

# The dialect of the Mitrovica Roma

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The Mitrovica Roma have been scattered across Europe since the ethnic conflict in Kosovo. Their dialect was identified as a Gurbet variety, but has not yet being exhaustively documented. This article aims at filling this gap by presenting the grammar of the dialect. Data have been collected in Palermo, Italy, and are presented following the Romani Morpho-Syntax database format. Phonological, morphological and syntactic features are described, highlighting those helpful in classifying the dialect in a geographic–historical perspective. Many features are shared with Vlax dialects of Romani, originating in Walachia and Moldavia, which is taken as an indication of the origin of the Mitrovica dialect in Vlax territories. Mitrovica Romani participates in innovations originating in the south-western Balkans but not reaching Vlax territories, suggesting a relatively early migration of the community to the southern Balkans.

*Keywords:* Kosovo, migrant dialect, Vlax, Gurbet, morpho-syntax, phonology, descriptive grammar, dialect classification

## Introduction

The Romani dialect described in this article is spoken by Roma refugees who escaped from Mitrovica, Kosovo. According to my informants it constituted the main Romani variety spoken in the town until the late 1990s.

The 1981 Yugoslavian census (the last one to be answered by all the ethnic groups living in Kosovo) reports that 4,299 Roma lived in Mitrovica (Pettan 2000, 2002), concentrated in the Romani *mahala* ('district'). The professions practised were a mixture of traditional Romani activities (musician, craftsman, peddler) and of working-class jobs (cleaner, low-level employee in the public sector, builder, skilled and unskilled worker). Some families even ran small businesses like restaurants, bars, clothes and textiles shops. The economic crisis faced by former Yugoslavia from the late 1970s, however, persuaded many families to migrate to Western Europe for periods of a few months up to several years. During the ethnic conflict in the 1990s, many Roma were accused by Albanians of being Serb collaborators and driven from their homes. Furthermore, the destruction of the *mahala* by NATO bombings on Mitrovica in 1999 finally led the community to live in diaspora in various European countries (mainly France, Italy and Germany).

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Very little is known about this dialect, although Lapov (2004) describes it as a Gurbet variety. It appears to be related to other dialects spoken in former Yugoslavia, such as Bosnian Romani (Uhlik 1941/42/43), the Xoraxane dialect spoken in Italy by immigrants from Bosnia (Franzese 1997), Kosovo Gurbet (Boretzky 1986) and Macedonian Džambazi (Boretzky 2003).

All these dialects have been classified as belonging to the widespread Vlax family, traditionally associated with Romani population settlements in Romanian speaking territories (Matras 2002, Boretzky 2003). Considering various particular features of these dialects, both archaisms and innovations, Boretzky argues that Vlax dialects moved into the Romanian speaking territories of Walachia and Moldavia around the fourteenth century as an already distinct group. Contact with Romanian further added to their distinct character. Some Vlax distinctive features are umlaut in *daj* > *dej* 'mother', *čaj* > *čej* 'daughter'; short genitive marker in *-k-*; plural of borrowed nouns *-uri*; comparative *maj*; prothetic *v-* in third-person pronouns; negative indefinites *khonik* 'nobody' and *khanči* 'nothing'; 1SG past in *-em*; loan-verb adaptation marker *-isar-*; suffix *-tar* with verbs of motion (Matras 2002, Boretzky 2003).

Vlax speakers are now dispersed in most European regions, as well as overseas. Their migrations have been connected at least in part to the abolition of Romani slavery in Romania in around 1863, although it has also been suggested that various groups may have reached the southern Balkans during the previous centuries (Marushiakova and Popov 2001). Southern Vlax varieties are found in southern Romania, Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro and the southern Balkans. Since the wars in former Yugoslavia they are also found in migrant communities, mainly across Western Europe. They are characterised by, amongst other features, palatalisation of velars preceding /e/; vocative plural *-alen*; short possessive reflexive *po* and 1SG possessive *mo*; demonstrative *gava*; negation with *ni* or *in* (Matras 2002, Boretzky 2003).

Northern Vlax dialects are located in northern Romania, Vojvodina, Hungary and in migrant communities elsewhere in Europe and overseas. They usually show de-affrication of *čh* > *ś* (*š*) and *dž* > *ž* (*ž*); abstract nominaliser *-imos*; clitic pronouns *li*, *lo*; demonstrative *kakava*; definite articles in *l-*; negation with *či*; synthetic future in *-a* (Matras 2002, Boretzky 2003). Considering the relatively recent geographical distribution of speakers, Boretzky (2003) argues that features distinguishing the two sub-groups must have developed before the abolition of slavery.

At first glance the dialect spoken by Mitrovica Roma shows many Southern Vlax features as well as lexical borrowings from Albanian (e.g. *ljufta* 'war', *kiša* 'church'), Serbian (i.e.: *sveto* 'world', *misliv* 'I think') and Balkan Turkish (e.g. *pendžerava* or *džama* 'window', *lafi* 'word'), although the latter may have entered via Serbian or Albanian. This suggests the group reached Kosovo when

Turkish was still the dominant language and remained in the region until its forced migration, when Albanian and Serbian were the most widely spoken languages.

In spite of the similarities with Gurbet dialects documented elsewhere in former Yugoslavia, none of my informants indicated this term as their ethnonym. Older informants who were born and raised in the early 1970s generally favour the religious designation *Xoraxane Roma* 'Muslim Roma', also in use among the members of the community now settled in Florence (Lapov 2004). The next generation, born and raised during the period of short-term migrations, accepted the above designation, although they prefer to define themselves as *Kosovače Roma* 'Kosovo Roma' or *Mitricače Roma* 'Mitrovica Roma' (from the colloquial pronunciation of the town name, *Mitrica*). Informants in both groups, occasionally, and only if put under pressure to provide a more specific designation, resorted to the Albanian *Gabeli*, which, just as *Gurbet* in Serbian, is used to define historically nomadic and semi-nomadic Roma as opposed to *Arli* or *Arlije*, historically sedentary Roma (Pettan 2002). Finally, the younger generations born and raised in Italy seem to lack any group-specific name and call themselves simply as Roma. Considering this lack of a shared ethnonym and the fact that even the youngest generations are aware of the group origin in Mitrovica, I will refer to the dialect as Mitrovica Romani. I will not follow Lapov (2004) in defining the dialect *Xoraxane* in order to avoid confusion with the dialect documented by Franzese (1997).

Romani as a whole has been described as a Balkanised Indic language (Matras 1994) and, given its historical condition of a dispersed minority language, it has also been proposed as a perfect case for the study of contact phenomena (Matras 2002). In the case of the Mitrovica dialect, this suitability is further enhanced by the recent shift in contact situation experienced by its speakers. However, since it has so far not been exhaustively documented, it is nearly impossible to investigate the relevance of any supposedly contact phenomenon that may be observed.

In order to compensate for this lack of documentation, the present work provides a grammatical description of the dialect, focusing on morpho-syntax.

The primary data were collected and transcribed by me following the dialectological questionnaire developed for the Romani Morpho-Syntax (RMS) Database (Matras *et al.* 2009)<sup>1</sup> among the members of the community now settled in Palermo, Italy. I was already familiar with the informants thanks to a six-month fieldwork trip undertaken for my BA dissertation in 2006, which was followed by a year of voluntary civil service in 2007 on a project aimed at mediating between the community and the local institutions.

1. The database is accessible at <http://romani.humanities.manchester.ac.uk>.

Fieldwork for the present work was conducted during three trips in September 2008 (two weeks), March 2009 (one week) and July 2009 (two weeks). During my second trip, increasing anti-Roma attitudes in Italy boosted the group's mobility and thus interfered with fieldwork. A total of four questionnaires were elicited in Italian from speakers born during the years of short-term migration. The informants' competence in Italian is good, although the language has been regularly used only since their settlement in the late 1990s. It must be admitted that the sample is small and only comprises speakers in their late 20s and early 30s. However, as Petrović and Stefanović (2005) noted, Kosovan dialects of Romani are better preserved in refugee communities, while those still in Kosovo are undergoing a process of language shift due to Albanian pressure. Thus, also considering that due to the dispersion of the community Mitrovica is nearly emptied of Roma, providing description of the dialect seems important.

The analysis, too, follows the RMS and is thus broken into nominals and adverbs, verbs and syntax, constituting the three main sections of the work (sections 2 to 4). Remarks on phonology are provided in section 1. A list of diagnostic features is given in section 5, allowing for the reconstructions of the community migrations and the historic-geographical classification of the dialect.

## 1. Phonology

### 1.1. Vowels

The Mitrovica dialect has the five basic vowels, /a, e, i, o, u/, which were inherited from Early Romani and shared with all the other Romani dialects. As suggested by Boretzky (1991), early contact with Romanian may be held responsible for the presence of the centralized vowels /i/ and /ə/. In the Mitrovica dialect they freely alternate with corresponding uncentralised vowels, for instance, /šəl/ ~ /šol/ 'hundred', /šil/ ~ /šil/ 'cold', /bəršin/ ~ /bəršun/ ~ /beršin/ ~ /beršun/ 'rain'. The resulting seven-vowel system is shown in Table 1.1. (Diphthongs and long vowels do not occur in the Mitrovica dialect.)

TABLE 1. Vowel system

i	(i)	u
e	(ə)	o
		a

### 1.2. Consonants

Table 2 sets out the system of consonants of Mitrovica Romani. The set of common Romani aspirates, /ph, th, kh, čh/, is present in the dialect, although, as

TABLE 2. Consonantal phonemes

		Bilabial	Lab.Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Glottal
Plosives	Unvoiced	p		t			k		
	Unv. aspirated	ph		th		čh	kh		
	Voiced	b		d		dž	g		
Nasals		m		n					
Affricates	Unvoiced			c					
	Unv. aspirated					čh			
	Voiced					dž			
Fricatives	Unvoiced		f	s			x	h	
	Voiced		v	z					
Trill				r					
Lateral	Unpalatalised			(rr)					
	Palatalised			lj					
Approximant						j			

also observed by Lapov (2004), they are losing salience in the speech of those who were born and raised in Italy. Considering that other Romani dialects spoken in Italy since at least five centuries – such as Calabrian and Abruzzi Romani (Soravia 1977) – have completely lost the aspirates, it seems plausible to attribute this phenomenon to Italian influence. Albanian influence (see Lapov 2004) seems to be responsible for the presence of the palatalised lateral, mainly occurring in loanwords, e.g. *ljufta* ‘war’. The palatalised lateral has also infiltrated the inherited lexicon, e.g. *lil* ~ *l’il* ~ *ljil* ‘paper’, although in these cases either Albanian or Serbain influence can be held responsible. The long alveolar trill /rr/ continues the Early Romani /ř/ (whose quality, however, is unclear). It occurs only word-initially, e.g. *rrom* ‘man’, and in some realisations of the historical cluster /ndř/ (see section 1.4).

### 1.3. Stress

Mitrovica Romani preserves Early Romani word-level grammatical stress, following what has been defined as a conservative stress pattern (Matras 2002: 63). In the pre-European component, stress falls on Layer I inflectional endings in nominal and nominalised categories, on person inflection on finite verbs and on the final element of indeclinables:

- (1) a. *čhav-ó*  
boy-NOM

- b. *jačh-én-ca*  
eye-PL.OBL-INSTR
- c. *bar-í*  
big-F
- d. *xa-pé*  
eat-NR
- e. *čer-áv*  
do-1SG
- f. *vačard-á*  
talked-3SG
- g. *dž-án-asa*  
go-3PL-REM
- h. *katé*  
here

European loans retain the model-language stress when not assimilated into the inflectional morphology, in which case they follow the pre-European pattern with stress falling on Layer I markers:

- (2) a. *fóro* < Greek *fóros* ‘city’  
*for-ós-te*  
city-OBL-LOC
- b. *hóna* < Albanian *hóna* ‘Monday’  
*hon-á-ko*  
Monday-OBL-GEN
- c. *maéstro* < Italian *maéstro* ‘male teacher’  
*maestr-ós-o*  
teacher-OBL-GEN

#### 1.4. Phonological and morphophonological processes

The Early Romani \*/ndř/ cluster is continued in the Mitrovica dialect as /nr, nrr, ngr/:

- (3) a. *anro, anrro, angro* < Early Romani \**andřo* ‘egg’
- b. *manro, manrro, mangro* < Early Romani \**mandřo* ‘bread’
- c. *punro, punrro, pungro* < Early Romani \**pindřo* ‘leg’

Such variation can be encountered even within individual speakers:

- (4) a. Informant 1:  
*dijem cara manro tumare štare grasten.*  
gave.1SG little bread your.OBL four.OBL horses.OBL  
‘I gave some bread to your four horses.’

- b. Informant 1:  
*voj čindžarda o manrro.*  
 she broke.3SG the bread  
 'She broke the bread.'
- c. Informant 1:  
*ni džav kur ano pijaco te činav mangro.*  
 not go.1SG never to.the market to buy.1SG bread  
 'I never go to the market to buy bread.'

Another historical process common to all Romani varieties is prothesis of /j-/ and /v-/. In Mitrovica Romani prothetic /j-/ only occurs in the two lexical items that share this development across dialects (*jag* 'fire' < OIA *agní*; *jakh* 'eye' < OIA *akši*) and variably with the numeral 'one' (*ekh* ~ *jekh*). Prothetic /v-/ occurs only in items beginning with back vowels in more conservative dialects:

- (5) a. *angar* < *angar* 'coal'  
 b. *aver* < *aver* 'other'  
 c. *vordon* < *urdon* 'cart'  
 d. *vuš* < *uš* 'lip'  
 e. *vov/voj/von* < *ov/oj/on* 'he/she/they'

Truncation of initial /a-/ in words such as *akana* 'now', *av-* 'to come' and *avral* 'outside' is absent in the Mitrovica dialect. On the other hand, as in the majority of Vlax dialects, innovative forms with prothetic /a-/ are systematic, as shown in (6):

- (6) a. *abav* < *bijav* 'wedding'  
 b. *anav* < *nav* 'name'  
 c. *ašun-* < *šun-* 'to listen'  
 d. *arakh-* < *rakh-* 'to find'

In Mitrovica Romani, as generally in Vlax, feminine nouns are jotated. This led to replacement of /n/ in individual lexical items such as *phenja* > *pheja* 'sister.ACC' and even in the masculine *panjesa* > *pajesa* 'water.INSTR'. Furthermore, jotation of the copula and the past-tense conjugation led to umlaut in the 1SG concord marker:

- (7) a. *sem* < *sjom* 'I am'  
 b. *čerdem* < *kerdjom* 'I did'

Palatalisation of alveolar plosives in selected lexemes, a process common to most Vlax dialects, led to the addition of palatal stops to the inherited consonant inventory:

- (8) a. *bući* < *but'i* 'work'  
 b. *džive* < *d'ives* 'day'

A further stage of the same process is affrication, again affecting selected lexemes:

- (9) *cikno* < *t'ikno* 'small'

In Mitrovica Romani, palatal stops also replace velar plosives preceding front vowels:

- (10) a. *ćin-* < *kin-* 'to buy'  
 b. *ćher* < *kher* 'house'  
 c. *džel-* < *gel-* 'went'

This process also characterises co-territorial dialects belonging to both the Vlax and the Balkan group, and is thus attributable to contact with Slavic languages (Matras 2002: 49).

