

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

**János Imre Heltai, Petra Réka Boros, Kamilla Jenei, István Kozmács, Márk Székely**

Linguistic repertoire is a basic unit in the translanguaging approach. Translanguaging is based on the assumption that the linguistic repertoire is unitary and not divided into languages (García 2014; Vogel and García 2017). The linguistic repertoire is a concept, an idea which helps to imagine how to recognize all resources needed to communicate (see also chapter 2.3). From a cognitive perspective, the repertoire is a concept about mental processes and representations. Mental processes and representations cannot be photographed or documented (Kovács and Téglás 1999: 221), thus they aren't tangible part of the observable biological reality. That is, the unitary nature of the repertoire is an assumption, not a proved biological fact.

For communicating with other humans, we need linguistic resources people around us understand in similar ways. Resources are units of speech: words, multi-word phrases, phonological realisations. They can be both specific (concrete units of speech, such as words) and schematic (abstract patterns of speech, such as syntactic units), or often a combination of the two (Blommaert and Backus 2013: 6). Besides shared resources, communication assumes speakers' knowledge about how their resources are valued by others in order to avoid being treated as ridiculous or strange. People maintain and evaluate their abilities to speak depending on the environment; they use resources others understand and appreciate.

In an early conceptualisation, repertoire was imagined as an inventory of resources (Gumperz 1964). The model has changed as research into linguistic ideologies has come to the fore and today repertoire is seen as a functioning multiplicity, constantly developing in the intersubjectivity, and not an objectified unit. It is described as simultaneously connected to subjectivity, to a person, and intersubjectivity, to a community and the environment (Busch 2012a, Blommaert and Backus 2013). This approach is based on Bakhtin's much cited idea: “our speech is filled with other people's words” (Bakhtin 1979 [1934–1935]: 185 cited by Busch 2012b; Bakhtin 1981, cited by Milani and Jonsson 2012: 46; Blackledge and Creese 2014: 8). Resources of a person's repertoire are common property, shared with other persons. Others, but not necessarily everyone, in the given environment understand them and use them as well. The meaning of resources evolves through common linguistic practices.

Many resources in our repertoire are linked with social meaning. Speakers making use of resources have a common (and constantly changing) knowledge of their social meanings. This knowledge is multifaceted and complex. It contains for example thoughts and judgements about which language a resource belongs to. In Tiszavasvári, for example, students are convinced, that some words their teachers hold as Hungarian words with a Romani suffix are actually Romani words. In this case, the judgements of non-Roma and Roma are different about the belonging of some words to the one or other language. But this is not a local phenomenon: judgements, about which language a resource belongs to, vary all over the world. For instance, in the case of so called “loanwords”, speakers of European national languages often know that these words used to be part of another language, but they do not care anymore and assess them as part of their own language now. With regards to other words, speakers might feel that they represent foreign influence in their language. Such judgements often change with time, depending on various factors.

Of course, the social meaning of a word consists of much more than the views about its belonging to a language. Speakers know who typically use such a word, in which situation, and what people might think about someone using it. Speakers have views about the political

or aesthetic value of resources, too. Such views are always based on a common knowledge of some people who belong together in some way (Agha 2005). This sense of togetherness, based on a shared knowledge about one or the other resource can be local in nature, but it may also affect wider ranges of speakers, for example on a national level. Discourses of togetherness mesh both everyday life and scientific approaches, often in very different ways (the concept of scaling captures the ways in which discourses evolve, see Blommaert 2007; Rymes and Smail 2021). There are resources which are evaluated similarly by a larger community, for example by people who speak Hungarian in Hungary. Other resources have a social meaning only in a smaller community, for example among young people or among Roma, or even just among Roma youth in Tiszavasvári. The social meaning of some resources can differ in larger and smaller communities. For example, there are resources evaluated differently by Roma and non-Roma people in Tiszavasvári. This knowledge, being in constant development, is shared and links linguistic resources with social features. The repeated act of such linking is called enregisterment by Agha (2007: 81). It is a consequence of enregisterment that our speech marks our social position(s). Enregisterment works at different levels. It operates on morphemes, lexemes and phonological features (for example special pronunciations), but also on the level of discursive strategies, genres, schemes, and non-verbal gestures and language attitudes. People imply and interpret for example coolness in special ways, and in different communities, different resources can be enregistered as “cool”.

