ikrek sírtak.*  
 ‘The shepherd said, that . . . the shepherd heard the twins cry.’
- Tünde *Nagyon ügyes vagy! Köszönöm a fordítást. Jó. Következő?*  
 ‘Well done! Thank you for the translation! Okay. Next Please!’
- pupil 6 *A pásztor vette magához az ikreket.*  
 ‘The shepherd took in the twins.’
- Tünde *Ügyes vagy. Igen?*  
 ‘Good! Next, please!’

- pupil 7 *A pásztori rakja e beáto.*  
‘THE SHEPHERD FOUND THE CHILDREN.’
- Tünde *És ez mit jelent?*  
‘And what does this mean?’
- pupil 7 *A pásztor megtalálta a gyerekeket.*  
‘The shepherd found the children.’
- Tünde *Ó, de nagyon ügyes vagy! Szuper! Most mondd! Igen?*  
‘Great, well done! Super! Now you, please!’
- pupil 8 *O pásztori sajnálingya e ikrek.*  
‘THE SHEPHERD FELT SORRY FOR THE TWINS.’
- Tünde *Azt jelenti, a pásztor megsajnálta az ikreket. Tudtam! Kitaláltam! Ügyes voltam! Nagyon jó volt a mondatod, tényleg így volt. Jöhet a következő!*  
‘It means that the shepherd felt sorry for the twins, right? I knew it! I figured it out! Well done me! Your sentence is very good, this is exactly what happened. Next, please!’
- pupil 9 *O királyi phengya e szolgake te csude andre ando pányi e ikrek.*  
‘THE KING TOLD THE SERVANTS TO THROW THE TWINS INTO THE WATER.’

Among the outcomes of this task are five Romani-based sentences (written with capital letters). The pupils incorporated the four Hungarian words that were provided by adding to them Romani suffixes. They did not attempt to find a Romani word for them. The word *ikri* ‘twins’ appears in sentences 1, 2, and 3 with Romani suffixes (*ikr-i*, in plural), in sentences 4 and 5 it has even retained its Hungarian form (*ikr-ek*, also in plural). There are two more verbs in the sentences which speakers of Hungarian would identify as words with a Hungarian root, *találingya* (Hu. *talál* ‘find’) and *sajnálingya* (Hu. *sajnál* ‘regret’, both verbs in past tense singular third person). The pupils use these forms in the task for formulating the sentences both Hungarian and Romani. The use of words viewed as Hungarian by the teacher in a Romani sentence is in line with the statements in excerpt 4 and 5, which argue that there are words in Romani that are very similar to Hungarian.

Resources linked to school subjects are often transformed by the pupils in similar ways. In most Hungarian schools, lessons begin with a so-called “report” in which the pupils present to the teacher who are absent from class. Every week, two pupils are responsible for facilitating classroom activities, and one of their duties is to deliver the report. The expressions in this speech act follow a decades old formula, which constitutes shared knowledge of all generations across Hungary. Everyone stands up, the two pupils on duty come to the front of the classroom, and

turn towards the class and the teacher. This little ceremony at the beginning of classes is part of a fixed school practice. Teachers often employ it as it helps children to calm down after the break. The report, delivered loudly and in chorus by the two pupils in charge but in first person singular, consists of the following text in Hungarian (excerpt 8).

- (8) pupils     *Osztály vigyázz! A tanárnőnek tisztelettel jelentem, hogy az osztály*  
 on-duty     *létszáma 22, ebből hiányzik hét tanuló. Az osztály a rajzórára készen áll.*  
                  ‘Class, stand up! I respectfully report to Miss [teacher] that the total number of pupils is 22, of which seven are missing. The class is ready for drawing class.’

In video 16 (*Translanguaging in a fixed school practice*), the pupils on-duty are given the freedom to deliver the report in Romani, and they take the opportunity. However, the structure of the passage remains the same. The pupils add only some Romani suffixes to perform it in Romani (excerpt 9):

- (9) pupils on-duty     *Tanár néninek tisztelettel jelentinav, hogy az osztályi létszáma huszonkettő.*  
 HU                     Tanár néninek tisztelettel jelentem, hogy az osztályi létszáma huszonkettő.  
 EN                     To Miss I respectfully REPORT that the number of LEARNERS IN CLASS is 22.  
 pupils on-duty     *Ebből hiányzinél hét tanulóvo, az osztályi rajzórára készen áll.*  
 HU                     Ebből hiányzik hét tanuló, az osztály rajzórára készen áll.  
 EN                     Of this, seven learners are ABSENT, the CLASS is ready for art lesson.

