Modality in Romani

Viktor Elšík (Charles University, Prague)
Yaron Matras (University of Manchester)

1. Introduction

Romani\(^1\) (Indo-Aryan) is an inflectional language with a ‘thin’ layer of agglutinating morphology. Grammatical material is generally suffixed. Lexical roots that entered the language in the Byzantine period or later typically draw to some extent at least on Greek-derived morphology, which has remained productive since Byzantine contact for all subsequent loans from European languages. In its syntactic typology, Romani closely resembles typical Balkan formations, having undergone intense convergence with Greek, and later with other languages of the area. Romani is the only New Indo-Aryan language that relies exclusively on prepositions as analytic markers of semantic case roles, and the only Indo-Aryan language that possesses a definite article (pre-posed, as in Greek). Word order is flexible, generally alternating between verb-middle and verb-initial. Attributes are pre-posed. Subordinations are based on conjunctions, usually deriving from interrogatives. In complement clauses a distinction is made between factual and non-factual complements. Relative clauses are post-posed, usually introduced by an uninflected relativiser, and they usually require resumptive pronouns in the main clause.

The impact of diverse contact languages is a major feature differentiating the individual Romani dialects, and it is therefore difficult to generalise when discussing the structures of Romani. In the present contribution we try to exploit this structural diversity within Romani in order to draw some generalisations about the language based on a sample of dialects.\(^2\) Our subsequent discussion is therefore devoted to general tendencies in Romani. Alongside internal pathways of grammaticalisation, we shall also make use of the opportunity offered by the Romani sample and pay special attention to grammatical borrowing and language convergence and their role in shaping the inventory of modality-related structures in the language. Our data examples draw on both published sources

\(^1\) Information on the history of Romani and dialect differentiation within the language, accompanied by maps, examples, and sound samples, can be found on the website of the Manchester Romani Project: http://www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/Research/Projects/romani/. See also Matras (2002), Elšík & Matras (2006).

\(^2\) See also Elšík & Matras (2006), Matras (2002), and the Romani Morpho-Syntax (RMS) database on the Manchester Romani Project website. The sample contains over 350 recordings and questionnaire elicitation of different Romani dialects from across Europe, collected between 2000-2007. We acknowledge support for our work during this period from the Arts and Humanities Research Council, the Economic and Social Research Council, and the Open Society Institute.
whenever indicated; where a source is not identified, data derive from our own ongoing survey of European Romani dialects, as part of the RMS (Romani Morpho-Syntax) Database project (see footnote 2, and see Manchester Romani Project). Much of these data were collected by questionnaire elicitation, which in some cases puts certain limitations on the discussion and the scope for interpretation.

Our present work may be understood as a kind of follow-up to Boretzky’s (1996b) earlier work devoted to modals in Romani. In the present contribution, a vast amount of data is taken into consideration on dialects that had not been described and were in fact unknown in the research context at the time of Boretzky’s publication. Our discussion is also anchored in a wider morphosyntactic context, one which takes into account not just the etymology of individual expressions of modality, but attempts a more typologically informed evaluation of modal constructions, inspired by models in grammaticalization theory.

2. Modals in Romani

Early Romani, the ancestor of all Romani dialects, can be reconstructed to have possessed three or four dedicated modals: a volition modal and two or three possibility modals. In all likelihood, there were no dedicated necessity modals, although periphrastic constructions that could express necessity must have been available. Today we find a bewildering variety of modals and modal constructions within Romani, especially in the domain of necessity and, to a lesser extent, possibility. Volition is clearly the most stable form of modality. There are several sources of dialect divergence with regard to modals. The majority of necessity modals, numerous possibility modals and a couple of volition modals are dialect-specific loanwords from Romani’s European L2s. In addition to lexical borrowing, there are also several instances of contact-induced or ‘replica’ grammaticalization (cf. Heine & Kuteva 2005) of modals based (mostly) on indigenous lexical material. Finally, several modals may result from autonomous, contact-independent, grammaticalization within Romani. In order to abbreviate the subsequent discussion we first provide a morphosyntactic classification of Romani modal constructions (Section 2.1), which will then be referred to in the actual data subsections on volition, possibility and necessity modals (Sections 2.2–4). The last part of Section 2 is devoted to the interaction between modality and negation (Section 2.5).

2.1. Modal constructions

Romani modal constructions consist of two major parts: the modal and the main verb of the clause that encodes the modalized proposition. Since the clause need not be a complement of
the modal in syntactic terms (though it frequently is) and since the main verb in this clause need not be lexical, we use the term ‘modalized verb’. Romani modal constructions vary on several parameters, both across and within dialects. Most importantly, there are differences with regard to the location of **subject marking**. The modal subject (the subject of the modalized proposition) is expressed through an NP, which is mostly optional if the subject is pronominal. In addition, person, number and, rarely, gender of the modal subject are, in most constructions, also cross-referenced on the modal and/or on the modalized verb. We distinguish between **personal** vs **impersonal** constructions, according to whether the modal inflects for the subject categories or not; and between **finite** vs **nonfinite** constructions, according to whether the modalized verb inflects for the subject categories or not. The criterion of subject cross-referencing thus renders four types of modal constructions.

The following examples from Hameln Sinti illustrate three of these types: the impersonal–finite construction in (1a) may express different kinds of possibility, while the personal–finite (1b) and the personal–nonfinite (1c) constructions are specialized for participant-internal possibility.

(1) Hameln Sinti (Northwestern, Germany; Holzinger 1993)
   a. *Me givau našte.*
      I.NOM sing.PFUT.1SG can
      ‘I can sing.’ (p. 94)
   b. *Me hajeau te givap.*
      I.NOM understand.PFUT.1SG COMP sing.SUBJ.1SG
   c. *Me hajeau te givel.*
      I.NOM understand.PFUT.1SG COMP sing.SUBJ.3SG[ = INF]
      ‘I am able to sing.’ (p. 94)

The structural difference between the two synonymous personal constructions is noteworthy. In (1b) both the modal and the (subjunctive) modalized verb cross-reference the first-person singular subject, whereas in (1c) only the modal does so. The modalized verb instead assumes a default, third-person singular, subjunctive form. While the finite construction has been inherited from Early Romani, the nonfinite subjunctive, or the ‘new infinitive’ (Boretzky 1996b, cf. also Matras 2002: 161–162), is an imperfect copy of the infinitive used in corresponding constructions in German, the current L2 of Hameln Sinti. Numerous further Romani dialects outside of the Balkans have developed the ‘new infinitive’ in same-subject non-factual complement clauses (and some other tightly-integrated subordinate clauses), due to pattern borrowing from L2s that, like German, possess an infinitive verb
form. Nonfinite modal constructions are restricted to those Romani dialects that have developed the ‘new infinitive’. Personal–finite modal constructions, on the other hand, are restricted to those dialects that retain finite non-factual complements. Impersonal–finite modal constructions can occur in dialects of both types.

The one type of modal construction that has not been illustrated so far is the impersonal–nonfinite construction. In this type there is no cross-referencing of the modal subject, and so it must be overtly encoded through an NP even if it is pronominal. No subject marking at all may only occur if generic modal subject is intended. In the example from modern Finnish Romani (2) the impersonal modal takes a nonfinite (default third-person singular subjunctive) modalized verb and the first-person singular modal subject is marked solely through an accusative pronoun. In the example from Selice Romani (3) the impersonal modal takes nonfinite (default third-person plural subjunctive) modalized verbs and the generic subject remains unexpressed.

(2) Finnish Romani (Northwestern, Finland)

\[
\text{Mān mote lel tauva tram.}
\]

I.ACC must take.SUBJ.3SG[=INF] this medicine.NOM

‘I have to take this medicine.’

(3) Selice Rumungro (South Central, Slovakia)

\[
\text{Te te dživen kampe, na čak te}
\]

also COMP live.SUBJ.3PL[=INF] need NEG only COMP work.SUBJ.3PL[=INF]

‘One also needs to live, not only to work.’

Romani modal constructions also differ with regard to the location of TAM marking. While personal modals always do, impersonal modals may but need not inflect for TAM categories. In most Romani dialects modalized verbs in personal constructions and in TAM-inflected impersonal constructions assume a (finite or nonfinite) subjunctive form that does not encode tense or aspect. If however impersonal modals do not inflect for TAM, then TAM categories must be marked on the modalized verb. In other words, while the location of TAM marking is usually predictable from the location of subject marking in most constructions, the second criterion does differentiate between two types of impersonal–finite

---

3 Dialects differ in what the default form of the nonfinite subjunctive is: it may be, like in Hameln Sinti, the third-person singular, but also the third-person plural or the second-person singular. Some varieties of Ukrainian Romani have reduced the second-person singular nonfinite subjunctive into a form that is now distinct from any subjunctive form, e.g. 2SG subjunctive t’ir-ex ‘[that] you do’ vs infinitive t’ir-e ‘to do’.
constructions: those where TAM categories are marked on the modal and those where they are marked on the modalized verb. In the dialect of Sliven Muzikanta, for instance, past reference can be marked on the impersonal modal *trjabvizela*, in which case the modalized verb assumes the tenseless subjunctive (4a), or it can be marked on the modalized verb, in which case *trjabvizela* assumes the default present form (4b). For the functional difference between the two examples see Section 2.4.

(4) Sliven Muzikanta (Balkan, Bulgaria)

   must.IMPF.3SG COMP wait.SUBJ.1PL
   ‘We had to wait.’

b. *Trjabvizela* te dičhan les.
   must.PRES.3SG COMP see.PRET.2SG he.ACC
   ‘You must have seen him.’

All of the above patterns show TAM inflection either on the modal, or on the modalized verb. Nevertheless, instances of double TAM marking are also attested, though restricted to a few dialects. In the dialect of Parakalamos, as elsewhere in Romani, modalized verbs are in the subjunctive when the modal is in the present form (5a–b). However, unlike most dialects, Parakalamos Romani shows imperfect (rather than tenseless subjunctive) marking on the modalized verb when the modal is in the imperfect form. This kind of tense ‘agreement’ occurs irrespective of whether the modal is personal (5c) or impersonal (5d).

(5) Parakalamos Romani (Balkan, Greece; Matras 2004)

a. *Kamama* te avav demosityráfos.
   want.PRES.1SG COMP come.SUBJ.1SG journalist
   ‘I want to become a journalist.’ (p. 89)

b. *Prepi* te džas othe.
   must.PRES COMP go.SUBJ.1PL there
   ‘We have to go to town,’ (p. 72)

c. *Kamamas* te džavas ti poli.
   want.IMPF.1SG COMP go.IMPF.1SG to town
   ‘I wanted to go to town.’ (p. 75)

d. *Eprepe* te džakerasas.
   must.IMPF COMP wait.IMPF.1PL
   ‘We had to wait.’ (p. 88)
The NP that expresses the modal subject may be in the nominative case or in an oblique case (the dative, the locative, or the markerless oblique, whose main function is to mark animate direct objects and which is usually labelled the ‘accusative’). The two types of case marking of the modal subject are close to complementary. Nominative (canonical) marking always occurs in personal constructions (cf. 1b–c) and in those impersonal–finite constructions where TAM categories are marked on the modalized verb (cf. 1a). Oblique (noncanonical) marking, on the other hand, is obligatory in impersonal–nonfinite constructions (cf. 2). Nevertheless, we find variation between nominative and oblique marking in those impersonal–finite constructions where the modalized verb does not inflect for TAM categories. Typically the differentiation is lexically determined, though instances of (apparently) free variation are also attested. For example, in the dialect of Servy Ghympeny there are several impersonal modals, all of which take finite but tenseless complements: while našty always has a nominative subject (6a) and javel-pe always has a dative subject (6b), the subjects of treb’i alternate between nominative (6c) and dative marking (6d).

(6) Servy Ghympeny (Northeastern, Ukraine)

a. Me našty isys te otěhak’iraw udara.
   I.NOM cannot COP.3.PRET COMP uncover.1SG.SUBJ door.PL
   ‘I could not open the door.’

b. Mange javja -pe te užakiraw.
   I.DAT come.PRET.3SG REFL COMP wait.SUBJ.1SG
   ‘I had to wait.’

c. Tu treb’i vark’edys’ te javes ke me.
   thou.NOM need sometimes COMP come.SUBJ.2SG at/to I.NOM
   ‘You must come to me sometimes.’

d. Tuke treb’i dor’ik te džas.
   thou.DAT need there COMP go.SUBJ.2SG
   ‘You must go there.’

The role of finiteness in the case marking of the modal subject can be illustrated from a dialect that shows a different type of variation. In Kubanskie Servy the subject of impersonal modals nasći and trebun’i is nominative when the modalized verb is finite (7a–b) but dative when the verb is nonfinite (7c–d).

