

Mirjana Mirić
Svetlana Ćirković

THE POSTNOMINAL POSITION OF MODIFIERS IN THE GURBET ROMANI NOUN PHRASE: A CORPUS-BASED STUDY*

The study aims to explore the factors underlying the non-canonical postnominal positioning of adnominal modifiers in the noun phrase in the Gurbet Romani variety spoken in Eastern Serbia. The noun phrases are excerpted from the Knjaževac Gurbet Romani corpus, which consists of adults' and children's samples of transcribed oral narratives. The quantitative analysis shows that the prenominal position of modifiers is the default one, given the low frequency of postposed modifiers in the adults' and children's samples (3.7% and 1.3%, respectively). The main part of the study is focused on the reasons for the non-canonical positioning of modifiers in the NP, and points towards several pragmatic factors as relevant for the postnominal positioning: the contrastive and information focus and stylistic effects.

Key words: Gurbet Romani, noun phrase, adnominal modifiers, postnominal position, information structure.

Ова студија има за циљ да истражи услове који доводе до позиционирања адноминалних модификатора у постпозицију у именичкој фрази у гурбетском варијетету ромског језика којим се говори у источној Србији. Именичке фразе су ексцерпирани из књажевачког корпуса гурбетског варијетета ромског који се састоји од узорака транскрибованих усмених наратива одраслих и деце. Квантитативна анализа показује да је преноминална позиција модификатора типична, имајући у виду низак проценат модификатора у постноминалној позицији у узорку одраслих (3,7%) и деце (1,3%). Централни део истраживања фокусиран је на разлоге због којих се модификатори позиционирају постноминално у именичкој фрази, а као најрелевантнији издвојени су прагматички фактори – контрастни и информацијски фокус и стилски ефекти.

Кључне речи: гурбетски ромски, именичка фраза, адноминални модификатори, постноминална позиција, информацијска структура.

1. INTRODUCTION. Over the past few decades, Romani has been extensively explored in the domain of morphology and syntax (for a recent overview see papers in MATRAS – TENSER 2020). However, detailed studies on the word order at the clause level and in the noun phrase are still quite scarce. Romani is also rarely

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mentioned in works which explore various word order issues from a cross-linguistic and/or typological perspective (cf. SIEWIERSKA 1998). Our study aims to explore the variation in word order in the noun phrase (NP)¹ in the Gurbet Romani variety spoken in Eastern Serbia, taking a corpus-based approach. Although the typical prenominal position of adnominal modifiers in the Romani noun phrase will be presented in the paper (e.g., NUM-ADJ-N: *jekh cikni phej* ‘one little sister’), the focus will be on the (pragmatic) motivation for the postnominal position of modifiers (e.g., POSS-N-ADJ: *mo phral baro* ‘my big brother’).² Not only is the study of factors which influence the alternative ordering in the NP relevant for Romani linguistics and descriptions of specific Romani varieties, but it may prove significant from a broader linguistic perspective, as it may point towards various conditions which determine the non-canonical, alternative ordering.

In the paper, we rely on the terminology used in Romani linguistics (e.g., MATRAS 2002; LEGGIO 2011; ADAMOU – MATRAS 2020) and in other cross-linguistic and typological studies on word order (e.g., GREENBERG 1966; RIJKHOFF 1998; 2001; DRYER 2018). The notion of adnominal modifiers is used to denote different word classes and constructions which are treated as adnominal dependents within NPs, such as articles, demonstratives, possessives, numerals, adjectives, and genitive adnominals.³ In terms of word order, modifiers typically occupy the prenominal position in Romani (see examples in (1)), but may also be found in the postnominal position, for specific pragmatic purposes, which we will analyze in the paper.

(1)

- a. ART-N: *e čarr* ‘the grass’
- b. ADJ-N: *bare baja* ‘long sleeves’
- c. DEM-N: *kaja khandjiri* ‘this church’
- d. POSS-N: *me čhave* ‘my children/sons’
- e. NUM-N: *duj breš* ‘two years’
- f. GEN-N: *Bibijako djive* ‘Aunt’s Day’

In the remainder of the Introduction, basic information on Romani and its dialects is given. Then follow details about the word order in the Romani NP,

¹ Abbreviations used in glosses and throughout the article are as follows: N – noun, NP – noun phrase, ADJ – adjective, ART – article, def.art – definite article, QNT – quantifier, DEM – demonstrative, POSS – possessive, NUM – numeral, REL – relative clause, nom – nominative, obl – oblique, gen – genitive, dat – dative, inst – instrumental, sg – singular, pl – plural, m – masculine, f – feminine, 1 – the first person, 2 – the second person, 3 – the third person, pres – the present tense, perf – the perfect tense, rem – the remoteness marker, dist.part – distributive particle, (Sr) – a word of Serbian origin, loan – the verb adaptation marker *-sar-*, comp – complementizer.

² Unless stated otherwise, the examples throughout the paper are taken from the Knjaževac Gurbet Romani corpus (see the Methodology section for details).

³ Although discussed in the literature in relation to NPs, the position of adverbial qualifiers relative to adjectives (in the sense used by GREENBERG 1966) will not be explored in the paper. A few examples of this kind have been found in the Knjaževac Gurbet Romani corpus, mostly with the Romani adverbial *but* ‘a lot/very’ (e.g., *but bilačo narodo* ‘very bad people’) or with the borrowed Serbian intensifier *baš* ‘really’ (e.g., *baš lače kazaja* ‘really good cauldrons’). We will also exclude from the analysis relative clauses modifying the head nouns, but it is worth mentioning that relative clauses always follow the head noun in Romani (ADAMOU – MATRAS 2020; see also RIJKHOFF 1998 for the (Vlax) Romani data in a cross-linguistic perspective), as in: *gova badnjako kaj andol* ‘that Christmas tree which is brought’.

focused on the results of previous empirical research in this domain. In the section dedicated to Aims, the research questions on which the study is based are provided, together with the main hypotheses. In the Methodology section, we present the Knjaževac Gurbet Romani corpus used for the purpose of the study. In the Analysis section, the quantitative and qualitative analysis is provided across different linguistic factors which do (or do not) influence the postnominal position of adnominal modifiers in the Romani NP. In the final section, concluding remarks are given in addition to methodological shortcomings and future desiderata.

1.1. ROMANI. Romani is an Indo-Aryan language spoken by more than 3.5 million people worldwide, mainly in Europe (MATRAS 2002: 238). The actual number of Romani speakers is likely to be much higher, but the number of Roma and Romani speakers, as well as their distribution across countries, is not synchronized with the data collected in censuses in the last 10 years. In addition, the Roma communities have been dispersed due to their continuous migration to Western European countries, and the repatriation to the countries of their origin has to be taken into account as well. Data from other, non-European countries should also be considered, due to the intensive migration of the Roma, not only recent, but also older to North and South America and Australia.

Romani is a heterogeneous language, with at least 4 large groups of dialects, namely, Balkan, Vlax, Central and Northern. More recent literature proposes a division into 12 groups of dialects (ELŠÍK – BENÍŠEK 2020). In Serbia and the Balkans, the two major groups of dialects in terms of their geographical distribution and the number of speakers are the Balkan and Vlax dialects. The Gurbet variety, which is the focus of the study, belongs to the Southern Vlax group (MATRAS 2002; ELŠÍK – BENÍŠEK 2020; MIRIĆ – ČIRKOVIĆ 2022).

In Serbia, Romani was recognized as a minority language in 2006, when the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages came into force. In Serbia, the Charter's articles and paragraphs⁴ are implemented only partially and fail to meet the actual needs of Romani speakers (ČIRKOVIĆ, in preparation). According to the 2011 Census, Romani is spoken by 100,668 speakers in the country (1.4% of the population in Serbia), while 673 speakers are registered in the area of Knjaževac, a town in Eastern Serbia where the data for the study were collected (2.14% of population in the town and the area).

1.2. WORD ORDER IN THE ROMANI NOUN PHRASE

1.2.1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND. As noted by Greenberg (1966: 76–77), the position of qualifying adjectives relative to the noun is one of the three classifying criteria for the basic word order typology, the other two being the existence of prepositions against postpositions and the relative order of subject, verb and object in declarative sentences.⁵ Although a certain degree of variation exists, languages

⁴ The Charter's articles and paragraphs refer to the use of regional or minority languages in the domain of education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, and trans-frontier exchanges, respectively.

⁵ The paper will be restricted to the word order in the NP only and will not discuss the prenominal or postnominal position of modifiers as a function of the order of object and verb (cf. GREENBERG 1966; HAWKINS 1983; DRYER 1998). Nevertheless, a note should be made that Romani

typically have the dominant order in the noun phrase with the position of demonstratives, articles, numerals and quantifiers frequently differing from that of the qualifying adjectives (GREENBERG 1966: 77).

In the world's languages there is a general preference towards the postnominal position of adjectives (GREENBERG 1966: 100; DRYER 2018: 801), as in the sample analyzed in Dryer 2013a, in which N-ADJ languages outnumber ADJ-N languages (878 to 373). Numerals and demonstratives manifest strong areal patterns – they are prenominal in Eurasia, but can be postnominal in some other areas, such as Africa and Southeast Asia (DRYER 2013b; 2013c). According to Dryer's cross-linguistic analysis of languages of Europe (DRYER 1998: 289), numerals precede the noun as the dominant order in all VO languages, relative clauses always follow, while adjectives, demonstratives, and genitives are arranged between. Levshina (2019) also investigated frequencies of different word order patterns, from the perspective of word order variability, in corpora of various languages annotated using the Universal Dependencies approach. She showed that various modifiers of nouns (adjectival and nominal modifiers, determiners, and attributive clauses) usually have limited variability, whereas numeral modifiers are more variable (LEVSHINA 2019: 548–549). Although the order of numerals and determiners is to some extent similar cross-linguistically, as they tend to occur predominantly before their heads, a closer look revealed that this is an artifact of the UD language sample, as most corpora she analyzed come from Eurasia (LEVSHINA 2019: 550). Additional analysis at the lexically specific level showed that the position of determiners can vary functionally as determiners constitute a very heterogeneous category and include demonstratives, possessives, negative and indefinite pronouns, and articles (LEVSHINA 2019: 551–554).⁶

When it comes to the conditions which determine the particular word order patterns in the NP in the world's languages, Rijkhoff (1998: 339–343) proposed three semantic principles (the Principle of Domain Integrity, the Principle of Head Proximity, and the Principle of Scope) which govern the unmarked word order, based on a representative sample of 40 European languages. Other word order patterns can be attributed to the functioning of pragmatically motivated forces, notably emphasis (RIJKHOFF 1998: 341, 353):

In a number of European languages and language families word order in the simple NP is also determined by pragmatic considerations, which may result in modifiers appearing in a position that is not preferred according to the semantic principles. [...] Although emphasis is one of the major reasons why modifiers appear in special positions, it is as yet often not possible to be more explicit about the pragmatic conditions that determine such alternative orderings. (RIJKHOFF 1998: 364)

1.2.2. ROMANI TYPICAL PRENOMINAL POSITION. In Romani, the typical linear order within the noun phrase is the following (ADAMOŪ – MATRAS 2020: 188):

exhibits a relatively free word order in declarative clauses “with a certain preference for VO” and the option of object fronting for focus purposes (SONNEMANN 2022: 60). The subject can precede (contrastive-thematic) or follow (connective-narrative) the verb (MATRAS 2002: 167, 190; SONNEMANN 2022: 60).

⁶ For more details on the constituent order in the languages of Europe, especially on the parameters of word order variation, see papers in the volume SIEWIERSKA 1998.

[quantifier] + [determiner] + [numeral] + [adjective] + NOUN + [options]⁷

According to Adamou – Matras (2020: 188–192), quantifiers such as ‘all’ and ‘every’ occupy the first slot in the NP and precede nouns (QNT-N). The group of determiners is the most complex as it includes different word classes which assign definiteness and are incompatible with one another, namely demonstratives, interrogatives, possessive adjectives, and usually definite articles (MATRAS 2002: 165). The definite article always precedes nouns (ART-N), as is the case with the indefinite article, derived from the numeral ‘one’. Demonstratives are inflected for gender, number, and case and typically precede the noun (DEM-N). Descriptive adjectives show the same agreement features and typically precede the nouns (ADJ-N), while numerals always precede the head noun (NUM-N). In Romani on the whole, there is a prevalence of the prenominal position of modifiers in the noun phrase (MATRAS 2002: 166–167).

In the case of particular Romani varieties, most studies also report on the prevailing modifier-noun order. For instance, in Rumungro, all types of adjective modifiers, such as descriptive adjectives, adnominal possessors, demonstratives, and numerals always precede their head nouns, and this order has been fully grammaticalized due to language contact with Hungarian (ELŠÍK 2007: 272). In Mitrovica Romani, a Gurbet-like variety spoken by immigrants from Kosovska Mitrovica who live in Italy, the typical position of modifiers is prenominal (LEGGIO 2011: 102–103), which is in line with the descriptions provided in Matras (2002) and Adamou – Matras (2020).

