

Language Learning and Roma Pupils – the Case of Slovenia

Saša Jazbec¹, Branka Čagran² and Alja Lipavac Oštir¹

¹Faculty of Arts University of Maribor

²Faculty of Education University of Maribor

Abstract

The paper comprises a theoretical discussion and an empirical investigation of how Roma pupils position, perceive and assess Slovene as a language, and how successfully they learn Slovene as the official language and the language of the environment, as well as foreign languages (German and English) compared to non-Roma students. In the first part of the paper, theoretical considerations on the current (foreign) language learning tendencies, on the official status of both Slovene and Romani in Slovenia, and on the influential didactic (foreign) language-learning concept are presented and substantiated by an extensive quantitative empirical study, which includes a third of all Roma pupils in Slovenia. The study yielded both the expected results and highly interesting additional findings, which will require a thorough analysis by experts and education providers alike, and consequently may lead to certain fundamental changes in (foreign) language learning concepts.

Key words: children in Slovenia; empirical study; (foreign) language learning; Roma pupils

Introduction

The Roma are a unique minority with a population of approximately 8 million spread across the region of Europe. They are often branded as criminals, social deviants, or as problematic, a classification which consequently leads to segregation and social deprivation. The general perception of the Roma is based on a range of stereotypes such as poverty, asociality, unemployability, poor education, inclination towards social tension, and a susceptibility to educational disadvantages. Their values, lifestyle, principles, their language, generally lower social status, and their sociocultural tradition are noticeably different from those of the majority population of any particular European country. These salient differences are the force behind the

“Roma question”, the ensuing conflicts, problems, and intolerance within different discourses, particularly regarding the field of education (Jenssen, 2005).

The education of Roma children is a topical subject throughout Europe, included in the agendas of various national and international institutions such as the European Council, the European Union, and many others (European Commission, 2011; Levinson, 2007; UNESCO and Council of Europe, 2007). Experts agree that a successful educational concept for Roma children should provide them with quality education and preserve their language, traditions and customs, but the Roma perceive the institutional education of their children as a means of estranging or alienating their children from the native community (Horvat, 1999; Nečak Lük, 1999). This paradox most definitely complicates the development of successful educational concepts for the Roma on a European scale.

The majority of papers, projects, and studies focus on Roma children and their insufficient competence in the language of the environment in which they live and function (Cudworth, 2010; Macura-Milovanović, 2006; Gimenez Adelantado, 2002). Well-developed linguistic competences represent a key predisposition for successfully mastering various aspects of life. The topic spans several fields of science, from linguistics, psycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics and sociology, to anthropology, psychology and didactics. This suggests the necessity for a reduced scope of research.

The focus of this investigation is the level of success in (foreign) language learning and the attraction, as well as the perception of languages - Slovene as the official language of the environment and foreign languages (English, German, etc.) in Roma children in comparison to non-Roma children. The above bases are elaborated within the context of the discussion on the education of Roma children.

The Slovene and foreign language skills in Roma and non-Roma students have been assessed and analysed in a separate study. In order to remain within the scope of this paper, we proceeded from the existing fact that language skill levels among the Roma children included in the investigation were statistically significantly lower with regard to both Slovene as well as foreign languages, in comparison to the language skill levels in non-Roma children (Jazbec, Lipavic Oštir, Čagran, 2012). This fact has already been treated by other authors such as Husar Černjavič (2006), Kovač Šebart, Krek (2003), Krek Vogrinc (2005), and in the strategic plan *Strategija vzgoje in izobraževanja Romov v Sloveniji*.

However, we proceed on the assumption that the Roma have depended throughout history and still depend on (foreign) language skills for practical reasons, precisely because of their specific way of life today. Bársony and Daróczi (2004) explain that it is typical for “travelling people” to conquer markets based on a working knowledge of several foreign languages at a level enabling them to negotiate successfully. Consequently, we are interested in establishing which languages the Roma and the non-Roma pupils actually encounter in Slovenia today, and how successful they are in particular foreign language classes. Is the thesis, according to which Roma pupils are supposed to possess multilingual potential, still valid? However, there are also

additional prerequisites that could be linked to the context of language learning and Roma pupils. From a theoretical perspective, the teaching of foreign languages could be understood as a discourse within which both the Roma and the non-Roma are being exposed to the foreign language. Hence, the results of work by Roma pupils would be more comparable in this arena as opposed to non-language classes, where language competence is presupposed and rarely explicitly discussed (Hu, 2003; Christ, 2006; Wiater, 2007).

In the present paper, the phrase “language learning” will be detailed more specifically, with particular focus on its two constituents. The constituent “learning” stands for productive and receptive as well as private and institutional language use, for the perception of language(s), for the importance of language(s), for the appeal of language(s) to pupils, and for the success of pupils at language-oriented school subjects. “Languages” are regarded as a general term for the official language of the environment, on the one hand, (in our case Slovene), and for foreign languages, on the other. Whenever Slovene and foreign languages are treated in the same instance, the term “(foreign) language” is applied.

Instruction in foreign languages is compulsory in the Slovenian education system. In the present paper, we focus particularly on English and German - the two most frequently learned foreign languages in Slovenia. A specification of the terms *languages* and *(foreign) languages* is necessary in the case of Roma pupils, because the official language of the country (subchapter *The language of the environment - Slovene*) which is Slovene, also represents a de facto “foreign language” to Roma pupils. This holds even though it is learned, positioned, perceived, and used differently by the inhabitants of the country in comparison to the aforementioned foreign languages.

The Importance and Currency of Foreign Languages

Competence in various languages, especially in a linguistically diverse region such as the EU, has become crucial, for it is a hallmark of flexibility, mobility, and quality of life. The promotion of language learning in the broadest sense of the term, including the promotion of both native and foreign language skills as well as skills in the official language of a country, has become one of the fundamental tasks of education (de Cillia, 2007; Council of Europe, 2001; 2003). However, it is also influenced by other various factors beyond the framework of the school curriculum (being exposed to a particular language through media, friends, extracurricular activities or projects) that often influence successful, motivated learning. Roma pupils, for example, are exposed to at least three languages (*Strategija vzgoje in izobraževanja Romov v Sloveniji*, 2011; Wiater, 2007).

The Language of the Environment – Slovene

The language of the environment, in our case Slovene, is a South Slavic language, positioned at the junction between the Slavic, Germanic, and the Finno-Ugric group of

languages. On 25 June 1991, Slovene was promoted to the status of the official language of the newly formed independent and sovereign Republic of Slovenia (Kalin Golob, Komac, Logar, 2007). The status of Slovene as the official language of the country is determined by the constitution of the Republic of Slovenia. In addition to Slovene, Italian and Hungarian are also recognized as official languages in Slovenia, particularly in the border regions with Italian and Hungarian minorities (§ 4 of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia (Republika Slovenija, 1991)).

Slovene is the native language for approximately 2.2 million people – the vast majority of whom live in Slovenia. Approximately 0.5 million native-Slovene speakers live in nearby border regions of the neighboring countries. Slovenia is also home to various migrants, contributing to a vast array of languages being spoken in the territory. These languages, which represent a total share of 16.94% speakers, and which include Croatian, Serbian, Albanian, Macedonian, etc. (cf. Table 3), are ascribed a far lower (disadvantaged) status in comparison to Slovene, Italian, and Hungarian. The facts presented show that the vast majority of native Slovene speakers (83.06 %) live in Slovenia (Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia). Thus, we can justifiably categorize Slovenia as a linguistically homogeneous country.

In contrast to the Romani language (cf. subchapter *The language of the Roma - Romani*), Slovene constitutes an important object of study in various linguistic papers and is, like all “major” languages, based on a contemporary standard language dictionary (*Slovar slovenskega knjižnega jezika* (1970-1991)), a set of structural grammatical rules (*Slovenska slovnica*, written by Toporišič (1976)), a set of orthographic rules, various specialist dictionaries, reference corpora (FidaPLUS, which contains more than 620 million words), a bilingual corpus of translated legal texts (Evrokopus) containing over 28 million words, and much more (Kalin et al., 2007).

As per the Slovenian legislation, Slovene is also the official medium in which all academic subjects must be taught, with the exception of foreign language classes. This excludes the minority regions, where school subjects are officially allowed to be taught in the first language of the respective minority: either in Italian or in Hungarian. According to this, Roma pupils in Slovenia have to follow school lessons in the language – in our case Slovene – which they often have mastered insufficiently or not at all, and obtain academic knowledge based on the language in which they have to be taught to read and write, while they are already being educated in other academic subjects in that same language.

The results of an extensive study have confirmed the assumption that Slovene language skills in the educational context of Slovenia constitute an essential prerequisite for the success of all pupils (Krek & Vogrinc, 2005). Slovene language skills are crucial for social linkage and the social life of Roma pupils. Nevertheless, one cannot count on non-Roma pupils understanding or speaking the Romani language. Frequently, it is also the case that non-Roma pupils even express intolerance toward the Romani language (Husar Černjavič, 2006; Kovač Šebart, Krek, 2003). In principle,

Roma children are “forced” to function multilingually. According to Christ (2006), it frequently occurs in such cases that whoever lacks the capacity to communicate is in danger of failing to incorporate their qualities into society in an appropriate manner, which could, in the worst cases, force such an individual into marginality, excluding them completely.

School enrolment and the learning of languages are highly intensive, complex and important processes for Roma pupils (particularly regarding their language of origin, aboriginal culture and identity), in which they cannot succeed based on the current circumstances, which often even force them into dropping out of school (Krek, Vogrinc, 2005).

The Language of the Roma – Romani

Romani, the language of the Roma, is an Indic (Indo-Aryan) language, which many regard as a phenomenon: “[It] is the only international language which is not officially recognized in any country” (Calvet, 1985, as cited in Liégeois, 1998, p. 199). The language which is spoken by approximately 20 million people worldwide is essentially a minority language, because it has no distinct territorial reference. In short, it is not indigenous to any country, yet is present in all, and is not official in any consulates or embassies. In the past, Romani was also forbidden, oppressed, and until recently (with a few exceptions) grounded almost exclusively on oral tradition. In addition to a lack of written tradition and standardized grammar and orthography, Romani is also splintered into several dialects. All these characteristics, which would be detrimental to other languages, and the cultural context in which Romani exists, paradoxically lend it a tremendous level of vitality (Hohmann, 1996; Liégeois, 1998).

In Slovenia, Romani has the status of a minority language – as it does in Austria, Germany, Sweden, and Hungary. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (2010) states that the Committee of Experts has encouraged Slovenia to continue efforts to implement the measures of the “Strategy for the Education of Roma in the Republic of Slovenia” (which was adopted in 2004 and amended in 2011) in practice. The Committee of Experts encouraged the Slovenian authorities to work specifically at promulgating a more positive image of the Romani language and culture in the media, particularly in the national media, at increasing its visibility and prestige in the national curriculum (and, where appropriate, in the curriculum of the other minorities present in Slovenia as well), and as well at engaging in research projects aimed at the standardisation of the Romani language as a basis for its teaching (The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, 2010).

The current status of the level of (foreign) language skills in Roma pupils is less favorable to them and their chances for a successful education. To Roma children who are enrolled in school and speak predominantly Romani or one of its dialects, the education process is thus foreign in many ways - most evidently, because they have to deal with a new code, which is supposed to form their thinking (Jazbec, et al.,

2012; Krek, Vogrinc, 2005; Liégeois, 1999). This new code is concretely represented by the mandatory language of education, which is grounded on an established written and oral tradition codified by dictionaries, regulated by grammar, and much more. Furthermore, this code also represents something so new to them that they can barely cope with it, or are incapable of coping at all. Additionally, they are only confronted with this new language at school and are often deprived of the opportunity or the support to improve their language skills when interacting with their domestic community or their circle of friends (Krek, Vogrinc 2005; Jazbec et. al, 2012). When enrolled, the majority of Roma pupils consequently experience grave disadvantages regarding the outcome of school lessons, where sufficient skills in the language of education – in our case Slovene – are both expected and required. The failures of Roma children in school, their insufficient knowledge of the language of education, the linguistically conditioned abstract ideas with which they are confronted during lessons, frequent social isolation, and their responsibilities at home (work, caring for siblings) cause frequent absence from school and a steady decline in their level of success (Liégeois, 1998). Statistics from various countries show that the number of Roma pupils declines drastically during the period between enrolment and graduation (European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, 2006). For Slovenia, this specifically means that, for instance, of eight Roma children enrolled in school, four have already dropped out of 9-year compulsory education by either the 7th or the 8th grade. Roma pupils in upper grades are the exception (Krek & Vogrinc, 2005).

