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VERBAL ASPECT AND THEMATIC ORGANIZATION OF SINTE NARRATIVE DISCOURSE

1. INTRODUCTION

Verbal aspect is just one of the formal devices used to express thematic organization of Sinte narrative texts. Word order, discourse particles, coding of participants and phonetic marking (breaks, intonation) all work as parts of a network. Therefore, when we go about describing the function and use of aspectual forms it is essential to bear in mind that it cannot be regarded in isolation.

1.1. Sociolinguistic background

The Sinte people refer to their language as "Romanes". The number of Sinte in Germany is about 50.000. Furthermore there are Sinte in France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Northern Italy and Slovenia and small groups in almost all the other European countries. The estimated total number of Sinte is 100 000 to 200 000.

Even within Germany the dialect situation is very complex and largely unexplored: Romanes has remained an unwritten language on the whole,¹ the Nazi holocaust led to a mixing of different dialect groups and the different national languages in Europe influence the variety of Romanes spoken there.

Due to the permanent persecution of the Sinte throughout the past centuries, Romanes is kept secret by its speakers today. Every kind of interest in their mother tongue by outsiders (*gādše*) is regarded with strong suspicion.

In the group of "Lalere"-Sinte (with some Czech influence) of Hildesheim where the data of the description at hand were collected, Romanes is spoken in almost all of the families. The Sinte are bilingual to a high degree. However, their German is strongly influenced by Romanes and has quite a limited lexicon.

1.2. Typology

Romanes is a richly inflected language (e.g. six cases; verbs inflected for tense, aspect, mode, number, person, gender of the subject etc.) and has a relatively 'free' word order. The syntactic possibilities are used mainly for pragmatic purposes. However, tendencies towards reducing morphology can be observed.

¹ In spite of attempts to develop and introduce an orthographical standard (Holzinger 1986).

The word order in the isolated independent clause is SVO.

The Sinte arrived in Western Europe in the beginning of the 15th century.² Due to this long stay of the Sinte in German speaking countries Romanes³ is characterized (as opposed to other Romani dialects) by strong German influence.

1.3. Discourse analysis: Theoretical introduction

Most traditional grammars are restricted to language descriptions up to the level of the sentence. Discourse analysis goes beyond that level. I regard discourse structures as something produced by speakers by means of operational processes. Our intention is to find out more about these operations that influence language structures of natural oral texts. How does a speaker use his language in a specific communicative setting and context to express a certain meaning?

We don't follow any specific theoretical model of text grammar. The operational processes that control language structures are taken over from different "functional" approaches, e.g. the Prague school (Functional Sentence Perspective) or the studies and hypotheses of Givón (1979,1983,1984) or Haiman (1985a,b).

Narrative texts are characterized by a basically system of organization that is temporal,⁴ i.e. events are ordered chronologically on a temporal axis (with the exception of flashbacks or temporal jumps).

To understand the function of linguistic expressions on the text level the gradual parameter of *continuity* as developed by Givón (1983) proved to be very helpful. Givón distinguishes between three kinds of continuity in a text:

- a) thematic continuity
- b) action continuity
- c) topic/participant continuity

As Givón says, *thematic continuity* "is the hardest to specify" (1983:8) as compared to action or topic continuity. Thematic continuity refers to semantic units above sentence level. It is the defining characteristic of a paragraph; a paragraph is about one theme; it is coherent and understandable. There is a certain interdependence of meaning between its propositions. A theme therefore is not a certain element of a proposition, it is rather "a higher level theme", the semantic main content or basic (leading) idea of a certain passage.⁵

² First documents report about "Tateren" in Hildesheim in 1407.

³ Including that of the Sinte living outside Germany today.

⁴ There is "at least a partial congruity between the temporal order of the reported events and the order of presentation" (Reinhart 1984:781).