1.2.3. GURBET ROMANI PRENOMINAL POSITION. The same prenominal ordering of various adnominal modifiers is observed as typical in the Gurbet Romani variety spoken in Eastern Serbia, as illustrated in (2). In (2a) the Serbian borrowed distributive particle *po*, the Romani numeral *jekh* ‘one’ and the Romani adjective *cikno* ‘small’ precede the noun *rrojorro* ‘little spoon’. In (2b) the Romani numeral *jekh* ‘one’ and the possessive determiner *mi* ‘my’ precede the Serbian loan noun *drugarica* ‘girlfriend’, while in (2c) the Romani demonstrative *gaja* ‘that’ and the adapted Serbian loan adjective *romsko*⁸ ‘Romani’ precede the Romani noun *čhib* ‘language’. In (2d), the definite article *e* and the adjective *cikne* ‘small’ precede the Romani noun *čhavvre* ‘children’.

(2)

- a. Djiv, las po jekh cikno rrojorro.
 wheat.nom.sg.m take.pres.1pl dist.part one small.nom.sg.m little spoon.nom.sg.m
 ‘(Boiled) wheat, we take one little spoon each.’ (TR5; ŠIKIMIĆ 2018: 173)⁹

⁷ Earlier accounts consider that the first slot in the Romani NP is reserved for prepositions, as they always precede all elements in the noun phrase: [preposition]+[determiner]+[quantifier]+[adjective]+[noun]+[option] (MATRAS 2002: 166).

⁸ Loan adjectives are adapted by adding the masculine ending *-o* in nominative singular, which is why their gender is not marked in the glosses.

⁹ The labels in the brackets refer to the transcripts in the corpus (TR is used for the adults’ sample, while CH stands for the children’s corpus).

- b. Jekh mi drugarica ikhardola Ljubica.
 one my.nom.sg.f friend(Sr).nom.sg.f to be called.3sg.rem Ljubica.nom.sg.f
 ‘One friend of mine was called Ljubica.’ (CH3)
- c. Ako pričos gaja romsko čhib (...)
 if(Sr) speak(Sr).pres.1pl that.nom.sg.f Romani(Sr).nom.sg language.nom.sg.f
 ‘If we speak that Romani language (...)’ (CH6)
- d. Dobisaren e cikne čhavrrre i pare.
 get(Sr).pres.3pl def.art small.nom.pl child.nom.pl and(Sr) money(Sr)
 ‘The small children also get (the) money.’ (TR4; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 182)

1.2.4. ROMANI POSTNOMINAL POSITION. However, in some Romani dialects, adnominal modifiers such as demonstratives, possessive determiners and attributive adjectives can optionally follow the noun (ADAMOŪ – MATRAS 2020: 188). According to Matras (2002: 165–167):

The postnominal ‘option’ slot deserves this designation due to the fact that adnominals that are accommodated here are often exempt from the constraints that apply to them in their usual, prenominal slot. Demonstratives are generally incompatible with definite articles. But when a demonstrative is postposed, then the noun it follows must be accompanied by a definite article [...] Moreover, postposed demonstratives as well as postposed adjectives quite often carry nominal, rather than attributive, case agreement, reinforcing the impression that they serve as appositions.

When demonstratives follow the head nouns, as observed in the dialects in Romania available in the Romani Morpho-Syntax Database (RMS), the definite article is obligatory (ADAMOŪ – MATRAS 2020: 189). In the case of descriptive adjectives, speakers can postpose them (MATRAS 2002: 167), as it is attested in various samples from Romania available in RMS, but also in Vlax dialects in other countries (Czech Republic, Ukraine) and in dialects spoken in the Balkans (Albania, Macedonia, Serbia) (ADAMOŪ – MATRAS 2020: 191). In some dialects, postnominal adjectives are only used with doubling of the definite article, as is the case in the Agia Varvara Vlax variety spoken in Greece (ADAMOŪ – MATRAS 2020: 192). According to Matras (2002: 166–167), it seems that, although frequent in some Romani varieties, the postnominal position in general is outnumbered by the conventional prenominal positioning of all attributes. In addition, “individual dialects also show formal postnominal positions in the noun phrase, which are occupied either by calques (postposed demonstratives and adpositions) or by direct borrowings (postposed focus particles)” (MATRAS 2002: 167). Furthermore, Matras (2002: 166–167) and Leggio (2011: 103) note that the postnominal position of attributive elements and adnominals is employed for communicative purposes in many Romani dialects, except in those in which it is the default position due to language contact (e.g., the Romani varieties in Italy (LEGGIO 2011: 103)). Leggio argues that postnominally placed adnominals in Mitrovica Romani can result from the contact of this variety with the Albanian language and other contact languages. However, he does not explicitly mention that the postnominal position of

adnominals is also common in Serbian (another contact language of Mitrovica Romani), for informational structure purposes, or communicative purposes.

1.2.5. GURBET ROMANI POSTNOMINAL POSITION. The same option of adnominal modifiers used in the postnominal position is attested in Gurbet Romani in Eastern Serbia, as illustrated in (3). In (3a), the Serbian loan noun *bicikla* ‘bicycle’ is followed by the Romani adjective *nevi* ‘new’, while in (3b) the possessive pronoun *mrni* ‘my’ follows the Serbian loan noun *drugarica* ‘girlfriend’. In both cases, the postposed word agrees with the head noun in case, number and gender.

(3)

- a. Mo dad činda maje bicikla nevi.
 my.nom.sg.m father.nom.sg.m buy.perf.3sg I.dat bicycle(Sr).nom.sg.f new.nom.sg.f
 ‘My father bought me (a) new bicycle.’ (CH7)
- b. Al goja drugarica mrni,
 but(Sr) that.nom.sg.f female friend(Sr).nom.sg.f my.nom.sg.f
 voj djili akana ano Niš.
 she.nom go.perf.3sg.f now in-def.art Niš.nom.sg.m
 ‘But that female friend of mine, she went now to Niš.’ (CH6)

1.2.6. ROMANI GENITIVE ADNOMINALS. Another category of modifiers can be found in both prenominal and postnominal position, namely – nominal modifiers in the genitive case (GREENBERG 1966; DRYER 1998; 2018). In Romani, genitive adnominals are used in possessive noun phrases (KOPTJEVSKAJA-TAMM 2000: 126–127; ADAMOU – MATRAS 2020: 192–194). Koptjevskaja-Tamm (2000) makes a distinction between anchoring and non-anchoring genitives. While the former have a referential function, e.g., Kalderaš *e krajeski hoji* ‘the king’s anger’, the latter serve to qualify or classify the head noun, e.g., Kalderaš *duje časengo drom* ‘a two hours’ journey’ (KOPTJEVSKAJA-TAMM 2000: 126, 143). In the case of anchoring genitives with relational head nouns in NPs, genitive adnominals are usually used for kinship, body parts, other part-whole relations, authorship and other, while in the case of non-relational nouns, the most prominent relation is that of possession (KOPTJEVSKAJA-TAMM 2000: 126).

The genitive adnominal belongs to the slot of determiners, as it usually precedes the noun, acts as a determiner, and is incompatible with the other determiners such as definite articles or demonstratives since they occupy the same position in the syntactic structure and are also functionally incompatible (KOPTJEVSKAJA-TAMM 2000: 128–132; MATRAS 2002: 165). The genitive adnominal (possessor) typically precedes the head noun (possessed) (GEN-N) (ADAMOU – MATRAS 2020: 192). As Matras points out (2002: 166), the genitive adnominal is probably the most prominent morphosyntactic representative of the Indo-Aryan legacy in Romani, as its prenominal position is retained despite the shift to VO order in the verb phrase, “making Romani a typological hybrid in Greenbergian terms (cf. GREENBERG 1966)” (MATRAS 2002: 166). However, a distinction can be made between determiner-genitives, which are used prenominally, and adjective-determiners,

which are used postnominally (KOPTJEVSKAJA-TAMM 2000: 130).¹⁰ Some Romani varieties are flexible in terms of the position of genitive adnominals in the NP and show a comparable frequency of both orders (e.g., Kalderaš, Bugurdži and Lovari), whereas in other varieties, one of the orders is preferred (KOPTJEVSKAJA-TAMM 2000: 130).

1.2.7. GURBET ROMANI GENITIVE ADNOMINALS. The preposed genitive adnominal is attested in Gurbet Romani in Eastern Serbia, as illustrated in example (4), in which two adnominal genitives *phralesko* ‘brother’s’ and *Srećkosko* ‘Srećko’s’ precede the Serbian loan noun *rodjendan* ‘birthday’. As noted by Adamou – Matras (2020: 193), possessors in the genitive case agree with the head noun in number, gender and case. In addition, the possessive NP can be determined by articles, numerals, and demonstratives.

(4)

Me	<u>phralesko</u>	<u>Srećkosko</u>	<u>rodjendan</u>	sasa.
my.obl.sg	brother(m).gen.sg.m	Srećko(m).gen.sg.m	birthday(Sr).nom.sg.m	be.perf.3sg

‘It was my brother Srećko’s birthday.’ (CH7)

The genitive adnominal may also occupy the ‘option’ slot that is postposed to the noun (MATRAS 2002: 166). In some Romani dialects, when the genitive adnominals follow the noun (N-GEN), the definite article determines both the head noun and the genitive (ADAMOŪ – MATRAS 2020: 193–194). This possibility is also attested in Gurbet Romani in Eastern Serbia, as illustrated in (5) in which the genitive adnominal *bakresko* ‘lamb’s’ is determined by the definite article *e* in the oblique case and placed in the postnominal position, after the head noun *rat* ‘blood’.¹¹

(5)

Pa,	<u>katar</u>	<u>o</u>	<u>rat</u>	<u>e</u>	<u>bakresko</u>
well(Sr)	from	def.art.nom.sg.m	blood.nom.sg.m	def.art.obl	lamb(m).gen.sg.m

el čhinel, čhinel.

because(Sr) cut.pres.3sg cut.pres.3sg

‘Well, from the lamb’s blood, because (he) slaughters, slaughters (the lamb).’

(TR17; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 186)

1.2.8. PREVIOUS EMPIRICAL RESEARCH. Although research on the word order in the Romani NP illustrates the variation in the ordering, corpus-based and experimental studies are scarce and mainly deal with the distribution of adnominal modifiers, not focusing on the factors underlying the (atypical) postnominal position.

¹⁰ There is a theoretical disagreement in the literature on how to treat the Romani genitive: as an oblique case form, a derived adjective or a postpositional phrase (KOPTJEVSKAJA-TAMM 2000: 124). Romani genitive forms follow the same agreement patterns as adjectives do, but this is not the case with other case markers (KOPTJEVSKAJA-TAMM 2000: 134). In our paper, we will not deal with the morpho-syntactic peculiarities of Romani genitives related to the origin of the form itself.

¹¹ Sonnemann (2022: 38–41) discusses the impact of Slavic languages on the case system of several Romani varieties, including the influence in the genitive case.

An exception is a recent study by Adamou – Feltgen – Padure (2021), which showed that the adjective-noun order in production strongly depends on the cross-language priming effects. In this study, Romani-Romanian bilinguals used DEF-N-ADJ order more frequently in Romani after having read out loud a N-DEF-ADJ order in Romanian (or a DEF-N-ADJ order in Romani), unlike the inherited DEF-ADJ-N order in Romani which was only used more frequently after participants have read out loud an NP with the same order in Romani. In addition to the experimental study, the authors also examined cross-dialectal and corpus data available in the Romani Morpho-Syntax Database (RMS) and concluded that the DEF-N-ADJ order in Romani from Romania has increased following prolonged contact with the dominant N-ADJ order in the Romanian language, whereas such change was not attested in Romani varieties in contact with languages that exhibit a dominant ADJ-N order, as is the case of Slavic languages like Serbian. Furthermore, Leggio mentions that the postnominal position of adjectives is the default choice in those Romani varieties which are historically spoken in Italy (LEGGIO 2011: 103), which further suggests the influence of contact languages on the word ordering in the Romani NP.

Following the idea of cross-language priming as one of the main mechanisms responsible for the change in the Romani NP word order, another study examined the effects of N-ADJ / ADJ-N order in two Romani varieties (Gurbet and Kalderaš) under the influence of Serbian and Romanian, respectively (ARSLAN et al. 2022). Although the results of the main experiments are still being analyzed, worth noting are the findings of the acceptability judgment task which showed that Gurbet Romani-Serbian bilingual participants from Eastern Serbia (N=30) exhibited no critical differences accepting ADJ-N and N-ADJ orders in both Gurbet Romani and Serbian as they similarly evaluated the naturalness of the audio stimuli in their two languages (using a 5-point scale). Therefore, this experimental study showed that N-ADJ order is acceptable in Gurbet Romani.