Foreign Language Competence

Foreign language learning has been educationally-theoretically founded for a long time (Christ, 2006) and has achieved new prominence, owing to political and economic changes around the world (Council of Europe, 2001, 2003). Firstly, language competence is important for individuals because it assists them in broadening their horizon of expectations established in the native-language world, in breaking with solidifications within personal cultural perceptions and judgments, and in establishing connections with other linguistic communities (Christ, 2006). Secondly, language competence is also crucial for societies, since the ability of a society to act strongly depends on the level of language competence maintained by its members.

Foreign language learning has had a long tradition in Slovenia, facilitated by the country's geographical location at a junction of many different linguistic and cultural landscapes. A look back at the history of language learning in Slovenia reveals an interesting dynamics. Russian, for example, was a commonly taught foreign language in Slovenia during the 1960s. Serbo-Croatian took over that role during the 1980s and the early 1990s, with Spanish becoming the fashionable foreign language at the beginning of the 21st century. While the aforementioned languages were favored only during particular periods of history, both English and German have managed to remain the only foreign languages to stand the test of time and maintain a stable

status among the foreign languages being taught in Slovenia (Jazbec, 2011; Pižorn, 2009; Statistical office of the Republic Slovenia).

Regarding the current status of language learning in Slovenia, Slovene as the official language of the country, with the exception of the border regions (*The language of the environment - Slovene*), is taught as an individual academic subject and represents the medium of communication for all of the other non-linguistic academic subjects. Apart from that, the list of foreign languages offered in Slovenian comprehensive schools (compulsory education from grades 1 to 9) also includes English, German, French, Italian, Latin and Spanish. The languages are ascribed different statuses. English and German, for example, are regularly taught as compulsory subjects, while the other languages are mostly offered as elective courses. Primary school pupils officially begin to learn their first foreign language in 4th grade – when they are approximately 9 years old. However, the foreign language learning process actually begins earlier, since most primary schools offer additional elective foreign language courses. Pupils learn their first foreign language in 656 academic hours of instruction, and should reach a language proficiency level of A2 or A2+, as outlined by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Yet, the trend and the aspirations in Slovenia are leaning toward beginning to teach the first foreign language as early as in the 1st grade.

The second foreign language had until recently not had a distinct status, although this may change within a period of two years (Kacjan, 2010). The option of learning a second foreign language in the form of “elective” courses in the 7th, 8th, and 9th grades became accessible to primary school pupils after the inception of the 9-year compulsory primary school format. In principle, the pupils were offered the additional choice of learning English, German, French, Croatian, Italian, Latin, Macedonian, Russian, Serbian, and Spanish. Despite the vast array, the majority of primary school pupils in Slovenia elected to learn German as their second foreign language.

Roma pupils are also confronted with such (foreign) language trends. Firstly, the means of education focus predominantly on the language of the country, e.g., Slovene (cf. subchapter *The language of the environment - Slovene*), and secondly, teachers are not competent in the Romani language, and consequently cannot apply it as a base on which to teach a language.

In the empirical part, we undertake to discover whether Roma pupils obtain lower marks in comparison to non-Roma pupils in foreign language subjects, taking into consideration the described influential conditions and circumstances, contrary to the thesis about the historically and practically motivated as well as conditioned multi-linguistic potential of the Roma, as stated at the beginning.

The Current Foreign Language-Learning Concept in Slovenia from the Perspective of Roma Pupils

Social changes, globalization, and migration demand that foreign language didactics change, especially in the direction of placing more emphasis on language diversity

in classrooms (Fürstenau & Gomolla, 2011; Hu, 2003; Nodari, 2000). Intercultural competence, understanding how others think and act, the didactics of multilingualism and tertiary language didactics should become imperative within language learning concepts, since the majority of schools throughout Europe are still influenced by the *monolingual habitus* (Gogolin, 2008). This means that the official language of a country represents the medium of communication for the majority of school subjects. Exceptions can be observed, first, in regions where minorities live and where there are two or more official languages present in schools, and second, in bilingual schools where a foreign language is applied as a the medium of education for various school subjects or even the whole curriculum. Basically, it is expected that pupils study in the official language of a country and that they also be taught in this particular language. In addition to this, they should learn foreign languages (in most cases English – the *lingua franca*).

This situation is neither clear nor simple for Roma children. They often enter a *monolingual* school (Hu, 2003) with rather modest skills in the language of education. Furthermore, there are often vast differences to be observed between their own culture, their way of thinking, and their emotions in comparison to the culture, ways of thinking and emotions of the country. This fundamental, asymmetric position of Roma pupils in comparison to non-Roma pupils in the classroom leads directly to vast differences regarding their success and achievement in school, as well as later in life (Husar Černjavič, 2006; Kovač Šebart, Krek, 2003).

The acquisition of a second language as well as of a foreign language is not a monolithic process, but more a process controlled by a variety of social and psycholinguistic influences. The process of developing skills in and mastering the first language plays an important role in this, since the first language paves the way for the acquisition of additional languages (Barkowski, 2003). Because the Romani language is a specific language, Roma pupils face a major problem here (see subchapter *Discussion*). The foreign language teaching methods in school rarely contain differentiating means for adjusting to disparate language learning abilities and skills among the pupils. In the context of her migrant research in Germany, Hu assesses that the didactic principles and premises in foreign language didactics, which are indisputable on the programmatic and theoretical level, appear to fall by the wayside. In addition, the principle of learner centricity encounters obvious limits with a great number of learners (Hu, 2003). Her assessment is also relevant for Slovenia. While extracurricular practice takes place in several languages throughout the world, even in linguistically homogenous countries like Slovenia, this multilingualism is often dismissed in foreign language teaching.

Foreign language teaching in Slovenia is influenced by didactic approaches to foreign language teaching that are oriented toward monolingual groups of learners. To illustrate: the discourse of explaining and summarizing and meta-communicative discourse often take place in Slovene; teachers often explain grammar in Slovene or

comparatively (using both the foreign language and Slovene); when teaching reading comprehension, the terms are translated into Slovene. In teaching, the “multilingual approach” should be adopted – with the multilingual approach actually pertaining to a bilingual ‘Slovene – foreign language’ approach (Divjak, 2010). Since this is generally not the case, the failure of pupils with a different linguistic background from that of the majority, but especially the failure of Roma pupils (as explained above) appears to be predetermined.

Empirical Research

Research Questions

The present empirical research was based on the following research questions, with the primary focus being directed toward the differences between Roma pupils and non-Roma pupils or Slovene pupils with regard to their respective levels of interest in language learning.

In which languages do Roma and non-Roma pupils aged between 10 and 15 in Slovenia communicate with their friends?

Which languages do Roma and non-Roma pupils in Slovenia consider important?

Which languages are most often preferred by Roma and non-Roma pupils?

Which languages are Roma and non-Roma pupils learning in Slovenian schools and how successful are they at it?

Methodology

The empirical research (survey) was based on the descriptive and causal non-experimental method.

Survey Sample

The survey sample was not chosen randomly. It was selected purposely and intentionally. The study included 1,121 pupils from Slovenia enrolled in grades 4 to 9 (aged between 10 and 15 years). 585 pupils included in the study were of Slovene descent, 435 were Roma pupils. The 101 pupils of other nationalities were not included in the research analysis presented in the present chapter, since the circumstances of the children with immigrant status cannot be equated with the circumstances of the Roma children (Hu, 2003). According to the main perspective of this paper – to study the success of Roma and non-Roma pupils in language learning – the following includes the evaluation and analysis of the data obtained based on a sample of 1020 pupils (585 pupils of Slovene descent and 435 Roma pupils).

The distinction between Roma and non-Roma pupils was established on the basis of particular questions included in the first part of the survey aimed at determining the research sample. The pupils stated in which language they communicated at home, with their parents, and with their siblings. Based on their answers, we derived the information about their first language. The first language of the Slovene pupils

was Slovene, while the first language of the Roma pupils was Romani. We thus prevented any distractions that could have affected the pupils during the survey. The key definition is in accordance with the criteria for first-language determination (Apeltauer, 1997).

Data Collection

The data were collected at all comprehensive schools in Slovenia in which more than 10 Roma pupils were enrolled. According to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, 1,500 Roma pupils were enrolled in comprehensive schools and an additional 140 in special schools during the school year 2009/2010. There are 550 comprehensive schools in Slovenia, 46 of which were included in the study. 1,245 questionnaires were handed out as part of the study, of which 1,121 were returned filled out completely and appropriately. The response rate amounted to 90% and can thus be considered optimum. The pupils completed the survey anonymously and individually under the supervision of teachers (in some cases, the Roma pupils required assistance in reading comprehension). The subject group was chosen as follows: Roma pupils (according to Slovenian law, there is a maximum limit of three Roma pupils per class) were invited to complete the questionnaire voluntarily. Each of the teachers in classes with Roma pupils also chose randomly the same number of non-Roma pupils from the same class, who were also prepared to complete the questionnaire voluntarily, truthfully, and earnestly.

Measurement Instrument

The data were collected with a questionnaire consisting mostly of closed-type (dichotomous, verbal, and scaled answers) and semi-open questions. The questionnaire was devised according to the measurement characteristics. Its *validity* is grounded partly on the rational assessment of content and methodological aspects, as conducted by the experts and partly on a pre-test in which some questions did prove ambiguous and were subsequently either amended or removed. The *reliability* of the questionnaire was ensured by means of precise instructions, clear, specific questions, and comparison of the answers to content-related questions. During the data processing phase, the *objectivity* of the survey questionnaire was monitored by reading the answers to closed-type and semi-open questions without subjective evaluation. During the data collection phase, the *objectivity* of the questionnaire was ensured by having the pupils answer the questions without intervention from the teachers. The teachers were provided with uniform, unambiguous, and clear instructions on what sort of assistance they were allowed to offer to the pupils. In our case, the monitoring teachers were allowed to read the question aloud, and to ascertain that the pupils understood the questions correctly. The teachers were not allowed to encourage or hint at certain answers, even if it might appear that a particular pupil might leave a certain question unanswered.

Data Evaluation

The research results are presented in tables (f, f%). The statistical differences between Roma and non-Roma pupils were checked with the Pearson Chi-square test (χ^2 -test).

Results and Interpretation

The "Presence" and Importance of, and Preference for (Foreign) Languages among Roma and Non-Roma Pupils

We began by ascertaining the linguistic experiences of Roma and non-Roma children aged between 10 and 15. We researched the level(s) of "presence" of languages in the daily lives of both Roma and non-Roma pupils, as well as their respective perceptions regarding the importance of and preference for languages in general, the language of the environment - Slovene, and other (foreign) languages. By such means, it was established in which languages Roma and non-Roma pupils communicate with their friends (1), which languages Roma and non-Roma pupils consider as important in their lives (2), and which languages are most often preferred by Roma and non-Roma pupils (3).

In Which Language(s) Do Roma and Non-Roma Pupils Communicate with Their Friends?