⁵ Longacre (1979, 1985) tried to describe the different semantic relations between the propositions of a paragraph (1979: 122), e.g.: *conjoining* (contrast, exception, frustration, alternative, coordination), *temporal* relations, *logical* relations (implication, conditional, contrafactuals, consequence), *elaborative* devices (illustration, introduction and identification, amplification, equivalence) and *reportative* devices (comment, introduction of direct speech).

The paragraph, of course, has to be understood as a recursive unit, it consists of several parts and represents just a part of a larger unit (section, chapter, story etc.).

The first thing to do in discourse analysis was to split up the texts into semantic paragraphs rather intuitively. The next step was to find the linguistic means that were used to code paragraph boundaries.⁶ We found that the paragraph was marked by a whole bunch of structural features.⁷

In the following we concentrate on the marking of a paragraph boundary, i.e. positions of thematic discontinuity.

By *action continuity* Givón means the temporal sequence of states of affairs. If there is no chronology of events, action continuity is interrupted; there is discontinuity of action. In the Romanes of the Sinte the morphological aspects (Perfective, Imperfective) are used to distinguish chronological from non-chronological events. Furthermore, word order can express action continuity/discontinuity as well.

Participant continuity is expressed by morphosyntactic marking of participants in a text. Discontinuous participants (new participants or those that have not been mentioned for a long time) are generally marked in a more complex way than continuous ones.

Usually there is an implicational relationship of the following kind:

THEMATIC CONTINUITY < ACTION CONTINUITY < TOPIC CONTINUITY

Thematic breaks (beginnings of new paragraphs) very often are marked by morphosyntactic devices that express discontinuity of action (e.g. by the imperfective aspect or by a preverbal subject). Furthermore, discontinuity of action often implies discontinuity of participants: a break in the chronology of a story is often marked by new participants as well.

2. VERBAL ASPECTS

2.1. Introduction

In Romanes there are two morphological aspect forms that refer to the past: the *Perfective* (PFV) and the *Imperfective* (IPFV). As opposed to tenses, aspects are "different ways of viewing the internal constituency of a situation" (Comrie 1976: 3). It is important to note, that "the fundamental notion of aspect is not a local-semantic one but is discourse-pragmatic", it is "characterizable as completed event in the discourse" (Hopper 1979: 5). This factor of completedness of an event always refers to the specific discourse context.

⁶ Of course, when splitting up the text semantically it is inevitable to take already certain linguistic forms and especially phonetic breaks into consideration.

⁷ We assume that a larger number of these simultaneous features marks a stronger thematic break. Furthermore, there certainly is a sort of strength hierarchy of the linguistic devices.

Therefore, aspect cannot be described without doing discourse analysis, even though there are also local semantic functions that have to be considered.

As is common for Indoeuropean languages the IPFV and the Present Tense are formed from the same present stem, whereas there usually is a different Perfect stem for the PFV. Furthermore, the inflectional paradigms differ. The IPFV is formed regularly by suffigation of *-s* to the Present Tense endings.

e.g.: paradigm: *x-a-* 'to eat'

	PERFECTIVE	PRESENT TENSE	IMPERFECTIVE
Sg. 1.	xa-j-om	x- <u>au</u>	x- <u>au</u> -s
2.	xa-j-al	x- <u>ā</u>	x- <u>ā</u> -s
3.	xa-j-as	x- <u>al</u>	x- <u>al</u> -s
Pl. 1.	xa-j-am	x- <u>ā</u>	x- <u>ā</u> -s
2.	xa-j-an	x- <u>an</u>	x- <u>an</u> -s
3.	xa-j-an	x- <u>an</u>	x- <u>an</u> -s

The PFV aspect is used to express events in chronological order. It marks these events as completed within the discourse; the completedness of one event is the presupposition for the beginning of the following one. States of affairs in the past that are in no temporal sequence are expressed by the IPFV; the IPFV always expresses states of affairs that are *not* completed within the narrative.⁸

Thus verbal aspects are used to organize texts. They mark "foreground" and "background" sections of the narrative. The *foreground* of a text is made up by chronological events; in the literature it is referred to as "skeleton", "story line", "event line", "main line of the episode", "gist" etc. It is made up by the events that process the text temporally. In most cases they also represent the more salient events.

