3 The field research

3.1 Aims and methods

The aim of this study is to provide a contrastive synchronous analysis of the linguistic particularities specific to the Arĝelean and Munĉan vernaculars in Pécs, Gilvánfa, and Alsószentmárton in southern Hungary, with a particular emphasis on the villages of Gilvánfa and Alsószentmárton. Secondly, the study also seeks to present a number of aspects of linguistic identity and linguistic structures of these insular vernaculars in a context in which Hungarian represents the majority language. The denominations of these vernaculars do not designate the homonymous vernaculars (usually called *grai,* PL *graiuri* in Romanian) spoken on the territory of Romania. Rather, they are denominated after the Boyash groups represented here, the Arĝeleni and the Munĉeni. The spelling variants of the Hungarian Boyash glottonyms and endonyms are numerous (e.g. *Arĝelɛ́ńi, Munĉɛ́ńi, Arĝelɛ́ń, Munĉéń)*. For the sake of simplicity we have chosen the neutral forms *Arĝeleni* (abbreviated to A) and *Munĉeni* (abbreviated to M) and for their dialects *Arĝelean* (abbreviated to Arĝ.) and *Munĉan* (abbreviated to Munĉ.). Furthermore, we will present the current status of the Boyash language and efforts to preserve the language and identity of the Arĝeleni and Munĉeni Boyash, and of endeavors to create a written tradition for a dialect, which although it is spread as far south as Greece and as far north as Ukraine, has no such tradition in either country. This descriptive-comparative study explores issues that go beyond the strict interests of dialectology (sociolinguistics, history, etc.), the predominant perspective in the socio-linguistic analysis of the two vernaculars is based on field research undertaken during three distinct periods in 2010, 2011 and 2013. The inhabitants of

the communities under study, many of whom carry the generic ethnonym *Ţigani* or *Romi* do not speak Romani, but an archaic variant of Romanian. At this point, it must be stated that we do not aim to explain in depth the historical circumstances that led to the total abandonment of Romani and the adoption of Romanian as their native language, nor do we present in detail the causes of their migration and the historical circumstances thereof; rather, we attempt a general placement in context, which allows a presentation of the linguistic particularities of the two varieties and the ethnolinguistic formulations regarding their group affiliation and linguistic identity.

The description of the two dialects is based on more than 25 hours of video and audio recordings, documenting a sociolinguistic interview and a questionnaire containing 800 questions based on the Romanian Linguistic Atlas by Regions (Rusu et al. 1992). Video recordings touch on subjects related to their traditions, their daily life and that of their parents and grandparents, oral tradition, transmission of cultural heritage, especially songs, and

linguistic attitudes. Furthermore, several observations regarding the competence of the interviewer in the A-language (the two Boyash varieties) resulted from the participant's observation. The material is stored on the ISLSSL server of the University of Jena, and will consequently be archived at *https://lazar.gbv.de/* and partially published online and open access on *www.oeaw.ac.at/vlach.*

In the three places in which research was conducted on 23-24 September 2010, 23-24 March 2011, 3-10 June 2011 and in February 2013, Pécs, Gilvánfa and Alsószentmárton, we selected interlocutors ranging in age from 4 to 80, gender and occupation in order to better reflect the possible diasystematic variations within the same variety (e.g. different levels of competence) and the differences between the two vernaculars.

Equivalents in standard Romanian are provided only when forms of the Boyash language differ considerably thereof.

3.2 Places of research

Alsószentmárton (Croat./Serb. Semartin, Boyash: Sînmárta) is a village in southern Hungary, 34 km from Pécs, with 1,156 inhabitants according to the 2011 census (*www.ksh.hu*). During the communist period, the inhabitants of Alsószentmárton worked as harvesters; today, a high percentage of the inhabitants are unemployed and lives on social welfare provided by the state. A few work as seasonal labourers, picking fruit or tilling fields. A small number of better-off individuals weave baskets; one who plies this trade is a *cuşar*. Due to rising levels of unemployment, the Swabians and Croats who lived in the village and the region left for cities such as Siklós and Pécs around 1972. The inhabitants of the village of Alsószentmárton identify themselves as Munčeni, not Boyash, and their language as *ţîgănív* or *ţîgăníu*. In their view, only the Arĝeleni, who speak "a different language" (*o altă ímbă, cu alte orbe* – Persa), are Boyash. Alsószentmárton is an isolated village, an enclave inhabited almost entirely by Boyash and only one Hungarian, the priest, who describes himself as *a Gypsy among priests and a priest among Gypsies* (Jakobi 1997), and a few other people who settled there through marriage. The inhabitants of the community are bilingual, starting with the youngest, whose native language has remained the Munčan vernacular. Unlike the Munčeni Boyash community in Croatia, whose faith is Orthodox (Sorescu-Marinković 2008: 192), the entire community of Alsószentmárton is Catholic, and actively participates in church life and all church activities initiated by the priest.

