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Phonological and morphological features of Boyash language varieties in Eastern Slovakia[1]

1. Introduction

Apart from some sporadic data collected by a few researchers, systematic research on the language varieties spoken by the Boyash (or Bayash) only became a focus of linguistics in the 2000s, first in Hungary, then in Croatia, Serbia and sporadically in Slovakia, Bulgaria and Greece. Nowadays, it is precisely the increased interest in the Vlax Roma that has brought the Boyash more into the limelight across Europe. At the same time, academics focus on sociology and political science, and linguistic research on the Boyash is often secondary (Sorescu Marinković 2008b: 174-175; Arató 2015a: 7). "Research into the traditions of Romanian-speaking Boyash Gypsies is the most neglected field of Hungarian Roma Studies to date", says Kovalcsik (1988: 215) in her first study on the Boyash, who not only raised awareness of Boyash folk music, but also, together with fellow scholars, collected a significant corpus of Boyash language for posterity (Arató 2015b: 355). Kovalcsik (1994) claims that the main reason for the scarce and incomplete information on the Boyash is that they speak Romanian, as the Romani-speaking communities received much more attention from the beginning. Since then, it has become clear that the reasons are more numerous, including the social status of the Boyash, the adaptability of communities, their sporadic spatial location in some regions, asymmetrical representation compared to other Roma groups, but mainly the homogenizing and simplifying practices of the majority society.

While it has long been known that Slovakia is home to different multilingual Boyash communities with different identities and speaking also Romanian varieties of the language, very little information has been published about them (Kovalcsik 1994). Gergely Agócs published a study entitled *Sociálna identifikácia Bajášov na Slovensku* (Social Identification of the Boyash in Slovakia), which

discussed the most important and basic social science issues of the topic. Earlier articles on the subject mainly focused on trough making and only partially on the Boyash communities and their similarities and differences from other groups defined predominantly by occupation (e.g. Okrucký, 1964; Stano, 1965; Holicová, 1977).

This paper seeks to complement information about the Boyash, firstly with a critical presentation of categorisation activities, and secondly with the migration history of the Slovakian Boyash community. The focus is on lexical, phonological and morphological features so they will be discussed in more detail.

2. Description of the research

I have performed fieldwork in communities regarded as Boyash since 2013. My dialectological survey of Boyash language varieties included linguistic data gathering from approximately 2,250 informants in a total of 165 places. The interviews were conducted in Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Romania, Ukraine, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. Their language was primarily Boyash and Hungarian but sometimes also Romani, Slovakian, Ukrainian, and English. In almost every case there was elicited data recording (using a translation questionnaire comprised of 270 sentences, where I looked at 1,900 items, and I also used the direct question method) and non-elicited data recording (spontaneous conversations with me or other members of the community, sometimes re-recording tales, songs and other oral folklore). The audio material recorded in Eastern Slovakia is about 20 hours, the interviews were made between 2013 and 2018. My research findings are being processed in my self-developed corpus management software and will later become searchable in an online database. This survey gives priority to morphological and phonological phenomena and lexical differences.

3. Social and linguistic definition problems

The difficulty in the scientific study of the Boyash is that many researchers divide these communities into groups and give them names based on various criteria, but familiarity with these terms is not universal. It is not always known who gives a name to a group or subgroup and on what grounds and how it is related to other groups or subgroups (Rosenberg 2020a). We encounter endo- and exo-ethnonyms, endo- and exoglottonyms as well as scientific (i.e. constructed or inferred) designations or even misnomers. Some ethnic groups distance themselves from other ethnic groups, and may not even know of any other Boyash communities besides their own, and the relationship between the names of some groups and their supposed language use remains unknown (Rosenberg 2021a). As

a result, this paper will briefly touch upon the social definitional problems and categorisation practices that generally permeate the literature on the Boyash and Roma/Gypsies in general, as well as the relationship between the image of each group and the image of themselves and each other, and how this correlates with academic practice (for more on these, see Rosenberg, 2018a, 2021a).

3.1. Categorisation models

There are two types of categorisation of Boyash. The first is the **horizontal model**, which juxtaposes independent, spatially distinct and separable groups with their own history and historical consciousness, cultural characteristics, language variety and glottonyms specific to the group and brings them under the umbrella term *Boyash* (e.g. Erdős, 1958/1989, pp. 42–43; Kovalcsik 1988, p. 216; Kovalcsik, 1993, p. 231; N. Békefi, 2001, pp. 6–7). The second one is the **hierarchical model**, which distinguishes three levels (Agócs, 2003, pp. 42–49). Level I is the belonging to the whole ethnocultural group, which includes the common Romanian origin, the common mother tongue, which contains more conservative forms, and traditional woodworking as a craft, as well as a set of specific cultural characteristics. This also includes the main ethnonyms of the Boyash, e.g. *Rumuni* 'Romanians', *Bajáši* 'Boyash', *Korytári* 'trough makers', and the relationship between the Boyash and other Gypsy groups and the surrounding society. Level II refers to the affiliation of the Boyash to particular subgroups and the ideologies and ethnonyms associated with the relations between different subgroups, e.g. *Goleci* (cf. R. *goleț*), *Dunáši* 'Danube-side', etc. Level III refers to the affiliation to patrilineal lineages (*vigă*), i.e. how they perceive their own lineage within a given subgroup, how they define it and how they think about other lineages.

While it facilitates thinking, the *in vitro* use of both the horizontal and hierarchical models can also be extremely misleading, resulting in highly simplistic practices and misinterpretations of reality. The external and internal ethnonyms and glottonyms used by groups are situational, as is the diversity of ways of thinking about the groups around them. Some groups do not commune with others or only partially, some groups are considered closer to themselves than others, and in some cases they are unaware of certain communities under the umbrella term *Boyash*. Neither of the models can reproduce reality in sufficient detail to faithfully reflect both spatiality and temporality. The advantage of the hierarchical model is that it better captures the researcher's vision based on the totality of the ideologies of informants, but its shortcoming is precisely this: the categorisation of the levels reflects a rather constructed or hegemonic way of thinking, while thinking about the different levels is not only situational, varying from individual to individual and from area to area, but also rather optional.

To put this into practice, we need to imagine a real-life example of two men of a similar age living on the same street in a place in Eastern Hungary. One of them, who has been a trough maker all his life, considers himself a trough maker, a Boyash, a Gypsy and a Hungarian, but does not reject the term *Romanian*. He was first taught Boyash as a child, learned Hungarian in kindergarten, and considers his language Romanian in both Boyash and Hungarian. He has never been to Romania, and is distant and distrustful of the other Gypsy groups who make up the majority of the local community. The other man, a fishmonger, feels comfortable with the term *Romanian*, situationally still accepts the ethnonyms *Boyash*, but not the ethnonyms *Gypsy* and *Hungarian*. He has spoken both Boyash and Hungarian since childhood, and he considers his language to be Romanian in both Boyash and Hungarian. He is a regular visitor to Transylvania and has serious reservations about the other Gypsy groups in the village. The two men consider themselves and each other to be members of the same group, as confirmed by their friends and distant relatives.

From a linguistic point of view, however, the biggest problem with social categorisation models is that they do not convey linguistic information, or they only do so indirectly, and are therefore not particularly suitable for linguistic inquiry. It should be kept in mind that the dozens of varieties of Boyash (far more than the number of ethnic subgroups) are spoken by groups of different origins, lifestyles and identities, who often question the validity of the umbrella terms. The majority of the Boyash in Croatia and Hungary do not consider themselves or their language to be Romanian, and are hence like the other Roma groups, they are categorised as stateless national minorities, such as the Sami, Welsh, Bretons, Frisians, Gallegos, Basques, and Sorbs (Rosenberg, 2021b), but from a linguistic point of view this does not mean that the variety of languages they speak is in any way more distant from those who attach the label *Romanian* to their language.