The background on the other hand consists of states of affairs that represent a break/interruption of the sequential temporal flow: comments to the foreground, amplifications, evaluations, scene setting statements, descriptions etc.⁹

We know from "gestalt psychology" that human perceivers do not lend equal weight to all incoming sensations, they notice some of them as more salient figures, which stand out distinctively in front of a less salient ground (Wallace 1979: 216). Reinhart (1984) and

⁸ For the verbal auxiliary "to be" there is no aspectual distinction because it always codes states (non-chronological states of affairs in the background).

⁹ Reinhart (1984) argues that there is no reason to expect, that the narrative temporal sequences per se should be more important than the non-narrative units. According to her the crucial property defining the relations of figure and ground is the functional dependency of the figure upon the ground. The ground can determine the interpretation of the figure, but not conversely (Reinhart 1984: 788). Thus the figure is not per se more important than the ground, rather it is the relative salience, determined by the context.

Givón (1984) argue in quite a similar way for a simpler cognitive processing of the foreground as compared to the background. The principles of "gestalt perception" correlate closely with those of temporal perception. More continuous, punctual and completed contours or forms are easier to interpret as figures. Temporal sequences (marked by the PFV) form a kind of temporal continuity. Therefore, they are easier to identify as foreground. Furthermore, completed events should be easier to code and recall than still ongoing incomplete ones. Punctual events are more easily identified as "figure" than durative ones.

FOREGROUND

chronological events
completed, punctual, compact
more salient (unexpected)
usually coded by the PFV

BACKGROUND

non-chronological events
not completed, durative, diffuse
less salient
usually coded by the IPFV

It is important to note, that foreground and background must be regarded as two extremes of a continuum. There is no strict bipartition of texts. Furthermore, verbal aspects are only *one* way of expressing this distinction, e.g. narrative present and word order are other means of coding foreground and background.

2.2. Markedness

The PFV is clearly less marked than the IPFV; it is cognitively less complex/less costly. The criteria for markedness (Comrie 1976) are morphological, semantic and statistical ones. Morphological criteria are the weakest. In the Romanes of the Sinte the IPFV is formed regularly by a suffix to the Present Tense ending (see above). In addition, slightly less morphological material is needed; there is no separate IPFV stem, but the unmarked Present stem is used. The PFV is much more frequent in narrative texts than the IPFV.¹⁰ The last criterion for the relative unmarkedness of the PFV is a semantic one. The unmarked category can be used to include the meaning of the more marked counterpart; the PFV can be used in cases, where actually the IPFV would have "fitted in". The PFV can be used to simply state an event without any further implications, the event is seen as an unanalysed whole, whereas the IPFV always emphasizes the internal structure of a state of affairs.

2.3. Imperfective

IPFV events are in no chronological order, they are not temporally dependent on foreground events, the IPFV marks states of affairs as habitual, iterative, durative or progressive.

¹⁰ The relative unmarkedness of the Pfv in the past corresponds to a general tendency in the languages of the world.

2.3.1. Habitual

There is a whole passage of habitual events in our sample text (appendix) from sentence 1-11. It is about how horse trade used to be when the story teller was a young boy (60 years ago). It is background information (about horse trade in general) for the actual story about a specific horse that starts with sentence 12 with the verb in the PFV.:

Un jek kopo pardas miro kamlo dad i grai drē.
'And one time my late father exchanged a horse.'

Another example is sentence 22: The new horse would not pull the waggon, so the storyteller's father had to beat it with a stick (15-20). From that time on whenever the boy would only take a straw in his mouth, the horse would literally explode with action, drawing the waggon.¹¹

2.3.2 Iterative

Sentence 17 describes the father beating the horse with a stick. As a reaction (s.18) the horse would rise up all the time, again and again.

In sentence 54 the IPFV form expresses the repeated, head shaking as well as the repetition of the greengrocer's words 'That's just not possible!'.