The pupils incorporate newly learned subject-specific terminology into Romani in a similar way. In video 7 (*Technical terms for school subjects*) pupils demonstrate their knowledge. Given the chance to use Romani, they follow the same strategy, and employ words like Hungarian *adózik* (‘pays taxes’), *harcol* (‘fights’) or *nemesek* (‘noblemen’) complemented with Romani suffixes as *adózingya* (‘PAID TAXES’), *harcolingya* (‘FOUGHT’), or *nemesi* (‘NOBLEMEN’). In this way they have the opportunity to incorporate new, subject-specific terms into their repertoire and follow their local language practices at the same time. This practice of Romani vocabulary extension supports the development of their repertoire in Hungarian, too, as new

words (including new technical terms) become part of their repertoire in both languages. A further benefit is that their monolingual Hungarian teachers have a better chance to follow their utterances in Romani through such “shared” keywords.

The often despised “mixed language” of the local Roma has clear advantages at school. Hungarian monolingual teachers with a translanguaging stance can understand it to some extent. It can also be transformative as it allows learners to embrace new language resources learned at school. Due to their translingual awareness regarding languages, local Roma children are open to embed new subject-specific terminology taught in Hungarian into their Romani utterances. This is not a unique practice among bi- and multilingual Roma in Europe. There may be differences in the detail of such practices, but the tendencies are similar in various parts of Europe. In a similar manner, in video 32 (*Multisensory approach to language learning*), recorded in Szímő (Zemné), a boy repurposes a Slovak saying about the typical autumn weather (excerpt 10, video 32: 1.39–1.55):

- (10) pupil 1 *Del o bris- ( . . ) nem!*  
           ‘IT’S RAIN- ( . . ) Not!’  
       teacher *Na? Fúj a hideg szél!*  
           ‘So? The cold wind is blowing!’  
       pupil 2 *Phurdel i bálvál sugyrész.*  
           ‘THE COLD WIND IS BLOWING.’  
       pupil 1 *Phurdel i bálvál.*  
           ‘THE WIND IS BLOWING.’  
       pupil 2 *Sugyrész.*  
           ‘COLDLY’.  
       learner 1 *Del o brisind táj téle hullin o falevelula.*  
           ‘ITS RAINING AND THE LEAVES FALL’.

Hungarian speakers view words in the last sentence as Hungarian words with Romani suffixes: *Hullin o falevelula* ‘the leaves fall’ is ‘hullanak a falevelek’ in Hungarian.

### 7.3 Teachers’ translanguaging stance: Activating the whole repertoire

Over the past few years, teachers in Tiszavasvári have developed a translanguaging stance to adapt to the needs of the sociolinguistic situation introduced in Chapter 7.1. This chapter, focusing on questions of pedagogy, provides examples

from our video repository which illustrate how to make teaching more efficient and enjoyable by exploiting learners’ bilingualism and their language ideologies. The chapter looks at three areas that can be used to mobilise learners’ full linguistic repertoire: opportunities for translation, text composition, and classroom performances.

The most common activity is translation. There are several classroom examples in the repository, and three such videos are analysed here. In the classroom scene shown in video 5 (*Translanguaging in Maths Class*), pupils are assigned to work in groups. The teacher first gives the instructions in Hungarian and then asks a pupil to summarise the essence of the task in Romani (video 5: 0.42–2.28). The translation appears in this video as a part of the procedure setting the task. Repeating the task in Romani helps to consolidate the information, on the one hand, and, on the other, to interpret the task for both the translator and the learners listening. During the translation, the content already uttered (in Hungarian) is repeated, so, the pupils are given the opportunity to rethink the task. After translating the task into Romani, the pupils summarise the main points of the task in Hungarian. In this way, after they hear the translation, pupils have the opportunity to interpret the instructions in Hungarian, too.