(7) Kubanskie Servy (Ukrainian, Ukraine and Russia)

a. Me nasći st’irav e ural’i.
   I.NOM cannot repair.SUBJ.1SG DEF car
‘I can’t repair the car.’

b. \[Tu \quad trebun’i \quad var’ikala \quad mande \quad te \quad avex.\]
\[\text{thou.NOM} \quad \text{must} \quad \text{sometimes} \quad \text{I.LOC} \quad \text{COMP} \quad \text{come.SUBJ.2SG}\]
‘You should visit me sometimes.’

c. \[Mand’i \quad nasči \quad te \quad makhe \quad o \quad cer.\]
\[\text{I.DAT} \quad \text{cannot} \quad \text{COMP} \quad \text{smear.INF} \quad \text{DEF} \quad \text{house}\]
‘I can’t paint the house.’

d. \[Tut’i \quad trebun’i \quad korde \quad te \quad dža.\]
\[\text{thou.DAT} \quad \text{must} \quad \text{there} \quad \text{COMP} \quad \text{go.INF}\]
‘You have to go there.’

Next, there are differences with regard to the internal \textit{constituency} and structural \textit{complexity} of modal expressions. While modals that inflect neither for TAM nor for subject categories are the least complex, one can further distinguish between \textit{synthetic} vs \textit{analytic} inflected modals. In synthetic modals TAM and/or subject categories are marked within the same word as modality. In analytic modals, on the other hand, the actual modality word is uninflected and inflectional categories are marked separately, on an inflectional auxiliary, which is structurally identical to the copula (and the verb of existence). The following examples from Podhradie Romani illustrate the three types of modals: an uninflected modal (8a), a synthetic inflected modal (8b) and an analytic inflected modal (8c).

In most instances of analytic modals the inflectional auxiliary assumes the default, third-person singular, subject category, thus only inflecting for TAM categories, and it is omitted in the present. The personal and obligatory auxiliary in (8c) is thus rather untypical in both respects. Nominal expressions of modality tend to require the copula, and so they resemble the analytic inflected modals. Adjectival modals, which are rather infrequent in Romani, show distributed marking of subject categories: the adjectival cross-references the number and (sometimes) gender of the modal subject, while the copula encodes the TAM categories and mostly cross-references the subject’s person and number, as in Crimean Romani (9).

(8) Podhradie Romani (North Central, Slovakia)

a. \[Šaj \quad džav \quad khēre.\]
\[\text{can} \quad \text{go.PRES.1SG} \quad \text{home}\]
‘I can go home.’

b. \[Kamav \quad khēre \quad te \quad džan.\]
\[\text{want.PRES.1SG} \quad \text{home} \quad \text{COMP} \quad \text{go.SUBJ.3PL[=} \text{INF}\]
‘I want to go home.’

c. \[Musaj \quad som \quad khēre \quad te \quad džan.\]
\[\text{must} \quad \text{COP.PRES.1SG} \quad \text{home} \quad \text{COMP} \quad \text{go.SUBJ.3PL[=} \text{INF}\]

Elšik & Matras \quad Modals in Romani \quad 7 \quad \text{of} \quad 47
‘I have to go home.’

(9) Crimean Romani (Balkan; Ukraine and Russia)

\[ Tume \ sanusas \ dolžn’a \ te \ raskeld’ijen \ les. \]

you COP.IMPF.2PL obliged.PL COMP meet.SUBJ.2PL he.ACC

‘You guys must have met him.’

Although modalized verbs are typically introduced by the non-factual complementizer \textit{te},\footnote{Apart from introducing non-factual complements, this polysemous connector may also introduce optative predications, conditional clauses, purpose clauses and further types of adverbial subordinations.} there are several kinds of exceptions. Some modals simply do not allow a complementizer. These include, but are not restricted to, expressions where an original complementizer has become an integral part of the modal. In Čáry Romani, for instance, some modals require the complementizer (10a), whereas others do not allow it (10c). Despite an etymological presence of \textit{*te} in the modal \textit{moste}, the construction (10b) is of the latter type: while the complementizer \textit{te} is separable from the modal and inseparable from the modalized verb (cf. 10a), the opposite holds for \textit{*te} in (10b). In many dialects some modals that usually take the complementizer may allow its occasional dropping. Importantly, the obligatory lack of a complementizer is restricted to uninflected modals, i.e. to constructions where TAM categories are marked solely on the modalized verb. There is no such limitation with the optional dropping of \textit{te}.

(10) Čáry Romani (North Central, Slovakia)

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Kamlom} \ \textit{ole} \ \textit{čhavenca} \ \textit{te} \ \textit{vakerel}.
\text{want.PRET.1SG} \ \text{that.OBL.PL} \ \text{boy.INSTR.PL} \ \text{COMP}
\text{speak.SUBJ.3SG[=}INF\]
\text{‘I wanted to talk to those boys.’}
\item \textit{Moste} \ \textit{prekal} \ \textit{odā} \ \textit{prelezindom}.
\text{must} \ \text{over} \ \text{that} \ \text{crowl.over.PRET.1SG}
\text{‘I had to climb over it.’}
\item \textit{Šaj} \ \textit{tut} \ \textit{vareso} \ \textit{dās}.
\text{can} \ \text{you.ACC} \ \text{something} \ \text{give.IMPF.1SG}
\text{‘I could give you something.’}
\end{enumerate}

Even if licenced by the modal, the complementizer is mostly omitted when the modalized verb is borrowed and retains its L2 inflection. For example, the modal \textit{može} in Kaspičan Xoraxane requires \textit{te} with indigenous modalized verbs (11a) but the
complementizer must be omitted with Turkish-inflected verbs (11b). Similarly, some Russian Romani modals require te with indigenous modalized verbs but there is no complementizer when the verb is borrowed from Russian, in which case it retains its Russian infinitive form. There is one dialect, Dolenjski Romani, where the complementizer te has been lost altogether, in modal constructions and elsewhere (see Matras 2002: 210 for details), having been replaced by the Slovene complementizer da (12a–b) or dropped altogether, especially in nonfinite constructions (12c).

(11) Kaspičan Xoraxane (Balkan, Bulgaria)
   a. Može te džas kaj gav.
      can COMP go.SUBJ.1PL to village
      ‘We can go to town.’
   b. Može inanasinus leske.
      can believe.SUBJ.2PL he.DAT
      ‘You can believe him.’

(12) Dolenjski Romani (Slovene/Istrian, Slovenia; Cech & Heinschink 2001)
   a. Triba da leske dav love.
      need COMP he.DAT give.SUBJ.1SG money.PL
      ‘I need to give him money.’ (p. 357)
   b. Hočemo da lam duj phabaja.
      [want.PRES.1PL] SLOVENE COMP take.SUBJ.1PL two apple.PL
      ‘We want to take two apples.’ (p. 357)
   c. Morinave lake del love.
      must.IMPF.1SG she.DAT give.SUBJ.3SG[=INF] money.PL
      ‘I had to give her money.’ (p. 356)

Several generalizations regarding the linear order within modal constructions can be made. The inflectional auxiliary, if there is one, immediately follows the modality word proper, thus conforming to the position of synthetic verb inflections. This order, however, is not required in nominal modal constructions with a copula (cf. 9). The complementizer, if any, precedes the modalized verb, usually immediately, though it may be separated from the verb by negators or pronominal clitics in some dialects. In pragmatically neutral contexts modals precede modalized verbs; they may be separated by other constituents, including the subject NP. However, most dialects probably allow pragmatically motivated fronting of modalized verbs, which results in postposed modals, cf. focus fronting in (3). German Sinti stands out in allowing postposition of uninflected modals even in neutral contexts, cf. (1a).
Table 1 summarizes the structure of five major types of modal constructions in Romani (COMP+ means that the complementizer is at least optionally present with Romani-inflected modalized verbs):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>constr.</th>
<th>SUBJECT INF.</th>
<th>TAM INF.</th>
<th>NOM NP</th>
<th>AUX</th>
<th>COMP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>modal verb</td>
<td>modal verb</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PF</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>±</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>±</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PnF</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>±</td>
<td>±</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nPF1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>±</td>
<td>±</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nPF2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nPnF</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Personal–finite (PF) constructions mark TAM categories on the modal, use the complementizer and have a nominative subject; they vary with respect to the marking of TAM categories on the modalized verb and with respect to the presence of an inflectional auxiliary. Personal–nonfinite (PnF) constructions mark TAM categories solely on the modal, use the complementizer, and have a nominative subject; there may but need not be an auxiliary. There are two major types of impersonal–finite constructions. Those that mark TAM categories on the modal (nPF1) always allow the complementizer but vary on a number of parameters: TAM marking on the modalized verb, case marking of the subject NP and the presence of an inflectional auxiliary. Those impersonal–finite constructions that do not mark TAM categories on the modal (nPF2) are rather uniform: they mark TAM on the modalized verb, have a nominative subject, and cannot have an inflectional auxiliary since the modal is uninflected; the complementizer may be obligatorily lacking. Finally, impersonal–nonfinite (nPnF) constructions mark TAM categories solely on the modal, have an oblique subject, and allow the complementizer.

2.2. Volition
There are two widespread expressions of volition in Romani. The verb kam- is the exclusive expression of volition in most Romani dialects, and can hence be reconstructed as the Early

---

5 As it is not restricted to modal constructions, the obligatory lack of a complementizer in Dolenjski Romani nonfinite constructions is disregarded in Table 1.

6 Inflectional auxiliaries are unattested in Romani impersonal–nonfinite modal constructions. This does not appear to be due to any structural reason, however.
Romani form. This verb can still be used with nominal objects, and in most dialects it retains its lexical meanings ‘to love, to like’ and ‘to desire’. The lexical kam- ‘to love’ is certainly pre-European, though it might be a loanword from West Iranian or Armenian (cf. Boretzky 1995b: 141) rather than continuing an Old Indo-Aryan etymon (as suggested by Sampson 1926, II: 131). In the Romani dialects of the Balkans kam- competes with a more recent volition expression, the verb mang-. The latter has its origin in the common Romani verb mang- ‘to ask for, to demand’, also used for ‘to beg’ (and from the latter meaning sometimes generalised for ‘to make a living by hawking, fortune-telling or begging’). The two volition verbs appear alongside each other in several Romani dialects of the Balkans (see also Section 2.5), whereas in other dialects of this area mang- has replaced kam-, taking over all of its functions, both lexical and modal. While the grammaticalization of kam- into a volition modal must pre-date the split of Romani dialects, the grammaticalisation of mang- appears to be a fairly recent phenomenon that emerged after the outwards migration from the Balkans of some of the groups, and one that is still spreading within the area. Its origin can be traced in all likelihood to replica grammaticalisation of the South Slavic construction, e.g. Bulgarian iskam ‘I want’ as well as ‘I demand’. Lexical borrowings of volition modals are infrequent: we only find the verb wànt-(a)s- from English in Welsh Romani (Sampson 1926, II: 401) and the verb hoč- from Slovene in Dolenjski Romani of Slovenia, both of which alternate with indigenous volition verbs.

All volition verbs are personal (Type PF or PnF) and mostly take the complementizer te (cf. 8b, 10a, 13a, 53), with the usual exceptions (see Section 2.1, ex. 12c). Occasional dropping of the complementizer is attested, for example, in Piemontese Sinti (Franzese 1985: 126). In some Romani dialects of Slovakia, including Klenovec Rumungro, the personal construction (13a) alternates with a less agentive volitional construction, which is impersonal (Type nPnF). The impersonal volition verb contains middle marking: either synthetic (13b), or analytic, reflexive-like (cf. 37c), as in Slovak, the source of this construction. In several dialects of northeastern Europe and the Balkans the verb kampreserves an archaic first-person singular non-perfective suffix -am, rather than the regular -(a)v. In the past tense, the modal verb may, in some dialects, take the simple preterite (14), but the imperfect (a non-perfective remote tense) is often preferred (15), which is typical of the portrayal of mental states. The Dolenjski volition loanword from Slovene retains its L2 inflection (cf. 12b).

(13) Klenovec Rumungro (South Central, Slovakia)

a. Na kames te džan ano gaw.  
   NEG want.PRES.2SG COMP go.SUBJ.3PL[=INF] in.DEF town  
   ‘You don’t want to go to town.’

b. Musaj odoj te džas
must there COMP go.SUBJ.2SG
te iš tuke na kamisaľol te
if too thou.DAT NEG want.MIDDLE.PRES.3SG COMP
džan.
go.SUBJ.3PL[=INF]
‘You have to go there, even if you don’t want to go.’

