The Morphosyntax of Istro-Romanian DPs

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Today’s talk overview

I. Eastern Romance: an overview; DPs general features
II. A new project: *Istro-Romanian and Istro-Romanians. Legacy and Heritage*
III. The morphosyntax of Istro-Romanian DPs
IV. Conclusions and open questions
I. Eastern Romance: an overview (1)

- Eastern Romance: Daco-Romanian, Aromanian, Megleno-Romanian and Istro-Romanian
- There are six stages from Latin to Romanian that are generally accepted (Rusu (ed.) 1984), namely:
  - Daco-Latin;
  - **Daco-Romance**;
  - Proto-Romanian;
  - Old Romanian;
  - Modern Romanian; and
  - Contemporary Romanian.
- Balkan Sprachbund
I. Eastern Romance: an overview (2)

- The separation of the four historical dialects is considered finished by the 10th century, in the form of divergent dialects:
  - the Daco-Romanian variety, to the north of the Danube, follows the pattern of a ‘full’ language: old language, first written texts, the creation of the literary language, modern language, national language;
  - the south-Danubian varieties have had sporadic and generally insignificant/inconsistent contacts among each other (with the exception of Aromanian and Megleno-Romanian, at least for some of their subvarieties), and with Daco-Romanian.
I. Eastern Romance DPs (1)

- pronouns show a full (suppletive) case paradigm
- for nouns, generally the nominative/accusative is opposed to the genitive/dative; all varieties tend though to reduce or neutralize this opposition (substandardly, all varieties display a full analytical case paradigm);
- the definite article is an affix;
I. Eastern Romance DPs (2)

- Aromanian definite article paradigm (Nevaci 2011: 47-52):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Singular</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N≡ACC</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>-lu (-u), -l°, -li</td>
<td>-x (-i), -x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G≡D</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>(a) –lui (-ui)</td>
<td>(a) -lor°</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(i)  
omlu  
omul.DEF  
preftul°l  
fratili  
(Aromanian)

(ii)  
(a) omlui  
omului.DEF  
preftului  
frateli  
(Daco-Romanian)

(iii)  
oamnțî  
oamenii.DEF  
preftâ îi  
frățî  

(iv)  
(a) oamnților°  
oamenilor.DEF  
preftâ îlor°  
frățîlor°  

omul.DEF  
preotul.DEF  
fratili  
brother.DEF

man.SG.G≡D.DEF  
horse.SG.G≡D.DEF  
brother.SG.G≡D.DEF

men.DEF  
horses.DEF  
brothers.DEF

man.PL.G≡D.DEF  
horse.PL.G≡D.DEF  
brother.PL.G≡D.DEF
I. Eastern Romance DPs (3)

Aromanian definite article paradigm (Nevaci 2011: 47-52):

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Singular</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=ACC</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-li</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G=D</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>(a) -rei</td>
<td>(a) -lor°</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(v) casa  steaua  muibernatea  
casa  steaua  muieret=femeia  
house.DEF  star.DEF  woman.DEF  

(vi) (a) casaei  (a) steauaei  (a) muieriei  
casei  stelei  muierii  
house.SG.G=D.DEF  star.SG.G=D.DEF  muiere.SG.G=D.DEF  

(vii) casili  stealili  muierili  
casele  stelele  muierile  
houses.DEF  stars.DEF  women.DEF  

(viii) (a) casilor°  (a) stealilor°  (a) muierilor°  
caselor  stelelor  muierilor  
I. Eastern Romance DPs (4)

Istro-Romanian definite article paradigm (Kovačec 566-568):

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Gender</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=ACC</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>-u, (-u), -le</td>
<td>-i, -le</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=ACC</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>-a, -vu</td>
<td>-le</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- for names/proper nouns, the definite article in Eastern Romance is always proclitic in the dative-genitive.
I. Eastern Romance DPs (5)

The indefinite article:

• In Aromanian (Nevaci 2011):
  • always proclitic, just like in Standard Romanian (unu, ună / născănț, născănti);
  • unlike Standard Romanian, the singular feminine is ună;

• In Istro-Romanian:
  • Always proclitic (Kovačec 1984: 566)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Gender</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N≠Acc</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>ân (north), un (south)</td>
<td>nușcărli / uri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N≠Acc</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>nușcărli / ure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. A new project: *Istro-Romanian and Istro-Romanians. Legacy and Heritage* (1)

The team:

