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THE OPPOSITION */ʃ, ʒ/ ↔ */ɹ/ IN THE CONTEMPORARY CENTRAL CASSUBIAN DIALECT

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Abstract

The article concerns the opposition */ʃ, ʒ/ ↔ */ɹ/ in central Cassubian dialects. The existing literature does not answer the question whether the opposition has been retained. Descriptions of the continuants */ʃ, ʒ, ɹ/ contradict one another and the disappearance of the vibration of */ɹ/ is regarded, unjustifiably, as a phonological identification of */ɹ/ with */ʃ, ʒ/. Even when synchronic differences are identified, the existing phonological interpretations are unsatisfactory. Contemporary central Cassubian data prove that the opposition continues to exist. */ɹ/ is consistently realised as [ʂ, ʐ], while */ʃ, ʒ/ is realised optionally as [ʃ, ʒ] or [ʂ, ʐ]. The shift of the continuants */ʃ, ʒ/ towards clear palatalisation is most probably a result of the transfer [ɹ] → [ʂ, ʐ].

1. Introduction

In the article I wish to demonstrate the problem of the phonological opposition */ʃ, ʒ/ ↔ */ɹ/ in contemporary central Cassubian. However, I will not address the issue of a possible biphonemic interpretation of the continuants */ɹ/. It should also be mentioned briefly that despite the more or less visible fluctuations of the opposition */ɹ/ ↔ */ɹʃ, rʒ, rs, rz/ in historical Cassubian data, I have not discovered its complete disappearance in any of the sources analysed. The selection of central Cassubian data results solely from my current research interests and it does not mean that this area is in any way special with regard to the problem under analysis.¹

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The dataset comprises about 23 hours of recordings which I made in March 2012. The corpus documents the idiolects of 28 native Cassubian users, including men and women of different ages (younger generation: 0–35 years of age, middle-aged generation: 36–60, older generation: 61–). All the informants' pronunciation shows clear dialectal features. Many of the informants are primary or vocational school leavers, in whom the influence of the literary variety of Cassubian may be excluded. Even in the more linguistically aware persons, I identified hardly any literary elements. All my informants know Cassubian from their own homes. In the case of the older and some of the middle-aged persons, it was undoubtedly their only L_1 . Some of the middle-aged and younger persons learned Cassubian and Polish simultaneously. In such instances, the emphasis on Polish was quite strong, especially in some areas, which is why in their case we can observe certain elements of partial language competence. However, even in these cases the speakers acquired language competence in early childhood.² I also used several recordings made by a journalist (which I received from Tatiana Kuśmierska; one of the recordings documents an idiolect which represents northern Cassubian) and one longer text which was read aloud (excerpts from the novel *Žěcé i przigòdë Remùsa* by Aleksander Majkowski, as read by Zbigniew Jankowski). This additional material will not serve as the basis for the general conclusions; it will only be a source of clearly stated additional information. The conclusions are based on auditory analyses; an acoustic analysis will be presented in an extensive publication on Cassubian phonetics on which I am currently working. In the article I follow the standard IPA transcription, similarly in descriptions of historical language data. A minor deviation which I introduced is the use of the ligature to mark affricates and the symbol [i̯] to mark the vowel corresponding to the Polish y . The Cassubian $ě$ is typically marked as [ɛ̃]. The letters [ʂ, zʂ, dz] correspond to the non-palatal Polish $ż, sz, cz, dź$, the symbols [ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ] show post-alveolar consonants, which are more or less palatalised. The symbol “*,” in turn, is used principally not to mark the reconstruction of unattested units, but with the meaning of “original” or “original continuant(s).”

The determination of whether the primary opposition $*/ʃ, ʒ/ \leftrightarrow */tʃ, dʒ/$ has been retained or not, must be achieved in a transparent manner. Firstly, we must specify the phonetic nature of the continuants $*/ʃ, ʒ/$. The second task is to identify the sound of the continuants $*/tʃ, dʒ/$, which, in turn, entails two subtasks. It must be verified whether the consonant [tʃ] has been retained as such (that is as a raised alveolar trill). If, however, it has not been retained in this form, we must specify the phonetic nature of its continuants. The last stage of the analysis involves the verification of whether $[C] \leftarrow */ʃ, ʒ/$ are the same as $[C] \leftarrow */tʃ, dʒ/$. The procedure is simple enough and its description may appear somewhat unnecessary. It was found, however, that many of the present researchers of Cassubian regard – a priori and with little justification

² These conclusions are based on the responses to my explicit questions regarding this issue, reference check questions asked in passing, as well as the informants' stories about their childhood, primary school education, etc. An important premise is that the informants have retained clear phonetic units alien to Polish, which supports the conclusion that they actively learned Cassubian at an early age.

