

ALEXANDER ANDRASON AND TYMOTEUSZ KRÓL

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRONOMINAL SYSTEM OF MODERN VILAMOVICEAN

Abstract:

The present paper is dedicated to the documentation of an underdocumented and nearly extinct Germanic language spoken in Poland, called Vilamovicean or Wymysiöeryś, and provides a detailed description of the pronominal morphology of this tongue. Employing the original evidence collected during their extensive field research, the authors present the declensional patterns of all the types of pronouns (personal, demonstrative, indefinite, anaphoric, relative, interrogative and possessive pronouns) and compare them with the pronominal system of Classical Vilamovicean, which was attested to at the beginning of the 20th century. The authors conclude that although a vast majority of the classical pronouns and their declensional forms are still well-maintained, several changes are likewise evident. Namely, the genitive case has been lost; some pronouns have vanished while others modified their usage; certain pronominal forms have suffered a Polish and/or German influence; original analytic pronominal expressions underwent a further grammaticalization process; and new case endings have emerged due to analogical adjustments.

Key words:

Germanic linguistics; dialectology; Vilamovicean; pronouns;

1. Introduction

The Vilamovicean language or *Wymysiöeryś* [vimisø:riɛ], as it is called by the native speakers, is an example of a silent linguistic drama. Ignored by politicians and administration, uninteresting to the flashes and microphones of the media, and – most sadly – excluded from mainstream interests of modern universities and research institutions, this local vernacular has gradually been dying a quiet and unnoticeable death.¹

¹ It should be noted that this year the situation has begun to change as two research projects in

Vilamovicean is most probably an East Central German (*Ostmitteldeutsch*) dialect, derived from Middle High German (cf. BESCH et al. 1983:911, WICHERKIEWICZ 2003 and RITCHIE 2012; for a discussion of the Flemish origin, see RYCKEBOER 1984 and MORCINIEC 1984 and 1995), spoken in the town of Wilamowice, in the westernmost part of Galicia in Southern Poland. Now, at the beginning of the 21st century, Vilamovicean is the smallest Germanic language in the world. It is understood by approximately two hundred persons² although fluently spoken by no more than forty. Almost all of these fluent and active speakers are more than 80 years old. As the years rolled on, many of these speakers have passed away and with the loss of each one of them a part of the idiom has been vanishing. Almost every year, yet another “living treasure” of the Vilamovicean language is lost. As a result, if no drastic and immediate changes are made to encourage the usage of this vernacular in Wilamowice, the tongue – at least as a social phenomenon – will vanish within the next fifteen years.

Since 2004, facing this inevitable linguistic and cultural catastrophe, the authors of the present paper have been engaged in the documentation of the Vilamovicean language, recording all the speakers and noting all the words, expressions and grammatical constructions that have been used. Simultaneously with this immense documentary task, Alexander ANDRASON and Tymoteusz KRÓL have been engaged in two other, equally expensive projects. They have been working on a Vilamovicean lexicon (cf. ANDRASON and KRÓL 2013) and on identifying and explaining various aspects of Vilamovicean grammar (cf. ANDRASON 2010a, 2010b, 2011, 2013 and forthcoming; see also ANDRASON & KRÓL forthcoming).³

The present article is dedicated to only one aspect of the grammar of Modern Vilamovicean: its pronominal system. Most particularly, based on the data collected in the first decade of the 21st century, the authors provide a meticulous description of the Vilamovicean pronouns as far as their morphology and semantics are concerned. To be exact, all the pronominal subtypes and their case forms (either regular and frequent or rare and even idiolectal) will be presented: personal, demonstrative, indefinite, anaphoric, relative, interrogative and possessive pronouns. Additionally, in appropriate cases, this contemporary situation, derived from the authors’ empirical research, will be compared to the

the Vilamovicean language have begun: “Ginące języki” and “Dziedzictwo językowe” from the University of Warsaw and University Adam Mickiewicz of Poznań, respectively.

² This number has increased over last 8 years as our research activities have been expanding, reaching a constantly wider scope of interviewed persons.

³ Tymoteusz KRÓL has also contributed to the renaissance of the Vilamovicean literature (cf. ANDRASON 2011). Additionally, he teaches the Vilamovicean language to children living in Wilamowice.

state of affairs from the beginning of the 20th century, which was described by KLECZKOWSKI (1920 and 1921) and which may be viewed as a classical period or a golden age of the Vilamovicean language and literature. KLECZKOWSKI'S grammar – published in two parts in 1920 and 1921 – despite its brevity, is the most valuable publication that addresses the question of the Vilamovicean grammar in its totality. The part devoted to pronouns, although very concise, treats the most important morphological properties of the Vilamovicean pronouns (cf. KLECZKOWSKI 1920:137–141) and can be viewed as a trustworthy testimony of the pronominal system before the Second World War.⁴

As a result, it is evident that our aim is principally empirical, descriptive and synchronic, although important diachronic tendencies that have led to modifications in Modern Vilamovicean will also be discussed. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that the elaboration of such a detailed description of the Vilamovicean pronominal system – apparently straightforward and uncomplicated – was not a simple task. It was based on extensive field research carried out by the authors since 2004, which involved approximately sixty persons.⁵ It goes also

⁴ Besides these two books, no other position can be viewed as casting some important light on the nominal system. The other four studies devoted to the Vilamovicean language fail to provide relevant information on the nominal system. The sections related to the grammar and nominal system in particular in books written by MLYNEK (1907) and LATOSIŃSKI (1909 [1990]) are too sketchy and superficial. LASATOWICZ'S book from 1992 cannot be regarded as a trustful description of the Vilamovicean language. To be exact, the data presented by LASATOWICZ are highly suspicious: she fails to provide the source(s) of her examples and the Vilamovicean variety she describes is very suspicious displaying an almost unnatural Standard German character (see, especially pages 57–58). Various forms offered by LASATOWICZ are perceived by our informants as evident German borrowings. Observe, for instance, that LASATOWICZ consistently provides genitive forms of nouns, adjective and pronouns, forms which in fact have almost entirely disappeared from the language. The genitive (especially as far as nouns and adjective are concerned) ceased being a living category of the language already at the beginning of the 20th century (cf. KLECZKOWSKI 1920:127). Finally, without undermining the importance of study compiled by Tomasz WICHERKIEWICZ in 2003, his grammatical discussion is limited and superficial (see, especially pages 421–423). This stems from a non-grammatical orientation of the book. Namely, WICHERKIEWICZ focusses on the translation of Biesik's poem and on several ethological and sociolinguistic issues.