(14) Kohila Romani (Northeastern, Estonia)
Me kamjom khere te džal.
I.NOM want.PRET.1SG home COMP go.SUBJ.3SG[=INF]
‘I wanted to go home.’

(15) Kaspičan Xoraxane (Balkan, Bulgaria)
Mangavas te džav mange khere.
want.IMPF.1SGCOMP go.SUBJ.1SG I.DAT home
‘I wanted to go home.’

2.3. Possibility

Two or three possibility modals can be reconstructed for Early Romani: certainly the affirmative šaj and the negative našti, and probably also the affirmative ašti. Though šaj is clearly of pre-European origin in Romani, its precise etymology remains open: it may either continue some form of the Old Indo-Aryan possibility verb šakno- (Boretzky 1996a: 3), or it may be a borrowing of the Persian possibility modal šāje into Proto-Romani (Matras 2002: 162–163, also mentioned in Boretzky & Igla 1994: 268). The origin of ašti is likewise disputed. Matras (2002: 162–163, following Sampson 1926: 216) hints at the Old Indo-Aryan third-person singular present copula form asti as its source,7 thus suggesting that Early Romani possessed both the original ašti and the pre-European borrowing šaj. Boretzky (1996a: 5–6), on the other hand, considers ašti to result from analogical decomposition of the negative našti, whereby n- of našti was identified with the indicative negator na. He also claims that this decomposition took place in individual dialects rather than before the dialect split of Romani, thus implying that šaj was the only possibility modal in Early Romani.8

7 As Boretzky (1995a: 5) points out correctly, the OIA copula form asti is usually considered to be the source of the Romani third person present copula form iš. Nonetheless, a split development might also be considered, accounting for parallel forms.
8 The current dialect distribution of ašti suggests inheritance from Early Romani rather than independent dialect-specific innovations. While šaj has been retained in a geographically contiguous area (stretching from

Elšík & Matras

Modals in Romani

12 of 47
Boretzky & Igla (1994: 196) derive našti from a construction consisting of the indicative negator, the affirmative modal šaj and the non-factual complementizer te, i.e. from *na šaj te. However, našti may also continue a regularly negated form of the possibility modal ašti (Matras 2002: 162–163). The disputed modal ašti has two etymologically unclear variants: šašty or sašty in Lithuanian and Latvian Romani and dašti- in Kalderaš and related North Vlax varieties (also diffused into some Ursari varieties). Assuming that both šaj and ašti were present in Early Romani, the question arises of what the functional difference between them was. This issue will be taken up in Section 3.1.

In most Romani dialects the inherited possibility modals are uninflected and occur in impersonal–finite constructions with TAM marking on the modalized verb (Type nPF2). They do not allow a complementizer in some dialects (those spoken in central-eastern Europe and occasionally in the Balkans and elsewhere), whereas in other dialects the complementizer is required or at least allowed. Several dialects spoken in, or originating from, Romania show synthetic personal inflection (Type PF) of the inherited possibility modals, at least variably, e.g. Pikulešti–Kurturare šaj(-in)- and nasči(-n)-, Kalderaš-type dašti(-sar)- and našti(-sar)-, and Ursari (d)ašti(-z)-. In fact, uninflected dašti is attested in a single dialect (Boretzky & Igla 2004: 183). Though indigenous, these subject-inflected modals display morphological adaptation typical of loanverbs. Impersonal inflection (Type nPF1) of the inherited possibility modals is rare: we find synthetic marking of TAM categories in Piedmontese Sinti, e.g. stik-o-l-a [-middle-3SG-PFUT], alternating with uninflected stik < *ašti; and analytical marking of TAM categories in some dialects of Ukraine (cf. 6a). The inflected possibility modals, as a rule, require the complementizer.

In addition to the possibility modals inherited from Early Romani, many dialects employ possibility expressions that result from dialect-specific grammaticalizations of pre-modal constructions or lexical verbs. An impersonal copula construction, which has been grammaticalized into a dedicated necessity modal in several dialects (see Section 2.4), is reported to have developed into a possibility expression in Crimean Romani (cf. Boretzky 1999a: 113). A negative impersonal copula construction probably also underlies the negative possibility modals nahi or naj < *na hi [NEG COP.PRES.3] in a few dialects of the Balkans and in Core Sinti (Boretzky & Igla 2004: 184). Note that if we are to assume that ašti developed from an Old Indo-Aryan copula, then the dialect-specific development of possibility modals from the Romani copula represents a ‘second round’ of the same type of grammaticalization.

Quite commonly, participant-internal possibility (ability or capability) is expressed by personal verbs meaning ‘to know’, ‘to understand’ or ‘to manage’, which as a rule retain

---

Czechia to northwestern Bulgaria plus recent out-migrant dialects), reflexes of ašti are attested within most dialect groups of Romani.
their pre-modal meanings as well. The ability function of the indigenous verb (a)xaljov- ‘to understand’ is only attested in some dialects of Ukraine, Germany, and Finland, e.g. in Kotka Romani (16). On the other hand, the (cap)ability function of the indigenous verb džan- ‘to know’ is widespread within Romani, to the extent that Boretzky (1999b: 178) considers it to be reconstructable for Early Romani. At least in some Romani dialects the extension of these lexical verbs to (cap)ability functions is likely to have resulted from contact-induced grammaticalization, as this kind of polyfunctionality is common Romani’s L2s. In several dialects spoken in and around Hungary, possibly due to pattern borrowing from Hungarian (cf. Boretzky & Igla 2004: 184), the (cap)ability verbs (17a) have been extended to express participant-external possibility functions as well (17b).

(16) Kotka Romani (Nortwestern, Finland)

Hajjuveha -ko tu cērel butti touveria?
understand.PFUT.2SG -Q thou do.SUBJ.3SG[=INF]work ax.INSTR
‘Are you able to work with an ax?’

(17) Gabor Romani (North Vlax, Romania)

a. Čokanosa žane te kere buči?
hammer.INSTR know.PRES.2SG COMP do.SUBJ.2SG work
‘Are you able to work with a hammer?’

b. Či žanel te žal -tar pînê na
NEG know.PRES.3SG COMP go.SUBJ.3SG away until NEG
arakël e čic.
find.SBJ.3SG DEF key
‘He can’t leave until he finds the key.’

In some Romani dialects of central Europe the Early Romani verb troma- ‘to dare’ of Greek origin has developed deontic possibility (permission) functions (cf. Boretzky & Igla 2004: 187). An identical semantic development is attested in Slavic languages (cf. Hansen 2003: 11) and German, and so contact-induced grammaticalization may be the source of this extension (Boretzky & Igla 1994: 183). While the permission modal retains its personal verb inflection in the Central dialects, it has fused with the original complementizer in Sinti, losing all inflection on the way, e.g. *troma- te > Hungarian Sinti trunti (18; Type nPF2). In some Rumungro dialects the verb troma- is now a dedicated permission modal (19a; Type PnF), while the lexical meaning ‘to dare’ is expressed by a construction involving a secondary nominal back-formation from the verb (19b).
(18) Hungarian Sinti (Northwestern, Hungary; Mészáros 1980: 10)

Trunti džal dren.
be_allowed go.SUBJ.3SG in
‘S/he is allowed to come in.’

(19) Klenovec Rumungro (South Central, Slovakia)

a. Me tromaw odā te keren.
I.NOM be_allowed.PRES.1SG that COMP do.SUBJ.3PL[ = INF]
‘I am allowed to do it.’
b. Man hi troma odā te keren.
I.ACC COP.PRES.3 courage that COMP do.SUBJ.3PL[ = INF]
‘I dare [lit. I have courage] to do it.’

Several possibility modals have quite interesting lexical sources. For example, the verb vydža- ‘to go out’ (consisting of a Slavic aktionsart prefix and the indigenous verb dža- ‘to go’) is used impersonally, with locative or dative marking of the subject NP, as the basic possibility modal in the Xandžary dialect of Ukraine. The construction is probably based on a Ukrainian idiomatic expression (‘it goes out to someone’ meaning ‘it works out for someone’), though the extension to possibility (‘it is possible [can work out] for someone’) is an autonomous innovation of the Romani dialect. The modal is attested in a wide range of possibility uses: ability (20a; Type nPnF), participant-external possibility (20b; Type nPF1) and permission (20c; Type nPnF). Further curious examples of lexical resources for possibility include the personal verbs dol- ‘to get, become; to get, receive; to get [somewhere]’ (21a; Type PnF), which consists of a Slavic aktionsart prefix and the indigenous verb l- ‘take’, and pēr- ‘to fall; to get [somewhere]’ (21b) in Kohila Romani. Both expressions share the meaning ‘to get [somewhere]’, which might be the immediate pre-modal meaning. 9

(20) Xandžary (Ukrainian, Ukraine)

a. Mande na vydžal te t’ire ural’i.
I.LOC NEG go_out.PRES.3SG COMP do.INF car
‘I am not able to repair the car.’
b. Lest’i na vydžal te udžal
he.DAT NEG go_out.PRES.3SG COMP leave.SUBJ.3SG
poka vov na rakhel t’ii.

9 The grammaticalization of motion verbs meaning ‘to arrive at, to reach’ into ability modals is well attested (cf. Heine & Kuteva 2002: 45–46).
until he.NOM NEG find.PRES.3SG key
‘He can’t leave until he finds the key.’
c. Tute vydžala te dža mansa.
thou.LOC go_out.fut.3SG COMP go.INF.INSTR
‘You may come with me.’

(21) Kohila Romani (Northeastern, Estonia)
a. Me dolā tuke löve tašša te
I.NOM get.PFUT.1SG thou.DAT money.PL tomorrow COMP
plajskyrel.
pay.SUBJ.3SG[=INF]
‘I can pay you [back] tomorrow.’
b. Jov kindža peske neve idža
he.NOM buy.PRET.3SG REFL.DAT new.PL clothes.PL
sob te pērel džal ande foros.
so_that COMP fall.SUBJ.3SG go.SUBJ.3SG in town
‘He bought himself new clothes so that he could go into town.’

Lexical **borrowing** of possibility modals into Romani is well attested, though many dialects do without a possibility loanword. Loans of the following possibility modals are attested within Romani: Greek *boro*, Macedonian and Bulgarian *možće*, Slovene *lahko*, Polish *móc*, East Slavic *moče’* and *možno*, German *dürfen*, Italian *potere*, and Finnish *voida*. Possibility loanwords tend to be borrowed from the current L2s of the relevant Romani dialects, although Slovene-derived *lako* and *lax* are also attested in some Italian Romani varieties, e.g. Venetian Sinti (cf. Boretzky & Igla 2004: 183). Most loanwords have a wide range of possibility functions, with the exception of the loan of German *dürfen* into German Sinti, which is, like the source form, specialized for deontic possibility (permission).

The Greek, Polish and Finnish possibility modals plus East Slavic *moče’* are personal verbs and they are always borrowed as such into Romani. Most commonly the loans are morphologically integrated into Romani verb inflection in the same way as other borrowed verbs are, through adaptation of a frequent inflectional stem of the L2 modal by means of a dialect-specific loanverb suffix, e.g. *bor-in- or bor-iz- (< Greek) in some varieties of Greek Romani; *mog-in-, moy-in- or mož-in- (< Slavic) in numerous Northeastern dialects of Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine; and *voj-uv- or *vojp-uv- (< Finnish) in Finnish Romani. Nevertheless, in some dialects in current contact with Greek and East Slavic, the possibility loanverbs are borrowed together with their L2 inflection, e.g. Parakalamos Romani (22), Russian Romani, some Servy dialects of Ukraine, and Crimean Romani (23). In all of these latter dialects this borrowing strategy is also common with lexical verbs.
(22) Parakalamos Romani (Balkan, Greece; Matras 2004)

a. *Boro te džav.*
   can.PRES.1SG COMP go.SUBJ.1SG
   ‘I can go.’ (p. 87)

b. *Na borusa te phiravas i vudar.*
   NEG can.PRET.1SG COMP open.IMPF.1SG DEF door
   ‘I could not open the door.’ (p. 94)

(23) Crimean Romani (Balkan, Ukraine and Russia)

   *Tu možeš te pak’as leske.*
   thou.NOM can.PRES.2SG COMP believe.SUBJ.2SG he.DAT
   ‘You can believe him.’

