

Book review:

**Hristo Kyuchukov, *Kratko opisanie na romskija ezik v Bulgaria*
(A short description of Romani language in Bulgaria).
Sofia: Delphi 2003, 210 pp.**

**Hristo Kyuchukov, Zlatko Mladenov, *Kratka gramatika
na kalderashkija romski dialekt v Bulgaria* (A short grammar
of Kalderash dialect of Romani in Bulgaria).
Sofia: Delphi 2004, 105 pp.**

The two books recently published in Bulgaria give broad information about the Romani language varieties amongst the Romani groups in Bulgaria and have features of textbooks for university students. The main author Hristo Kyuchukov is one of the well-known psycholinguists in Europe. In these two books he shows a deep knowledge of Bulgarian Romani dialects. The book *Kratko opisanie na romskija ezik v Bulgaria* (A short description of Romani language in Bulgaria) has two parts. The first part is focused on general information about Romani. In the second part the author describes the phonological and grammatical categories of Romani. In the Annexes we are given the Romani alphabet used in the book, as well as a short glossary of Romani and two texts in two different dialects (the Sofia Erlija dialect and the Kalderash dialect). The bibliography of the book amounts of 56 titles and shows that the author is familiar with the most significant publications in this field.

The first chapter of the book presents a historical overview of the development of the Romani language, the migrations from India to Europe, the research and publications on Romani in Europe and in Bulgaria.

The second chapter is dedicated to the characteristics of Romani dialects. At the beginning of the chapter the author informs about the professional and religious diversity among the Bulgarian Roma. Here the author classifies the Roma dialects on the basis of European authors' classification and divides the dialects in Bulgaria in two main groups: Balkan dialects and Vlax dialects. In the first group Hristo Kyuchukov places those Bulgarian dialects which have features close to the Roma dialects in other Balkan countries. The dialects influenced by the Romanian language are classified in the second group.

The third chapter is dedicated to the standardization of Romani. A historical overview shows the attempts of different authors since the 1970s to standardize the Romani orthography and the Romani grammar.

In the second part of the book Kyuchukov presents the grammatical categories of 6 Romani dialects in comparison. The dialects presented are: Kalderash,

Laho, Erlija from Sofia, Horaxano from North-East Bulgaria, the Drandar dialect from the town of Kotel, and the Kalaydjiya dialect from North-West Bulgaria. In this part, a chapter is dedicated to phonological features of those dialects and the next chapters show the morphological categories – nouns, adjectives, numerals, pronouns, verbs and connectors. In the last chapter the author concludes that some Roma dialects in contact develop features of interdialect. Here Kyuchukov applies the Accommodation Theory of P. Trudgill (1986) and the Interdialect Theory of M. Videnov (2000) and the implications of these theories for Bulgarian Roma dialects bringing a new dimension to the Romani dialectology and the Romani linguistics in general. The book of Kyuchukov is definitely a new phenomenon in the Romani linguistics area because it is not just a description of a particular dialect, as the Romani specialists usually do, but it is a comparison of dialects with implementation of the most modern theories of sociolinguistics.

The second book *Kratka gramatika na kalderashkija romski dialekt v Bulgaria* (A short grammar of Kalderash dialect of Romani in Bulgaria) is written in co-authorship with Zlatko Mladenov – a member of the Kalderash group in Bulgaria. The book presents information on Kalderash Roma in Bulgaria, their history, culture, subgroups, etc. Here the authors again describe the Kalderash dialect's different grammatical categories with rich illustration from this particular dialect.

The book is written in an easy and readable manner that makes it a good handbook for students studying Romani. It is unique in containing photographs, showing the life of the Kalderash Roma group in Bulgaria some 50-60 years ago. The book is the first successful attempt to describe a particular Romani dialect in Bulgaria and the authors should be congratulated.

This book also is a new phenomenon in Bulgarian linguistics society. It shows the ability of Hristo Kyuchukov to describe in detail a particular dialect and, together with the first book, Kyuchukov has shown himself to be an excellent dialectologist of Romani language.

References

- Trudgill, P. (1986). *Dialects in contact*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
 Videnov, M. (2000). *Uvod v sociolingvistikata*. Sofia: MSD.

Encho Gerganov
New Bulgarian University, Sofia