

# Romany Word-Formation Bases as a Source of Neologization in the Slovak Carpathian Romany Language

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*The paper analyzes the methods of enriching the Slovak Carpathian Romany vocabulary by Romany authors on the basis of existing Romany word-formation bases. The most frequent method is analogical formation that consists in assigning a new metaphorical or metonymical meaning to an existing form. The Slovak Carpathian Romany makes also use of standard derivational rules. Calques of Slovak complex words are less frequent, mostly restricted to nonce formations that have not yet become an integral part of the Slovak Carpathian Romany.*

**Key words:** neologization, analogical nomination, derivation, calques

My father, Professor Ján Horecký, counted the Romany language among his numerous interests in the last decade. It was mainly this language where our roads joined together following many years of each of us having gone our own ways. We spent a lot of time discussing the language in our study room. There, my father could easily use his extensive expertise, while I tried to apply my indological knowledge. My father was primarily interested in the question of the codification and standardization of the Romany language (2001). He used Romany to illustrate his original onomasiological theory (1999) and he put together his and my strengths in the description of the system (2000) and later also of the syntax of the Slovak Carpathian Romany language (2006). Father's inventiveness, his ability to understand the heart of the matter, together with his research reverence and patience have remained a goal beyond my reach so far. Moreover, his in-depth and versatile linguistic knowledge revealed in our discussions in our study room were and still are an undying inspiration for me. They also inspired me to write this paper.

The Romany language presents a permanent challenge for a linguist. It has not yet been researched sufficiently. In addition, it has been gradually changing in accordance with the changing social conditions and the requirements imposed on it in connection with the development of its new function: it is becoming a language of the press and literature. An increasing number of Romany texts face the problem of the language's limited vocabulary. Therefore, Romany authors try to cope with the problem by filling lexical gaps in their language. One of their methods, as the topic of this paper suggests, is to form neologisms based on Romany word-formation bases. As this paper shows, the most frequent ways of forming Romany neologisms are analogical nomination, derivation, and calque formation.

While there are numerous publications discussing neologisms, only few of them offer a definition of the term 'neologism' itself. Therefore, appropriate attention should be paid to the process of neologization and the enrichment of vocabulary in general.

Languages permanently adopt new lexical units to denote new things, phenomena and actions. These need not necessarily be 'brand' new objects, resulting from inventions or discoveries, the names of which not only enrich a source language, but also, together with their content, can gradually become neologisms in many other languages (e.g., loan-words: *lunochod* 'moon rover', *raketa* 'missile', *perestroika* 'perestroika', or calques from the English language: *počítač* 'computer', *myš* 'mouse', etc.). A neologism is often a name of an object which is new for a particular linguistic and cultural community. In a different linguistic and cultural environment, the same object may well be quite common (e.g., the names of animals, plants, weapons, religious and philosophical notions, and many others).

At a certain stage of development all loans are actually neologisms which gradually become a part of common vocabulary. At the same time, it is very difficult to set a limit as to when the word stops being a neologism. It is particularly problematic in languages without written literature and whose vocabulary is not recorded in dictionaries.

A case in point is Romany. The Romany language is a new Indo-Aryan language whose roots go far into the past. Words of Indian origin represent the core of its vocabulary. On the other hand, Romany does borrow words from other contact languages.

The question is at what state of development loans can be considered domesticated and not foreign (their etymology is usually clear though). Sometimes it is assumed that the true Romany language consists only of words of Indian, Persian and Greek origin, but not of Serbian, Romanian, Hungarian and Slovak origin. Furthermore, Slovak Carpathian Romany (the Romany spoken in eastern, central and western Slovakia), unlike Danubian Romany (Hungarian Romany in southern Slovakia) and Vlach Romany, is mainly saturated with Slovak loans. Since the Romany people have been living in Slovakia for centuries, most adults are bilingual, easily borrowing Slovak naming units standing for objects they ‘discovered’ in the new environment. While initially adopted mainly from dialects of different regions, many of these naming units are not considered to be loans in the Romany language. Today, they form an organic part of the Slovak Carpathian Romany vocabulary. They are recorded in *Romsko-český a česko-romský kapesní slovník* [Romany-Czech and Czech-Romany pocket dictionary] (Hübschmannová et al. 1991). The dictionary covers the basic wordstock of the spoken language and also of the language of the first literary works – poems, fairy tales, narratives and real-life stories – which appeared at the beginning of the 1990s. As these works usually have a simple theme, they can do with the basic vocabulary.

