This thesis is devoted to the issue of understanding Romani and the majority languages by Romani preschoolers in order to consider the possibility of introducing Romani language in schools. Also it analyses the influence of using Romani language on the ability to perform age-appropriate tasks by Roma preschoolers.

The work is divided into two parts. The first, theoretical part presents a summary of the relevant works on school failure of Romani children with an emphasis on their language handicap. We also pay attention to the theory of language shift, language code, and subtractive bilingualism.

In the second, empirical part a primary research is carried out examining the degree of understanding Romani and majority languages in three locations in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. As a methodology, a mixed research design was chosen. It was divided into two phases. During the first phase a field research was conducted, followed by quantitative evaluation of tasks performed by the Romani preschoolers in the second phase.

Research has shown, that there are different linguistic situations in the surveyed locations and therefore no generic measure can be introduced. At the same time the outcomes rejected the presumption that children who speak Romani better than the majority language will be more successful in the task performance. This assumption was formulated on the basis of the theory of language shift and subtractive bilingualism, the consequences of which should have a negative impact on the cognitive development of the child.