Whatever their origin, palatal stops in Mitrovica Romani tend to merge with postalveolars fricatives:

- (11) a. *bući* < *bući*  
 b. *džive* < *džive*  
 c. *čher* < *čher*  
 d. *mandž-* < *mandž-*.

Other processes encountered in various Romani dialects involve the reduction or dropping of /s/. In grammatical paradigms the Mitrovica dialect does not show substitution of /s/ with /h/. On the other hand, /s/ in word-final position is systematically dropped, with the exclusion of monosyllabic *mas* 'meat'.

- (12) a. *romn-ja-sa* < *romnasa* 'woman-OBL-INSTR'  
 b. *ćher-es-te* < *khereste* 'house-OBL-INSTR'  
 c. *rom-e* < *romes* 'man-OBL'  
 d. *džive* < *dives* 'day'

Typical of Mitrovica Romani appears to be the loss of /k/ in nominal paradigms. In both the dative marker *-ke* and the genitive marker *-k-* /k/ is dropped when preceded by /s/. Thus, in the masculine conjugation we have:

- (13) a. *rom-es-e*  
 man-OBL-DAT  
 to the man  
 b. *rom-es-Ø-o*  
 man-OBL-GEN-M  
 of the man

The same phenomenon occurs with the interrogative expressing goal 'what for' and reason 'why', *sose*, as it is the dative form of the interrogative pronoun *so* 'what'.



Innovations such as systematic prothesis of /a-/, extensive palatalisation of dental stops, jotation leading to umlaut and replacement of preceding materials are characteristic of the Vlax diffusion space centred around Transylvania and Wallachia (Matras 2005: 7–22) and rarely reach as far as the southern Balkans. Thus, geographical diffusion cannot account for the presence of all these features in Mitrovica Romani, which suggests that the dialect originates in the Vlax diffusion space. On the other hand, participation in regional developments such as phonological loss of final /s/ and palatalisation of velars preceding front vowels (Matras 2002: 229) suggest the dialect must have moved from the Vlax diffusion space and spent a reasonably long time in the southern Balkans.

## 2. Nominals and adverbs

In this section I will present both derivational and inflectional morphology of classes such as nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs and demonstratives. Where relevant, notes on synchronic and diachronic developments will be provided, drawing on Matras's chapter on nominal forms (Matras 2002: 72–117) and on Elšik's papers on Romani pronouns (Elšik 2000a) and Romani nominal paradigms (Elšik 2000b). Comparisons with other Vlax varieties, when relevant, will also be provided.

### 2.1. Nominal derivation affixes

The pre-European abstract nominalisers *-ipen/-iben* are merged into *-ipe* in Mitrovica Romani, which appears to be confined to the pre-European lexicon. *-ipe* can derive abstract nouns both from adjectives and from verbs:

- (14) a. *guglipe* 'sweets' < *guglo* 'sweet'  
 b. *sastipe* 'health' < *sasto* 'healthy'  
 c. *panglipe* 'prison' < *pang-l-* 'close.PAST'  
 d. *xape* 'food' < *xa-* 'to eat'

The Greek-derived nominal suffix *-imos* has replaced *-ipe* in all positions but the nominative singular. Thus, we have:

- (15) a. *sast-ipe*                    *sast-imasa*  
 healthy-NR.SG    healthy-NR.OBL  
 'health'                    'healthfully' (used when toasting and for farewell)  
 b. *dil-ipe*                        *dil-imata*  
 fool-NR.SG            fool-NR.PL  
 'Foolish thing'    'Foolish things (or 'foolish people', typically Vlax).'

The common Romani diminutive suffix *-or-* is no longer productive in Mitrovica Romani. Its only occurrence is as a fossilised remnant in *čhorro* <

*čhav-or-o* ‘little boy’ and *čhorri* < *čhaj-or-i* ‘little girl’. From personal observation I have noted the use of Italian *-in-* among very young speakers (4–5 years old), as in *dram-in-a* ‘little car, toy car’ < *drama* ‘car’ while adults, if using a diminutive suffix, generally resort to *-ic-*. Adult speakers, however, consistently favour the analytic construction *cikno* ‘little’ + noun.

For the formation of feminine nouns from pre-European masculine noun ending in a consonant, Mitrovica Romani follows the general Common Romani usage, resorting to the suffix *-nji*:

- (16) a. *rom-nji* ‘woman’ < *rom* ‘man’  
 b. *guruv-nji* ‘cow’ < *guruv* ‘bull’

From personal communication I have been able to hear a further nominaliser: *-amn-* in *sox-amn-o* ‘liar-M’ < *soxav-* ‘to lie’.

## 2.2. Noun inflection

The system of nominal case in Romani consists of three layers, referred to as Layer I, II and III (Matras 2002, following Masica 1991: 232ff). Layer I markers distinguish gender, number, origin of the word and declensional classes, and function as nominative and oblique endings. Layers II markers, identical for all the declension classes, are agglutinated to the oblique stem and indicate the grammatical cases. Layers III markers are analytical adpositions and will be dealt with in section 4.

### 2.2.1. Layer I markers

Various declension classes have been postulated for Early Romani, depending on origin, gender and base form, each class having its specific set of Layer I markers (Elšik 2000b: 14–18). Their relation with the declension classes I documented in Mitrovica Romani (Table 3) will be discussed here.

The first declension class is the pre-European  $\emptyset$ -masculines, comprising nouns ending in consonants and approximants. It has *-a* as nominative plural marker, *-es-* and *-en-* for singular and plural oblique respectively: *ruv* ‘wolf’, *ruv-a* ‘wolves’, *ruv-es-* ‘wolf-OBL’, *ruv-en-* ‘wolves-OBL’. Variation is encountered with nouns like *gra* < *grast* ‘horse’, *va* < *vast* ‘arm’, *vuš* < *vušt* ‘lip’ and *kaš* < *kašt* as they have a  $\emptyset$  marker for nominative plural: *kaš* ‘tree’, *kašt-es-* ‘tree-OBL’, *kaš* ‘trees’, *kašt-en-* ‘trees-OBL’. Finally, in the abstract nouns, too, we have variation as the Greek-derived nominaliser *-imos* has infiltrated the pre-European paradigm in *-ipe* (see section 2.1). All the markers listed, with the exception of the Greek-derived ones, agree with the forms postulated by Elšik.

Pre-European *o*-masculines, such as *raklo*, match the postulated Early Romani set of Layers I markers as well, having *-e*, *-es-*, *-en-* for plural, singular

TABLE 3. Layer I markers

Origin	Class	Example	NOM		OBL	
			SG	PL	SG	PL
pre-European	zero-masculine	<i>cher</i> 'house'	-∅	-a	-es-	-en-
		<i>sast-</i> 'healthy'	-ipe	-imata	-imasa	-imata
		<i>kaš</i> 'tree'	-∅	-∅	-es-	-en-
	<i>o</i> -masculine	<i>bakro</i> 'sheep'	-o	-e	-es-	-en-
	zero-feminine	<i>phen</i> 'sister'	-∅	-ja	-ja-	-jen-
<i>i</i> -feminine	<i>džili</i> 'song'	-i	-ja	-ja-	-jen-	
European	<i>o</i> -masculine	<i>foro</i> 'town'	-o	-i (-ore)	-os-	-en-
	<i>i</i> -masculine	<i>direktori</i> 'director'	-i	-i	-es-	-en-
	<i>a</i> -feminine	<i>slika</i> 'picture;	-a	-e	-a-	-en-

oblique and plural oblique respectively: *rakl-o* 'boy', *rakl-e* 'boys', *rakl-es-* 'boy-OBL', *rakl-en-* 'boys-OBL'.

Elšik also postulated a pre-European *i*-masculine class, represented in the RMS questionnaire by the word *pani* 'water'. In Mitrovica Romani the base form of the term has undergone reinterpretation based on forms such as *pajesa* < *pan-jes-a* 'water-OBL-INSTR' (see section 1.4) and is now *paj*. As such it falls into the ∅-masculine class as words like *šošoj* 'rabbit'.

Pre-European feminine Layer I declension classes, too, match the Early Romani ones. Two out of the three classes postulated by Elšik have emerged from the questionnaires: ∅-feminines and *i*-feminines both have plural *-ja*, singular oblique *-ja-* and plural oblique *-jen-*: *buč-i* 'thing', *buč-ja* 'things'; *buč-ja-* 'thing-OBL', *buč-jen-* 'things-OBL'. In the case of *phen* 'sister', jotation (see section 1.4) led to forms such as *phe-jen-ca* < *phen-jen-ca* 'sister-OBL.PL-INSTR', which lead speakers to reinterpret the base form of the term as *phe-*. All informants, in fact, used variably *phen* or *phej* as nominative singular. The noun *dej* 'mother' shows variation between jotated (*daja-*) and unjotated (*da-*) oblique forms. From personal communication it also seems that the third feminine class postulated by Elšik, unjotated ∅-feminines, may occur, for example in the word *džuv-a* 'louse-NOM.PL'. This may suggest that either the levelling of feminine nouns into one class is still undergoing or that few lexical items resisted the process.

Three out of four of the European declension classes identified by Elšik are attested in Mitrovica Romani: *o*-masculines, *i*-masculines and *a*-feminines. Masculine loan words are accommodated into the different classes depending on their shape. Those ending in an open syllable or in /e/ fall into the *i*-class:

*telefoni* < Serbian *telefon* ‘phone’, *komuni* < Italian *comune* ‘City Council’. The remaining masculine loans are placed in the *o*-class.

With the single exception of the *i*-class plural, which Elšik gives as *-ja*, the Layer I markers for both classes match the forms postulated for Early Romani. The markers for *o*-masculines are plural *-i*, singular oblique *-os-*, plural oblique *-en-*: *maestr-o* ‘teacher’, *maestr-i* ‘teachers’, *maestr-os-* ‘teacher-OBL’, *maestr-en-* ‘teachers-OBL’. *i*-masculines markers are plural *-i*, singular oblique *-es-*, plural oblique *-en-*: *doktor-i* ‘doctor’, *doktor-i* ‘doctors’, *doktor-es-* ‘doctor-OBL’, *doktor-en-* ‘doctors-OBL’. The Romanian plural marker *-ora*, indicated by Boretzky (2003: map 56) as characteristic of Vlax dialects spoken in Kosovo and Macedonia, is attested as *-ore* only in a few older borrowings (e.g. *lafore* ‘news’, *čebapore* ‘burgers’), and although I have heard it particularly in the speech of the community members born and raised in Kosovo, it never occurs with borrowings from Italian. Considering that Italian masculines have *-i* in the plural when their singular is in *-o* or in *-e*, (*fratell-o* ‘brother’–*fratell-i* ‘brothers’; *padr-e* ‘father’–*padr-i* ‘fathers’), I suggest that Italian influence may be held responsible for the levelling of the plural markers between the two classes.

Feminine Layer I markers, too, match Elšik’s reconstruction: plural *-e*, singular oblique *-a-* and plural oblique *-en-*: *dram-a* ‘car’, *dram-e* ‘cars’, *dram-a-* ‘car-OBL’, *dram-en-* ‘cars-OBL’.

No *u*-masculines are attested in the samples. Even for *papus* ‘grandfather’, the only wide-spread representative of the class, all the informants used the form *papo*.

### 2.2.2. *Vocative*

Vocative markers in Romani take up the same slot occupied by Layer I markers but, unlike them, are unstressed. In Mitrovica Romani vocative forms are regularly used and are extremely regular: *-a* is used for masculine (*phrala*, *pije!* ‘brother, drink!’); *-e* occurs with feminines (*phene mungre*, *diklem tut!* ‘my sister, I’ve seen you!’); *-alen* is the plural (*čhavralen*, *aven karin!* ‘guys, come here!’). In personal communication I also found that with personal names other markers are used: *-i* for masculines (*Džaferi!* < *Džafer*, *Senadi!* < *Senad*) and *-o* for feminines (*Roberto!* < *Roberta*, *Gifo!* < *Gifa*).

### 2.2.3. *Layer II markers*

Layer II markers are invariant across the declension classes and are used to express the grammatical case. Layer II markers are identical for singular and plural and attach directly to oblique stem, showing voice assimilation to the oblique endings. Layer I oblique endings, however, may occur unaccompanied by Layer II markers when marking the animate direct object. Following Matras

(2002: 85), this usage of unaccompanied oblique endings will be defined as ‘independent oblique’. It is important to note that in Mitrovica Romani, due to the general loss of word final /s/, the independent oblique is not identical to the oblique in masculine singular forms:

- (17) a. *dikhlem jeche Rom-e.*  
 saw.1SG one man-OBL  
 ‘I saw a man.’  
 b. *kole rom-es-Ø-o šoro si štađžikasa učardo.*  
 that man-OBL.M.SG-GEN-M head is hat.INSTR covered.M.SG  
 ‘That man’s head is covered with a hat.’

The inanimate direct object takes nominative case:

- (18) *dikhlem jekh čher.*  
 saw.I one house  
 ‘I saw a house.’

The independent obliques and the Layer II markers used in the Mitrovica dialect are summarised in Table 4. Their functions and usage will be discussed in section 4.