Un dan krēs o xālo i šerēha imə jāke, phenēso: Na, das gibt's nicht!
'And then the man always made with his head like this, he said: That's just not possible!'

2.3.3. Durative

In sentence 38 (as well as 33) the IPFV stresses the duration of the action: The greengrocer had been looking for the Sinte for quite a long time:

Rodēs men oxta divesa, ...
'He had been looking for us for EIGHT days, ...'

The following example from another narrative text nicely illustrates the emphasized duration of the action expressed by the IPFV.

Naš-as-o, naš-ēs-o, naš-ēs-o.
run-PFV-m, run-IPFV-m, run-IPF-m
'He ran and ran and ran.'

The first *našaso* is in chronological order relative to the preceding context. The continued duration of the act of running is expressed by the repetition of the verb in the IPFV.

¹¹ There is a certain iterative aspect in the meaning of the IPFV in sentence 22 as well.

2.3.4. Progressive

Finally, there is an example of progressive meaning of the IPFV in sentence 39: It was exactly when the greengrocer came, that the story-teller was playing in the wood. The IPFV marks the temporal overlap of the two events.

... *me grad an o vėš, khelaus mange.*
'... I (was) just in the forest, I was playing.'

2.3.5. The Semantics of the IPFV

After having shown the main functions of the IPFV we would like to demonstrate in some greater detail its semantic use. As mentioned before, the IPFV provides background information that is necessary to understand the narrative. This background information can be of various kinds:

- *scence setting*: temporal and local orientation of the main events (e.g. s.1-11);
- *identification or description of referents*: a description of the horse;
Sentence 15 ('There was a little handcart, it would not even pull that') is still part of the description of the horse (starting with s.13). The hearer's attention is not directed to the action of pulling the handcart. It is rather presented as a quality of the horse, namely, that it is not willing to pull even the tiniest vehicle.
- *collateral material*: events, that might have happened but did not happen: negated, future states of affairs, questions, direct speech etc.
e.g. s.19: ... *tserdēso gar*
'...he (the horse) would not pull the waggon'
s.24: *Kek vaverēha nai farēs o grai.*
'With nobobdy else the horse would go'
- *Comments, amplifications, explanations* etc.
S.62 is an explanation of the horse's action for the listener;
Haievē? Mukēs les gar te džal, dan his faiəabent, ende, džāso buter gār.
'You understand? If you did not let it go, it was all over, the end, it would not go any more!'

Finally it is worth mentioning, that there is an interplay between the basic semantic meaning of an aspectual form, the lexical meaning of the verb and its context of appearance; e.g. a punctual verb in the IPFV form can never be interpreted as durative, the iterative interpretation will be the natural one.

2.4 Perfective

The main function of the PFV is the presentation of sequential events, i.e. events that are completed relative to the contextual state of affairs, e.g. sentences 43-51 are in strict chronological order.

Since the PFV is the unmarked (usual, frequent) counterpart of the aspectual opposition we actually only have to explain the exceptional cases, when it is used for background events. The Perfective can be used for non-sequential events, if their internal temporal contour is of no importance. The PFV presents an event as a whole. Since there is no good example in our text, compare the following data from another narrative:

Un paš kol tšorende, kai vajam koi tel, koi lernevam ja nina pīpen.

'And with these Jenisch people, to whom we came down there, there we also learned drinking.'

The sentence is a comment about the Jenisch people. However, the act of learning is presented as a whole without stressing the continuity (duration, iterativity etc.) of the event. The following table summarizes the functions of the aspect forms:

PERFECTIVE	IMPERFECTIVE
- sequential events	- non-sequential events
	habitual
	iterative
	durative
	progressive ...
- unmarked	- marked
- presentation of event as a whole	- internal contour emphasized

The narrative (or historical) present (e.g. s.43) usually has the same general function as the PFV; it marks chronological events (Holzinger 1993).