Apart from the cross-language priming, attention has been sometimes paid to other linguistic factors that influence the variation in the Romani NP word order, such as communicative purposes. As various discourse data show, the postnominal ‘option’ slot is communicatively triggered; it is a pragmatic position for most attributives, and a lexicalized position for genitives in some dialects (MATRAS 2002: 166–167). Leggio emphasizes that the relatively rigid format of the RMS questionnaire, which he used for the study of Mitrovica Romani, “does not leave much room for stylistic variation”, but during his informal conversations with informants, he also noticed that the ‘option’ slot is generally used to accommodate adnominals for communicative purposes (LEGGIO 2011: 103). However, as noted by Adamou – Matras (2020: 191), the precise motivations (for postposing the adjectives) “in terms of information structure and correlation with prosodic features are not yet fully understood”.¹²

¹² When it comes to the relevance of prosodic features in relation to word order, Arvaniti and Adamou (2011) investigated the variation in the SV and VS order, as well as VO and OV order in Komotini Romani, and explored the possible influence of Turkish and Greek as contact languages. They mention prosodic focus marking as one of the most common strategies in focus marking. In

2. AIMS OF THE STUDY. The aim of the present study is to explore word order in the noun phrase in Gurbet Romani, applying a corpus-based approach. The study is focused on the variation in the NP word order and intends to address the following questions:

a) How frequent is the marked word order in the NP in Gurbet Romani, i.e., how frequent are adnominal modifiers in the postnominal position?

Based on previous studies, which showed that the preferred position for modifiers in Romani is prenominal, as illustrated by data from specific Romani varieties (MATRAS 2002; ELŠÍK 2007; LEGGIO 2011; ADAMOU – MATRAS 2020), but also having in mind theoretical accounts (e.g., RIJKHOFF 1998; DRYER 1998; 2018), we expect a lower frequency of adnominal modifiers in the postnominal position in comparison to the canonical prenominal position.

b) Are all adnominal modifiers equally frequent in the postnominal position, i.e., does the position of a modifier depend on the word class to which it belongs?

Based on the typological cross-linguistic studies (DRYER 1998; 2018), the tendency towards the postnominal position of the adjectives in the world's languages may point to a more likely possibility of adjectives in Gurbet Romani to be found in the postnominal position than other modifiers. With regard to Romani in particular, Leggio (2011: 103) noted that in Mitrovica Romani the majority of postposed adnominals were adjectives. He attributed this feature to the influence of Albanian, and possibly to other language contacts. This is why we may also assume that under the influence of Serbian, adjectives and genitive nominals may more frequently be found in the postnominal position.¹³

c) Does the origin of a noun or modifier affect the likelihood of a word to be found in the postnominal position?

Although the literature mentions the prenominal position of modifiers in the NP in Serbian as the most frequent (PIPER et al. 2005: 35, 65, 1073; PIPER – KLAJN 2013: 66–91), there exists a possibility for modifiers to be found in the postnominal position. Therefore, we may assume that the words or phrases borrowed from Serbian may be more likely to be found in the postnominal position.¹⁴

d) Which pragmatic factors influence the postnominal position of adnominal modifiers?

Based on the observations that the postnominal position may serve communicative purposes (MATRAS 2002; LEGGIO 2011), for reasons of emphasis or other pragmatic functions (RIJKHOFF 1998), we plan to analyze each example in detail from this perspective.

Komotini Romani, prosodic and morphosyntactic focus strategies are combined in the same utterance, and the use of stress-shift under focus is noted as a novel strategy (ARVANITI – ADAMOU 2011: 240, 247). For the purpose of their analysis, dialogues and narratives are prosodically annotated in the PRAAT software, which makes prosodic changes easy to follow (ARVANITI – ADAMOU 2011: 241). Although relevant for the investigation of word order, the study is focused on the sentential word order and does not explore prosodic factors in relation to the NP.

¹³ In Serbo(-Croatian) the dominant position of noun modifiers is the following: NumN, DemN, AdjN, NRel (DRYER 1998: 289). Slavic languages place the genitive after the noun as the dominant order, although the prenominal adnominal genitive is also common in many Slavic languages (DRYER 1998: 290).

¹⁴ The influence of Slavic languages on Romani in terms of word order is discussed mainly in relation to the variation in the SVO word order (see SONNEMANN 2022 for details and literature).

In order to investigate the assumptions from (a)-(c), a corpus-driven quantitative analysis will be performed, and the obtained data will be compared to the relevant literature. However, the main focus of the study will be on the qualitative and corpus-illustrated analysis of pragmatic factors, hypothesized in (d), which may influence the variation in the ordering of adnominal modifiers. While questions (a)-(c) may be investigated in terms of distribution regardless of the methodology (corpus vs. questionnaires), the main advantage of the corpus-based study is that it allows us to explore each NP against information available in a larger context. As it was noted in the literature: “information structure cannot be studied in isolated sentences” and “we need samples of spoken language to extract chunks to be analyzed phonologically, syntactically and pragmatically” (MEREU 2009: 3). Therefore, a corpus-based study is invaluable for understanding why adnominal modifiers occur in the non-canonical position in Romani. A corpus search also enables the investigation of the possible intra-speaker and inter-speaker (stylistic) variation and the (communicative) motivation for the alternative ordering. Furthermore, the Gurbet Romani variety in Eastern Serbia has not been explored so far in this domain, which makes it a novel ground for the analysis of word order in the NP.

3. METHODOLOGY. The data for the study are taken from the Knjaževac Gurbet Romani corpus (see MIRIĆ – ČIRKOVIĆ 2022 for details, as well as the texts published in SIKIMIĆ (ed.) 2018).¹⁵ The corpus consists of transcripts of conversations with the native speakers of Gurbet Romani, namely 12 adult speakers and 20 children aged 7-to-14, who were recorded from 2016 to 2018 in the town of Knjaževac and the nearby village of Minićevo. All speakers are bilingual in Gurbet Romani and the local dialect of Serbian.¹⁶

The semi-structured interview was applied as a method of data collection, with questions focusing mainly on traditional culture and autobiographic stories. For the purpose of our study, no linguistic questionnaires were used. The recorded data and transcripts are stored in the Digital Archive of the Institute for Balkan Studies SASA.¹⁷

The example of a narrative from the children’s corpus is given below, followed by the translation into English:

O ivend ka avel i kana ka avel o ivend, amen ka las ka vozis amen. Pherdo ə čhavre ka vozis amen. Posle džas opet čhere, pa opet vozis amen, pa posle po krajo marel

¹⁵ The texts published in the study Sikimić (ed.) 2018 are based on a larger sample of transcripts of conversations documented during fieldwork in 2016. From this study, some parts of the texts were excerpted in order to create the Knjaževac Gurbet Romani corpus, whose examples were analyzed in the monograph MIRIĆ – ČIRKOVIĆ 2022 and also in this paper.

¹⁶ The adult participants in the study gave their oral informed consent to be recorded. The children were recorded in their school premises or the premises of the local library during one of their Romani language workshops, except for two children who were recorded at home, in the presence of their Romani teacher, as they do not go to school regularly. The participants’ parents gave their written informed consent to their children’s participation, and the study was also approved by the schools’ institution management. Participation in the study was voluntary. The participants or their parents gave consent for the transcripts of their recordings to be used for scientific purposes.

¹⁷ It is noteworthy that the recordings are not suitable for acoustic analysis in speech analysis software, such as PRAAT, due to the lower quality of certain recordings, quiet speech of some informants, and different types of accompanying noise (see ČIRKOVIĆ – MIRIĆ 2017: 12). Therefore, the phonetic and phonological analysis would not be reliable enough.

pe mo phral thaj jekh mo drugari. Me dadese phejako unuko, vo akhardol Leo, parno (th)aj si-le narandžaste bala. (CH1)

‘The winter will come and when the winter comes, we will go for a ride. A lot of children, we will ride (sleighs). Afterwards we go home again, then we ride again, and afterwards in the neighborhood my brother and one of my friends fight each other. My father’s sister’s grandson, he is called Leo, (is) white and has orange hair.’

The Knjaževac Gurbet Romani corpus contains approximately 16,000 word tokens: 8,360 word tokens in the adults’ sample (excerpted from SIKIMIĆ (ed.) 2018), and 7,895 word tokens in the children’s sample. The corpus is manually annotated for word classes (e.g., nouns, verbs, demonstratives), and word origin (Romani or Serbian). Proper nouns are separately marked, as well as borrowed nouns whose origin can be attributed not only to Serbian as a current contact language, but to some other Balkan languages with which Romani was in intensive contact, such as Turkish, Romanian, etc. (e.g., *vrema* ‘time’, *pare* ‘money’).

4. ANALYSIS

4.1. FREQUENCY OF NPs WITH PRENOMINAL AND POSTNOMINAL MODIFIERS. For the purpose of the study, the examples of noun phrases, as well as bare nouns, were manually annotated in the corpus. In the group of nouns, we included both common and proper nouns. As for adnominal modifiers in NPs, the following are taken into account: definite article, indefinite article (i.e., the number *jekh* ‘one’ used as an indefinite), numerals, adjectives, demonstratives, possessive determiners, nominal modifiers in the genitive case, as well as non-genitive nouns specifying a head noun. The position of modifiers is marked as prenominal or postnominal.

Table 1 shows the overall number of word tokens in the adults’ and children’s samples in the corpus, the overall number of nouns, bare nouns, and noun phrases.¹⁸

	ADULTS	CHILDREN
Word tokens	8,360	7,895
Nouns	1,759	1,382
Bare nouns	746	516
NPs	955	820
NPs with postnominal modifiers	35	11

Table 1. Absolute frequencies of nouns, bare nouns and NPs in Gurbet Romani.

¹⁸ Several points should be made regarding the treatment of bare nouns in the corpus. First, in Romani, nouns can be preceded by prepositions which can incorporate the definite article. For instance, in the phrase *ko kaš* ‘to the tree’ the definite article *o* (masculine singular) is incorporated with the preposition *ke* > *ko*. The preposition *ke* is also found in the form which corresponds to the one without the article, as in *ke mi baba* ‘to my grandmother’ (MIRIĆ – ČIRKOVIĆ 2022: 63–64). In our analysis, nouns preceded only by prepositions without overt articles are counted as bare (e.g., *ande škola* ‘in school’), while the nouns which are preceded by prepositions with the definite article are treated as NPs (e.g., *ando paj* ‘in the water’: prep + def.art + noun). Furthermore, as bare nouns we also treated nouns preceded by the borrowed Serbian intensifier *baš* ‘really/exactly’ (e.g., *ako naj baš mruš*, *šaj t’avel i džuvlidžej bakri* (TR11-4; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 179) ‘if there isn’t exactly (a) male, it can be a female sheep’) or other adverbials, such as *but* ‘much/many/a lot’ or *zala* ‘a little’. Nouns preceded by the borrowed Serbian distributive particle *po* were also counted as bare nouns (e.g., *dobiv me po petice* (CH7) ‘I get fives (As at school)’).

In the adults' sample, the postnominal position of adnominal modifiers is attested in only 35 out of 955 noun phrases, which accounts for 3.7% of the data. In the children's sample, the postnominal position is attested in only 11 out of 820 noun phrases, which accounts for 1.3% of the data. Therefore, the quantitative analysis shows that the typical Romani word order, in which adnominal modifiers precede the head noun in the NP, is highly preferred in the corpus of Gurbet Romani spoken in Eastern Serbia. However, there are instances of alternative ordering, in which adnominal modifiers are found in the postnominal position. These results are in line with previous studies on word order in the Romani NP which showed that the typical position of adnominal modifiers is prenominal (MATRAS 2002; LEGGIO 2011; ADAMOŪ – MATRAS 2020).

It is worth mentioning that the postnominal position of modifiers is attested in 16 speakers in the corpus, which suggests that this option is not idiosyncratic, but on the whole available in the speech of Gurbet Romani speakers. Additionally, the low frequency of postnominal positioning which is found in both adults' and children's samples suggests that there are no significant age differences with regard to the frequency of the postnominal ordering.