TABLE 4. Layer II markers

	SG	Examples	PL	Examples
Independent	M: <i>-e</i>	M: <i>rakle</i>	M: <i>-e(n)</i>	M: <i>rakle(n)</i>
Oblique	F: <i>-ja</i>	F: <i>raklja</i>	F: <i>-je(n)</i>	F: <i>raklje(n)</i>
Dative	<i>-ke</i> > M: <i>-e</i> F: <i>-će</i>	M: <i>raklese</i> F: <i>rakljaće</i>	<i>-dže</i>	M: <i>raklendže</i> F: <i>rakljendže</i>
Locative	<i>-te</i>	M: <i>rakleste</i> F: <i>rakljate</i>	<i>-de</i>	M: <i>raklende</i> F: <i>rakljende</i>
Ablative	<i>-tar</i>	M: <i>raklestar</i> F: <i>rakliatar</i>	<i>-dar</i>	M: <i>raklendar</i> F: <i>rakljendar</i>
Instrumental	<i>-sa</i>	M: <i>raklesa</i> F: <i>rakljasa</i>	<i>-ca</i>	M: <i>raklenca</i> F: <i>rakljenca</i>
Genitive	<i>-k-</i> > M: <i>-Ø-</i> F: <i>-k-/ -ć-</i>	M: <i>rakles-</i> F: <i>rakljak-/ć-</i>	<i>-g-/ -dž-</i>	M: <i>rakleng-/dž-</i> F: <i>rakljeng-/dž-</i>

## 2.3. Adjectives

### 2.3.1. Derivational morphology

Of the historical Romani negational prefixes *bi-*, *na-* and *či-*, only *bi-* is currently used in Mitrovica Romani, although it is no longer productive and occurs only with inherited adjectives:

TABLE 5. Adjectival suffixes

Prefix	Examples	Semantic function
-al-	<i>zuralo</i> 'strong' <i>džungalo</i> 'hugely'	physical state
-val-	<i>nasvalo</i> 'sick' <i>barvalo</i> 'rich'	physical state
-an-	<i>phurano</i> 'old' <i>Romano</i> 'Gypsy'	physical state ethnicity
-ikan-	<i>borikano</i> 'bridal' <i>Dasikano</i> 'Christian Rom'	human ethnicity
-un-	<i>sastruno</i> 'metal' <i>kaštuno</i> 'wooden'	material
-utn-	<i>ladžutno</i> 'shy'	de-verbal

- (19) a. *bilačo* 'bad' > *lačo* 'good'  
b. *bibaxtalo* 'unlucky' < *baxtalo* 'lucky'

The prefix *na-* was substituted by the copula negator *naj*, which appears to be the productive way to negate adjectives, occasionally competing with *bi-*:

- (20) a. *naj baro* 'small' < *baro* 'big'  
b. *naj but* 'a little' < *but* 'much'  
c. *naj lačo* 'bad' < *lačo* 'good'

The inherited adjectival suffixes found in the samples are listed and exemplified in Table 5, with all examples given in the masculine form ending in *-o*.

Some semantic tendencies can be observed: the suffixes *-al-* and *-val-* are used to describe physical states, whereas *-un-* derives adjectives of material sources. The other suffixes do not show a clear correlation with semantic functions, probably because they are hardly productive and many adjectives are now fossilised as lexemes. The low productivity of the affixes is also confirmed by the receding of *-un-* before genitive forms:

- (21) a. *sastr-es-o* 'metal-OBL-GEN-M.SG' 'metal'  
b. *kašt-es-o* 'wood-OBL-GEN-M.SG' 'wooden'

Further confirmation is provided by the substitution of *-an-* and *-ikan-*, used in neighbouring Vlax dialects to derive adjectives of animal source, with genitive forms (see 22).

- (22) a. *guruvane jakha* 'the bull's horn' (RMS sample MK-001)<sup>2</sup>  
*guruveso jakha* 'the bull's horn' (Mitrovica Romani)

2. <http://romani.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/rms/browse/adjectivederivation/suffixes>

- b. *balikani porik* ‘the pig’s tail’ (RMS sample MK-001)  
*balesi pori* ‘the pig’s tail’ (Mitrovica Romani)

### 2.3.2. Inflectional morphology

Romani adjectives agree with their head noun in gender, number and nominative vs. oblique case, both in attributive and predicative position. In Mitrovica Romani the nominative markers for pre-European adjectives match the ones proposed by Elšik (2000b: 25) for Early Romani: masculine singular *-o*, feminine singular *-i* and plural *-e*. As in many other dialects (Matras 2002), the gender and number distinctions in the oblique have been neutralised, giving a unique marker *-e*. Examples of the pre-European inflection markers are provided in Table 6.

Some loan adjectives were encountered in the sample. They always occurred in the nominative case. Some of them matched the inflection markers proposed by Elšik (2000b: 25), namely *-o* for both masculine and feminine. *-i* was also found to occur with masculines, *-a* with feminines and *-e* with plurals:

- (23) a. *nemirno* č*hej*  
 naughty girl  
 ‘naughty girl’  
 b. *jekh čha-rr-o* *ašudžarol* *trankuillo*  
 one boy-DIM-M waits calm  
 ‘One boy is waiting quietly.’  
 c. *mo čhavo* *si* *duduči*.  
 my son is small  
 ‘My son is small.’  
 d. *dudučka* *the* *harini* *sa*.  
 small and friendly was  
 ‘She was small and friendly.’  
 e. *sa me čhavre* *si* *lulundže*.  
 all my children are long  
 ‘All my children are tall.’

TABLE 6. Pre-European adjectival inflection markers

	Marker	Example	Translation
NOM	Masc	<i>-o</i> <i>bar-o čer</i>	‘big house’
	Fem	<i>-i</i> <i>stolica nev-i</i>	‘new chair’
	Plural	<i>-e</i> <i>nov-e dramke</i>	‘new cars’
OBL	Masc	<i>-e</i> <i>čindan roja nev-e?</i>	‘did you buy new spoons?’
	Fem	<i>-e</i> <i>me duj-e phejenca</i>	‘with my two sisters’
	Plural	<i>-e</i> <i>dijem cara manro tumare štar-e grasten</i>	‘I gave some bread to your four horses’

### 2.3.3. Comparatives and superlatives

The inherited suffix *-eder*, used in the majority of Romani dialects to derive comparative and superlative, is not attested in Mitrovica Romani which, as most of the Vlax dialects, relies on Romanian *maj*:

- (24) a. *leso čer si maj baro sar munro.*  
 his.M house is CMPR big.M than my.M  
 ‘His house is bigger than mine.’  
 b. *o maj phurano manuš ki država čerde kraljo.*  
 the SUPPL old man in.the.F country do.PERF.OBL king.OBL  
 ‘The oldest man in the country was made king.’

### 2.4. Adverbs

In Mitrovica Romani, inherited adverbs still constitute the majority, although a certain number of loans can be observed. The adverbs found in the sample are exemplified in Table 7.

Other adverbial forms are derived from nouns through different processes. Dative case is used to derive some temporal adverbs:

- (25) a. *dživese* ‘during the day’ < *džive* ‘day’ + DAT  
 b. *ivendese* ‘during the winter’ < *ivend* ‘winter’ + DAT

Other temporal adverbs are expressed analytically, using deictics:

- (26) a. *kava bərs* ‘this year’  
 b. *kova kurko* ‘past week’ (lit. ‘that week’)

Adverbials referring to the days of the week are always expressed synthetically, although different markers are selected. Also note that in Mitrovica Romani *kurko*, designating Sunday in all other Romani dialects, is used for Saturday instead.

- (27) a. *Honako* ‘on Monday’ < Albanian *hona*  
 b. *Martako* ‘on Tuesday’ < Albanian *marta*  
 c. *Merkurako* ‘on Wednesday’ < Albanian *merkura*  
 d. *Ejtako* ‘on Thursday’ < Albanian *Ejta*  
 e. *Paraštune* ‘on Friday’  
 f. *Kurće* ‘on Saturday’  
 g. *Phurane kurće* ‘on Sunday’

The first four days of the week take the genitive marker *-ko*, *paraštuj* takes *-ne* and *kurko* takes the old locative marker *-e*. The old locative marker is also used to derive the only de-nominal adverb encountered in all samples: *čhere* ‘home/ at home’ < *čer* ‘house/home’.



TABLE 7. Adverbs

Adverb	Origin	Meaning	Example
<i>akana</i>	Inherited	now	<i>akana indžaren amen zumi</i> ‘they bring us soup now’
<i>arači</i>	Inherited	yesterday	<i>arači sa nasvali</i> ‘she was ill yesterday’
<i>adžive</i>	Inherited	today	<i>so ćerdan adžive?</i> ‘what have you done today?’
<i>ajrat</i>	Inherited	tonight	<i>ajrat ka džav ano foro</i> ‘tonight I’ll go in town’
<i>tehara</i>	Inherited	tomorrow	<i>tehara ka žaveršil kaja buči</i> ‘tomorrow I will finish this job’
<i>dži</i>	Inherited	until	<i>našti avav dži naj maj lače</i> ‘I can’t come until she gets better’
<i>anglal</i>	Inherited	already	<i>vačardem će anglal</i> ‘I told you already’
<i>špet</i>	Albanian	soon	<i>žinit tu maj špet!</i> ‘marry soon!’
<i>halija</i>	Albanian	yet, still	<i>mi maestra halija nasvali</i> ‘my theacher is still ill’ <i>ni avili halija ani skola</i> ‘she has not come back to school yet’
<i>odma</i>	Serbian	suddenly	<i>odma uštilo pe punre</i> ‘he suddenly stood up’
<i>dural</i>	Inherited	far	<i>kala čharre avilen but dural</i> ‘those little children came from far away’
<i>avral</i>	Inherited	outside	<i>voj si avral o čher</i> ‘she is outside the house’
<i>paše</i>	Inherited	nearby	<i>me dadeso čher si paše</i> ‘my father’s house is nearby’
<i>pala</i>	Inherited	behind	<i>lako čher si pala o bar</i> ‘her house is behind the bar’
<i>upral</i>	Inherited	above	<i>si jekh slika upral o kreveti</i> ‘there’s a picture above the bed’
<i>trujal</i>	Inherited	around	<i>pirdem trujal i kiša</i> ‘I walked around the church’
<i>lače</i>	Inherited	well	<i>džanav lače</i> ‘I know it well’
<i>več</i>	Serbian	only	<i>si ma več ekh čhavo</i> ‘I only have one child’

## 2.5. Numerals

Numerals in Mitrovica Romani appear quite stable: the only post-Greek borrowings are Serbian *nula* ‘zero’ and Romanian *milija* ‘thousand’. The numerals 11 to 19 are composed using the marker *-u-*, which can be freely omitted. The numerals 21 to 29 are created with the additive marker *-thaj-*, showing loss of /j/ before vowels. The numerals 31 to 59 are compounded without any marker. The numerals 60 to 90 are formed with the multiplicative marker *-var-*. Units are compounded to them again using *-thaj-*. The numerals are listed in Table 8.

The only ordinal encountered in the sample is *duj-to* ‘second’. During my fieldwork I also heard *tri-to* ‘third’ and *efta-to* ‘seventh’, which suggests that the marker *-to* is productive in the dialect, with the single exception of *pərvo* ‘first’, borrowed from Serbian.

TABLE 8. Numerals

---

0	<i>nula</i>
half	<i>upaš</i>
1	<i>(j)ekh</i>
2	<i>duj</i>
3	<i>trin</i>
4	<i>štar</i>
5	<i>panč</i>
6	<i>šov</i>
7	<i>efta</i>
8	<i>oxto</i>
9	<i>inja</i>
10	<i>deš</i>
11–19	10 + <i>u/ Ø</i> + NUM: 13 <i>deš-Ø-trin</i> , 18 <i>deš+u+oxto</i>
20	<i>biš</i>
20–29	20 + <i>tha(j)</i> + NUM: 26 <i>biš+thaj+šov</i> , 28 <i>biš+tha+oxto</i>
30	<i>tranda</i>
40	<i>saranda</i>
50	<i>pinda</i>
31–59	NUM X 10 + NUM: 32 <i>tranda+duj</i> , 45 <i>saranda+ panč</i> , 57 <i>pinda+efta</i>
60–90	NUM+ <i>var</i> + <i>deš</i> : 60 <i>šov+var+deš</i> , 90 <i>inja+var+deš</i>
61–99	NUM+ <i>var</i> + <i>deš</i> + <i>tha(j)</i> + NUM: 82 <i>oxtovardeš+thaj+duj</i> , 71 <i>eftavardeš+tha+jekh</i>
100	<i>šov</i>
1000	<i>milija</i>

---

Analytical multiplicatives are created using *drom* (literary ‘road’) as a quantifier. Otherwise borrowings are used:

- (28) a. *(j)ekh drom* ‘once’  
 b. *svako drom* ‘every time’  
 c. *uvek* ‘always = every time’

An oblique marker *-e* is used to inflect numerals, for both singular and plural:

- (29) a. *dikhlem ječh-e rom-e te pirol.*  
 saw.I one-OBL man-OBL COMP walk.3SG  
 ‘I saw a man walking.’  
 b. *me duj-e phejenca.*  
 my.OBL two-OBL sisters.INSTR  
 ‘With my two sisters.’

If substantivised numerals take full noun inflection:

- (30) *mangava te džav kol-e trin-enca ano foro.*  
 want.I.REM COMP go.I those-OBL three-PL.INSTR to town  
 ‘I wanted to travel to town with those three.’

## 2.6. Personal, possessive and reflexive pronouns

Personal pronouns in Romani show a layered structure in the same way that nouns with nominative and oblique forms do. Layer II case markers are agglutinated to the oblique form. Third-person plural pronouns show suppletion in their nominative vs. oblique forms.

First- and second-person plural possessives are created through the attachment of a possessive suffix *-r-* to the pronoun base form: 1SG *m-*, 2SG *t-*, 1PL *am-*, 2PL *tum-* (Elšik 2000a: 78). Third-person plural possessives, on the other hand, are formed by attaching the genitive Layer II marker to the oblique stem. All possessives act as adjectives and follow the same declension in order to agree in gender and number with the possessed.

The reflexive pronoun *pe*, which inflects like other pronouns, appears with reflexive or reciprocal verbs. If an anaphoric referent is identical with the clause subject, *pe* is also used as a thematic constituent, a pseudo-constituent with an evaluative reading or a reflexive possessive (Matras 2002: 101). The forms used in Mitrovica Romani are summarised in Table 9.

All the forms encountered perfectly match the developments from Early Romani into Vlax dialects as reconstructed by Elšik (2000a: 78–80).

Third-person plural nominative pronouns show prothesis of /v-/:

- (31) a. *vov dikhla e phurane.*  
           he saw.3SG the old.man.OBL  
           ‘He saw the man.’
- b. *voj džanola lače e džilja.*  
           she knew.3SG well the songs  
           ‘She knew the songs well.’
- c. *von si avral o čher.*  
           they are outside the house  
           ‘They are outside the house.’