In the center of Alsószentmárton

Scenes in Alsószentmárton

Gilvánfa (Croat./Serb. Gilvanfa, Boyash Gílvanfɔ) is a village in southern Hungary, in the district of Magyarmecske, 45 km from Alsószentmárton, with 381 inhabitants according to the 2010 census. Many Boyash inhabitants live in small houses or huts. Unlike those of Alsószentmárton, the inhabitants of Gilvánfa are less isolated from the Hungarian community, and have much more daily contact with them. They identify themselves as *Boyash*, and their language as *l'ímbă dă băĭáș*. The variety is highly endangered since the population, including the elderly, speaks mostly Hungarian. According to our interlocutor, about 90% of the children between the ages of three and seven no longer have even passive knowledge of the Arĝelean dialect. Those between the ages of seven and sixteen have limited passive knowledge of the language. Active knowledge of the language can be found only among those over 30, who, although Hungarian-speaking in the family, are able to converse in the Arĝelean dialect (based on the participant observations made during field research).

Pécs (Germ. Fünfkirchen, Croat. Pečuh, Serb. Pečuj, Boyash Arĝ. Pișíu, Boyash Munĉ. Piĉúĭu) is one of the five biggest cities in Hungary and the county town of Baranya, in the south-west of the country. Pécs is the administrative and economic centre of Baranya county and one of the 23 cities with county status in the country. According to the 2011 census, Pécs has 156,049 inhabitants. Pécs University, founded by King Louis the Great in 1367, is the oldest university in Hungary. The Boyash community in Pécs is more scattered, because its members live among Hungarians, *lăcătári* (Munĉ., exonym used by Boyash for Romani-speaking Roma), or other minorities. The stage of their language is similar to that of the Boyash of Gilvánfa.

The aforementioned Boyash toponyms are still in use, even if the great majority of toponyms are Hungarian. Boyash variants for settlements can be found also for cities with small Boyash populations, e.g. *Péśta* (Arĝ. and Munĉ. for Budapest) and *Méșca* (Arĝ. for Magyarmecske).

Baking bread in Gilvánfa

3.3 Interviewed persons

During field research two categories of family names were identified, a phenomenon similar to that seen in Serbia and Croatia. In the community of Arĝeleni Boyash, Hungarian names such as *Orsós, Kolónos* are to be found, whereas in the community of Munĉeni Boyash there are Serbian names such as *Petrovics, Gyorgyovics* (written here with Hungarian orthography) etc.

BOGDÁN JÁSZMINKA, 1978, born in Mohács, moved with her family to the former Yugoslavia. In 1991, at the beginning of the Yugoslav wars, when she was 12, Jasminka was placed in the care of a relative in Alsószentmárton. She completed four grades of primary school, speaks Croatian/Serbian, Hungarian, the Arĝelean vernacular, and the Munĉan one.

BOGDÁN JOLI, 1956, born in the woods near the village of Gilvánfa, completed for school and learning, insisting that her daughter, Mónika Bogdán, should go to high school. Joli is one of the interlocutors with a vast knowledge of the Arĝelean vernacular.

BOGDÁN MÓNIKA, 1973, completed 10 grades of school in Pécs, works in the social sector, looking after the elderly and children, speaks Hungarian as her native language and a fluent Arĝelean vernacular, which she learned on her own initiative when she was 12. Together with her mother, Joli Bogdán, she answered a large proportion of the questions on the questionnaire.

BALOGNÉ RENÁTA, 1984, a teacher at the elementary school in Alsószentmárton, where she teaches the Munĉan vernacular, shows great interest in the language and culture of the Boyash in Hungary.

GYORGYOVICS KLAUDIA, 1992, is pursuing post-secondary courses in Siklós to become an educator at the bilingual kindergarten in Alsószentmárton.

KALÁNYOS GYÖNGYI was born in Pécs, speaks the Arĝelean vernacular fluently, and has a large repertoire of traditional Boyash songs that she sings with her children. Gyöngyi has great oratorical talent and shows a special interest in preserving the Boyash language and culture. Her five children have little passive knowledge of the Arĝelean vernacular, because they

The primary school in Gilvánfa

Boyash in Pécs after the interview

resisted learning it, however, they know various songs in Boyash.

KOSZTICS DÁIÁNA, 1998, goes to school in Siklós, speaks the Munĉan vernacular and Hungarian in the family, and has a basic knowledge of English.