The use of glottonyms by each group is also situational. Some language communities prefer *Boyash* while others prefer *Romanian* but all are aware that their language variety is closely related to that of speakers from Romania even if mutual intelligibility is highly limited. My research findings show that choosing any of the alternative glottonyms firstly depends on the geographical distance of the given community from Romania and, secondly, it reflects the linguistic and social identify of the community and the individual. Each glottonym distances one group from another, whatever users want to express, and makes them homogeneous as it seeks to conceal the internal differences (Rosenberg, 2018a).

3.2. Geographic distribution, ethnonyms and glottonyms of the Slovakian Boyash

The Boyash communities in Slovakia probably consist of no more than 1,000 to 2,000 members, and are therefore considered by scholars to be the third smallest group of Gypsies (cf. Agócs, 2003, p. 41) after North Central and Vlax Romani speakers. The first group arrived in Slovakia from the east, via Transcarpathia, in the last third of the 19th century. The first settlement, Dolný Les (unofficially called *Butki erdő* in Hungarian), was established in the forest near Butka in Eastern Slovakia and later became the largest community of the Boyash in Slovakia, with more than 200 inhabitants. Further settlements were established over time in the villages of Pavlovce, Podhoroď, Podčičva, Kravany, Malá Stretava, etc. (Agócs, 2003, p. 49). Stano (1965, p. 553) believed that "the migration flow of the Romanian trough-makers was almost exclusively limited to Eastern Slovakia". By contrast, it is now known from the speakers that some families settled in Western Slovakia, for example in the villages of Veľký Ďúr, Telince, Ratnovce, Hlohovec, Vráble, etc., and in recent decades even more have moved to the cities of Košice, Bratislava or its agglomeration (e.g. Most pri Bratislave).

A later group arrived in what is now Western Slovakia after the First World War, presumably through what is now Hungary. After their arrival, they moved mainly in the area west of the town of Novohrad, and today the largest group is found in the village of Čata near Želiezovce, with some families also living in the villages of Kamenín, Dolinka, Trebušovce and of course Želiezovce. Many of them moved to the Czech Republic in the post-war period (e.g. to the village of Židovice), where they stopped making troughs to work in factories (Agócs, 2003, p. 49).

The most common names used by the Boyash in Eastern Slovakia to describe themselves and their group are *băjaš*, *cigan* 'Gypsy' in Slovak, or *korytár* 'trough maker'. They use the endoglottonym *limba dă rumîń* 'Romanian language', i.e. they speak *rumăńęšťe* 'Romanian'. In Slovak, the term *rumunský* 'Romanian' is also used, but they note that they are aware that their language differs in several important respects from the colloquial Romanian they hear and from the Romanian spoken by other Gypsies (e.g. Gabor). The Boyash communities in Western Slovakia mainly use the term *băjaš* to describe themselves, calling their language variety *limba dă băjaš* 'Boyash language'. They speak *băjăšęšće* 'in Boyash', but in Slovak the term *rumunský* 'Romanian' is more common.

The Boyash in Eastern Slovakia use the term *dunaš* to refer to the formerly socially distinct group living in Western Slovakia, if they know them, while those in Western Slovakia use the mostly negative term *guľec ~ goľęc* to refer to the Easterners. However, these terms are avoided in inter-ethnic communication, so

the Hungarian terms *dunamentiek* 'those beside the Danube' (instead of *dunaš*) or *tiszahátiak* 'those beyond the Tisza' *(instead of guľec ~ goľęc)* are used.

However, the Easterners use the term *guľec ~ goľęc* to refer to other, non-Boyash Gypsy persons and groups, or to the Roma in general (Slovakian: *Rómovia*), and in their language they use the parallel word *guľecęšće ~ golecęšće*[2] 'in Gypsy' (i.e. Romani). This is important because, on the one hand, this suggests that these communities make a distinction between Gypsy and Roma and if they feel the former term is their own, the latter is not. On the other hand, it should be pointed out that in Hungary there is also an ambiguity of *guľec ~ goľęc*: the Boyash in Tolna and Nógrád counties, called *dunás* 'by the Danube' by those living between the Danube and the Tisza and Tiszántúl, call the people living between the Danube and the Tisza and Tiszántúl *gojec*, while the group they refer to does not use the term for itself. As in Slovakia, in some areas the Vlax Roma, sometimes only the Gabor Roma, or even all Romani-speaking Roma communities are known as *guľec*, but occasionally all non-Boyash Roma communities, even the Hungarian-speaking Roma communities (also known as Romungro, Carpathian Roma i.e. former Central Romani speakers) are called *guľec*.

As transpires from the preceding examples, the diverse system of endoethno-nyms and exoethnonyms reveals heterogeneous social and ethnic relations, where the key elements are identification and differentiation. Feischmidt defines the concept of ethnicity as a relation and an associated attitude that is structurally important, which "is realised in the social practices of distancing and differ-rentiation." Embedded in social relations, it creates a specific order of differences which distinguishes those designated by the ethnic category from those unmarked and considered as homogeneous and usually associates this relation with a relation of power (2010, pp. 8–9). "Scholars looked at »ethnic groups« as self-explanatory phenomena for a long time, as communities sharing a certain cultural heritage and cultural patterns or as such defined by the same position in the struggle for political power or other resources" (op. cit.: 12). However, Boyash ethnic groups, just like other ethnic groups, do not exist a priori but are created and this is done in two ways: one is "from inside" so that group members reproduce the group's concept and their affiliation to it (e.g. *băjaš*, *cîgan*), and "from outside", by virtue of the environment's activities of categorisation and categorisation (e.g. *guľec, ardilęn*, *munćan*) (op. cit.: 12).

3.3. Geography and migration

In the half century or so since the publication of papers in the 1960s and 1970s (i.e. Okrucký, 1964; Stano, 1965; Holicová, 1977), the geographic distribution of the

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[2] Some informants also use the verb *goľecęšťe* in the sense 'to lie'.

Boyash has changed. They have moved from their previous settlements, leaving mainly smaller settlements with a low population density in favour of the big cities. One exception is Dolný Les, a one-road settlement (*časť* in Slovak) in the poplar forest between Drahňov and Stretavka, but administratively part of Budkovce. Kovalcsik (1994) describes her personal experience as follows: "Originally a small settlement, it has taken on its present appearance in recent decades, when stone houses were built in the place of some *koliba*. The poplar forest is now underutilised. Its inhabitants have given up trough making to work in Slovakian factories. After the political changeover, they, like their compatriots in their homeland, became unemployed. They then tried their hand at trading, exporting Slovak agricultural products to the Czech markets. However, after the separation of the two countries, the possibility of doing so became limited because they could not pay the high customs duties. For those who have not yet forgotten, the art of making wooden utensils has been revived: beautifully decorated spoons, kneading boards, rolling pins and bowls are now on sale. The majority of people do gardening, keep animals and fish in preparation for better days."[3]

    When I visited them for the first time 20 years later and asked a local man about the speech of the Boyash, he replied in Hungarian that not even middle-aged people speak Boyash, let alone young people. Instead, he stressed the importance of learning and the lifestyle change that goes with it, which has brought language exchange to the community[4]:

M: „Úgy vót, hogy minket az öregek, nagyapám már nem akart tanítni, mert aszondta: »Ebböl a keserves életbül ne egyél, mer ebbül én éltem eleget. Te erigy tanúni, legyen belőled szakma ember! Te ne tanúj tekenőköt csinálni!« Na és ü nem engedte, hogy tanújam. Akarta, hogy tanújak ki, legyen belőlem valami ember. Mer ő semmire nem tanút ki, ő vút egy rendes *obyčajnú*[5] ember, és ő csak itt a tekenőköt csinálta, a fakanálokot csinálta. S járták árulni, s abbol éltek." (Dolný Les, 2014)

M: "You know, the old people, my grandfather, didn't want to teach us anymore, because he said, 'Don't live this bitter life, because I've lived enough of it. Go and learn a trade. Do not learn trough making.' So he wouldn't let me learn it. He wanted me to learn a trade, to be a man. Because he never learnt anything, he was just a *simple* man, and he only made troughs and wooden spoons. And they went around selling them and that's how they lived."