- Ionuț Geană (principal investigator)
- Adina Dragomirescu (expert researcher)
- Ramona-Cătălina Corbeanu (postdoctoral researcher)
- Larisa-Florentina Nicolaie (PhD student)
- Mihaela-Cătălina Ilie (MA student)
II. A new project: *Istro-Romanian and Istro-Romanians. Legacy and Heritage* (2)

- The overall goal of the project *Istro-Romanian and Istro-Romanians. Legacy and Heritage* is to give a descriptive account of Istro-Romanian (IR), a severely endangered Romance variety, as spoken today in Croatia and in diaspora, and the people who speak this language, focusing on the following dimensions: *linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, language contact,* and *multiculturalism.*
II. A new project: *Istro-Romanian and Istro-Romanians. Legacy and Heritage* (3)

The objectives of the project:

- (O₁) A new collection of texts/data;
- (O₂) An updated Istro-Romanian vocabulary;
- (O₃) A descriptive account of word order in Istro-Romanian;
- (O₄) Linguistic questionnaires.
III. The morphosyntax of Istro-Romanian DPs (1)

i. Is IR nominal morphology different from standard and/or regional Daco-Romanian?

ii. Does IR nominal morphology pattern with any other Romance variety?

iii. What are (if any) the innovations of IR case marking?
III. The morphosyntax of Istro-Romanian DPs (2)

1. Overview

- Balkan Sprachbund (N/Acc vs D/G);
- Case oppositions for nouns almost completely gone;
- Full paradigm for pronouns;
III. The morphosyntax of Istro-Romanian DPs (3)

2. The Nominative

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<tr>
<td>N=ACC</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>-u, -(u), -le</td>
<td>-i, -le'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=ACC</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>-a, -vu</td>
<td>-le</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1)  
Gospodăru  
verit-a  
nâzat  
gentleman.DEF  
come.PPLE=have.AUX.3.SG  
back  
“The gentleman came back” (TC 86)

(1’)  
Gospodarul  
a  
venit  
înapoi  
gentleman.DEF  
have.AUX.3.SG  
come.PPLE  
back

(1”)  
Gospodaru  
a  
venit  
înapoi  
gentleman.DEF  
have.AUX.3.SG  
come.PPLE  
back
(2)  Ciuda ŭomir, jensche, betăr şi bâbe
    many men women old.men and old.women

    sapât-av (TC 12)

    dig.pple=have.aux.3.pl

    “A lot of men and women, old men and old women started digging”

(2’)  Toţ ŭomiri căntât-a de mare vesel’e
    all people.DEF sing.PPLE=have.AUX.3.PL of great joy

    “Everybody was singing with great joy” (TC 15)
(3)  Fost-a  ăn  mårle  stup (TC 130)
be.PPLE=have.AUX.3.SG INDEF  big.DEF  beehive
“There was a big beehive”

(4)  Čel'i  mái  mårle-s  nuč (SF 168)
those  more  big.DEF.F.PL=are  walnuts
“Those are the biggest walnuts”

(5)  Iuva-i  plamnic  mái  måré (SF 250)
where=is flame  more  big
“Where the flame is bigger”
“Your mother is with her husband” (TC 104)

“Saint Peter comes inside”
(7) Boris m-i-āv zis (SF 147)
Boris me.DAT=have.AUX.3.SG tell.PPLE
“Boris told me”

(8) Æn familie [...] m-i-ā murit čåia
in family me.DAT.POS=have.AUX.3.SG die.PPLE father.DEF
“In my family, my father died” (SF 151)

(9) a. O vreše când āv ânca Maria Tereziie
    a time when have.AUX.3.SG yet Maria Theresa fost
    be.PPLE
“Once Maria Theresa herself came [to this village]” (SF 45)

b. Și cum li s-āv muiåra
    and how his.DAT.POS REFL=have.AUX.3.SG wife.DEF
    kemåt?
call.PPLE
“And what was his wife’s name?” (SF 48)
Subject pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; person</th>
<th>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; person</th>
<th>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>singular</td>
<td>ñí</td>
<td>tu</td>
<td>þ                   þã</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural</td>
<td>no}</td>
<td>vo}</td>
<td>þí                   þíle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. The Accusative

(10)  a. Uăm  ăntrbåt  pre  domnu che  se
    have.AUX  ask.PPLE  DOM  sir.DEF  that  if
    va  då  cărstu  za  lu  ţiâte
    will.AUX  give.INF  christening.DEF  DAT  father

    “I asked God if he would christen my father” (TC 93)

b. N-a  nici  ur  conoscut  pre  iel’
    NEG=has.AUX  no  one  know.PPLE  DOM  they.ACC