4.2. WORD CLASSES AND TYPES OF CONSTRUCTIONS IN NPs: THE POSTNOMINAL POSITION. The following types of modifiers were found in the postnominal position: adjectives, as illustrated in (6), demonstratives, as in (7), possessive determiners, as in (8), numeral *jekh* 'one' used as an indefinite article, as in (9), nouns/noun phrases in the genitive case, as in (10), and non-genitive nouns, as in (11).¹⁹

(6) Adjectives

Paša	amende	si	<u>jekh</u>	<u>kafana</u>	<u>bari</u>
near	we.lok	be.pres.3sg	one	tavern(Sr).nom.sg.f	big.nom.sg.f
i	gathe	uvek	maren	pe	
and(Sr)	there	always(Sr)	beat.pres.3pl	refl	

'Near us, there is one big tavern, and they always fight there.' (CH9)

(7) Demonstratives

Naj-ma		<u>rraja</u>	<u>gasave</u>
neg.have.pres.1sg		branch.nom.pl.m	that large.dem.nom.pl

'I don't have such large (willow) branches.' (TR6; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 139)

(8) Possessive determiners

I	posle	sasa	<u>slava</u>	<u>lendji</u>
and(Sr)	afterwards(Sr)	be.perf.3sg	St.Patron's Day(Sr).nom.sg.f	their.nom.sg.f

'And afterwards, it was their St. Patron's Day.' (CH7)

¹⁹ We typically find a single modifier in the postnominal position in the corpus. However, a few examples are attested with two modifiers, e.g., [...] *pre tranda, saranda breš, Rroma purane amare, možda i pinda breš* 'thirty, forty years ago, our old Roma, maybe fifty years [...]' (TR11-4; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 178).

(9) Numeral *jekh* ‘one’ as an indefinite article

A i ponekad džav ke Mira jekh
 but(Sr) and(Sr) sometimes(Sr) go.pres.1sg to Mira.nom.sg.f one
 ‘But I also sometimes go to one Mira.’ (CH16)

(10) NP in the genitive case

O šoro e bakresko (...), ačhel
 def.art.nom.sg.m head.nom.sg.m def.art.obl lamb(m).gen.sg.m remain.pres.3sg
 ‘The head of the lamb (...) remains.’ (TR6; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 188)

(11) Non-genitive nouns

Pijel pese jekh čaša raćija tati
 drink.pres.3sg refl one glass(Sr).nom.sg.f brandy(Sr).nom.sg.f hot.nom.sg.f
 ‘He drinks one glass of hot brandy.’ (TR2; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 156)

In order to investigate whether all word classes are equally frequent in NPs, we performed a quantitative analysis of the examples in which adnominal modifiers were attested in the postnominal position (see Chart 1).

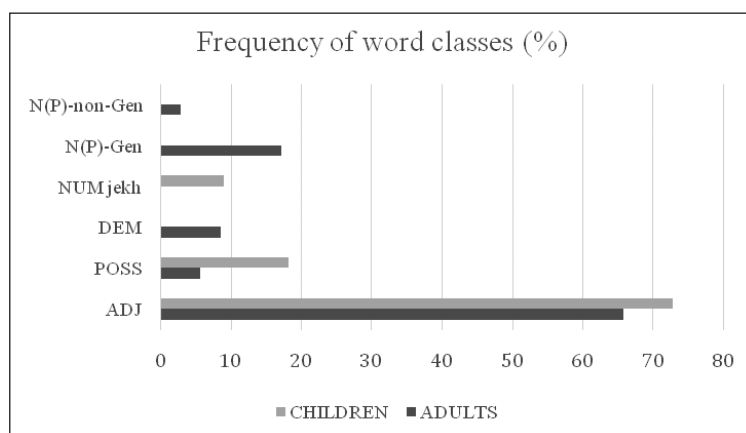


Chart 1. Relative frequency of word classes and constructions in the postnominal position.

As Chart 1 shows, adjectives are the most frequent word class in the postnominal position in the NP, as in both adults’ and children’s samples adjectives account for app. 70% of the modifiers in the postnominal position (N=23 (65.7%) in the adults’ sample and N=8 (72.7%) in the children’s sample). However, other word classes are also attested in the postnominal position, such as demonstratives (N=3 (8.6%) in the adults’ sample only), possessive determiners (N=2 (5.7%) in the adults’ sample and N=2 (18.2%) in the children’s sample), the numeral *jekh* ‘one’ used as an indefinite article (a single example in the children’s sample (9.1%)). In addition, six instances of a noun or noun phrase in the genitive case following the head noun were attested in the adults’ sample (17.1%), as well as a single example of a non-genitive noun (2.9%) in the adults’ sample.

The results, namely the prevalence of adjectives in the postnominal position, are in line with previous observations regarding the Romani varieties. As we have already mentioned, Leggio noted that the majority of adnominals in the postnominal position which he encountered in Mitrovica Romani were adjectives (LEGGIO 2011: 103).

In the corpus of Gurbet Romani, the following descriptive adjectives occurred in the postnominal position: *baro* ‘big’, *cikno* ‘little/small’, *purano* ‘old’, *nevo* ‘new’, *čisto* ‘clean’, with the adjective *baro* ‘big’ being the most frequent (e.g., *kazano baro* ‘big cauldron’, *zori baro* ‘big trouble’, *e pletare bare* ‘the big (woven) baskets factories’, *o snopo baro* ‘the big bundle’, *jag bari* ‘big fire’, *jekh kafana bari* ‘one big tavern’, *mo phral baro* ‘my big brother’, *torta bari* ‘big cake’). Some authors argue that some of these adjectives belong to a group of ‘subsecutive adjectives’ (KAMP – PARTEE 1995), as their interpretation is relativized to the head noun they refer to. Under this notion, “it might be the case that adjectives follow the noun more often because their interpretation has to be delayed until after the noun. This issue will not arise if the noun precedes the adjective, since the interpretation of the noun does not normally depend on the particular adjective” (DRYER 2018: 818). Dryer argues for an alternative explanation for the postnominal adjectival preference related to the similarity between adjectives and relative clauses, for which there is evidence that there is a very strong general preference for relative clauses to follow nouns (DRYER 2018: 818, following HAWKINS 1990: 225).²⁰

4.3. THE ORIGIN OF HEAD NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES IN NPs. In order to investigate whether the origin of head nouns and modifiers affects the position, we labeled the head nouns in the NPs as ‘Romani’ (e.g., *dej* ‘mother’), ‘Serbian’ (e.g., *stanica* ‘station’) or as ‘Other’ – proper nouns (e.g., *Mira*) or nouns whose origin can be attributed both to Serbian and to other Balkan contact languages (e.g., *kafana* ‘tavern’). Table 2 shows the absolute frequencies of nouns with regard to their origin.

As for modifiers, only the adjectives were marked for their origin as ‘Romani’ or ‘Serbian’ since possessive determiners, demonstratives or numerals are not borrowed from Serbian into Gurbet Romani (see MIRIĆ – ČIRKOVIĆ 2022). Table 3 shows the absolute frequencies of adjectives with regard to their origin.

Head nouns	Romani	Serbian	Other
ADULTS	19	11	5
CHILDREN	3	7	1

Table 2. Absolute frequencies of head nouns with regard to their origin.

²⁰ Analyzing why only adjectives, and not other modifiers, typically occur in the postnominal position in the world’s languages, Hawkins (1983) argues that adjectives follow nouns more often because they are ‘heavier’ than demonstratives and numerals. In his opinion, the morphological structure of descriptive adjectives typically comprises syllabically longer morphemes and more compounding of morphemes than that of demonstrative determiners, while descriptive adjectives are either greater than or equal to numerals (HAWKINS 1983: 90). However, Dryer disagrees as this difference may not be strong enough to explain the fact that adjectives follow nouns more often than demonstratives or numerals do, and also because the ‘length’ issue may be true only for less frequent adjectives (DRYER 2018: 827).

Adjectives	Romani	Serbian
ADULTS	12	11
CHILDREN	8	/

Table 3. Absolute frequencies of adjectives with regard to their origin.

As Table 2 shows, there are no significant differences in the case of head nouns, as both inherited and Serbian loan nouns can govern NPs with postnominal modifiers, as well as the proper nouns and other nouns in the category ‘Other’. In the case of adjectives (Table 3), in the adults’ corpus 11 adjectives were borrowed from Serbian, while 12 are inherited Romani adjectives. In the children’s corpus, all 8 adjectives are of Romani origin. This age difference might be due to the small number of examples with postposed modifiers which exist in the corpus.

4.4. THE REASONS FOR THE POSTNOMINAL POSITION OF ADNOMINAL MODIFIERS: PRAGMATIC FACTORS. In order to investigate the possible reasons underlying the non-canonical positioning in the Gurbet Romani NP, we performed a qualitative analysis of the examples excerpted from the corpus. As we have already mentioned, previous research on the word order in the NP already pointed out that the postnominal position in Romani may serve communicative purposes (MATRAS 2002; LEGGIO 2011) and may be used for emphasis or other pragmatic functions (RIJKHOFF 1998, following HANCOCK 1993). In what follows, we will pursue this pragmatically-oriented analysis and focus on two factors that emerged as the most relevant, namely the focus (in the broad sense) and stylistic effects. The nouns and NPs in the genitive case will be analyzed separately, as the pragmatic motivation for postposing does not apply to them.

4.4.1. FOCUS. In the literature, the notion of ‘focus’ is used in at least two different senses – both relevant from the perspective of information structure. The ‘information (presentational) focus’ is used to denote the new information in the sentence, in which case the non-focused, presupposed part of the sentence is called ‘background’ (KISS 1998b: 707) and can be pragmatically reconstructed from the context (HALUPKA-REŠETAR 2011: 12). The information focus can be placed on any sentence constituent, e.g., the whole sentence, an NP, a DP, a VP, or parts of NPs or DPs such as nouns, demonstratives, or adjectives (KISS 1998b: 707; KRIFKA 2008: 257). The ‘identificational (contrastive) focus’ is used to denote a (semantic or syntactic) operator expressing identification. Its function is “to introduce a set and to identify a subset of it as such of which the predicate exclusively holds” (KISS 1998b: 707, see also Rooth 1985, 1992). More precisely, the contrastive focus implies generating the alternatives for the focalized expression and excluding (from the interpretation) those alternatives which are not relevant (MIRIĆ 2016: 75). From a slightly different perspective, the distinction is made between the pragmatic and semantic uses of focus. According to Krifka (2008: 249), the pragmatic use of focus guides the direction into which communication should develop, and incoherent communication occurs as a result of failing to set the focus right. On the other hand, the semantic use of focus affects the truth-conditional content and “failing to set focus right will result in transmitting unintended factual information” (KRIFKA 2008: 249).²¹

²¹ The best-known cases of semantic operators are the focus-sensitive particles such as ‘only’, ‘also’ and ‘even’.

A prominent line of research on focus has been formally oriented and centered around the investigation of various semantic and structural means that languages employ to express the contrastive focus (but cf. FÉRY – FANSELOW – KRIFKA 2007). Although some studies explicitly mention word ordering as one of the means by which focus is realized, they are mostly concentrated on the sentential (clausal) ordering of the constituents, not the word order in the NP itself (see, among others, GIVÓN 1984; KISS 1998a; 1998b; STJEPANOVIĆ 1999; HINTERHÖLZL – PETROVA 2009; MEREU 2009; BÜRING 2010; ZIMMERMANN – FÉRY 2010; HALUPKA-REŠETAR 2009; 2011; ARVANITI – ADAMOŪ 2011; LEE – KIEFER – KRIFKA 2017).

In the present article, we rely on the definition of focus provided by Krifka (2008: 247), as it is compatible with different markings of focus: “[f]ocus indicates the presence of alternatives that are relevant for the interpretation of linguistic expressions”. Another pragmatic concept that is relevant for our analysis is the notion of ‘givenness’ vs. ‘newness’. One of the ways to indicate ‘givenness’ is the realization of an expression in a non-canonical position, typically before the canonical position, meaning that given constituents precede constituents that are new (KRIFKA 2008: 263, referring to the sentential word order). Although studies on focus usually concentrate on the constituents ordering, in our opinion, the general concept of focus may be applied to the NP level as well, because – under various accounts – the focus is seen as: a) indicating a set of alternatives, and b) providing novel information.

It is also noteworthy that in the examples given in the following sections (4.4.1.1. and 4.4.1.2.), we tried to establish the potential role of prosody by listening to the original audio recordings and by marking: a) if there was a pause between a noun and a postposed modifier in NPs, which could signal that we are dealing with the so-called ‘afterthought’; and b) if a postposed modifier was emphasized. Unless stated otherwise in the analysis, the pause is not attested in an example and a modifier is not emphasized. A pause is marked with the symbol # in front of a modifier. As we have already mentioned, the recordings and transcripts are not suitable for more detailed prosodic analysis, or for drawing any parallels with Serbian prosodic marking. However, pause and prosodic focus marking of postnominal modifiers might be useful for the interpretation of the analyzed examples.