TABLE 9. Pronouns

	NOM	OBL	INDEP. OBL	POSS	ENCL. REFL
1SG	<i>me</i>	<i>man-</i>	<i>ma(n)</i>	<i>mungr-/munř-/ munr-/m-</i>	<i>ma</i>
2SG	<i>tu</i>	<i>tu-</i>	<i>tu(t)</i>	<i>ćir-/ć-</i>	<i>tu</i>
1PL	<i>amen</i>	<i>amen-</i>	<i>ame(n)</i>	<i>amar-</i>	<i>ame</i>
2PL	<i>tumen</i>	<i>tumen-</i>	<i>tume(n)</i>	<i>tumar-</i>	<i>tume</i>
3SG.M	<i>vov</i>	<i>les-</i>	<i>le</i>	<i>les-Ø-</i>	<i>pe</i>
3SG.F	<i>voj</i>	<i>la-</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>la-k-</i>	<i>pe</i>
3.PL	<i>von</i>	<i>len-</i>	<i>le(n)</i>	<i>len-gr-</i>	<i>pe</i>
REFL	–	<i>pes-</i>	<i>pe</i>	<i>pir-/p-</i>	–

First- and second-person plural independent obliques can occur in a shortened, semi-clitic form which also serves as reflexive:

- (32) a. *čindem ma čurasa.*  
 cut.PERF.1SG myself knife.INSTR  
 ‘I cut myself with a knife.’
- b. *mo čhavo pušla ma katar po papo.*  
 my son asked.3SG me from his.M grandfather  
 ‘My son asked me about his grandfather.’
- c. *žini tu maj špet!*  
 marry yourself very soon  
 ‘Marry soon!’
- d. *te dikhav tu.*  
 COMP see.I YOU.OBL  
 ‘I might see you.’
- e. *amen garava ame.*  
 we hide.1PL ourselves  
 ‘We hide ourselves.’
- f. *vov ni dikhla ame.*  
 he not saw.3SG us  
 ‘He didn’t see us.’
- g. *tumen garaven tume.*  
 you hide.2PL yourselves  
 ‘You hide yourselves.’
- h. *vov ni dikhla tume.*  
 he not saw.3SG YOU.PL.OBL  
 ‘He didn’t see you.’

The second-person singular base form has undergone palatalisation in the possessive, *t-* > *ć-*

- (33) *kava si ćir-o čher.*  
 this.M is your-M house  
 This is your house

First- and second-person singular possessives show preservation of the Early Romani distinction between the first-person singular possessivity marker *-inř-* and second-person singular *-ir-*:

- (34) *kava si munř-o čher.*  
 this.M is my-M house  
 This is my house

First- and second-person singular possessives also have short forms:

- (35) a. *m-e duj phea bešen ani Svezia.*  
my-PL two sisters.OBL live.3PL in Sweden  
 ‘My two sisters live in Sweden.’  
 b. *kaja si č-i čhej?*  
 this.F is your-F daughter  
 ‘Is this your daughter?’

A second-person singular dative contracted form (*tuke >će*), occurring in other Gurbet dialects (Elšik 2000a: 72) has also emerged:

- (36) *vačardem će anglal.*  
 said.1SG you.DAT already  
 ‘I told you already.’

The short possessive reflexives *p-* and *pir-*, considered characteristic of Southern Vlax dialects (Boretzky 2003), are also attested in Mitrovica Romani:

- (37) a. *voj bojadisarda p-o čher parno.*  
 she painted.3SG her-M house white  
 ‘She painted her house white.’  
 b. *voj dikhla sudar pir-e jačhenca.*  
 she saw.3SG accident her-OBL eyes.INSTR  
 ‘She saw an accident with her own eyes.’

## 2.8. Demonstratives and deictics

Historically, the Romani system of demonstratives is discourse-oriented rather than physical space-oriented. It is based on two dichotomies: one of specificity and one of source-of-knowledge, resulting in a four-way system (Matras 2000: 95). The data collected through the RMS questionnaire, from speakers born and raised during the years of short-term migration, show a simplification of this system into a two-way system, corresponding to English ‘this’ and ‘that’. However, during various conversations with older members of the community I noticed that they still use a four-way system whose forms match those documented in Priština Gurbet (Boretzky 1986). Since Italian Xoraxane (Franzese 1997) and also Molisean Romani (RMS samples IT-007 and IT-010)<sup>3</sup> share this simplification, Italian influence is probably responsible.

The Mitrovica Romani demonstratives are summarised in Table 10. The root for all demonstratives is *k-*. A vowel, called ‘carrier vowel’ (Matras 2000: 96), is attached to the root and indicates the source of knowledge or the meaning: *-a-* for situational, extra-linguistic referents in the four-way system or ‘this/these’ in the two-way system. *-o-* is used for discourse referents in the four-way

3. <http://romani.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/rms/browse/deixis/demonstratives/pronouns>

TABLE 10. Demonstratives

Specificity	Source	Masc	Fem	Pl	Obl	Meaning	Users
Non-specific	situation	<i>kava</i>	<i>kaja</i>	<i>kale</i>	<i>kale</i>	'this/these'	All speakers
	discourse	<i>kova</i>	<i>koja</i>	<i>kole</i>	<i>kole</i>		
Specific	situation	<i>akava</i>	<i>akaja</i>	<i>okole</i>	<i>okole</i>		Older speakers
	discourse	<i>okova</i>	<i>okoja</i>	<i>okole</i>	<i>okole</i>		

system or to mean 'that/those' in the two-way system. The specific forms of the four-way system are distinguished from non-specific forms through reduplication of the carrier vowel. Finally inflection markers are attached: *-va* for masculine, *-ja* for feminine, *-la* for plural and *-le* for oblique.

- (38) a. *dikhlem ko-va čer ko-le kaj vačaresa.*  
 saw.I that-M house that-OBL REL talk.2SG.REM  
 'I saw that house, the one you were talking about.'
- b. *ko-ja si sastresi.*  
that-M is of.metal.F  
 'That (chair) is made of metal.'
- c. *dikhlem ko-la romnja ano bari.*  
 saw.1SG that-PL women in.M bar  
 'I saw those women at the bar.'
- d. *ka-va si čavro cikno.*  
this-M is boy small.M  
 'This is a small boy.'
- e. *ka-ja si munri phuv.*  
this-F is my.F land  
 'This is my land.'
- f. *ka-la si cikne čhavre.*  
this-PL are small.PL boys  
 'These are small boys.'
- g. *džanav ka-le čhorrendže da.*  
 know.1SG this-OBL girls.GEN.OBL mother.OBL  
 'I know the mother of these girls.'

The base forms of demonstratives, *ka-* and *ko-*, followed by the Layer II locative marker *-te*, constitute the location deictics 'here' and 'there'. Carrier vowels maintain the same contrast they have in the two-way demonstrative system: *-a-* for proximate and *-o-* for distant. The basic location deictics *kate* 'here' and *kote* 'there' freely alternate with forms showing reduplication of the carrier vowel; see (39) and Table 11.

- (39) a. *sa amen sam akate.*  
 all we are here  
 ‘We are all here.’
- b. *vi aver Roma bešen kate.*  
 too other Roma live.3SG here  
 ‘Other Roma as well live here.’
- c. *voj si kote.*  
 she is there  
 ‘She is there.’
- d. *ni dikhlem la okote.*  
 not saw.1SG her there  
 ‘I didn’t see her there.’

Reduplication of the carrier vowel always occurs in the ablative direction deictics:

- (40) a. *me bešavasa dur akatar.*  
 I live.1SG.REM far here.DIR  
 ‘I lived far from here.’
- b. *dželem te lav le okotar.*  
 went.1SG COMP take.1SG it there.DIR  
 ‘I went to take it from there.’

The direction-specific deictics *akarin* < \**aka-rig-a* ‘to this side’ and *okorin* < \**oko-rin-a* ‘to that side’ freely alternate with the location proper ones:

- (41) a. *čavralen aven akarin.*  
 boy.VOC:PL come here  
 ‘Boys, come here!’
- b. *čeje av kate.*  
 girl.VOC come.IMP here  
 ‘Girl, come here!’
- c. *kana dželem kote.*  
 when went.1SG there  
 ‘When I went there.’

TABLE 11. Location deictics

	‘here’	‘there’
Location	(a)kate	(o)kote
Direction	akarin/(a)kate	okorin/(o)kote
Ablative	akatar	okotar

- d. *kana dželem okorin.*  
 when went.1SG there  
 ‘When I went there.’

A single comparative deictic has been found in Mitrovica Romani: *gači* ‘so’:

- (42) a. *sa gači zuralo kaj šaj te bandžarol o sastro.*  
 was.3.SG so strong that can COMP bend.3SG the iron  
 ‘He was so strong that he could bend the iron.’  
 b. *gači mato sa kaj ni džangla po čher kaj si.*  
so drunk was.3.SG COMP not knew.3.SG REFL.GEN.M house where is  
 ‘He was so drunk that he did not know where his own house was.’

### 2.9. Interrogatives

Representatives of the two historical Romani sets of interrogatives, one in *k-* and one in *s-* (Matras 2002: 112), are found in Mitrovica Romani.

The *k-* interrogatives found are *ko*, oblique *ka(n)* for ‘who’, *kaj* ‘where’ and *kana* ‘when’.

- (43) a. *ko si kala manuša.*  
who are these person.PL  
 ‘Who are these people?’  
 b. *pušla kan dželo ano foro martako.*  
 asked.3SG who went.3SG.M to town on.Tuesday  
 ‘He asked who went to town on Tuesday.’  
 c. *kaj sem?*  
where am.I  
 ‘Where am I?’  
 d. *phurano kaj džan?*  
 old.man where go.2SG  
 ‘Old man, where are you going?’  
 e. *kana ka dikha amen.*  
when FUT see.2PL us  
 ‘When are we going to see each other?’

The quantifier interrogative used in Mitrovica Romani is a typical Vlax form: *sode* ‘how much/many’:

- (44) *sode drame si le.*  
how.many cars is he.OBL  
 ‘How many cars does he have?’

The *s-* interrogatives encountered in the sample are *so* ‘what’, manner interrogative *sar* ‘how’, goal/reason interrogative *sose* ‘why/what for’ and determiner *sav-* (inflected like adjectives).



- (45) a. *none so čerdan?*  
 mother.VOC what did.2SG  
 ‘Oh mother, what have you done?’
- b. *sar avilo kate.*  
how came.3SG.M here  
 ‘How did he get here?’
- c. *sose voj čerda kava.*  
why she did.3SG this  
 ‘What did she do this for?’
- d. *save manuša bešen kate.*  
which person.PL live.3PL here  
 ‘What kind of people live here?’

Most interrogatives are also used as relativisers, to which I will return in section 4.

TABLE 12. Interrogatives

English	Romani
‘who’	<i>ko</i>
‘what’	<i>so</i>
‘which’	<i>sav-</i>
‘how’	<i>sar</i>
‘how much/many’	<i>sode</i>
‘when’	<i>kana</i>
‘where’	<i>kaj</i>
‘what for’/‘why’	<i>sose</i>

## 2.10. Indefinite pronouns

Following Haspelmath’s (1997) model, two dimensions will be considered for the indefinites – words such as *some*, *anybody*, *nothing*, and *never* – encountered in the sample. The first dimension is the one defining the type of entity under consideration: unspecific determiner, person, thing, location, time and manner. The second dimension deals with the quantity of the entity: specific *vs.* negative *vs.* free-choice *vs.* universal. The two dimensions form the grid shown in Table 13. Although not all the constituents of the grid were found in the sample some regularity may be observed.

Person, thing and location indefinites in Mitrovica Romani appear to be quite conservative. As in many Vlax dialects, they are based on the Early Romani indefinites *kha-/khaj-*, *či* and the indefinite particle *\*ni* (Matras 2002: 115). The person indefinite *khoni(k)* < *\*khaj-ni-kon* oblique *khanikas-* < *\*khaj-*

TABLE 13. Indefinite pronouns

	Specific	Negative	Free-choice	Universal
Determiner	<i>disave</i> 'some'	<i>ni</i> 'no', 'none'	<i>bilosafar</i> 'any'	<i>svako</i> 'every', 'each', 'all'
Person		<i>khoni(k)</i> , OBL <i>khanikas-</i> 'somebody', 'nobody', 'anybody'		<i>kret</i> 'everybody'
Thing		<i>khanč(i)</i> 'something', 'nothing', 'anything'		unattested 'everything'
Location		<i>khatinde</i> 'somewhere', 'nowhere', 'anywhere'		unattested 'everywhere'
Time	<i>disave drom</i> 'sometimes'	<i>kur</i> 'never'	<i>bilosafar drom</i> 'anytime'	<i>stalno, uvek</i> 'always'
Manner	<i>disar</i> 'somehow'	unattested 'in no way'	unattested 'in any way'	unattested 'in all ways'

*ni-kas-*, thing indefinite *khanč(i)* < \**khaj-ni-či* and location indefinite *khatinde* cover three out of four categories of quantity: specific, negative and free choice.

- (46) a. *bešol khoni an kova čer.*  
lives somebody in this house  
'Somebody lives in this house.'
- b. *ni džanav khanika kate.*  
not know.1SG anybody here  
'I don't know anybody here.'
- c. *khoni ni bešol an kova čer.*  
nobody not lives in that house  
'Nobody lives in that house.'
- d. *ka dav tumen khanč!*  
FUT give.1SG you.OBL:PL something  
'I'll give you something!'
- e. *so dja tut? khanč!*  
what gave.3SG you.OBL nothing  
'What did he give you? Nothing!'
- f. *vov ni počinda khanči ano bari.*  
he not paid.3SG anything at.the bar  
'He didn't pay for anything at the bar.'
- g. *vov mandžol te džal khatinde.*  
he wanted.3SG COMP go.3SG somewhere  
'He wanted to go somewhere.'

- h. *našti arakha le khatinde.*  
 can.not find.1PL it anywhere  
 ‘We couldn’t find it anywhere.’
- i. *vov inklilo andar khatinde.*  
 he exit.PAST.3SG.M from nowhere  
 ‘He came out from nowhere.’

The remaining indefinites are all borrowings or are realised through borrowed markers, a tendency common to many Romani dialects (Elšik 2001).

The universal determiner is *svako* and the negative determiner is *ni*, both of South Slavic origin. The Slavic marker *di-* characterises the specific indefinites. When combined with interrogative *sav-* ‘which’ it gives the specific determiner *disave* ‘some’. In combination with *sar* ‘how’ it gives the manner specific indefinite *disar* ‘somehow’. An Albanian borrowing is used for the person universal: *kret* ‘everybody’.

The free-choice determiner *bilosafar* ‘any’ is compounded from two borrowings: *bito-* (South Slavic) and *-far* (Albanian) and the inherited *sa* ‘all’.

The time indefinites are negative *kur* ‘never’ (Albanian *kurrë*), universal *stalno* and *uvek* (both Serbian) ‘always’. Apart from the latter two an analytical expression based on *svako* and meaning ‘every time’ is used: *svako drom*. Similarly, the specific-time indefinite is *disave drom* ‘sometimes’ and the free-choice is *bilosafar drom* ‘anytime’.

As can be observed in Table 14, the borrowing of indefiniteness markers and word forms in Mitrovica Romani matches the borrowability hierarchies identified by Elšik and Matras (2006: 287) for Romani in general.

TABLE 14. Indefinites borrowability hierarchies

Markers	free choice ( <i>bito-</i> ; <i>-far</i> ) > negative ( <i>ni</i> ) > specific ( <i>di-</i> ) > universal (none)
Word forms	negative, universal ( <i>kur</i> , <i>svako</i> , <i>kret</i> , <i>stalno</i> , <i>uvek</i> ) > specific (none) > free-choice (none)

## 2.11. Articles

The articles used in Mitrovica Romani coincide with those encountered in Vlax dialects of Macedonia and Greece (Boretzky 2003: map 65) and are summarised in Table 15.