In the above mentioned dictionary, there are, however, some words classified as neologisms (e.g., *akhariben* ‘declaration, notice’, *andrethodo* ‘content, ingredient’, *anglelav* ‘preface’, *dikhaviben* ‘performance’, *džanaviben* ‘information, announcement’, *rozgiņipen* ‘consideration’ and others). There is no more recent dictionary that might be used to see whether these neologisms have passed to the category of common words. Moreover, there is a lack of texts commonly using these neologisms.

A special group are Romany neologisms derived from Romany word-formation bases, the main topic of this paper.

My research is based on the naming units identified as neologisms in the above-mentioned bilingual dictionary, and on lexical items occurring in the Romany press (although not listed in the dictionary). These latter occur mainly in texts sporadically published in the *Romano l'il nevo* newspaper. Their authors try to reduce the frequent adoption of Slovak words by replacing them with either paraphrases or new Romany words formed from Romany word-formation bases by using the processes of analogical nomination, derivation and calque.

The naming process is always based on the transition from the conceptual sphere through content to form, thus establishing an onomasiological chain (Horecký 1984). If an already existing form is used at the end of the chain, the process involves indirect, that is to say, analogical nomination (Horecký 1987). Analogical nomination mostly rests on metonymy and metaphor. In both cases one form stands for more concepts and contents.

In metonymy, the denotation of one object is transferred to another one on the basis of an inner relationship. In metaphor, it is transferred on the basis of resemblance of appearance and function.

For instance, the lexical unit *šeralo*, the common dictionary meaning of which is ‘someone with big head’, is also used regionally to mean ‘authority’, and, by analogy, to denote ‘a chairman’: *šeralo pro Kulturno romano jekhetañiben* ‘Chairman of Cultural Union of Romany Community’. The word *šeralo* is also used to mean ‘a manager of an ensemble’ and ‘mayor’ when translating Slovak text. Similarly, the word *šerutno*, initially meaning ‘someone with big head’, but also meaning ‘chieftain, authority’ is used in the meaning ‘chairman’: *republikakro šerutno* ‘republic chairman’. New meanings in these examples are based on the similarity of function. They denote a person heading something, an authority. Both *šeralo* and *šerutno* are derived from the word *šer* ‘head’.

The word *jekhetañiben* ‘unity, commonality’ (itself derived from the base *jekh* ‘one’), underlies neologisms meaning (1) ‘council’: *Helsinkengro jekhetañiben* ‘Helsinki council’, (2) ‘ensemble’ in connection with *khelibnaskro* (< *khelel* ‘act’): *khelibnaskro jekhetañiben* ‘theatrical

ensemble' and (3) 'union': *Kulturno romano jekhetañiben* 'Cultural Union of Romany Community'.

Another item, *upruno rajipen* 'government administration', was formed by analogy with a common vocabulary word *rajipen* which means (1) 'manorial farm' and (2) 'lordship', and from *upruno* 'the highest, utmost'. Similarly, the common word *kher* 'house', when combined with *upruno* acquires a new meaning: *upruno kher* 'supreme authority'.

The neologism *phala* 'stage' was coined on the basis of external resemblance with *phal* 'board'. An attributive *phalengero*, derived from this neologism, can be combined with the lexical unit *pochtan* 'linen, cloth' to form the neologism *phalengero pochtan* 'curtain'.

Other examples of analogic neologisms include *idejos* 'electoral term' (narrowing its common meaning 'time, period') and *dekhiben* (originally meaning 'look, horizon, view') with its meanings (1) 'medical examination', (2) 'attitude', and (3) 'goal'.

The names of some word-classes were also coined by analogical formation. For example, the word *nav/lav* 'name', may combine with other words to acquire the following meanings: *vičindo lav* 'interjection' (< *vičinel* 'call'), *pašonav* 'article' (*pašo* < *paš* 'next to, near'), *anglo nav* 'preposition' (< *anglo* 'in front of'), *phanduno lav* 'conjunction' (< *phandel* 'tie'), *paškerutno* 'adverb' (< *paš* 'next to' + *kerutno* 'verb', which is actually a calque of the word 'adverb'). Similarly, *dodino* 'adjective' is formed from *dodel* 'add'.

