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Report on Zuzana Bodnárová's doctoral dissertation *Vend Romani: a grammatical description and sociolinguistic situation of the so-called Vend dialects of Hungary*, submitted at Charles University

Zuzana Bodnárová's thesis presents a description of the grammar and sociolinguistic setting of Vend Romani spoken in Hungary, conducted as part of the research project Linguistic Atlas of Central Romani. Although not made explicit by Z. Bodnárová, this study largely follows the Romani Morphosyntax database's program to produce a "concise and comprehensive outline of a Romani dialect" (Matras 2004: 59) based on the RMS questionnaire, a dialectological-typological questionnaire which was later adapted to the Central Romani specificities by Viktor Elšík (2008).

The thesis, of 353 pages, is composed of 7 chapters: following the introductory chapter in 1, the work introduces the sociolinguistic setting of Vend Romani in Chapter 2. From Chapter 3 to 6, the author provides a description of the Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, and Lexicon of Vend Romani. Chapter 7 summarizes these findings. The work includes bibliographical references and an appendix with the Romani vocabulary translated in English.

Zuzana Bodnárová is offering a precious contribution to Romani studies with first-hand data from an under-described variety of Romani. The data were collected from 47 speakers of Vend Romani in total, living in 28 localities which are distributed in six different counties (p. 35). The description is predominantly based on the variety spoken in Kisbajom and offers a comparison with the other varieties of Vend Romani. The corpus is based on a questionnaire of 1,500 clauses designed for Central European Romani by the director of the thesis, Viktor Elšík (p. 34). The sample is relatively balanced in terms of sex, but, as far as age is concerned, middle-aged speakers constitute the majority of the sample due to lack of inter-generational transmission (p. 38). In summary, the methodology of data collection in this work has some advantages, i.e., comparable data for several localities, and disadvantages, i.e., mainly relying on elicited material, very few speakers per locality (generally one), etc. Knowing that one of the goals of the research project and the thesis is the documentation of Vend Romani (p. 288-289), I would have liked to read some details with respect to the recording material and the quality of the recordings.

Chapter 2, offers an informative sociolinguistic description of Vend Romani based on the UNESCO's criteria. For future work, I believe that this description could be nicely discussed in relation to the general literature on language endangerment.

The phonological analysis presented in Chapter 3 addresses several questions relevant for Vend Romani and more generally for Romani studies, and in some cases for general linguistics, e.g., vowel length in 3.2.5. The analysis in this chapter relies on the description of a sound inventory and contexts of appearance, but there is no systematic phonological analysis —e.g., minimal pairs are not systematic: in p. 78 one minimal pair is given for the bilabial and alveolar voice opposition in word initial position but none for the velar— nor acoustic phonetic analysis relying on wide-spread instrumental methods, e.g., using Praat. The absence of a systematic phonological analysis results in some confusion, e.g., when the sign for phonemes, //, is used for sounds or combinations of sounds for which the status of phoneme is not established or for

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which the analysis reveals they are not phonemes, see 3.1.3. for clusters. Moreover, systematic quantitative treatments of the distribution of sounds are presented in some cases, e.g., for gemination (p. 76), but general statements are found elsewhere, e.g., for word-medial clusters: "most common", "less frequent" (p. 70), without an explanation of the preferred analysis in one case or the other.

Chapter 4 is dedicated to morphology. It is very detailed and contributes to our knowledge of Romani. Sections 4.1., 4.2., 4.7.1., on the integration of borrowings, are also interesting for contact linguistics in general although Z. Bodnárová gives no such references, e.g., in the description of temporal adverbs, in 4.3.2., discussion with respect to borrowability hierarchies would have been welcome. Also, some issues would have deserved a more detailed analysis; e.g., articles are briefly presented in 4.6., but an account of the grammaticalization stage of the indefinite, and eventually definite, article would have been useful.

Chapter 5 presents the syntax of Vend Romani following Elšík and Matras (2006) and Matras (2002), and reflects the theoretical choices made in the elicitation questionnaire. The result is a reader-friendly presentation of all aspects of Romani Vend syntax which can also be of interest to typologists. A variety of interesting questions arise and would require more systematic work, e.g., alternative word orders in noun and verb phrases in section 5.4.

Chapter 6, is dedicated to the study of lexicon. I have particularly appreciated the quantitative treatment of the lexical borrowings with respect to parts of speech (p. 278) and semantic fields (p. 281) as it sets the basis for future comparative studies (as is the case in WOLD Haspelmath and Tadmor 2009 or for parts of speech in Adamou and Granqvist 2014).

Chapter 7 offers a brief summary of the work and concludes by proposing a division of Vend Romani into two sub-groups, the one related to the Vend Romani varieties in Slovenia, the other in Austria (p. 288). Z. Bodnárová's study also sheds light on the origin of the varieties in the nineteenth-century sources, showing that they did not document Vend Romani but South Central Romani varieties.

The appendix (p. 298-353) includes a well-presented, Romani-English lexicon.

The thesis, which is written in English, is agreeable to read and has been carefully proofread. I would also like to compliment the candidate on the detailed and consistent glosses, the quality of transcriptions and translations, and the indication of the type of data (narrative, elicited) for all the examples.

To summarize, Zuzana Bodnárová has undoubtedly conducted the description of Vend Romani with great skill. The doctoral thesis covers all aspects of the language and discusses them with respect to other Romani dialects. However, the main drawback of a thesis targeting a full grammatical description such as this one is the limited discussion of the theoretical contribution of the language data to the questions that are currently addressed in the various fields of linguistics. The absence of discussion outside the field of Romani linguistics is also apparent in the bibliographical references, which do not exceed seven pages and are predominantly dedicated to Romani studies. Admittedly, both tasks cannot be conducted for a single doctoral dissertation, and Zuzana Bodnárová will likely offer more detailed analyses of some of the phenomena under study in future work.

In conclusion, the doctoral dissertation submitted by Zuzana Bodnárová meets the standards required of a doctoral dissertation in that it offers an original empirical contribution. I therefore recommend it for public defense and propose the grade "Pass".

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