– the disappearance of the vibration of [ʀ] as a phonological identification of */tʃ/ with */ʃ, ʒ/. What is more, these opinions are often expressed rather tentatively, so it is difficult to decide whether we are dealing with intended assertions or an unfortunate turn of phrase. At the same time, individual descriptions contradict not only one another but, more often than not, they are also internally incoherent. The above is caused, to a large extent, by the fact that the authors mostly focused on phonetic problems, while totally ignoring phonological relations or marginalising them (I feel that the archaism and certain peculiarity of the phonetic features discussed in this paper as part of the Polish-Cassubian language area diverted the scholars' attention from the language-system problems). In fact, very few researchers express unambiguous views regarding these issues. To illustrate my point, I will provide a brief (though representative) review of the relevant literature. In the review, I will also include investigations of northern and southern Cassubian dialects, which are relevant to my discussion as well.

2. Literature review

I will start with */ʃ, ʒ/. Biskupski (1883: 16–17) identifies the continuants */ʃ, ʒ/ in Brodnica with the Polish *sz, ż* as well as the German *sch* and the French *j*. According to Ramułt (1893: XXVIII), *ś, ź* sound “Polish and all-Slavic.” Bronisch (1896: 4, 22), in turn, maintains that */ʃ, ʒ/ in the *bylacki* dialect are non-palatal like in Polish. Nitsch, both in the *luziński* dialect (1903: 240–241) and in Swornegacie (1907: 118), notes the palatalised pronunciation which is optional and partly idiosyncratic as well as position-dependent. The non-palatal variants are identical with the Polish equivalents. Lorentz (1903: 137, 139, 164; 1919: 3; 1925: 75–76; 1927–1937: 464–465, 511–512; 1959: 49) claims that */ʃ, ʒ/ have become non-palatal throughout the whole of the area in which Cassubian dialects are spoken, except for one dialect south of Bytów. The only exception to the above in the case of other dialects is the optional palatalisation *[ʃ], which sometimes occurs in the word *kòżdi* ‘every/each.’ What is interesting, Lorentz (1927–1937: 512) clearly states that, unlike Nitsch, he did not record the palatalised pronunciation in Swornegacie. Breza (1973: 33) asserts that */ʃ, ʒ/ as used in Wierzchucin usually retain the “old Polish palatalisation.” Further, Topolińska notes the optional palatalisation */ʃ, ʒ/ in the north-western group of southern Cassubian dialects (1967a: 138) as well as in the whole of the area where northern Cassubian dialects are spoken (1969: 85). She does not, however, take this into account in her description of central Cassubian dialects (Topolińska 1967b), even though in the texts she transcribed and analysed, */ʃ, ʒ/ often have palatalised realisations (I will discuss this in detail later in the article). On the other hand, in her descriptions produced for the *General Slavic Linguistic Atlas*, Topolińska notes the optional palatalised pronunciation */ʃ, ʒ/ in Wierzchucin and Wielka Wieś, in Brzeźno (with regard to /ʃ/ such pronunciation is “occasional”, whereas with */ʒ/ “there are no attestations”), as well as in the central Cassubian Mirachów (in the language of the oldest generation). Such realisations are not, however, noted in

Karsin (Topolińska 1982: 35, 40, 44, 50–51). Treder finds that */ʃ, ʒ/ generally retain their phonetic softness (Breza, Treder 1981: 63, 66; Treder 2001: 117; Tréder 2009: 47) and contends that Stone fails to account for this fact in his classification of Casubian consonants (Treder 1994: 362; cf. Stone 1993: 763).³ The discrepancy between individual descriptions is obvious and is found (unambiguously) when comparing the accounts of Nitsch and Lorentz and those of Lorentz and Topolińska.

I will now discuss selected descriptions of */ʀ/ (as opposed to */ʃ, ʒ/). Biskupski (1883: 16) identifies */ʀ/ with the Polish *rz* and the French *j* (as with */ʃ, ʒ/), and the symbol *ř* is used according to the etymology, even in the transcription of Polish literary forms. Thus, this description suggests that the opposition is absent. Ramułt (1893: XXVII) describes *ř* as a sound different not only from the Polish *rz*, but also from the Czech *ř*. It is “rather a combination of *r* + *ž*, or possibly of *r* + *š*, in which we hear *ž* or *š* more clearly than *r*.” It should be stressed here that the final element of this complex consonant is marked by Ramułt in the same way as */ʃ, ʒ/. The scholar holds that under the influence of both the literary variety of Polish and the neighbouring Polish dialects, *ř* “becomes assimilated” with the Polish *rz*. Thus, the opposition is generally retained.