TABLE 15. Articles

	Nominative	Oblique
Singular Masculine	<i>o</i>	<i>e</i>
Singular Feminine	<i>i</i>	<i>e</i>
Plural	<i>e</i>	<i>e</i>

### 3. Verbs

Romani verbs are composed of a lexical root followed by a series of suffixes marking loan adaptation, valency, perfectiveness, person and number concord, proximity and modality. A series of particles and auxiliaries, external to the actual verb morphology, may express future tense, stative present, remote or perfect tense and conditional and quotative modality (Matras 2002: 117–18). In this section I discuss the suffixes and particles encountered in Mitrovica Romani.

#### 3.1. Valency alternation

A characteristic feature of Romani is the presence of productive synthetic morphology, which allows for alternation of the verb-root valency (transitive vs. intransitive). Grammatical derivation also provides an extremely productive method to enlarge the Romani verbal lexicon (Matras 2002: 119). The markers encountered in Mitrovica Romani and their functions are summarised in Table 16.

*-av-*, deriving transitives from nominals and intransitives, is the oldest Romani valency marker. It is declining in many dialects and is generally found in lexicalised verbs (Matras 2002: 122). Mitrovica Romani is no exception in this regard and *-av-* is encountered mostly with obsolete roots: *gar-av* ‘to hide something’ *xox-av-* ‘to lie’, *sić-av-* ‘to show/teach’ (from *\*sikh-*, showing palatalisation due to jotation in morpheme boundaries). The only cases of a seemingly productive use of this marker are *džil(j)-av-* ‘to sing’ from *džili* ‘song’, *dar-av-* ‘to frighten’ from *dara-* ‘to fear’ and *ćir-av-* ‘to cook’ from *ćer-* ‘to do’. For the latter, however, a case for lexicalisation can be made on the basis of the root *-i/-e-* variation between the derived and the base form.

TABLE 16. Valency alternation markers

Marker	Derives	From
<i>-av-</i>	transitives	– obsolete roots – nouns – intransitives
<i>-ar-/al-</i>	transitives	– obsolete roots – adjectives – nouns
<i>-(j)o(v)-</i>	intransitives	– transitives – adjectives
<i>-áv-</i>	intransitives	– nouns – adjectives

A more frequent transitive marker is *-ar-* (occasionally *-al-* following sibilants), suggesting the decline of *-av-* may have begun in the later Proto-Romani stage when the two markers entered in competition (Matras 2002: 123). Exactly as *-av-* it attaches to a number of obsolete roots *baš-al-* ‘to play an instrument’, *ačh-ar-* ‘to call’ (from \**akh-* with palatalisation attributable to jotation in morphological boundaries), *bist-ar-* ‘to forget’, *put-ar-* ‘to open’. The main function of *-ar-*, however, is to derive transitives from nouns and adjectives: *dand-ar-* ‘to bite’ from *dand* ‘tooth’, *mel-jar-* ‘to make something dirty’ from *mel-* ‘dirty’, *dil(j)-ar-* ‘drive someone crazy’ from *dil-* ‘crazy’, were the examples found in the sample. A single case of a participle turned into a causative thanks to *-ar-* also occurred in the sample:

- (47) *voj beš-l-ar-ol e čhave.*  
 she sit-PART-TRANS-3SG the.OBL kid.OBL  
 She seats the kid

This usage is also attested in other dialects. The fact that *-ar-* attaches to the participle rather than to the verbal root confirms its function as a deadjectival and denominal marker (Matras 2002: 124).

In Mitrovica Romani, however, transitive and causative expressions are generally expressed analytically.

- (48) a. *laki paramiča čuta amen te rova.*  
 her.F story put.3SG US COMP cry.1PL  
 ‘Her story made us cry.’  
 b. *vov čerda ma te bistarav.*  
 he made.3SG me COMP forget.1SG  
 ‘He made me forget.’

The intransitive marker *-(j)o(v)-*, derived from the existential auxiliary *ov-* ‘to become’ is also attested in Mitrovica Romani. This marker occurred mainly in deadjectival verbs: *bar-(j)o(v)-* ‘to grow’ from *bar-* ‘big’, *phur-(j)o(v)-* ‘to get old’ from *phur-* ‘old’, *thul-(j)o(v)-* ‘to get fat’ from *thul-* ‘fat’. The marker also derived intransitives from other verbs as *čer-d-(j)o(v)-* ‘to become’ from *čer-* ‘to do’ and *sik-l-(j)o(v)-* ‘to study/learn’ from the obsolete root \**sikh-*. This marker undergoes various processes of simplification. The initial yod is often lost or can alter the preceding segment as in *bandž-o(v)-* ‘to turn’ from *bang-* ‘curved’ and in *čindž-o(v)-* ‘to become wet’ from *čing-* ‘wet’. The consonantal ending *-v-* is regularly lost. This in turn leads to assimilation of the vowel component with the person marker vowel, resulting in a peculiar inflection of transitive derivations (see section 3.3.1 for details).

To derive transitives from nouns, a further marker is used in Mitrovica Romani: *-áv-*, from the other existential auxiliary *av-* ‘to come’. This marker

was attested by two items in the sample: *xolj-av-* ‘to get angry’ from *xoli* ‘hanger’ and *melj-av-* ‘to get dirty’ from *mel* ‘dirt’.

As in the case of transitive derivation, however, analytic constructions are favoured in Mitrovica Romani. Such constructions involve the usage of the oblique personal pronoun as a reflexive, as shown in the following examples:

- (49) a. *tu žini tu.*  
           you merry RFL.2SG  
           ‘You get married.’  
       c. *vov garavol pe.*  
           he hide.3Sg RFL  
           ‘He hides himself.’

### 3.2. Loanverb adaptation

Borrowed verbal roots are adapted into Mitrovica Romani using the markers *-isar-* for transitives (*skur-isar-* ‘to write’ from Albanian, *studi-isar-* ‘to study’ from Italian) and *-isav-* for intransitives (*žin-isav-* ‘to get married’ from Serbian). Both markers are often reduced to their vocalic component *-i-*. These markers, common to all Vlax dialects, are composed by the Greek aorist marker *-is-* and the inherited markers of transitivity *-ar-* and of intransitivity *-av-* acting as ‘carriers’ (Matras 2002: 129).

### 3.3. Verb inflection

Romani distinguishes two verbal stems. The present stem is the unmodified verbal root or the outcome of valency alternation and loan adaptation procedures. The perfective stem is, in most cases, derived by attaching a perfective marker to the lexical root (or its alternations and adaptations). Furthermore, verb inflection classes can be distinguished for both present and perfective stems. With present stems the vowel component mediating between the stem and the subject-concord markers distinguishes the inflection classes. With perfective stems the perfective markers distinguishes the inflectional classes (Matras 2002: 135).

#### 3.3.1. Present tense

In Mitrovica Romani, as in Romani in general, two main inflectional classes can be identified: a consonantal one and a vocalic one. To these a class of contracted forms must be added.

The vocalic components of the person concord markers are *-a-* for first persons, *-o-* for third-person singular (showing an innovation of the Early Romani *-e-*; Matras 2002: 144) and *-e-* for all other persons. In the consonantal class, which also comprises transitive derivations in *-av-/ar-*, intransitive derivation

in *-áv-* and loan verbs with unreduced adaptation markers, these vowels are unaltered. In the vocalic class, mainly containing verbs in *-a*, the vocalic components of the concord markers are assimilated to the *-a* of the verbal stem. The root *pi-* ‘to drink’ is systematically assimilated into the consonantal class through a glide insertion (*pijav* ‘I drink’).

The contracted forms encountered in Mitrovica Romani comprise intransitive derivations in *-(j)o(v)-* and loan verbs with reduced adaptation marker *-i-*. In the latter, the vocalic component of concord markers is assimilated to *-i-*, creating additional vocalic stems. The assimilation of concord-marker vowels to contracted derivations in *-(j)o(v)-*, as in all Romani dialects, follows a person hierarchy: 3SG/PL > 2PL > 2SG > 1SG/PL (Matras 2002: 137). Thus, in Mitrovica Romani, first-person *-a-* overrides the consonantal component of the intransitive marker, giving *-ja-*, while in all other persons the *-o-* of the valency marker prevails.

The inflectional classes for present-stem formations along with the present-tense person-concord markers used in Mitrovica Romani are summarised in Table 17.

The only modification in the set of person concord markers in respect to the Early Romani heritage is the loss of /s/ in the second-person singular (*-es* > *-e*) and the first-person plural (*-as* > *-a*). No long forms of the present ending in *-a*, attested in neighbouring Balkan dialects (Matras 2002: 156), were encountered in any of the samples. Note also that in some loanverbs in the sample, for instance, *žini-* ‘to get married’ and *izvinisar-* ‘be sorry’, the first-person singular concord marker was optionally omitted.

- (50) a. *me žin-i ma.*  
           ‘I married-LOAN me.’  
           ‘I get married.’
- b. *izvin-isar kaj perradem če kličore.*  
       be.sorry-LOAN that lost.1SG your.OBL keys.OBL  
       ‘I am sorry I lost your keys.’

TABLE 17. Present tense inflection

	Consonantal <i>čer-</i> ‘to do’	Vocalic <i>xa-</i> ‘to eat’	Contracted loans <i>skur-</i> ‘to write’	in <i>-(j)o(v)-</i> <i>bar-</i> ‘to grow’
1SG	<i>-a-v</i> <i>čerav</i>	<i>-a-v</i> <i>xav</i>	<i>-i-v</i> <i>skuriv</i>	<i>-ja-v</i> <i>barjav</i>
2SG	<i>-e-∅</i> <i>čere</i>	<i>-a-∅</i> <i>xa</i>	<i>-i-∅</i> <i>skuri</i>	<i>-(j)o-∅</i> <i>bar(j)o</i>
3SG	<i>-o-l</i> <i>čerol</i>	<i>-a-l</i> <i>xal</i>	<i>-i-l</i> <i>skuril</i>	<i>-(j)o-l</i> <i>bar(j)ol</i>
1PL	<i>-a-∅</i> <i>čera</i>	<i>-a-∅</i> <i>xa</i>	<i>-i-∅</i> <i>skuri</i>	<i>-ja-∅</i> <i>barja</i>
2/3PL	<i>-e-n</i> <i>čeren</i>	<i>-a-n</i> <i>xan</i>	<i>-i-n</i> <i>skurin</i>	<i>-(j)o-n</i> <i>bar(j)on</i>

3.3.2. *Past tense*

The Proto-Romani split between the *-t-* and *-l-* perfective markers is held responsible for the inter- and intra-dialectal variation of perfective classes encountered in Romani. According to the class-reassignment hierarchy proposed by Matras (2002: 139), in Mitrovica Romani the *-t-* marker is preserved only with verb stems ending in voiced dental sonorants (/r/, /l/, /n/) as well as in /v/ and shows voice assimilation, giving *-d-*. All the other verbs have been reassigned to the *-l-* class, a development shared by all Vlax dialects. To these two inflectional classes a third one must be added, comprising intransitive derivations in *-(j)o(v)-*, a number of verbs of motion and change of state (*av-* ‘to come’, *ušt-* ‘to stand up’), borrowed intransitives (*žinisar-* ‘to get married’) and psych verbs (*asa-* ‘to laugh’, *dara-* ‘to fear’). The verbs in this class form their perfective stem from the adjectival ending *-il-*.

Person concord markers are shared between the inflection classes for all persons but the third-person singular: 1SG *-em*, 2SG *-an*, 1PL *-am*, 2PL *-en*, 3PL *-e*. For the third-person singular concord marker the *-il-* class retains the archaic adjectival inflection (Matras 2002: 145): *-o* for masculine and *-i* for feminine. Adjectival inflection is also extended to unaccusative verbs belonging to the other classes: *džel-o* ‘he went’, *džel-i* ‘she went’. All the other verbs belonging to the *-d-* and *-l-* classes take *-a* in the third-person singular. The retention of adjectival inflection as well as innovations in the second-person plural marker, substitution of inherited *-an* with *-en* by analogy with second-person plural present, and in the third-person singular marker *-a*, showing loss of final *-s*, are shared by a number of dialects located in the Balkans (Matras 2002: 145). Table 18 exemplifies the three perfective inflectional classes attested in Mitrovica Romani.

The past tense of monoconsonantal stems *d-* ‘to give’ and *l-* ‘to take’ is formed by attaching the perfective concord markers directly to the verb root through a glide insertion: *d-j-em* ‘I gave’, *l-j-a* ‘s/he took’.

The root *džan-* ‘to know’ shows, as in other Vlax dialects, partial reassign-

TABLE 18. Past-tense inflection

	<i>-d-</i> <i>čer-</i> ‘to do’	<i>-l-</i> <i>xa-</i> ‘to eat’	<i>-il-</i> <i>bar-</i> ‘to grow’
1SG	<i>čer-d-em</i>	<i>xa-l-em</i>	<i>bar-il-em</i>
2SG	<i>čer-d-an</i>	<i>xa-l-an</i>	<i>bar-il-an</i>
3SG	<i>čer-d-a</i>	<i>xa-l-a</i>	<i>bar-il-o/ bar-il-i</i>
1PL	<i>čer-d-am</i>	<i>xa-l-am</i>	<i>bar-il-am</i>
2PL	<i>čer-d-en</i>	<i>xa-l-en</i>	<i>bar-il-en</i>
3PL	<i>čer-d-e</i>	<i>xa-l-e</i>	<i>bar-il-e</i>



ment to the *-l-* class: *džan-gl-em* ‘I knew’. Transitive derivations in *-av-* show consonant contraction: *gar-a-d-* to *gar-av-* ‘to hide something’. Finally, as in all other dialects of Romani (Matras 2002: 143), some verbs show lexicalised alternations: *pel-* to *per-* ‘to fall’, *mul-* to *mer-* ‘to die’, *sut-* to *sov-* ‘to sleep’, *ruj-* to *rov-* ‘to cry’.

### 3.4. Tense and aspect

In the previous two sections I presented the suffixes used in Mitrovica Romani to inflect verbs in the present and perfective tenses. The other tenses, as in other Romani dialects, are not expressed through suffixes, but analytically or through single suffixes identical for all persons.

#### 3.4.1. Future

As in most dialects spoken in the southern Balkans, the future tense in Mitrovica Romani is expressed analytically by pre-posing the particle *ka* to the verb in the present tense. This particle, a shortened form of *kam-* ‘to want’ is a calque of the Balkan future particle derived from the verb ‘to want’ (Matras 2002: 157).