LANKÓ JÓZSEF, 1954, a Hungarian, has been a priest in Alsószentmárton for 20 years, speaks Hungarian, fluent German and the Munĉan vernacular. József Lankó has initiated several programmes, including the Caritas-Sankt Martin e.V. association, with various contacts in Germany and other countries. He is involved in the education of children of various ages and has initiated the construction of a bilingual church kindergarten in the village. He also participates in the organization of after-school activities for young people (among them the *Kászádăsztyisză* programme in Gilvánfa). The Catholic Church gives the *young people and ghetto kids*, as Father Lankó calls them, the possibility to leave the village every day and go to town, where they come into contact with Hungarians, enriching their social milieu. All these programmes support the learning of both languages; Hungarian

and the Munĉan vernacular, both in kindergarten and at school.

ORSÓS ANNA, 1963, a linguist and assistant professor at the Department of Romology at Pécs University. Her native language is the Arĝelean vernacular and she was on the team that laid the didactic foundations of the Gandhi High School in Pécs. She has devoted her life to the study of the Boyash language and culture.

ORSÓS ÉDIT, 1977, born in Séylle, lives in Gilvánfa, has completed seven grades of school in Hungarian, is a collaborator in the *Kászádăsztyisză* project in Gilvánfa and a fluent Arĝelean speaker, the language she employs at the aforementioned youth centre and with her relatives and the elderly in the village. Within her immediate family she only speaks Hungarian, and her three children have little passive knowledge of the Boyash language.

ORSÓS JÁNOS, 1952, born in the woods near the village of Gilvánfa, completed eight grades of school in Hungarian and is bilingual in Hungarian and the Arĝelean vernacular. He worked as a driver and

was the mayor of Gilvánfa, and travelled several times to France, where he delivered a speech on the Arĝelean vernacular. He is actively committed to the protection of the Boyash language, and is an excellent storyteller, known in his village for his oratorical gift.

ORSÓS PÉTER, also called Pera or Perics, 1974, born in Alsószentmárton, completed eight grades of school, speaks Hungarian, the Munĉan vernacular, has some basic knowledge of Croatian, and is a basket weaver.

PALKÓ LÁSZLÓ, 1964, deputy-mayor of Gilvánfa, ex-mayor, has completed eight grades of school, is half Lacatar (Rom. *rom*), half Boyash, speaks fluent Boyash, Romani, and Hungarian; at home with his wife and children, he speaks Boyash and Romani.

PETROVICS ERZSÉBET, also known as Pérsa, 1947, born near the village of Alsószentmárton, speaks Hungarian, Croatian/Serbian and the Arĝelean vernacular. She made a substantial contribution to the recorded material with her stories and songs.

Anna Orsós and colleagues with Thede Kahl (right) at Pécs university

János Orsós

János Orsós with Ioana Nechiti (right) and relatives in Gilvánfa, telling a fairy tale

PETROVICS MÁRTIN, 1951, born near Alsószentmárton, owns a horse farm, is bilingual in Hungarian and the Munĉan vernacular, and speaks fluent Croatian.

VÁS PÉTER, 1956, the mayor of the village of Alsószentmárton, speaks the Munĉan vernacular and Hungarian fluently, keeps contact with friends in Romania, and shows a keen interest in the conservation of the Munĉan vernacular.

The list of informants is not complete, as some interlocutors preferred to remain anonymous. In those cases, only the name of the place is mentioned in brackets.

3.4 Transcription

The phonetic transcription used in this book is a simplified version of the IPA international system complemented with specific signs from works dealing with standard Romanian (RUSU 1992) and with Romanian vernaculars in Hungary (MARIN/MĂRGĂRIT 2005: CLXXXI-CLXXXIV). Those signs were chosen which were considered to be representative of the dialectal variations compared in this study.

In addition to the phonetic transcription signs, alternative symbols were used in order to better render the quality of the chosen transcription. Regarding the order of the phonetic representation, we followed wherever possible the established tradition in Romanian dialectology, as the vernaculars compared in this book fall within Romanian dialectology (RUSU 1992: 9-14; CARAGIU MARIOȚEANU 1975: 43-47). The graphemes in the transcription table appear in alphabetical order.