For example, video 34 of our video repository (*Intercultural reflections: Parents, teachers and school language*) was recorded in Szímő (Zemné) during a first grade-class with Roma students forming the majority. The non-Roma teacher, whose son is one of the students in her class, says in the video that *hazamegyünk és cigány hangléjtéssel beszélnek* (‘we go home and the children speak with a Romani intonation’). In this case, special features of the students’ intonation are registered locally as featuring the Roma. Such features of Hungarian have low prestige for non-Roma families. It is possible that also the Roma associate this way of speaking with being Roma. In any case, such features are not associated with negative judgements among the Roma. In the classroom, it is a way of speaking that is necessary to be assertive, to be friendly with others. However, among Hungarian minority families in Slovakia, such ways of speaking are interpreted as a threat to their Hungarian identity based on “clean” Hungarian language practices. Hungarians in Slovakia thus evaluate the Roma ways of speaking thus as a stigmatised way of speaking Hungarian.

### 3.1.1 The linguistic repertoire of the Roma in Tiszavasvári

The linguistic repertoire of the Roma in Tiszavasvári and Szímő (Zemné) are linked to more than one language. Most of them speak at home in ways which are linked to Romani and Hungarian, and in Szímő also to Slovak. Based on observations in Tiszavasvári this chapter shows that local Roma experience their repertoire somewhat differently than speakers of standardised languages do. They formulate statements about the unitary nature of their repertoire, which can be explained with the common opinion, that the Romani spoken by them is a non-standardised language. This language ideology has an impact on everyday life, their ways of speaking and their linguistic behaviour in and outside of school, and it can be traced in our classroom recordings, too. This subchapter summarizes 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.

Groupism (assuming clear and separable ethnic groups [Brubaker 2002, 2004] and their respective distinct languages, cf. chapter 1.1 and 1.2) has had less influence among Roma speakers in Tiszavasvári than among most other, non-Roma speakers in Hungary and Central-



Europe. In academic categorizations regarding Roma ethnicity, it can be a complicated issue to establish and distinguish Roma groups and subgroups (cf. chapter 1.2). 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, the local Roma always stressed how diverse the ways they speak are and added new and new examples of dissimilarity in language use. People said for example, that they speak differently in one part of the slum 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 associate these names generally with Roma). Local Roma also stated that there are differences between the language practices of community members in more than one way. 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. It was observed as well that each person has a different way of framing the language differences. In this community, the relationship of the languages is also conceived in a special way. 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).

Speakers asked in the interviews and conversations mentioned 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, connected to a range of factors such as place of residence within the slum, financial situation, or the family memories about one or more non-Roma ancestors (grandparents or great-grandparents). Some families register also “Hungarian Roma” ancestors. According to local opinions, those are the people who consider themselves Roma but do not speak Romani. (This does not necessarily coincide with the category of “Karpathian” 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, see: Erdős 1958, 1959; Vekerdi 1981; Réger 1988; Szalai 2006).

Local Roma usually say that their language is not identical with the language they call *Romani* or sometimes *Lovari* (this how the variational tradition calls the standardised Romani variety in Hungary. It is named after a variety it is based on, spoken by people identifying themselves as “Lovar Vlach Roma” [Szuhay 2005]. Most of the Roma proponents of standardisation in Hungary are Lovar Vlach Roma. More to this topic see in chapter 3.8). The Roma in Tiszavasvári say that real Romani is spoken “elsewhere” (they mention places from Budapest to the neighbouring towns and villages) or by the “old folks” of bygone times. 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 represents a relatively new state of the art or whether it has always been like that. Speakers estimate the percentages of Romani dominant conversations among local Roma much greater as that of the Hungarian dominant. These percentages relate to two things. On the one hand, speakers describe the proportion of conversations in Romani or in Hungarian. They usually estimate that the proportion of Romani is more than 70%. On the other hand, they often illustrate the proportion of Hungarian resources within their Romani dominant conversation (they also often say that it is

a “mixed language”). Regarding this issue 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 the stigmatised and marginalized life in the slum. According to observations among young Roma in the school and kindergarten, speaking Hungarian in local Roma families is more a discursive image than reality. Linguistic socialization takes place dominantly in Romani, but people always add that Hungarian plays also an important role in it. Those who were asked 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 socialized and speak Hungarian already in the 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 current 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 about 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 speaking about them follows the binary logic of groupism. The result of this is that participants' accounts are often contradictory, variable or even confusing. Next we discuss three examples (cited and discussed also in Heltai 2020a: 96–98).