Table 1. Frequency (f) and percentage (f%) of Roma and non-Roma pupils regarding the medium of communication and result of the χ^2 -test

Languages	Roma pupils		Non-Roma pupils		Total	
	f	f %	f	f %	f	f %
Romani	43	9.9	0	0,0	43	4.2
Slovene	149	34.3	499	85.3	648	63.5
Romani + Slovene	197	45.3	3	0.5	200	19.6
Slovene + Albanian	6	1.4	3	0.5	9	0.9
Slovene + Croatian	6	1.4	28	4.8	34	3.3
Slovene + other languages	7	1.6	51	8.7	58	5.7
Romani + Slovene + Albanian + Croatian + other languages	27	6.2	1	0.2	28	2.7
Total	435	100	585	100	1020	100
χ^2 -test result: $\chi^2 = 481.331, P = 0.000$						

The vast majority (63.5%) of pupils converse with their friends in Slovene exclusively; this result was to be expected because of the relatively homogenous linguistic structure of pupils in Slovenia. This group is followed by the share of pupils who communicate with their friends in both Romani and Slovene (19.6%). Based on the survey sample, there was also nothing surprising concerning this particular piece of information. The group of pupils who communicate with their friends exclusively in Romani made a share of 4.2%.

The result of the χ^2 -test regarding the medium of communication between friends confirms a statistically significant difference between Roma and non-Roma pupils ($\chi^2 = 481.331, P = 0.000$). The majority of the Roma pupils communicate with their friends

in Romani and Slovene (45.3%); 34.3% of the Roma pupils communicate with their friends in Slovene exclusively, and 9.9% of the Roma pupils communicate with their friends in Romani only. In addition to Romani and Slovene, some Roma pupils also converse with their friends in other languages, such as Albanian and Croatian. The vast majority of non-Roma (85.3%) pupils communicate with their friends in Slovene exclusively. The share of those non-Roma pupils who communicate with their friends in other languages in addition to Slovene is rather small, while none of the non-Roma pupils communicates with their friends in Romani.

Based on the results above, it can be concluded that Roma pupils are the ones who need competence in various languages in order to communicate successfully with friends of different origin. In other words, multilingualism is expected of Roma pupils rather than of non-Roma pupils. This can be deduced from the fact that Roma are a minority, facing a situation similar to that of migrants and indigenous minorities. Also connected to this situation is the prestige of the language and the language community, notions of which both the Roma and the Romani language are deprived.

Which Languages Do Roma and Non-Roma Pupils Consider Important in Their Lives?

Table 2. Frequency (f) and the percentage (f%) of Roma and non-Roma pupils regarding the importance of (foreign) languages in their lives and the results of the χ^2 -test

Most important languages	Roma pupils		Non-Roma pupils		Total	
	F	f%	f	%	f	f%
Slovene	97	22.3	3	0.5	100	9.8
German	45	10.3	47	8	92	9
English	207	47.6	469	80.2	676	66.33
Spanish	13	3	2	0.3	15	1.5
Croatian	6	1.4	4	0.7	10	1
Slovene + German	8	1.8	0	0	8	0.8
Slovene + English	31	7.1	1	0.2	32	3.1
German + English	21	4.8	47	8	68	6.7
German + English + Croatian	1	0.2	11	1.9	12	1.2
German + English + Hungarian	6	1.4	1	0.2	7	0.7
Total	435	100	585	100	1020	100

χ^2 -test result: $\chi^2 = 304.653$, $P = 0.000$

Table 2 shows which languages are important to these pupils in their lives. The list of the languages stated is in accordance with our expectations, since – in addition to Slovene as the official language – it also includes established world languages (English and German) as well as Spanish - the increasingly popular foreign language among the younger generations in Slovenia. There is also Hungarian, the minority language, and Croatian - the language spoken by children with a migration background. None of the pupils included in the study considered Romani as important in their lives. A disturbing fact is that there are also children with different migration backgrounds in Slovenia who speak Bosnian, Serbian, and Albanian as a first language, yet these

particular languages were, for reasons unbeknownst to us, not included in the list of the languages which Roma and non-Roma consider as important in their lives.

Still, the data reveal an interesting difference in the assessment of the levels of importance of languages in the lives of the pupils. The difference in opinion between the Roma and the non-Roma pupils is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 304.653$, $P = 0.000$). While the majority of the non-Roma pupils (80.2%) choose English as the most important language, Roma pupils also choose Slovene (22.3%) as an important language in their lives, in addition to English (47.6%). Furthermore, the share of Roma pupils who rank English as more important in their lives than German is also higher (10.3%) compared to the share of non-Roma pupils stating the same (8%).

A finding which can be implicitly derived from the data stated above and which should certainly be considered by experts is that, even though the question posed was related to languages in general and not to foreign languages specifically, the non-Roma pupils did *not choose* Slovene as a language that they also considered as important in their lives. Within the scope of this paper, we can assume that they are really focusing on foreign languages exclusively and considering Slovene as an independent medium in their lives. A definite answer to whether they actually ascribed Slovene such a low level of importance in their lives (0.5%), as shown by the data, could be obtained only through additional empirical studies.

Which Languages are the Most Often Preferred by Roma and Non-Roma Pupils?

Table 3. Frequency (f) and percentage (f%) of Roma and non-Roma pupils regarding the preference for languages and the results of the χ^2 test

Preference for languages	Roma pupils		Non-Roma pupils		Total	
	f	f %	F	f %	f	f %
Slovene	163	37.5	266	45.5	429	42.1
German	22	5.1	52	8.9	74	7.3
English	30	6.9	195	33.3	225	22.1
Romani	147	33.8	1	0.2	148	14.5
Albanian	3	0.7	0	0	3	0.3
Spanish	27	6.2	22	3.8	49	4.8
Croatian	14	3.2	14	2.4	28	2.7
Serbian	3	0.7	2	0.3	5	0.5
Bosnian	2	0.5	4	0.7	6	0.6
French	7	1.6	9	1.5	16	1.6
Italian	6	1.4	3	0.5	9	0.9
Slovene + English	3	0.7	3	0.5	6	0.6
Slovene + Romani	5	1.1	0	0	5	0.5
German + English	0	0	3	0.5	3	0.3
Hungarian	1	0.2	4	0.7	5	0.5
Other languages	2	0.5	7	1.2	9	0.9
Total	435	100	585	100	1020	100

χ^2 -test result: $\chi^2 = 304.653$, $P = 0.000$

The difference between Roma and non-Roma pupils with regard to the preference for languages is statistically significant. The majority of Roma pupils (37.5%) chose Slovene as the most preferred language, with Romani ranked at number 2 (33.8%). The majority of non-Roma pupils named Slovene as the most preferred language (45.5%), followed by English. An important finding that can be implicitly derived from the data stated above and which should certainly be considered by experts is that Roma pupils find Slovene to be more preferred than their mother tongue or native language, in which they are much more proficient. An in-depth discussion regarding this particular fact would exceed the framework of this paper. Within the scope of our research, we can only refer to the potential concerns that may arise from this fact. This particular finding clearly expresses the depth as well as the intensity of the socialization processes taking place in educational institutions. Even though Roma pupils usually communicate with their friends in Romani, which is also the dominant language in their immediate environment, they, contrary to presuppositions, did not internalize the conceptual pair “preferred languages and Romani” only. They internalized the conceptual pair “most preferred language and Slovene” as well. We consider this to be a significant finding that hints at the importance of change - for example, in the sense of positioning Romani differently in school - and fundamental alterations at the programmatic level of the education system oriented toward a more positive being-with-one-another of both Roma and non-Roma.

Efficiency of Roma and Non-Roma Pupils in (Foreign) Language Learning

In addition to assessing the linguistic experiences, as well as positioning and assessing the languages of Roma and non-Roma pupils aged between 10 and 15 in Slovenia, the aim of our research was also to determine the level of efficiency (success) of Roma and non-Roma pupils in institutional (foreign) language learning based on their marks, in accordance with the five-point grading scale used in the academic grading system in Slovenia - with 1 as the lowest and failing (unsatisfactory) mark and 5 as the highest possible (excellent) mark.

Which Languages Do Roma and Non-Roma Pupils Study at School?

Table 4. Frequency (*f*) and percentage (*f*%) of Roma and non-Roma pupils regarding (foreign) language learning in school and result of the χ^2 -test

Languages	Roma pupils		Non-Roma pupils		Total	
	f	f %	f	f %	f	f %
Slovene + German	70	16.1	48	8.2	118	11.6
Slovene + English	267	61.4	266	45.5	533	52.3
Slovene + German + English	72	16.6	225	38.5	297	29.1
Slovene + German + Hungarian	10	2.3	4	0.7	14	1.4
Slovene + English + Hungarian	4	0.9	9	1.5	18	1.8
Slovene + English + French	3	0.7	15	2.6	13	1.3
Slovene + German + English + Hungarian	3	0.7	6	1.0	9	0.9
Other language combinations	6	1.4	12	2.1	18	1.8
Total	435	100	585	100	1020	100

χ^2 -test result: $\chi^2 = 78.045$, $P = 0.000$

Table 4 shows that the majority of pupils (52.3%) learn Slovene and English, while less than a third (29.1%) of the pupils learn German and English in addition to Slovene. Those pupils (11.6%) who learn German in addition to Slovene are next in rank. A significantly smaller percentage of pupils (0.9%) in addition to Slovene, German, and English, also learn Hungarian or French. The frequency distribution shows that English is taught as the lingua franca in those comprehensive schools in Slovenia in which Roma pupils are enrolled. However, the difference between Roma and non-Roma pupils with regard to German as the foreign language does appear statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 78.045, P=0.000$). The combination of Slovene and German is taken by significantly more Roma (16.1%) than non-Roma pupils (8.2%). On the other hand, significantly more non-Roma pupils learn three languages, i.e. German in addition to Slovene and English (38.5%).

Efficiency of Roma and Non-Roma Pupils in Language Learning

Table 5. Frequency (f) and percentage (f%) of Roma and non-Roma pupils regarding their level of efficiency (success) in language learning in school and results of the χ^2 -test.

Language	Mark	Roma pupils		Non-Roma pupils		Total		χ^2 -test result	
		f	f %	f	f %	f	f %	χ^2	p
Slovene	1	52	12.0	3	0.5	55	5.4	480.226	0.000
	2	232	53.3	37	6.3	269	26.4		
	3	97	22.3	107	18.3	204	20.0		
	4	37	8.5	171	29.2	208	20.4		
	5	17	3.9	267	45.6	284	27.8		
	Total	435	100.0	585	100.0	1020	100.0		
English	1	67	19.1	8	1.5	75	8.6	420.259	0.000
	2	188	53.6	35	6.7	223	25.6		
	3	46	13.1	74	14.2	120	13.8		
	4	28	8.0	131	25.2	159	18.3		
	5	22	6.3	272	52.3	294	33.8		
	Total	351	100.0	520	100.0	871	100.0		
German	1	9	6.2	1	0.4	10	2.5	131.386	0.000
	2	58	39.7	17	6.6	75	18.6		
	3	41	28.1	30	11.7	71	17.6		
	4	21	14.4	72	28.0	93	23.1		
	5	17	11.6	137	53.3	154	38.2		
	Total	146	100	257	100	403	100		

Relating to the performance in foreign language learning, the pupils stated the marks that they most frequently obtained in each of the language subjects. The table shows that most pupils had achieved either a satisfactory (26.4%) mark (2) or an excellent (27.8%) mark (5) in Slovene. Such bimodality in performance is also apparent regarding the language subject of English, whereby the share of pupils with an excellent mark (5) is slightly larger (33.8%) and the share of pupils with a satisfactory mark (2) slightly smaller (25.6%) in comparison to the shares in the same

marks obtained by pupils in the language subject of Slovene. The share of pupils with an unsatisfactory mark (1 – fail) is also greater for the language subject of English (8.6%) in comparison to the share of unsatisfactory marks obtained by pupils in the language subject of Slovene (5.4%). A different tendency can be observed with “German as a foreign language” (DaF) classes, where the frequencies of the marks increase positively for all pupils. Thus, pupils with a mark of excellent (5) represent the largest share of the pupils (38.2%), while the share of unsatisfactory marks obtained by pupils in the subject of German levels off at 2.5%. In summary, in terms of the marks of the pupils in (foreign) language learning, we observe that the mean mark is the same ($\bar{x}=3.4$) for the language subjects of Slovene and English, while the mean mark ($\bar{x}=3.8$) for the language subject of German shows a statistical tendency toward higher marks.