Orsós Péter, basket weaver in Alsószentmárton

Gyöngyi Kalányos singing

Ewer (Hung. *ceglédi kanna*) used as instruments

Gyöngyi Kalányos

Part of Gyöngyi Kalányos collection of instruments

Graphem	IPA	Description	Example
a			
a	ɑ	open central unrounded	*a*hásta (this)
ă	ə	mid central unrounded	*bă̆ĭ*ášu (Boyash)
b			
b	b	plosive bilabial	*b*árbă̆ (beard)
c			
c	k	plosive velar voiceless	*c*ásă (home)
ć	tɕ	affricate postalveolar voiceless	fra*ć*e (brother)
ĉ	ʧ	africate palatal voiceless	*ĉ*áptăn (comb)
d			
d	d	plosive dental voiced	*d*ínte (tooth)
ď	dʲ	plosive dental voiced, lightly palatal	hún*ď*e (where)
ḍ	dz	affricate dental voiced	*ḍ*îc (I say)
e			
e	e	close-mid front unrounded	me*r*źı (you go)
ɛ	ɛ	open-mid front unrounded	*ľɛ*mn (wood)
ʲe	ʲe	close-mid front unrounded preceded by a short [j]	*ʲe*șt (you are)

f			
f	f	fricative labiodental voiceless	*f*ắ*ín*ă (flour)
g			
g	g	plosive velar voiced	*slúg*ă (slave)
ǵ	ɟ	plosive dental slightly palatal voiced	*ǵ*έ*ță* (ice)
ĝ	ʤ	affricate postalveolar voiced	*șîĝέ* (he/she sat)
h			
h	h	fricative glottal voiceless	*h*ái*n*ă (p. of cloth)
i			
i	i	vowel close front unrounded	*ľ*í*mb*ă (tongue)
ĭ	ĭ	approximant close front unrounded	*v*ĭ*áță* (life)
ʲi	ʲi	close front unrounded preceded by a short [j]	*ʲi* (they)
î	ɨ	close central unrounded	*r*î*u* (river)
ɪ	ɪ	open close front unrounded, between i and e, but more towards i	*véd*ɪ (he/she sees)
k			
k	k	plosive velar voiceless, before e and i	*k*ip (face)
ḱ	kʲ	palatal plosive	*ḱ*imέșă (shirt)
l			
l	l	lateral alveolar	*l*ótru (proud)

l'	lʲ	lateral alveolar palatal	*l'ɛmn* (wood)
l''	ʎ	lateral palatal	*cul''íbă* (hut)
m			
m	m	nasal bilabial	*mărmínće* (cemetery)
n			
n	n	nasal alveolar	*búnă* (good)
ń	ɲ or nʲ	nasal palatal	*báńì* (money)
ŋ	ŋ	nasal velar	*íŋca* (still)
ṇ	ṇ	nasal alveolar with incomplete closure	*cîṇ* (when)
o			
o	o	close-mid back rounded	*fost* (was)
ɔ	ɔ	open-mid back rounded	*să plɔ́ve* (to rain)
p			
p	p	plosive bilabial voiceless	*păpúșă* (doll)
r			
r	r	vibrant alveolar voiced	*muĭére* (women)
ŕ	rʲ	vibrant alveolar, slightly palatal before e and i	*ŕínduŕ* (rows)
s			
s	s	fricative alveolar voiceless	*drăcɔ́să (impish)*

ś	ɕ	fricative postalveolar voiceless articulated, slightly anterior to ş	*fáśe* (do)
ş	ʃ	fricative postalveolar voiceless	*bắĭáş* (Boyash)
t			
t	t	plosive alveolar voiceless	*lăútă* (violin, lute)
ť	tʲ	plosive postalveolar voiceless	*sfắť'íń* (we speak)
ţ	ts	affricate alveolar voiceless	*oţíră* (little)
u			
u	u	close back rounded	*cum* (like)
ŭ	w	approximant labiovelar voiced	*dɔ́ŭă* (two)
v			
v	v	fricative labiodental voiced	*văzít* (seen)
z			
z	z	fricative alveolar voiced	*zbéra* (shouted)
ź	ʐ	fricative postalveolar voiced	*źos* (down)
ẑ	ʒ	fricative retroflex voiced	*ríẑă* (> orez) (rice)

Alternative signs:

[̥]   under vowels indicates closing

[̄]   over vowels indicates length

[́]   main accentuation

[̀]   secondary accentuation on words with three or more syllables

[̋]   on vowels with special emphasis

[̯]   under consonants, indicates incomplete closure

_   under letters indicates that the investigator notes that the form registered seems unusual

< >   marks direct speech

[?]   the word could not be deciphered during transcription

[...]   omission of segments which are not relevant for illustrating a certain aspect

' '   translation in standard Romanian (only those words and sentences have been translated which differ considerably from standard Romanian and which were considered key for understanding the text)

Further punctuation marks such as commas, semi-colons, exclamation marks and question marks, when outside the square brackets, are used as in standard punctuation.

Erzsebet Petrovics and her helpers basket weaving in Alsószentmárton

Traditional basket (Boyash: *coş*)

Mártin Petrovics in Alsószentmárton

Wooden trough (Boyash: *albíe* or *trócă*)

Mártin Petrovics in Alsószentmárton

Erzsebet Petrovics and her visitors in Alsószentmárton