    “No one knew them” (TC 9)

(11)  Gvårdiia  l-a  ucis  pre  iel’
    guard.DEF  CL.ACC.3PL=has.AUX  kill.PPLE
    DOM  they.ACC

    “The guard killed them” (TC 73)

(11’)  Gardianul  i-a  ucis  pe  ei
    guard.DEF  CL.ACC.3PL=has.AUX  kill.PPLE  DOM  they.ACC
(12)  *Ie a batut cu celă mårle băt*

he have.AUX.3.SG beat.PPLE with that big.DEF stick

“He beat [the sword] with that big stick” (TC 123)
Stressed/strong pronouns (Kovaceč 1984: 572)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st person</th>
<th>2nd person</th>
<th>3rd person</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>míre</td>
<td>tíre</td>
<td>Že</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>nò {</td>
<td>vò {</td>
<td>Žl</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>masculine</th>
<th>feminine</th>
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(13) a. N-ūåi mire scutåt
    NEG=have.AUX.2.SG me.ACC listen.PPLE
    “You didn’t listen to me” (TC 7)

b. Ver tu mire lå cu tire?
    COND you.SG me.ACC take with you.ACC
    “Would you take me with you?” (TC 69)

(14) Av şi tire bătu stucit?
    have.AUX.3.SG and you.ACC stick.DEF hit.PPLE
    “Has the stick hit you as well?” (TC 20)
Pronominal clitics (Kovaceč 1984: 572)

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<th>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; person</th>
<th>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; person</th>
<th>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Singular</strong></td>
<td><strong>me</strong></td>
<td><strong>te</strong></td>
<td><strong>âľ’</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plural</strong></td>
<td><strong>na</strong></td>
<td><strong>va</strong></td>
<td><strong>âľ’</strong></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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</table>
“Nobody wanted to take me” (SF 237)

“I will take you with me”

Such free distribution never occurs with reflexives. In these cases, only the pronominal clitic is used.

“I spent some time with a friend” (SF 225)

“You didn’t want to become my fiancée” (SF 116)
4. The Genitive and the Possessive

• Dragomirescu and Nicolae (2018: 155–66)

The paradigm of the definite article in the genitive (and dative, for that matter) is given below (cf. Kovačec 1984: 566-569, Sârbu and Frățilă 1998: 22-23):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>(a) lu(ă), (a) -lu(ă), a</td>
<td>(a) -lor, a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>(a) le, lu, -l’ejă</td>
<td>(a) -lor, a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(19) Část-i fil'a lu frâtele (SF 55)
    this.FEM=is daughter.DEF GEN brother.DEF
    “This is my brother’s daughter”

(20) Dråga, mâia lu Sergio (SF 55)
    Dråga mother.DEF GEN Sergio
    “Dråga, Sergio’s mother”

(21) E-a lu Sergio se kiåma Iasmina
    and=GEN Sergio REFL.3.SG call.PR.3.SG Iasmina
    “And Sergio’s [daughter] is called Iasmina” (SF 76)

(22) Åu mes ân a lui pât durmit
    have.AUX.3.SG go.PPLE in GEN bed sleep.PPLE
    “He went to sleep in his bed” (SF 149)
5. The Dative

(23) a. Hlăpețu lu cesăru ... zice lu gospodăru

guard.DEF GEN emperor.DEF says DAT gentleman.DEF

“The emperor’s guard tells the gentleman” (TC 5)

b. Ganescu lu Mărtin

tell.PS.1SG DAT Martin

“I’m telling Martin” (TC 18)

(24) a. Cea fraierițę ganę lu cea bâbę

DEF fiancée told DAT DEF old.lady

“The fiancée told the old lady” (TC 7)

b. Mărtin... ganę lu mul'era

Martin told DAT woman.DEF

“Martin told his wife” (TC 19)
(25)  *Guårdiiia*  *l-a*  *dåt*  *cela*
guard.DEF  CL.DAT.M.3SG=has.AUX give.PPLE  DEF  list  lu  cela  camaier

letter  DAT  DEF  valet

“The guard gave the letter to the valet” (TC 13)

(26)  *L-av*  *zis*  *lu*  *cela*  *mladichi*
CL.DAT.M.3SG=has.AUX tell.PPLE  DAT  DEF  young.man

“He told the young man” (TC 25)
Examples (27a–d) above bring IR datives closer to Aromanian (28):