⁵ During the compilation of evidence the following native speakers – ordered by the year of the birth – have been consulted: Franciszka Bilczewska fúm Frycki (1913–2012), Kazimierz Grygierczyk fúm Bieruniok (1913–2010), Anna Danek fúm Pejtela (born 1916), Zofia Danek fúm Stańcu (1917–2012), Franciszek Mosler fúm Mózler (1918–2011), Helena Danek fúm Kwaka (1919–2012) Jan Biba fúm Tüma–Jaški (1920–2011), Anna Sznajder fúm Pejter (1920–2012), Elżbieta Mynarska fúm Siöeba (born 1921), Helena Biba fúm Płaćnik (born 1922), Elżbieta Babiuch fúm Poükner (1923–2010), Anna Foks fúm Prorok (1923–2011), Elżbieta Kacorzük fúm Pütrok (born 1923), Elżbieta Sznajder fúm Pejter (born 1923), Anna Zejma fúm Lüft (1923–2010), Elżbieta Matysiak fúm Hala-Mockia (born 1924), Anna Danek fúm Küpse-la (born 1924), Helena Gasidło fúm Biöezniok (born 1924), Waleria Brzezina fúm Cepok (born 1925), Rozalia Kowalik fúm Poüermin (born 1925), Jan Formas (born 1925), Katarzyna

without saying that this synchronic and mainly empirical portrayal is necessary in light of the inevitable disappearance of the tongue. This may, in fact, be the last testimony of the Vilamovicean pronouns.

2. Evidence

2.1 *Personal pronoun*⁶

The Vilamovicean language offers a great number of alternative personal pronouns, spanning from forms that are less morphologically and phonetically downgraded to those that are profoundly reduced, as far as their phonetics and morphology are concerned (cf. the suffixed forms in section 2.1.3, below). To be precise, the language possesses three classes of personal pronouns: the accented independent pronouns (so-called “full” pronouns; 2.1.1) and two types of the weak and most commonly unaccented pronouns – independent (so-called “reduced” pronouns) and dependent pronouns (i.e. pronominal affixes).

Balcarczyk fum Karol (1925–2013), Stanisław Foks fum Lüft (born 1926), Elżbieta Formas fum Mözler (born 1926), Katarzyna Nowak fum Tobyś (1926–2010), Rozalia Hanusz fum Linküş (1926–2009), Anna Korczyk fum Kołodziej (born 1927), Elżbieta Gąsiorek fum Anta (born 1927), Elżbieta Figwer fum Böba (born 1927), Anna Foks fum Lüft (born 1927), Kazimierz Sznajder fum Pejter (1927–2011), Ingeborg Matzner-Danek (born 1928), Helena Nowak fum Holeczka (born 1928), Jan Balcarczyk fum Siöeba (1928–2013), Bronisława Pyka (born 1928), Helena Rozner fum Böba-Lojzka (born 1928), Emilia Biesik fum Raczek (1929), Józef Gara fum Tołer (1929–2013), Elżbieta Merta fum Hala-Frana-Jaškia (born 1929), Katarzyna Danek fum Pejtela (born 1929), Elżbieta Nycz fum Śleżok (1929–2007), Helena Dobroczyńska fum Osieçon (1929–2012), Elżbieta Gandor fum Baranła (born 1930), Zofia Kozieł fum Sübert (born 1930), Anna Biba-fum Küčlik (1930–2009), Hilda Kasperczyk fum Čioe (1930–2005), Eugenia Foks fum Bröda (born 1930), Rozalia Danek fum Mjyra-Winca (born 1931), Elżbieta Nikiel fum Linküş (born 1931), Rozalia Węgrodzka fum Gadła (born 1931), Stanisław Zejma (born 1931), Stefania Kuczmierczyk fum Jonkla (born 1932), Anna Nowak fum Hala-Mockia (1932–2011), Emilia Danek fum Biöeźniok (born 1933), Kazimierz Foks-fum Baranła (born 1934), Anna Kuczmierczyk fum Zelbst (born 1934), Anna Sznajder fum Pejter (born 1934), Barbara Tomanek (born 1935), Elżbieta Sznajder fum Frešlik (born 1938), Stanisław Merta fum Hala-Frana-Jaškia-Hala (1955–2011), Janusz Brzezina fum Urbon (born 1956).

⁶ In this paper, to the category of pronouns we will include not only forms that are employed as genuine pronouns (in this usage, they are independent, stand on their own and substitute nouns) but also morphologically analogical or very similar constructions that are used as determiners or adjectives (they qualify and modify a noun). To the former subclass we will refer as “employed in a pronominal function (i.e. as genuine pronouns)” while the latter will be labelled as “an adjectival usage”.

2.1.1 Full personal pronouns

The full personal pronouns – whose nominative forms are presented in Figure 1, below – typically appear in cases where the speaker wishes to add some emphasis or where a given pronominal form appears in isolation. The latter situation is frequently found when someone employs a sole pronominal form as an answer to a question such as *War maht dos?* ‘Who did it?’. In this case, the regular response is, for example, *Yhy* ‘I’. The full pronouns also commonly appear in a predicative position: *S’ej har* ‘It’s he’ (for further examples, see 1.a–g).

	singular	plural
1	<i>yhy</i>	1 <i>wjyr</i>
2	<i>dü</i>	2 <i>jyr</i>
3MS	<i>har</i>	3 <i>zej</i>
FM	<i>zej</i>	
NT	<i>ejs</i>	

Figure 1: Full personal pronouns

- (1) a. **Yhy**⁷ łaz s’bihła
I read the-book
‘I read a book’
- b. **Wos** mahst **dü**?
what do you
‘What are you doing?’
- c. **Har** kouft dan štül
he bought this chair
‘He bought this chair’
- d. **Zej** hon dos ym fjyšta feršankt
they have this to-the prince given
‘They have given it to the prince’
- e. **Ejs** ej ołd
it is old
‘It is old’
- f. **Wjyr** zäjn y Wymysöü
we are in Wilamowice
‘We are in Wilamowice’

⁷ All the relevant pronominal forms in the examples provided in this paper will be indicated in bold formatting. In this article, word-for-word glosses with contextually similar words/forms (rather than morpheme-by-morpheme glosses) will be used.

- g. **Jyr** hot dos gygasa
 you have this eaten
 ‘You have eaten this’

The above mentioned pronouns – as any nominal entity such as substantives and adjectives – may be declined in two further cases available in the Vilamovicean language: accusative and dative. Their forms are indicated below:

	singular					plural		
	1	2	3ms	fm	nt	1	2	3
ACC	<i>mejh</i>	<i>dejh</i>	<i>ejn</i>	<i>zej</i>	<i>ejs</i>	<i>yns/c</i>	<i>öüh</i>	<i>zej</i>
DAT	<i>mjyr</i>	<i>djyr</i>	<i>ejm</i>	<i>jyr</i>	<i>ejm</i>	<i>yns/c</i>	<i>öüh</i>	<i>ejn</i>

Figure 2: Oblique cases of the full personal pronouns

The usage of the oblique forms is analogical to those described when analyzing the nominative forms with the distinction that the accusative and dative pronouns fail to appear in a predicative position.

- (2) a. **Mejh** komsty byzihja
 me came-you visit
 ‘You came to visit me’
- b. **Dejh** cy ryta
 you to save
 ‘To save you’
- c. Ga **yns**
 give us
 ‘Give us!’
- d. Yh ho **zej** gyzan
 I have them seen
 ‘I have seen them’
- e. Yh ho myt **ejm** gygasa
 I have with him eaten
 ‘I have eaten with him’
- f. Yh wa **jyr** dos gan
 I will her this give
 ‘I will give this to her’
- g. Fjyr **zej**
 for her
 ‘For them’

mājncwegen ‘because of me’, *derhołw* ‘because of you, as far as you are concerned’, *dājncwegen* ‘because of you’ and *ynzer āner* ‘one of us’. According to KLECZKOWSKI, the genitive forms of the third person were more independent and could occur on their own. Nowadays, however, the genitive forms of the pronouns – be they full, reduced and/or affixed – are entirely lost.

