

Romany English Words

"... The Romany spoken by English Gypsies today is best described as an English dialect that contains a certain amount of Romany, slang and old cant..."

- by Manfri Frederick Wood from **In the Life of a Romany Gypsy**

- A -

adoi - there
adrey, 'drey - in into, within
akai - here
av akai - come here
ambrol - pear
arva, arvalie - yes
atch, hatch - to stay
atchava - I stop, remain
atchen tan - stopping place
av - to come (**avel, 'vel, 'wel**)
avas - let us come
avree - away
jal avree - go away

- B -

bak, bok - Luck
bakalo - lucky (**baktalo** - happy)
kushti bak - good luck
balovas - bacon
bal, balum - hair
bar - a pound note
bárrikánni - pheasant
bárripóari - peacock
bang, beng - the devil
baulo - policeman
bauri - snail
báuromátchi - salmon
bavol, baval - wind
becker - fruit
beebe - aunt
bender - tent; noose on a spring
berk - breast
bero - ship
besh - to sit; nest
bickin - to sell
bister - a summons
bístering mush - judge, magistrate
bitcher - to send, to transport
bítchado pardál - sent across, transported
bitti - little, small
bíttikánni - partridge
bocklo - hunger, hungry
si tut bocklo? - are you hungry?
bokro - sheep
boler - wheel
boobi - pea
booti - work
bor - friend; hedge
boreen - a small country lane
bori, barri - big
bosh - violin
kel the bosh - play the fiddle;
boshoméngro - violinist, fiddler (**balánokosht** is the violin bow)
broller - pear
brembelia - blackberry
brushíndo - rain
bul - bottom, behind
bun - witch
bungy, bongo - lame
búriker, buteker - shop
busno - billigoat

- C -

chad - posterior
chai - girl, young woman
chaipáni - seagull

chal - chap, fellow, man
char - ashes
charo - bowl, plate
chat, chet, chete - a thing
chaunt - to sing
chav - term of endearment; child
'chav - to stop (from **atchav**)
'chava - I stop
'chavaia! - stop!
chavi - girl
chavo - boy
cheuri - knife
chib - tongue, speech
chik - dust, dirt
chíkchani - frog
chikly - dirty
chikni - daughter
chikno - son
chin - to cut
chingary - a fight
chinner - a hatchet
chiokers - boots
chir - to sing
chíriilo, chíriiko - bird
chiténgro - frog
chitries - foliage, greens, herbs, vegetables
chiving - putting
chókalis - shoes
chockas - boots
chooma - kiss
chooper - whip
chor - to steal
chori - poor
chover - shop
choviar - witch
chóvihánni - witch
chuffa, chukka - coat
chuffas - petticoats
churi - knife
coaver - these
cóokerell - pot
conger - match

- D -

dacker - toad
dadrus, dadus, dad - father
púrodad - grandfather
daia, dai - mother
púridaia - grandmother
dal, del - to give
dan - to bite
dand - tooth
danners - teeth
deloméskro - hammer
deram - light
deriav - sea, ocean
desh - ten
déshshel - thousand
Devel - god
Develésko mush - Jesus Christ
didikai, didikoi - Gypsy outside the Romany tribes and of mixed blood
dik - to look, see
dikkornéngro, dikkoglímmar - mirror
dínilo's dikkaméngro - a television set
diklo - scarf
ding - to throw
dinlo, dinilo, dinili - silly, stupid; an idiot, a fool
divio, divi, didlo - crazy
divvus - day
djilia - songs
dood - light, moon
doosta - enough, plenty
dordi, dordi - the most common exclamation
drab - poison
drabber - chemist
drabéngro, drabméngro - doctor
drabsap - adder, viper (**drábaneysapa**)
drábaneysapa - poisonous snakes
drag - car (usually called a **motor**)
drom, drum - road (plural: **droma**)
drummer - rabbit
dui - two
dukker, drukker - to tell fortunes
dukking, drúkkeribén - fortunetelling
drúkkerébema - a prophecy
dunnick - cow
dur - far
duro - long
durrel - berry
Duvvel - God

dwin - three
dyker - daffodil

- E -

eef - snow
efta - seven
emets - ants

- F -

faida - pegs
fake - to make or mend
faster - hand
fauni - ring
feeter - clothes-peg
filshinákos - deer
foggus - tobacco
fonga - fork
foros - fair, market
folki - people

- G -

gad - shirt
gájikano - stranger
gatta, gadda - beer
gav - a town; to hide
gavver, gav mush - policeman
Geyro, Geyri - non-Gypsy man and woman
gilli - song; (plural: **gillia**)
gilo - gone, departed
giv - corn
givéngro - farmer
glaze, glazey, glazer - window
goodlo - sugar; sweet
góodlokénner - beehive
gooi - pudding
goonna - bag, sack
Gorgio, Gaujo - non-Gypsy
grai - horse
grannum - corn
grasni - mare
grauni - gem
griddler - bicycle
griga - heather, ling
groi - horse
groiéngero, graiéngro - horse-dealer
groovni - cow (also **gurni**)
grov - ox, bull (also **groovno** or **gurno**)
grunter - pig
gry - horse
gurli - cherry