In video 10 (*Enhancing the Prestige of Romani within the group*), the translation takes place in a task summarising the content of a fairy tale. The teacher distributes the text of a Roma tale in Hungarian. Pupils are asked to summarise the passage in two rounds: first in Hungarian, and second, in the language of their choice (video 10: 0.37–1.12; video 10: 1.21–2.28). It is important that this is done twice, in Hungarian and Romani, because in this way the children perform an activity which develops a general language competence (summarising texts) in two different ways. Summary as a general language competence (cf. García and Kleyn 2016: 24) is an abstract activity in which speakers highlight, systematise, and articulate essential points, in this case on the basis of a particular text. Translingual tasks of this kind are well suited for developing skills related to general language competences in a multilingual environment: giving pupils the opportunity to summarise the text in their local ways of speaking allows them to mobilise resources in the language of instruction.

Video 13 (*The teacher as language learner in the translanguaging classroom*) shows a history lesson in which the teacher provides a list of words referring to the most important historical events related to the founding of ancient Rome, and asks the pupils to make sentences in either Romani or Hungarian (video 13: 0.42–2.42). In cases where learners formulate a Romani statement, the teacher uses two strategies: either asks another learner to translate the sentence into Hungarian, or repeats the essence of the sentence based on the language resources she understands. In this case, she asks pupils to confirm that she understood the

sentence (video 13: 5.02–5.18). In this exercise, the teacher becomes a learner of not only Romani but also the pupils' translingual ways of speaking, and what translanguaging is like in general. The possibility of translating helps learners to report on their pre-existing knowledge in a way which is not tied to a named language. In such instances communication is not constrained by language barriers. Translation helps to shed light on whether the information absorbed is correct and to provide further details when answers need to be improved. The teacher not only indicates when one of the learners is making an inaccurate statement, but also ensures that the correction is done collaboratively and that the clarified formulation is repeated in Hungarian and Romani. In sum, translation, while time-consuming, has its advantages: the teacher can keep track of learners' knowledge because learners dare to say what they know; uncertainty in how best to formulate something in Hungarian does not hinder learners' interventions. Furthermore, learners improve their competence in translation itself.

Text composition, like translation, is a general language competence which cannot be linked to individual languages, so its development is not related to a single language spoken by learners. We mention two classroom moments, video 24 (*Composing written texts in Romani*) and video 25 (*Community-based learning methods and cultural relevance in the translanguaging classroom*). In the videos we can see two parts of a lesson. The recorded history lesson covers the settlement of Hungarians and the Roma in the Carpathian Basin. During this class, pupils working in groups describe some customs that are still characteristic of the Roma (video 24: 0.56–2.25; video 24: 1.22–3.45). Romani and Hungarian appear in various ways in the pupils' writings. On the one hand, translanguaging helps learners to systematise their knowledge and thoughts in writing; this is illustrated by the length of learners' Romani texts: they create relatively long texts during group work. On the other hand, the ability to take notes can be developed more effectively in a translingual way as the focus is not on the difficulties with the named language but on organising the knowledge to be acquired through writing. Developing the ability to compose texts and take notes in a translingual way enhances learners' competence in applying these general language abilities with confidence later in their life. They also develop their understanding of different written text genres and what is appropriate in different situations, such as taking notes during lectures, writing essays, and writing notes before an oral exam.

In the life of a school, special attention is paid to the plays and scenes performed by the learners. In Hungarian schools, these are usually associated with ceremonies or drama classes. There are two examples of the latter in our video repository: one is video 21 (*Imitating Romani "adult speech" at school*), where pupils act out a market scene (video 21: 1.01–2.27), the other is video 33 (*Creative*

*engagement in translingual learning*), where pupils tell a story in both Hungarian and Romani (video 33: 1.44–4.06).