In excerpt 1, Zorán, the Grandpa and Ildikó and Jázmin, who are young mothers, talk with János Imre Heltai in a recorded conversation. 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 említenék 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.*  
'Well it's like that say I have one- not just one but I will mention only one from the 16, so an 8 month old grandchild, he has been crying in Gypsy when we speak Gypsy to her. But it's the same in Hungarian. So she learns them as one. She does not learn Hungarian and Gypsy separately.'
- János *Igen, persze, értem. És így volt maguknál is?*  
'Yes of course, I see. So it was like that with you as well?'
- Ildikó *Igen.*  
'Yes'.
- Jázmin *Így- így- így születik szerintem az ember.*  
'That's it, I think you are born that way.'
- Ildikó *És ugyanúgy rátalál a cigány nyelvre is, mint a magyar nyelvre.*  
'And they find their way to the Gypsy language in the same way as to the Hungarian language.'

Zorán claims that the child „cries” in Romani when speaking to him Romani. Then he says that the two (languages) are learned “as one”. This language ideology is shared by the



mothers present in the conversation. Such expressions clearly refer to the local linguistic practices as united, without separating languages in the socialization process.

In extract (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 speak, also the little ones and they speak well? So in the slum 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. Asked whether all children speak Romani, she considers it important to add that some also do 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. Extract (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 százalékban. Szóval nem olyan nagy a különbség egyébként...*  
 ‘If I would say it in percentages, I think they [the families on the upper end, who hold themselves as “more Hungarian” families] speak 70 % in Gypsy, lets say Zsolts family, or those at the lower end say 85 %. So the difference is not so big in any case...’
- Zsolt *Így van, így van.*  
 ‘Yeah yeah.’

This couple lives outside the slum, in the city center, Gabi is non-Roma and Zsolt is Roma, his family members live in the slum. Gabi tries to express the percentages of Romani-dominated conversations in families who consider themselves “more Hungarian”, with

conversations in families which do not claim such, and establishes that the difference is actually not a big one and linguistic practices can be characterized 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, conceptualizations of local Roma regarding the belonging of resources to a language can be different from the opinion of 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 linguistics, they can be described as “borrowings” or “loan words” of Hungarian origin. For local Roma children, they are Romani words. What is more, Roma often perceive them as part of both languages Romani and Hungarian, as we will see the following extracts. Extract (4) and (5), (see also Heltai 2020a: 94), display a discussion between the researchers and the mothers, where one of them, Magda speaks about this topic as follows:

- (4) Magda *A- mi cigányul beszélünk, majdnem egyforma a magyarral. Tehát vetekszik. 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.*  
‘We speak Gypsy almost the same way as Hungarian. They are equal. We say something in Gypsy and the Hungarians understand what I just said, too. Yeah. Lets’ say that is a *pohár* [glass]. We call it a glass in Gypsy.’

Later in the conversation, the other mother, Móni considers these elements also as not Hungarian words, more as 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 ours has such expressions which are Hungarian. Just like we would say it in Hungarian, just different. 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 clearly of Hungarian origin for Hungarians (Hu. *seprű* ‘broom’). It also contains a Romani suffix marking grammatical gender which Hungarian does not have (for details, see Heltai 2020a: 106–107).

- (6) Endre *Na most például egyszer megfogtam egy cigányembert ott Máriapócson [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 already, 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! [vki közbeveti:] seprüvo. Na tessék, fél magyar!*  
‘How do you say a broom? Your mother is brooming, 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 silági.*  
‘In Gypsy we can say SILÁGYI to a broom.’
- Endre *Na! Ez a cerhar.*  
‘Hey! That’s a cerhar.’
- Ferenc *Na tessék. Köszönöm szépen!*  
‘There you go. Thank you very much!’
- János *És azt itt nem mondja senki?*  
‘And nobody uses that here?’
- Endre *Nem.*  
‘No.’
- János *És akkor maga honnan tudja?*  
‘And then how do you know it?’
- Ferenc *Azért mert tanultam.*  
‘Because I learnt it.’
- Endre *Ez az eredeti, silági.*  
‘That’s the original, BROOM.’
- János *És maga is ismeri ezt, silági?*  
‘And do you know it as well, BROOM?’
- Andor *Most hallottam.*  
‘This is the first time I heard it.’