The results of the χ^2 -test expressed in Table 4 confirm a statistically significant and large difference ($P=0.000$) between Roma and non-Roma pupils regarding the marks obtained in (foreign) language subjects. Roma pupils revealed a trend towards obtaining lower marks (unsatisfactory and satisfactory) more frequently than non-Roma pupils in the language subjects of Slovene and English, as well as when learning German as a foreign language. The mark of excellent (5), a mark obtained predominantly by non-Roma pupils included in this study, is shown to be obtained by Roma pupils very rarely, with most of them (11.6%) having received it in the language subject of German. The failures of Roma pupils in learning Slovene as well as in learning foreign languages do not prove the initial hypothesis, according to which the results achieved by Roma pupils in foreign language learning were expected to be better than the results achieved by Roma pupils in learning the native language (i.e., Slovene).

In summary, we observe with regard to language learning in Roma and non-Roma pupils that the majority of the pupils enrolled in comprehensive school in Slovenia learn English as the first foreign language in addition to Slovene - the language of the environment. However, in contrast to non-Roma pupils, the majority of Roma pupils learn German as a foreign language in addition to Slovene. These findings can be explained based on the fact that a large share of Roma pupils live in areas where German is an integral or even a standard feature in the academic syllabus. If we roughly summarize the findings regarding the level(s) of efficiency (success) of Roma and non-Roma pupils in language learning in school, we observe that Roma pupils achieve worse results than non-Roma pupils in both the academic subject of “Slovene” as well as in the academic subject of “German as a foreign language”. Furthermore, the results also show that Roma pupils achieve slightly better results in the academic subject of “German as a foreign language” in comparison to their success rate in the academic subject of “English as a foreign language”.

Discussion

With the present study, we attempted to establish the level of success of Roma pupils in (foreign) language learning beyond discussions about their social status, beyond the concept of acculturation, and beyond general educational concepts. We researched the aspect of language learning from two perspectives. The first perspective was focused on observing how both Roma and non-Roma position, perceive and assess Slovene - as the official language of the country, on the one hand, and the language of the environment for Roma pupils, on the other - in addition to their respective levels of efficiency. The second perspective was focused on observing the context of foreign language learning (English and German) in both Roma and non-Roma pupils.

The theoretical part includes a discussion on the current (foreign) language tendencies, trends, the official status of Slovene and Romani in Slovenia, and the influential didactic foreign language learning concept. Additionally, the theoretical part also includes the assumption that Roma pupils are expected to achieve poorer results in Slovene language classes in comparison to non-Roma pupils because the position of Roma pupils exhibits a high level of asymmetry. As opposed to this, the theoretical part also includes the assumption that the level of success of Roma pupils in foreign language learning should be expected to be positive - especially when compared to their level of success in other academic subjects, which are based on the official language of the country - and definitely comparable to the level of efficiency in non-Roma pupils in this particular academic foreign language learning context. The latter assumption is based on the following predispositions: the historical background of Roma pupils; their way of life and the living conditions that urge them to acquire (foreign) language skills for practical reasons; and their undisputed working knowledge of foreign languages that enables them to negotiate successfully.

The extensive empirical research, which included one-third of all Roma pupils in Slovenia, led to the following fundamental findings:

Regardless of whether the pupils are Roma or non-Roma, Slovene represents the medium of communication in a statistically significant higher number of cases than Romani. Non-Roma pupils communicate with their friends mainly in Slovene, while Roma pupils communicate with their friends in Slovene and Romani. Romani is spoken by Roma pupils exclusively.

Both Roma and non-Roma pupils regard English as the most “important language” in their lives, with the Roma ranking Slovene as the second in this particular category, in which their non-Roma peers ranked German as their “number two” language with regard to importance. In short, the results confirm that Slovene plays a very important role in the lives of Roma pupils. They ascribe it a much higher level of importance than their non-Roma peers do.

With regard to the “preferred language” category, the empirical data confirm that both Roma and non-Roma pupils regard Slovene as their favorite language. The finding that Roma pupils rank Slovene higher than their native/first language of

Romani on the scale of preference stands out inconveniently and should urgently facilitate a discussion among experts in various fields as well as competent authorities in the field of education.

English is most frequently taught as the foreign language in addition to Slovene in the comprehensive schools where Roma pupils are enrolled. In addition to Slovene, Roma pupils learn German as a foreign language (which is also taught in comprehensive schools) more often than non-Roma pupils.

Roma pupils obtain significantly worse marks compared to non-Roma pupils in (foreign) language subjects (Slovene, English, and German).

Such empirical data should constitute a valid reason for reconsidering the current institutional and conceptual situation. In Slovenia, Roma pupils should be competent in the Slovene language prior to their enrolment in primary school because Slovene language skills are a prerequisite for successful functioning in school and in the environment outside school. The present findings showing that Roma pupils do regard Slovene as important and even as their favorite language confirm that they have already internalized the earlier assumption. Despite Slovene being the favorite language among Roma pupils, they often do not fulfill the prerequisite of being sufficiently competent in it, which leads to poor success levels and subsequent demotivation among Roma pupils at school. According to a prior study by Peček, Čuk, and Lesar (2006), the extremely low expectations of teachers toward Roma pupils also play an influential role with respect to the level of success or failure of Roma pupils in (foreign) language learning. These expectations could consequently turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy, with the outcome being actual negative learning performances for Roma pupils. What is more, teachers lack the relevant skills, methodology, experience, and working strategies for a multicultural classroom.

Native language skills as a crucial prerequisite should be a good base for pupils, enabling them to succeed in further language learning. Roma pupils can speak Romani, yet they cannot build upon it because of Romani being a specific, non-standardized language based on an oral tradition in which teachers are not competent and which is not taught in school. Moreover, curricula are often extensive and packed with abstract content, thus disadvantaging Roma pupils, who are frequently practically and pragmatically oriented. It is imperative that the monolingual habits currently prevalent in school be changed by decreasing the focus on a single language for the benefit of all pupils and their multicultural competence.

Foreign language learning, which has been part of the educational canon in Slovenia for a long time, and which is compulsory for Roma pupils as well, is designed in a manner that prevents Roma pupils from achieving success in this particular field. In Slovenia, English is favored in the majority of schools – a fact that does not benefit Roma pupils, either. The present study has revealed that Roma pupils learn German more often and are also more successful at learning German than at learning English as a foreign language. This can be explained by the fact that German is the language

of a neighboring country and is therefore more relevant for them than English from an economic and practical point of view, because of which they are also motivated to learn German to a greater extent. Still, the current language policy trends in Slovenia are directed towards compulsory study of English as a foreign language for all. Thus, Roma pupils are being deprived of a crucial educational dimension that would also enable them to achieve a higher level of success.

The perception of foreign language learning as a discourse that can be modeled as “free space” in which all pupils deal successfully with the foreign and the new, while building on their own language, whereby Roma pupils would theoretically have similar chances for success by building on their native language of Romani, could not be established. The poor results of Roma pupils show that the (foreign) language learning concept in Slovenia is too heavily based on the official language of the country, focusing on linguistically homogenous groups, while the varied language and capability profiles of pupils are rarely taken into regard. The poor success of Roma pupils clearly hints at the insubstantiality and the functional fallibility of the education system, but it is primarily the (foreign) language learning concept that should be thoroughly discussed. With regard to this particular matter, it is our assumption that the resources of the socio-economic and educational system could be exploited to a far greater extent.

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Saša Jazbec

Faculty of Arts University of Maribor
Koroška cesta 160, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia
sasa.jazbec@um.si

Branka Čagran

Faculty of Education University of Maribor
Koroška cesta 160, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia
branka.cagran@um.si

Alja Lipavic Oštir

Faculty of Arts University of Maribor
Koroška cesta 160, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia
alja.lipavic@um.si

Učenje jezika i romski učenici – primjer Slovenije

Sažetak

Ovaj rad prikazuje teorijsku raspravu i empirijsko istraživanje o tome kako romski učenici rangiraju, shvaćaju i procjenjuju slovenski kao jezik, kako uspješno mogu naučiti slovenski kao službeni jezik i jezik okoline, te kako uspješno mogu naučiti i strane jezike (njemački i engleski) u usporedbi s učenicima koji nisu Romi. U prvome dijelu rada prikazana su teorijska razmišljanja o aktualnim tendencijama u učenju stranoga jezika, o službenome položaju slovenskoga i romskoga jezika u Sloveniji, te o utjecajnom didaktičkom pojmu učenja (stranoga) jezika. Ta razmišljanja potkrijepljena su opsežnim kvantitativnim empirijskim istraživanjem koje je obuhvatilo jednu trećinu svih romskih učenika u Sloveniji. Istraživanje je dovelo do očekivanih rezultata i vrlo zanimljivih dodatnih rezultata koji zahtijevaju detaljnu analizu stručnjaka i svih uključenih u obrazovne aktivnosti, a u konačnici mogu dovesti do određenih temeljnih promjena u pojmovima o učenju (stranoga) jezika.

Ključne riječi: *djeca u Sloveniji; empirijsko istraživanje; romski učenici; učenje (stranoga) jezika*

Uvod

Romi su jedinstvena manjina s populacijom od otprilike 8 milijuna diljem europske regije. Često ih se smatra kriminalcima, društvenim devijantima ili problematičnim ljudima, što je klasifikacija koja u konačnici vodi prema segregaciji i društvenoj depriviranosti. Opće mišljenje o Romima temelji se na nizu stereotipa kao što su siromaštvo, asocijalnost, nezapošljivost, loše obrazovanje, sklonost društvenim tenzijama i podložnost obrazovnim neuspjesima. Njihove vrijednosti, stil života, principi, njihov jezik, općenito lošiji društveni položaj, te njihova sociokulturna tradicija značajno se razlikuju od onih koje ima većinsko stanovništvo u bilo kojoj europskoj državi. Te iznimno značajne razlike pokretačka su snaga „romskog pitanja“ i konflikata koji se javljaju kao njihova posljedica, problema i netolerancije unutar raznih diskursa, posebno onoga koji se tiče područja obrazovanja (Jenssen, 2005).

Obrazovanje romske djece goruća je tema diljem Europe i smatra se jednim od ciljeva raznih nacionalnih i međunarodnih institucija kao što su Europsko vijeće,

Europska unija i mnoge druge (Europska komisija, 2011; Levinson, 2007; UNESCO i Vijeće Europe 2007). Stručnjaci se slažu u tome da bi uspješan obrazovni plan za romsku djecu toj istoj djeci trebao pružiti kvalitetno obrazovanje i očuvati njihov jezik, tradiciju i običaje, no Romi smatraju da je institucionalno obrazovanje njihove djece sredstvo koje će otuđiti i odvojiti njihovu djecu od izvorne zajednice (Horvat, 1999; Nećak Lük, 1999). Taj paradoks uistinu otežava razvoj uspješnoga obrazovnog plana za Rome na europskoj razini.

Većina radova, projekata i istraživanja usredotočena je na romsku djecu i njihovu nedostatnu jezičnu kompetenciju kada se radi o jeziku sredine u kojoj žive i djeluju (Cudworth, 2010; Macura-Milovanović, 2006; Gimenez Adelantado, 2002). Dobro razvijene jezične kompetencije predstavljaju ključnu predispoziciju za uspješno ovladavanje različitim aspektima života. Ta tema povezuje nekoliko znanstvenih područja, od lingvistike, psiholingvistike, kognitivne lingvistike i sociologije, do antropologije, psihologije i didaktike. To upućuje na nužnost smanjenoga opsega istraživanja.

Ovo je istraživanje usredotočeno na razinu uspjeha u učenju (stranoga) jezika i privlačnost, kao i poimanje jezika – slovenskoga kao službenoga jezika okoline i stranih jezika (engleskoga, njemačkoga, itd.) kod romske djece u usporedbi s neromskom djecom. Navedene odrednice razrađuju se unutar konteksta rasprave o obrazovanju romske djece.