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[3] Translated by M. R.

[4] The system of transcription, as mentioned before, will be a simplified one, for the texts to be easily readable. As for the interlocutors, in order to protect their identity, women were marked with W, men with M. Researcher was marked with MR - Matyas Rosenberg. Code-switching is written in italics.

[5] 'simple' (Slovakian).

As their economic competitiveness declined and the demand for their products diminished, the Boyash gradually abandoned their traditional occupations. Trough making, wooden spoon carving and basket weaving are now only rarely practised:

RM: Tu băjšîcă ješć, nu?

W: Ej, no!

RM: Ješće aiśe śińiva, kare inkă faśe troś?

W: Ale... băjaš... ale nu lukru momika dăn ľemn akol aša... nu fak momika.

RM: Ńime nu faśe ma trośiľeľę d-ej mîndre?

W: Nu, ńime.

RM: În *Mađarska* šađe ąn vom, kare faśe troś, furkulice sî ľingurj...

W: Ľingurka fak, ale troś mari ńime nu faśe kolo, ńime. *A nižšie* kuma ńime n-o faśe d-aja, k-ąr murid užę hej maj bătrăń, śe jera ľi akol ľi făśę. Užę kuma hej tăńirj, jak-a mńew vom, užę nu.

RM: Dă śe s-o dăzvăcatu-să?

W: Kă aję-j mare lukru, a už ma kuma nu kumpără, nu. Kă n-au bań, štic kum... (Podhoroď, 2015)

RM: You're a Boyash woman, aren't you?

W: Yes, of course!

RM: Is there anybody here who still makes troughs?

W: Well, there are some Boyash but they don't make anything out of wood anymore.

RM: No one makes those pretty troughs?

W: No, no one.

RM: There's a man in Hungary who makes troughs, forks and spoons...

W: They make spoons but nobody makes big troughs there anymore. And younger people never do so anymore because the old people who used to do it there are dead. Now the young people, like my husband, don't do it anymore.

RM: Why did they stop?

W: Because it's hard work and it's not worth it now, no. They have no money, you know how [this is]...

Choosing other occupations, they settled mainly in nearby towns such as Humenné, Trebišov, Sobrance or Bratislava. The last decades have also opened up the possibility of cross-border employment, with the more mobile Boyash taking jobs in the Netherlands, England, Germany or the Czech Republic, mainly in towns closer to Slovakia, such as Frýdek-Místek, Ostrava or Havířov (Rosenberg, 2017, pp. 101).

  The elderly members of Boyash communities in Ukraine still remember their former relatives among the Boyash people who migrated westwards, while the Boyash people in Eastern Slovakia no longer remember their own migration history. They do not keep in touch with each other, mainly for political reasons, e.g. the low number of border crossings, the difficulty of crossing the border, visa requirements, etc. and partly for geographical reasons, since the north-Eastern

Carpathians are located along the Slovak-Ukrainian border. In Slovakia, only few respondents were aware of the Boyash community living on the Ukrainian side of the border but they did not know any person directly and were not sure whether the Boyash living in the village had come from the other side of the border. Here is a counter-example:

RM: Voj dîn Ukrajina ac vińit aiśe? Da nu voj, ale baba ta, o đedu to... kîndva dămult...?

RM: You came here from Ukraine? I mean, not you guys, but your grandmother or grandfather... sometime back...?

W: Jo nu šťu... a me mama nu šťu ... tata... a lu mama tată, a jo nu šťu d-unđ jera, ale dăn Ruska. Dăm Ukrajina jera. Ale jo iž m-am năskut. Iś! (Podhoroď, 2015)

W: I don't know. I don't know my mother... my father... my maternal grandfather, I don't know where they're from, but they're from Russia. They were from Ukraine. But I was born here. Here!

4. Language situation

The majority of the Boyash people in Eastern Slovakia no longer speak the Romance variety spoken by their ancestors, but we do not even know the estimated proportion of speakers. Those who have some knowledge of Romanian also report that they use almost exclusively Slovak in everyday life, i.e. they are terminal speakers of Boyash. A significant number (also) communicate in Hungarian in their families, as their ancestors lived in areas where Hungarian speakers lived, but even in Southwest Slovakia, Hungarian is not rare. There is also a Rusyn language influence near the Slovak-Ukrainian border, so there are quadrilingual families speaking Boyash, Slovak, Hungarian and Rusyn on a daily basis, and this has a significant contact effect on the Boyash language varieties they speak.

Boyash is mainly acquired in the domains of primary language socialization, i.e. in the immediate or extended kinship and in oral communication, because in the domains dominated by the language(s) of the majority society (e.g. in education, public life, media, science, etc.), Boyash speakers have not had the opportunity to use their language and hence have not developed specialised language registers. These registers are usually replaced by a speaker's repertoire of Slovak, and to a lesser extent Hungarian, when speaking in Boyash. It is only in the last decade, with the spread of social media sites, that they have spontaneously started to write using the Slovak alphabet, but no written books have been published in their language variety and they are not familiar with the Romanian alphabet.

5. Typical features of the language variety of the Boyash in Eastern Slovakia

The Eastern Slovak Boyash speak pre-language reform Romanian varieties that are very close to each other and clearly distinguishable from the Western Slovak Boyash varieties. Those spoken in Eastern Slovakia are closely related to the Transcarpathian varieties, but also share several features with the Eastern Hungarian varieties, while those spoken in Western Slovakia are similar to the Transylvanian-Banatian dialects spoken in Hungary, in Nógrád County and mainly in the South Transdanubian region. The dialectological categorisation of the East Slovak Boyash varieties remains a task for linguistics, but preliminary data suggest that these varieties share many Transylvanian and Maramureș dialectal features, but are transitional varieties, and thus probably go back to several earlier Romanian regional varieties.

5.1. Lexical elements

There is an infinite number of differences between the Eastern Slovak Boyash varieties and standard Romanian, but some dialectal words and those with different meanings are particularly striking. Examples include *gîndęšťe* 'wants' (R. *gândește* 'thinks', cf. R. *vrea* 'wants'), *grăjęšťe* 'speaks' (R. *vorbește*, regional R. *grăiește*), *înkălzęšťe sạriľi* 'the sun is shining' (R. *bate soarele ~ soarele strălucește*, H. Arđ. *arđe sạriľẹ*), *kătă* 'next to' (R. *lângă*, cf. R. *către* 'towards'), *luvuťęšťe* 'plays an instrument' (R. *cânta*, H. Arđ. *să žạkă*), *žăndar* 'policeman' (R. *jandarm* 'gendarme', regional R. *jăndar* 'gendarme', cf. R. *polițist* 'policeman'). Other elements are identical to standard Romanian but differ from other varieties of Boyash: *mulcămęšťe* 'thanks' (R. *mulțumește*, but H. Arđ. *kisińęšće* 'thanks' ~ *zîše să fije sănătos* 'he says to be healthy'; the latter is said when thanking), *găsęšťe* 'finds' (R. *găsește*, H. Arđ. *află* 'finds'), *prę* 'very' (R. *prea* 'too much', H. Arđ. *ro ~ fạrće* 'very'). There are also cultural implications in that, unlike other Boyash varieties, the words *bărbat* and *mujęre* are used to denote 'husband' and 'wife', and *cîgan* es *cîgankă ~ căgankă* are not documented.

5.1.1. Hungarian loans

Hungarian loanwords also occur to a lesser extent, but some of them are derived from earlier Romanian dialects, e.g. *koštulęsťe* 'taste' (H. *kóstol*), *vušuľęšťe* 'to iron' (H. *vasal*), *musaj* 'must' (H. *muszáj*), *žădov* 'Jewish' (H. *zsidó*), *hotar* 'border' (H. *határ*), *păľinkă* 'brandy' (H. *pálinka*), *buđigăw* 'panties' (H. *bugyogó*) (for more details on on Hungarian elements in Romanian see Tamás 1966). Some of the borrowings, however, come from the local Hungarian language varieties spoken in South Slovakia, e.g. *korhaz* 'hospital' (H. *kórház*), *igozan* 'really' (H. *igazán*), *vonot* 'train' (H. *vonat*), *minđan* 'all the time' (H. *mindjárt*), *varoš* 'city' (H. *város*),

ezeră 'thousand' (H. *ezer*), *meg* 'even' (H. *még*), *de* 'but' (H. *de*), *lęčă* 'lecsó' (H. *lecsó*), *fol* 'wall' (H. *fal*).