The term *silági* is introduced by Ferenc, who Ferenc moved into the community and was not brought up in Tiszavasvári. For the others is term *silági* he is bringing into the conversation, new, they use the resource *seprüvo*. In the discussion, this resource is evaluated in three ways. Ferenc categorizes it as half-Hungarian, and the elder Endre notes that it is actually Hungarian. It is clear from the answer to Ferenc's question (probably by Andor) that the term *seprüvo* is interpreted by other speakers as part of Romani, too.

### 3.1.2 Consequences at school

In the video recordings students make use of the view that some resources belong to more than one language. They include new resources in their Romani with ease. They make use of these resources in the same sense as adults in above examples: as Romani words, which are alike or similar in Hungarian. The video 13, (*The teacher as language learner in the translanguaging classroom*), contains a part of a history lesson in the fifth class. The teacher, Tünde, has written four Hungarian words on the board: *király* ‘king’, *szolga* ‘servant’, *pásztor* ‘shepherd’ and *ikrek* ‘twins’. The words are connected to myths in Ancient Rome, which the class had covered in previous lessons. The students’ task was to construct sentences using these words, in Romani or in Hungarian at their choice. After completing this task, the students reported their sentences as follows (excerpt 7, [video 13: 0.59–2.32](#)):

- (7) Tünde [egy diák utolsó mondatát ismételve]: *O ikri pasztora hile. Nem értem. Kérhetek segítséget?*



- [repeating the last sentence of a student]: 'THE TWINS WERE SHEPHERDS. I don't understand. May I ask for your help?'
- student 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?*  
'All right! Whoa! Let's sort out this sentence! What does the shepherd have to do with the twins? Yes please?'
- student 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!'
- student 3 *O pásztori opre találingya po ikri.*  
'THE SHEPHERD FOUND THE TWINS.'
- Tünde *Na, ez már így nagyon jó! És akkor, hogyha átjavítod a mondatodat, akkor pipálhatod, jó?*  
'That's it. It has worked out this time around. If you correct your sentence here, you can tick it off, ok?'
- student 4 *O pásztori sungye vorbi- roven o ikri*  
'THE SHEPHERDS HEARD THE TWINS CRY.'
- Tünde *Húha! Segítesz, kérek?*  
'Whoops! Are you going to help me, please?'
- student 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!'
- student 6 *A pásztor vette magához az ikreket.*  
'The shepherd took in the twins.'
- Tünde *Ügyes vagy. Igen?*  
'Good! Next, please!'
- student 7 *A pásztori rakja e beáto....*  
'THE SHEPHERD FOUND THE CHILDREN.'
- Tünde *És ez mit jelent?*  
'And what does this mean?'
- student 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!'
- student 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!'



Among the outcomes of this task are 5 Romani-based sentences (written with capital letters). The students incorporated the four given Hungarian words by providing them with Romani suffixes (written with capitals in italics). They did not attempt to find a Romani word for them. The word 'twins' appears in sentences 1, 2 and 3 with Romani suffixes (*ikri*, expressing plural), in sentences 4 and 5 it has even retained its Hungarian form (*ikrek*, expressing 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 students use the Hungarian words in the task for speaking 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) arguing that there are words in Romani that are very similar to Hungarian.

Also resources linked to school discipline are often transformed by the students in similar ways. In most Hungarian schools, lessons begin with a so called "report" by the students for the teacher. Every week, two students are responsible for discipline in the classroom, and one of their duties is to deliver this 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 students on-duty enter the front of the classroom, turn towards the class and the teacher. This little ceremony at the beginning of the lessons is part of a rigid school tradition. Teachers often employ it as it helps them calm down the children after the break. The report, delivered loudly and in chorus, but in singular first person, entails following passage in Hungarian (excerpt 8.).

- (8) students    Osztály vigyázz! A tanárnőnek tisztelettel jelentem, hogy az osztály  
 on-duty       létszáma 22, ebből hiányzik hét tanuló. Az osztály a rajzórára készen áll.  
                   'Class get ready! I respectfully report that seven students are missing out of  
                   22; the class is ready for a drawing class.'