- (51) a. *adžive ka lav e graste pale.*  
 today FUT take.1SG the.OBL horse.OBL again  
 ‘Today I will take the horse again.’  
 b. *kava berš k-avav ke tumende.*  
 this year FUT-COME.1SG to you.PL.OBL.LOC  
 ‘This year I will come to you.’

As can be seen in (51b) the particle *ka* can show vocalic assimilation to the following verb. Few occurrences of the verb in the present tense but expressing future actions have also been recorded.

- (52) *tehara džaverš-i-v kaja buči thaj dž-av ano foro.*  
 tomorrow finish-LOAN-1SG this.F work and go-1SG in.the town  
 Tomorrow I will finish this work and I will go to town

This usage is common to all dialects of Romani and goes back to the lack of distinction between present and future categories in Early Romani (Matras 2002: 152–5).

#### 3.4.2. Remoteness

Imperfect and pluperfect in Mitrovica Romani are derived from the present and the perfective respectively, by attaching to the person concord markers a remoteness marker: *-a* or *-asa*, the latter showing vowel deletion when preceded by person markers ending in another vowel. As pointed out by Matras (2002: 153) the inherent meaning of the remoteness marker is that of ‘distance’

from the immediate context of speech: the cancellation of the factual validity of an event, whether completed (perfective) or non-completed (non-perfective). As such, the remoteness markers allow the expression of habitual, imperfective and anterior past, polite requests, conditional and irrealis:

- (53) a. *dža-v-asa svako džive ano merkato.*  
 go-1SG-REM every day in.the market  
 'I used to go to the market every morning.'
- b. *pindžar-av-asa ječe čorra.*  
 know-1SG-REM one.OBL girl  
 'I knew a girl.'
- c. *dželem čhere sose čind-il-em-asa.*  
 went.1SG home because get.tired-PERF-1SG-REM  
 'I went home because I had got tired.'
- d. *mang-av-asa te pučav.*  
 want-1SG-REM to ask.1SG  
 'I would like to ask.'
- e. *džan-av-a kaj si ni pučav tu.*  
 know-1SG-REM where is not ask.1SG you.OBL  
 'I wouldn't ask you if I knew where it is.'
- f. *me ni čhel-av-a kur lovendže.*  
 I not dance-1SG-REM never money.DAT.  
 'I would never dance for money.'
- g. *te av-il-e-sa arači dikh-l-e-sa la.*  
 COMP come-PERF-3SG-REM yesterday see-PERF-3SG-REM her  
 'If you had come yesterday you would have seen her.'

### 3.4.3. Imperative

As in the majority of Romani dialects, the imperative is expressed in Mitrovica Romani by a  $\emptyset$  marker in the singular and by the second- and third person plural present marker (-en).

- (54) a. *phand- $\emptyset$  o vudar!*  
 close-IMP the.M door  
 'Close the door!'
- b. *phralalen, pij-en!*  
 brothers.VOC drink-2PL  
 'Brothers, drink!'

A specific negator, *ma*, is employed with the imperative.

- (55) *amalalen, ma xoliav-en!*  
 friends.VOC NEG get.angry-2PL  
 'Friends, don't get angry!'

TABLE 19. Tense marking in Mitrovica Romani

Tense	Marking	Example
Present	short form	<i>čerav</i> 'I do'
Future	<i>ka</i> + short form	<i>ka čerav</i> 'I will do'
Perfect	perfect + -∅	<i>čerdem</i> 'I did'
Imperfect/conditional/ irrealis	present + - <i>a/-asa</i>	<i>džavasa</i> 'I used to go' <i>pindžaravasa</i> 'I knew' <i>džanavasa</i> 'if I knew'
Pluperfect/conditional/ irrealis	perfect + - <i>a/-asa</i>	<i>čindilemasa</i> 'I had got tired' <i>dikhlesa la</i> 'you would have seen her'
Imperative	SG: + -∅ PL: + 2/3PL (- <i>en</i> )	<i>čer!</i> 'do!' <i>čeren</i> 'do!PL'

Borrowed verbs generally follow the same pattern. In a couple of cases, however and always with the same verb in the singular, the loan-adaptation marker was omitted.

- (56) *izpid-∅ le!*  
push-IMP 3SG.OBL  
'Push it!'

#### 3.4.4. Suffix -*tar*

The suffix *-tar* is considered as characteristic of verbs of movement in the Vlax dialects (Boretzky 2003). In the Mitrovica Romani samples it occurs only with *dža-* 'to go' as a semantic reinforcement marker expressing completion.

- (57) a. *amo dža-∅-tar!*  
hey.you go-IMP-away  
'Hey you, go away!'
- b. *mangav vov te dž-al-tar pese.*  
want.1SG he COMP go-3SG-away REF  
'I want him to leave.'
- c. *voj džel-i-tar sabale.*  
she go-PERF-3SG.F-away in.the.morning  
'She left in the morning.'

#### 3.5. Copula

The copula paradigm attested in Mitrovica Romani appears to be characteristic of the Southern Vlax dialects of the Gurbet type, showing distinct forms for third persons in the past tense (Boretzky 2003: 54). Strictly speaking, the copula lacks a present stem and derives present-tense meaning from the historical

past-tense stem (Matras 2002: 137). The past-tense copula derives from the present copula through the attachment of the remoteness marker. Interestingly, the copula in Mitrovica Romani does not show variation between the two remoteness markers used with lexical verbs: only the short marker *-a* is used. For the future copula a suppletive form is drawn from the future of *av-* ‘to come’.

- (58) a. *tehara k-av-e čhere.*  
 tomorrow FUT-come-2SG at.home  
 ‘Tomorrow you will be at home.’  
 b. *k-av-ol baro murš.*  
 FUT-come-3SG big man  
 ‘He will be a big man.’

*av-* also acts as the future form for *čerd-(j)o(v)-* ‘to become’, although one of the informants occasionally preposed the future particle to this verb.

- (59) *kaj pijav but thud ka čerdij-av maj zuralo.*  
 if drink.1SG lot milk FUT become-1SG very strong  
 ‘If I drink a lot of milk I will become very strong.’

A specific negator, *naj*, is used with the copula. In the present, the negated third-person singular copula is expressed by the negator alone.

- (60) a. *me naj sema čhere.*  
 I not was home  
 ‘I was not at home.’  
 b. *voj naj sa lače.*  
 she not was well  
 ‘She was not well.’  
 c. *naj but than.*  
 is.not much room  
 ‘There is not much room.’

TABLE 20. Copula inflection

	Present	Past
1SG	<i>sem</i>	<i>sem-a</i>
2SG	<i>san</i>	<i>san-a</i>
3SG	<i>si</i>	<i>sa</i>
1PL	<i>sam</i>	<i>sam-a</i>
2PL	<i>sen</i>	<i>sen-a</i>
3PL	<i>si</i>	<i>ses-a</i>

### 3.6. Non-finite forms

Various non-finite forms have been found in Mitrovica Romani. Common to the majority of Romani dialects is the perfective participle, consisting of the perfective stem with adjectival inflection (Matras 2002: 159) which can be used attributively as well (see 61c).

- (61) a. *i džama si phan-gl-i.*  
 the.F window.F is close-PERF-F.SG  
 ‘The window is closed.’
- b. *o čhavo si mar-d-o.*  
 the.M boy is beat-PERF-M.SG  
 ‘The boy is being beaten up.’
- c. *ni arakhlja ekh putar-d-o vudar.*  
 not found.3.SG one open-PERF-M.SG door  
 ‘He did not find an open door.’

Loanverbs, too, take the common Romani perfective participle marker *-ime*.

- (62) a. *o vudar sa bojad-ime kalo.*  
 the.M door.M was paint-LOAN.PPART black  
 ‘The door was painted black.’
- b. *voj si žen-ime.*  
 she is marry-LOAN.PPART  
 ‘She is married.’

The present participle, or gerund, is a converb expressing simultaneity (Matras 2002: 160). In Mitrovica Romani it is realised by combining the inherited Early Romani marker, inflected *-nd-/-ind-*, with uninflected *-i* (probably derived from Greek 3SG present-tense ending; see Matras 2002: 160), giving *-indoj*.

- (63) a. *vov džal ki bući phir-indoj.*  
 he goes to.the work walk.GER  
 ‘He goes to work on foot.’
- b. *avilo ke mande garav-indoj khanči.*  
 came.he to 1SG.LOC hide-GER something  
 He came toward me hiding something

### 3.7. Modal verbs

In Mitrovica Romani, as is typical for Balkan languages, modals occur in a specific construction, comprising a complementiser (see section 4.4 for further discussion on the functions of the complementisers) plus an inflected verb. A number of modal verbs are borrowed from Serbian. Just as in the borrowing

language, those modals are uninflected. They are the necessity modals ‘must/need’ *trubu(l)* and *mora*, the latter used only for ‘must’, and *poči* for ‘start’.

- (64) a. *mora te džav.*  
 must COMP go.1SG  
 ‘I must go.’  
 b. *trubul te phire.*  
 must COMP walk.2SG  
 ‘You must walk.’  
 c. *trubu te džav.*  
 need COMP go.1SG  
 ‘I need to go.’  
 d. *poči te dja bəřsun.*  
 start COMP gave.3SG rain  
 ‘It started to rain.’

The remaining modals are all inherited forms. The ability and inability modals, *šaj* and *našti* respectively, are uninflected.

- (65) a. *šaj ave manca?*  
 can come.2SG 1SG.INSTR  
 ‘Can you come with me?’  
 b. *našti arakhlam le.*  
 can.NOT find.PERF.1PL 3SG.OBL  
 ‘We couldn’t find it.’

In contrast, the modals of volition, *mang-* ‘to want’, and for ‘stop’, *ačh-* ‘to stay’ are inflected.

- (66) a. *manglem te džav čhere.*  
 wanted.1SG COMP go.1SG home  
 ‘I wanted to go home.’  
 b. *ačhilo te dol beršun.*  
 stopped.3SG.M COMP give.3SG rain  
 ‘It stopped raining.’

#### 4. Syntax

The first two sections deal with prepositions and case representation, paying particular attention to the interplay between synthetic and analytical expressions of thematic roles. The following sections address phrase structure (section 4.3), clause structure (section 4.4) and clause combining (section 4.5).

## 4.1. Prepositions

Generally in Romani, the use of Layer I and II markers synthetically to express thematic roles, although still productive, competes with analytical expressions involving Layer III adpositions. They constitute a set of prepositions drawn from the stock of adverbs; more recent prepositions emerged in Early Romani and borrowings from contact languages (Matras 2002: 92). Mitrovica Romani is not an exception in this regard and various prepositions have emerged from the sample. They are exemplified in Table 21. Apart from the uses exemplified in the table, some prepositions show more functions.

Free variation, even within individuals, is encountered between *an* and *pe* in the expression of temporal ‘in’.

- (67) a. *p-o askamo dikhlem isto kola romnja.*  
 in-the.M evening saw.1SG same that.OBL woman.OBL  
 ‘In the evening I saw that same woman.’
- b. *ame an-o Luljo ka dol bəršnd.*  
 maybe in-the.M July FUT give.3SG rain  
 ‘Maybe it will rain in July.’

TABLE 21. Prepositions

Preposition	Meaning	Example
<i>an</i>	in, to/at	<i>ano džardino</i> ‘in the garden’
<i>ke</i>	to/at, towards	<i>ke mande</i> ‘towards me’ <i>ko abav</i> ‘to the wedding’ <i>ko dešuduj</i> ‘at noon’
<i>pe</i>	on, against	<i>po astali</i> ‘on the table’ <i>po zido</i> ‘against the wall’
<i>katar</i>	from, through	<i>katar i astali</i> ‘from the table’
<i>andar</i>	from, through	<i>andar o pijaci</i> ‘from the market’
<i>pala</i>	behind	<i>pala o bar</i> ‘behind the bar’
<i>dži</i>	until	<i>dži o milaj</i> ‘until the summer’
<i>paš/paša</i>	near, beside, next to	<i>paš o kaš</i> ‘near the tree’ <i>paš i kiša</i> ‘beside the church’ <i>paša tute</i> ‘next to you’
<i>tal</i>	below, under	<i>tal o astali</i> ‘under the table’
<i>upral</i>	above	<i>upral o kreveti</i> ‘above the bed’
<i>maškar</i>	between, among	<i>maškar disave manuša</i> ‘among some people’
<i>trujal</i>	around	<i>trujal i kor</i> ‘around the neck’
<i>avral</i>	outside	<i>avral o éher</i> ‘outside the house’
<i>bi</i>	without	<i>bi baškiengo</i> ‘without nails’
<i>mamuj</i>	in front	<i>mamuj i kiša</i> ‘in front of the church’
<i>već</i>	except for	<i>već o papo</i> ‘except for grandfather’
<i>mesto</i>	instead of	<i>mesto sudžukli</i> ‘instead of sausages’

The variation between *an* and *ke* to express the meaning of spatial ‘to/at’ is governed by the semantic opposition between incorporative and non-incorporative relations (Matras 1997: 68–72). *An* is used to express incorporative relations while *ke* is used to express non-incorporative relations:

- (68) a. *ejtako ka dža an-o foro.*  
 on.thursday FUT go.1PL to-the.M town  
 ‘On Thursday we will go to town.’  
 b. *von mistarde kaj me sema an-o bar.*  
 they thought.3PL COMP I was at-the pub  
 ‘They thought that I was at the pub.’  
 c. *ni džav k-o foro.*  
 not go.1SG to-the.M town  
 ‘I am not going to town.’  
 d. *but narodo sesa k-i fiera.*  
 many people were.3SG at-the fair  
 ‘There were many people at the fair.’

The distribution of *andar* and *katar* ‘from, through’ follows the same opposition, with *andar* expressing incorporative relations only.

- (69) a. *i maestra naj andar amari zona.*  
 the teacher is.not from our area  
 ‘The teacher is not from our area.’  
 b. *dikhlen andar o zido.*  
 looked.3PL through the wall  
 ‘They looked through the wall.’  
 c. *voj iklisi andar o čher.*  
 she exit.PERF.3SG.F out.of the house  
 ‘She came out of the house.’  
 d. *le i torta andar i vetrina.*  
 take.IMP the cake out.of the cupboard  
 ‘Take the cake out of the cupboard.’

On the other hand, *katar* only expresses non-incorporative relations, thus demarcating the source or point of initial reference of an action.

- (70) a. *ašundem le katar e čhorra.*  
 heard.1SG it from the girls  
 ‘I heard it from the girls.’  
 b. *mi čhej daral katar i jag.*  
 my daughter fears from the fire  
 ‘My daughter is scared of fire.’



- c. *kola torte si katar o aro anre šičeri thaj thud.*  
 these cakes are from the flour eggs sugar and milk  
 ‘These cakes are made of flour, eggs, sugar and milk.’
- d. *mo čhavo pušla ma katar po papo.*  
 my son asked me about REF.POSS grandfather  
 ‘My son asked me about his grandfather.’
- e. *našti nakav katar kava drom.*  
 cannot pass through this road  
 ‘I cannot pass through this road.’
- f. *vov avol katar aver gav.*  
 he comes from another village  
 ‘He comes from another village.’