- H -

haréef - ice
haw - to eat
heréngro - crab, lobster
hero - leg; wheel of vehicle
hobben - food
holéno - landlord, publican
holofer - sock, stocking
hóokamen, hóckaben - lie, fraud, deceit
hotchi - hedgehog
hótchiméngri - frying pan
hummel - hair

- I -

inneon - nine

- J -

jarriger - apron
jass - run away
jaul - to go (**jel** is used for to come)
jib - language
jiffro - coat
jigger - door
jin - to know, to understand
jinnik - donkey
jívaben - life
joob - louse
joobly - lousy
joovi - woman

júkal, jook, jog, dogue - dog
juvel, juvli - women

- K -

kaba - kettle
kackarátchi - magpie
'kai, 'koi (akai) - here
kair - to make, to do
kako - uncle
kal - cheese
kam - to love
kámmoben - love, friendship
kang - taste
kanni - chicken, fowl
kanniechor - chicken thief
kappar - blanket
kas - hay
kassóni - bill-hook
kauli - black
káulochírilo - blackbird
káulodúros - bilberries; black-currants
kavvi, kharvi - kettle
kávvisáster - kettle iron
kaydi - hat
kek, kekka - no, not
kekkávvi - kettle
kennick - house-dweller
kel - to do, to play
kepsi - basket
ker, ken, kenner - house
keréngro - house-dweller
ketter, ked - to gather, to pick
ki - to
kil - butter
kin - to buy
kipsi - basket
kliss - to shut
klissin - lock
klíssiméngero - trap
kókkero - self
kokko - uncle
kola - things
kom - love
konáfni - turnip
konéngri - hare
konyo - peaceful, quiet
kooli - soldier
kor - to fight
kora - a fight
kóraméngro - boxer
koro - cup
kosh, kosht - wood, stick
kovva - a thing
kraftni - turnip
kuriying - fighting
kushi, kusi - a little
kushti - good, fine, nice, all right

- L -

lacho - good
lalo, lala - red
lalos - cherries
laster - to find
lav - name word
lel - to take, to catch
lévinor, livna, lívena - beer
lévinorkénna - pub, ale-house, inn (also called **kitchima**)
lévinorménqris - hops
lil - a book
lólochírillo - redpole
lólodúianchír - robin
lon - salt
the bori lon pani - 'the great salt water', the ocean
lóoverni - prostitute
luller - to arrest

- M -

mailo, moilo, myla - donkey
mandi, man, me - I, me;
mandi's - my, mine
mas - meat
maséngro - butcher
matchi - fish
matchko, matchiko - cat
mato - drunk
mélali - smutty

meláno - canary
meski - tea
méripén - death
miltog - shirt
misto - well, all right
moaker - mule
mókadi, mókado, móggerdowie - ritually unclean; impure; dirty
mókadi jóok - fox
mong - to beg
monisha, monishi, mollisher - wife, girlfriend; used to mean woman
monkri - countryside
mooi - face, mouth
móoikósht - a whistle
moolyin matchi - pike
moon - month
sixmoon - six months
moosh - man
morgan - hare
morler - hand
mort - woman
morum, moro, panum - bread
motto - drunk
muk - leave, let
mukka - mule
múladi - haunted by a dead person
mulésko dud - will-o'-the-wisp
mulla - corpse
mulo, muladi, moolo - ghost of Romany man or woman in possession of a corpse at certain hours of the day and night; the devil in possession of a corpse
múlladipóov - graveyard, cemetery
mumli - candle
mumper, mumpli, hedgemumper, hedgecrawler - tramp; traveller without any Romany blood
mumpli - the ways of a mumper
mung - to beg
muréngi - berry
muréngimátchi - trout
mush - man
múshgaying - to spy out the land
mushgro, musker - policeman

- N -

nafli, násfalo - ill
nantee, nanti - don't
nappy - obstinate (used mainly to describe a horse)
narked, narkri - dark, dank, bad, unpleasant
nash - to hang
nav - name
nogo - own
nok - nose
nongo - naked

- O -

odjus - lovely, beautiful
ogrúsela - gooseberry
oito - eight
olivas - stockings
opréy, 'prey - up, upon
'prey o poov' - on the ground, in the field
'prey o pani' - on the river or lake
ora - clock, watch, time
orélla - trout
ozi - heart