In the TL-movie 16 (*Translanguaging in a fixed school practice*), the students 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 students add only some Romani suffixes to perform it in Romani (excerpt 9):

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



The students incorporate also newly learned subject-specific terminology into Romani in a similar way. In video 7 (*Technical terms for school subjects*) students demonstrate their knowledge. Given the chance to use Romani as well, 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 terms) become thus 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. What is more, it has transformative force to embrace new language resources learned at school. Due to their special 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 with regards to details of such practices, but the tendencies can be similar in several localities across Europe. In a similar manner, in video 32 (*Multisensory approach to language learning*), recorded in Zemné (Szímő), a boy reuses a Slovak saying about the typical autumn weather (Excerpt 9, [video 32: 1.39–1.55](#)):

- (9) student 1 *Del o bris- (...) nem!*  
'IT'S RAIN- (...) Not!'  
teacher *Na? Fúj a hideg szél!*  
'Well? The cold wind is blowing!'  
student 2 *Phurdel i bálvál sugyrész.*  
'THE COLD WIND IS BLOWING.'  
student 1 *Phurdel i bálvál.*  
'THE WIND IS BLOWING.'  
student 2 *Sugyrész.*  
'COLDLY'  
student 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 endings: *Hullin o falevelula* is in Hungarian 'hullanak a falevelek' (En. 'the leaves fall').

### 3.1.3 Teachers' translanguaging stance: activating the whole repertoire

Over the past few years, teachers in Tiszavasvári have developed a translanguaging stance to accommodate to the needs of the sociolinguistic situation introduced in subchapter 3.1.1. This subchapter, focusing on questions of pedagogy, provides examples from our video repository, how to make teaching more efficient and enjoyable by exploiting students' bilingualism and their language ideologies. The subchapter looks at three areas that can be used to mobilize students' 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 of it, three such videos are analysed here. In the classroom scene shown in Video 5 (*Translanguaging in Math Class*), students are assigned to work in groups. The teacher first gives the instructions for the task in Hungarian and then asks a student to summarize the essence of the task in Romani ([video 5: 0.42–2.28](#)). The translation appears in this video as a task assignment procedure. Repeating the task in Romani helps to record the information on the one hand and the interpretation of the task on the other hand, both by the translating student and the students listening. During the completion and listening of the translation, the content already uttered (in Hungarian) is repeated, so the students get the opportunity to rethink the task. After translating the task into Romani, the students collect the main points of the task in Hungarian, so after the translation by the translator they 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 summarizing the content of a fairy tale. The teacher distributes details of a Roma tale in Hungarian. Students are asked to summarize the content of the passage in two rounds: first in Hungarian, and secondly, in the language and manner 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 (summary of texts) in two different ways. Summary as a general language competence (cf. García and Kleyn 2016: 24) is an abstract activity in which speakers – in this case on the basis of a given text – highlight, systematize and articulate essential points. Such a translanguaging practice is particularly suitable for developing these skills in a multilingual environment: by giving students the opportunity to summarize the text in their local everyday way, it helps them to make this competence work even when mobilizing resources for the language of instruction.

Video 13 (*The teacher as language learner in the translanguaging classroom*) shows a history lesson where the teacher organizes the most important historical elements and concepts related to the founding of ancient Rome into words and then asks the students to form sentences in either Romani or Hungarian ([video 13: 0.42–2.42](#)). In cases where students formulate a Romani statement, the teacher uses two strategies: either asks another student 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 students to confirm that she has understood the sentence well ([video 13: 5.02–5.18](#)). With this, the teacher also learns, and the knowledge gained in this way contributes to her better understanding of the translanguaging manifestations of the students. The possibility of translating helps students to report on their pre-existing knowledge in a way that is not tied to a language, and that communication is not constrained by language barriers. The translation helps to shed light on whether the information is well-recorded and when a summary needs to be corrected. The teacher not only indicates when one of the students is making an inaccurate statement, but also ensures that the correction is done together and that the clarified sentence is repeated in Hungarian and Romani. In sum, translation, while taking time, has its advantages: the teacher can keep track of students' knowledge because students dare to say what they know; weaker Hungarian language competence does not hinder student reporting. Furthermore, students also practice competences through translation.

Text composition, like translation, is a general language competence that cannot be linked to individual languages, so its development is not related to a single language spoken by students. 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 Roma in the Carpathian Basin. During this class, students working in groups write down 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 students' writings. On the one hand, translanguaging helps students to systematize their knowledge and thoughts in writing (this is well illustrated by the length of students' Romani texts: they create relatively long texts during group work). On the other hand, the ability to take notes can be developed more effectively, as the focus is not on the language, but on recording and organizing the knowledge to be acquired through writing. Developing the ability to compose and take notes in a translingual way – as this is also a language-independent general language competence – will also help students to employ it more consciously later in other tasks, in different genres and in different situations, such as writing down the material of a frontal lesson, writing an essay or taking notes before an oral exam.