Jezične vještine u slovenskome i stranim jezicima kod romske i neromske djece procjenjivane su i analizirane u posebnom istraživanju. Da bismo ostali unutar granica ovoga rada, krenuli smo od poznate činjenice da je razina jezičnih vještina kod romske djece uključene u istraživanje statistički znatno niža kada se radi i o slovenskome jeziku, ali i o stranim jezicima, u usporedbi s razinom jezičnih vještina kod neromske djece (Jazbec, Lipavic Oštir, Čagran, 2012). Tu temu već su obradili drugi autori kao Husar Černjavič (2006), Kovač Šebart, Krek (2003), Krek Vogrinc (2005), a ona je obrađena i u strateškom planu *Strategija vzgoje in izobraževanja Romov v Sloveniji*.

Međutim, nastavljamo pod pretpostavkom da Romi oduvijek, tijekom povijesti i još uvijek, ovisе o (stranim) jezičnim vještinama zbog praktičnih razloga, posebno zbog njihova specifičnog načina života u današnje vrijeme. Bársony i Daróczy (2004) objašnjavaju da je tipično za „nomadske narode“ da osvajaju tržišta na temelju aktivnoga znanja nekoliko stranih jezika na stupnju na kojemu mogu uspješno pregovarati. Stoga bismo željeli utvrditi s kojim se jezicima romska i neromska djeca zapravo u današnje vrijeme u Sloveniji susreću i koliko su uspješni u određenim stranim jezicima. Vrijedi li još uvijek teza prema kojoj bi romska djeca trebala imati višejezični potencijal? Međutim, postoje također i dodatni preduvjeti koji bi se mogli povezati s kontekstom učenja jezika i romskim učenicima. S teorijskoga gledišta poučavanje stranih jezika moglo bi se razumjeti kao diskurs u kojemu su i Romi i neromi izloženi stranome jeziku. Stoga bi se rezultati rada romske djece mogli bolje usporediti u ovoj sferi jezičnih nego nejezičnih predmeta, gdje se jezična kompetencija

već unaprijed podrazumijeva i o njoj se rijetko eksplicitno raspravlja (Hu, 2003; Christ, 2006; Wiater, 2007).

U ovome će radu izraz „učenje jezika“ biti detaljno razrađen, a pažnja će biti usredotočena na njegove dvije glavne sastavnice. Sastavnica „učenje“ označava produktivnu i receptivnu, kao i privatnu i institucionalnu upotrebu jezika, shvaćanje jezika, važnost jezika, privlačnost jezika učenicima, uspjeh učenika u jezičnim predmetima u školi. Druga sastavnica, „jezici“, smatra se općim terminom za službeni jezik okoline s jedne strane (u ovome slučaju slovenski) i općim terminom za strane jezike s druge strane. Kada god se slovenski i strani jezici analiziraju u istome primjeru, koristit će se termin „strani jezik“.

Nastava na stranim jezicima obvezna je u slovenskome obrazovnom sustavu. U ovome radu usredotočit ćemo se na engleski i njemački – dva strana jezika koja se u Sloveniji najčešće uče. Detaljno objašnjenje termina *jezici* i *strani jezici* neophodno je kada govorimo o romskim učenicima, jer službeni jezik zemlje (potpoglavlje *Jezik okoline – slovenski*), koji je slovenski, također za romske učenike predstavlja „strani jezik“. To ima smisla iako se slovenski uči, rangira, shvaća i drugačije upotrebljava u odnosu na spomenute strane jezike.

Važnost i prihvaćenost stranih jezika

Kompetencija u raznim jezicima, posebno u jezično raznolikoj regiji kao što je Europska unija, postala je neophodna jer je ona i oznaka za fleksibilnost, mobilnost i kvalitetu života. Promicanje učenja jezika u najširem smislu riječi, uključujući promicanje i materinskih i stranih jezičnih vještina, kao i vještina u službenom jeziku neke države, postalo je jedan od temeljnih zadataka obrazovanja (de Cillia, 2007; Vijeće Europe, 2001; 2003). Međutim, na njega utječu i razni drugi čimbenici izvan okvira školskoga kurikula (izloženost određenome jeziku putem medija, prijatelji, izvannastavne aktivnosti ili projekti), koji često utječu na uspješno, motivirano učenje. Romski učenici, na primjer, izloženi su barem trima jezicima (*Strategija vzgoje in izobraževanja Romov v Sloveniji*, 2011; Wiater, 2007).

Jezik okoline – slovenski

Jezik okoline, u našem slučaju slovenski, južnoslavenski je jezik na raskrižju slavenske, germanske i ugrofinske grupe jezika. Dana 25. lipnja 1991. slovenski je dobio status službenoga jezika novostvorene neovisne i suverene Republike Slovenije (Kalin Golob, Komac, Logar, 2007). Položaj slovenskoga kao službenoga jezika države određen je Ustavom Republike Slovenije. Uz slovenski, službenim jezicima u Sloveniji smatraju se i talijanski i mađarski jezik, posebno u pograničnim područjima s talijanskim i mađarskim manjinama (Paragraf 4 Ustava Republike Slovenije (Republika Slovenija, 1991)).

Slovenski je materinski jezik otprilike 2,2 milijuna ljudi od kojih velika većina živi u Sloveniji. Otprilike pola milijuna izvornih govornika slovenskoga jezika živi

u obližnjim pograničnim područjima susjednih država. Slovenija je također i dom raznim emigrantima, što doprinosi širokom rasponu jezika koji se govore na njezinu teritoriju. Ti jezici, kojima govori ukupno 16,94% ljudi, npr. hrvatski, srpski, albanski, makedonski i dr. (Tablica 3), imaju znatno niži (neprivilegirani) status u usporedbi sa slovenskim, talijanskim i mađarskim. Navedene činjenice pokazuju da velika većina izvornih govornika slovenskoga jezika (83,06%) živi u Sloveniji (Statistički ured Republike Slovenije). Stoga Sloveniju možemo opravdano nazvati jezično homogenom državom.

Za razliku od romskoga jezika (potpoglavlje *Jezik Roma – romski*) slovenski je jezik važan predmet brojnih lingvističkih istraživanja. Kao svi „glavni“ jezici temelji se na suvremenome rječniku književnoga jezika (*Slovar slovenskega knjižnega jezika* (1970-1991)), nizu strukturnih gramatičkih pravila (*Slovenska slovnica*, koju je napisao Toporišič (1976)), nizu pravopisnih pravila, raznim specijaliziranim rječnicima, referentnim korpusima (FidaPLUS, koji sadrži više od 620 milijuna riječi), dvojezičnom korpusu prevedenih pravnih tekstova (Evrokopus) koji sadrži više od 28 milijuna riječi i dr. (Kalin i sur. 2007).

Što se tiče slovenskoga zakona, slovenski je također službeno sredstvo komunikacije na kojemu se moraju predavati svi akademski predmeti, osim stranih jezika. Ta odredba ne odnosi se na regije u kojima žive manjine i na mjesta u kojima je dopušteno poučavanje školskih predmeta na materinskom jeziku određene manjine: talijanskome ili mađarskome. Prema tome, romski učenici u Sloveniji moraju pratiti nastavu na jeziku – u našem slučaju slovenskome – kojim su nedovoljno ili nikako ovladali, te usvojiti znanje na jeziku na kojem moraju naučiti čitati i pisati, a dok se istodobno na tome jeziku obrazuju i u drugim predmetima.

Rezultati opsežnoga istraživanja potvrdili su pretpostavku da slovenske jezične vještine u obrazovnom kontekstu Slovenije predstavljaju ključan preduvjet za uspjeh svih učenika (Krek i Vogrinc, 2005). Ovladavanje jezičnim vještinama slovenskoga jezika nužno je za društvenu povezanost i društveni život romskih učenika. Ipak, ne može se očekivati da će neromski učenici razumjeti ili govoriti romski jezik. Često se događa da neromski učenici čak izražavaju netoleranciju prema romskom jeziku (Husar Černjavič, 2006; Kovač Šebart, Krek, 2003). Zapravo, romska su djeca „prisiljena“ na višejezičnost. Prema Christu (2006), u takvim slučajevima često se događa da je svatko tko ne posjeduje sposobnost komuniciranja u opasnosti da neće moći na odgovarajući način ugraditi svoje kvalitete u društvo, a to bi tog pojedinca moglo marginalizirati ili ga, u najgorem slučaju, potpuno isključiti iz društva.

Upisivanje u školu i učenje jezika vrlo su intenzivni, složeni i važni procesi za romsku djecu (pogotovo s obzirom na njihov izvorni jezik, starosjedilačku kulturu i identitet), u kojima oni u aktualnim okolnostima, koje ih često dovode i do napuštanja školovanja, ne mogu uspjeti (Krek, Vogrinc, 2005).

Jezik Roma – romski

Romski, jezik Roma, je indoarijanski jezik, kojega mnogi smatraju fenomenom: „[To] je jedini međunarodni jezik koji nije službeno priznat niti u jednoj državi“ (Calvet, 1985, citirano u Liégeois, 1998, str. 199). Jezik koji govori otprilike 20 milijuna ljudi širom svijeta zapravo je manjinski jezik jer nema svoj jasno određeni teritorij. Ukratko, nije autohton ni u jednoj državi, a opet je prisutan u svima i nije službeni jezik ni u jednom konzulatu ili ambasadi. U prošlosti je romski jezik bio i zabranjen, potlačen i donedavno (uz nekoliko izuzetaka) utemeljen gotovo isključivo na usmenoj predaji. Uz nedostatak pisane tradicije i standardizirane gramatike i pravopisa, romski je također podijeljen na nekoliko dijalekata. Sve te karakteristike, koje bi bile pogubne za neke druge jezike, te kulturni kontekst unutar kojega Romi žive, paradoksalno su mu priskrbile iznenađujući stupanj vitalnosti (Hohmann, 1996; Liégeois, 1998).

U Sloveniji romski jezik ima status jezika manjine – kao što je slučaj i u Austriji, Njemačkoj, Švedskoj i Mađarskoj. Europska povelja o regionalnim ili manjinskim jezicima (2010) navodi da Odbor stručnjaka potiče Sloveniju da nastavi s naporima za provođenje mjera „Strategije za obrazovanje Roma u Republici Sloveniji“ (koja je usvojena 2004. i dopunjena 2011.) u praksi. Odbor stručnjaka potaknuo je slovenske vlasti da posebno rade na širenju pozitivne slike o romskom jeziku u kulturi i medijima, posebno u nacionalnim medijima i da rade na poboljšanju njegove prisutnosti i njegova statusa u nacionalnome kurikulumu (i, gdje god je to moguće, u kurikulumu drugih manjina također prisutnih u Sloveniji). Potaknuo je vlasti da sudjeluju u istraživačkim projektima s ciljem standardizacije romskoga jezika kao temelja za njegovo poučavanje (Europska povelja o regionalnim ili manjinskim jezicima, 2010).

Trenutno stanje razine (stranih) jezičnih vještina kod romskih učenika je manje povoljno za njih i njihove izgleda za uspješno obrazovanje. Za romsku djecu koja su upisana u školu i pretežno govore romski ili jedan od njegovih dijalekata obrazovni proces je očito stran na mnoge načine jer se susreću s novim kodom koji bi trebao oblikovati njihov način razmišljanja (Jazbec, i sur. 2012; Krek, Vogrinc, 2005; Liégeois, 1999). Taj novi kod je zapravo obvezni jezik obrazovanja, a temelji se na određenoj pisanoj i usmenoj tradiciji, rječnicima, gramatici i dr. Nadalje, taj kod također predstavlja i nešto njima sasvim novo, čime jedva mogu vladati ili uopće ne mogu vladati. Uz to, s tim se novim jezikom susreću samo u školi i često su lišeni prilike ili podrške da poboljšaju svoje jezične vještine u interakciji sa svojom zajednicom kod kuće ili sa svojim krugom prijatelja (Krek, Vogrinc, 2005; Jazbec i sur. 2012). Kada se upiše u školu, većina romske djece susreće se s ozbiljnim nedostacima kada se radi o uspješnosti na školskim satima jer se ovladavanje jezikom obrazovanja – u našem slučaju slovenskim jezikom – i očekuje i zahtijeva. Neuspjeh romske djece u školi, njihovo nedovoljno znanje jezika na kojemu se izvodi obrazovni proces, jezično uvjetovane apstraktne ideje s kojima se tijekom nastave susreću, česta društvena izolacija, njihovi zadaci kod kuće (rad, briga o braći i sestrama) uzrok su čestim izostajanjima s nastave i sve lošijem uspjehu (Liégeois, 1998). Statistika iz raznih zemalja

pokazuje da broj romskih učenika drastično opada od upisa u školu do završetka školovanja (Europski centar za praćenje rasizma i ksenofobije, 2006). Za Sloveniju to konkretno znači da je, na primjer, od osmero romske djece upisane u školu, četvero već odustalo od devetogodišnjega obveznog školovanja ili do 7. ili do 8. razreda. Romski učenici u višim razredima osnovne škole su iznimka (Krek i Vogrinc, 2005).