The morphological aspects contribute in an important way to the marking of the paragraph semantic since a beginning paragraph is usually marked by a change from foreground to background or vice versa (which is marked by the PFV/IPFV). Within a paragraph there normally is continuity of action.

However, there are more morphosyntactic devices to code thematic continuity/discontinuity; e.g. word order functions to organize discourse.

3. WORD ORDER

Word order in the isolated main clause is SVO, e.g.:

I romni ger-ēs i zumi.

Det woman cook-3SgIpfv Det soup

'The woman was cooking the soup.'

However, in narrative oral texts the unmarked word order is that with the verb in sentence-initial position. Preverbal elements belong to a more marked word order type:

i) V... ii) X V...

The function of the sentence-initial phrase was often described as point of departure of a proposition (Halliday 1979 refers to it as "theme"). The topicalized element sets a temporal or local frame for the predication. However, Beneš (1962) already emphasizes the connection with the *preceding* context. The function of what she calls "basis" is that of coherence with the preceding context. Of course the basis also influences the hearers interpretation of the following text. Daneš (1974) summarizes the following two main functions of what he calls "theme":

- i) *connecting back and linking in to the previous discourse, maintaining a coherent point of view*
- ii) *serving as point of departure for the further development of discourse*

In the following we will use Beneš's term "basis" since there are lots of different definitions of "theme" in the literature. Preverbal elements mark a specific relation to the context. In case of thematic continuity within the narrative no basis is necessary to maintain coherence. Thus, the basis will be found in positions of the narrative, where there is a break of thematic development. The basis marks discontinuity in the text, it serves to shift the hearer's attention to a new thematic unit.

There are different types of preverbal elements. Type ii) (above) can be subdivided, we will deal in this paper with preverbal subjects only:

ii)

X V...

/ / \

S Av O

Verb-initial sentences most often encode states of affairs in the foreground, whereas sentences with an initial basis usually express background events:¹²

¹² The numbers are taken from a study of a larger corpus of narratives (Holzinger 1993).

	SV...	VS...	V...
Background	75%	22%	7%
Foreground	25%	78%	93%

However, the function of the basis cannot be described in a coherent way by grounding only.

The preverbal subject usually is not the same as in the preceding clause. However, topic change by itself also does not explain preverbal subjects; subjects in postverbal position most often are not the same as in the preceding clause either:

	SV...	VS...
Different Subject:	83,8%	72%

To find out the overall function of the basis it is helpful to have a look at VS in the background (about 22%). What all these occurrences have in common is that *thematic* continuity is not interrupted. The attention of the hearer is not directed/shifted to "the preverbal subject". The whole introduction of the sample text (VS in sentences 3,4,6,7,8,10) is about one theme; how the horse trade used to be a long time ago. The father or the story-teller himself are not in the center of attention, it is rather all the actions that have to do with exchanging horses. Therefore, we argue, that the main function of word order is not the coding of action continuity (foreground vs. background) but that of marking thematic continuity. Thematic continuity however very often implies continuity of action.

S. 23 is another example of VS in the background. The whole paragraph is about the horse. In S. 23 the story-teller and his father are not made the new theme; there is no thematic shift from the description of the horse (and his actions) to the main human participants of the story.

4. DISCOURSE PARTICLES

Discourse particles have the function of relating syntactic units and fitting them into a discourse context. The distribution of these particles can only be explained by pragmatic and discourse factors. They are independent of sentence structure; their deletion produces correct sentences. The particles we had a look at were:

- 1) *un* 'and'
- 2) *kana, dan* 'now, then'
- 3) *na, naja, mišto* 'well'
- 4) *džinē* 'you know'

- 1) *Un* marks transitions in the thematic structure of narratives. Most often it occurs in positions where there is discontinuity of action and topic. It has the function to bring about continuity.¹³

¹³ The sentence-initial phrase "un dan" must be regarded as a whole and has a specific function different from "un" (see Holzinger 1993).