4.4.1.1. CONTRASTIVE FOCUS ANALYSIS. The postnominal position of adnominal modifiers in the examples excerpted from the corpus of Gurbet Romani can be motivated by ‘contrastive’ focus, as shown in examples (12)–(20). In these examples, there always exists an alternative to the adnominal modifier in the postnominal position, which is important to be excluded from the interpretation as inadequate in the given context. The non-canonical ordering in the NPs is used to emphasize the appropriate interpretation of a referent expressed with a noun.

In the examples below we might consider that ordering in the NP is dictated by contrastivity – understood in the discourse-pragmatic sense used by Zimmerman (2007: 148):

[...] contrastivity in this sense means that a particular content or a particular speech act is unexpected for the hearer from the speaker’s perspective. One way for the speaker to direct the hearer’s attention, and to get him to shift his background assumptions accordingly, is to use additional grammatical marking, e.g., intonation

contour, syntactic movement, clefts, or morphological markers. This special marking seems to correlate with what is often called *emphatic* marking in descriptive and typological accounts of non-European languages. Contrastivity defined in this way depends on the speaker's assumptions about what the hearer considers to be likely or unlikely, introducing a certain degree of subjectivity."

In example (12), in the NP *stanica železničko* 'the railway station', the loan adjective *železničko* 'railway' is postposed in order to resolve the potential ambiguity of the loan noun *stanica* 'station' which it follows. Namely, in the town of Knjaževac, in which the material is collected, the bus station and the train station are located next to each other. By postposing the adjective, the speaker intends to emphasize which station s/he refers to and to ensure that the hearer excludes the alternative {'bus (station)'}.²² The likely alternative has not been mentioned previously. It is noteworthy that in the NP immediately following the sentence given in (12), the same adjective is used in the prenominal position: *Džane kaj si železničko stanica?* 'Do you know where the railway station is?'. This further suggests that the speaker aims to ensure the appropriate understanding of the NP. However, in this case, it is possible to employ the typical ordering because common ground has already been established.

(12)

Amari	razonoda	sasa	samo
our.nom.sg.f	amusement(Sr).nom.sg.f	be.perf.3sg	only(Sr)
džasa	džike	<u>stanica</u>	<u>železničko</u> .
go.lpl.rem	to	station(Sr).nom.sg.f	railway.adj(Sr).nom.sg

'Our only amusement was – we used to go to the railway station.' (TR2; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 222)

The notion of contrastivity emerges also in example (13), as in the NP *pepera posne* 'peppers for fasting', the loan adjective *posne* 'for fasting, made without animal products' is postposed to the noun *pepera* 'peppers' to contrast it with a different kind of peppers {'(peppers) made with meat'} – which are not allowed in the food preparation for the festivity in question. A similar example is found in (14), in which the appropriate information is provided by postposing the adjectives in the NPs – *kolakura obično* 'ordinary little cakes' and *plečinta posno* 'pie for fasting'. The postnominal position, by means of emphasis, excludes the possible alternatives {'fat (little cakes), made with dairies and eggs'}, {'fat (pie)'}. In both examples, the postnominal position serves the communicative purpose – to highlight the property of the noun so that the hearer understands the important element of traditional culture, namely the 'adequate' food preparation for the festivity.

(13)

Spremosaras	<u>pepera</u>	<u>posne</u> ,	bobako (...)
make(Sr).loan.lpl	pepper.nom.pl.m	for fasting(Sr).nom.pl	corn.nom.sg.m

'We make peppers for fasting, corn (...)' (TR2; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 154)

²² One might argue that, in this case, the non-canonical ordering also has a role in determining the right semantic interpretation, as the alternative would affect the truth conditions (see SELKIRK 2007: 126).

(14)

Ćeras	amije	<u>kolakura</u>	<u>obično</u> ,
make.pres.1pl	refl	cake.nom.pl.m	ordinary(Sr).nom.sg
# <u>posno</u> ,	<u>plečinta</u>	<u>posno</u> ,	akhorena,
for fasting(Sr).nom.sg	pie.nom.sg.f	for fasting(Sr).nom.sg	walnut.inst.pl.m
šaj	šećeres	samo, ²³	višnjenca (...)
can	sugar(Sr).inst.sg.m	only(Sr)	cherry(Sr).inst.pl.f

‘We make plain, lenten cakes, (a) lenten pie, it can (be) with sugar only, with cherries (...)’
(TR2; ŠIKIMIĆ 2018: 155)

In example (15), given in the broader context, we observe two NPs in which the same adjective *šučo* ‘dried’ is postposed to the nouns in the NPs *drak(h) šući* ‘dried grape(s), raisins’ and *prune šuće* ‘dried plums’. In both cases, the alternative would be the adjective meaning {‘fresh’}, but in the context of Christmas rituals, it is not adequate. Therefore, the speaker uses the adjective ‘dried’ in the postnominal position to emphasize the targeted property of the nouns. However, in the context which follows, both NPs are used with the same adjective in the prenominal position *šuće prune* ‘dried plums’ and *šući drak(h)* ‘dried grape(s), raisins’, as these notions have already been mentioned in the context and the common ground between the speaker and the hearer has already been established, by the speaker’s first use of a non-canonical, i.e., marked, ordering in the NPs.

(15)²⁴

Context: Christmas celebration (see ŠIKIMIĆ 2018: 155).

Researcher 1: [Da li se nešto radi sa slamom, da li se unosi slama u kuću?] ‘Is something done with the straw, is it brought into the house?’

TR2: [Da, da], sulum, džane kaj anas, thas talo astali, thas akhoro, drak(h) # šući, [ove pomarandže, bilo šta stavimo pod astal], talo astali (...) Akhoro, ondak thos prune šuće, džane prune so si?

‘Yes, yes, the straw, you know where we bring (it), we put (it) under the table, we put walnuts, grape(s) # dried, these oranges, anything we put under the table, under the table (...) Walnuts, then we put plums dried, do you know what plums are?’

Researcher 2: [Da, da]. ‘Yes, yes.’

TR2: Šuće prune, akhoro, pomarandže, banane, sa gova tho po astali thaj e slama thos ande jekh kova i tho talo astali, i gothe ačhel trin djive talo astali, posle trito djive le goda i čhude – gova xa tuće. E akhoro, šući drak(h) gova xa, a e slama čhudes.

‘Dried plums, walnuts, oranges, bananas, all that you put on the table and the straw we put in one, (like) this, and you put (it) under the table, and there it stays for three days under the table. After the third day, you take that and throw (it) – that you eat. The walnuts, dried grape(s) that you eat, and the straw – you throw.’

Another example relevant from the point of traditional culture is given in (16). The Romani adjective *terno* ‘young’ in the given context can contrast with the adjective {*purano* ‘old’} having in mind that there are two celebrations during a year cycle which are organized for the same Saint – the one celebrated in the

²³ It is noteworthy that the borrowed Serbian focus-sensitive particle *samo* ‘only’ is placed in the postnominal position, which is not its canonical position either in Gurbet Romani or Serbian.

²⁴ The parts of the transcript which are employed in Serbian are marked in square brackets.

summer (called ‘young’) and the other one celebrated in the winter (called ‘old’). By placing the adjective *terno* ‘young’ postnominally to the proper noun *sveti-Randjel* ‘Saint Archangel’, the speaker uses the focus for the purpose of emphasis. The alternative is actually mentioned later in the same sentence, but in the prenominal position – once the common ground has already been established. Another post-posed loan adjective *zimsko* ‘wintery’ is used in the NP *purano sveti-Randjel zimsko* ‘old Saint Archangel wintery’ in order to provide additional information on the exact time of the celebration of the ‘old Saint’.

(16)

Gala	slave	ke	<u>sveti-Randjel</u>	<u>terno</u> ,
these.nom.pl	St.Patron’s	such as	Saint Archangel	young.nom.sg.m
	day(Sr).nom.pl.f			
slavis	isto,	<u>purano</u>	<u>sveti-Randjel</u>	<u># zimsko</u>
celebrate(Sr).pres.1pl	same(Sr)	old.nom.sg.m	Saint Archangel	wintery(Sr).nom.sg.m
isto.				
same(Sr)				

‘These St. Patron’s days such as (the) young Saint Archangel, we celebrate (them) too, (the) old Saint Archangel wintery, the same.’ (TR4; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 198)

In example (17), another Romani custom (celebration of *Bibijako djive* ‘Aunt’s Day’) has to be properly explained, so the speaker emphasizes the required properties of the nouns by placing the adjectives describing them in the postnominal position. The adjective *nevo* ‘new’ in the NP *ogledalo nevo* ‘new mirror’ emphasizes that the mirror cannot be old, and the loan adjective *čisto* ‘clean’ in the NPs *sapuj čisto* ‘clean soap’ and *kangli čisto* ‘clean comb’ emphasize that the soap and the comb cannot be dirty (or used). By postposing the adjectives, the speaker aims at excluding the alternatives {‘old’} and {‘dirty/used’} as the possible interpretation of the properties of the head nouns, as they would be inadequate in the context of a particular custom. In addition, in all three NPs, the modifiers are prosodically emphasized.

(17)

Suvena	e	rromnja	cikni ²⁵	trasta,	andre
sew.3pl.rem	def.art	woman.nom.pl.f	small.nom.sg.f	bag.nom.sg.f	inside
mora	te	avel	<u>ogledalo</u>	<u>nevo</u> ,	
must(Sr)	comp	be.pres.3sg	mirror(Sr).nom.sg.m	new.nom.sg.m	
sapuj	<u>čisto</u> ,	<u>kangli</u>	<u>čisto</u> (...)		
soap.nom.sg.m	clean.nom.sg.m	comb.nom.sg.m	clean.nom.sg.m		

‘The women used to sew small bags, inside (there) must be (a) new mirror, clean soap, clean comb (...)’ (TR6; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 165)

In addition to the parts of narratives in which elements of traditional culture are marked as important in the corpus, we also encountered narratives in which the new and the old way of living or working are contrasted. For instance, in example (18), the loan adjective *drveno* ‘wooden’ is placed after the noun *tulcura* ‘car

²⁵ The adjective *cikni* ‘small/little’ is in the prenominal position in the NP *cikni trasta* ‘small bags’, as there is no need to contrast it or to emphasize it.

axles', as a contrast with the alternative {'metal'}. In the broader narrative, we find out that the speaker is a blacksmith who makes horseshoes and car axles and points out that the car axles used to be made of wood, thus contrasting the alternatives {'wooden (car axles)'} and {'metal (car axles)'}. In addition to a short pause used before it, the modifier *drveno* is prosodically emphasized.

(18)

Ranije (...)	o	narodo	čerela
earlier(Sr)	def.art	people(Sr).nom.sg.m	make.3sg.rem
pe	<u>tulcura</u>	<u># drveno.</u>	
on	car axle.nom.pl.m	wooden(Sr).nom.sg	

'Earlier (...) the people used to make wooden car axles.' (TR8; ŠIKIMIĆ 2018: 150)

In examples (19) and (20), the adjectives *baro* 'big' and *cikne* 'young' are placed after the nouns *phral* 'brother' and *phrala* 'brothers', respectively, to emphasize the age of the brothers to which the nouns refer, as the speaker has siblings of different ages.²⁶ In these examples, the adjectives are used in order to provide additional information on the head noun; however, the element of contrast also exists. In examples (18) and (19), we might be dealing with an 'afterthought' because of the pause before the adjectives.

Regarding example (20), it is important to emphasize that the postposed adjective is preceded by the definite article *e* *cikne*. This phenomenon of doubling the definite article is attested in other Romani varieties as well (see ADAMOU – MATRAS 2020).²⁷

(19)

Gathe	djal	i	<u>mo</u>	<u>phral</u>	<u># baro,</u>
there	go.pres.3sg	also(Sr)	my.nom.sg.m	brother.nom.sg.m	big.nom.sg.m
si-le	dešutrin	breš.			
have.pres.3sg.m	thirteen	year.nom.sg.m			

'My older brother also goes there, he is thirteen.' (CH9)

(20)

Pa	djas	me,	mo	papo (...)
well(Sr)	go.pres.1pl	I.nom	my.nom.sg.m	grandfather.nom.sg.m
<u>me</u>	<u>phrala</u>	<u>e</u>	<u>cikne</u>	džas
my.nom.pl	brother.nom.pl.m	def.art	little.nom.pl	go.pres.1pl
pe	Banjica.			
on	Banjica.nom.sg.f			

Well, we go, I, my grandfather (...) my little brothers, we go to Banjica (swimming pool).' (CH20)

4.4.1.2. INFORMATION FOCUS ANALYSIS. In addition to the adnominal modifiers in the postnominal position, which are used for contrastive focus purposes, post-

²⁶ In the corpus the noun 'brother' is most frequently preceded by possessive determiners, e.g., *mo phral* 'my brother'.