Kompetencija u stranome jeziku

Učenje stranoga jezika dugo je utemeljeno na obrazovno-teorijskoj osnovi (Christ, 2006) i dobilo je novu važnost zbog političkih i ekonomskih promjena širom svijeta (Vijeće Europe, 2001, 2003). Kao prvo, jezična kompetencija je važna za pojedinca jer mu pomaže proširiti horizont očekivanja nastalih u svijetu materinskog jezika, ukinuti stroga ograničenja u osobnim kulturološkim shvaćanjima i prosudbama, kao i uspostaviti veze s drugim jezičnim zajednicama (Christ, 2006). Kao drugo, jezična kompetencija je također presudna za društvo jer sposobnost društva da djeluje na ozbiljan način, ovisi o stupnju jezične kompetencije koju njegovi pripadnici posjeduju.

Učenje stranoga jezika u Sloveniji ima dugu tradiciju, a potpomognuto je geografskim položajem države na raskrižju mnogih jezičnih i kulturoloških utjecaja. Pogled unatrag na povijest učenja jezika u Sloveniji otkriva zanimljivu dinamiku. Ruski je, na primjer, bio strani jezik koji su svi učili diljem Slovenije tijekom 1960-ih. Srpsko-hrvatski preuzeo je tu ulogu tijekom 1980-ih i ranih 1990-ih, dok španjolski postaje moderan strani jezik početkom 21. stoljeća. Dok su spomenuti jezici bili preferirani samo tijekom određenih povijesnih razdoblja, i engleski i njemački uspjeli su ostati jedini strani jezici koji održavaju stalan status među stranim jezicima koji se uče u Sloveniji (Jazbec, 2011; Pižorn, 2009; Statistički ured Republike Slovenije).

Kada govorimo o trenutnom stanju učenja jezika u Sloveniji, slovenski, kao službeni jezik u državi, uz izuzetak pograničnih područja (*Jezik okoline – slovenski*), poučava se kao zaseban nastavni predmet i predstavlja sredstvo komunikacije u svim ostalim nejezičnim nastavnim predmetima. Osim toga, popis stranih jezika koji se mogu učiti u osnovnim školama u Sloveniji (obvezno obrazovanje od 1. do 9. razreda) uključuje engleski, njemački, francuski, talijanski, latinski i španjolski. Jezici imaju različit status. Engleski i njemački, na primjer, redovito se poučavaju kao obvezni predmeti, dok se ostali jezici pretežno nude kao izborni predmeti. Učenici u osnovnim školama službeno počinju učiti prvi strani jezik u 4. razredu, kada imaju otprilike 9 godina. Međutim, proces učenja stranoga jezika zapravo počinje prije, budući da većina osnovnih škola nudi dodatne strane jezike kao izborne predmete. Učenici uče svoj prvi strani jezik tijekom 656 sati nastave i trebali bi postići A2 ili A2+ stupanj jezične kompetencije, kako je naznačeno u Zajedničkom europskom referentnom okviru za jezike. Ipak, trend i očekivanja u Sloveniji naginju tome da se prvi strani jezik počne učiti već u prvom razredu osnovne škole.

Drugi strani jezik donedavno nije imao svoj poseban status, iako bi se to moglo promijeniti unutar dvogodišnjega razdoblja (Kacjan, 2010). Mogućnost učenja

drugoga stranog jezika u obliku izbornoga predmeta u sedmom, osmom i devetom razredu pruža se učenicima osnovnih škola nakon uvođenja obvezne devetogodišnje osnovne škole. U principu, učenicima se nudi dodatna mogućnost učenja engleskoga, njemačkoga, francuskoga, hrvatskoga, talijanskoga, latinskoga, makedonskoga, ruskoga, srpskoga i španjolskoga. Usprkos širokome rasponu stranih jezika koji se mogu učiti, većina učenika osnovnih škola u Sloveniji odabire njemački kao svoj drugi strani jezik.

Romski učenici se također suočavaju s takvim trendovima u (stranom) jeziku. Prvo, sredstvo obrazovanja se ponajprije temelji na jeziku države, slovenskome, (potpoglavlje *Jezik okoline – slovenski*). Nadalje, nastavnici nisu kompetentni služiti se romskim jezikom pa se njime ne mogu koristiti kao osnovom na kojoj mogu poučavati jezik. U empirijskome dijelu pokušat ćemo otkriti dobivaju li romski učenici niže ocjene u usporedbi s neromskim učenicima u nastavi stranih jezika, uzimajući u obzir opisane uvjete i okolnosti koje imaju jak utjecaj, suprotno tezi o povijesno i praktično motiviranom i uvjetovanom višejezičnom potencijalu Roma, kako je bilo navedeno na početku.

Aktualni plan učenja stranoga jezika u Sloveniji s gledišta romskih učenika

Društvene promjene, globalizacija i migracije zahtijevaju promjenu didaktike nastave stranih jezika, posebno u smjeru naglašavanja jezične raznolikosti u učionicama (Fürstenau i Gomolla, 2011; Hu, 2003; Nodari, 2000). Interkulturalna kompetencija, razumijevanje kako drugi razmišljaju i djeluju, didaktika višejezičnosti i didaktika trećega jezika trebale bi postati imperativ u planu učenja jezika, budući da na većinu škola diljem Europe još uvijek djeluje *monolingual habitus* (Gogolin, 2008). To znači da službeni jezik neke države predstavlja sredstvo komunikacije u većini školskih predmeta. Iznimke se mogu uočiti najprije u regijama u kojima žive manjine i u kojima u školama postoje službena jezika ili više službenih jezika, a zatim i u dvojezičnim školama u kojima je strani jezik sredstvo obrazovanja u raznim školskim predmetima, pa čak i u cijelom kurikulumu. U osnovi, očekuje se da učenici uče na službenome jeziku države, i da ih se na tome jeziku poučava. Osim toga, trebali bi učiti i strane jezike (u većini slučajeva engleski, koji je lingua franca).

Ta situacija nije ni jasna ni jednostavna za romsku djecu koja se često upisuju u *jednojezičnu* školu (Hu, 2003) s prilično skromnim poznavanjem jezika obrazovanja. Nadalje, često postoje velike razlike koje ta djeca uočavaju između svoje vlastite kulture, svojega načina razmišljanja i osjećaja u usporedbi s kulturom, načinom razmišljanja i osjećajima u državi. Taj temeljni, asimetričan položaj romske djece u usporedbi s neromskom djecom u učionici vodi izravno do velikih razlika u uspjehu i postignućima u školi, kao i poslije u životu (Husar Černjavič, 2006; Kovač Šebart, Krek, 2003).

Usvajanje drugoga jezika, kao i stranoga jezika, nije monolitan proces, nego proces koji kontroliraju mnogobrojni društveni i psiholingvistički utjecaji. U tome važnu

ulogu ima proces razvijanja vještina prvoga jezika i ovladavanje njime, budući da prvi jezik utire put usvajanju ostalih jezika (Barkowski, 2003). Kako je romski jezik poseban jezik, romski učenici tu nailaze na velik problem (vidi potpoglavlje *Rasprava*). Metode poučavanja stranoga jezika u školi rijetko se prilagođuju uvelike različitim sposobnostima i vještinama učenika u učenju jezika. U kontekstu istraživanja o imigrantima u Njemačkoj, Hu smatra da se didaktički principi i premise u didaktici stranoga jezika, koji su neosporivi na stupnju programiranja i teorije, u praksi prestaju koristiti, a princip koji stavlja učenika u središte nailazi na očita ograničenja kod velikoga broja učenika (Hu, 2003). Njezino je razmatranje također važno i za Sloveniju. Dok se uvježbavanje u izvannastavnom kontesktu odvija na nekoliko jezika širom svijeta, čak i u jezično homogenim državama poput Slovenije, takva vrsta višejezičnosti često se napušta u nastavi stranih jezika.

Poučavanje stranoga jezika u Sloveniji temelji se na didaktičkom pristupu nastavi stranoga jezika koji je usmjeren na jednojezične grupe učenika. Da bismo pojasnili: diskurs objašnjavanja i sažimanje i meta-komunikativni diskurs odvijaju se često na slovenskome; nastavnici često objašnjavaju gramatiku stranoga jezika na slovenskome jeziku ili ih uspoređuju (upotrebljavajući i strani jezik i slovenski); prilikom rada na tekstu riječi se prevode na slovenski jezik. U poučavanju bi se trebao primijeniti „višejezični pristup“, što bi zapravo bio dvojezični pristup – slovenski i strani jezik (Divjak, 2010). Budući da se to rijetko događa, čini se da je neuspjeh učenika koji imaju drugačiju jezičnu situaciju od one koju ima većina, a posebno neuspjeh romske djece (kako je prije objašnjeno), unaprijed određen.

Empirijsko istraživanje

Pitanja korištena u istraživanju

Ovo empirijsko istraživanje temeljilo se na sljedećim pitanjima, koja su ponajprije fokusirana na razlike između romskih i neromskih učenika ili slovenskih učenika s obzirom na njihov pojedinačni interes za učenje jezika.

Na kojim jezicima romski i neromski učenici od 10 do 15 godina u Sloveniji komuniciraju sa svojim prijateljima?

Koje jezike romski i neromski učenici u Sloveniji smatraju važnima?

Koje jezike romski i neromski učenici najviše vole?

Koje jezike romski i neromski učenici uče u slovenskim školama i koliko su u tome uspješni?

Metodologija

Empirijsko istraživanje temeljilo se na deskriptivnoj i kauzalnoj neeksperimentalnoj metodi.

Uzorak korišten u istraživanju

Uzorak nije bio nasumično odabran. Odabran je pažljivo i s namjerom. Istraživanje je obuhvatilo 1121 učenika iz Slovenije, upisanog u razrede od 4. do 9. (u dobi od 10

do 15 godina). 585 učenika uključenih u istraživanje bilo je slovenskoga podrijetla, a njih 435 bili su romski učenici. Ostali učenici, njih 101, bili su druge nacionalnosti i nisu bili uključeni u analizu prikazanu u ovome radu, budući da se okolnosti djece koja imaju status imigranata ne mogu izjednačiti s uvjetima u kojima žive romska djeca (Hu, 2003). U skladu s glavnim ciljem ovoga rada – ispitati uspjeh romskih i neromskih učenika u učenju jezika – slijedi evaluacija i analiza podataka prikupljenih na uzorku od 1020 učenika (585 učenika slovenskoga podrijetla i 435 romskih učenika).

Razlika između romskih i neromskih učenika ustanovljena je na temelju posebnih pitanja postavljenih u prvome dijelu istraživanja, a s ciljem određivanja uzorka istraživanja. Učenici su naveli na kojem jeziku komuniciraju kod kuće, sa svojim roditeljima i sa svojom braćom i sestrama. Na temelju njihovih odgovora dobili smo informacije o njihovom prvom jeziku. Prvi jezik slovenskih učenika bio je slovenski, dok je prvi jezik romskih učenika bio romski. Tako smo isključili sve nejasnoće koje su učenici mogli imati tijekom istraživanja. Ključna definicija je u skladu s kriterijima bitnima za određivanje prvoga jezika (Apeltauer, 1997).