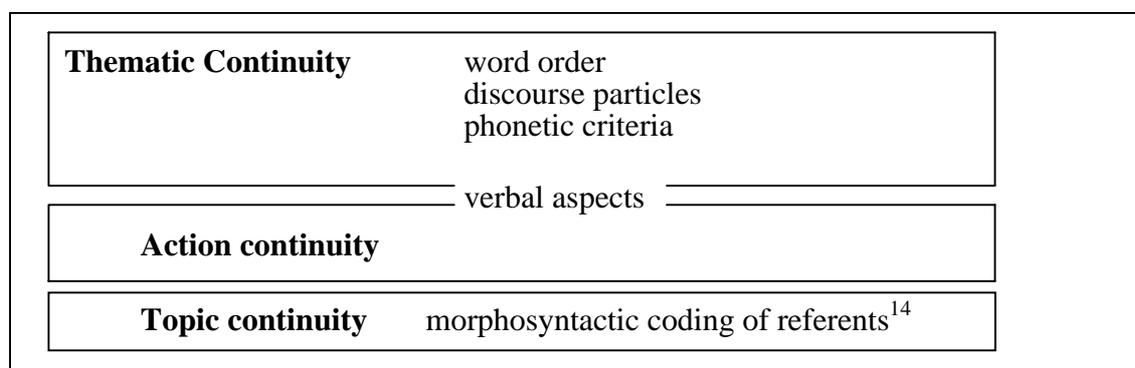
- 2) *Kana* directs the speaker's attention from the former events to something new. A sequential new thematic unit is introduced by *kana*. The function of *dan* is to create a link to the preceding context. It's mostly anaphoric. *Dan* can also be used to link units that are in no chronological order, but belong together semantically.
- 3) *Na/naja/mišto* occur quite rarely. These particles are found in positions of discontinuity. Normally they mark a return to the gist of the narrative after background interruption, direct speech or longer pauses. Therefore, they can be found most often at the beginning of a paragraph (e.g. S. 16,1).
- 4) *Džinē* usually does not occur at the beginning of a paragraph. It marks the preceding or following unit (with which it forms an intonation unit) as something, the addressee should react to. It offers an opportunity for the listener to simply agree or comment. In narrative texts it is most often background comments (explanations) that are marked by *džinē*. Usually they are not new thematic units (e.g. S. 6,9,31).

5. PHONETIC CRITERIA

So far we did not make a detailed study of intonation contours and pauses. Therefore we can only make quite general comments. The beginning of a paragraph is often emphasized phonetically and spoken with a higher intonation. The most consistent criterion for the end of the paragraph on the other hand is a long pause. Furthermore, endings of paragraphs are often marked by an intonation contour falling to a very deep level.

6. CONCLUSION

Aspect was found to be only *one* way of marking thematic continuity in discourse. In addition, word order, discourse particles and phonetic criteria serve to organize a narrative text semantically:



¹⁴ Due to space limitations topic continuity (the marking of participants in a text) was not included in the present description. There is a general tendency for a referent to be coded in a more marked way at the beginning of new thematic units. Often a new paragraph is about a new referent.