To a lesser extent, there are words that are nearly or completely identical in form and meaning in Slovak and Hungarian. Most of them go back to a common word derived from one another. On the one hand, this makes it difficult to determine the origin of the word, and on the other hand, lexemes with similar forms can confuse each other, with speakers alternating between words with the same meaning but different forms, sometimes creating hybrid forms. The forms *lekvar* 'jam' (Sk. *lekvár*, H. *lekvár*), *rampă* 'ramp, barrier' (Sk. *rampa*, H. *rámpa*), , reinforce each other, and the forms *pilulkă* 'pill' (Sk. *pilulka*), *pirulă* 'same' (< H. *pirula*) are accompanied by the form *pirulkă* 'same' (Arató 2015c: 45). The similarity between *sumsid* 'neighbour' (H. *szomszéd*) and *sused* 'same' makes speakers uncertain about its use, which is exacerbated by the fact that the word is also known in Transylvanian Romanian dialects (regional R. *somsid ~ somsig ~ sâmsig ~ sumsâd*).

5.1.2. Slavic loans

The Slovakian Boyash people use a great many Slovak loanwords, e.g. *fabrikă* 'factory' (Sk. *fabrika*), *citron* 'lemon' (Sk. *citrón*), *hribă* 'mushroom' (Sk. *hriby*), *izbă* 'room' (Sk. *izba*), *popălńik* 'ashtray' (Sk. *popolník*), *mravec* 'ant' (Sk. *mravec*), *kráľovnă* 'queen' (Sk. *kráľovná*), *sťină* 'wall' (Sk. *stena*), *upratovačka* 'cleaning lady' (Sk. *upratovačka*), *biplată* 'payment' (Sk. *výplata*), *smed* 'thirst' (Sk. *smäd*), *opravă* 'repair shop' (Sk. *oprava*), *đed ~ đid* 'grandfather' (Sk. *dedo*, cf. Ukr. *ðið did*), *med* 'honey' (Sk. *med*), *zaclonă* 'curtain' (Sk. *záclona*), *poštar* 'postman' (Sk. *poštár*), *poštarka* 'postwoman' (Sk. *poštárka*), *ruđină* 'family' (Sk. *rodina*), *babă* 'grandmother' (Sk. *baba*, cf. Ukr. *баб(к)а bab(k)a*), *pavuk* 'spider' (Sk. *pavúk*), *hladńičkă* 'refrigerator' (Sk. *chladnička*), *nahlas* 'loudly' (Sk. *nahlas*), *krabică* 'box' (Sk. *krabica*), *oblohă* 'sky' (Sk. *obloha*), *advokatkă* 'female lawyer' (Sk. *advokátka*), *vojnă* 'war' (Sk. *vojna*), *osă* 'wasp' (Sk. *osa*), *kręzbă* 'drawing' (Sk. *kresba*), *diamant* 'diamond' (Sk. *diamant*), *napoj* 'drink' (Sk. *nápoj*), *sovă* 'owl' (Sk. *sova*). These words include a high number of internationalisms, e.g. *univęrzită* 'university' (Sk. *univerzita*), *telefon* 'telephone' (Sk. *telefón*), *legitimaciă* 'certificate' (Sk. *legitimácia*), *kancelarijă* 'office' (Sk. *kancelária*), *cigaretă* 'cigarette' (Sk. *cigareta*), *kino* 'cinema' (Sk. *kino*) and discourse markers, e.g. *buđ* 'or' (Sk. *buď*), *ale* 'but' (Sk. *ale*), *abo* 'or' (Sk. *abo*), *pręśńę* 'exactly' (Sk. *presne*), *prave* 'just' (Sk. *práve*), *až* 'only' (Sk. *až*), *a* 'and' (Sk. *a*).

The examples suggest that nouns come first, and conjunctions and adverbs second, from the Slovak repertoire of speakers to the speech of the Boyash. The use of Slovak verbs is less common, but with the appropriate suffix *-ęšťe* almost all

verbs can be adapted. Adjectives are adopted much less frequently, and when they are, they mostly retain their original Slovak nominative case paradigm (1a-1b).

(1) a. hăl   maj   **stredný**   kupil
         CEL   ADV   middle.ADJ.SG.M   boy
         'middle boy' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

     b. în   **stredná**   školă
         PREP middle.ADJ.SG.F   school
         'secondary school' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

     c. Jesk   **zachrípnutý**   šă   n-am   hlas.
         be.1SG hoarse.ADJ.SG.M   CONJ NEG=have.1SG   voice
         'I'm stuck and I have no voice' (Podčičva, Slovakia)

The fieldwork clearly revealed that the speakers used Slovak loanwords to name certain things, but during the language interviews and when asked, they clearly recognised and started to use the Romanian equivalent that I had offered earlier. After a short time, they remembered the forgotten words themselves and corrected themselves several times afterwards, so there is variation in the use of *ą skroboľit* 'scratched' (Sk. *škr[i]abať*) ~ *ą zgrijęt*, *điđină* 'village' (Sk. *dedina*) ~ *sat*, *hudbă* 'music' (Sk. *hudba*) ~ *kănťik* 'song' (R. *cântec*).

Their speech also includes Rusyn words: *užę ~ užęg ~ užęk* 'already' (Rut. *уже uže*), *ladičkă* 'chest' (Rut. *ладичка ladička*), *sogriňă* 'sister-in-law' (Rut. *шовгриня šovgrinja*), *pčolă* 'bee' (Rut. *пчола pčola*), but many lexemes cannot be clearly delimited from Slovak borrowings, e.g. *čaj* (cf. Rut. *чай čaj*, Sk. *čaj*), *kńiškă* (cf. Rut. *книжка knižka* 'book, small book', Sk. *knižka* 'booklet').

5.2. Phonology

5.2.1. Vowels

In most varieties of Boyash, as in Transylvanian and Banatean Romanian dialects, the vowels are pronounced more closed than in standard Romanian. In Eastern Slovak speakers, the centralisation of pronunciation is striking. Close-mid vowels correspond to mid vowels [ɨ] > [ə]: *bătrăn* 'old' (R. *bătrîn*), *măndru* 'beautiful' (R. *mândru*), *kăńe* 'dog' (R. *câine*), *săngur* 'alone' (R. *sîngur*), *vănăt* 'blue' (R. *vânăt*), *zăľe* 'days' (R. *zile*), and back vowels [ɨ] > [o]: *mocă ~ mîcă* 'cat', *om ~ ăm* 'in' (R. *în*) and [ə] > [o]: *primovară* 'spring' (R. *primăvară*), *koldură* 'warm' (R. *căldură*), *po* 'on' (pă < R. *pe*). Closed-back vowels can also correspond to mid vowels [u] > [o]: *poťem* 'we can' (R. *putem*), *fromos* 'beautiful' (R. *frumos*), *d-a avoză* 'to hear' (R. *a auzi*). Back semi-open vowels are sometimes correspond to central vowels [ą] > [o]: *sănătosă*F 'healthy' (R. *sănătoasă*), *sokră* 'mother-in-law' (R. *soacră*),

*imosă*_F 'dirty' (R. *imoasă*). Words ending in front mid [e] can be pronounced anywhere on the full spectrum up to the closed [i] sound, e.g. *mare* 'big' (R. *mare*), *zîśe* 'say' (R. *zice*), *pădurę* 'forest' (R. *pădure*) *faśę* 'do' (R. *face*), *bińi* 'well' (R. *bine*), *hunđi* 'where' (R. *unde*). Particularly interesting is *prababă/prăđid* 'great-grandmother/great-grandfather' (Ukr. *прабаб(к)а/прадід*), where the [i] centralises the former [a] sound in the prefix *pra-*, causing it to be used in two forms.