- P -

palésko - nephew
panish - hungry
pánishók - watercress
pansh - five
papin - goose
pápingo - gander
paramíkri - rabbit-snare
patrin - leaf
pattriensis - herbs used in cures
páttrimíshi - legend, story, fairy-tale
pauni, pani, parni - water
pani, pan - to rain
paurdál, pardál - across
ped - to walk
peeve, pee - to drink
pen - sister; to speak
penyáki - niece
pester - to pay
pero - leg
petál - hoof

petlar - nut
pikie - Gypsy expelled from tribe
pir - stomach
pirri - foot
pishom - bee
píshomgúdlo - honey
pobble, pobo - apple
pogger - to beat; to break
poggered - broken
pókinyos - high-court judge
poodéllas - bellows
pooker - to ask, to tell
the kosht that pookers the drom, the pookering-kosh - signpost
póokersaméngri - lawyer
póorami - leek
póorano - ancient
pooro, poori - old
pootsi - pocket
póover, poovéngro - potato
posh - half
poshes - money
poshrat - half-Gypsy person
poshumésko - woollen
povel - apple
pral - brother
praster - to run
pug - ferret; to hide
púgurus - monkey
purchery - fish pond, fish farm
puro - old
purum - onion
pushka - gun (only used for a flintlock)
putch, putcha - to ask, to enquire
pútcherléngro - smith

- R -

rai, rye - gentleman
rakli - girl
rákonis - trousers
rap, rup - silver
rashái - priest, parson, minister
rarti - night
rártigíllichal - nightingale
rat - blood
ratválo - bloody, bleeding
rattlers - beans
rauni - lady
rokker - to talk
Rom - Romany man
rom, romer - bridegroom, husband
romered, ramado - married
romni - bride, wife
rómanichírilo - water wagtail
rómanirétchka - mallard
retchka - a duck
retchko - a drake
rosela, ribiséla - redcurrant
rove, ruv - to cry to weep
ruk, rukker - tree
rúkkersaméngri - squirrel
rull - spoon
rummer - to marry
rup, rupper - silver
rúppavo - chaffinch
rustler - flower

- S -

sáliwésher - bridle
sap, sarp, sapper - snake
sappéskomátchi - eel
saster - iron; wire
sásterkábakósh - kettle-iron
scran - food
scroops - hops
shant - pint
shav, shab, sherp, shev - to go
sharo, sherro - head
shora, shura - head person, foreman, gaffer
shel - hundred
shoav - six
shok - cabbage
shóllivárdo - trolley, light cart
shoon - to hear
shoshi - rabbit
sim - to resemble
siménsa - cousin
simmin - sauce, gravy, soup
skip - basket

skóodalín - plate
slang - license, summons
slinger - dog license
slabérias - strawberries
smowrélias - raspberries
snaff, shiv - snow
snokrel - Swede
sólivárdo - trolley
sónnakai - gold
sónnasáster - copper; bronze
sootti - sleep
sor - all
spíngarus - skewer
spishi - honey
splogger - to shoot
stagni - nanny-goat
stardi - hat
starni - deer
stiggerus, stúggerus, stéggus - gate
stiraben, stúraben - prison, gaol
stoggers, stoggrus - stack
stook - handkerchief
stor - four
strangli, strangler - onion
summa - stink
swiggler - pipe

- T -

ta - and
desh ta yek - eleven
táchiben - truth
tarder - to pull
tarno, tauno, tauni - young
tatcho - real, true
tatti - hot
táttikovi - pepper
táttipáni - spirits
táttitátti - baked potato
tem - countryside
gríгатem - heath
tiffi - sailor
tikni, tikno, titno - baby
tit - old mare recently in foal
titlaméngro - snare
tober - road
togs - clothes
togram - clothes-peg
tompad, tonpad - parson
tood - milk
tool - to hold
toot - brass
toov, tuv - tobacco
toovlil - cigarette paper
tóovalo - cigarette, a smoke
totting, tatting - rag and bone dealing
tovar - axe
trash - fright, fear
trashd - frightened, afraid
trin - three
trindesh, trinanda - thirty
trushul - about; trail ; cross
tukali - friendly
tulla - fat
tullaben - butter
tushni - basket
tutóoti, tooti - you
tuv - tobacco; to smoke
twilers - trousers

- V -

valín - bottle
vardo, wardo - caravan, trolley, wagon, cart, covered vehicle
vast - hand

- W -

wafti, wafeti - bad
wardis - playing cards
wast - hand
wavver - other
wel - to happen
wélgora - a fair; market
wesh, besh, bos - forest, woodland, copse
weshéngro - gamekeeper
weshjook - fox
wéshimúlo - owl
wiffler - pigeon

wongur - coal; money
wóngustrin - ring on finger
woodrus - bed
wooshter - to throw

- Y -

yak, yeck - one
yéckorus - once
year, yurr - ear
yog - fire
yogéngri, yogger - gun
yogéstowásto - tongs
yora, yoro, yaras - egg, eggs

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