Neologisms formed by analogy can either be one-word (*šeralo*, *šerutno*, *jekhetañiben*, *idejos*, *dekhiben*) or multi-word (*khelibnaskro jekhetañiben*, *phalengero pochtan*) formations. Multi-word neologisms are often a combination of the Slovak and Romany elements as in, for example, *gaveskro urados* 'municipal office' (Rom. *gav* 'municipality', Slov. *úrad* 'office') or *vladno avrikidno manuš* 'government representative' (Slov. *vládny* 'government', Rom. *khidel avri* 'choose, elect' + *manuš* 'man'). Since only some Slovak words are occasionally replaced by neologisms in the texts, combinations like *dženo* (Rom.) *andre* (Rom.) *Rada* (Slov.) *vlady* (Slov.) *vaš* (Rom.) *narodnosti* (Slov.) 'member of Government Council for Nationalities' are formed.

A frequent way of forming neologisms in the Romany language is affixation; however, neologisms formed by prefixation are an exception. There are namely no original prefixes in the Romany language; in some cases, the meaning of a prefix is carried by a grammaticalized postposition. Examples are *anglelav* 'preface' (< *angle* 'in front of' + *lav* 'word'), *telgodate* 'subconsciousness' (< *tel* 'under' + *god'i* 'reason, mind'), and *bikherengro* 'homeless' (< *bi* 'without' + *kher* 'house'). Similarly, some neologisms from verbs were formed from units influenced by Slovak verbs with the prefix *vy-*, where the prefix means 'heading out, from.' In Romany, this prefix is automatically replaced by the postposed element *avri*. Following this pattern, the verb *akharel* 'call' produced the verb *akharel avri* 'declare' (Slov. *vyhlásit*), which then gave rise to the neologism *avriakhariben* 'declaration.' Similarly, *avriphučeriben* 'interrogation' came from *phučerel avri* 'interrogate' (< *phučel* 'ask', Slov. *vypytovať sa*) and *avripheniben* 'pronunciation' from *phenel avri* 'pronounce' (< *phenel* 'speak', Slov. *vysloviť*).

It should be noted that the aforementioned cases are not only based on the prefix; an important role is played by the very productive suffix *-iben*, often used in Romany to create substantives from verbs and other parts of speech. It can be illustrated with *dikhlariben* and *dikhaviben* 'theatre performance' and *charňariben* 'abbreviation.'

The neologism *charňariben* is listed in the dictionary also with the synonymous suffix *-ipen*. The suffixes *-iben* and *-ipen* are in most cases completely synonymous. However, it seems that, when forming neologisms, at least those we have found in the dictionary and the examined texts, *-ipen* is more productive. It can be attached to a participial stem as well as to an infinitive stem: *kerd'ipen* 'product' (< *kerd-o* 'produced, made'), *čhord'ipen* 'liquid' (< *čhord-o* 'outpoured'), and *dochudňipen* 'success' (< *dochudn-o* 'achieved'); *rozgiňipen* 'consideration' (< *rozgin-el* 'consider'), *bašal'ipen* 'sound.' (< *bašal-ol* 'make ring itself') In some cases, the differences between the suffixes *-iben* and *-ipen*, attached to different verb stems, give rise to separate neologisms such as *kerd'-ipen* 'product' in contrast to *ker-iben* 'act, deed.'

Romany neologisms are also formed using other suffixes, e.g. *-išagos* as in *kamplišagos* ‘duty’ (– *kampel* ‘be necessary’), *-utn-o* as in *dikhutno* ‘spectator, viewer’ (< *dikhel* ‘watch’). The neologism *dikhutno* exists side by side with another neologism of the same meaning *dikh'lardo* ‘spectator, viewer’ (< *dikh'larel*). Additionally, perfect participle in masculine gender forms the neologism *dikhado* ‘theatre’ and its feminine counterpart forms the neologisms *dikhad'i* ‘television’.