Although the East South Slavic possibility verb *može* may also be subject-inflected, it is frequently used as an impersonal modal, assuming the default, third-person singular, subject category. While some Romani dialects that borrow this modal allow both constructions, others have generalized the impersonal construction. Personal loanwords of *može* are always morphologically adapted through dialect-specific loanverb suffixes, e.g. *mož-in-, mož-ij-, mož-iz-, mož-is-, mož-i(sar)-*, i.e. there is no retention of L2 subject inflection. Impersonal loanwords of the verb, on the other hand, may but need not be adapted. Most dialects borrow the third-person singular present L2 form *može*, although they may also allow its adaptation and indigenous third-person singular inflection, especially in more complex TAM categories. Obligatory adaptation of the impersonal verb even in the present is exceptional, attested for example in Rakitovo Yerli, cf. *mož-ij-al-a/as [-LOAN-3SG-PRES/REM]* (24).

(24) Rakitovo Yerli (Balkan, Bulgaria)

a. *Možijalali to karon buti čukosa?*
   can.PRES.3SG Q COMP do.SUBJ.2SG work hammer.INSTR
   ‘Can you work with a hammer?’

b. *Of na daralas če možijalas to*
   he.NOM NEG fear.IMPF.3SG COMP can.IMPF.3SG COMP 
   *parol.*
   fall.SUBJ.3SG
   ‘He was not afraid that he could fall.’
The East Slavic construction of možno is retained in Romani: though the modality word itself is uninflected, it takes an impersonal inflectional auxiliary that must be omitted in the present indicative (Type nPF). The auxiliary is either borrowed in its East Slavic form or rendered by the Romani copula. The uninflected possibility modal lako in Dolenjski Romani is, like its Slovene source, used in impersonal–finite constructions with TAM marking on the modalized verb (Type nPF2) and without a complementizer (25). The German Sinti permission modal darfte occurs in the same type of construction, as the complementizer te has become an integral part of the modal; darf- is a petrified singular present stem of the German modal dürfen.

(25) Dolenjski Romani (Slovene/Istrian; Slovenia)
a.  I  brzo  lende  lako  živinamo.
and without they.LOC can live.PRES.1PL
‘And we can live without them.’ (p. 357)
b.  Pe  domislindža  da  ruv  lako  haja  porana
REFL.ACC realize.PRET.3SG COMP.wolf can eat.PRET.3SGold.ACC
  daja
mother.ACC
‘He realized that the wolf may have eaten the grandmother.’ (p. 359)

2.4. Necessity

In all likelihood, there were no dedicated necessity modals in Early Romani. The necessity modals we find in present-day Romani are loanwords or result from recent, dialect-specific, grammaticalizations. Nevertheless, we also find in various Romani dialects several weakly grammaticalized modal constructions that indicate how necessity could have been expressed in Early Romani. These constructions do not contain a dedicated modal word (or affix) and quite often they are not even specialized for expressing a certain kind of modality. For example, in Sepečides the independent subjunctive, introduced by the non-factual connector $ti < \ast te$, can be used to express not only necessity (26a), but also permission (26b), volition (26c) and other modal meanings (Cech & Heinschink 1999b: 119–120). And in Welsh Romani a personal construction involving the copula and a finite (subjunctive or present indicative) complement, also introduced by $te$, can be used to express not only necessity (27a), but also possibility (27b) or general engagement\(^\text{10}\) in an event (27c). A similar range of modal functions is also attested for impersonal constructions involving the

\(^{10}\) As Sampson’s (1926, II: 119) lexicographic definition goes: ‘to be in the act of, to be occupied or engaged in, to be the fact that’.

Elšik & Matras
Modals in Romani
18 of 47
copula in some dialects of the Balkans (cf. Boretzky 1999a: 113). Necessity is not explicitly encoded in examples such as (26a) and (27a), and so their necessity reading (and translation) must involve some sort of pragmatic inference.

(26) Sepečides (Balkan, Turkey; Cech & Heinschink 1999b: 120)
a. Okulestar ti daras!
   that.ABL COMP fear.SBJ.1PL
   ‘We must be afraid of that!’
b. Ti bešav akate?
   COMP sit.SBJ.1SG here
   ‘May I sit here?’
b. Akana me tuke ti vakerav…
   now I.NOM thou.DAT COMP speak.SBJ.1SG
   ‘Now I want to tell you…’

(27) Welsh Romani (British, Wales; Sampson 1926, II: 119)
a. Šomaš te lā phabā kjathakja
   COP.PRET.1SG COMP take.SBJ.1SG apple.PL such_and_such
   thaneste.
   place.ABL
   ‘I had to fetch apples from such and such a place.’
b. Na šom mē te reperava kek.
   NEG COP.PRES.1SG I.NOMCOMP remember.PRES.1SG NEG
   ‘I cannot remember.’
c. Šom mē te dživava lesa.
   COP.PRES.1SG I.NOMCOMP live.PRES.1SG he.INSTR
   ‘I am living with him.’

Nevertheless, the above modal constructions may become specialized for necessity, especially deontic necessity (but also for possibility, see Section 2.3). In Hameln Sinti, for instance, the independent subjunctive without te always conveys obligation (28; Holzinger 1993: 92), as does the impersonal copula construction in Welsh Romani (29a–b). In the latter construction the modal subject is not only cross-referenced on the subjunctive verb but also encoded through an obligatory accusative-marked NP. Necessity here is modelled on predicative possession, whereby the modal subject is construed as the possessor of the modalized event: in most Romani dialects, including Welsh Romani, the predicative possessive construction consists of a nominative-marked possessee NP, the copula agreeing with it in number (and person, if the possessee is pronominal, which is rare) and an oblique-
marked possessor NP (29c). The possession model for necessity is exactly what we find in English, one of the L2’s of Welsh Romani. Boretzky & Iglá (2004: 185) suggest that Romani possessive-like necessity constructions, which are well attested in several dialects, may result from contact-induced grammaticalization on the model of possessive-like necessity modals in various European languages. In some North Central dialects of Slovakia, including Čáry Romani, a personal (rather than impersonal–possessive) copula construction is specialized to express weak necessity, especially weak obligation (30). Even though Slovak, the current L2 of the dialect, expresses weak necessity by the verb of possession, here too we might be dealing with an instance of pattern borrowing, though a less straightforward one.

(28) Hameln Sinti (Northwestern, Germany; Holzinger 1993: 325)

Štrap i grajes, krap leske
brush.SUBJ.1SG DEF.OBL horse.ACC do.SUBJ.1SG he.DAT
futera.
animal_food
‘I must brush the horse, I must prepare food for him.’

(29) Welsh Romani (British, Wales; Sampson 1926)

a. Šī man te dā les būt lōvō.
COP.PRES.3 I.ACC COMP give.SUBJ.1SG he.ACC many money
‘I have to give him a lot of money.’ (II, p. 119)

b. Sas ī Džakes te del les vavēr stādi
COP.PRET.3 DEF.OBL Jack.ACC COMP give.SUBJ.3SG other hat
sunakaj.
gold
‘Jack had to give him another hatful of gold.’ (I, p. 213)

c. Sas ī phuriā trīn guruniā.
COP.PRET.3 DEF.OBL old.F.ACC three cow.PL
‘The old woman had three cows.’ (I, p. 213)

(30) Čáry Romani (North Central, Slovakia)

Sal tuke te pametinel so
COP.PRES.2SG thou.DAT COMP remember.SUBJ.3SG[ = INF] what

tuč phenā.
thou.DAT say.fut.1SG
‘You ought to remember what I’m going to tell you.’
In several dialects the weakly grammaticalized copula constructions have undergone considerable grammaticalization. In most South Central the impersonal copula construction developed into a strongly grammaticalized necessity modal *site* or *iste*, which continues the third-person present indicative copula form *(i)si* plus the complementizer *te*. And in the Core Sinti dialects the personal copula construction developed into the strongly grammaticalized necessity modal *hunte*, *unti* etc.,¹¹ which continues the generalized first-person singular¹² present indicative copula form *hom* < *(i)som* plus the complementizer (cf. already Pott 1844). In either case the two etymological components have fused together and the resulting univerbal modal is separable from the modalized verb. In Selice Rumungro *site* may constitute a separate utterance (31b) and in Hameln Sinti *hunte* may be postposed to the verb (32b). Although both modals are historically based on a present indicative copula form, neither inflects for TAM categories: their marking has shifted from the copula to the modalized verb (31b, 32c; Type nPF2). The Rumungro modal takes a regular negator rather than involve the irregular negative third-person present copula form, i.e. *na site* rather than *nane te* (31b). Both modal constructions now show nominative marking of the modal subject (31a, 32a–b), although in older Rumungro oblique marking was still available in the impersonal *si te* construction (cf. Müller 1869: 161). Unlike their less grammaticalized source constructions, *site* and *hunte* serve as the basic necessity modals in the respective dialects and have a wide range of necessity functions.

(31) Selice Rumungro (South Central, Slovakia)

a. *Amen site džas onďa.*
   we.NOM must go.SUBJ.1PL there.
   ‘We have to go there.’

b. *Na site mange papaleg palikerďal.* *De, site!*
   NEG must I.DAT again thank.PRET.2SG but must
   ‘[A:] You need not have thanked me again. [B:] I did have to!’

(32) Hameln Sinti (Northwestern, Germany; Holzinger 1993: 92–93)

a. *Tu hunte kres kova.*
   thou.NOM must do.SUBJ.2SG that

b. *Tu kres kova hunte.*

¹¹ The modal *hunte* has also diffused from Sinti into Bohemian (North Central) Romani. It appears to have been present also in some Para-Romani varieties (cf. Boretzky & Iglá 2004: 184–185).

¹² Boretzky & Iglá (2004: 185) find the generalization of this person–number category suprising. It should be noted, however, that the first person singular is, cross-linguistically, the second most frequent person–number category in verbal paradigms (Bybee 1985).
thou.NOM do.SUBJ.2SG that must
‘You have to do that.’
c. Hunte džajom khere.
must go.PRET.1SG home
‘I had to go home.’

Like the South Central dialects, the Lovari-type dialects spoken in and around Hungary, including Austrian Lovari, possess the necessity modal site or iste, which is used in constructions with TAM marking on the modalized verb (33a; Type nPF2). Unlike its South Central counterpart, however, the Lovari modal is not separable from the modalized verb. In addition, the dialect has also retained a less grammaticalized copula construction in the past, where tense is marked on the copula rather than on the modalized verb and where the complementizer clearly remains a separate syntactic unit (33b; Type nPF1). The latter construction is only attested as an expression of participant-external necessity, while site appears to have a wider range of necessity functions.

(33) Austrian Lovari (North Vlax, Austria)
   a. Site ašasas khere.
      must stay.IMPF.1PL home
      ‘We had to stay at home.’ (Cech et al. 1999: 28)
   b. Me sas te dikhav pel grast.
      I.NOM COP.PRET.3 COMP see.SUBJ.1SG on.DEF.PL horse
      Sas te pijavav, te xaxavav
      COP.PRET.3 COMP make_drink.SUBJ.1SG COMP make_eat.SUBJ.1SG
      they.ACC
      ‘I had to take care of the horses. I had to give them to drink, to feed them.’ (Fennesz-Juhasz & Heinschink 1999: 66)

There are several further sources of dialect-specific grammaticalization of necessity modals in Romani. A few Balkan and Appenine dialects of Romani have grammaticalized the verb ther- ‘to hold’ into a personal verb of possession (‘to have’) and in one of these dialects, Rumelian Romani, this verb may also express necessity (34; Type PF). Both developments are contact-induced (cf. Boretzky & Igla 2004: 185), the latter once again, as with the impersonal copula construction, exemplifying the possessive model for necessity. Another common source of necessity expressions in Romani are volition verbs (cf. Boretzky 1996a: 14–17). Personal volition verbs may occasionally be used to express necessity in some Romani dialects of Greece, Slovakia, Ukraine (35; Type PF) and perhaps
elsewhere. Pattern borrowing from Greek can be invoked to explain these uses at least in Greek Romani (cf. Boretzky 1996a: 16). In quite a few dialects the polysemous verb kam- (see Section 2.2) may also mean ‘to owe’ and this meaning, rather than the verb’s volition meaning, might be the immediate source of its necessity uses (cf. English ought, the historical past of owe).

(34) Rumelian Romani (Balkan, Turkey; Paspati 1973 [1870], Boretzky 1999a: 113)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Therava} & \quad \text{te} \quad \text{phenav} \quad \text{tuke.} \\
\text{have.PRES.1SG}\text{COMP} & \quad \text{say.SUBJ.1SG} \quad \text{thou.DAT}
\end{align*}
\]

‘I have to tell you.’