In the life of a school, special attention is paid to the plays and scenes performed by the students. In Hungarian schools, these are usually associated with ceremonies or drama classes. There are two examples of the latter in our video library: one is video 21 (*Imitating Romani "adult speech" at school*), where students play a market scene ([video 21: 1.01–2.27](#)), the other is video 33 (*Creative engagement in translingual learning*), where students tell a story in both Hungarian and Romani ([video 33: 1.44–4.06](#)).

In Video 21, we see two students performing a spontaneous scene of bargaining between the customer and the seller at a fair. The dialogue took place in Romani between two students and it was viewed by the rest of the class as an audience. The improvised performance develops the students' ability to write a text independently, as it is connected to the fairy tale they have been reading, but the students still had to figure out what to say and how. This practice also improves situational awareness, as it helps students to recognize and use phrases and shapes related to different situations. In video 33 we see a theatre play about King Matthias. The text is based on a Hungarian tale, which learners translated into Romani. Then they learnt both the Hungarian and the Romani version. (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 heyday of the Kingdom is tied to his reign). All students in the class took part in the performance, everyone had some role to play. Memorizing the text develops the students' long-term memory and language skills (pronunciation, vocabulary expansion). The development of these skills was also facilitated by the fact that the students, 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 prepared over long lessons (video 33), allow for the emergence of non-standard local language practices in school situations in which the "advantage" of the standardised language of instruction disappears. Both tasks were based on literacy-linked activities (reading of story tales), but the tasks themselves were focused on the oral skills. (In case of video 21, the class read a story in Romani from a storybook that was produced together by parents, researchers, students and teachers in the course of the translanguaging-project (cf. chapter 3.3.4). In case of video 33, the story acted out was translated by the children from a Hungarian tale written in the lesson. 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, but for them with greater freedom, joy and confidence. This is why performance can be one of the most important and successful tools for translanguaging education.



## 3.1.4 Students reflections on their repertoire

The repertoire and the ways in which it is operated are largely determined by the linguistic ideologies that surround them. These are covered in the videos 29 (*Childrens' 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 that they did. 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 to speak Romani, 3) they speak Romani at home, too ([video 29: 1.24–2.00](#)). The first answer testifies that for the respondent, Romani language and Roma identity presuppose each other. The second answer, which emphasizes a positive emotional attitude, does not make it clear why the students like to speak Romani. According to the third answer, family members also speak this way, so Romani reinforces belonging to this community. In the family, the children's language practices are not subject to linguistic correction either.

A premise of the question whether the children speak Romani at home ([video 29: 2.04–2.09](#)) contains that the children's answers might be different. Since majority of the students follow translingual practices at home, it is not easy for students to answer the teacher's question along monolingual ideologies. The following answers were given (excerpts 10 to 14, [video 29: 2.11–2.42](#)):

- (10) student 1 *Anyukámmal cigányul, apukámmal pedig magyarul-*  
'We speak Gypsy with my mother, Hungarian with my father'
- (11) student 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.'
- (12) student 3 *Nekem a családom mind cigányul beszél.*  
'My whole family speaks Gypsy.'
- (14) student 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 show what is affecting them at that moment. One such influencing factor is that the questioning takes place in the system of *a language*. As a consequence, two languages appear in the students' answers – Thus meeting the inherent expectation of the question – even if they do not follow (only) this logic during their language practices or in their metalinguistic reflections on them (cf. 3.1.1).

The next question of the teacher is whether the Romani language is worse than the Hungarian one, and whether we can talk about good and bad language at all? ([video 29: 2.49–2.59](#)). According to one student, the Romani language is worse because Hungarians do not understand it. Although children feel emotionally closer to Romani, there are aspects that makes 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 the video 30 (*Children's opinion about translanguaging at school*) show that bilingualism is not perceived as beneficial or as a disadvantage. Bilingualism is seen simply as a feature of their lives and as everyday reality for them. In their answers, students are hardly able 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 results of the teacher's translanguaging stance can also be seen in the videos: the answers to this question in Romani ([video 30: 1.39–1.48](#); [video 30: 2.14–2.22](#); [video 30: 2.31–2.41](#)) show that students have got used to that they can talk in that way to the teachers at class, too. Normally, children rely primarily on the resources of the Hungarian language at school; views on speaking Romani may be better, could be present because Romani utterances are not related to the experiences of correction and inadequacy. Thus, the fact that students find their Hungarian worse compared to Romani may be related to this. Thus, the experience of Hungarian is linked to the fact that it is the language of the school subjects, so in the school environment they have to face that they can be good and bad, right or wrong in a language. In the case of Romani, used largely only in informal speaking situations, such expectations, criteria and norms are not present. In addition to the experiences gained at home and in the bilingual community, the children's opinions about languages and speech were influenced by the monolingual ideologies represented by the teacher and their questions as well as in the students' desire to meet the assumed expectations.