It is difficult to draw any far-reaching conclusions that cannot be questioned based on this somewhat imprecise description. Yet, a description of the articulation as well as the transcription suggest that the disappearance of the vibration of the continuants */ʀ/ leads to their identification with */ʃ, ʒ/. Bronisch (1896: 22) describes the consonant *ř* as a sound which is intermediate between the Polish *rz* and the Czech *ř*, classifying it – by analogy to the continuants */ʃ, ʒ/ – as a non-palatal consonant. He does not, however, mention the possible disappearance of the opposition under analysis. Also Nitsch describes the continuant */ʀ/ as a complex consonant (“affricate”) and transcribes it using the symbols “*ř*, *řž*.” The second element of this consonant may be, according to Nitsch (1903: 240; 1907: 118) – like in the case of */ʃ, ʒ/ – palatalised. The researcher notes the weakening and the partial disappearance of the vibrating element, which leads to phonetic assimilation and, as a consequence, the blending of */ʀ/ with */ʃ, ʒ/ in some of the southern Cassubian dialects (Nitsch 1907: 117, 162). Lorentz (1903: 164, 139, 1919: 3, 1959: 49) describes the continuants */ʀ/ – similarly to */ʃ, ʒ/ – as depalatalised. It is true that the scholar mentions the disappearance of the vibrating element of */ʀ/ in some dialects, but this does not mean the disappearance of the opposition under analysis in this paper. Namely, the fricative element *ř* is – depending on the dialect – either “cerebral” or close to “cerebral” and in the case of the disappearance of the vibration of *ř* (i.a. in southern Zabory dialects) in some contexts (e.g. word-finally or between consonants), the lone fricative element retains, according to Lorentz (1927–1937: 526–527), this “cerebral nature.” Breza (1973: 33) also attributes the retention of the “old Polish palatalisation” to the continuants */ʀ/. In a series of phonological interpretations of dialectal texts, Topolińska (1967a: 138, 1969: 85) describes the continuants */ʀ/ in northern and southern Cassubian dialects

³ It should be noted that Treder’s and Stone’s studies are of a secondary nature. I refer to them due to their high impact in the field.

as obligatorily non-palatal, juxtaposing them explicitly with the continuants */ʃ, ʒ/ (a phonological interpretation of this observation will be provided later in the article). The phenomenon is also found in central Cassubian texts, where, however, the scholar (Topolińska 1967b) does not comment on this occurrence. However, it is true that in one of her later publications Topolińska notes the optional palatalisation */ɹ̥/ in Wierzchucin and Wielka Wieś; in the first of the two locations field research was only carried out by Breza, whereas in the second Topolińska undertook the research alongside five other scholars (Topolińska 1982: 32–33, 37–38). In the case of other locations in which [ɹ̥] has been retained, that is in Brzeźno and Mirachów, Topolińska does not mention palatalisation, which she does, however, when discussing */ʃ, ʒ/. In fact, although she analyses the loss of the vibrating element of */ɹ̥/ synchronically as an optional phonological substitution /“ɹ̥”/ → /“z”/, this does not have to mean, however, that the secondary /“z”/ becomes palatalised.⁴ In fact, she links the optional palatalisation */ʃ, ʒ/ only to the older generation, which in the case of the younger generation would mean the disappearance of the opposition under discussion (Topolińska 1982: 44, 46–47). The authors of the *Cassubian Linguistic Atlas* talk about a complete loss of the palatalisation of ř. The continuants */ɹ̥/ which have lost the vibrating element are transcribed as “š, ž”, while the continuants */ʃ, ʒ/ are most frequently represented as “š, ž” as well as “ṣ̌, ẓ̌” (AJK 13: 10, 13, 145). Treder states in the *Cassubian Grammar* that “rz occurs [. . .] more or less frequently in certain areas, especially in the case of the older generation” (Breza, Treder 1981: 62), without mentioning its possible palatalisation, which he explicitly associates with sz, ź (Breza, Treder 1981: 63, 66). In his detailed comments, the scholar concludes that the vibrating pronunciation of */ɹ̥/ is found principally in northern Cassubian, in the western part of central Cassubia and in the south-west of southern Cassubia; however, it is usually recorded in the pronunciation of the older generation. Further, Treder adds that “[o]ther areas [...] and the younger generation show the general Polish development, that is the identification of the sound transcribed as the diagraph rz with the sound marked as ź or sz [...]” (Breza, Treder 1981: 67). It is impossible, however, to resolve what the author understands under the label “general Polish development,” and which consonants (“palatalised Cassubian” or “non-palatal Polish” consonants) are marked here by the letters ź or sz. In the aforementioned review, Treder (1994: 362) does not object to the description of ř as a palatalised consonant. In the publication discussed above, Stone classifies the continuants */ʃ, ʒ/ (originally transcribed as “j, ʒ”) as alveolar consonants, while */ɹ̥/ (originally transcribed as “ɹ”) as palatal. However, on the following page he contends that sz and ź represent palatalised consonants. Subsequently, the continuant */ɹ̥/ is described as a “post-alveolar trill”, which is replaced (in the pronunciation