(35) Servy Ghympeny (Northeastern, Ukraine)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Me} & \quad \text{na} \quad \text{kamam} \quad \text{dala} \quad \text{draba} \\
\text{I.NOM} & \quad \text{NEG} \quad \text{like.PRES.1SG} \quad \text{this.PLdrug.PL} \\
\text{save} & \quad \text{me} \quad \text{kamam} \quad \text{te} \quad \text{prlaw.} \\
\text{which.PL} & \quad \text{I.NOMwant.PRES.1SG} \quad \text{COMP} \quad \text{take.SUBJ.1SG}
\end{align*}
\]

‘I do not like these pills that I have to take.’

Impersonal de-volitional construction show a greater degree of grammaticalization. In these constructions the volition verb takes the default, third-person singular form and is accompanied by a reflexive pronoun in the accusative case, which is a way of decreasing the construction’s valency; the modal subject NP is in an oblique case. In Prizren Arli the verb mang- encodes volition in a personal construction, but necessity in an impersonal–reflexive construction; this may have been modelled on Albanian (Boretzky 1999a: 114). In Kumanovo Kovački and Crimean Romani, on the other hand, the two verbs are now distinct: the original volition verb kam- had acquired a wide range of necessity functions within the impersonal–reflexive construction, but its volition meaning was later taken over by the verb mang- (see Section 2.2). Though the reflexive necessity construction (Type nPF1) is still attested in Crimean Romani (36a), the dialect now prefers dropping of the reflexive pronoun (36b), apparently without any semantic effect.

(36) Crimean Romani (Balkan, Ukraine and Russia)

a. \[
\begin{align*}
\text{Tumenge} & \quad \text{kamela} \quad \text{pes} \quad \text{te} \quad \text{dž’an} \quad \text{othe.} \\
\text{you.DAT} & \quad \text{necessary.3SG.PRES} \quad \text{REFL} \quad \text{COMP} \quad \text{go.2PL.SUBJ} \quad \text{there}
\end{align*}
\]

‘You have to go there.’

b. \[
\begin{align*}
\text{Amenge} & \quad \text{kamelas} \quad \text{te} \quad \text{udž’aras} \quad \text{e} \quad \text{brešindestar.} \\
\text{we.DAT} & \quad \text{necessary.3SG.IMPF} \quad \text{COMP} \quad \text{wait.1PL.SUBJ} \quad \text{DEF.OBL} \quad \text{rain.ABL}
\end{align*}
\]

‘We had to wait because of the rain.’
The Central dialects of Romani exhibit further developments of the impersonal–reflexive de-volitional construction (cf. Boretzky 1996a: 14–15). The accusative form of the singular reflexive pronoun pe(s) has been agglutinated to the volition verb kam-. In the Vendic subgroup of the Central dialects the reflexive was prefixed and some of the forms then underwent further phonological erosion, e.g. present *pe+kam-el [REFL+want-3SG] > peka-l. In the Rumungro and North Central subgroups, on the other hand, the reflexive was suffixed to the volition verb and the forms underwent not only phonological erosion but also externalization of verb inflections, e.g. present *kam-el+pe(s) [want-3SG+REFL] > ka(m)p-e(l). Typically, these impersonal necessity modals are used as expressions of participant-internal necessity, though in several Central dialects they have been extended to other necessity functions as well. Some of these latter dialects (viz. the outliers Gurvari, Cerhari and Plaščuny) retain the impersonal construction in all necessity functions, while others reserve the impersonal construction (Types nPnF or nPF1) for expressing participant-internal necessity (37a, 38a) but develop a functionally distinct personal construction (Type PnF) for other types of necessity. For example, in numerous Central dialects of Slovakia, e.g. Lučivná Romani, subject-inflected kamp- expresses weak obligation (37b) and in the dialect of Dobšiná it expresses participant-external necessity in general (38b).13 Note that the strongly grammaticalized de-volitional necessity modal (e.g. 37a) is functionally distinct from the less grammaticalized impersonal–reflexive construction involving the verb kam-(37c; Type nPnF), which still expresses volition (see Section 2.2).

(37) Lučivná Romani (North Central, Slovakia)
   a. Kampel matte džal andre skřepa.
      be_needed.PRES.3SG I.DAT COMP go.SUBJ.3SG[=INF]in.DEF shop
      ‘I need to go to the shop.’
   b. Furt kampes avka te kerel.
      always be_needed.PRES.2SG so COMP do.SUBJ.2SG
      ‘You should always act like this.’
   c. Kampas pes mange odoj te džal.
      want.PRET.3SG REFL.ACC I.DAT there COMP go.SUBJ.3SG[=INF]
      ‘I wanted to go there.’

(38) Dobšiná Romani (North Central, Slovakia)
   a. Kampel matte zav andro foro.
      be_needed.PRES.3SG I.DAT COMP go.SUBJ.1SG in.DEF town

--

13 See Section 2.5, ex. (53) for a more complex example from Burgenland Roman.
‘I need to go to town.’

b. Kampav te zal andro foro.

must.PRES.1SG COMP go.SUBJ.3SG[ = INF] in.DEFTown

‘I have to go to town.’

The majority of Romani necessity modals are dialect-specific **lexical borrowings**. Only few Romani dialects do without a necessity loanword, namely some of those that possess strongly grammaticalized de-copular and/or de-volitional necessity modals. Loans of the following necessity expressions are attested within Romani: Turkish lâzım, Greek prepi, South Slavic trjabva treba(ti), mora(ti) and valjati, Romanian trebui and musai, Hungarian muszáj, Slovak musiet’, mat and potrebovat’, Polish musicć, trzeba and powinien, East Slavic treba, dolžen, nado and prixoditsja, German müssen and brauchen, English ought, Swedish mäste and må, and Finnish pitää.14 The dialectal distribution of these loanwords is too complex to be discussed here (see Boretzky & Iglá 2004: 184–187 for a partial overview). Some loanwords are restricted to dialects whose speakers are currently bilingual in the source language, while others have been retained even after the Romani speakers shifted to a different L2. For example, the loan of Romanian trebui is found not only in most Romani dialects of Romanian bilinguals but also in most non-Romanian Vlax dialects, some of which lost contact with Romanian centuries ago; it has also diffused from Vlax into some non-Vlax dialects of Macedonia and Bulgaria.

Many, perhaps most, borrowed necessity modals retain the range of functions they have in their source language, especially when the Romani speakers are currently bilingual in it. For example, the loan of English ought in Welsh Romani expresses weak obligation or probability and the loan of Slovak potrebovat in some varieties of Slovak Romani expresses participant-internal need. However, the function of Romani necessity loanwords may also differ from that of the source modal, especially if the source language is not the dialect’s current L2 and/or if the loan acquires a different morphosyntactic status than it has in the source language. For example, the loan of the Polish uninflected and generic modal trzeba ‘one must, one should’ (cf. Hansen, in press) need not have a generic subject in Kohila Romani (39a) and may even show personal inflection (39b). On the other hand, loanwords from an older L2 may also show functional specialization, often due to competition with loanwords from the current L2. For example, Ub Gurbet trubu- appears to be specialized for weak obligation (40a), although its source modal, Romanian trebui, is much more general;

14 Several of these necessity modals are themselves borrowings into the languages that serve as the immediate source for Romani: Turkish lâzım from Arabic, Romanian trebui from Slavic, West Slavic musiet musicć, Hungarian muszáj and Romanian musai from German (the latter two cases from muss sein ‘must be’).
the current Serbian loan *mora-* has taken over most necessity functions, including strong obligation (40b).

(39) Kohila Romani (Northeastern, Estonia)

a. Jöj čebl łöve te janel.
   she must money.PL COMP bring.SUBJ.3SG
   ‘She must bring the money.’

b. Tu čebisos te jēs an goštī.
   thou must.PRES.2SG COMP come.SUBJ.2SG in guest.PL
   ‘You must come for a visit.’

(40) Ub Gurbet (South Vlax, Serbia)

a. Tu trubus te posetis ma jekar.
   thou ought.PRES.2SG COMP visit.SUBJ.2SG I.ACC once
   ‘You should visit me once.’

b. Uvek moraš t- aes pažljivo.
   always must.PRES.2SG COMP come.SUBJ.2SG careful
   ‘You must always be careful.’

Necessity loanwords inflecting for subject categories are mostly morphologically adapted through loanverb suffixes, e.g. Dolenjski Romani *mor-in-* < Slovene *mor-*, and show Romani verb inflection. Retention of L2 subject inflection is rare, being only attested in some of those Romani dialects that borrow the Serbian or Macedonian personal verb *mora-*. For example, in Kosovo Bugurđi (Boretzky 1993: 74) singular present forms of the modal retain their Serbian inflection, i.e. 1SG *mora-m*, 2SG *mora-š*, and 3SG *mora*. However, the third-person singular form *mora* is also used with plural subjects of any person, like in colloquial Serbian. In further dialects of Serbian and Macedonian Romani the generalization of the third-person singular form has been completed and *mora* is now used irrespective of person or number of the modal subject (Type nPF1). The impersonal *mora* mostly encodes TAM categories, either analytically, through the inflectional auxiliary, e.g. Serbian Kalderas past *mora sas* [must COP.PRET.3], or synthetically, through indigenous TAM morphology, e.g. Šutka Arli imperfect *mora-ine* [must-REM]. On the other hand, impersonal modals may also acquire subject inflection in Romani. For example, the loan of *trebui*, which only inflects for TAM categories in Romanian, has developed subject inflection in several Vlax dialects.¹⁵ In some of them the borrowed modal shows defective

---

¹⁵ However, *trebui* has personal inflections in some non-standard varieties of Romanian, and so some instances of the loanword’s personal inflection in Romani may in fact simply retain this property.
subject inflection and personal constructions alternate with impersonal ones. For example, the Austrian Lovari loan trubu- only has third-person and second-person forms (Cech & Heinschink 1999a: 63), which are used personally (41a–b; Type PF). First-person subjects, on the other hand, require an impersonal construction (41c–d; Type nPF1). Though there are distinct second-person forms, the impersonal construction may also be employed with second-person subjects (41e).

(41) Austrian Lovari (North Vlax, Austria)
a. Trubun 
   te       den  e    love.
   need.PRES.3PL COMP give.SUBJ.3PL  DEF.PL money.PL
   ‘They need to give money.’ (Cech & Heinschink 1999a: 73)
b. Trubundanas sama 
   te    les  tu.
   need.PLPF.2SG attention COMP take.SUBJ.2SG thou
   ‘You should have paid attention.’ (Cech et al. 1999: 64)
c. Me  trubujas 
   lašo šavo t-  avav.
   I.NOM need.IMPF.3SG good son COMP come.SUBJ.1SG
   ‘I should be a good son.’ (Cech et al. 1999: 48)
d. Trobundas  i  hera 
   opre  te  las.
   need.PRET.3SG  DEF clover up COMP take.SUBJ.1PL
   ‘We needed to lift the clover.’ (Cech et al. 1999: 82)
e. Trubujas  tu  t-  aves 
   o  kraj  ande  gado
   need.IMPF.3SG thou COMP come.SUBJ.2SG  DEF king in this country
   ‘You should become the king of this country.’ (Cech et al. 1999: 50)

Those loans of impersonal necessity verbs that remain impersonal in Romani are often morphologically integrated as Romani-inflected verb forms of the default, third-person singular, subject category, e.g. Kumanovo Arli present treb-el [-3SG], treb-el-aine [-3SG-REM], preterite treb-in-g’-a [-LOAN-PFV-3SG.PFV] < Macedonian treba. Only rarely do we find internally derived TAM forms that do not contain the default subject morphology. For example, the Sliven Muzikanta imperfect trjabv-as is derived directly from the Bulgarian present form trjabva by means of a Romani tense/mood suffix. Quite commonly, on the other hand, impersonal necessity verbs are borrowed without any morphological integration and retain their L2 inflection for TAM categories, e.g. present prepi and imperfect eprepe from Greek, present trjabva and past trjabvaše from Bulgarian, present trebuje < trebuie and imperfect trebuja < trebua from Romanian, or present pittää and conditional pitäs < pittäis from (colloquial) Finnish. Several Romani modals inflect for
TAM categories even though their source forms do not. For example, the uninflected Swedish modal *måste* has been borrowed as an impersonal verb (Type nPnF) into Finnish Romani, showing synthetic TAM marking, e.g. present–future *most-u-l-a* [-LOAN-3SG-PFUT] and preterite *most-u-dil-o* [-LOAN-PFV-3SG.PFV.M].