2.1.2 Reduced pronouns

The reduced pronouns are forms that are typically unaccented. It is an accompanying element in the sentence (most commonly, a preposition, a conjunction or a verb) that receives the stress. These pronominal forms are extremely common. *De facto*, they are the most neutral and/or unmarked pronominal forms. They may be found in almost all the syntactic environments and their only regular and necessary feature is the loss (or, at least, weakening) of their accentual force, by which they contrast with full forms. On the other hand, they maintain their morphological independence, being clearly distinguishable from affixed pronouns (cf. examples 5.a–e, below). The following chart presents the reduced pronouns that are available in the nominative case, in Modern Vilamovicean:

	singular	plural
1	<i>yh</i>	1 <i>wer</i>
2	<i>dy</i>	2 <i>der</i>
3MS	<i>ā / ār</i>	3 <i>zy</i>
FM	<i>zy</i>	
NT	<i>(es)</i> ⁸	

Figure 3: Reduced personal pronouns

- (5) a. **Yh** łaz dy cąjting
 I read the newspaper
 ‘I read the newspaper’
- b. Wen **der** wjet yhta maha...
 if you were something do
 ‘If you were to / would do something...’

⁸ This form is an intermediate variant between *ejs* and the suffixed *s*, with a slightly audible vocalic *e* sound. Apart from LASATOWICZ (1992), it is normally not used in the Vilamovicean orthography and modern texts.

- c. **Wer** hon dos oüta
 we have this car
 ‘We have this car’
- d. **Es** ej wiöem
 it is hot
 ‘It is hot’
- e. **Å** ziöet...
 he says
 ‘He says...’

The oblique forms of the unstressed pronouns are as follows:

	singular					plural		
	1	2	3ms	fm	nt	1 st	2 nd	3
ACC	<i>mih</i>	<i>dih</i>	<i>å</i>	<i>zy</i>	<i>(es)</i> ⁹	<i>(yns/c)</i> ¹⁰	<i>(j)üh</i> ¹¹	<i>zy</i>
DAT	<i>mer</i>	<i>der</i>	<i>jum</i>	<i>jer</i> ¹²	<i>jum</i>	<i>(yns/c)</i>	<i>(j)üh</i>	<i>(j)yn</i> ¹³

Figure 4: Oblique cases of the reduced personal pronouns

- (6) a. Yh ho **å** gyzan
 I have him seen
 ‘I have seen him’
- b. **Å** hot gyköüft å hinla
 he has bought a chicken
 ‘He has bought a chicken’
- c. Yh wa **jum** dos gan
 I will him this give
 ‘I will give it to him’
- d. Yh wa **jyn** dos gan
 I will them this give
 ‘I will give it to them’
- e. Yh ho myt **jyr** gygasa
 I have with her eaten
 ‘I have eaten with her’

⁹ See footnote 4, above.

¹⁰ These forms are similar to the full pronouns with the difference that they are unstressed.

¹¹ The two forms (*jüh* and *üh*) are free variations.

¹² The form *jyr*, pronounced with a short *y* [i], is also possible.

¹³ As may be seen in this chart, certain pronominal forms (in particular, *jüh* and *jün*) may lose the initial consonant *j* yielding variant such as *üh* and *yn*. Additionally, one may infrequently find the form *ina* as an alternative to *jyn* and *yn*.

- f. Yh ho myt **jyn** gygasa
 I have with them eaten
 ‘I have eaten with them’

The contrast of the full and reduced personal pronouns may be illustrated by the following examples, in which the first sentence of the pair employs a full variety while the other uses an alternative, reduced, form.

- (7) a. Yh ho **zej** gyzan
 I have her seen
 ‘I have seen her (i.e. it is her I have seen)’
 b. Yh ho **zy** gyzan
 I have her seen
 ‘I have seen her’

This difference between the two classes of personal pronoun (i.e. full *versus* reduced) can also be observed in their usage in conjunction with prepositions. If a full pronominal form is employed, the preposition is unstressed and the accentual prominence is given to the pronoun. If a reduced variant is used, however, it is the preposition that bears the stress, while the pronoun is left unaccented: *fu* ‘mjyr vs. ‘fön mer ‘for me’ and *cy* ‘djyr vs. ‘cün der ‘to you’, *fjyr ejn* vs. *fjyr* ‘å ‘for him’. It should also be noted that the reduced pronouns (such as *å*, *zy* or *es*) are usually impossible when used alone in a sentence, for example, in order to answer the question *War maht dos?* ‘Who did it?’. As a response, only the pronoun *Har!* ‘He’ – and not *Å!* – is acceptable.¹⁴

As was the case with the full pronouns, certain neuter forms (e.g. *jum* in example 8, below) may be employed in order to refer to feminine substantives, especially to nouns that indicate female persons:

- (8) Yh wa **jum** dos gan
 I will her this give
 ‘I will give it to her’

2.1.3 Affixed pronouns

Affixed pronouns constitute the most downgraded variants of pronouns as far as their phonetics and morphology are concerned. Most commonly, they are suffixed to verbs (*hjih* ‘I hear’), prepositions (*wih* ‘as I’) and conjunctions (*doh*

¹⁴ However, as far as the lexeme *jer* is concerned, it is used in an independent position by some informants.

‘that I’ or wājls ‘as/since they’). In the case of verbs, one also finds prefixed pronouns (*syj* ‘it is’). They are invariably unstressed and cannot be employed without a hosting entity (i.e. independently or in isolation). The nominative forms of this type of pronouns are the following:

	singular	plural
1	- <i>h</i> / <i>h</i> -	1 - <i>wer</i>
2	- <i>y</i>	2 - <i>er</i>
3MS	- <i>ā</i>	3 - <i>s</i> / <i>s</i> -
FM	- <i>s</i> / <i>s</i> -	
NT	- <i>s</i> / <i>s</i> -	

Figure 5: Affixed personal pronouns

These forms are common in speech and the examples are highly abundant:

- (9) a. Mahsty dos?
do-you this
‘Do you do it?’
- b. Fu mün hower ferja
for tomorrow have-we holidays
‘Tomorrow we start the holidays’
- c. Wos wisty maha
what will-you do
‘What will you do?’
- d. Ziöetā
says-he
‘He says’
- e. Skymt
it-comes
‘It comes’
- f. Sej Bolesław
it-is Bolesław
‘This is Bolesław’
- g. Cołts dy taksa
paid-she the fees
‘She paid the fees’
- h. Yh kynt ny ziöen wiöes junk wiöes alt
I can not say was-he young was-he old
‘I could not say – was it young, was it old’

It should be observed that when the first person plural suffix is added to a verb in the Present Tense, the regular ending (either *a* or *n*) disappear. This means that the suffix *-wer* is added directly to the verbal root, yielding forms such as *hower* ‘we have’ (cf. *wjyr hon*) and *gejwer* ‘we go’ (cf. *wjyr gejn*).