The back mid vowels may correspond to closed vowels [o] > [u]: *kuťec* 'hutch' (R. *coteț*), the front mid vowels to mid vowels [e] > [ə]: *jăl* 'he' (R. *el*), *mijă* 'to me' (R. *mie*), and the back mid vowels may correspond to semi-open vowels [o] > [ą]: *ąľakă* 'a little'. In the common preposition *dă* (R. *de*) there is a tendency towards opening [ə] > [a]: *da avur* 'of gold', *da haja* 'because of'.

In Slovak loanwords containing the [r̩ː] sound, an epenthetic vowel appears, e.g. *podprîsęnkur*_{PL} 'bras' (Sk. *podprsenky*), *omîrvinkur* 'crumbs' (Sk. *omrvinka*). By contrast, in other words there is an elision, which is rarely or never observed in other varieties of Boyash (with many variations), e.g. *kuma ~ kumă* 'now' (R. *acuma*), *ša ~ aša* 'in that way' (R. *aşa*), *omlo ~ umblu* 'I walk' (R. *umblu*), *am kumprat ~ am kumpărat* 'I bought' (R. *am cumpărat*), *hălant* 'another' (R. *celălalt*, H. Arđ. *hălalant*), *kvare* 'somehow' (R. *oarecum*), *-ť*_{CL.ACC.2SG} 'you' (R. *te*), *švare* 'something' (R. *oarece*).

As some diphthongs have been reduced to monophthongs, as in other varieties of Boyash, and some of the remaining diphthongs have been eliminated by the insertion of a labial [w], there are relatively few diphthongs, e.g. *jou* 'I' (R. *eu*), *šťiu* 'I know' (R. *ştiu*), *băut* 'drunk' (R. *băut*). It is a matter of perspective whether in words such as *fjerp* 'you cook' (R. *fierbi*), *dabję* 'hardly' (R. *de-abia*) a diphthong or a C_[+glide] position is detected. In word-initial vowel clusters, or more precisely in the /#___C_[+sib] position, a prothetic [ə] appears even if not in other Boyash varieties, e.g. *ăskunđe* 'hiding' (R. *ascunde*), but also in Slovak borrowings, e.g. *ăsprava* 'news' (Sk. *správa*).

5.2.2. Consonants

In most Boyash varieties in Central Europe, palatalisation occurs before the *e* and *i* sounds, as follows: *t > ć, d > đ, n > ń, l > ľ, č > ś, ǧ > ź* (a more significant difference is found in the Banatean-Muntenian (*munćan*) varieties). In the speech of Eastern Slovak Boyash communities, the palatalisation of the voiceless alveolar plosive [t] changes from voiceless alveolo-palatal affricate [tɕ] to voiceless palatal plosive [c]: *t > ť*, e.g. *šťaptă* 'waits', *biťag* 'sick', *juťe* 'quickly'. The pronunciation of the voiceless alveolopalatal [ɕ] and voiced fricative [z] is constantly converging to the voiced postalveolar [ʃ] and voiceless fricative [ʒ] due to the Slovak phonetic context, e.g. *d-a śiťi* 'to read' > *d-a šiťi* (cf. R. *a citi*), *iśę* 'here' > *išę* (cf. R. *aice[a]*).

The Banatian *r* - *ŕ* opposition, which occurs only sporadically in the South Transdanubian varieties, was only recorded in one word, so its existence is doubtful for the time being: *jeŕ* 'yesterday' (R. *ieri*). The sound system is complemented by the velar, voiceless fricative [x], found in some Slovak loanwords, e.g. *ħibă* 'mistake' (Sk. *chyba*), *koħńę ~ kuħńę* 'kitchen' (Sk. *kuchyňa*), *kuħar* 'cook' (Sk. *kuchár*). Long consonants do not occur frequently, although in exceptional cases originally short consonants are elongated, e.g. *đuffe* 'match' (R. *ghiufă* < H. *gyufa*), *śęppe* 'onions' (R. *cepe*), *pappęruš* 'paper' (cf. R. *păpiruş*, H. *papiros*, H. Arđ. *piparoš*, etc.).

Some words beginning with *o* have a prothetic *v-/w-*, e.g. *vopt* 'eight', *vujtat* 'forgotten', *vor* '(x) times', *a wurbit* 'gone blind', *woľiľi* 'the pans', *vom* 'human', and also in the plural of the latter: *vąmiń ~ vomiń* 'people' (cf. R. *om*$_{SG}$ and *oameni*$_{PL}$). The sounds [w] ~ [v] play a role in the resolution of many diphthongs and triphthongs, e.g. *skavăn* 'chair' (R. *scaun*), *avtobus* 'bus' (Sk. *autobus*), *a mńew* 'mine' (R. *al meu*), *răw* 'bad' (R. *răul*), *śew* 'please' (R. *cer*), *bęw* 'drink' (R. *beau*), etc. The former *-ouă-* triphthong is usually labialised, e.g. *dąvă ~ dovă* 'two' (R. *două*), but sometimes it does occur, e.g. *pląuă* 'it is raining', while the former *-ău-* diphthong is labialised, e.g. *Dumńizăw* 'God'. The sounds [w] ~ [v] also occur epenthetically in a hiatus, and not only inside a stem, e.g. *jo am bătrăńit* [ˈjowam bətrəˈnʲit] 'I have grown old', *vušulę-o!* [vuʃuˈlɛwo] 'Iron it!'

Word-finally or at morpheme boundary, some plosives become devoiced: *g > k*, e.g. *tărk* 'market' (R. *târg*), *mă rok* 'I beg' (R. *mă rog*); *b > p*: e.g. *fjerp* 'I cook' (R. *fierb*), *sărp* 'Serb' (R. *sârb*); *d > t*, e.g. *plîngînt* 'crying' (R. *plângând*), *slobot* 'free' (R. *slobod*), but also in Slovak loanwords, e.g. *sut* 'court' (Sk. *sud*). Conversely, there is also frequent voicing, which affects certain plosives and fricatives: *t > d*, e.g. *am văzud* 'I saw' (R. *am văzut*); *k > g*, e.g. *trăjesg* 'I live' (R. *trăiesc*), *mă dug* 'I go' (R. *mă duc*); *š/ś > ž*, e.g. *ńiźądată* 'never' (R. *niciodată*), *krîźmă* 'pub' (regional R. *crâşmă*), *hež važ* 'these calves' (R. *aceste vaci*). After a consonant, the word-final [ʲ] is usually not audible, e.g. *flor* 'flowers' (R. *flori*), *śasur* 'clocks' (R. *ceasuri*), *tęlęvizorur* 'televisions' (Sk. *televízor*), *mujer* 'women' (R. *muieri*), *vor* '(x) times' (R. *ori*).

5.3. Morphology

5.3.1. Nouns

The dissimilation of the final [e] into [i] and the subsequent assimilation of the penultimate vowel can also be observed in the speech of the Eastern Slovakian Boyash (2a-2c). This phenomenon can also be found with palatalization, i.e. in a form identical to the Boyash variety of Eastern Slovakia, in the Transylvanian-Crişana region varieties spoken Central and Eastern Hungary (2d) and without palatalisation in the Banatean-Muntenian (*munćan*) (2e) varieties spoken in

Southern Transdanubia (cf. R. *merele* 'the apples', *numele* 'the name(s)', *greblele* 'the rakes', *soarele* 'the sun', dial. *șocâtele* 'the mice') (Arató, 2013, p. 50).