Prikupljanje podataka

Podaci su prikupljeni u svim osnovnim školama u Sloveniji koje imaju više od desetero upisane romske djece. Prema Statističkom uredu Republike Slovenije, 1500 romskih učenika upisano je u osnovne škole, a još 140 romske djece upisano je u posebne škole tijekom školske godine 2009/2010. U Sloveniji ima 550 osnovnih škola, od kojih je 46 sudjelovalo u ovome istraživanju. Kao dio istraživanja podijeljeno je 1245 upitnika od kojih je posve i ispravno popunjen vraćen 1121 upitnik. Stopa odaziva ispitanika bila je 90,0%, pa se može smatrati optimalnom. Učenici su ispunili upitnik anonimno i samostalno pod nadzorom nastavnika (u nekim slučajevima romskim učenicima bila je potrebna pomoć pri čitanju). Grupa ispitanika bila je odabrana na sljedeći način: romski učenici (prema slovenskome zakonu, postoji granica od najviše tri romska učenika po razredu) pozvani su da ispune upitnik dobrovoljno. Svi nastavnici koji predaju u razredima s romskim učenicima izabrali su nasumično isti broj neromske djece iz istoga razreda, koji su također bili spremni dobrovoljno, istinito i ozbiljno ispuniti upitnik.

Mjerni instrument

Podaci su prikupljeni upitnikom koji se sastojao od pitanja pretežno zatvorenoga tipa (dihotomni, usmeni i skalirani odgovori) i poluotvorenih pitanja. Upitnik je sastavljen prema karakteristikama koje su se mjerile. *Valjanost* upitnika temelji se djelomično na racionalnoj prosudbi o sadržaju i metodologiji, koju su dali stručnjaci, a djelomično na probnome testu u kojemu se pokazalo da su neka pitanja nejasna, pa su naknadno bila promijenjena ili maknuta iz upitnika. *Pouzdanost* upitnika osigurana je preciznim uputama, jasnim i određenim pitanjima i usporedbom odgovora s pitanjima usmjerenima na sadržaj. Tijekom faze obrade podataka *objektivnost* upitnika bila je osigurana tako što su se čitali odgovori na pitanja zatvorenoga tipa i

na poluotvorena pitanja bez davanja subjektivne procjene. Tijekom faze prikupljanja podataka objektivnost upitnika osigurana je tako što su učenici odgovarali na pitanja bez uplitanja nastavnika. Nastavnicima su dane iste, jasne upute o tome kakvu pomoć učenicima smiju dati. U našem slučaju, nastavnici koji su nadgledali ispunjavanje upitnika smjeli su glasno čitati pitanja i uvjeriti se da su učenici ispravno razumjeli pitanja. Nastavnicima nije bilo dopušteno poticati ili natuknuti odgovore na neka pitanja, čak i ako se činilo da određeni učenik na postavljeno pitanje neće moći odgovoriti.

Procjena podataka

Rezultati istraživanja prikazani su u tablicama (f,f%). Statistička razlika između romskih i neromskih učenika provjerena je Pearsonovim hi-kvadrat testom (χ^2 -test).

Rezultati i interpretacija

Prisutnost, važnost i zainteresiranost za (strane) jezike romskih i neromskih učenika

Započeli smo s utvrđivanjem jezičnih iskustava romske i neromske djece u dobi od 10 do 15 godina. Istražili smo stupanj/stupnjeve „prisutnosti“ jezika u svakodnevnom životu romske i neromske djece, kao i njihove pojedinačne stavove o važnosti jezika i sklonosti prema jezicima općenito, jeziku okoline – slovenskom i drugim (stranim) jezicima. Na taj je način utvrđeno na kojim jezicima romski i neromski učenici komuniciraju sa svojim prijateljima (1), koje jezike romski i neromski učenici smatraju važnima u životu (2) i koje jezike najviše vole romski i neromski učenici (3).

Na kojem jeziku/kojim jezicima romski i neromski učenici komuniciraju sa svojim prijateljima?

Tablica 1.

Velika većina (63,5%) učenika razgovara sa svojim prijateljima isključivo na slovenskome jeziku. Taj je podatak bio očekivan zbog relativno homogene jezične strukture učenika u Sloveniji. Odmah nakon te grupe učenika slijedi dio učenika koji sa svojim prijateljima komuniciraju i na romskome i na slovenskome jeziku (19,6%). Uzimajući u obzir uzorak korišten u istraživanju, ne postoji ništa iznenađujuće u toj informaciji. Grupa učenika koji komuniciraju sa svojim prijateljima isključivo na romskome jeziku ima udio od 4,2%.

Rezultat χ^2 -testa s obzirom na sredstvo komunikacije među prijateljima potvrđuje statistički značajnu razliku između romskih i neromskih učenika ($\chi^2 = 481.331$, $P=0.000$). Većina romskih učenika komunicira sa svojim prijateljima na romskome i na slovenskome jeziku (45,3%); 34,3% romskih učenika komunicira sa svojim prijateljima isključivo na slovenskome jeziku, a 9,9% romskih učenika komunicira sa svojim prijateljima samo na romskome jeziku. Uz romski i slovenski, neki romski

učenici u razgovoru sa svojim prijateljima upotrebljavaju i drugi jezik, npr. albanski i hrvatski. Velika većina neromskih učenika (85,3%) komunicira sa svojim prijateljima isključivo na slovenskome. Udio onih neromskih učenika koji sa svojim prijateljima uz slovenski jezik komuniciraju i na drugim jezicima relativno je nizak, dok nitko od neromskih učenika ne komunicira sa svojim prijateljima na romskome jeziku.

Na temelju navedenih rezultata može se zaključiti da su romski učenici oni koji trebaju kompetenciju u raznim jezicima da bi mogli uspješno komunicirati s prijateljima drugačijega podrijetla. Drugim riječima, višejezičnost se očekuje više od romskih nego od neromskih učenika. To se može zaključiti iz činjenice da su Romi manjina koja se suočava sa situacijom sličnom onoj u kojoj se nalaze imigranti i autohtone manjine. Povezan s tom situacijom je i prestiž jezika i jezične zajednice, čega su Romi i romski jezik lišeni.

Koje jezike romski i neromski učenici smatraju važnima u svojem životu?

Tablica 2.

Tablica 2 pokazuje koji su jezici važni učenicima u njihovu životu. Popis navedenih jezika je u skladu s našim očekivanjima, budući da – uz slovenski kao službeni jezik – taj popis uključuje i vodeće svjetske jezike (engleski i njemački), kao i španjolski, koji je sve popularniji među mlađim generacijama u Sloveniji. Na popisu je i mađarski, jezik manjine, hrvatski, jezik kojim govore djeca doseljenika. Nijedan učenik koji je sudjelovao u istraživanju nije smatrao romski jezik bitnim u svojem životu. Uznemirujuća je činjenica da, iako su u istraživanju sudjelovala djeca brojnih useljenika koja govore bošnjački, srpski ili albanski kao prvi jezik, ti jezici nisu, iz nama nepoznatih razloga, bili uključeni u popis jezika koje romski i neromski učenici u svom životu smatraju važnima.

Ipak, podaci otkrivaju zanimljivu razliku u određivanju stupnja važnosti jezika u životima učenika. Različita stajališta romskih i neromskih učenika statistički su značajna ($\chi^2 = 304,653$, $P = 0,000$). Dok je većina neromskih učenika (80,2%) odabrala engleski kao najvažniji jezik, romski učenici su, uz engleski jezik (47,6%), također odabrali i slovenski (22,3%) kao važan jezik u svojem životu. Štoviše, postotak romskih učenika koji smatraju engleski jezik važnijim od njemačkoga u svojem životu je također veći (10,3%) u usporedbi s postotkom neromskih učenika koji imaju isto mišljenje (8%).

Zaključak koji se implicitno može izvesti iz navedenih podataka i koji bi svakako trebali razmotriti stručnjaci jest da, iako se postavljeno pitanje odnosilo na jezike općenito, a ne isključivo na strane jezike, neromski učenici *nisu odabrali* slovenski kao jezik koji također smatraju bitnim u svom životu. U okvirima ovoga rada možemo pretpostaviti da se oni zapravo usredotočuju isključivo na strane jezike i smatraju slovenski neovisnim sredstvom komunikacije u svom životu. Potpuni odgovor na

pitanje pridaju li oni uistinu slovenskome jeziku tako malo važnosti (0,5%) kao što pokazuju podaci, mogao bi se dobiti samo dodatnim empirijskim istraživanjima.

Kojim su jezicima najviše skloni romski i neromski učenici?

Tablica 3.

Razlika između romskih i neromskih učenika s obzirom na to koliko vole jezike statistički je značajna. Većina romskih učenika (37,5%) odabrala je slovenski kao najpoželjniji jezik, dok je romski bio na drugome mjestu (33,8%). Većina neromskih učenika navela je slovenski kao najpoželjniji jezik (45,5%), a nakon njega engleski. Važan zaključak, koji se može implicitno izvesti iz navedenih podataka, a koji bi svakako trebali razmotriti stručnjaci, jest da romski učenici smatraju slovenski jezik poželjnijim od svojeg materinskog ili izvornog jezika, koji svakako bolje govore. Detaljna rasprava o toj činjenici izlazila bi iz okvira ovoga rada. Unutar područja našega istraživanja možemo se samo osvrnuti na možda zabrinjavajuće posljedice koje se mogu proizići iz te činjenice. Upravo taj podatak jasno izražava i dubinu i intenzitet procesa socijalizacije koji se odvija u obrazovnim institucijama. Iako romski učenici obično komuniciraju sa svojim prijateljima na romskome jeziku, koji je također dominantan jezik u njihovoj neposrednoj okolini, oni, suprotno prijašnjim pretpostavkama, nisu samo usvojili pojmove „poželjan jezik i romski“. Oni su također usvojili i pojmove „najpoželjniji jezik i slovenski“. Smatramo da je to važan rezultat koji upućuje na važnost promjene (na primjer, u smislu drugačijega pozicioniranja Roma u školi) i na temeljne izmjene na stupnju programiranja obrazovnoga sustava orijentiranoga prema pozitivnijem zajedništvu Roma i neroma.

Učinkovitost romskih i neromskih učenika u učenju (stranoga) jezika

Uz određivanje jezičnih iskustava, rangiranje i prosuđivanje jezika romskih i neromskih učenika u dobi između 10 i 15 godina u Sloveniji, cilj našega istraživanja također je bio i odrediti stupanj učinkovitosti (uspješnosti) romskih i neromskih učenika u institucionaliziranom učenju (stranoga) jezika na temelju njihovih ocjena, u skladu s ocjenjivačkom ljestvicom od 5 bodova, koja se upotrebljava u nastavnom ocjenjivanju u Sloveniji, a u kojoj je 1 najniža i nedovoljna ocjena, a 5 najviša moguća (odlična) ocjena.

Koje jezike romski i neromski učenici uče u školi?

Tablica 4.

Tablica 4 pokazuje da većina učenika (52,3%) uči slovenski i engleski, dok manje od trećine učenika (29,1%) uz slovenski jezik uči njemački i engleski. Na sljedećem su mjestu učenici (11,6%) koji uz slovenski uče i njemački jezik. Znatno manji postotak učenika (0,9%) uz slovenski, njemački i engleski jezik također uči i mađarski ili francuski. Distribucija frekvencije pokazuje da se engleski poučava kao lingua franca

u onim osnovnim školama u Sloveniji u koje su upisana romska djeca. Međutim, razlika između romskih i neromskih učenika s obzirom na njemački kao strani jezik doista se čini statistički značajnom ($\chi^2 = 78.045$, $P=0.000$). Kombinaciju slovenskoga i njemačkoga jezika odabire znatno više romskih (16,1%) nego neromskih učenika (8,2%). S druge strane, znatno više neromskih učenika uči tri jezika, tj. njemački jezik, uz slovenski i engleski (38,5%).

Učinkovitost romskih i neromskih učenika u učenju jezika

Tablica 5.