The oblique – accusative and dative – forms of the affixed pronouns are the following:

	singular				plural			
	1	2	3ms	fm	nt	1 st	2 nd	3
ACC	–	–	-â/-jâ ¹⁵	-s / s-	-s / s- ¹⁶	-ns	-üh	-s / s- ¹⁷
DAT	–	–	-um /-m ¹⁸	-er/-r	-um/-m	-ns	-üh	-n, -a, -na ¹⁹

Figure 6: Oblique cases of the affixed personal pronouns

It must be emphasized that oblique affixed forms are extremely frequent with prepositions (e.g. *cyns* ‘to us’), although the full and separated forms may be used as well (e.g. *myt ejm* or *myt ina*):

- (10) Nimyd kons mej ny ryta
 nobody can-her more no save
 ‘Nobody can save her anymore’

In accordance with the phenomenon observed in the case of full and reduced pronouns, the form of the neuter singular dative *-um* is sometimes used for feminine referents: *mytum* ‘with him/it’ or ‘with her’ (i.e. instead of *myt ejm/jym* and *myt jyr/jer*) and *fum* ‘from him/it’ and ‘for her’ (i.e. instead of *fu ejm/jum* and *fu jyr/jer*).²⁰

¹⁵ The forms *-jâ*, *-m*, *-r* appear after a vowel while the varieties *-â*, *-um* and *-er* are found after a consonant.

¹⁶ One should note that in cases where the pronoun *-s* follows the consonant *r*, the two sounds are pronounced as *ś* [ɕ].

¹⁷ As far as the pronouns of the feminine singular and 3rd person plural are concerned, it seems that the reduced form *zy* is preferred. This most likely stems from the need to differentiate the aforementioned pronouns from the neuter singular (cf. however, example 10 below).

¹⁸ It should be noted that the dative of the third masculine and neuter singular is homonymous with a suffixed form of the article.

¹⁹ The distribution of these forms is as follows: *-n* and *-na* (an innovation, a type of a double marking *-n* + *-a*) are found after vowels and *-a* after consonant (*myta* ‘with them’).

²⁰ The genuine feminine forms are *myter* and *fur*, respectively.

2.2 Demonstrative pronouns

The Modern Vilamovicean displays three series of demonstrative pronouns. Two of them concern the spatial deixis: proximal pronouns and distal pronouns, while the third is related to the idea of “qualitative” indication. The first – proximal – type of demonstrative pronouns expresses the idea of physical nearness, similar to the English pronouns ‘this, these’ and offers the following forms depending on the gender, case and number:

	masculine	feminine	neuter	plural of all genders
NOM	<i>dar</i>	<i>di</i>	<i>dos (dot)</i> ²¹	<i>di</i>
ACC	<i>dan</i>	<i>di</i>	<i>dos (dot)</i>	<i>di</i>
DAT	<i>dam</i>	<i>dar</i>	<i>dam</i>	<i>dan</i>

Figure 7: Declension of the demonstrative pronouns of proximity

- (11) a. Myt **dan** büwa
 with these boys
 ‘With these boys’
 b. Uf **dar** welt
 in this world
 ‘In this world’

It should be noted that the unaccented and/or suffixed variant of the demonstrative pronouns of proximity are nowadays employed only as forms of the definite article:

	masculine	feminine	neuter	plural of all genders
NOM	<i>der</i>	<i>dy</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>dy</i>
ACC	<i>yn, -a, -n</i>	<i>dy</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>dy</i>
DAT	<i>ym, -m</i>	<i>yr, -r</i>	<i>ym, -m</i>	<i>yn, -a, -n</i>

Figure 8: Declension of the definite article

- (12) a. Yh lüz **dy** câjtung
 I read the newspaper
 ‘I read [past] the newspaper’

²¹ The form *dot* instead of *dos* is idiolectal being employed by one informant: *dot mâkja* ‘this girl’.

- b. Yh ho gykoüft s'bihła
 I have bought the-book
 'I have bought the book'
- c. Yh ho gyzan dy ki
 I have seen the cows
 'I have seen the cows'

In an analogical manner to the personal pronouns, the singular neuter form *dos* may be employed when referring to females whom one would address by *dü* ('you' [singular]). As far as the genitive forms are concerned (cf. *dass*, *dar*, *dyr* and *yr* in KLECZKOWSKI 1920:138 and *das*, *dyr* and *dar* in LASATOWICZ 1992:58), their usage has ceased to be available in the modern language.

The second class of demonstratives includes distal pronouns – *jer*, *jeny*, *jes* and *je(na)* – which indicate objects or persons located further way from the speaker of distance, corresponding to the meaning of the English words 'that' and 'those'. Their declensional pattern is as follows:

	masculine	feminine	neuter	plural of all genders
NOM	<i>jer</i>	<i>jeny</i>	<i>jes</i>	<i>je / jena</i>
ACC	<i>jen</i>	<i>jeny</i>	<i>jes</i>	<i>je / jena</i>
DAT	<i>jem</i>	<i>jer</i>	<i>jem</i>	<i>jen</i>

Figure 9: Declension of the demonstrative pronouns of distance

As may be observed above, the nominative and accusative plural forms display two varieties: *je* and *jena*. *Je* is used as an adjective (i.e. accompanying and qualifying a noun), while *jena* is employed as a genuine pronoun (i.e. independently without any accompanying noun or in a predicative position).²² The genitive forms (*jess*, *jer*, *jess* and *jer*; cf. KLECZKOWSKI 1920:139) are nowadays entirely lost.

The third set of demonstratives consists of three related but different types of pronouns – *zyter*, *zytnikjer* and *zytikjer* – that indicate not the physical location (either proximate or distant) but a determined type of thing or person. All of them have the meaning of 'so, like this, of this sort' (cf. German *solcher*). Below, we provide the declensional patterns of *zyter* and *zytnikjer*. The word *zytikjer* declines analogically to *zytnikjer* – the only difference is the assimilation of *n* to *t*. According to our data, *zyter* is the most common of the three varieties.

²² Some speakers use the form *jena* as an accented variant of *je*.

	masculine	feminine	neuter	plural of all genders
NOM	<i>zyter</i>	<i>zyty</i>	<i>zyta / zytys</i>	<i>zyty</i>
ACC	<i>zyta</i>	<i>zyty</i>	<i>zyta / zytys</i>	<i>zyty</i>
DAT	<i>zyta</i>	<i>zyta / zyty</i> ²³	<i>zyta</i>	<i>zyta</i>

	masculine	feminine	neuter	plural of all genders
NOM	<i>zytnikjer</i>	<i>zytnikjy</i>	<i>zytnik / zytnikjys</i>	<i>zytnikjy</i>
ACC	<i>zytnikja</i>	<i>zytnikjy</i>	<i>zytnik / zytnikjys</i>	<i>zytnikjy</i>
DAT	<i>zytnikja</i>	<i>zytnikja / zytnikjy</i>	<i>zytnikja</i>	<i>zytnikja</i>

Figure 10: Declension of *zyter* and *zytnikjer*

One should observe that *zyter*, *zytnikjer* and *zyttikjer* are regularly preceded by the indefinite article *â*. The nominative/accusative neuter displays two forms: the shorter (*zyta* and *zytnik*) is employed when preceding a noun (it qualifies the nominal head; 13.a), whereas the longer (*zytys* and *zytnikjys*) are used in apposition to a noun (13.b and 13.c).²⁴

- (13) a. *Â zyta* kind
 a such child
 ‘Such a child’
- b. *Â kynd â zytys*
 a child a such
 ‘Such a child’
- c. *Â mākja â zytnikjys*
 a girl a such
 ‘Such a girl’
- d. *Â zyta (zyty) šejny cajt*
 a such nice time
 ‘Such a nice time’

Following the general tendency, the genitive forms of this series of the demonstrative pronouns are lost in the modern language.