In video 21, we see two pupils performing a spontaneous scene of bargaining between the customer and the seller at a horse fair. The dialogue in the bargaining scene took place in Romani between two pupils and it was watched by the rest of the class. The improvised performance develops the learners’ ability to create a text independently. The bargaining scene is connected to the fairy tale they have been reading but the pupils still had to come up with a text of their own as they take turns in the role-play. This task improves situational awareness and the features of adult speech in the learners’ home language. In video 33 we see a theatre play about King Matthias. The text is based on a Hungarian folk tale, which learners translated into Romani. Then they learnt both the Hungarian and the Romani version by heart. (Matthias Corvinus, the ruler of the Kingdom of Hungary between 1458 and 1490, appears as a just king in numerous legends and fairy tales; the most prosperous years of the Kingdom are tied to his reign). All pupils in the class participated in the performance, everyone had a role to play. Memorising texts develops the learners’ long-term memory and language skills. The development of these skills was facilitated by the fact that the learners, together with the teacher, translated the text into Romani during class work, and the scene was learned and performed in both Hungarian and Romani.

These scenes, whether spontaneously acted out (video 21) or performed after a long period of preparation (video 33), allow for the emergence of non-standard local language practices in school situations in which the advantages associated with the standardised language of instruction disappear. Both tasks were based on literacy activities linked to literacy (reading and translating stories), but the tasks themselves focused on the oral skills. (In video 21, the class read a story in Romani from a storybook produced jointly by parents, researchers, pupils, and teachers in the course of the translanguaging-project (cf. Chapter 9.4). In video 33, the story that was acted out was translated by the children from a Hungarian folk tale. These oral tasks made everyday situations (though in the case of video 33 embedded in a historical context) part of the meaning making process. In both scenes, the children experienced that the work could be done just as successfully in Romani as in Hungarian. Performance and role-play is successful tool in translanguaging classrooms.

## 7.4 Pupils' reflections on their repertoire

The repertoire and the ways in which it is operated are largely determined by the linguistic ideologies that surround it. These are covered in the videos 29 (*Children's Language Ideologies*) and 30 (*Children's opinion about translanguaging at school*). In video 29, when asked by the teacher who prefers to speak Romani (video 29: 1.15–1.20), half of the children answered yes. According to the ideologies prevailing outside the community, the teacher's question assumes and separates the two languages as closed units. During the response, the children also followed this ideology, or at least tried to meet the expectation in the question, that is, to choose the language they prefer.

The question of whether it is good to be able to speak Romani at school was answered in the affirmative by the children. Their answers were based on the following arguments: 1) they were born as Roma, 2) they like speaking Romani, 3) they speak Romani at home (video 29: 1.24–2.00). The first answer testifies that for the respondent, Romani and identity processes associated with being Roma presuppose each other. The second answer, which emphasises a positive emotional attitude, does not make it clear why the pupils like speaking Romani. According to the third answer, family members also speak in this way, so, Romani reinforces belonging to this community. In the family, the children's language practices are not subject to linguistic correction either.

To ask the pupils whether they speak Romani at home is to assume they separate the two languages in their mind. The question pre-supposes the answer, whether it is Romani or Hungarian (video 29: 2.04–2.09). Since most pupils follow translingual practices at home, it is not easy for them to answer the teacher's question along monolingual ideologies. The following answers were given (excerpts 11 to 14, video 29: 2.11–2.42):

- (11) pupil 1 *Anyukámmal cigányul, apukámmal pedig magyarul*  
'We speak Gypsy with my mother, Hungarian with my father'
- (12) pupil 2 *Anyukám mindkét nyelven beszél, apukám is, meg a négy testvérem is.*  
'My mother speaks both languages, so does my father and my four siblings, too.'
- (13) pupil 3 *Nekem a családom mind cigányul beszél.*  
'My whole family speaks Gypsy.'

- (14) pupil 4 *Mi nem szoktunk cigányul beszélni.*  
 ‘We usually don’t speak Gypsy.’

What they say in class does not necessarily reflect their real language practices. Their responses reflect what affects them at the moment of speaking. One such influencing factor is that the questioning takes place in the system of a named language. As a consequence, two languages appear in the pupils’ answers, thus meeting the expectation inherent in the question, regardless of their actual language practices or of their metalinguistic reflections on them (cf. 7.1).

The teacher’s next question is whether Romani is worse than Hungarian, and whether we can talk about good and bad language at all (video 29: 2.49–2.59). According to one student, Romani is worse because Hungarians do not understand it. Although children feel emotionally closer to Romani, some associations it evokes make them interpret it as a low-prestige language.