Prepositions *an* and *andar* also co-occurred with the adverb *andre/andral* ‘inside’.

- (71) a. *voj si andre ano čher.*  
 she is inside in.the house  
 ‘She is inside the house.’
- b. *ašundem muzika andral andar o čher.*  
 heard.1SG music inside from the house  
 ‘I heard music from inside the house.’

The only two borrowed prepositions encountered in the sample were *već* ‘except for’ and *mesto* ‘instead of’, both from Serbian.

#### 4.2. Case representation

Synthetic case marking is generally stable in Mitrovica Romani and most of the case relations are expressed through the usage of Layers I and II markers.

Nominative case marks the subject of intransitive and transitive verbs, the nominal predicate and the direct object with inanimate nouns.

- (72) a. *me ćerdjav director-i.*  
 I become.1SG director-NOM.M  
 ‘I become director.’
- b. *le ć-i dram-a.*  
 take.IMP your-NOM.F car-NOM.F  
 ‘Take your car.’

Animate direct objects are expressed by the independent oblique.

- (73) a. *čumida ječh-e džuvlidžej-a.*  
 kissed.3SG one-OBL woman-OBL  
 ‘He kissed a woman.’

- b. *me dikhlem tumen.*  
 I saw.1SG 2PL.OBL  
 'I saw you.'

Some speakers, however, reserved the independent oblique for human direct object only, using the nominative for other animates.

- (74) *bičindem o gra-Ø.*  
 sold.1SG the.M horse-NOM.M  
 'I sold the horse.'

The independent oblique is also used as the case of the possessor in positive and negative possessive constructions as well as in existential possession.

- (75) a. *naj man but love.*  
 is.not 1SG.OBL much money  
 'I do not have much money.'

TABLE 22. Case functions

Function	Representation
Nominal predicate	Nominative
Direct object – Inanimate	Nominative
Direct Object – Animate	Independent oblique
Positive possession	Independent oblique
Negative possession	Independent oblique
External possession	Independent oblique
Existential possession	Independent oblique/Dative
Recipient	Independent oblique/Dative
Beneficiary	Dative
Goal	Dative
	Preposition + Dative/Nominative ( <i>ke kurlese, ke phralese, palo kašt</i> )
Experiencer with <i>svidžol pe</i>	(Preposition) + Dative
Time relations	Dative
	Preposition + Nominative
Local relations	Locative (pronouns only)
	Preposition + Pronouns in Locative
	Preposition + Nouns in Nominative
Referential, reason, source, origin, partitive	Ablative (pronouns only)
	Preposition + Nouns in Nominative
Associative, Instrument	Instrumental
Genitive relations	Genitive
Privative exclusive	<i>bi</i> + Genitive
Privative	Preposition + Nominative

- b. *voj si la čher.*  
 she is 3SG.F.OBL house  
 ‘She owns a house.’
- c. *kova beš sa ame trin meseci šudre.*  
 that year was 1PL:OBL three months cold  
 ‘Past year we had three cold months.’
- d. *voj naj sa la i zor.*  
 she not was 3SG.F.OBL the strength  
 ‘She did not have the strength.’

The independent oblique is also used in what has been referred to as external possession (Crevels and Bakker 2000: 151–86).

- (76) a. *dukhal man o nakh.*  
 hurts 1SG.OBL the nose  
 ‘My nose hurts.’
- b. *o por dukhal le haj čhadol.*  
 the.M belly hurts 3SG.OBL and vomits  
 ‘His belly hurts and he vomits.’

Finally the independent oblique is also used to express the recipient with *d-* ‘to give’ and with *vačar-* ‘to tell/speak/say’.

- (77) a. *dijem ko-le rom-e love.*  
 gave.1SG that-OBL rom-OBL money  
 ‘I gave some money to that man.’
- b. *vačardam amar-e čhav-e te čerdol muzičista.*  
 told.1PL 1PL.POSS-OBL son-OBL COMP become.3SG musician  
 ‘We told our son to become a musician.’

The recipient, however, is more often expressed by the dative case. Inflected nouns can occur in analytical expression, although they retain dative marking:

- (78) a. *voj dja e love ke phral-e-se.*  
 she gave.3SG the money to brother-OBL-DAT  
 ‘She gave money to the brother.’
- b. *voj vačarda e čoxan-a-će.*  
 she said.3SG the.OBL witch-OBL-DAT  
 ‘She said to the witch.’
- c. *i maestra sikada disave slike e čhav-en-dže.*  
 the teacher showed.3SG some pictures the.OBL boys-OBL-DAT  
 ‘The teacher showed some picture to the children.’

Dative case alternates with the independent oblique also in the external possession constructions.

- (79) *tumen-dže uvek si but bəřšin ivend-es-e?*  
 2SG.PL.OBL.DAT always is that.much rain winter-OBL-DAT  
 ‘Do you always have that much rain during the winter?’

As it can be seen in (80), the dative case is also used to express temporal simultaneous relations as well as future relations.

- (80) *štar-e dživ-en-dže kavol amen drama.*  
 four-OBL day-OBL-DAT FUT.come 1PL.OBL car  
 In four days we will have a car

Other temporal relations, however, are expressed analytically, see also (68).

- (81) a. *kaj bešol dži o milaj?*  
 where live.3SG until the summer  
 ‘Where does he live until the summer?’  
 b. *živil kate katar o džunjo.*  
 live.3SG here from the June  
 ‘He lives here since June.’  
 c. *pala cara avilo jekh aver manuš.*  
 after a.little came.3SGM one other man  
 ‘After a while another man came.’

Dative is also the case of the beneficiary:

- (82) a. *akana indžarav i zumi len-dže.*  
 now bring.1SG the zuppa 3PL.OBL-DAT  
 ‘I bring soup them now.’  
 b. *vov mukhla kava xabe tu-će thaj će phralen-dže.*  
 he left.3SG this food 2SG.OBL-DAT and your brothers.OBL-DAT  
 ‘He left this food for you and your brothers.’

Goal too, is expressed by the dative case. Analytical expressions may be encountered in this function, still taking dative as prepositional cases.

- (83) a. *džav vrano sabale thud-e-se.*  
 go.1SG early in.the.morning milk-OBL-DAT  
 ‘I go early in the morning for milk.’  
 b. *von maren p-e paj-e-se.*  
 they fight.3PL for-the.OBL water-OBL-DAT  
 ‘They fight for the water.’

Dative case also marks the experiencer of the indeclinable *svidžol pe*, modelled on the Serbian impersonal verb *svidati se* ‘to please’. Preposition *pe* may co-occur with nouns taking dative case.

- (84) a. *svidžol pe la-će torte korenca.*  
 please 3SG.OBL-DAT cakes cakes nuts.INSTR  
 ‘She likes cakes with nuts.’
- b. *so xabe svidžol pe pe tumar-e sas-a-će.*  
 what food like to 2PL.POSS-OBL mother.in.law-OBL-DAT  
 ‘What food does your mother-in-law like like?’

Mitrovica Romani shows a rather high occurrence of Layer III markers in the expression of locative and ablative relations, as is the case for most Vlach varieties (Matras 2002: 93). In these functions, only pronouns take synthetic case, while preposition are regularly used with nouns, as already shown in examples (67) and (69) to (71).

- (85) a. *ašunden kaja storia man-dar.*  
 heard.3PL this story 1SG.OBL-ABL  
 ‘They heard this story from me.’
- b. *avile ma kala luludžja katar mi phen.*  
 came.3SG me these flowers from my sister  
 ‘I got these flowers from my sister.’
- c. *duj len-dar.*  
 two 3PL.OBL-INSTR  
 ‘Two of them.’
- d. *samo duj katar sa e manuša.*  
 only two from all the.PL persons  
 ‘Only two of all the people.’
- e. *ka avav tumen-de.*  
 FUT come.1SG 2PL.OBL-LOC  
 ‘This year I will come to you.’
- f. *dželem ko manuš.*  
 went.1SG to.the man  
 ‘I went to the man.’

Pronouns are normally inflected for case and never occur in analytical expressions. In the locative case, however, they can co-occur with prepositions.

- (86) a. *kavav ke tumen-de.*  
 FUT.COME.1SG to 2SG.OBL-LOC  
 ‘I will come to you.’
- b. *ekh cikno džučel avilo ke len-de.*  
 one small dog came.3SG.M to 3SG.OBL-LOC  
 ‘A small dog came to them.’

The instrumental case has no competitors among the Layer III markers and expresses the associative meaning, both comitative and as an instrument.

- (87) a. *džan ko abav tusa.*  
 go.3SG to.the wedding 2SG.OBL-INSTR  
 ‘They go to the wedding with you.’  
 b. *šaj te ćerav bući ćekić-e-sa?*  
 can COMP do.1SG work hammer-OBL-INSTR  
 ‘Can you work with a hammer?’

The genitive too, does not have competitors and is the only way to express genitive relations.

- (88) a. *e ċhorr-a-k-o dad.*  
 the.OBL girl-OBL-GEN-M father  
 ‘The girl’s father.’  
 b. *me dad-es-Ø-e amala.*  
 my.OBL father-OBL-GEN-PL friends  
 ‘My father’s friends.’

With the preposition *bi* ‘without’, the genitive also expresses privative exclusive meaning:

- (89) a. *te dža ano foro bi dram-a-ko.*  
 COMP go in.the town without car-OBL-GEN  
 ‘To go to town without a car.’  
 b. *ko šaj ćerol jekh ċher bi baskj-en-go?*  
 who can build.3SG one house without nails-OBL-GEN  
 ‘Who can build a house without nails?’

This usage can be considered a calque of Serbian which similarly has *bez* + genitive to express the same meaning.

Finally, privative non-exclusive meaning is expressed analytically by the borrowings *već* and *mesto*, which take nominative as prepositional case.

- (90) a. *već ekh phurano*  
 except.for one old.man  
 except for an old man  
 b. *mesto sudžukli*  
 instead.of sausages  
 instead of sausages

#### 4.3. Phrase structure

In Mitrovica Romani, pronominal attributes are normally preposed to the noun, following a layout common to all Romani dialects: [preposition]+[determiner]+[quantifier]+[adjective]+noun+[option] (Matras 2002: 166).

- (91) a. *kole štare romane čhorenca*  
 those.OBL four.OBL gypsy.OBL girls.INSTR  
 with those four Gypsy girls
- b. *katar me duj phrala*  
 from my.PL two brothers  
 from my two brothers
- c. *me dadeso čher*  
 my.OBL father.GEN.M house.M  
 my father's house

As can be seen in (91), all attributes follow the adjectival inflection, agreeing with their head noun in gender, number and nominative vs. oblique case.

The option slot, as pointed out by Matras (2002: 167) and as I have noticed during informal conversations with my informants, is generally used to accommodate adnominals for communicative purposes. The relative rigid format of the RMS questionnaire does not leave much room for stylistic variation, thus only a few occurrences of postposed adnominals have been recorded.

- (92) a. *jekh torta bari*  
 one cake.F big.F  
 'a big cake'
- b. *i soba me phejendži*  
 the.F room.F my.OBL sisters.GEN.F  
 'my sisters' room'
- c. *jekh čher džungalo*  
 one house.M strange.M  
 'a strange house'

It is worth noting that the majority of postposed adnominals encountered were adjectives. Although this feature can be attributed to Albanian influence, it is worth noting that in other varieties of Romani historically spoken in Italy (Abruzzi Romani, Soravia 1977; Molisean Romani RMS samples IT-007 and IT-010),<sup>4</sup> postposition of adjectives is the default choice. Thus in the case of Mitrovica Romani, influence of both current and recent contact languages could be considered a possible explanation for the occurrences of postposed adjectives.

Post-position of non-genitive nouns specifying a head noun is common among all of my informants.

- (93) a. *jekh fidžano kafava*  
 one cup coffe  
 'a cup of coffe'

4. <http://romani.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/rms/browse/adjectiveinflection/positive/agreement>

- b. *kafava thudesa*  
 coffe milk.INSTR  
 ‘coffe with milk’
- c. *ekh šiši paj*  
 one bottle water  
 ‘a bottle of water’

#### 4.4. Clause structure

The most recurring word order in the sample is SVO:

- (94) a. *jekh baro džučel daravol e čhaven.*  
 one big dog frighten.3SG the.OBL boys.OBL  
 ‘A big dog frightens the children.’
- b. *o panglipe si paš o foro.*  
 the prison is near the town  
 ‘The prison is near the town.’
- c. *mi bibi avili andar Varsavia.*  
 my aunt came.3SG.F from Warsaw  
 ‘My aunt arrived from Warsaw.’

In contrastive constructions, however, the object can be fronted.

- (95) *sviđzol pe mandže thud, angre ni sviđzol pe mandže.*  
 please 1SG.DAT milk eggs not please 1SG.DAT  
 I like milk, but I do not like eggs

The copula is more likely to appear in final position than lexical verbs.

- (96) a. *mi maestra halija nasvali si.*  
 my teacher still ill is  
 ‘My teacher is still ill.’
- b. *i soba me phejendži cikni si.*  
 the.F room.F my sisters.GEN.F small.F is  
 ‘My sisters’ room is small.’

VS order occurs in constructions that can be defined pragmatically as presentative, where the introduction of a new subject/topic triggers VS word order (Matras 2002: 169).

- (97) a. *mamuj i kiša si i škola.*  
 opposite the church is the school  
 ‘Opposite the church there is the school.’
- b. *jekh džive avile kaljarde late.*  
 one day came.3PL cops 3SG.F.LOC  
 ‘One day the cops came to her.’



Finally, in clauses introduced by *te* (non-factual subordinations and complement clauses, see section 4.5) the verb always occurs immediately after the conjunction *te*.

The word-order pattern outlined so far is common in Romani and can be regarded as the conservative type (Matras 2002: 167). The single innovation encountered in Mitrovica Romani, particularly in possessive constructions, is pronominal-object doubling. This innovation is a Balkan areal feature common to all Romani dialects spoken in the region and involves the exposition of a topical patient with a resumptive pronoun immediately following the verb. In Romani it is not grammaticalised but represents a facultative, discourse oriented resource (Matras 2002: 174).

- (98) a. *le trubu te pača le.*  
 him can COMP believe.2SG him  
 'You can believe him.'
- b. *e džilje lačhe džanola len.*  
 the songs well know.3SG.REM them  
 'She knew the songs well.'
- c. *voj si la čher.*  
 she is her house  
 'She owns a house.'
- d. *me naj ma drama.*  
 I not.is me car.  
 'I do not have a car.'