APPENDIX

1. *Naja, har me terno homs, frīə nox, džinē, farās ap o them.*
'Well, as I was young, earlier on, you know, we went into the country.'
2. *Dan ulevās von jek fōro nāx o vāver fōro hin, kai graiengre maršte his.*
'Then we went from one town to another, where there were horse markets.'
3. *Un dan parēs mīro kamlo dād i graientsa.*
'And then my late father bartered with the horses.'
4. *Dan laues mē i graien, mustevaues len, džinē.*
'Then I took the horses, I examined them, you know.'
5. *Dan his man i kašt an o vast, und tapevaues les paš i halftra, dan našaues leha.*
'Then I had a stick in my hand, and I took hold of the bridle, then I ran with him.'
6. *Džinē, dikēns i gādže, har o grai štakevēles.*
'You know, the 'gadše' watched, how the horse trotted.'
7. *Un dan parēs mīro kamlo dād.*
'And then my late father bartered.'
8. *Und te parēs lo, dan laues mē imə 'Halftergeld', phenēnse prē 'Halftergeld', val putse-
vaues i graien, fitevaues len und kraues, laues 'Halftergeld'.*
'And whenever he bartered, I got 'bridle money', they said 'Halftergeld', because I groomed the horses, I fed them and made (everything for them), that's why I got 'Halftergeld!'
9. *Džinē, ko his imə jake pal māre lōve deš krōne, pantš krōne, jenaxdēm har būt lēso.*
'You know, that was always about 10 crowns according to our money, (sometimes) 5 crowns, depending on how much he got.'
10. *Džinē, un ab un tsu dēs man mīro dād nina nox tšimōne.*
'You know, and from time to time my father gave me something as well.'
11. *Na, dan farās pāle khēre.*
'Well, then we went back home.'
12. *Un jek kopo pardas mīro kamlo dād i grai drē.*
'And one time my late father exchanged a horse.'
13. *Ābə ko his i bilta i graiesta.*
'That was a horse as pretty as a picture.'
14. *His i "Appelschimmel".*
'It was a dapple-grey.'
15. *His i tikno handvāgo, nox nix mol ko tserdēso, i laubmano, na tata!*
'(There) was a little handcart, he would not even pull that, a 'Laubmann', oh dear!'
16. *Na, špandam les an glān o bāro vurdi, 'Viermeterwagen', un i bāre berge!*
'Well, we hitched it up to the big waggon, four metres long, and (there were) the big mountains.'

17. *Ax, un dan lajas mīro kamlo dād o kašt und glān dajas les o muiesta un tšivas daba.*
'Oh, and then my late father took the stick and beat hit it in the front near it's mouth and he beat it.'
18. *Ax, un o grai baumrēs pes prē.*
'Oh, and the horse rose up on his hind legs.'
19. *Nichts zu machen, tserdēso gār.*
'Nothing helped, it would not pull (the waggon).'
20. *Na un dan tsuletst dox, dan his leskro mēn jāke anšvelemen fon i daba.*
'Well and then finally (it did) after all, then it's neck was swollen up from the beatings.'
21. *Dan laues blōs i tikno halmo an o mui.*
'Then I only took a little straw in my mouth.'
22. *Un ko te dikēso, dan tseraisevēs pes lo.*
'And when(ever) he (the horse) saw it, he (literally) tore himself apart.'
23. *Koles našte farauēs blōs mē und mīro dād.*
'That one(the horse) only my father and I were able to drive.'
24. *Kek vaverēha nai farēs o grai.*
'With nobody else the horse would go.'
25. *His menšenumēglix, te farel les jek.*
'It was impossible for anyone else to drive it.'
26. *Un dan pardam les krik paš sau gemīsemano.*
'And then we bartered it away to a vegetable dealer.'
27. *Pardas les mīro kamlo dād.*
'My late father exchanged it.'
28. *Dan faram.*
'Then we left.'
29. *Hames krik.*
'We were gone!'
30. *Dan rodēs men o xālo.*
'Then the man was looking for us.'
31. *Har dajam les i grai, hiso demfīg, džīnē.*
'As we gave him the horse, it was steaming, you know.'
32. *Vajaso pal mende.*
'He followed us.'
33. *Rodēs men lo.*
'He had been looking for us.'
34. *Phenēso: "Hoi kerdan tumēr mit mantsa?"*
'He said: "What have you done to me?"'