U vezi s uspješnošću u učenju stranoga jezika učenici su naveli ocjene koje su najčešće dobivali iz svakoga od jezičnih predmeta. Tablica pokazuje da je većina učenika dosegla ili ocjenu dovoljan – 2 (26,4%) ili ocjenu odličan – 5 (27,8%) iz slovenskoga jezika. Takva dvostranost u uspješnosti također je očita u engleskom jeziku kao jezičnome predmetu, u kojem je postotak učenika s odličnom ocjenom (5) nešto veći (33,8%), a postotak učenika s ocjenom dovoljan (2) nešto manji (25,6%) u usporedbi s postotkom istih ocjena u slovenskome jeziku kao jezičnome predmetu. Postotak učenika s nedovoljnom/neprolaznom ocjenom (1) je također veći u engleskome kao jezičnome predmetu (8,6%) u usporedbi s postotkom nedovoljnih ocjena koje učenici dobivaju u slovenskome kao jezičnome predmetu (5,4%). Drugačija tendencija može se uočiti u nastavi “njemačkoga kao stranoga jezika“ (DaF) jer se učestalost ocjena pozitivno povećava kod svih učenika. Stoga učenici koji imaju ocjenu odličan (5) predstavljaju najveći postotak učenika (38,2%), dok postotak nedovoljnih ocjena koje učenici dobivaju iz njemačkoga jezika stagnira oko 2,5%. Dakle, što se tiče ocjena učenika u učenju (stranoga) jezika, možemo primijetiti da je srednja ocjena ista ($\bar{x} = 3.4$) za slovenski i engleski kao jezične predmete, dok srednja ocjena ($\bar{x} = 3.8$) za njemački kao jezični predmet pokazuje statističku tendenciju prema višim ocjenama.

Rezultati χ^2 -testa prikazani u Tablici 4 potvrđuju statistički značajnu i veliku razliku ($P=0.000$) između romskih i neromskih učenika s obzirom na ocjene dobivene iz stranih jezika. Romski učenici pokazuju trend prema dobivanju lošijih ocjena (nedovoljnih i dovoljnih) češće nego neromski učenici iz slovenskoga i engleskoga jezika, kao i njemačkoga kao stranoga jezika. Ocjena odličan (5), ocjena koju dobivaju pretežno neromski učenici uključeni u istraživanje, pokazala se ocjenom koju romski učenici dobivaju jako rijetko, a većina njih (11,6%) dobila ju je iz njemačkoga jezika. Neuspjeh romskih učenika u učenju slovenskoga jezika, kao i u učenju stranih jezika, nije potvrdio početnu hipotezu, prema kojoj se očekivalo da će rezultati koje romski učenici postižu u učenju stranoga jezika biti bolji od rezultata koje romski učenici postižu u učenju slovenskoga jezika.

Prema tome, primijetili smo, s obzirom na učenje jezika romskih i neromskih učenika, da većina učenika koji su upisani u osnovnu školu u Sloveniji uči engleski kao prvi strani jezik, uz slovenski – jezik okoline. Međutim, za razliku od neromskih učenika, većina romskih učenika uči njemački kao strani jezik, uz slovenski. Ti rezultati

mogu se objasniti činjenicom da veći broj romskih učenika živi u područjima u kojima je njemački bitan, ili čak uobičajen u obrazovanju. Ako ugrubo sažmemo rezultate s obzirom na stupanj uspješnosti romskih i neromskih učenika u učenju jezika u školi, primijetiti ćemo da romski učenici postižu lošije rezultate od neromskih učenika i u slovenskom jeziku kao nastavnom predmetu i u njemačkome kao stranom jeziku. Nadalje, rezultati također pokazuju da romski učenici postižu nešto bolje rezultate u predmetu „njemački kao strani jezik“ u usporedbi s njihovom stopom uspješnosti u predmetu „engleski kao strani jezik“.

Rasprava

Istraživanjem smo pokušali odrediti stupanj uspješnosti romskih učenika u učenju (stranoga) jezika izvan okvira njihova društvenoga položaja, izvan pitanja akulturacije, te izvan općih obrazovnih pojmova. Ispitali smo aspekt učenja jezika s dva stajališta. Prvo je stajalište bilo usmjereno na proučavanje toga kako i romski i neromski učenici rangiraju, shvaćaju i cijene slovenski jezik kao službeni jezik u državi s jedne strane, a s druge strane kao jezik okoline za romske učenike, i to uz njihove pojedinačne stupnjeve uspješnosti. Drugo stajalište usmjereno je na ispitivanje konteksta učenja stranoga jezika (engleskoga i njemačkoga) i kod romskih i kod neromskih učenika.

Teorijski dio uključuje raspravu o trenutnim tendencijama u (stranome) jeziku, trendovima, službenome statusu slovenskoga i romskoga jezika u Sloveniji, te snažnom utjecaju didaktičkoga pojma učenja stranoga jezika. U teorijskom dijelu također se obrađuje i pretpostavka da se od romskih učenika očekuje da će postići lošije rezultate u nastavi slovenskoga jezika u usporedbi s neromskim učenicima, jer položaj romskih učenika odražava visok stupanj asimetričnosti. Suprotno tomu, teorijski dio također uključuje i pretpostavku da bi se trebalo očekivati da će stupanj uspješnosti romskih učenika u učenju stranoga jezika biti dobar – pogotovo kada se on usporedi s njihovim stupnjem uspješnosti u drugim predmetima, koji se temelje na službenome jeziku u državi, te da će taj stupanj uspješnosti također biti dobar i usporediv sa stupnjem uspješnosti neromskih učenika u istom kontekstu učenja stranoga jezika. Druga pretpostavka temelji se na sljedećim pretpostavkama: povijesnoj podlozi romskih učenika; njihovome načinu života i uvjetima života koji ih potiču da usvoje jezične vještine u stranome jeziku zbog praktičnih razloga; njihovom neospornom aktivnom znanju stranih jezika koje im omogućuje uspješno pregovaranje.

Opsežno empirijsko istraživanje, koje je uključilo jednu trećinu svih romskih učenika u Sloveniji, dovelo je do sijedećih temeljnih zaključaka:

Bez obzira na to radi li se o romskim ili neromskim učenicima, slovenski jezik je sredstvo komunikacije u statistički značajnom većem broju slučajeva nego romski jezik. Neromski učenici komuniciraju sa svojim prijateljima pretežno na slovenskome, dok romski učenici komuniciraju sa svojim prijateljima i na slovenskome i na romskom jeziku. Romski jezik govore isključivo romski učenici.

I romski i neromski učenici smatraju engleski jezik „najvažnijim jezikom“ u svojem životu. Na drugo mjesto u toj kategoriji romski učenici stavljaju slovenski jezik, dok njihovi neromski vršnjaci kao „drugi najvažniji“ jezik navode njemački jezik. Ukratko, rezultati potvrđuju da slovenski jezik ima važnu ulogu u životima romske djece. Njemu su dali viši stupanj važnosti nego njihovi neromski vršnjaci.

S obzirom na kategoriju „poželjnoga jezika“ empirijski podaci potvrđuju da i romski i neromski učenici smatraju slovenski jezik svojim najdražim jezikom. Spoznaja da romski učenici daju slovenskome jeziku više mjesto na ljestvici poželjnosti nego svojem izvornom/prvom jeziku – romskom, ističe potrebu istraživanja i hitnog poticanja razgovora među stručnjacima u različitim područjima, kao i među nadležnim vlastima u području obrazovanja.

Osim slovenskoga jezika engleski je strani jezik koji se najčešće uči osnovnim školama u kojima su upisani romski učenici. Uz slovenski, romski učenici uče i njemački kao strani jezik (koji se također uči u osnovnim školama) češće nego neromski učenici.

Romski učenici u (stranim) jezicima (slovenski, engleski i njemački) dobivaju znatno lošije ocjene u usporedbi s neromskih učenicima.

Takvi empirijski podaci trebali bi biti smatrani valjanim razlogom za ponovno razmatranje trenutnoga institucionalnog i idejnog stanja. U Sloveniji bi romski učenici trebali biti sposobni upotrebljavati slovenski jezik prije upisa u osnovnu školu, jer je posjedovanje jezičnih vještina slovenskoga jezika preduvjet za uspjeh u školi i izvan škole. Rezultati pokazuju da romski učenici ipak smatraju slovenski jezik važnim, pa čak i svojim omiljenim jezikom, i potvrđuju da su oni već usvojili prijašnju pretpostavku. Uprkos tomu što je slovenski najdraži jezik romskih učenika, oni često ne ispunjavaju preduvjete kako bi bili dovoljno kompetentni za njegovo korištenje, što onda dovodi do niskoga stupnja uspješnosti, a samim time i nemotiviranosti romskih učenika u školi. Prema prije provedenome istraživanju Pečeka, Čuka i Lesara (2006), iznimno mala očekivanja koja nastavnici imaju od romskih učenika također imaju važnu ulogu na stupanj uspješnosti ili neuspješnosti romskih učenika u učenju (stranoga) jezika. Ta bi očekivanja zbog toga mogla prerasti u proročanstvo koje će se samo ispuniti, a rezultat bi mogao stvarno biti loš uspjeh romskih učenika. Štoviše, nastavnici ne posjeduju odgovarajuće vještine, metodiku, iskustvo i strategije rada za višekulturalne razrede.

Jezične vještine u izvornome jeziku kao ključan preduvjet trebale bi biti dobra osnova za učenike i omogućiti im da uspiju u daljnjem učenju jezika. Romski učenici znaju govoriti romski, a ipak ne mogu graditi svoje daljnje znanje na njemu, jer je romski jezik specifičan, nestandardiziran jezik koji se temelji na usmenoj predaji, jezik u kojemu nastavnici nisu stručni, a ne uči se ni u školi. Štoviše, kurikuli su često opširni i puni apstraktnoga sadržaja, pa obeshrabruju romske učenike, koji su često praktično i pragmatično orijentirani. Neophodno je promijeniti jednojezičnu praksu koja trenutno prevladava u školama tako ta se umanjiti orijentiranost na jedan jezik za dobrobit svih učenika i njihove višekulturalne kompetencije.

Učenje stranoga jezika, što je već dugo dio obrazovne tradicije u Sloveniji, i obavezno i za romske učenike, osmišljeno je tako da onemogućuje romske učenike da u tome području postignu uspjeh. U Sloveniji se engleskom jeziku daje prednost u većini škola, što je također činjenica koja romskim učenicima ne ide u prilog. Istraživanje je pokazalo da romski učenici češće uče njemački jezik i da su često puno uspješniji u učenju njemačkoga nego u učenju engleskoga kao stranoga jezika. To se može objasniti činjenicom da je njemački jezik službeni jezik susjedne zemlje, pa je im je stoga važniji nego engleski jezik, s ekonomskoga i praktičnoga gledišta, zbog čega su također daleko više motivirani učiti njemački jezik. Ipak, trendovi u trenutnoj jezičnoj politici u Sloveniji usmjereni su prema obveznom učenju engleskoga kao stranoga jezika za sve učenike. Zbog toga su romski učenici lišeni iznimno važne obrazovne dimenzije koja bi im omogućila postizanje višega stupnja uspješnosti.

No, ne može se uspostaviti model učenja stranoga jezika kao diskursa koji se može oblikovati kao „slobodan prostor“ u kojemu se svi učenici mogu uspješno nositi sa stranim i novim, dok istovremeno uče i dalje grade na osnovi svog jezika, i u kojem bi teorijski i romski učenici slične prilike za uspjeh gradili na svojem izvornome jeziku, romskom. Slabi rezultati romskih učenika pokazuju da je pojam učenja (stranoga) jezika u Sloveniji čvrsto utemeljen na službenom jeziku države, da je usmjeren prema jezično homogenoj grupi, dok se rijetko u obzir uzimaju različiti jezični profili i različite sposobnosti učenika. Slab uspjeh romskih učenika jasno upućuje na manjkavost i funkcionalne pogreške obrazovnoga sustava, no ponajprije je važno detaljno razmotriti pojam učenja (stranoga) jezika. Uzimajući u obzir upravo taj problem, naša je pretpostavka da bi se resursi socioekonomskoga i obrazovnog sustava mogli puno bolje iskoristiti.