(2)   a.   **Kńiškurili**   skod   dăm   krabică.
              book.DEF.PL.N   take.1SG   PREP   box
              'I take the books out of the box' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

        b.   Să   zîkă   **numiľi-š**!
              AUX.CONJ   tell.CONJ   name.DEF.PL.N=CL.REFL.3SG
              'Tell us your (own) name' (Dolný Les, Slovakia)

        c.   **Hrablili**   a   lăsat   lîngă   uşă   kol   afar.
              rake.DEF.PL.F   AUX.PP.3SG   leave.PP   PREP.next   door   there   outside
              '[He] left the rakes outside by the door' (Podčičva, Slovakia)

        d.   Friźe   **sąriľi.**
              shine.3SG   sun.DEF.SG.M
              'The sun is shining' (Poroszló, Hungary)

        e.   Nuj   akas   mîca,   cincugęšte   **šukicili**.
              no   home   cat.DEF   squeak.3PL   mouse.DEF.PL.N
              'The cat's not at home, the mice are squeaking' (Barcs, Hungary)

In Eastern Slovakian Boyash, it is common for loanwords ending with *-ă, -o* and consonants to receive the plural suffix *-ur*, e.g. *pčolă/pčolur* 'bee/bees' (Rut. *пчола pčola*), *skriňă/skrińur* 'cupboard/cupboards' (cf. Sk. *skriňa*, Rut. *скриня skrinja*, Ukr. *скриня skrynja) evro/evrur* 'euro/euros' (Sk. *euro*), *macko/mackur* 'teddy bear/bears' (H. *mackó*), *firm/firmur* 'film/films' (Sk. *film*), which phenomenon more frequent in among Ukranian Boyash speakers in Boyash varieties spoken in Hungary. This makes the plural suffix *-ur* more productive and this explains the occurring use with indigenous nouns, i.e. *kasă/kăsur* 'house/houses' (R. *casă/case*, H. Arđ. *kasă/kăš*), *bęsęrikă/bęsęrikur* 'church/churches' (R. *biserică/biserici*, H. Arđ. *biserikă/biseriś*). The Slovak singular and plural forms often interfere with the already heterogeneous Boyash declension, e.g. the singular of *zv(j)erată/zv(j)eratur* 'animal/animals' (Sk. *zviera/zvierata* 'animal/animals') shows singularization of a plural source form. The singular and plural forms of *ukrajinec/ukrajincur* 'Ukrainian/Ukrainians' (Sk. *Ukrajinec/Ukrajinci*) are may derived separately from the Slovak singular and plural forms. However, the allomorph *Ukrajinc-* is the dominant allomorph in Slovak, which is used in all forms but the nominative singular, and so not restricted to the plural forms.

5.3.2. Numerals

Some respondents use the indefinite article *ǎ ~ ǎn* (3a), *o ~ on* (3b) as in other Boyash varieties, while in other communities the indefinite article has been replaced by the numeral *unu ~ ona* (3c-3d).

(3)   a.   C-am   skrijit   **ǎ**   lungă   karťe.
             CL.DAT.2SG=AUX.PP.1SG   write.PP   one.F   long   letter.ACC
             'I wrote you a long letter' (Dolný Les, Slovakia)

        b.   Hăl   maj   mik   kupil   ǎvę   **on**   an.
             CEL   ADV   small.M child have.FUT.3SG one.M   year.
             'The youngest boy will be one year old' (Podčičva, Slovakia)

        c.   Kol   **jera**   una   liškă   om   pădurę.
             there   be.IMPERF.3SG one.F fox   PREP   forest
             'There was a fox in the forest' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

        d.   Gănđesk **una**   furkă   **š-onu**   kucăt.
             want.1SG one.F fork.ACC CONJ=one.M knife.ACC
             'I want a fork and a knife' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

5.3.3. Verbs

The conjugation is similar to that of the Transylvanian Romanian dialects, with the present tense, the imperfect tense, the past perfect tense, and the future tense expressed by short forms of the former auxiliary *vrea* 'wants'.

In spoken Romanian, in verb group I (ending with -*a*), the forms 3SG and 3PL, e.g. *adună*₃SG≡₃PL 'he collects/they collect', and in verb groups II-III-IV (ending with -*ea*, -*e*, -*i* or -*î* respectively), the forms 1SG and 3PL coincide and take a zero morpheme, e.g. *văd*₁SG≡₃PL 'I see/they see'. In the Eastern Slovak varieties, in all four verb groups 1SG and 3PL are the same form *dohońesk*₁SG≡₃PL 'I smoke/they smoke'. In Hungary, in all Boyash varieties studied so far, the 3SG and 3PL forms are the same in all verb groups, e.g. *ahuđe*₃SG≡₃PL 'he hears/they hear'.

Typical are the forms *męre* 'to go' (R. *merge*), *mănk* 'I eat' (R. *mănânc*) and *skrijit* 'written' (R. *scris*). The gerund is rare, when it occurs the final consonant of the former -*înd* suffix (R. -*ând*) became voiceless: *plîngînt* 'weeping' (R. *plângând*).
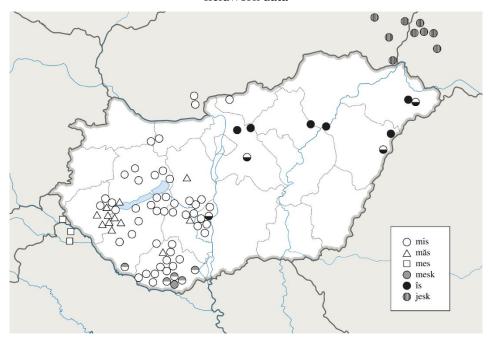
The present tense and imperfective paradigm of the existential verb is basically the same as in the Transcarpathian Boyash varieties, but completely different from all other varieties (for more details on the existential verbs of the Hungarian varieties, see Rosenberg, 2020b).

Table 1. The present tense and imperfect paradigm of the East Slovak Boyash be verb

	Present		Imperfect
	Stressed	**Unstressed**	
1SG	*jesk*		*jeram*
2SG	*ješť*		*jeraj*
3SG	*ję̌šťe*	*ej ~ ăj*	*jera*
1PL	*ješťem ~ jišťem*		*jeram*
2PL	*ješťec ~ jišťec*		*jerac*
3PL	*ję̌šťe*	*ăs*	*jera*

If we examine the geographic distribution of the 1SG forms of the existential verb among the data, a highly heterogeneous picture emerges (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Patterns in the 1sg forms of the present tense Boyash be verb based on fieldwork data

The already mentioned *jesk* is exclusive in Eastern Slovakia and Transcarpathia, in the Eastern half of Hungary the form *îs* is sporadic, while in Transdanubia the form *mis* is predominant (but there is also a sporadic form *mǎs*, most often near the border of Zala and Somogy counties). A *mesk* form occurs near the Hungarian-Croatian border, while *mes* occurs mainly in the Croatian Međimurje and to a lesser extent in the Slovenian Prekmurje. It can therefore be concluded that in the Western half of Hungary and south of the border, *mis* is the most common form, along with several other forms, while in Eastern Slovakia and Transcarpathia, *jesk* is used (Rosenberg, 2018b, pp. 1093–1094; 2020b).

The past participle of the past perfect tense sometimes ends in a *-u* sound (4a-4b), which is also found in Old Romanian.

(4) a. Akurat   šǎđẹm   în   motor,   kǎnd
          just   sit.IMPERF.1SG   PREP   car   when
          m-ẹj   **tïmatu**.
          CL.ACC.1SG=AUX.PP.2SG   call.PP
          'I was sitting in the car when you called' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

     b. Ajẹ   ạr   **ahuzîtu**   meg   ăm   altu   sat.
          that.F.SG   AUX.PP.3PL hear.PP   ADV   PREP   other.DEF.M.SG   village
          'That was even heard in the other village' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

The dative and genitive clitics can appear both preverbally and postverbally (5a-5c), but sometimes also in the future tense (5d).