²³ The forms in the dative singular feminine – i.e. *zyta* or *zyty* and *zytnikja* or *zytnikjy* are free variations (13.d).

²⁴ Additionally, *âncik* ‘the only one, sole’ and *ânik* ‘taki sam’ may be included to the demonstratives of Modern Vilamovicean. However, they never appear independently (they are never used as genuine pronouns) but invariably accompany a noun functioning as an adjective. They are also indeclinable.

2.3 Indefinite pronouns

Modern Vilamovicean possesses numerous positive indefinite pronouns with the meaning of ‘someone, somebody, anyone, anybody’. The most frequent are indeclinable words such as *imid*, *imyd*, *imåd* and *imanda*. Apart from these lexemes, equally frequent is the use of the pronouns *mon* and *må* ‘one, someone’. Additionally, the pronoun of the third person plural *zej* (and its reduced variant *zy*) may be employed in order to convey an impersonal or general meaning. Some speakers alternatively prefer the pronoun of the third masculine singular *har* in the same function. There is also a depreciatory indefinite pronoun similar to ‘just any(one)’ *målåjhtwar* and its adverbial variety *målåjhtwi* ‘in any manner’. The indefinite pronoun for things is typically *yhta* ‘something, anything’ and, less commonly, *yht* ‘something, anything’. The pronoun *jynt åner* ‘anyone, someone’ – given by KLECZKOWSKI (1920:141) is rarely used as an indefinite pronoun anymore. It has survived more frequently in some negative and adverbial uses, such as: *jynt* and *jyntwu* ‘somewhere, anywhere’, *njynt* ‘nowhere’, *jynta mól* ‘sometimes’. A similar fate may be detected in the case of the pronouns *miöhjer*, *miöhj* and *miöhjys* ‘some, several, many a’ that were still in use according to KLECZKOWSKI (1920:141) and mainly survived in the words *nymiöhjer*, *nymiöhj*, *nymiöhjys* with the same meaning. They are also found in the adverbial expression *miöhjysmól* ‘sometimes, anytime’. The pronoun *nander* ‘other’ is typically encountered in certain reciprocal locutions, such as *undernander*, *funander* or *mytnander* (see, section 2.4, below).

There are two main series of the negative indefinite pronouns. The first class includes words that are direct negative counterparts of the positive pronouns: *nimid*, *nimyd*, *nimåd* and *nimanda* ‘no one’. The word for negative pronouns referring to things is *nist* ‘nothing’. Just like their positive homologues, all of the aforementioned negative pronouns are indeclinable. However, apart from these indeclinable indefinite negative pronouns, the language likewise possesses the lexeme *kå* ‘(no) any / none’ that varies according to number, gender and case, showing the following declensional pattern:

	masculine	feminine	neuter	plural of all genders
NOM	<i>kå / kåner</i>	<i>kå / kåny</i>	<i>kå / kås</i>	<i>kå / kåna</i>
ACC	<i>kån</i>	<i>kå / kåny</i>	<i>kå / kås</i>	<i>kå / kåna</i>
DAT	<i>kåm</i>	<i>kår</i>	<i>kåm</i>	<i>kån</i>

Figure 11: Declension of the pronoun *kå*

One should note that, in some cases (i.e. in the singular masculine nominative, neuter and feminine nominative-accusative and plural nominative-accusative), two types of *kå*-forms are found. The short variant appears if the word *kå* is used adjectively, i.e. when qualifying a given noun. On the contrary, the long varieties *kåner*, *kåny*, *kås* and *kåna* are employed in a pronominal function, i.e. when *kå* appears independently, without an accompanying noun. A frequently found alternative pronoun with the sense of ‘no one, nobody’ is *kå menć*, literally ‘no man’.

Besides the positive and negative indefinite pronouns presented above, scholars also include to the class of indefinites, the pronouns with the meaning of ‘every’: *ider* and *itlykjer*. Their declensional patterns are indicated below. One should observe that the variety *ida* is used adjectively, while the form *idys* is employed independently as a genuine pronoun.

	masculine	feminine	neuter
NOM	<i>ider</i>	<i>idy</i>	<i>ida / idys</i>
ACC	<i>ida</i>	<i>idy</i>	<i>ida / idys</i>
DAT	<i>idum</i>	<i>ider</i>	<i>idum</i>

	masculine	feminine	neuter
NOM	<i>itlykjer</i>	<i>itlykjy</i>	<i>itlykjys</i>
ACC	<i>itlykja</i>	<i>itlykjy</i>	<i>itlykjys</i>
DAT	<i>itlykja</i>	<i>itlykja</i>	<i>itlykja</i>

Figure 12: Declension of the pronouns *ider* and *itlykjer*

In an analogical manner to the personal and demonstrative pronouns, the genitive case of the indefinite pronouns (e.g. *idas*, *ider* and *idar*; cf. Kleczkowski 1920:141) is lost in Modern Vilamovicean.

2.4 Anaphoric pronoun

The category of anaphoric pronouns consists of two subclasses: reflexive and reciprocal.

In the 1st and 2nd person singular and plural, the reflexive pronouns – which indicate that the subject of the verb is also the patient of the action – are formally identical to the accusative of a respective personal pronoun (cf. section 2.1). In the 3rd person of the singular and plural, the word *zejh* and its reduced variety *zih* are used:

subject	reflexive	subject	reflexive
<i>ih</i>	<i>mejh / mih</i>	<i>wjyr</i>	<i>yns</i>
<i>dü</i>	<i>dejh / dih</i>	<i>jyr</i>	<i>oüh / jüh</i>
<i>har</i>	<i>zejh / zih</i>	<i>zej</i>	<i>zejh / zih</i>
<i>zej</i>			
<i>ejs</i>			

Figure 13: Reflexive pronouns

Nowadays, the use of the form *zejh* – originally restricted to the 3rd person singular and plural (cf. 14.a) – has been generalized for all the persons. Consequently, the form *zejh* may be employed with the 1st and 2nd persons instead of *mejh*, *dejh*, *yns* and *oüh* (14.b and 14.c). Nevertheless, the historically correct forms *mejh*, *dejh*, *yns* and *oüh* are also frequently met (14.d). It should be noted that the pronoun *zejh* may likewise be used in the imperative, which is a verbal form typically directed to the 2nd person singular (14.e). In addition, the pronoun *zejh* is regularly employed with the infinitive: *łijn zih* ‘to study, learn’ or *zih cy wjen* ‘to defend itself’. Vilamovicean also possesses an emphatic indeclinable anaphoric pronoun *zoüwer*, which is commonly added to a reflexive pronoun (14.f).