²⁷ According to Hancock: "emphasis in particular may be expressed by repeating the definite article with a postnominal adjective", e.g., *o raklo o baro*, 'the boy, the big one' (HANCOCK 1993: 30).

posed modifiers can also be used for other functions. Namely, for providing additional information, which offers more, new details about a head noun, or for the purpose of emphasizing novel information, which draws the hearer's attention to the meaning of a modifier, an NP, or the whole context. In both cases, adnominal modifiers are used in the postnominal position for the purpose of expressing the information focus since the novel information is placed in the non-canonical position. As noted by Zimmermann – Féry (2010: 1): “the use of a marked linguistic structure over an unmarked, more economical one often triggers pragmatic and other cognitive effects on the side of the hearer, who attempts to find a rationale for the speaker's preference for an uneconomic way of communicating a thought.”

In examples (21)–(25), the adjective *baro/bari* ('big') is used in the postnominal position to provide novel, additional information on the size of the objects denoted by the nouns. In example (21), speaking about a technically advanced process of making baskets in a state factory, the speaker adds the qualifications of the head noun preceded by the definite article *e pletare* 'the (woven) baskets factories' by placing the adjective 'big' in the postnominal position, followed by another postposed adjective *državne* 'state', which is prosodically emphasized. Unlike the former postposed adjective *bare*, the latter is used with the double article *e državne* (cf. example (20)).

(21)

Si	ando	Kruševco,	kala	kaj
be.pres.3pl	in-def.art	Kruševac.nom.sg.m	these.nom.pl	where
si	<u>e</u>	<u>pletare</u>	<u>bare</u> ,	# <u>e</u>
be.pres.3pl	def.art	baskets factory(Sr).nom.pl.f	big.nom.pl	def.art
<u>državne</u> ,	si-len	gala	mašine	pe
state.adj(Sr).nom.pl	have.pres.3pl	these.nom.pl	machine(Sr).nom.pl	on
struja.				
electricity(Sr).nom.sg.f				

'There are in Kruševac (town), these, where there are the big (woven) baskets factories, the state (ones), (they) have these electric machines.' (TR6; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 140)

In example (22), the situation with the postposed adjective is the same as in example (21). The context is also the same – the speaker explains the process of making baskets, specifically its last phase – tying up a bundle of branches. The loan noun *snopo* 'bundle' is qualified as *baro* 'big' in the NP *o snopo baro* 'the big bundle'.

(22)²⁸

sa	phanđen	<u>o</u>	<u>snopo</u>	<u>baro</u>
all	tie up.perf.3pl	def.art	bundle(Sr).nom.sg.m	big.nom.sg.m
i	odvoji	klasa (...)		
and	separate(Sr).pres.2sg	class(Sr).nom.sg.f		

'All is tied up (in) the big bundle and (you) separate (the) class (...)' (TR6; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 141)

²⁸ The context is the following: *E tek posle te beše te radi, onda onda klasikin pe rraja, ikaldon pe vrste, ande vrba, sa phanden o snopo baro i odvoji klasa...* 'And only afterwards you sit to work, then then the branches are classified, extracted into types, of willow, all is tied up (in) the big bundle (of branches) and (you) separate (the) class.' (TR6; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 141)

In example (23), the child describes his/her free time or the time s/he spends playing on the street. One of the episodes is to light the fire (a big one) which would warm them up after a long stay outside.²⁹ In this case, the atypical word ordering *jag bari* ‘lit. fire big’, with the prosodically emphasized adjective, is used as a means to draw the hearer’s attention to the size as a relevant property.

(23)

Ćidas	amen	gathe,	ćeras	
gather.pres.1pl	we.nom	there	make.pres.1pl	
<u>jag</u>	<u>bari</u>	te	tatos,	bešas
fire.nom.sg.f	big.nom.sg.f	comp	warm up.pres.1pl	sit/stay.pres.1pl
džike	jekh,	džike	duj.	
until	one	until	two	

‘We gather there, light (a) big fire to warm up, (we) stay until one, until two (o’clock).’ (CH9)

Not only does the adjective *baro/bari* ‘big’ provide additional information, but also other adjectives perform the same function. In example (24) the adjective *nevi* ‘new’ is also used in the postnominal position in the NP *bicikla nevi* ‘(a) new bicycle’ for information focus purposes.

(24)

Sas-ma	bicikla,	mo	dad
have.perf.1sg	bicycle(Sr).nom.sg.f	my.nom.sg.m	father.nom.sg.m
ćinda	maje	<u>bicikla</u>	<u>nevi</u> .
buy.perf.3sg	I.dat	bicycle(Sr).nom.sg.f	new.nom.sg.f

‘I had (a) bicycle, my father bought me (a) new bicycle.’ (CH7)

This example is ambiguous – the first part of the sentence, located in the past, implies that the speaker had a bicycle (and something might have happened to it), while the second part of the sentence adds information about the newly bought bicycle. Another interpretation may set both pieces of information in the same moment on the timeline – the speaker had a bicycle and it was the one newly bought by his/her father. Both interpretations indicate that the adjective is postposed in order to provide a new detail, relevant for the complete understanding.

It could be discussed whether preposing of adjectives in the NPs used in the above-mentioned examples would affect the meaning or informativeness of the utterances. However, in examples (25) and (26) the postnominal position seems preferable since it provides the information which is crucial for understanding the context in which the sentences are used.

²⁹ The same postnominal position of the adjective ‘big’ is attested in the following examples from the corpus: *Amende, paša amende si jekh kafana bari i gathe uvek maren pe.* (CH9) [Near us, there is one big tavern, and they always fight each other there] – the modifier is emphasized prosodically; *Ka ćerav roštilji isto, torta bari, ka ikharav me drugaren.* (CH15) [I will make grill too, (a) big cake, I will invite my friends]; *Džas ande khandjiri, ćiraven rraćija, den pećenke, banane, rraćija ćiradi, kazano baro.* (TR4; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 198) [We go to church, (they) cook brandy, share baked pumpkins, bananas, hot brandy, (a) big cauldron (is used)].

In example (25), in the NP *kožno jakna, nevi* ‘(a) new leather jacket’, already containing the adjective ‘leather’ in the prenominal position, the adjective *nevi* ‘new’ is postposed and the pause in front of it suggests that the adjective could be considered as an ‘afterthought’. This example can be understood only if the broader, previously mentioned context is taken into consideration: another leather jacket, previously bought, had been ripped by the speaker’s sister, and the new one was bought and given only later. Considering the context, the postposed adjective *nevi* ‘new’ represents the new, important information that helps understand the whole situation.

(25)

I	dija	ma	mi
and(Sr)	give.perf.3sg	I.acc	my.nom.sg.f
phej	<u>kožno</u>	<u>jakna,</u>	<u># nevi.</u>
sister.nom.sg.f	leather(Sr).nom.sg	jacket(Sr).nom.sg.f	new.nom.sg.f

‘And my sister gave me (a) new leather jacket.’ (CH3)

The same holds for example (26), in which the loan adjective *žuto* ‘yellow’ is used in the postnominal position in the NP *e boja žuto* ‘the yellow color’ in order to specify the information on the exact color, which makes the utterance more informative and facilitates understanding of the process of baskets making.

(26)

Trin,	štar,	pandž	saata	ćirol
three	four	five	hour(Sr).nom.pl	be cooked.pres.3sg
i	dobil	e	<u>boja</u>	<u>žuto (...)</u>
and(Sr)	get(Sr).pres.3sg	def.art	color(Sr).nom.sg.f	yellow(Sr).nom.sg

‘It is cooked for three, four, five hours, and (it) gets the yellow color (...)’ (TR6; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 139)

Similarly, in example (27), the adjective *pokojno* ‘deceased’, used in the postnominal position in the NP *laći dej pokojno* ‘her deceased mother’, provides a piece of information highly relevant for understanding the whole utterance, i.e., that the mother who cursed her own daughter had died. By postposing the modifier, the speaker intends to ensure that the proper background assumptions are created on the hearer’s part.

(27)

E	Ljiljana,	mi	bibi (...)	muli	jel
def.art	Ljiljana.nom.sg.f	my.nom.sg.f	aunt.nom.sg.f	die.perf.3sg.f	because(Sr)
<u>laći</u>	<u>dej</u>	<u>pokojno</u>	kaj	sasa	voj
her.nom.sg.f	mother.nom.sg.f	deceased(Sr).nom.sg	who	be.perf.3sg	she.nom
dija	la	rromaja ³⁰			
give.perf.3sg	she.acc	curse.nom.sg.f			

‘Ljiljana, my aunt (...) died, because her deceased mother, who was, she cursed her.’ (TR11-1; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 195)

³⁰ The phrasal verb *del rromaja* means ‘to curse’ (ROMLEX; ĆIRKOVIĆ – MIRIĆ 2017: 38).

Unlike in the aforementioned examples, in which the postnominal position of the adjectives is clearly used for the information focus purposes, as new information is specified after head nouns, the examples which follow, (28) and (29), can be considered as possibly expressing both information and contrastive focus.

(28)

Pijel	pese	jekh	čaša	<u>raćija</u>	<u>tati</u>
drink.pres.3sg	refl	one	glass(Sr).nom.sg.f	brandy(Sr).nom.sg.f	hot.nom.sg.f

‘He drinks one glass of hot brandy.’ (TR2; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 156)

(29)

Džas	ande	khandjiri,	ćiraven	raćija (...)
go.pres.1pl	in	church.nom.sg.f	cook.pres.3pl	brandy(Sr).nom.sg
<u>raćija</u>	<u>ćiradi</u> ,	kazano	baro	
brandy(Sr).nom.sg	cooked.nom.sg.f	cauldron(Sr).nom.sg.m	big.nom.sg.m	

‘(We) go to church, (they) cook brandy (...) cooked brandy, (a) big cauldron (is used).’ (TR4; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 198)

In both examples, the NPs *raćija tati* ‘hot brandy’ and *raćija ćiradi* ‘cooked brandy’ refer to the same sort of drink – *raćija* ‘brandy’ which is cooked and served during wintertime and on special occasions. Given that the broader context of the narrative suggests that the drink in question is served for a special occasion, the adjective is postposed for the purpose of emphasizing additional information. The other interpretation would be that of the contrastive focus, in which case the alternative would be ‘a regular brandy’. Given the context, this interpretation is excluded.

Postposed adjectives in the NP can emphasize the information on the quality or size of the object denoted by a head noun. In example (30), *zori baro* ‘big trouble’ the adjective *baro* ‘big’ emphasizes the intensity of the ‘trouble’ (*zori*), making the NP more effective and intensive in the utterance.

(30)

A	kaj	sićilem	te	khuvav	pe
but(Sr)	because	learn.perf.1sg	comp	knit.pres.1sg	on
korparstvo	goda	tradija	ma,	<u>zori</u>	<u>baro</u>
basketry(Sr).nom.sg.m	that.dem	push.perf.3sg	I.acc	trouble.nom.sg	big.nom.sg.m
sas	mandje				
be.perf.3sg	I.dat				

‘And because (I) learned to knit (the) basketry, that pushed me (away from it), it was a big trouble for me.’ (TR6; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 139)

As it was shown, the adjectives are frequently postposed in the NP with the function of providing new, additional information in an utterance, or/and as emphasis. However, other adnominal modifiers in the NP can be postposed too, as it is the case with the demonstrative in example (31), and the possessive determiner in example (32).

(31)

Samo	kaj	naj-ma	materijali,	naj-ma	<u>rraja</u>
just(Sr)	because	neg.have.pres.1sg	material(Sr). nom.pl.m	neg.have.pres.1sg	branch.nom.pl
<u>gasave</u> ,	ali	kala	kaj	si	po
that large.dem.nom.pl	but(Sr)	that.nom.pl	which	be.pres.3pl	on
Timoko	von	za	krparenje	lače.	
Timok.nom.sg.m	they	for(Sr)	patching(Sr).nom.sg	good.nom.pl	

‘I just don’t have materials, (I) don’t have branches that large, but these which are (found) on (the) Timok (river), they are good for patching (baskets).’ (TR6; ŠIKIMIĆ 2018: 139)

The demonstrative *gasave* (‘such/like this’) is used to point out the length of the branches used for making baskets. The explanation is related to the context in which this utterance is employed. As the speaker says, the quality and the type of branches of which the baskets are made are important. The postposed demonstrative emphasizes the information on the quality.

The possessive determiner *lesi* ‘his’, in example (32), is postposed in the NP *jekh rromni lesi* ‘one his wife’ in order to add an explanation due to the ambiguous meaning of the head noun *rromni*. The noun *rromni* in Romani has two meanings: ‘woman’ and ‘wife’. Due to the fact that the speaker intends to refer to the ‘wife’, the possessive determiner in the postnominal position serves to resolve the ambiguity.