(5) a. **M-o**   **muškatu-mă**   osa.
          CL.ACC.1SG=AUX.PP.3SG   sting.PP=CL.ACC.1SG   wasp.DEF
          'The wasp stung me' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

     b. **S-ạ**   **kulkatu-să.**
          CL.REFL.ACC.3SG=AUX.PP.3SG   sleep.PP=CL.REFL.ACC.1SG
          'He fell asleep' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

     c. **Ť-om**   **datu-ťẹ**   pǎ   sut.
          CL.ACC.2SG=AUX.PP.1PL   give.PP=CL.ACC.2SG   PREP   court
          'We reported you to the court' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

     d. **Ń-o-mmăna-ńe**   pappẹrusi.
          CL.DAT.1PL=AUX.FUT.3SG=send.INF=CL.DAT.1PL   paper.DEF
          'He will send us the papers' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

Since the accusative or dative clitic preceding the auxiliar verb and succeeding the past participle denotes the beneficiary, the latter (reduplicated) clitic is also accusative if the auxiliar verb is preceded by a dative clitic, and the verb is transitive – although this is not common (6a). A single parallel case comes from a Banatean-Muntenian (*munćan*) dialect (6b).

(6)	a.	Mi	s-o		năskutu-ńe
		CL.DAT.1SG	CL.REFL.ACC.3SG=AUX.PP.3SG		born.PP=CL.ACC.1PL
		trij	mîc.		
		three	cat.PL		
		'We had three cats this year' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)			

	b.	**C**-am		spusu-**te**	vęršu.
		CL.DAT.1SG=AUX.PP.1SG		say.PP=CL.ACC.2SG	poem.DEF
		'I told you the poem' (Barcs, Hungary)			

5.3.3.1. Short and long infinitives

In Western Slovakian and Hungarian Boyash varieties, the infinitive is used to express the future tense (7a) and the conditional tense (7b), and it occurs after *pąće ~ pąte* 'can, able to' (7c), and less frequently after *sćije* 'know' (7d).

(7)	a.	Meg	trăjesk	šî	n-ąj		**muri**.
		ADV	live.3SG	CONJ	NEG=AUX.FUT.1SG		die.INF
		'I am still alive and I will not die' (Poroszlo, Hungary)					

	b.	M-ar		**trăbuji**	maj	daă	sućе
		CL.DAT.1SG=AUX.COND.3SG		must.3SG	ADV	two	hundred.PL
		va	trij.				
		CONJ	three				
		'I need two or three hundred more.' (Kamenín, Slovakia)					

	c.	Să	pątă	**purnisî**	grevola.
		AUX.CONJ	can.3SG	bear.INF	pain.DEF.DIST.N.SG
		'To bear the pain' (Alsószentmárton, Hungary)			

	d.	Kupilu	lu	somsedu		ma	**šćije**
		boy.DEF	DAT	neighbour.DEF		ADV	know.3SG
		skriji	šî	**umăra**.			
		write.INF	CONJ	read.INF			
		'The neighbour's son can already read and write' (Tengelic, Hungary)					

However, we often find that the verb *pạ́ce* is also more common with *pạ́ce* + CONJ (8).

(8) **Pot**   **să**   **mă**   **duk**   la   jej.
     can.1SG   CONJ   CL.REFL.ACC.1SG   go.1SG   PREP   they
     'I can go over to their place' (Poroszló, Hungary)

In contrast, in the Eastern Slovak and Transcarpathian varieties, beyond the scope of the future tense and the conditional mode, there is an intensive and extensive use of the short infinitive, preceded by the contracted form of *dă* and the infinitive auxiliary *a*, which is a conservativism inherited from Old Romanian (9a-9b).

(9) a.   Śińevare   už   ar   pạ́ťe
           someone   already   AUX.COND.3SG   can.INF
           śevare   **d-a**   **zîśe.**
           something   AUX.INF   say.INF
           'Someone should say something.' (Dolný Les, Slovakia)

     b.   Kupilu   prẹ   gînďešťe   pă   gitară   **d-a**   **žuka.**
           boy.DEF   very   likes.3SG   PREP   guitar   AUX.INF   plays.INF
           'The boy really likes playing guitar' (Dolný Les, Slovakia)

The long infinitive is usually extremely rare in the Boyash varieties, and most speakers do not use it at all and are mostly unfamiliar with it (e.g. *tusare* 'cough'). In contrast, it is common in Eastern Slovakian Boyash and has the same function as the short infinitive (e.g. *d-a tusă* 'cough'), but is used somewhat less frequently (10a-10b).

(10) a.   **Kăntara**   maj   bun-ej   **d-a**   **să-nvăca.**
           sing.INF   ADV   good=be.3SG   AUX.INF   REFL=learn.INF
           'Singing is better than learning' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

     b.   Îc   avuză   **d-a**   **mẹ**   žorare.
           AUX.FUT.2PL   hear.INF   PREP=GEN   mine.F.SG   wedding
           'You guys will hear about my wedding' (Podčičva, Slovakia)

     c.   Hast   kasă   **dă**   **vinzară**-j.
           this   house   PREP   sell.INF=be.3SG
           'This house is for sale' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

In the Hungarian Boyash varieties, sentences of the same (11) type always use the supine, which is a *dă* + participle construction.

(11) Asta-j   apă   **dă**   **but.**
      this=be.3SG   water   PREP   drink.SUP
      'This is drinking water' (Gerjen, Hungary)

5.4. Pronouns

5.4.1. Demonstrative pronoun

Demonstrative pronouns in spoken and standard Romanian can be in both prenominal and postnominal positions, e.g. *dantela acela* 'that lace' and *acest clopoțel* 'that bell', but in most Boyash varieties they are used as clitics: *fiśorusta*DEF.PROX.M.SG 'this boy' (< *fiśoru*DEF.M.SG + *ăsta*), *fataję*DEF.DIST.F.SG 'that girl' (< *fata*DEF.F.SG + *(h)aje*). There are also examples of analytical construction, but much less frequently and mainly in contrastive position, e.g. *aheśćę vicej* 'these calves', *alę pušt* 'those rifles'. In contrast, in Eastern Slovak Boyash speakers, demonstrative pronouns do not occur in the postnominal position and as clitics, but only in the prenominal (12a-12c) and independent positions (12d-12e). There is also some variation between forms, e.g. *ast ~ hast ~ has* 'this', *hist ~ aheśť ~ heš* 'these' etc.

(12) a. **Aheśť**   **kărc**   akuma   l-ądus   poštarka.
          these.F.PL   letter.PL.F   now   them=bring.PP   postwoman.DEF
          'These letters have just been brought by the postwoman' (Dolný Les, Slovakia)

      b. Mije   ą   dat   **aha**   **bęre,**   vaď   vąvă?
          to me   AUX.PP   give.PP   that.F   beer   or   to you guys
          'Did he give that beer to me or to you guys?' (Dolný Les, Slovakia)

      c. As   bę   **ha**   **bęre.**
          AUX.COND.1SG   drink.INF   this.DEF.PROX.F   beer.DEF
          'I would have drunk this beer' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

      d. Nu   šťu   **hasta**   d-a   zîši.
          NEG   can.1SG   this.F.SG   AUX.INF   say.INF
          'I can't tell you that' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

      e. Bińi   jesk,   da   **haja**   aj   duśi   motoru.
          well   be.1SG   PREP   that.F.SG   AUX.FUT.1SG   take.INF   car.DEF
          'I'm fine, so I'll take the car' (Podhoroď, Slovakia)

5.4.2. *Possessive pronoun, possessive adjective and adnominal possessive clitic*

In the majority of the Boyash varieties, there is a distinction between possessive article + possessive adjective structures, also known as possessive pronouns (13a), the postnominal position of the possessive adjective (13b), and the adnominal, i.e. the possessive clitic expressed as a pronoun (13c). The adnominal possessive clitics, according to some views, are dative, according to other views, they are originally genitive clitics (for more details see Pană Dindelegan, 2013, p. 343). According to Farkas (2007, p. 148), a distinction is made between possessive pronouns and possessive adjectives: the possessive pronoun is always used with the possessive article, while the possessive adjective is placed after the noun without the possessive article and agrees with the preceding word to which it refers. This use of the term, however, does not correspond to the current approach which represented by Pană Dindelegan (cf. 2013, pp. 335–338).