A common development is a complete loss of inflection of borrowed modal verbs. For example, in Srem Gurbet the loan of the Serbian personal verb *mora-* lost not only subject inflection but also TAM inflection: the original third-person singular present form *mora* is now used in all TAM categories, which are thus marked solely on the modalized verb (Type nPF2). Similarly, Welsh Romani and some varieties of Slovak and Lithuanian Romani have generalized forms such as *mus muš mos musi*, which go back to inflectional stems or the third-person singular present forms of the German personal modal *müßen* and its loans into Western Slavic, e.g. *musi* < Slovak 3SG *mus-i*. These generalized forms may then fuse with the complementizer *te*, resulting in uninflected univerbal modals such as *mos-te* in Čáry Romani (see Section 2.1, 10b), which parallel the strongly grammaticalized indigenous modals *hun-te* and *si-te* in their morphosyntax (Type nPF2). A similar development also gave rise to the uninflected modal *braux-te* in German Sinti < German *brauchen*.

Sometimes we find, within a single Romani variety, competition or complementary distribution between different constructions involving necessity loanwords. Several dialects reveal a TAM asymmetry here: the present indicative is more susceptible to borrowing, more likely to remain unintegrated, and less likely to show subject inflection than other TAM categories. In Vidin Kalajdži, for instance, the integrated impersonal loanverb *trubu-z*-(from Romanian, an old L2) is used in all TAM categories but in the present indicative it is currently being replaced by the unintegrated *trebva* (from Bulgarian, the current L2). In Slavošovce Romani the Hungarian-origin modal *mušaj* must show analytical subject and TAM inflection (Type PnF) in most TAM categories (42a), while in the present the personal construction (42b) is rare and the modal is usually uninflected (42c; Type nPF2). Similar patterns are also attested in Finnish Romani, where the uninflected *mote* (probably from Swedish *må* plus the complementizer *te*) is restricted to the present, while the impersonal *most-u-* (from Swedish *måste*) is used in all TAM categories; in some varieties of Macedonian Arli, where the loan of Macedonian *mora-* inflects for subject categories in the past, e.g. *mora-n-dil-jum* [must-LOAN-PFV-1SG.PFV] ‘I had to’, even though the generalized impersonal *mora* is used in the present; and elsewhere.

(42) Slavošovce Romani (North Central, Slovakia)

a. *Mušaj ščamaš te užarel.*
   must COP.PRET.1PL COMP.wait.SUBJ.3SG[=INF]
   ‘We had to wait.’

b. *Mušaj ščom odoj te dzal.*
must COP.PRES.1SG there COMP.go.SUBJ.3SG[=INF]

‘I have to go there.’

c. Adádžive mušaj megin te dzav odoj.
today must again COMP.go.SUBJ.1SG there

‘Today I have to go there again.’

Several dialects of Bulgarian and Greek Romani, including the dialect of Vălči Dol, show competition in the past between impersonal constructions with TAM marking on the modal (43b; Type nPF1) and impersonal constructions with TAM marking on the modalized verb (43c; Type nPF2).16 In some of these dialects, e.g. Cerovo Cocomanja, Sliven Muzikanta (cf. Section 2.1, ex. 4) or Kalamata Romani, the former construction expresses situational necessity (44a), while the latter construction appears to be specialized for epistemic necessity (44b).

(43) Vălči Dol Romani (South Vlax, Bulgaria)
a. Lazmi te džas ote.
necessary COMP.go.SUBJ.2SG

‘You have to go there.’
b. Lazmi sasdı te nakav latar.
necessary COP.PRET.3 COMP.walk.SUBJ.1SG she.ABL

‘I had to go around her.’
c. Lazmi te ačasas sostar delas brišind.
necessary COMP.stay.IMPF.1PL what.ABL give.IMPF.3SG rain

‘We had to stay because it was raining.’

(44) Kalamata Romani (Balkan, Greece)
a. Eprepe te cikarasjati delas brisim.
must.IMPF COMP.wait.SUBJ.1PL because give.IMPF.3SG rain

‘We had to wait because it was raining.’
b. Siγura prepi te bidzardan -es ta apo prin.
surely must.PRES COMP.get_to_know.PRET.2SG OBJ.3SG.M also of before

‘Surely you must have got to know him before.’

16 Note that the Turkish modal lâzım must be morphologically adapted by the nominal suffix -ı in those dialects that allow its analytic inflection through the inflectional auxiliary, including in Vălči Dol Romani. The loan remains unadapted in those dialects that do not allow its analytic inflection, i.e. in those where TAM categories are marked solely on the modalized verb (Type nPF2).
In addition to borrowed necessity modals we also find their loan translations. While Russian and Ukrainian dialects of Romani usually borrow the East Slavic impersonal verb *prixdistsja* (lit. reflexive ‘come’) in its L2 form, also retaining its L2 inflection, some varieties prefer to use its ‘semicalqued’ or ‘calqued’ equivalent, e.g. present *pri-dža-l-pe* [AKTIONSART=go-3SG-REFL] or *jav-el-pe* [come-3SG-REFL]. Similarly, the East Slavic adjectival modal *dolžen* ‘obliged’, which still also retains its lexical meaning ‘indebted’ in the source languages, is mostly borrowed (and, in some varieties, morphologically integrated in the way borrowed adjectives are) but can also be translated by the adjective *bango* ‘crooked; indebted’. Interestingly, since the Russian copula does not encode person in the past (45a), the default, third-person, form of the Romani copula is selected in the ‘calqued’ construction (45b; Type nPF1) in Russian Romani. However, personal copula occurs in Crimean Romani (cf. 9).

(45) Russian Romani (Northeastern, Russia)

a. *Tu dolžen byl te dykxesles.*
   thou [obliged.SG.M COP.PTC.SG.M]Russian COMP see.SUBJ.2SG he.ACC

b. *Tu bango sys te dykxesles.*
   thou obliged.SG.M COP.PRET.3 COMP see.SUBJ.2SG he.ACC

‘You must have seen him.’

2.5. Modality and negation

Negation in modal constructions may have scope over the modalized proposition or over the modality itself (cf. Palmer 2001: 90–98). In Romani the differences in the scope of negation are reflected especially in the linear order of the negator, as exemplified for the Rumungro (South Central) variety of Selice, Slovakia. In (46b) and (47b) the negator immediately precedes the main verb, having scope over the modalized proposition: the constructions express, respectively, possibility and necessity of a negative proposition. In (46c) and (47c), on the other hand, the negator immediately precedes the modal, being cumulated with it in (46c), and has scope over the modality: the constructions express, respectively, negative possibility and negative necessity of an affirmative proposition. Finally, in (46d) and (47d) both negators are used: the constructions express, respectively, negative possibility and negative necessity of a negative proposition.\(^\text{17}\)

(46) Possibility (47) Necessity

---

\(^{17}\) The example (47d) has been elicited but might not occur in natural discourse.
a. šaj le keras
   can he.ACC do.SUBJ.1PL
   ‘we can/may do it’

b. šaj le na keras
   can he.ACC NEG do.SUBJ.1PL
   ‘it is possible that we don’t do it’
i.e. ‘we need not do it’

c. naštig le keras
   cannot he.ACC do.SUBJ.1PL
   ‘it isn’t possible that we do it’
i.e. ‘we cannot/may not do it’

d. naštig le na keras
   cannot he.ACC NEG do.SUBJ.1PL
   ‘it isn’t possible that we don’t do it’
i.e. ‘we must do it’

a. site le keras
   must he.ACC do.SUBJ.1PL
   ‘we must do it’

b. site le na keras
   must he.ACC NEG do.SUBJ.1PL
   ‘it is necessary that we don’t do it’
i.e. ‘we must not do it’

c. na site le keras
   NEG must he.ACC do.SUBJ.1PL
   ‘it isn’t necessary that we do it’
i.e. ‘we need not do it’

d. na site le na keras
   NEG must he.ACC NEG do.SUBJ.1PL
   ‘it isn’t necessary that we don’t do it’
i.e. ‘we can/may do it’

In most Romani dialects, as in Selice Rumungro, negators preceding (or cumulated with) the modal have scope over modality. A single exception is attested: in Welsh Romani the negator preceding the necessity modal mus (48a) has scope over the proposition, so that na mus (48b) encodes necessity of a negative proposition (‘must not’) rather than negative necessity (‘need not’). This is clearly due to pattern borrowing from English, although mus itself is more likely to be of German origin (Sampson 1926: I, 216). In the remainder of this section we will be concerned solely with negative modality, focusing on the formal relationship between affirmative and negative modality.

(48) Welsh Romani (British, Wales; Sampson 1926, II: 236)
a. Mus te ves mansa.
   must COMP come.SUBJ.2SG  I.INSTR
   ‘You must come with me.’

b. Na mus te čas odoj čarľa.
   NEG must COMP stay.SUBJ.1PL there long
   ‘We must not stop there long.’

Although negative volition is expressed by regular negation of the affirmative volition modal in most Romani dialects, a few dialects of Bulgaria employ a different modal for negative volition than for affirmative volition. For example, in Pazardžik Malokonare the original volition modal kam- is retained in negative contexts (49b), while the newly grammaticalized volition modal mang- (see Section 2.2) is used in affirmative contexts.
(49a). The Rešitare dialect of Velingrad represents a further stage in the replacement of kam- by mang-: while the former is restricted to negative contexts, the latter may now be used in both polarities. Another rare type of irregularity concerns the shape of the negator: in Cerovo Cocomanja most verbs take the indicative negator na, while the volition verb kam- takes nan, which probably derives from the third-person present negative copula form nanaj.

(49) Pazardžik Malokonare (Balkan, Bulgaria)

a. Mangava te žav andi zi.
   want/demand.PRES.1SG COMP go.SUBJ.1SG in.DEF town
   ‘I want to go to town.’

b. Na kamamte žav andi zi.
   NEG want/love.PRES.1SG COMP go.SUBJ.1SG in.DEF town
   ‘I don’t want to go to town.’

Negative possibility is frequently irregular in that it is often not expressed by regular negation of the affirmative possibility modal. Although the Early Romani negative possibility modal našti may continue a regularly negated form of the affirmative possibility modal ašti or derive from a construction involving the negator and the affirmative possibility modal šaj (see Section 2.3), in neither case is našti completely regular in synchronic terms. Indeed, pairs such as šaj vs našti can be even considered to be suppletive. Nevertheless, many Romani dialects have discontinued this Early Romani heritage as a result of hyperanalysis (cf. Croft 2000: 121–126), analogical regularization, grammaticalization and borrowing.

The first source of regular negation of possibility is the semantic shift of negative possibility modals into modals of affirmative possibility. This development, which has occurred in most modern Sinti dialects, consists in an addition of a more transparent negator (the German-origin nit/nix or gar) to a former negative possibility modal (našti or naj) and a subsequent hyperanalysis of the inherent negative value of the modal as a property of the negator alone (cf. Boretzky & Igla 2004: 183–184, Elšik & Matras 2006: 159). Examples from Austrian Sinti, a dialect in a transitional stage of the development, are illustrative: the modal naj may still express the negative possibility function by itself (50a), though it is more likely to be negated by a borrowed negator in this function (50b); the prevailing function of plain naj is affirmative possibility (50c). Those Sinti varieties that have undergone the complete shift now possess regularly negated possibility modals, e.g. Auvergne Manuš našti ‘can’ vs našti gar ‘cannot’. Although the addition of a more transparent negator to the negative possibility modal has also occurred in several Balkan dialects of Romani, giving rise to forms such as na-našti, there is no hyperanalysis of
negation and so plain našti, if there is one, continues to function as a negative possibility modal in these dialects.\(^\text{18}\)

\[(50)\] Austrian Sinti (Northwestern, Austria)

a. \textit{Naj bešč imər kheri.}
cannot sit.PRES.2SG always home
‘You can’t sit at home all the time.’

b. \textit{Naj fārena butar nit kheri.}
can[not] drive.PRES.3PL more NEG home
‘They can’t drive home anymore.’

c. \textit{Kola nicərens man vri kaj naj nicərens la man vri.}
that.PL use.IMPF.3PL1.ACC out where can use.IMPF.3PL they I.NOM out
‘They used me as much as they were able to use me.’

Next, the negative possibility modal našti may be re-analyzed as containing the regular verb negator and a novel affirmative possibility modal may be created by analogy. Boretzky’s (1996a: 5–6) claim that this kind of analogical decomposition gave rise to the affirmative ašti in general (see Section 2.3) is somewhat problematic in that it does not account well for the form’s initial vowel. Nevertheless, analogical decomposition is likely to be the source of šti ← na-štî in Moravian and Abbruzian Romani and of sti(k) ← na-sti(k) in Lombardian and Piedmontese Sinti (these dialects retain the Early Romani negator na).\(^\text{19}\) Regular negation of inherited possibility modals may also result from an analogy in the opposite direction. Thus several Romani dialects of, or originating, in Romania have supplemented or even replaced the original negative possibility modal našti by a construction consisting of a regular verb negator and affirmative possibility modal, e.g. Kurtureare či šaj-\textemdash Šanxajcy či dasči(-sar)-, Laješa–Kišinjevcy–Rakarenge ni dašti(-sar)-, Ursari ni (d)ašti(-z)-, and probably also Kərəmidarja na aštik.

