

RÁCOVÁ, A. – HORECKÝ, J.: *Syntax slovenskej karpatskej rómčiny* (Syntax of the Slovak Carpathian Romani). IRIS, Vydavateľstvo a tlač, s.r.o., Bratislava 2006. 147 pp., ISBN 80-89018-94-7.

The monograph is another result of the scholarly work of both authors devoted to the Romani linguistics. The reference grammar of the Slovak Carpathian Romani (A. Rácová, J. Horecký: *Slovenská karpatská rómčina. Opis systému*. VEDA 2000; SKR in what follows) is recently completed by a highly innovative syntactic description of the same variety of Romani.

The theory of illocutionary acts which already has some tradition in the Slovak linguistics (E. Pauliny, 1981 and J. Horecký, 1996) forms the theoretical basis of the present syntax. The traditional hierarchy of phrases, clauses and sentences reappears in the finely organized dynamism of speech acts and their ability for expansion into steadily varying discursive units or illocutions. By this holistic approach to the discursive activity the present text differs from the traditional government-based syntax and stands much closer to semantics.

The first part of the monograph (The structure of the illocutionary act, pp. 11-88) deals with the basic notion of the description, the speech act, its structure and the set of its components. The nominational component of the speech act includes several types of nominators differing from each other by their word-class membership, structural properties (one-word/multiword units), by their ability for expansion and resulting patterns of expanded structures, and other features. The possibility of omitting the nominator expressed by a pronoun in 'familiar contexts' (*Avle andro ešebno gav*, 13) would perhaps more plainly be related to the lack of topical emphasis whose presence may, on the contrary, call for the explicit statement of the pronoun (*Ta ov mange sikhavel o drom*, . . . , *ibid.*).

This part further provides a fine classification of nominators along with structural and semantic criteria which is supported by an impressive illustrative material. Here, the feature of contextual 'familiarity' plays a very helpful and meaningful criterial role in controlling the presence or omission of nominators.

The careful analysis of the moods and categories associated with the verbal predication (viz., predication component of the illocutionary act) is followed by the description of the case system related to it. Here, the casual reader and even a non-initiated linguist will be surprised when discovering that the series of the five Romani cases, accusative, dative, instrumental, ablative, and local, is not completed by the genitive (with the nominative unmarked). The fine description of the possessive relationship (22-26), apparently one of the intricate parts of the Romani grammar, provides one of the possible answers.

The authors' decision to classify the suffix *-ker/-ger* independently of the case paradigm is worth consideration. When reducing formal means used to mark the possessive relationship to what might be theoretically classified as genitive, *Syntax* (22) quotes the following two possibilities:

- possessive pronouns, and
- possessive adjectives.

With the possessive pronouns the marker *-ter/-ger* occurs as a component of the third person pronouns: *leskero, leskeri, leskere* 'his' with the possessed entity in singular masculine, singular feminine, and plural respectively; the same for the feminine *lakero, lakeri, lakere* 'her', and the plural *tengero, tengeri, tengere* 'their' (SKR 47).

With what the authors classify as possessive adjectives, the suffix *-ker* operates either as a single possessive marker, as in *la dakeri rokla* 'the mother's skirt' (accusative) (25),

*le papuskere phrala* 'grandfather's brothers' (18) or as a combined marker together with the accusative indicator *-es-* (*le ~ -es*), as in *le dadeskeri cholov* 'the father's trousers' (accusative) (25).

Were the suffix *-ker* operating as a single marker, it would be apparently possible to classify it both as a genitive marker and as a possessivizer. Such double classification is followed in the description of a number of other languages. The Korean *-ui* marker may serve as an illustrative example: *chascan-ui kaps* 'the price of the tea cup' (genitive marker) as against *senayng-ui mal* 'the master's words' or *kim sensayng-ui ttal* 'Mr Kim's daughter' (possessive marker) (Lewin-Tschong Dae Kim 1974: 248).

Nevertheless, the co-occurrence of a genuine case marker (*-es*) and *-ker* makes the classification of the latter in case terms somewhat problematic since a conflicting case cluster would thereby result.

The second part of the book is dealing with the content, form and function of the speech acts and with four basic types thereof: cogitational, conditional, directive and phatic illocutionary acts.

Besides its high linguistic qualities as scholarly work, the book is fully qualified to serve as an efficient tool to guide the scattered bits of dialectal communication of the Slovak Romani communities towards a norm-bound written language. The completeness of basic syntactic patterns described, the high-level consistency and clarity of exposition and the well-balanced architecture of the book would make this challenging goal fully attainable were it not for several extra-linguistic factors difficult to deal with in the present-day Roma community in Slovakia. In this domain, the book will no doubt contribute to the rise of linguistic awareness with the Romani intellectuals and, hopefully, the common language users alike. As a valuable piece of linguistic scholarship, the monograph will be read with profit by Romanists, general linguists and all those who are interested in this wide-spread archaic language.

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TABAREV, A. V.: *Drevnie Olmeki (Ancient Olmecs: History and Problems of Investigation)*. Novosibirsk: Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography SBRAS Press, 2005. 143 pp. ISBN 5-7803-0138-7. (Press of the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Lavrentev prospect 17, Novosibirsk-90, 630090, Russia).

The author of the book, Prof. Dr. Andrei Vladimirovich Tabarev, is a well-known archeologist in Russia and the USA. He is the head leading researcher of the stone age in the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences. His ideas on the development of the ancient American cultures are supported by his American colleagues. The foreword of the book on the ancient Olmecs is written by Dr. Michael D. Coe, Professor Emeritus of Yale University (USA). He recommends the book by Andrei V. Tabarev as one of the best about the Olmec civilization of Mesoamerica. It is prepared and published with the support of the Foundation for the Advancement of the Mesoamerica Studies of the USA. Unfortunately, it is rather seldom that the publications of Russian scholars are supported by American