(13)   a.   a   nąstră   kasă
            GEN   ours.F.SG   house
            'our house' (Čata, Slovakia)

       b.   kupilu   mńo
            child.DEF.M   mine.M.SG
            'my (boy) child' (Čata, Slovakia)

       c.   kalu-c
            horse.DEF=CL.2SG
            'your horse' (Čata, Slovakia)

However, among speakers in Eastern Slovakia, the possessive adjective was never used in the collected corpus in the postnominal position, even when deliberately asked to repeat it, but only in the prenominal position (14a). In the Hungarian Boyash varieties, the prenominal position occurs only in the focalised position, but not in other cases (14b).

(14)   a.   a   mńew   šogor
            GEN   mine.F.SG   brother in law
            'my brother in law' (Podčičva, Slovakia)

       b.   Niś   a   nąstră   fată   [nuj   îmmăritată   inkă].
            nor   GEN   our.F   girl   NEG   married.F   ADV
            'Our daughter is not married yet either' (Galambok, Hungary)

The use of the adnominal possessive clitic is highly diverse in East Slovakian Boyash. Some speakers use it, although much less frequently than speakers in Western Slovakia or Hungary, and even then only in the form 1SG (15a), but there are also speakers who do not use the adnominal possessive clitic at all.

(15)   a.   bărbatu-m
             husband.DEF=CL.1SG
             'my husband' (Dolný Les, Slovakia)

5.4.3. Indefinite pronoun

The use of the suffix *-vare* and *-va* is widespread for indefinite pronouns, with a rather large variation and a high degree of elision, which is certainly related to its highly frequent use, e.g. *kumvare* 'somehow' (R. *oarecum*), *unđivare ~ unđvarę ~ hunđvare ~ unđva* 'somewhere' (R. *oareunde*), *kîndvare* 'at some time' (R. *oarecând*), *śevare ~ śvare ~ śeva* 'something' (R. *oarece*), *śińevare* 'someone' (R. *oarecine*), *kîťťevare* 'some' (R. *oarecât*), cf. *kariva ~ kareva* 'one of' (R. *careva*).

6. Summary

Our current knowledge of the Boyash communities is rather limited, while the findings discovered in the past are now outdated due to rapid social and linguistic changes. It would be important to further investigate the social ideologies of the Boyash, since the diverse system of endo- and exo-ethnonyms suggests hetero-geneous social and ethnic relations, but it should be kept in mind that the Boyash, like other ethnic groups, do not exist as a given group, but are created as group members reproduce the group image and their affiliation, and by the categori-sation activities of the environment.

In Slovakia, the Boyash language varieties can only be learnt in local commu-nities through oral communication as there is no institutional education. Literacy has not developed, only in the last 10-15 years have some people started to write phonetically using the Slovak alphabet. The Boyash language varieties of Eastern Slovakia are closely related to those of Transcarpathia, with many Slavic (Slovak, Ruthenian, possibly Ukrainian) and Hungarian elements enriching their language varieties. The characteristics of their linguistic system make them a clearly distinct language variety among the Boyash language varieties, with many variations, but also with a high degree of Old Romanian conservativism. So far, except for this study, no linguistic data were available from the Boyash communities in Eastern Slovakia, so even though they have largely switched to the local majority language (Slovak, Hungarian) and that the youngest informants still speaking Boyash are at least middle-aged, research on their language varieties would be an important issue for Roma Studies and Romance Linguistics.

List of abbreviations

dial.	dialectal
H.	Hungarian
H. Arđ.	Transylvanian-Banatian (*Arđelan*) Boyash spoken in Transdanubia, Hungary
R.	Romanian
Rut.	Rusyn
Sk.	Slovakian
Ukr.	Ukrainian

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Some phonological and morphological features of Boyash language varieties in Eastern Slovakia

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The heterogeneous group of Boyash (or Bayash, Rudari) are small communities speaking different highly endangered conservative subvarieties of the Romanian language and dispersed throughout Central and Southeastern Europe. This paper first summarises historical research issues related to the Boyash communities in Eastern Slovakia and points out that the existing information is limited and rudimentary. A separate section is devoted to the categorisations of Boyash people. While these are crucial, they are of little use for linguistic inquiry. This is followed by a brief account of the migration history of the Slovakian Boyash. The paper focuses on preliminary linguistic data obtained through my dialectological fieldwork over the last decade. The audio material recorded in Slovakia is about 20 hours, the interviews were made between 2013 and 2018 recorded in 10 localities (Dolný Les, Oborín, Podhoroď, Podčičva, Čata, Kamenín, Malé Trakany, Čierna nad Tisou, Štúrovo, Most pri Bratislave) with 21 speakers (age 52-77). I present the system of Slovakian, Rusyn and Hungarian loanwords and differences between the Eastern Slovak Boyash varieties and standard Romanian, examine phonological and morphological features in detail and compare them with other language varieties spoken in Slovakia and

Hungary. In Slovakia, the Boyash language varieties can only be learnt in local communities through oral communication as there is no institutional education. Literacy has not developed, only in the last 10-15 years have some people started to write phonetically using the Slovak alphabet. The Boyash language varieties of Eastern Slovakia are closely related to those of Transcarpathia, with many Slavic (Slovak, Ruthenian, possibly Ukrainian) and Hungarian elements enriching their language varieties. I point out that the characteristics of their linguistic system make them a clearly distinct language variety among the Boyash language varieties, with many variations, but also with a high degree of Old Romanian conservativism. The paper offers a brief description of the linguistic reality of an ethnic group that is still largely unknown.

Keywords: Boyash, Romanian language, dialectology, ethnicity, linguistic fieldwork

Фонологічні та морфологічні особливості говорів беашів Східної Словаччини

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Гетерогенні групи беашів – це невеликі групи, які розмовляють консервативними різновидами румунської мови, які перебувають під загрозою зникнення. Проживають вони на окремих територіях Центральної та Південно-Східної Європи. У статті зроблено спробу узагальнити ті дослідження та напрацювання, які пов'язані з беашами Східної Словаччини. З'ясовано, що наявна на сьогодні інформація мізерна і фрагментарна. Окрему увагу звернено на категоризацію беашів, що має базову важливість, однак з точки зору лінгвістики використовується мало. Крім цього, представлено інформацію про історію міграції словацьких беашів. У фокусі дослідження перебувають ті попередні мовні дані, які були отримані в ході нашої діалектологічної польової роботи протягом минулого десятиліття. Аудіоматеріали, записані у Словаччині, займають приблизно 20 годин часу, інтерв'ю записувалися у 2013-2018 роки, респондентами виступили 21 особа віком 52-77 років у 10 населених пунктах (Абара, Долні Леш, Тібоваролйо, Чічвоолйо, Чото, Кеменд, Кіштаркань, Тисачернєв, Паркань, Дуноідош). Представлено систему слов'янських і угорських запозичених лексем, детально проаналізовано фонетичні і морфологічні питання, проведено їх порівняння з іншими словацькими та угорськими діалектами. Виходячи з характеристик їх мовної системи, аналізований мовний варіант беашів однозначно можна трактувати як самостійний, у якому збереглися не тільки коливання, але й дуже багато старорумунських консервативних форм, завдяки тому, що в Словаччині мовні варіанти беашів можна засвоїти тільки в локальних населених пунктах, під час усної комунікації, інституційно вони не вивчаються і письмову форму не мають, тільки в останні кілька десятиліть почали писати цим варіантом за фонетичним принципом, користуючись словацькою абеткою. Вважаємо, що східнословацькі мовні варіанти беашів є спорідненими із закар-

патськими, збагатившись численними слов'янськими (словацькі, русинські, укра-
їнські) та угорськими елементами. Метою нашої публікації є коротко познайомити
з мовною реальністю до сьогодні майже не відомої етнічної групи.

Ключові слова: *беаші, румунська мова, діалектологія, етнічна приналежність, мовознавча польова робота*