#### 4.5. Complex clauses

Clause-linking in the Mitrovica dialect, as is normal in Romani (Matras 2002: 176), is characterised by finiteness, the only converbal constructions being those involving the gerund (see section 3.6). Sporadically, serialisation of verbs occurred in the sample but only with verbs of motion and change of state.

- (99) a. *le o gunoj dža čud le ani kanta.*  
 take.IMP the soil go.IMP throw.IMP it in.the garden  
 'Take the soil and go throw it in the garden.'
- b. *uštilem vačardem: kaj sem?*  
 woke.up.1SG said.1SG where be.1SG  
 'I woke up and said: where am I?'

Since Mitrovica Romani has historically been in contact with Turkish, these constructions could be a way to imitate Turkish converbal constructions, as in *alıp götürdüm* 'I took it and brought it' (Matras 2002: 176).

Clause-combining is achieved in Mitrovica Romani by the usage of comple-

TABLE 23. Complex clauses

Clause type	Specification	Particle	
Relative clause		<i>kaj</i>	
Embedding	Relevant interrogatives	<i>so, ko, sose, kana, etc.</i>	
	Potential condition	<i>de li</i>	
Complement clause	Modal	} <i>te</i>	
	Manipulation		
	Purpose	<i>te, kaj te</i>	
	Epistemic	{ <i>kaj</i> <i>ke</i>	
Adverbial clause	Conditional	Irrealis	<i>te</i>
		Realis	<i>ako</i>
		Conditional	<i>i ako</i>
	Temporal	Simultaneity	<i>kana</i>
		Anteriority	<i>pal</i>
		Posteriority	<i>dži</i>
	Causal	Cause	<i>sose</i>
		Reason	<i>kolese</i>

mentisers, relativisers drawn from the set of interrogatives and various inherited and borrowed conjunctions. Various types of clause and the particle used to introduce them are exemplified in Table 23.

#### 4.5.1. *Relative clauses and embeddings*

Two relativisers emerged from the sample, *kaj* from *kaj* ‘where’, used with animates and *so*, from *so* ‘what’ following inanimates and generic expressions. With both relativisers, resumptive pronouns are regularly used when head nouns take a role other than subject in the relative clause.

- (100) a. *mrzjav i jačin so mora te pijav la.*  
 hate.1SG the medicine REL must COMP drink.1SG it  
 ‘I hate the medicine that I have to take.’
- b. *naj ma kanč so dav tut.*  
 is.not 1SG.OBL nothing REL give.1SG 2SG.OBL  
 ‘I have nothing to give you.’
- c. *pindžaravasa ječe čorra kaj čhelola e lovendže.*  
 know.I.REM one.OBL girl.OBL REL dances.REM the money.DAT  
 ‘I knew a girl who danced for money.’
- d. *o manuš kaj dikhlem le arači pale si kate.*  
 the man REL saw.1SG 3SG.OBL yesterday again is here  
 ‘The man that I saw yesterday is here again.’

Like relative clauses, embeddings are a constituent of the main clause and are introduced by a relevant interrogative.

- (101) a. *ni džanav kana kaj žav čhere.*  
 not know.1SG when COMP go.1SG home  
 'I do not know when to go home.'
- b. *vačar man so ćerdan adžive.*  
 tell.1MP me what did.2SG today  
 'Tell me what you have done today.'
- c. *mangav te phučav le sose ćerda kale.*  
 want.1SG COMP ask.1SG him why did.2SG this.OBL  
 'I want to ask him why he did this.'

Embeddings with the potential conditional 'whether' are introduced by a Serbian borrowing, *de li*.

- (102) *pušlem e maestro de li avol ko abav.*  
 asked.1SG the teacher whether come.3SG to.the wedding  
 I asked the teacher whether he will come to the wedding

#### 4.5.2. Complement clauses

A Balkanism common to all Romani dialects is the split in the representation of integrated/subordinated events as real (factual) *vs.* non-real (non-factual).

Factual events, such as those expressed by the complements of epistemic verbs are introduced by what has been referred to as the 'KAJ-complemenitser' (Matras 2002: 179). In Mitrovica Romani the KAJ-complemenitser is represented by two forms: the inherited, conservative, *kaj* 'where' and its functional equivalent of Romanian origin *ke*, common to all Vlax varieties.

- (103) a. *dikhlem ječe rome ke sa mamuj i zadruga.*  
 saw.1SG one.OBL man.OBL COMP was in.front.of the shop  
 'I saw a man standing in front of the shop.'
- b. *ašundem kaj aver Roma bešen kate.*  
 heard.1SG COMP other Roma live.3PL here  
 'I heard that other Roma live here.'
- c. *mislisarav kaj bešol katar džunjo kate.*  
 think.1SG COMP lives.3SG since june here  
 'I think he lives here since June.'
- d. *misliva ke naj sa lače.*  
 think.1SG.REM COMP not was well  
 'I thought that she was not (feeling) good.'

Non-factual events, such as those expressed by the complements of modal verbs, are introduced by *te*, which is common in all Romani dialects and of

unclear origin (Matras 2002: 180). A few examples of modal clauses encountered in the Mitrovica sample are given in (104).

- (104) a. *manglem te džav čhere.*  
 wanted.1SG COMP go.1SG home  
 ‘I wanted to go home.’
- b. *mi phej cikni daral te načol i phurd.*  
 my daughter small fears COMP cross.3SG the bridge  
 ‘My young daughter is scared to cross the bridge.’
- c. *našti te irisara.*  
 can.not COMP return.1PL  
 ‘We can not return.’
- d. *poči te dol beršun.*  
 stop COMP give.3SG rain  
 ‘The rain is stopping.’
- e. *ašučarav mo čhavo te avol.*  
 wait.1SG my son COMP come.3SG  
 ‘I expect my son to come.’

Between these two extremes is a factuality continuum corresponding in the various Romani dialects to a continuum of clause-linking devices used to express more ambivalent relations, particularly manipulation and purpose clauses (Matras 2002: 181–9). In the Mitrovica Romani sample, however, complex linking is encountered with purpose clauses only, introduced by the combination of the two inherited complementiser, alongside plain *te*.

- (105) a. *phandav i džama kaj kova naj te ašunol amen.*  
 close.1SG the window COMP that.M not COMP listen.3SG us  
 ‘I will close the window so that he can not hear us.’
- b. *dželem ko manuš kaj te rodav lestar love.*  
 went.1SG to.the man COMP COMP ask.1SG he.INSTR money  
 ‘I went to the man to ask him for money.’
- c. *avilo mande čhere te vačarol manca.*  
 came.3SG.M 1SG.LOC home COMP talk.3SG 1SG.INSTR  
 ‘He came to my house to talk with me.’
- d. *te dža ki zadruga trubu te pire ki kiša.*  
 COMP go.2SG to.the shop must COMP walk.2SG to.the church  
 ‘To go to the shop you must walk towards the church.’

Manipulation clauses in the sample seem to rank low in the factuality continuum and are thus introduced by *te*.

- (106) a. *voj muklja o tano te perol.*  
 she left.3SG the plate COMP fall.3SG  
 ‘She left the plate fall.’
- b. *pušla ma te dav le love.*  
 asked.3SG me COMP give.1SG him money  
 ‘He asked me to give him money.’
- c. *vačarda man te bičinav i drama.*  
 told.3SG me COMP sell.1SG the car  
 ‘He told me to sell the car.’

#### 4.5.3. Adverbial clauses

Another usage of *te*, confirming its function to mark low-truth-value sentences, is in adverbial conditional clauses. In Mitrovica Romani, however, it has a competitor in this function, the Serbian loan *ako*. It occurs in realis conditions and, reinforced by Serbian *i* ‘also’, in concessive conditions.

- (107) a. *te aračola pese vov čher, ni bešol akate.*  
 COMP find.3SG.REM REF.OBL he house not live.3SG here  
 ‘If he had found a house, he would not live here.’
- b. *ako ni mandže le, de le mandže.*  
 COND not want.3SG it give.IMP it 1SG.DAT  
 ‘If you don’t want it, give it to me.’
- c. *mora te dža kote i ako ni mandže.*  
 must COMP GO.2SG there also COND not want.2SG  
 ‘You must go there even if you don’t want to.’

In temporal adverbial clauses only inherited particles are used. A distinction is made between simultaneity, *kana* ‘when’; anteriority *pala* ‘after’; and posteriority, *dži* ‘until’.

- (108) a. *kana dzelem kote voj n-avli čhere.*  
 when went.1SG there she not-came.3SG at.home  
 ‘When I went there she was not at home.’
- b. *pala mukhlem i škola poči te čerav bući an jekh fabrika.*  
 after left.1SG the school start COMP do.1SG work in one factory  
 ‘After I left school I started working in a factory.’
- c. *našti avav dži naj maj sasti.*  
 can.not come.1SG until is.not more healthy.F  
 ‘I can not come until she feels better.’

Inherited materials are used in causal clauses as well. The undetermined pronoun *kova* in the dative case (*kolese* ‘for that’) marks the cause, while the goal/reason interrogative *sose* ‘why’ is also used for ‘because’.

- (109) a. *kolese ni dikhlem la okote.*  
 that.DAT not saw.1SG her there  
 ‘Therefore I did not see her there.’
- b. *ni inklistem avral sose dal bəřšund.*  
 not exit.PERF.1SG outside because gave.3SG rain  
 ‘I didn’t go out because it was raining.’

## 5. Dialect classification

This last section serves as a conclusion and summarises the characteristic features of Mitrovica Romani. As proposed by Matras (2002: ch. 9, 2005), innovations and archaisms are taken into consideration in order to classify Mitrovica Romani in a geographic–historical perspective. A summary of those features seemingly undergoing influence from Italian is also provided.

A first set of relevant features found in Mitrovica Romani comprises:

- no insertion of *-in-* in the copula;
- future copula *av-* ‘to come’;
- loss of /n/ in nominaliser *-ipen/-iben*;
- retention of 3SG perfective adjectival inflection (*gel-o* went-3SG.M; *gel-i* went-3SG.F);
- retention of irregular oblique *kas* of the interrogative *ko*;
- palatalisation of alveolars in selected lexemes (*bući < buti* ‘work’), in some cases also leading to affrication (*cikno < \*t’ikno* ‘small’);
- retention of Early Romani /ndř/.

The first two features are characteristic of the majority of dialects spoken north of the so-called Great Divide, a bundle of isoglosses roughly corresponding to the historical border between the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires. The following features are encountered south-east of the Great Divide. However, they all co-exist in the area having at its core Wallachia and Transylvania, the historical Vlax centre (Matras 2005).

A relevant number of features of Mitrovica Romani all originate from the Vlax diffusion space (Matras 2002, 2005, Boretzky 2003), namely:

- jotation leading to umlaut in lexical items (*daj > dej* ‘mother’, *čhaj > čhej* ‘daughter’) and at morpheme boundaries (1SG.PERF *-jom > -em*) and to replacement of preceding material (*phenja > pheja* ‘sister.ACC’);
- prothetic *v-* in third persons pronouns;
- extensive prothesis of *a-* (*abav < bjav* ‘wedding’, *anav < nav* ‘name’);
- replacement of plural and oblique forms of the nominaliser with *-mata* (PL) and *-masa* (OBL), from Greek derived *-imos*;
- exclusive usage of short genitive Layer II *-k-*;

- comparative and superlative particle *maj*;
- distinct forms of the 1SG and 2SG long possessives: 1SG *munřo*, 2SG *ćiro*);
- quantifier interrogative *sode*;
- person indefinite *khoni(k)*, thing indefinite *khanč(i)* and location indefinite *khatinde*;
- loanverb adaptation markers *-isar-* and *-isav-*, optionally reduced to *-i-*;
- reassignment of all consonantal verbal stems but those in dental sonorant to the perfective *-l-* class;
- use of suffix *-tar* (attested only with *dřa-* ‘to go’);
- productive usage of Layer III prepositions at the expenses of synthetic case marking to express, primarily, locative and ablative relations but also some dative relations;
- Romanian complementiser *ke* in epistemic clauses.

A further set of features shared by Mitrovica Romani are limited to the southernmost area of the Vlax core (Boretzky 2003). They are:

- distinct forms of the third persons perfective copula: 3SG *sa*, 3PL *sesa*;
- short reflexive possessive (*po*);
- short 1/2SG possessives (*mo*, *ćo*);
- plain negator *ni*, imperative negator *ma*, copula negator *naj*.

It is clear from the features listed so far, that the Mitrovica dialect originates in the southern part of the Vlax diffusion space. Mitrovica Romani, however, also shares the only innovation originating from the southern Balkans (Matras 2005: 20):

- substitution of 2PL perfective *-an* with *-en* by analogy with 2PL present.

Participation in this innovation provides evidence for both the late diffusion of this change and the early migration of Mitrovica Romani to the south-western Balkans, most probably around the seventeenth century.

Mitrovica Romani also shows palatalisation of velars preceding front vowels and the systematic loss of word-final /s/, changes common to various dialects spoken in the south-western Balkans (Matras 2002: ch. 9). These changes, although less relevant for classification, can be taken as a further confirmation of the early migration of the dialect in Kosovo. This supports Marushiakova and Popov’s (2001) historical reconstruction, thus confirming that Vlax-speaking groups reached the southern Balkans before the abolition of slavery in the Romanian principalities.

Finally, a number of features identified in my sample seem to be due to more recent contact influence. They are:

- reduced saliency of aspiration in /ph, th, kh, čh/;

- usage of diminutive marker *-in-* (*dram-in-a* ‘little car, toy car’ < *drama* ‘car’) among very young speakers (4- and 5-year-old);
- levelling of nominative plural markers of borrowed nouns to *-i* (*maestr-o* ‘teacher’, *maestr-i* ‘teachers’; *doktor-i* ‘doctor’, *doktor-i* ‘doctors’) at the expense of Romanian *-ore*;
- postpositions of adjectives;
- simplification of the demonstratives from a four-way to a two-way system (*kava/akava/kova/okova* vs. *kava/kova*).

While I am inclined to attribute all these to Italian influence, the latter two can also be older and attributable to Albanian influence. However, the fact that older speakers still use a four-way demonstrative system (see section 2.8) suggests that this innovation is recent.

In conclusion, Mitrovica Romani can be regarded as a southern Vlax variety, as it shares the innovations originating in the Vlax diffusion space. Sharing of the only innovation from the southern Balkans allows us to determine the relative time of the dialect speakers’ migration to Kosovo. This co-existence of innovations of different geographical origin confirms Matras’ claim that affinity among individual dialects is not genetic and absolute but gradual and is determined by the adoption of similar features (Matras 2005: 30).

Considering the present day dispersal of its speakers, it would be interesting to investigate if Mitrovica Romani is currently differentiating. This future investigation will, however, have to take into account the role that modern technologies (text messages, the internet, and so on) play in maintaining contacts among members of dispersed communities and the impact of this kind of communication on language change.

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