The answers to the question “Is it good to be bilingual, to speak two languages?” (video 30: 0.46–0.58) in video 30 (*Children’s opinion about translanguaging at school*) show that bilingualism is perceived as neither beneficial nor disadvantageous. Bilingualism is seen simply as a feature of their lives and as everyday reality. In their answers, pupils are unable to take a stand on whether it is good to be bilingual. Rather, they provide a type of response that touches on the frequency of use of languages and their relationship to them. The outcome of the teacher’s translanguaging stance can be witnessed in the videos: the Romani answers to the question (video 30: 1.39–1.48; video 30: 2.14–2.22; video 30: 2.31–2.41) show that pupils are used to talking to the teacher in classes using their home-language resources. Normally, children rely primarily on their Hungarian-language resources at school; views which advocate that speaking Romani may be better could be present because Romani utterances are not related to the experience of being corrected and feeling inadequate. This might explain why pupils find their Hungarian worse than their Romani. Hungarian, spoken in a strongly norm-oriented speaker community, is also the sole language of the school subjects. In the school environment learners are used to definite-oriented spontaneous assessments of their behaviour: they can be seen as good or bad, right or wrong, clever or incompetent – including also in their language practices. In Romani, used largely in informal situations, such expectations and norms are not present. In addition to the experience pupil gain at home and in their bilingual community, their opinions about languages and speech were influenced by the monolingual ideologies represented by the teacher and her questions, coupled with the pupils’ desire to meet the assumed expectations.

## 7.5 Outlook: Translanguaging pedagogical stance in monolingual and multilingual classrooms

Translanguaging scholarship usually concentrates on multilingual situations. However, Vogel and García highlight that the concept provides a label for all users of language (2017: 2). Li argues that translanguaging is not necessarily a concept that can be applied only in multilingual situations: “Translanguaging is using one’s idiolect, that is one’s linguistic repertoire, without regard for socially and politically defined language names and labels” (Li 2018: 19). As Otheguy, García, and Wallis (2015) argue, a bilingual person’s idiolect consists of lexical and grammatical features from different socially and politically defined languages, just as: “a so-called monolingual’s idiolect would consist of lexical and grammatical features from regionally, social class-wise, and stylistically differentiated varieties of the same named language” (Li 2018: 19).

The translanguaging practices of bilingual Roma learners draw attention to procedures which are less obvious in situations described as monolingual and in which the language practices of the speakers are related to more than one mode of speaking. Such heteroglossic situations are interpreted along the duality of speaking in the standardised way or in a “sub-standard” way. Research outside the translanguaging paradigm also points to the benefits of supporting the simultaneous development of learners’ competence in the standard and their home variety (Parapatics 2019, who cites here Vangsnes et al. 2017).

The language practices of speakers considered to be bidialectal are judged in a negative way in societies with a strong orientation towards a centrally regulated linguistic norm. In the spirit of a homogenising linguistic ideology, actors in public education assume that all children entering school speak the same way. However, as Li (2018, see above) states, a monolingual child also has his or her own idiolect, and the features of this particular way of speaking form an essential part of the child’s selfhood and personality.

In the case of children who acquire at home competencies and resources that are predominantly Romani-related, teachers perceive a lack of knowledge of a named language, which serves as the language of instruction. In the case of children who acquire a particular regional or social variety of Hungarian at home, however, teachers perceive a lack of knowledge of a particular variety, that is, standard Hungarian. The teachers’ perception does not prompt her to teach the standard, but rather to eliminate resources that are different from the standard. In the case of bilingual children, teachers with a monolingual ideological stance might endeavour to silence linguistic resources which to their mind are linked to a language which is different from the language of education. In the case of monolingual children, a

similar pedagogical and linguistic process occurs, but one in which the “incorrectness” of particular language elements or ways of speaking is flagged up. In both situations, a child who speaks his or her idiolect, is regularly confronted with the ideology that “his or her language” is somehow wrong. This has important consequences on their personal development and self-confidence. A translanguaging stance therefore, can be beneficial in monolingual heteroglossic situations as well.

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