(32)

I	vov	tužisarda	<u>jekh</u>	<u>rromni</u>	<u>lesi.</u>
and(Sr)	he.nom	sue(Sr).loan.perf.3sg	one	woman/wife.nom.sg.f	his.nom.sg.f

‘And he sued (one) his wife.’ (TR11-2; ŠIKIMIĆ 2018: 148)

4.4.2. STYLISTIC EFFECTS. As it was pointed out in the Methodology section, the corpus which is analyzed in the study is based on semi-structured interviews, which resulted in oral narratives with a specific structure. In the literature, oral narratives are mainly explored from the perspective of units such as linkers or pragmatic and discourse markers, verb syntax and the use of tenses for narrative purposes, the relation between direct and indirect object, lexical components of narratives (e.g., temporal or locative adverbials) (see GONZÁLEZ 2004), as well as in the domain of deictic categories (BAYNHAM 2015) with the aim to thoroughly describe the structure of oral narratives.³¹

A number of studies that concentrate on oral narrative analysis also deal with oral narratives’ features, such as repetition and reformulation (e.g., POLOVINA 1993; ŠIKIMIĆ 2004). Oral narratives contain false starts, unfinished sentences and phrases (HOEKSTRA 2008: 142–143), hesitation in expressing thoughts, many details, the credibility of statements, as well as digressions (NORRICK 2003: 47; ČIRKOVIĆ 2004;

³¹ Cf. ČIRKOVIĆ 2004; 2009; 2015.

2015), which makes them distinctive enough from the written narratives. Although extensive, the literature on oral narratives does not provide insight into how ordering in the noun phrase influences the stylistic characteristics of narratives.

The Romani language lacks thorough research of stylistic and communicative purposes of word ordering, although it was noted in the literature that postposed modifiers in the NP can be used for communicative purposes, as well as for stylistic variation (MATRAS 2002; LEGGIO 2011).

Starting from the notions of “communicative purposes” and “stylistic variation”, as well as from the oral narrative form, we will analyze the examples with modifiers placed in the postnominal position used for stylistic effect. By stylistic effects we consider the non-canonical ordering in the examples in which the modifiers are placed postnominally in order to contribute to the value of liveliness, rhythm, or to express the narrative formula which is located in the context of habitual actions.

The examples (33)–(35) illustrate the NPs in which the modifiers – possessive determiners in (33) and (34), and the adjective in (35), are postposed to the head nouns, making the utterance resemble the formulaic expression. Similar constructions can be used in Serbian, especially as an introduction to the narrative about traditional rituals. In Serbian, the narratives about traditional culture frequently employ initial formula: *tako je ostalo od starih* ‘that’s left from the old (people)’, *u staro vreme* ‘in the old days’, *tako su pričali/govorili stari* ‘that’s what the old (people) used to say’, which is more or less equivalent to the Romani phrases *e purane amare* ‘our old (people)’, *Rroma purane amare* ‘our old Roma’, *tradicija purani* ‘(the) old tradition’. Therefore, in this domain, we may assume the influence of the contact language.

In example (33), the possessive determiner *amare* ‘our’ is in postposition to the nominalized adjective, i.e., the head noun *purane* ‘old (people)’ and in (34) the adjective *purane* ‘old’ and the possessive *amare* ‘our’ are in postposition to the head noun *Rroma* ‘the Roma’. In both examples, the NPs are in the subject position, with the elided predicate “used to say”.

(33)

Možda	ašunden,	neko	dela	rromaja,
maybe(Sr)	hear.perf.2pl	someone(Sr).nom.sg	give.3sg.rem	curse.nom.pl.f
šaj	ašunda	e	Buba	nekada,
maybe	hear.perf.3sg	def.art	Buba.nom.sg.f	once(Sr)
e	<u>purane</u>	<u>amare</u>	ando	Pirot:
def.art	old.nom.pl.m	our.nom.pl	in-def.art	Pirot.nom.sg.m
“Čalavel	te	e	čuma ³² ”	
beat/hit.pres.3sg	comp	def.art	čuma/demon(Sr).nom.sg.f	

‘Maybe (you) heard, someone used to curse, maybe Buba heard once, our old (people) in Pirot (used to say): “Let the čuma hit you.”’ (TR6; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 165)

³² The expression *čalavel te e čuma* ‘let the čuma hit you’ is considered to be a form of curse in Romani folklore (SIKIMIĆ 2018: 21).

(34)

<u>Rroma</u>	<u>purane</u>	<u>amare</u> [...]	kozom	god	
Roma.nom.pl.m	old.nom.pl	our.nom.pl	how many	(Sr)free choice	
mruša	sesa	ando	ćher	ande	familija
male.nom.pl.m	be.perf.3pl	in-def.art	house.nom.sg.m	in	family(Sr).nom.sg.f
gaći	mora	sesa	te	aven	bakre
so many	must(Sr)	be.perf.3pl	comp	be.pres.3pl	lamb.nom.pl.m

'Our old Roma (used to say) [...] as many males there were in the house, in the family, that many lambs must have been.' (TR11-4; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 178)

The same holds for example (35), in which the NP *tradicija purani* 'old tradition' achieves the stylistic effect by placing the adjective in the postnominal position, which sets the ritual (of slaughtering the lamb) in the context of traditional culture. Importantly, the postnominal adjective is prosodically emphasized. The stylistic effect is missing in the same NP with the canonical ADJ-N word order which follows in the same sentence: *purani tradicija*.

(35)

Isto,	isto	goda	si	<u>tradicija</u>
same(Sr)	same(Sr)	that.dem	be.pres.3sg	tradition(Sr).nom.sg.f
<u>purani</u> ,	naj	goda	izmisljime	sad,
old.nom.sg.f	neg.be.pres.3sg	that.dem	made up(Sr).nom.sg	now(Sr)
goda	si	purani	tradicija.	
that.dem	be.pres.3sg	old.nom.sg.f	tradition(Sr).nom.sg.f	

'The same, the same, that is (the) old tradition, (it) isn't made up now, that is (the) old tradition.' (TR17; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 187)

In the children's corpus, the postposed modifier in the NP is also used for stylistic purposes. It is set in the context of describing children's everyday lives, mentioning other children with whom they spend time, so the modifiers in the postposition in examples (36) and (37) do not have the same function as the previous ones, but tend to describe the situation as dynamic and vivid. The postnominal adjective *cikno* in (37) seems to be prosodically emphasized.

(36)

Al	<u>goja</u>	<u>drugarica</u>	<u>mrni</u> ,	voj
but(Sr)	that.nom.sg.f	female friend(Sr).nom.sg.f	my.nom.sg.f	she.nom
djili	akana	ano	Niš	
go.perf.3sg.f	now	in-def.art	Niš.nom.sg.m	

'But that female friend of mine, she went now to Niš.' (CH6)

(37)

<u>Jekh</u>	<u>bebe</u>	<u>cikno</u>	si-le.
one	baby(Sr).nom.sg	little.nom.sg.m	have.pres.3sg.m

'He has one little baby.' (CH17)

4.4.3. GENITIVE ADNOMINALS AND NON-GENITIVE NOUNS. In Romani, the postnominal ‘option’ slot is a pragmatic position for most attributives, and a lexicalized position for genitives in some dialects (MATRAS 2002: 166–167). For this reason, genitive adnominals are analyzed separately in the paper.

As noted earlier, genitive adnominals exhibit the agreement features as other attributes and agree with head nouns in gender, number, and case. They typically occupy the prenominal position, namely the slot of determiners. However, variation is possible in different dialects. Examples (38)–(41) illustrate the use of nouns and NPs in the genitive case in the postnominal position. Since all examples exhibit a referential function, they belong to the category of ‘anchoring genitive adnominals’ (see KOPTJEVSKAJA-TAMM 2000).

In example (38), the noun *bakro* ‘lamb’ is used in genitive to mark the possessor in the NP *o šoro e bakresko* ‘the head of the lamb’.³³ It is noteworthy that the definite article precedes both the head noun (*o šoro*) and the genitive adnominal (*e bakresko*), both agreeing with their own head nouns. This is often the case in many Romani varieties (see KOPTJEVSKAJA-TAMM 2000). In addition, the same genitive adnominal is found in the prenominal position in the narrative which follows: *ga-dava e bakresko šoro* ‘that the lamb’s head’. In this case, both the article and the genitive adnominal are used, although prenominal anchoring genitive adnominals are considered to be incompatible with definite articles as they occupy the same slot of determiners (cf. KOPTJEVSKAJA-TAMM 2000: 147; MATRAS 2002: 166–167).

(38)

o šoro e bakresko, o šoro ačhel
 def.art head.nom.sg.m def.art lamb(m).gen.sg.m def.art head.nom.sg.m remain.pres.3sg
 ‘The head of the lamb, the head remains.’ (TR5; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 188)

The genitive adnominal is attested postposed to the noun *sastipe* ‘health’ in the formulaic expressions with the function of toasts, as in (39) and (40).

In example (39), the noun *Bibi* ‘aunt’ is used as a possessor in the postnominal position in the NP *ando sastipe Bibijako* ‘for the health of Aunt’, followed by another NP in genitive: *laće čhavengo* ‘of her children’. In the corpus, the genitive adnominal *Bibijako* is more frequently found in the prenominal position, in the NP *Bibijako djive* ‘Aunt’s day’, which is an expression used to mark this Romani celebration.

In example (40), the NPs *me čhavengo* ‘of my children’ and *me unukurengo* ‘of my grandchildren’ are also postposed to the head noun *sastipe* ‘health’.³⁴ It ought to be mentioned that in Serbian, as a recent contact language of Gurbet Romani, the genitive adnominals are also found in the postnominal position, especially in the type of toasts mentioned above, e.g., Serbian *u zdravlje moje dece* ‘for the health (of) my.gen children.gen’.

³³ Another similar example is also attested in the corpus: *Pa katar o rat e bakresko el čhinel, čhinel*. ‘Well, from the lamb’s blood, because (he) slaughters, slaughters (the lamb).’ (TR17; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 186).

³⁴ The same construction is repeated in the sentence which follows the one given in (40). This particular expression in Romani is analyzed as a form of blessing (SIKIMIĆ 2018: 20).

(39)

Znači samo ando sastipe Bibijako,
 mean(Sr) only(Sr) in-def.art health.nom.sg.m Aunt(f).gen.sg.m
laće čhavengo...
 her.obl child(m).gen.pl.m
 ‘It means, only for the health of Bibi (aunt), of her children...’ (TR11-4; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 163)

(40)

Pa pričosaras: “Sastimasa (...) ando
 well(Sr) tell(Sr).loan.pres.1pl for the health in-def.art
sastipe me čhavengo, me unukurengo...”
 health.nom.sg.m my.obl child(m).gen.pl.m my.obl grandson(m).gen.pl.m
 ‘Well, we say: “Cheers (...) for the health of my children, of my grandchildren”.’ (TR2; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 157)

Example (41) contains the NP in genitive *kaja Miletasi* ‘that of Mileta’ which is postposed to the head noun *khandjiri* ‘church’. Although the demonstrative *kaja* immediately follows the noun *khandjiri*, it is actually governed by the genitive adnominal *Miletasi*. The same NP is later used with the prenominal position of the genitive adnominal: *voj korkorro letisarda, thaj avili gathe korkorro, godija e Miletasi khandjiri* ‘it flew on her own, and it came here on her own, that Mileta’s church’. It is noteworthy that in this example both the article and the genitive adnominal are used (*e Miletasi*), as in example (38), although they are considered incompatible as they occupy the same slot in the syntactic structure and are functionally incompatible (cf. KOPTJEVSKAJA-TAMM 2000: 147; MATRAS 2002: 166–167).

(41)

Kate kaj si e khandjiri kaja Miletasi
 here where be.pres.3sg def.art church.nom.sg.f that.nom.sg.f Mileta(m).gen.sg.f
 ‘Here, where there is the church, that of Mileta.’ (TR6; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 166)

In addition to the genitive adnominals, an example of a non-genitive noun used as a modifier in the NP is attested in the Knjaževac Gurbet Romani corpus, as illustrated in (42). The same type of construction is found in Mitrovica Romani, as Leggio mentions that post-position of non-genitive nouns specifying a head noun is common among his informants, e.g., *jekh fidžano kafava* ‘a cup of coffee’ (LEGGIO 2011: 103). This type of construction could be treated as a calque of the Serbian NP *čaša rakije* ‘(a) glass of brandy’. However, unlike in Serbian, where the modifier *rakije* ‘of brandy’ is used in genitive, in Gurbet Romani the modifier remains in the nominative case.