35. *Dajan man i grai.*
'You gave me a horse.'
36. *Kales nai farau nix mol - ap i gāba, te bikerelo peskro kōva.*
'I can't even drive it, to the villages, when he sells his stuff.'
37. *Na, vajaso dox palē hēr.*
'Well, he came back after all.'
38. *Rodēs men oxta divesa, lajas men lo pal, befor hatsas men lo.*
'He had been looking for us for eight days, he followed us, until he found us.'
39. *Ax tšāve, me grād an o vēš, khelaus mange.*
'Oh boy! I was just in the forest, playing.'
40. *Har phūro homes me?*
'How old was I?'
41. *Deštadui homes me.*
'I was 12.'
42. *Phureder homes gar.*
'No older.'
43. *Naja, wel o xālo an.*
'Well, the man arrived.'
44. *Džajas paš mīro kamlo dadeste, rakedas mit leha.*
'He went to my late father, he talked to him.'
45. *Phenaso: 'Hoi phenē tu?*
'He(the father) said: 'What do you say?'
46. *O grai tserdela gār?*
'The horse does not pull?'
47. *Tu haievē gar te farel!'*
'You can't drive (it)!'
48. *Khardas man lo, mīro kamlo dād.*
'He called me, my late father.'
49. *Phenaso: "Kamau mol tut te sikevel, hoi o grai haievela!'*
'He said: "I want to show you, what the horse can do!'"
50. *Lajas mīro kamlo dād i bari štitsa, tšivas la mank i rāde durx, palal un glān.*
'My late father took a large support and put it between the wheels, behind and in the front.'
51. *Phenas: "Dša prē, fāre leha!'*
'He said: "Go up, drive him!'"
52. *Le i laina, fāre!'*
'Take the reins, drive!'

53. *Ts, ts! O grai tseraisevēs pes.*
'Ts, ts! The horse (literally) tore himself apart.'
54. *Un dan krēs o xālo i šereha imə jāke, phenēso: 'Na das gibt's nicht! (in German!)*
'And then the man shook his head like this: 'That's just not possible!'
55. *Ja, ko dela gār.' Haievē?*
'Yes, that just isn't possible.' You understand?'
56. *Phenaso: "Har džal kova?"*
'He said: "How is that possible?"'
57. *Phenom: "Ām prē', kol xaleste, 'le i laina, fāre!"*
'I said: "Come up' to the man, 'take the reins, drive!'"
58. *Dan sikevauēs les, har te farelo.*
'Then I showed him how he should drive.'
59. *'Mukes i laina luker, nix tserdēs an ōdā des les prē!*
'You have to hold the reins loosely, you mustn't pull on or hit him.'
60. *Job merkel būt.*
'It notices a lot.'
61. *Har tu blōs o vurdi prē hal, mukes les te džal!*
'As soon as you get onto the waggon, you must let it go!'
62. *Haievē? Mukes les gār te džal, dan his faiābent, ende, džāso buter gār.*
'You understand? If you don't let it go, then it's all over, the end, it would not go any more.'
63. *Naja, dan ulevom leha ungefēd dēš bis deštapanš kilometre pāle nax leskre khēre zu.*
'Well, then I drove with him about 10 or 15 kilometers back towards his home.'
64. *Lajas o grai dox pāle peha lo.*
'He took the horse with him after all.'
65. *Naja, štakevom von i graiester tēle.*
'Well, I got down from the horse.'
66. *Dan mangēso miro kamlo dadester lo, te mukelo man dox dui voxe paš leste, te sikevap les o fārepen.*
'Then he asked my late father to leave me two weeks with him in order to teach him how to drive.'
67. *Ax kai denn? Kon džajas den koi hin, mē dox gār!*
'Oh, certainly not. Who went there, not me in any case!'
68. *Naja, dan his nox mīre gešvistre prē ap o vurdi prē.*
'Well, then my brothers and sisters were also on the waggon.'
69. *Un farom leha durx o fōro durx bis i vāver rīg.*
'And I drove with him through the town to the other side.'

70. *Ah, tapras drē an i taša, dajas man bīš krōne.*
'Oh, he reached into his pocket, he gave me 20 crowns.'
71. *Un dan našam mēnge pāle khēre.*
'And then we ran back home again.'
72. *Na, dan rikedas o xālo o grai, džinē?*
'Well, then the man kept the horse, you know.'
73. *Ax, ko his i grai, i šuker grai!*
'Oh, that was a horse, a beautiful horse!'

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