Finally, regular negation is also found with those possibility modals that have been grammaticalized from lexical verbs (see Section 2.3), e.g. džan- ‘to be able’ vs. na džan- ‘not to be able’, and in those dialects that borrow a possibility modal and negate it by a regular negator. The negator may be indigenous, in which case Romani ‘semicalques’ the regular negative possibility expression of the source language of the possibility modal, e.g.

\(^\text{18}\) In Taikon Kalderaš of Sweden inflected naštî ‘not to be capable’ requires an additional analytical negator, while uninflected naštî ‘cannot’ does not allow one (cf. Section 2.3). Again, there is no hyperanalysis of negation in the former case.

\(^\text{19}\) Diffusion from another Italian Romani dialect is likely to be the source of šti in Italian Xoraxane, unless one wants to assume that the analogical decomposition of naštî took place before the development of the innovative (South Vlax) indicative negator ni.
Parakalamos Romani *na bor-*-, Finnish Romani *na vojuv-*-, Lithuanian Romani *na možyn-*-. Or, less commonly, the possibility modal may be borrowed together with its L2 negator, as in Russian Romani and in some Ukrainian dialects, e.g. in Kiev Servy (51).

(51) Kiev Servy (Ukrainian, Ukraine)

\[
\begin{array}{l}
Ame \ n’it’ev \ n’e \ mayl’i \ kada \ te \ arakhe. \\
we.NOM \ nowhere \ [NEG \ can.PRET.PL]\text{Russian} \ this \ COMP \ find.INF
\end{array}
\]

‘We couldn’t find this anywhere.’

However, semicalquing and matter borrowing of negative possibility modals only represents a minor pattern within Romani: most dialects that borrow an affirmative possibility modal retain the indigenous negative *našti*, and so they re-iterate or introduce suppletion between their affirmative and negative possibility modals. Also, the use of a borrowed possibility modal in negative possibility does not automatically result in a regularly negated negative possibility expression. Both points may be illustrated by examples from Karditsa Romani. This dialect borrows its possibility modal from Greek (52a) but retains the indigenous negative possibility modal (52b). There is nevertheless another way to express negative possibility: the borrowed affirmative possibility modal may combine with the indigenous negative possibility modal, which in effect functions as an irregular negator in the domain of possibility (52c).

(52) Karditsa Romani (Balkan, Greece)

a. \[
\begin{array}{l}
Borinea \ te \ keres \ buti \ me \ sfiri? \\
\text{can.PRES.2SG} \ COMP \ do.SUBJ.2SG \ work \ with \ hammer
\end{array}
\]

‘Can you work with a hammer?’

b. \[
\begin{array}{l}
Ame \ nasti \ džaa \ pala. \\
we.NOM \ cannot \ go.PRES.1PL \ back
\end{array}
\]

‘We can’t go back.’

c. \[
\begin{array}{l}
Nasti \ borinava \ ti \ dav \ boja \ o \ kher. \\
cannot \ can.PRES.1SG \ COMP \ give.SUBJ.1SG \ dye \ DEF \ house
\end{array}
\]

‘I can’t paint the house.’

Negative *necessity* is mostly expressed by regular negation of affirmative necessity modals. Exceptions to this general pattern are contact induced. For example, in Hameln Sinti the negative counterpart of the necessity particle *hunte* is a regular negation of the modal *brauxte*, which cannot occur without a negator (Holzinger 1993: 92).\(^{20}\) This restriction

---

\(^{20}\) The source (Holzinger 1993) is not explicit about whether *hunte* can be regularly negated, or not.
derivates from an identical restriction on the source element, the German verb *brauchen* ‘to need’, when used with a clausal complement. A similar, though somewhat more complex, pattern applies to the necessity verb *peka(m)* (see Section 2.4) in Burgenland Roman. When used impersonally (Type nPnF) the verb expresses participant-internal necessity (53a) and can be regularly negated (53b). However, when the verb is inflected for subject categories within a personal construction (Type PnF) it must be accompanied by a negator and the construction expresses negative participant-external necessity (53c). Regular negation of the participant-external necessity modal *iste* appears to be extremely rare (53d). Halwachs (1998: 158) explains this asymmetry as a result of pattern borrowing from German.

(53) Burgenland Roman (South Central, Austria; Halwachs et al. 1999)

a. *Le fačunge eklik te hal*
   DEF.OBL child.PL.DAT a_little COMP eat.SUBJ.3SG[=INF]
   *pekalahi.*
   be_needed.IMPF.3SG
   ‘The children would need to eat a bit.’ (p. 48)

b. *Ni te hal, ništa lake na*
   not_even COMP eat.SUBJ.3SG[=INF] nothing she.DAT NEG
   *pekal.*
   be_needed.PRES.3SG
   ‘She does not even need to eat or anything else.’ (p. 66)

c. *Na pekajs mandar te daral.*
   NEG must.PRES.2SG I.ABL COMP fear.SUBJ.3SG[=INF]
   ‘You need not be afraid of me.’ (p. 96)

d. *Na iste uso sikajipe džan.*
   NEG must to.DEF teaching go.PRES.3PL
   ‘They need not go to the course.’ (Romani Patrin 1999: 8)

3. Grammaticalization and borrowing asymmetries

3.1. Functional aspects of grammaticalization

Most of those Romani modal expressions that are not material borrowings derive from Romani lexical verbs or other pre-modal constructions. The sources for modals were discussed in the data sections (2.2–4) and are summarized in (54–56). Most of the

---

21 It is unattested in a large collection of authentic Burgenland Roman narratives (Halwachs et al. 1999) and not discussed in the grammar of the dialect (Halwachs 1998).
developments are dialect-specific, with the exception of the pre-split extension of the verb ‘to love’ to volition functions (see Section 2.1). Modal uses of copula constructions are also likely to have existed in Early Romani, though grammaticalization of these constructions into dedicated modals is certainly dialect-specific (see Section 2.4). The majority of the developments in (54–56) involved contact-induced grammaticalization on the model of Romani’s L2s and some grammaticalized modals even result from straightforward calquing or semicalquing (e.g. those based on Russian prixditsja, see Section 2.3).

(54) volition       < ‘love, like’, ‘ask for, demand’
       less agentive volition  < ‘want’ reflexive/middle

(55) possibility    < ‘be/have’, ‘work out, go out’, ‘get [somewhere]’
       capability        < ‘know’, ‘understand’, ‘manage’
       permission        < ‘dare’

(56) necessity      < ‘be/have’, ‘have, hold’, ‘want, owe’, ‘come’ refl., ‘indebted’
       need, weak obligation  < ‘want’ reflexive

Some modals are less grammaticalized than others in that they still retain their lexical meanings as well, thus possessing greater semantic weight or integrity (cf. Lehmann 2002: 112). This holds especially for the volition modals, including the verb kam- (e.g. Selice Romani ‘to love, to like; to wish, to desire; to owe; to want’), whose modal function must have existed since Early Romani and which thus shows remarkable semantic stability. Lexical meanings are also retained in several more recently grammaticalized modals, such as those expressing capability (e.g. Crimean Romani hal’ov- ‘to understand; to feel; to guess; to manage; to be able’) and those that calque polysemous source expressions (e.g. Russian Romani bango ‘crooked; indebted; obliged’, see Section 2.4). Modals expressing participant-internal necessity mostly also possess the lexical meaning ‘to need [sth.]’, though several dialects differentiate between expressions of event-oriented/modal need and object-oriented/lexical need, e.g. de-volitional kamp- vs. borrowed potrebín- in some dialects of Slovakia.

Semantic developments between different kinds of modality include the extension of modals specialized for participant-internal possibility and necessity (capability and need) into other possibility and necessity functions as well (cf. the discussion of džan- and kamp-, respectively, in Sections 2.3 and 2.4). This is in line with van der Auwera & Plungian’s (1998) modality’s semantic map. We have suggested in Section 2.3 that Early Romani possessed two possibility modals, šaj and ašti. The evidence from Kalderaš, a dialect cluster that preserves both šaj and dašti- (most likely a variant of ašti), shows that the latter tends to
be less grammaticalized semantically (according to van der Auwera & Plungian’s map). In Piteşti Kalderăş şaj is only attested as an expression of epistemic possibility, the most grammaticalized semantic function, whereas daštî- dominates all possibility functions. In Taikon Kalderăş of Sweden, on the other hand, the modal şaj expresses participant-external, deontic or epistemic possibility (57a–c; Type nPF2), while daštî- is specialised for participant-internal possibility (cf. the glossary item ‘be able, be capable, can, manage’ in Gjerdman & Ljungberg 1963: 222; Type PF). This distinction is paralleled by a similar, if not identical, functional distinction in the negative domain, probably due to morphological analogy: uninflected naštî can express most impossibility functions (57d–e; Type nPF2), but inflected naštî- is specialized for participant-internal impossibility (57f; Type PF). The Kalderăş data suggest that the Early Romani aštî was specialized for participant-internal possibility (perhaps due to a relatively late grammaticalization from a copula construction) and that its semantic extension to participant-external possibility is a recent, dialect-specific, development.

(57) Taikon Kalderăş (North Vlax, Sweden; Gjerdman & Ljungberg 1963: 127)

a. Šaj dav tu deš kronurjä.
can give.PRES.1SG thou.ACC ten crown.PL
‘I can give you ten crowns.’

b. Šaj keres sar kames.
can do.PRES.2SG how want.PRES.2SG
‘You may do as you like.’

c. Šaj avel voj tehara.
can come.PRES.3SG she tomorrow
‘She may/might come tomorrow.’

d. Naštî ankardine lako trajo.
cannot hold.PRET.3PL she.GEN life
‘They couldn’t save her life.’

e. Naštî vazdel o gono korkoro.
cannot lift.PRES.3SGDEF bag alone.M
‘He can’t lift the bag himself.’

22 In some Kalderăş varieties both possibility modals appear to have identical functions (e.g. in a Šanxajcy variety of Ukraine and in the Bunkuleş and Markuleş varieties of Banat and northern Serbia, cf. Boretzky 1994: 137). Unfortunately, the sources on other dialects that possess reflexes of both modals, Moravian Romani and Italian Xoraxane with şaj and šti, contain no detailed information on modal functions.

23 The evidence from a variety of Šanxajcy Kitajake is puzzling: in this Kalderăş-type dialect daštî- only has the lexical meaning ‘to dare’, while all possibility functions are expressed by şaj. This either assumes de-grammaticalization of daštî- or questions the etymological connection between aštî and daštî-.
Of all modalities, volition is most prone to further grammaticalisation processes in Romani. The development of volition modals into necessity modals has been discussed in Section 2.4. In addition, in some North Vlax dialects we find the epistemic possibility adverb kam ‘perhaps’, which might derive from the verb kam-, although a Romanian etymology is also possible (Boretzky 2003: 67, Boretzky & Igla 2004: 173). Volition modals can also grammaticalize into post-modal meanings. Some varieties of Slovak Romani have developed the de-volitional free-choice postfix -kam in de-interrogative indefinites, e.g. so-kam ‘anything whatsoever’ (< *‘what one wants’). More importantly, in all Romani dialects of the Balkans the volition verbs have given rise to the future proclitics kam kan ka < *kam- or ma ma < *mang-, which are modelled on the future markers deriving from volitional verbs in other Balkan languages (Greek θα and so on; Boretzky 1999b: 170–172).

Future meanings may also be encoded by the impersonal copula construction, which otherwise tends to grammaticalize into possibility and, more often, necessity modals (see Sections 2.3–4). In several Romani dialects of Macedonia and Bulgaria this development has occurred especially in negative polarity due to pattern borrowing from East South Slavic (Boretzky 1999b: 172–173). For example, in Montana Kalajdži affirmative future is marked by the de-volitional proclitic ka(m) (57a), while the negative future is encoded through a construction containing the negative third-person present copula form and the non-factual complementizer (57b), calquing Bulgarian šte and njama da, respectively. In several dialects of Romania and Kosovo impersonal copula constructions encode future in both polarities, due to an imperfect replication of the personal possessive-like future construction in Romanian and Albanian. For example, we find future constructions with present copula forms in Ursari (cf. Boretzky 1999a: 113) and constructions with future copula forms in Kemásjarja (58a–b). Although the development of future from necessity is well attested cross-linguistically, it is not obvious that this is what happened in the above Romani dialects. It is quite possible that, at least in some of the dialects, the semantically vague copula construction acquired the future function directly, due to pattern borrowing from an L2, without ever passing through the necessity stage. In any case, post-modal developments of strongly grammaticalized possibility and necessity modals are unattested in Romani.