Thus, the Romany language uses a wide range of options to form neologisms by means of derivation. This can be clearly exemplified with neologisms formed from the stem *dikh-* (*dikhel* ‘to see’):

(1)	<i>dikh -- 0 -- iben</i>	1. medical examination 2. attitude 3. goal
	<i>dikh -- av -- iben</i>	theatre performance
	<i>dikh – l'-- ar -- iben</i>	theatre performance
	<i>dikh -- ad -- o</i>	theatre
	<i>dikh -- ad' -- i</i>	television
	<i>dikh – l'-- ar -- d -- o</i>	viewer
	<i>dikh -- utn -- o</i>	viewer

These neologisms, together with common dictionary words that are formed from the same word-formation base, enrich the Romany vocabulary: *dikhiben* ‘look, horizon, view’, *dikheri* ‘mirror’, *dikh'lado* ‘transparent’ and *dikh'liben* ‘visibility.’ Other neologisms are formed from similar verbal bases. For example, the base *sikh-* (< *sikh'ol* ‘learn’) produced *sikh'lard'i* ‘teacher’, *sikhad'i* ‘school’, *cikñi sikhad'i* ‘kindergarten’ (i.e., ‘small school’), and *sikh'ariben* ‘rehearsal.’

Other deverbal neologisms include *vakeribnaris* ‘prompter’ (< *vakerel* ‘speak’), *garuvkerdo* ‘stagehand’ (< *garuvel* ‘hide’ + *kerel* ‘do’), *avindo* ‘guest’ (< *avel* ‘come’), *kerutno* ‘verb’ (< *kerel* ‘do’), and *gindo* ‘numeral’ (< *ginel* ‘count’).

Still other common neologisms are derived from substantives, for example, *rajip* ‘office’ (< *raj* ‘Mr.’) as in *gavutne rajip* ‘municipal office’, *gaduñi* ‘costumer’ (< *gada* ‘clothes, suit’), and *navutno* ‘namesake’ (< *nav* ‘name’). The adverb *jekhetane* ‘together’ (*jekh* ‘one’), for example, underlies the neologism *jekhetañib* ‘centre’ (*kulturno jekhetañib* ‘cultural centre’).

Some neologisms involve the affix *-or-*, a characteristic diminutive marker: *lavoro* ‘participle’ (< *lav* ‘word’) and *ratoro* ‘corpuscle’ (< *rat* ‘blood’).

Another possibility for creating neologisms from Romany word-formation bases is by forming calques from Slovak words. Some examples of this process include *maškarthemutno* ‘international’, Slov. ‘*medzinárodný*’ (< *maškar* ‘between, among’ + *them* ‘state, country’), *bikherengro* ‘homeless’, Slov. ‘*bezdomovec*’ (< *bi* ‘without’ + *kher* ‘house’), *čhavoriko kher* ‘orphanage’, Slov. ‘*detský domov*’ (< *čhave* ‘children’ + *kher* ‘house’), *jekhetane but'i* ‘cooperation’ Slov. ‘*spolupráca*’ (< *jekhetane* ‘together’ + *but'i* ‘work’), *vod'akeri dajori* ‘spiritual mother’, Slov. ‘*duchovná matka*’ (< *vodi* ‘spirit’ + *daj* ‘mother’), and *Naroma* ‘not a Romany’, Slov. ‘*Neróm*’.

Actually, neologisms in Romany are not only formed in cases where a new ‘object’ requires a new word. Many coinages are engendered – as in other languages – by purism: as a result of an effort to replace borrowed words with ‘more Romany’ units. Examples are *dikhado* ‘theatre’ vs. *d'ivadlos* or *tijatros*; *l'ilengero* ‘postman’ (< *l'il* ‘letter’) vs. *poštaris*; *gend'i* and *l'il'ali* ‘book’ (< *genel* ‘read’ and < *l'il* ‘letter’) vs. *kñižka*; *sikhad'i* ‘school’ (< *sikh'ol* ‘learn’) vs. *škola*; *beš'i* ‘chair’ (< *bešel* ‘sit’) vs. *stolkos*.

Synonymous neologisms cause an intralingual conflict in the Romany language. However, the selection of one of the synonyms in Romany is determined neither semantically nor stylistically because all synonyms are neutral. This is rather a sign of the lack of norm or codification in Romany.

In addition, the enrichment of Romany vocabulary by using the above-mentioned and other word-formation processes has, to this point, only involved the efforts of individuals, because there is no relevant institution fostering this enrichment. Therefore, most Romany neologisms are rather nonce-formations rather than institutionalised units of language. The future will show whether and how they can enter the lexicon of the Romany community. However, since the Romany language is still relatively rarely used in its written form, it may be supposed that new words will find it very difficult to become a part of the Romany vocabulary.

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