(42)

Pijel pese jekh čaša raćija tati
 drink.pres.3sg refl one glass(Sr).nom.sg.f brandy(Sr).nom.sg.f hot.nom.sg.f
 ‘He drinks one glass of hot brandy.’ (TR2; SIKIMIĆ 2018: 156)

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS. Taking a corpus-based approach, the present study investigated the postnominal position of adnominal modifiers in the Gurbet Romani variety spoken in Eastern Serbia. The following postposed modifiers were taken into account: adjectives, demonstratives, possessive determiners, the numeral *jekh* as an indefinite article, genitive adnominals, and non-genitive nouns. Previous research showed that adnominal modifiers in Romani typically occupy the prenominal position relative to the head noun, although non-canonical word ordering is possible for grammatical or functional reasons (e.g., the incompatibility of certain modifiers with other determiners in the prenominal position), but also for pragmatic, communicative or stylistic purposes (RIJKHOFF 1998; MATRAS 2002; LEGGIO 2011; ADAMOŪ – MATRAS 2020). Having in mind that communicative motivation for alternative ordering remains underexplored for the Romani NP, the aim of the study was to perform a detailed analysis of the examples excerpted from the Knjaževac Gurbet Romani corpus (see MIRIĆ – ĆIRKOVIĆ 2022 for details) from a pragmatically-oriented perspective. In the study, we hypothesized that several linguistic factors might affect the postnominal ordering of adnominal modifiers, such as the word class to which a modifier belongs, the origin of a head noun or modifier, and pragmatic factors.

The results of the study can be summarized as follows. A total of 46 examples with postnominal modifiers in the NP were attested in the corpus comprising both adults' and children's samples (app. 16,000 word tokens). The quantitative analysis shows that the prenominal position of adnominal modifiers prevails in Gurbet Romani, given the low frequency of postnominal modifiers – 3.7% in the adults' sample and 1.3% in the children's sample. These results corroborate previous research in Romani which shows that the postnominal positioning is overall outnumbered by the prenominal positioning of modifiers (MATRAS 2002: 166–167). As for the word class, the study reveals that the adjectives are most frequently found in the postnominal position, as they account for app. 70% of the postposed modifiers in both adults' and children's samples. Other studies also report on the prevalence of adjectives in the postnominal position in Romani (LEGGIO 2011) and across other languages (DRYER 2018). Among adjectives, the Romani adjective *baro* 'big' is most frequently postposed in comparison to other adjectives. Furthermore, the study shows that the postnominal position is not affected by the origin of a head noun or a modifier, as both Romani inherited nouns and adjectives, as well as Serbian loan nouns and adjectives can be used postnominally.

The study does not reveal any significant intra-speaker variation. Adnominal modifiers are attested in 16 speakers (out of 32), both adults and children, which suggests that postposed modifiers are a phenomenon characteristic of Gurbet Romani in Eastern Serbia. This finding is in line with the experimental study of Arslan and colleagues, which showed that speakers of Gurbet Romani accept both ADJ-N and N-ADJ order in Romani (ARSLAN et al. 2022). Regarding the age of speakers, the small number of examples with postposed modifiers which are attested in the corpus does not allow for making any general conclusions regarding the age differences. However, it seems that both age groups included in the corpus exhibit the option of placing adnominal modifiers after a head noun. Based on the slightly higher percentage of postnominal modifiers in the adults' sample (3.7%) than in the children's sample (1.3%), one might hypothesize that younger speakers

have not reached their full pragmatic competence yet and do not fully use available pragmatic devices, such as alternative ordering for the information structure purposes. However, this assumption remains to be explored in the future, preferably on a larger corpus or by applying a different methodology. In the children's sample, we also did not find any loan adjectives in the postnominal position, but that might be due to the overall low number of attested NPs with postposed modifiers.

The main part of the study explores factors underlying the postnominal position of modifiers and reveals that the postnominal slot serves information structure purposes, such as contrastive and information focus, as well as stylistic effects.

As for the contrastive focus, a property expressed by a modifier (usually an adjective in the attributive function) is placed postnominally for several reasons. Firstly, the focalized modifier expresses new, not previously mentioned information which is relevant in a given context. More importantly, the speaker tends to contrast a modifier with other alternatives which would be inadequate. As we have shown, this is typically the case with those NPs which refer to certain elements of Romani traditional culture, festivities, or customs, for which the right interpretation is crucial (e.g., the right kind of food ought to be prepared, the time of a particular celebration ought to be right, etc.). It is also the case when a noun is ambiguous between two or more different referents in the broader context (e.g., 'brother' – {younger} or {older}, 'station' – {bus} or {railway}). Thus, the selection of a particular attribute over alternative ones seems to be the most important contribution to adequate utterance interpretation. The speaker uses a non-canonical, i.e., marked, ordering in the NP to direct the hearer's attention and to shift his/her background assumptions of what is likely or unlikely in a given context.

When it comes to the information focus, the postposed modifiers are used after head nouns because the 'option' slot in the NP serves as the information focus position in which new information is placed. The formal marking of the information-structural status by grammatical means, such as word order, facilitates information update and the actualization of belief states (ZIMMERMANN – FÉRY 2010: 1). Adnominal modifiers are used postnominally to mark novel information, relevant for the adequate understanding of the NP or even the whole utterance. In this case, the information focus has the pragmatic purpose of improving discourse coherence. In some cases, the focalized modifier seems to be particularly emphasized, especially if it refers to the size of the object (e.g., 'big cake', 'big tavern').

In addition to serving the information structure purposes *per se*, the postnominal use of modifiers can also be a consequence of the oral type of analyzed spontaneous narratives. In the analyzed narratives speakers often retell meaningful traditional customs or events which they personally experienced. Therefore, their retelling contains as many relevant details as they could remember. On the one hand, speakers aim to be as precise as possible and to transmit the complete message, often reaching for *ad hoc* word choices, unlike in written narratives. On the other hand, they tend to dynamize the narration, achieve a certain rhythm or revive the situations they describe. All these tendencies are reflected in their word ordering.

Mention should be made that it is often difficult to make a distinction between the contrastive and information focus, especially in languages in which the two focus notions are not structurally distinguished (KISS 1998b; KRIFKA 2008). Having this in mind, the analysis we have proposed in the paper strongly relies on the broad context of each NP. It is noteworthy that some examples can be treated differently from the perspective of whether they mark the contrastive or information focus. Furthermore, what creates a specific stylistic effect in oral narratives might also be a problematic notion, but a few examples of this kind have been proposed in the analysis as well. The most prominent stylistic effect is postposing of modifiers to obtain an effect of a formulaic expression, resembling those phrases in Serbian in which the stories of elders and of old traditions are evoked.

Keeping in mind that the study is based on corpus analysis, several advantages and disadvantages of the applied methodology should be acknowledged. A corpus-driven quantitative analysis enables measuring the frequency of adnominal modifiers in the postnominal position, consequently making a solid empirical ground for the investigation of variation in the domain of Romani NP. A qualitative corpus analysis allows for discovering the specific pragmatic factors which underlie the postnominal positioning. The communicative purposes would be difficult to grasp based on a different type of methodology, such as morpho-syntactic questionnaires (cf. LEGGIO 2011: 103) or acceptability judgment tasks (cf. ARSLAN et al. 2022), as they could only detect whether a particular word ordering is possible or not. On the other hand, corpus samples of spoken, spontaneous narratives allow for exploring the broader context and detecting phonological, syntactic, and pragmatic elements relevant for word order. As our results indicate, the postnominal positioning of adnominal modifiers is highly context-dependent – numerous examples of postposing were triggered by a particular topic – traditional culture, which required particular elements to be emphasized.

Nonetheless, in corpus analysis, there is always a possibility that a particular word or construction is not detected due to the corpus size or topic limitations. In the present study, a relatively small number of examples with the postposed modifiers was attested. Therefore, a larger corpus sample might reveal other pragmatic elements relevant for the alternative ordering in the Gurbet Romani NP. Furthermore, the study is based on the analysis of spoken narratives in the transcribed form, so the intonational contours of utterances, pauses, and other prosodic elements which might be relevant – were not analyzed in the study in detail. The observed pauses between head nouns and modifiers, as well as the detected prosodic emphasis of postnominal modifiers could not be considered sufficient and relevant enough to make a distinction between contrastive and information focus, or to point towards the prosodic features which correlate with word ordering and influence the information structure, since they are not used consistently. The prosodic marking could only be relevant if the proper systems for speech analysis or prosodic annotation were utilized, which was not possible given the limitations of the recorded material used in this study. Future research should take into account the relevance of prosody for the information structure and find ways to correctly measure prosodic data which accompany the non-canonical, postnominal position in NPs, preferably by planning the research so as to apply speech analysis software in the analysis of documented material.

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Мирјана Мирић

Светлана Ћирковић

ПОСТНОМИНАЛНА ПОЗИЦИЈА МОДИФИКАТОРА У ИМЕНИЧКОЈ ФРАЗИ У ГУРБЕТСКОМ РОМСКОМ ВАРИЈЕТЕТУ: КОРПУСНА СТУДИЈА

Резиме

Ова студија има за циљ да истражи услове који доводе до позиционирања адноминалних модификатора у постпозицију у именичкој фрази у гурбетском варијетету ромског језика, којим се говори у источној Србији. Именичке фразе, које су предмет анализе, ексцерпирани су из књажевачког корпуса гурбетског варијетета ромског који се састоји од узорака транскрибованих усмених наратива одраслих и деце.

Досадашња истраживања ромског језика су показала да адноминални модификатори типично заузимају позицију испред именице, а да је нетипичан ред речи у именичкој фрази (постноминална позиција модификатора) условљен граматичким, семантичким, прагматичким, комуникативним и стилистичким разлозима (MATRAS 2002; LEGGIO 2011; ADAMOŪ – MATRAS 2020). У студији се узима у обзир неколико лингвистичких фактора, који би хипотетички могли да мотивишу постноминалну позицију адноминалних модификатора: 1) врста речи којој модификатор припада, 2) порекло управне именице и модификатора, 3) прагматички фактори. У корпусу одраслих и деце (који садржи око 16.000 речи) потврђено је 46 примера употребе модификатора у постноминалној позицији у именичкој фрази.

Квантитативна анализа показује да је преноминална позиција модификатора типична у гурбетском ромском, имајући у виду низак проценат модификатора у постноминалној позицији у узорку одраслих (3,7%) и деце (1,3%), што је у складу са претходним истраживањима позиције модификатора у именичкој фрази у ромском језику. У погледу врсте речи, придеви се најчешће позиционирају иза именице у именичкој фрази будући да чине око 70% модификатора у постноминалној позицији у оба узорка, а међу придевима најфреквентније је постпониран ромски придев *baro* ‘велики’. Осим тога, квантитативна анализа показује да на постноминалну позицију не утичу порекло управне именице или модификатора, јер се и ромске инхерентне именице и придеви, као и именичке и придевске позајмљенице могу наћи у именичким фразама са постноминалним модификатором.

Главни део истраживања, фокусиран на разлоге за нетипичну позицију модификатора у именичкој фрази, указује на неколико релевантних прагматичких фактора који утичу на позиционирање модификатора иза именице: контрастни и информацијски фокус и стилски ефекти.

Када је у питању контрастни фокус, истраживање показује да фокализовани модификатор изражава нову, претходно непоменућу информацију, која је важна за разумевање самог наратива и која издваја употребљени модификатор из скупа могућих опција, које су неадекватне за дати контекст. Ово је посебно важно за именичке фразе које реферишу на елементе ромске традицијске културе, празнике и обичаје, за које је исправна интерпретација кључна за разумевање. Употребом модификатора маркираног постпозицијом у именичкој фрази елиминише се потенцијална двозначност употребљене именице.

Постпонирани модификатори у именичкој фрази који врше функцију информацијског фокуса додају нову информацију већ постојећим информацијама употребљеним у исказу, дајући право тумачење именичке фразе или пак целе реченице. У овом смислу информацијска структура има прагматичко својство постизања кохеренције у дискурсу. Такође, треба имати у виду да су анализирани наративи спонтано продуковани, са фокусом на традицијску културу, те да су за само разумевање наратива важни детаљи традицијске културе, чија је постноминална употреба у именичкој фрази елемент наративне стратегије подсећања. У неким случајевима су фокализовани модификатори посебно наглашени, посебно када се говори о величини поменутих објеката (нпр. *torta bari* 'велика торта', *kafana bari* 'велика кафана', *kazano baro* 'велики казан').

Спонтана продукција усмених наратива има и своје стилске ефекте, те се у ову сврху такође користи постноминална позиција модификатора у именичкој фрази. Говорници теже да унесу прецизност у наравију, али и да наравију учине динамичном, оживљеном, са посебним ритмом приповедања.

Важно је напоменути да дистинкција између контрастног и информацијског фокуса није увек јасна, посебно у језику у коме се ова два фокуса структурно не разликују.

Балканолошки институт САНУ
Кнез Михаилова 35/IV, 11000 Београд, Србија
mirjana.miric@bi.sanu.ac.rs
svetlana.cirkovic@bi.sanu.ac.rs

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