(57) Montana Kalajdži (Balkan, Bulgaria)

a. Tase kam- ovav amende.

tomorrow FUT become.SUBJ.ISG we.LOC

‘Tomorrow I will be at home [at our place].’

Elšik & Matras Modals in Romani
b. *Tase nanaj te ove tumende.*
   tomorrow COP.NEG.PRES.3 COMP become.SUBJ.2SG you.LOC
   ‘Tomorrow you won’t be at home [at your place].’

(58) Karămidarja (North Central, Romania)\(^{24}\)

a. *Tese ala te avaw khere*  
   tomorrow come.FUT.3SG COMP come.SUBJ.1SG home  
   ‘Tomorrow I will be at home.’

b. *Tese na ala te aves khere.*  
   tomorrow NEG come.FUT.3SG COMP come.SUBJ.2SG home  
   ‘Tomorrow you won’t be at home.’

### 3.2. Formal aspects of grammaticalization

The least grammatical Romani modals are fully fledged morphological verbs that, like most lexical verbs, inflect for TAM and subject categories. Syntactically, these modal verbs have scope over the whole clause that expresses the modalized proposition: the modalized verb occurs in a subordinate form and is, disregarding some exceptions that are not specific to modal constructions (see Section 2.1), introduced by the non-factual complementizer. Also, the nominative marking of the modal subject NP, which is the only option with personal modals, can be interpreted as marking of the grammatical subject of the modal verb. There are three major diachronic classes of personal modal verbs in Romani. First, many are lexical borrowings of L2 personal modal verbs, thus simply retaining the morphosyntactic properties of their source forms. Second, several modal verbs such as volition *kam-* and *mang-*; (cap)ability *džan-* and *axaljov-*; permission *troma-* or necessity *ther-* derive from lexical verbs. Significantly, this class of modals overlaps almost perfectly with the class of modals that still retain their pre-modal meanings as well, and so the low degree of morphosyntactic grammaticalization of these modal verbs parallels their low degree of semantic grammaticalization.

Finally, and perhaps most interestingly, dedicated modals, too, may be personal verbs. This is the case of the possibility modals *šaj*(−in)−, *(d)aštī(−z/sar)−* and *naštī(−n/sar)−* in a few (formerly contiguous) dialects (see Section 2.2). These possibility verbs do not represent an earlier, less grammaticalized, stage of the uninflected *šaj, aštī* and *naštī*, which are found in the rest of Romani. Rather, they must have acquired their personal inflection secondarily.

\(^{24}\) Note that the Karămidarja future construction is not an instance of (directly) de-allative future (cf. Heine & Kuteva 2005: 103). Although *ala* is a form of the verb ‘to come’, this verb generally provides some TAM (viz. non-indicative and future) forms of the copula and the verb of existence (‘to be, to become’) in this dialect.
through analogy, one kind of evidence being their morphology otherwise typical of loanverbs. Similarly, the personal inflection of kamp- and pekam- in some dialects must be an analogical innovation based on the impersonal kamp- and pekam- (see Section 2.3), since the forms contain a reflex of the reflexive pronoun, which is only used in the third person. Despite their analogical rather than grammaticalization origin, the above possibility verbs tend to have less grammatical functions than their uninflected counterparts, provided they co-exist within a variety (cf. 57). On the other hand, if both personal and impersonal kamp- or pekam- co-exist within a variety, the personal (participant-external) modal is more grammatical semantically than the impersonal (participant-internal) modal, which appears to contradict the degree of their morphosyntactic grammaticality. The fact that the impersonal (participant-internal) necessity modals kamp- or pekam- also function as lexical verbs of need seems to be relevant here.

Impersonal modal verbs, i.e. modals inflecting for TAM but not subject categories, are obviously less differentiated morphologically than personal modal verbs. The lack of subject inflection may result from obligatorification of an impersonal modal construction (as in the case of the loans of Bulgarian može in some dialects, see Section 2.2) or from fossilisation of a frequent person–number form of a personal modal (as in the case of the borrowed mora in some dialects, see Section 2.3), and so, given that obligatorification and fossilization are recognized paradigmatic aspects of grammaticalization (cf. Croft 2000: 157), impersonal modals can be considered to be more grammatical than personal modals. If there is alternation between personal and impersonal modal forms, the latter tend to occur in the more frequent TAM categories. Like personal modal verbs, impersonal modal verbs have scope over the whole clause that expresses the modalized proposition: the modalized verb occurs in a subordinate form and is introduced by the complementizer. However, some impersonal modal verbs with finite complements (Type nPF1) have nominative marking of the modal subject NP, which is to be interpreted as the grammatical subject of the modalized verb rather than of the modal. This indicates a certain degree of syntactic degradation of the modal. Impersonal verb inflection is common especially with possibility and necessity modals, often due to the impersonality of the source or model expressions in Romani’s L2s.

Clearly the most grammatical are those modals that do not inflect either for TAM or subject categories (Type nPF2), thus functioning as invariant markers of modality that modify a fully inflected verb. Syntactically, such modals do not influence the argument structure of the modalized verb, and so the modal subject is invariably marked as the grammatical subject of the modalized verb (i.e. nominative-marked with most verbs). Also, they are the only type of modals that allow an obligatory absence of the non-factual complementizer, which is the last remnant of the embedded status of the modalized verb. The development of uninflected modals thus involves both paradigmatic and syntagmatic morphosyntactic processes of grammaticalization: fossilization and/or morphological loss of
verbal inflection on the one hand and structural condensation, scope decrease and loss of independent syntactic status on the other (cf. Croft 2000: 157). In addition to modals that were inherited as uninflected from Early Romani (šaj, ašti and našti) and borrowed modals that are uninflected in the source language as well, there are quite a few instances of recently grammaticalized uninflected modals in the domain of possibility (naj, trunti, darfte) and especially necessity (hunte, site, mus, moste, brauste, mote and more). A complete loss of inflection and independent syntactic status in expressions of volition, on the other hand, is associated with post-modal functions. If there is alternation between constructions with inflected vs uninflected modals, the latter tend to occur in the more frequent TAM categories. More importantly, they also tend to occur in the more grammaticalized functions within a certain modality, as the distinction between the the tensed modals expressing situational necessity and the default-tense (and so in a sense uninflected) modals expressing epistemic necessity in (4) and (44) illustrates.

All Romani modals are free forms, i.e. none is bound to the modalized verb as a clitic or even as an affix. This also holds for those Romani dialects that have been in contact with languages that possess bound modals (cf. possibility suffixes in Turkish and Hungarian): unlike free modals, bound modals are never borrowed in their material form; and if there is pattern replication it does not concern the degree of coalescence. Coalescence with the modalized verb has only affected the post-volition future markers (see Section 3.1), which are proclitics. Instances of coalescence of a modal with the non-factual complementizer te are restricted to uninflected modals, and so to possibility and necessity. Coalescence with the reflexive pronoun is typical of de-volitional necessity.

### 3.3. Borrowing asymmetries

Modality is a domain that is conspicuously susceptible to structural borrowing in Romani. However, the borrowing behaviour is asymmetrical: Some modality categories are more likely to be borrowed than others. The overall likelihood modality categories to be affected by structural borrowing is expressed by the following hierarchy:

(59) necessity > possibility > volition

Necessity appears at the top of the borrowability scale, meaning that it is both the most frequently borrowed modality category in the cross-dialect sample, and that lower positions on the hierarchy – volition and possibility – are not likely to be borrowed unless necessity is borrowed too. The hierarchy seems compatible to some degree with the hierarchy of grammaticalization: Both possibility and necessity are targets in the grammaticalization process, rather than points of departure; in other words, they occupy higher positions on the
grammaticalization hierarchy. This appears to suggest that the absence of a highly grammaticalized, semantically dedicated expression for modality attracts borrowing as an enrichment to the system. Such an argument follows a traditional “gap-hypothesis” approach to borrowing: items that are “missing” in the recipient system are more likely to be borrowed from a donor system. It does not, however, explain the relative low susceptibility of volition to borrowing – which in Romani is the least grammaticalized modality category. It appears, rather, that the trigger for borrowing is to be found in the semantic-pragmatic functions involved. Prone to borrowing are those modality categories that are participant-external, rather than participant-internal. Arguably, necessity involves greater intensity of external pressure than possibility, allowing us to postulate the following hierarchy:

(60) external pressure (necessity) > external facilitation (possibility) > internal (volition)

Borrowing, in effect the speaker accommodating ‘intrusions’ from a (dominant) external language, is thus in a sense a metaphorical reflection of the actor succumbing to external pressure. In relation to language processing in communicative interaction, it is yet another expression of the susceptibility to borrowing (in an oral, minority language) of structures expressing contrast, discontinuity, uncertainty, or exemption. As discussed already in Elšík & Matras (2006: 385-386) and in Matras (1998), we may conclude that borrowing targets firstly those grammatical devices that are employed to process instances of potential tension between the message conveyed by the speaker, and the hearer’s expectations. It is, therefore, the ‘stress-effect’ in processing discourse that leads the bilingual speaker to lose control over the ‘correct’ selection of language form, a production error which, unaffected by normative attitudes may lead to convergence or ‘fusion’ of the structural representation of the category in both languages – i.e. to structural ‘borrowing’.

A rather different picture emerges from the distribution of borrowed inflection accompanying borrowed modality structures. While such borrowed inflection is common with modals expressing possibility, it is rather rare with necessity – in a way reversing the hierarchy observed in (59). (Borrowed inflection with volition is attested in only one dialects, Dolenjski). The explanation is likely to be related to the availability of impersonal modality markers in the contact languages, as well as the overall semantic-pragmatic tendency to express necessity as an external, impersonal force (cf. even the language-internal grammaticalisation from volition in kam- to an impersonal, reflexive necessity expression kampel).
4. Conclusions

Figure (1) presents an integrated map of the grammaticalization paths of Romani modals:

Figure 1: Romani modality: An integrated map of grammaticalization paths
Two principal dimensions appear as relevant to the evaluation of modality and its grammaticalization paths. Modality categories can firstly be arranged on a cline reflecting the degree of intensity or determination – a conscious force driving the modal evaluation of a target action. This cline interacts with a split between the anchoring of modality through internal and external force. On the internal-force side, determination is expressed as agentivity: It is strongest in volition, weaker in capability, and ambiguous or irrelevant in possibility. On the external-force side, determination is expressed as intensive outside pressure: This is strong with necessity, weaker with permission, and ambiguous or irrelevant in possibility. Internal-force modality is of course present in volition and capability, but ambiguous in possibility, while external-force modality is present in necessity and permission, but also ambiguous in possibility. Possibility thus takes up a rather neutral position on the chart, free of explicit determination, and undefined for either internal-agentive or external-causative involvement.

The grammaticalization paths of Romani modals generally lead from predications depicting a mental-emotional state, a material state, or, marginally, movement. There is a strong tendency for internal-force predications to feed into internal-force modality, and for predications that are situated at least on the borderline between internal and external semantic conceptualizations to feed into external-force modality. Thus, existence is arguably externally-driven, as it is taken at face value without reference to the speaker’s own emotions or intentions. Possession is somewhat ambiguous, as it entails a claim for possession on the part of the participant, but arguably also recognition of the possession relationship from an external source. In terms of its own grammaticalization path, Romani possession tends to draw on existence, supporting this ambiguity, at the very least, and quite possibly further biasing its external orientation. While the (marginal) grammaticalization of ‘to dare’ for permission is an exception to this tendency, the split between internal and grammaticalization paths receives support from the fact that possibility, occupying an ambiguous position, shows mixed source deriving both from expressions of internal and external states-of-affairs.

The two principal dimensions depicted in Figure (1) also serve as a useful map to interpret the role of structural borrowing in the Romani modality system. Borrowing is most frequently encountered when there is close correlation of external-force modality with intensity (in this case, intensive outside pressure), as discussed in 3.3.

On the entire chart, volition clearly stands out as the category with the greatest potential for further grammaticalization. Its grammatical derivations may cross the agentivity line to serve as impersonal, external-force modals, which in turn may serve as sources for the grammaticalization of necessity expressions. Volition expressions may also
end up in functions beyond strict modality, such as the epistemic future or the marking of indefiiteness.

References


their investigation (Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft). Berlin: De Gruyter.


Manchester Romani Project website: www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/Research/Projects/romani


RMS = Romani Morpho-Syntactic Database. Viktor Elšík & Yaron Matras 2001–present; current version supported by Christopher White, Charlotte Jones, and Christa Schubert. See: Manchester Romani Project.