- (14) a. Fjeta **zih** giöe ny
 fear themselves at all not
 ‘They do not fear at all’
- b. Wjyr łjyn **zih** Wymysiöerys
 we learn ourselves Vilamovicean
 ‘We learn Vilamovicean’
- c. Wjyr fråjyn **zih**
 we rejoice ourselves
 ‘We rejoice’
- d. Yh wyl **mih** łjyn Wymysiöerys
 I want myself learn Vilamovicean
 ‘I want to learn Vilamovicean’
- e. Łjy **zih!**
 learn yourself
 ‘Study!’
- f. Å ziöet cy **zejh** zoüwer
 he said to himself self
 ‘He said to himself’

The use of the anaphoric pronoun *zejh* in the sense of a *dativus beneficiaries* – which indicates that the subject is beneficiary of the action – is uncommon in the Vilamovicean language. Instead, Vilamoviceans prefer an appropriate personal pronoun in the dative case (15.a). In this usage, the pronoun may again be accompanied by the word *zoüwer* (15.b). The reflexive pronouns (especially *zejh*) may also be used after a preposition (15.c).

- (15) a. Har köüft **um** å fad
 he bought himself a horse
 ‘He bought himself a horse’
- b. Har köüft **um** **zoüwer** å oüta
 he bought himself self a car
 ‘He bought himself a car’
- c. Göt cy **zih** höt byfoła
 God to himself has called
 ‘God has called to himself’

The Vilamovicean reciprocal pronouns are derived from the word *nander* ‘other, another’ which is nowadays found only in compounds: *undernander* ‘among each other’, *funander* ‘for each other’ or *mytnander* ‘with each other’ (16.a). The idea of reciprocity may likewise be conveyed by the locution *åner* + preposition + *ander*, in which the two nominal entities (i.e. *åner* and *ander*) are declined in an appropriate case (16.b). However, the concept of reciprocity is most commonly expressed by adverbs derived from the entity *-zoma*, for instance *cyzoma*, *byzoma* or *mytzoma* (16.c):

- (16) a. Zej kuza **undernander**
 they talk to each other
 ‘They talk to each other’
- b. Zej kuza **åner** **myt** **andum**
 they talk one with another
 ‘They talk to each other’
- c. Zej kuza **cyzoma**
 they talk together
 ‘They talk to each other’

2.5 Relative pronouns

There are two types of relative pronouns in Vilamovicean. The first one is homonymous with the interrogative adverb *wu* ‘where’ and the second is

identical to the demonstrative pronouns of proximity *dar*, *dos* and *di* (cf. section 2.2, above).

The lexeme *wu* is by far the most frequent relative pronoun in the Vilamovicean language. It is indeclinable and may be used with persons, animals and inanimate objects of any gender and number:

- (17) a. Gat s'brut y dam **wu** hyngjyt
 give the-bread to that one who is hungry
 'Give the bread to who is hungry'
- b. Was ej dy jak **wu** dö ląjt?
 whose is the jacket that there lies
 'Whose is the jacket that lies there?'

The other way of introducing the relative clauses corresponds to the use of the demonstrative pronouns *dar*, *dos* and *di*. The declensional pattern of this set of relative pronouns is analogical to the declension offered by the demonstrative pronouns (cf. section 2.2).²⁵ This usage is significantly less common than the previously mentioned word *wu* and is perceived by natives as a German influence.

- (18) a. Di mąjsta Douća **di** hoüt grenn...
 the most Germans who today cry
 'Most Germans who cry today...'
- b. Å smok **dar** hot łoüt gyfrasa...
 a dragon that has people eaten
 'A dragon that has eaten people...'

One should also observe that in contrast with the situation presented by KLECZKOWSKI (1920) and (1921), in the modern Vilamovicean language, relative pronouns – both *wu* and *dar* and its varieties – may be omitted (19.a). In such cases, a resumptive personal pronoun (full, reduced or affixed), which specifies the referent of the omitted relative pronoun, typically appears in the subordinated clause in an adequate case, gender and number (19.b, 19.c and 19.d):

- (19) a. Dar būw yh za
 this boy I see
 'The boy whom I can see'

²⁵ It should be noted that the singular masculine nominative form *dar* has two alternative variants: *der* and *dyr*.

- b. Dar büw yh ǎ za
 this boy I him see
 ‘The boy whom I can see’
- c. Dar büw yh ho ǎ gyzon
 this boy I have him seen
 ‘The boy whom I have seen’
- d. Dos mǎkja yh mytum kuzt
 this girl I with-her talked
 ‘The girl [that] I talked to’

2.6 Interrogative pronouns

The most common interrogative pronouns in the Vilamovicean language are *war* ‘who’ and *wos* ‘what’. They decline regularly, except for the fact that in the dative, apart from the regular *wam*, the pronoun *wos* shows an innovative form *wos*, developed by analogy to the nominative and accusative cases. As a result, at least for some speakers, the pronoun *wos* is nowadays indeclinable. One should note that there is also an exceptional genitive form of the pronoun *war*, i.e. *was* ‘whose’.

NOM	<i>war</i>	<i>wos</i>
ACC	<i>wan</i>	<i>wos</i>
DAT	<i>wam</i>	<i>wam</i> / <i>wos</i>
(GEN)	<i>was</i>)	

Figure 14: Declension of the interrogative pronouns *war* and *wos*

The pronoun *wos* ‘what’ may also be used in an adjectival sense, qualifying a noun – either a thing or a person – with which it stands together:

- (20) **Wos** tohter ej dos?
 what girl is this
 ‘What girl is this one?’

There are also three interrogative pronouns with the sense of ‘which(one)’: *wyler*, *wyhjer* and *wylhjer* whose declension is presented in Figure 15, below. *Wylhjer* declines like its more frequent counterpart *wyhjer* – the only difference consists in the preservation of the consonant *l*. Additionally, one may find the pronoun *woswer* ‘which(one)’, a fused form of the original expression *wos fŷyr ǎner* (cf. German: *was für ein*). One should note that, according to KLECZKOWSKI (1920:141), this pronominal locution was

still understood as analytical. In the modern language, however, it is perceived as a fully fused and synthetic pronoun. Likewise in contrast with the situation described by KLECZKOWSKI (1920), in the Modern Vilamovicean, *woswer* is indeclinable.

	masculine	feminine	neuter	plural of all genders
NOM	<i>wyler</i>	<i>wyły</i>	<i>wyłys</i>	<i>wyła/ wyły</i> ²⁶
ACC	<i>wyła</i>	<i>wyły</i>	<i>wyłys</i>	<i>wyła / wyły</i>
DAT	<i>wyłum</i>	<i>wyler</i>	<i>wyłum</i>	<i>wyła</i>

	masculine	feminine	neuter	plural of all genders
NOM	<i>wyhjer</i>	<i>wyhjy</i>	<i>wyhjys</i>	<i>wyhja / wyhy</i>
ACC	<i>wyhja</i>	<i>wyhjy</i>	<i>wyhjys</i>	<i>wyhja / wyhy</i>
DAT	<i>wyhjum</i>	<i>wyhjer</i>	<i>wyhjum</i>	<i>wyhja</i>

Figure 15: Declension of the interrogative pronouns *wyler* and *wyhjer*

- (21) a. Y **wyhym** jür?
 in which year
 ‘In which year?’
- b. **Wyhjer** büw
 which boy
 ‘Which boy?’