(27)  a. *Av zis a lu tatu*

they have say DAT thief DEF

“They told the thief” (Manual 220)

b. *Fil’u pisê a lu ceâia*

son wrote DAT father

“The son told his father” (TC 114)

c. *Atunce av celî doi fraț zis*

then have DEF two brothers tell DAT

*a lu Hobo*

DAT Hobo

“Then the two brothers told Hobo” (TC 117)

d. *Zmăiu a le mâie spus-a*

dragon mother tell DAT=has

“The dragon told the mother” (TC 129)

(28)  *L’-diṣiri alu furu*

CL.M.DAT.3SG=said DAT thief DEF

‘They told the thief’ (Manual 220)
(29)  
\[ Va \text{ cumparå za lu sè fîl’e } \]
will.AUX buy.INF DAT her daughter
“She will buy for her daughter” (TC 8)

(30)  
\[ Oștaru \text{ nepisëit-a listu mușåt } \]
publican.DEF write.PPLE=has.AUX letter.DEF nice
za lu cesåru
DAT emperor.DEF
“The publican wrote the nice letter for the emperor” (TC 13)
(31) a. Pure-m uocl'i!
put.IMPERATIVE=CL.POS-DAT.1SG eyes.DEF
“Put my eyes” (TC 8)
b. T-oi spure nuște
you.DAT.2SG=will.AUX say.INF something
“I will tell you something” (TC 6)

(32) a. Preftu m-a-ntrebăt
priest.DEF CL.ACC.1.SG=has.AUX=ask.PPLE
“The priest asked me” (TC 111)
b. Cum t-oi io cea votę conoștę?
how you.ACC.2SG=will.AUX I that time know
“How will I know you then?” (TC 39)
(33) a. Miie fost-a sila me.DAT be.PPLE has.AUX hurry.NOM
“I was in a hurry” (TC 40)
b. Nu mîn-a niş dåt
NEG me.DAT=has.AUX nothing give.PPLE
“He gave me nothing” (TC 23)

(34) a. Fraieritâ lui ganę fiancée.DEF DAT.3SG told
“His fiancée told him” (TC 7)
b. Ie-l’ ganę
he=CL.DAT.3SG told
“He told her” (TC 6)

(35) a. Mårtin le ganę Martin CL.DAT.3PL told
“Martin told them” (TC 18)
b. Lucifer ganę lor
Lucifer told them.DAT
“Lucifer told them” (TC 19)

Doubling with pronouns is also possible:

(36) a. Čela mi-e mài bur miie
that me.CL.DAT=is more good me.DAT
“That one is better for me” (SF 74)
b. Ie le ganę lor
he CL.DAT.3PL told them.DAT
“He told them” (TC 89)
IV. Conclusions

I. Is IR nominal morphology different from standard and/or regional Daco-Romanian? NO, because IR shows the same genitive dative syncretism for nouns; has stressed and non-stressed forms of dative clitics; shows synthetic datives with enclitic articles (rarer). YES, because in the south, stressed and non-stressed forms for dative clitics are at least partly neutralized, analytical datives with lu, a lu, za lu (some of which are similar to spoken and substandard Romanian).
II. Does IR nominal morphology pattern with any other Romance variety? YES, because at least in part dative-accusative opposition is neutralized, and IR patterns with Aromanian for *a lu / alu* dative/genitive marking; and NO, because the patterns are inconsistent (explainable given that IR is not standardized).
III. What are (if any) the innovations of IR case marking? Considering the southern IR dative realization with za lu, a construction not mentioned in previous literature, the IR case marking proves innovative. At least from the data I had access to, the particularity of the za lu dative is unique (and novel) across Romance, in general, and Eastern Romance, in particular (and even across IR varieties), given that a preposition (of Croatian/Slavic origin) combines with a pronominal form (at origin) to mark a dative, whereas in other varieties, for example DR, the dative is formed either synthetically (with an enclitic or proclitic lui form), or analytically (substandard) with the preposition la, but never combining la and lui.
Sources


Selected references


• Coteanu, Ion, 1957, *Cum moare o limbă – istroromâna*, Bucharest, Societatea de științe istorice și filologice.


• Vrzić, Z., 2019, *Endangered Romance Languages in Istria, Croatia: Documentation and Preservation*, abstract for LSRL49, University of Georgia (available URL: http://linguistics.uga.edu/sites/default/files/LSRL49-abstracts/VRZIC_LSRL49.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2_5eCegTIBRKbCOMfhMlk6wGSvWtZqYG3qwJ_9434KGHo8K8T3jd_cao)
Huåla muşåta!