### **3.1.5 Translanguaging pedagogical stance in monolingual and multilingual classrooms: some similarities and some pitfalls**

Translanguaging scholarship usually concentrates on bi- and multilingual situations. However, Vogel and García highlight that the concept provides a label besides of the linguistic practices of bilinguals for all users of language (2017: 2). Li also argues that translanguaging is not necessarily a concept that can only be applied 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 et al. (2015) argue, a bilingual person's idiolect would consist 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.

The translanguaging practices described in a situation with Hungarian-Romani bilingualism draw attention to the procedures that are lagging behind in situations described as monolingual, in which the language practices of the speakers are related to more than one mode of speaking. Such bidialectal situations are interpreted in relation to Hungarian speakers (and very often in other cases as well) in the duality of speaking in the standardised way or in a sub-standard way. Research outside the translanguaging paradigm also points out to benefits of similar practices that can be exploited in school education (Parapatics 2019, who cites here Vangsnes et al. 2017).

The first and most important difference in the language behaviour of speakers considered to be Hungarian bidialectal compared to bilinguals is that in a monolingual environment the deviation from the preferred, supported and expected standard by the school is judged in a negative way in all cases. This is because, in the spirit of a homogenising linguistic ideology, actors in public education assume that all children entering school speak the same way. However, a monolingual child also has his or her own idiolect: „[...] 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).

In the case of children who acquire competencies and resources that are predominantly Romani-related at home, teachers perceive a lack of knowledge of a language, in our case Hungarian, which serves as the language of instruction and the state language. If teachers perceive the relative lack of Hungarian standard competencies in the case of monolingual children, the purpose of Hungarian-language education is the same as in the case of bilingual Roma children: to introduce, teach and learn the Hungarian standardised language variety. In the case of a bidialectal child, however, this does not really mean teaching the standard, but eliminating resources that are different from the standard and interpreted as linguistic errors. This constitutes an important difference: in the case of bilingual Roma children, teachers with a translanguaging stance do not usually correct the so-called “language errors” they notice in the vernacular, that is, they do not confront the learner with speaking incorrectly. On the contrary, they support and praise the students for mobilising their language resources beyond the language of instruction. In the case of bidialectal children, the opposite pedagogical and linguistic process is often observed. When, during an educational practice, a child who speaks in his or her own idiolect is regularly confronted by the teacher with the fact that the language (s)he has learned is not good. Such a student is thus prevented from using his or her language resources to express his or her thoughts. In public education in Hungary, speakers are expected to revise and correct their dialectal forms in spoken and written language, in this manner, the way of speaking they have learned at home is presented as flawed. This can make the speaker so insecure that he or she will make – now real – linguistic errors (hypercorrection) that he would never make without interfering with his linguistic manifestations.

Another procedure connected to translanguaging pedagogy is that teachers incorporate the new Hungarian (= language of instruction) words into the Hungarian resources of bilingual students by subjecting them to close inspection. This has to be done, because the new word, concept, name or verb that appears in the curriculum might not exist in the mother tongue of the students, but even if it does, the Hungarian word is often unmotivated for the students. While, for example, for a student from a Hungarian-speaking family at home, a noun formed from a verb can be identified on the basis of similar verb (in this sense *tudós* ‘scholar’ is motivated for the student as a word formed from the verb *tud* ‘to know’), the same is not necessarily true for a student not raised in Hungarian. While translanguaging stance in bilingual education also pays attention to the development of concepts, in the case of bidialectal children there is a lack of discussions about new words i.e., mainstream education teaches them as quasi-foreign words. Monolingual, homogenizing education is based on the assumption that for Hungarian speakers, regardless of the language in which they grew up, the so-called new words are automatically added to the speakers' language resources. However, experience tells that this is not the case. As a conclusion, the teaching methods of the translanguaging stance would be very useful even among students with a repertoire related to one language only.

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