2.7 Possessive pronouns

Vilamovicean has the following possessive pronouns: *māj* ‘my’, *dāj* ‘your [singular]’, *zāj* ‘his, its’, *jyr* ‘her, their’, *ojer* ‘your [plural]’ and *ynzer* ‘our’. The possessive of the 1st person singular declines in the manner indicated below, although uninflected form *māj* may also be used in all the cases. As a result, *māj* displays two alternative paradigms: one preserve the classical situation (cf. KLECZKOWSKI 1920:140) while the other corresponds to a modern analogical expansion of the form that historically was the most common one. It should also be noted that *māj* corresponds to the simplest shape (as far as the morphology is concerned) of the inflected pronoun of the 1st person singular (cf. Figure 16, below).

²⁶ The plural forms *wyła* or *wyły* and *wyhja* or *wyhy* are free variations.

	masculine	feminine	neuter	plural of all genders
NOM	<i>mâj</i>	<i>mâj</i>	<i>mâj</i>	<i>mâj</i>
ACC	<i>men</i>	<i>mâj</i>	<i>mâj</i>	<i>mâj</i>
DAT	<i>mem</i>	<i>mer</i>	<i>mem</i>	<i>men</i>

Figure 16: Declension of the possessive pronoun *mâj*

- (22) a. **Mâj** câjgnis mü zâjn mytum rima
 my certificate must be with-the distinction
 ‘My certificate must be with the distinction’
- b. Šlōf **mâj** būwła fest
 spleep my boy deeply
 ‘Sleep my boy deeply!’
- c. **Mâj** baba
 my grandmother
 ‘My grandmother’

If the possessive lexeme is used predicatively (23.a) or independently as a genuine pronoun – and thus not as an adjective preceding and qualifying the noun – different “long” or, more properly speaking, pronominal, forms are employed (23.b). Additionally, these “long” varieties appear if the pronoun follows the substantive. In this usage, the possessive pronoun was originally used in apposition to the preceding noun. As it is evident from the quoted examples (see 23.c–f, below), in such instances, the substantive is invariably accompanied by a definite article.

	masculine	feminine	neuter	plural of all genders
NOM	<i>mâjner</i>	<i>mâjnŷ</i>	<i>mâjs</i>	<i>mâjna</i>
ACC	<i>mâjna</i>	<i>mâjnŷ</i>	<i>mâjs</i>	<i>mâjna</i>
DAT	<i>mâjnum</i>	<i>mâjner</i>	<i>mâjnum</i>	<i>mâjna</i>

Figure 17: Declension of the possessive pronoun *mâj* – “long” forms

- (23) a. Har ej **mâjner**
 he is mine
 ‘He is mine’
- b. Dū kuzt myt dâj kłop. Yhy kuz myt **mâjnum**
 you talk with your man I talk with mine
 ‘You talk to your husband. I talk to mine’

- c. Der kłop **mąjner**
 the man mine
 ‘My husband’
- d. Dy müter **mąjny**
 the mother yours
 ‘My mother’
- e. S’ mąkja **mąjs**
 the girl mine
 ‘My girl’
- f. Dy kyndyn **mąjna**
 the children mine
 ‘My children’

The pronouns *dąj* and *ząj* are declined and employed in an analogical way to that displayed by *mąj*:

	masculine	feminine	neuter	plural of all genders
NOM	<i>dąj (dąjner)</i>	<i>dąj(ny)</i>	<i>dąj(s)</i>	<i>dąj(na)</i>
ACC	<i>den (dąjna)</i>	<i>dąj(ny)</i>	<i>dąj(s)</i>	<i>dąj(na)</i>
DAT	<i>dem (dąjnum)</i>	<i>der (dąjner)</i>	<i>dem (dąjnum)</i>	<i>den (dąjna)</i>
	masculine	feminine	neuter	plural of all genders
NOM	<i>ząj (ząjner)</i>	<i>ząj(ny)</i>	<i>ząj(s)</i>	<i>ząj(na)</i>
ACC	<i>zen (ząjna)</i>	<i>ząj(ny)</i>	<i>ząj(s)</i>	<i>ząj(na)</i>
DAT	<i>zem (ząjnum)</i>	<i>zer (ząjner)</i>	<i>zem (ząjnum)</i>	<i>zen (ząjna)</i>

Figure 18: Declension of the possessive pronouns *dąj* and *ząj*

- (24) a. **Dąj** noma, **dąj** kyngrąjh, **dąj** wyla
 Your name your kingdom your will
 ‘Your name, your kingdom, your will’
- b. Wos maht **dąj** foter?
 what does your father
 ‘What does your father do?’
- c. Har blå **ząj** frynd
 he remained his friend
 ‘He remained his friend’
- d. Tiöef **ząj** łand!
 Baptize his land
 ‘Baptize his country’

- e. Y **zen** łandyn
 in his countries
 ‘In his countries’
- f. **Ząj** besta kyndyn
 his best children
 ‘His best children’
- g. Y **ząj** hend
 into his hand
 ‘Into his hand’
- h. Myt **zem** nama
 with his name
 ‘With his name’

The pronoun *ynzer* ‘our’ and *ojer* ‘your [plural]’ decline in the way indicated below:

	masculine	feminine	neuter	plural of all genders
NOM	<i>ynzer</i>	<i>ynzer</i>	<i>ynzer</i>	<i>ynzer</i>
ACC	<i>ynzyn</i>	<i>ynzer</i>	<i>ynzer</i>	<i>ynzer</i>
DAT	<i>ynzum</i> / <i>ynzerum</i> / <i>ynzrum</i> ²⁷	<i>ynzer</i>	<i>ynzum</i>	<i>ynzyn</i>

	masculine	feminine	neuter	plural of all genders
NOM	<i>ojer</i>	<i>ojer</i>	<i>ojer</i>	<i>ojer</i>
ACC	<i>ojyn</i>	<i>ojer</i>	<i>ojer</i>	<i>ojer</i>
DAT	<i>ojum</i>	<i>ojer</i>	<i>ojum</i>	<i>ojyn</i>

Figure 19: Declension of the possessive pronouns *ynzer* and *ojer*

- (25) a. **Ynzer** foter
 our father
 ‘Our father’
- b. **Ynzer** śulda
 our sins
 ‘Our sins’
- c. **Ynzer** familyj wönt y Wymysoü
 our family lives in Wilamowice
 ‘Our family lives in Wilamowice’

²⁷ The three forms *ynzum*, *ynzerum* and *ynzrum* are interchangeable free variants.

- d. Ejwer **ynzer** śyfla
 over our boat
 ‘Over our boat’
- e. Wjyr fercąjn **ynzyn** śułdigja
 we forgive our debtors
 ‘We forgive our debtors’

Additionally, there is a special predicative (genuine pronominal) form of all the persons (masculine, feminine and neuter) in the singular: *ynzyś* (26.a) and *ojyś* (26.b). Both forms were unnoticed by KLECZKOWSKI (1920).

- (26) a. Ejs ej **ynzyś**
 it is ours
 ‘He (she, it) is ours’
- b. Har ej **ojyś**
 he is yours
 ‘He is yours’

As in German, the possessive pronoun of the third singular feminine *jyr* also refers to the third person plural of all the genders. Consequently, the expression *jyr frynd* may signify ‘her friend’ and ‘their friend’. The declension of the pronoun *jyr* follows the pattern indicated below and again, the lexeme possesses a particular predicative form *jyś* for all the genders in the singular (27.f).

	masculine	feminine	neuter	plural of all genders
NOM	<i>jyr</i>	<i>jyr</i>	<i>jyr</i> ²⁸	<i>jyr</i>
ACC	<i>jyn</i>	<i>jyr</i>	<i>jyr</i>	<i>jyr</i>
DAT	<i>jym</i>	<i>jyr</i>	<i>jym</i>	<i>jyn</i>

Figure 20: Declension of the possessive pronoun *jyr*

²⁸ It should be noted that that according to KLECZKOWSKI (1920:140), there was no distinction between a predicative/pronominal and qualitative/adjectival form of the neuter *jyr*. To be precise, *jyś* was supposedly a nominative while *jyr* an accusative form. This description however may have been inadequate, failing to represent the real state of affairs. It is significantly more plausible that the distribution of *jyr* and *jyś* at the beginning of the 20th century was analogical to the situation observed nowadays. It is important to note that no other neuter forms (pronominal, adjectival or nominal) display in the accusative a shape that would differ from the nominative. In fact, in nominal entities of the neuter gender, the two cases are always identical.

- (27) a. Cy **jym** man
to her husband
‘For her husband’
- b. Uf **jyr** hyłf
on her help
‘With her help’
- c. **Jyr** łand
her country
‘Her country’
- d. Y **jym** ława
in their lives
‘In their lives’
- e. Y **jyn** łanda
in their countries
‘In their countries’
- f. Har ej **jyś**
he is hers / theirs
‘He is hers / theirs’

In accordance with the general loss of the genitive case in the Vilamovicean language, the genitive forms of the possessive pronouns have been lost. Only very infrequently and under the influence of German, do some speakers employ the genitive form of a given possessive pronoun:

- (28) Dy śü **mājner** foter
the shoe my father
‘My father’s shoe’

Apart from the forms of the possessive pronouns introduced thus far, which are relatively stable and shared by a vast majority of our informants, one may encounter various irregular, rare and even idiolectal varieties that considerably differ from the formations presented above. For instance, besides the historically correct feminine dative form *mer* in *fu mer müter* ‘for my mother’ and the uninflected – nowadays quite common – form *fu māj müter*, one may find alternative constructions such as *fu mem müter* (borrowed from the masculine dative singular), *fu meme müter* (a form based upon the masculine variety although extended by the vowel *e*) and *fu mājner müter* (a form borrowed from the genuinely pronominal inflection). Another example may be *fu zājn foter* (a possible Germanism) instead of the expected construction *fu zem foter*.

Consequently, as far as the Modern Vilamovicean possessives are concerned, the following tendencies may be distinguished: i) preservation of the original “classical” declension; ii) use of indeclinable forms such as *māj*, *dāj*, *zāj*, etc.; iii) confusion of case endings and, thus, the use of etymologically “inappropriate” forms (cf. feminine dative singular *mem* or *mājner*; iv) innovative forms (cf. feminine dative singular *meme*); and in some instance v) reshaping of forms in accordance with the Standard German. It is thus evident that possessives are the subcategory of pronouns that displays the greatest modifications if compared with the situation from the beginning of the 20th century. They also offer the highest number of irregular, alternative and/or idiolectal by-forms. It seems that the language is undergoing a restructuration of the system of its possessive pronouns, at least as far as the morphology is concerned.

3. Conclusion

As explained at the beginning of the paper, our study was intended to provide a detailed description of the pronominal system of the Modern Vilamovicean language, as far as their morphology and semantics are concerned. However, the evidence provided in section 2 enables us to go beyond a straightforward descriptive task.

Given the data collected since 2004 and offered above, we may conclude that the pronominal system of Modern Vilamovicean in main lines preserves the situation which dates from the beginning of the 20th century. Namely, a vast majority of the classical pronouns and their declensional forms are nowadays well-maintained. In this manner, the language displays various features that have been typical of East German dialects (cf. KLECZKOWSKI 1920).

However, several changes affecting the pronominal system are also evident. These – more or less stable – modifications are indicators of an incessantly dynamic nature of the language and its dissimilar development in new and distinct sociolinguistic environments: first, after the Second World War (a period where Vilamovicean was banned) and later, after the fall of the Communist regime (a period where one witnesses a revitalization of the interest concerning the tongue, on the one hand, and where, on the other, the group of fully competent speakers is limited to a few elderly persons). All the changes, detected in our database, may be divided into seven classes:

- i) The genitive forms of the pronouns have been lost with a possible exception (although infrequently attested) of *was* ‘whose’ (a genitive of *war* ‘who’). Accordingly, the language intensified the tendency, already well

visible a hundred years ago as far as nouns and adjectives are concerned. In the 21st century, the loss of the genitive case has ultimately reached the pronominal system, the most resistant thus far;

- ii) Another noticeable modification is the admissibility of certain neuter pronominal forms in referring to feminine (typically singular and, less commonly, plural) substantives. This is particularly frequent when the referent is a female whom the speaker may address by using the informal pronoun *dü* ‘you’;
- iii) The use of certain pronouns has likewise changed. For example, the third person of the reflexive pronoun (*zih*) has been generalized for all the persons and the demonstrative pronouns of the third person singular and plural are nowadays commonly used in the function of personal pronouns;
- iv) Traces of the Polish and/or German influence may be detected. For instance, the pronoun *-cie* (*že/že*) is common among certain speakers, while other informants (typically those who attended the German school during the Second World War) are likely to employ German pronominal forms;
- v) Additionally, new pronouns have emerged either due to phonetic changes (*zytikjer* from *zytnikjer*) or as a result of a more profound grammaticalization of original analytical expressions (*woswer* from *wos ffyr âner*). In some cases, novel analytical locutions have been shaped and/or stabilized (*âner* + preposition + *ander*);
- vi) On the other hand, some pronouns have entirely been lost: *miöehjer*, *miöehy* and *miöehys* ‘something, anything’;
- vii) In various instances, new case forms of classical pronouns have emerged. Typically, the simplest (i.e. morphologically less complex) or the most common forms have analogically been extended to other cases (cf. *mâj*) so that some pronouns may nowadays be uninflected. In addition, multiple by-forms appear (cf. the dative singular feminine of possessives in an adjectival use: *mem* [from masculine], *mâjner* [from the predicative inflection] or *meme* [an innovation based upon the form *mem*]). The modification of case endings is the most prominent in the set of possessive pronouns.

Furthermore, certain case forms have been found that – although missing in KLECZKOWSKI (1920) – are genuine and typical Vilamovicean constructions that had most probably existed at the beginning of the 20th century (cf. *ynzyś* and *ojyś*). Our study also enables us to postulate a possible inadequacy in the data provided by KLECZKOWSKI who determined *jyś* as a neuter nominative form while *jyr* as its accusative form. The accurate distribution is indicated in section 2.7 and Figure 20.

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Dr. Alexander Andrason
Department of Ancient Studies
University of Stellenbosch
South Africa

Tymoteusz Król
Collegium Invisible, Warsaw
Poland