⁴ The methodology used to produce the description under analysis makes it impossible for one to avoid such traps, e.g. marking the disappearance of the vibration */ɹ̥/ as a phonological substitution /“ɹ̥”/ → /“z”/ is incompatible with the rule presented by the author, specifying the assimilation of the voicing in combinations of obstruents (defined as distribution limitations of voiceless obstruents). Such problems arise from the low level of abstraction that is unfortunately found in Topolińska’s descriptions. I will define the problem more broadly later in the article.

of the younger generation) with the Polish “[ʒ]” and “[ʃ].” Yet, six lines later, Stone states that in words like *trzeba* “/r/” or – in the case of the loss of the vibrating element – “/ʒ/” does not become voiceless. Thus, the relation between the continuants */ʃ, ʒ/ and the continuants */r/ which have lost the vibrating element remains unclear. The Cassubian /“ʒ”/ is, as the scholar proposes, palatalised, whereas [r] is supposed to be evolving into the Polish “[ʒ]”, “[ʃ]” (that is the non-palatal [z, ʃ]). This description suggests that the opposition has been retained. Next, however, Stone identifies the continuant */r[ʲ] without the vibrating element with the Cassubian, that is palatalised, /“ʒ”/. Much of the confusion is caused by the usage of the symbols “[ʃ, ʒ]” both for (the Cassubian) [ʃ, ʒ] and (the Polish) [ʃ, z]. To sum up, in the case of the continuants */r[ʲ]/ the somewhat extraordinary discrepancies between the descriptions make it impossible to draw unambiguous conclusions.

In the context described above, which is full of ambiguities and understatements, it is almost impossible to hope for numerous unambiguous phonological interpretations. In fact, although the authors of the *Cassubian Linguistic Atlas* describe “s” and “z” alternating freely with “r” as the optional variants of “r”, they do not pay any attention to the phonological relation of */ʃ, ʒ/ and the continuants */r[ʲ]/ with regard to the total loss of the vibrating element (AJK 13: 145). The only attempt to address this problem can be found in Topolińska, in a series of phonological discussions of Cassubian dialectal texts. Therefore, I will discuss in greater detail the scholar’s phonological interpretations. I wish to stress, however, that my discussion may at times appear unclear. This results from the complexity and internal incoherence as well as the fragmentation and tentativeness of the original description. Topolińska distinguishes two systems. The first, typical of older generations speaking northern Cassubian dialects, is characterised by the partial retention of [r] as such. In this system, “r” is an “optional phoneme.” In this case, */r[ʲ]/ may lose its vibrating element, which results in the pronunciation [z ʃ] (“s”, “z”). The original */ʃ, ʒ/ may be pronounced freely as [ʃ, z] (“s”, “z”) or as [ʃ, ʒ] (“ś”, “ź”). With regard to */r[ʲ], the palatalised continuants are absolutely impossible. Therefore, the researcher concludes that given this fact, it is possible to regard [r] and [z ʃ] which do not alternate with [ʃ, ʒ] (in other words [z ʃ] ← */r[ʲ]) as allophones of the phoneme /“r”/ (the primary allophone is [r], while [z ʃ] are its optional variants). The conclusion in itself is convincing, even though “optional variants” of an “optional phoneme” are an incomprehensible construct (I will return to the concept of “optional phoneme”). It would seem logical to conclude from this that [ʃ, z] alternating with [ʃ, ʒ], yet never alternating with [r], should be regarded as realisations of two separate phonemes (of /“r”/ and, of course, of each other). Yet, Topolińska (1969: 85–86) does not state this unambiguously. She goes on, however, to discuss the pronunciation of the younger generation, who do not know [r]. In this case, as she asserts, the palatalised “ś, ź” “reach the status of optional phonemes.” At this point, the researcher brings her discussion to an end. Topolińska does not reveal how to describe phonologically the restrictions of the alternation [ʃ, z] ↔ [ʃ, ʒ] (which in some morphemes is completely discretionary and in others completely impossible) with regard to the younger generation. In the comments on allophonic phenomena, she describes, however, “s”, “z”

and “š”, “ž” as optional variants of the phonemes /“š”, “ž”/, and the pronunciation [ʃ, ʒ] in lieu of [r] as an optional phonological alternation /“r”/ ↔ /“š”, “ž”/ be at odds with Topolińska’s explicit – even though not unambiguously concluded – considerations. What is more, there is also a serious implicit contradiction. If, when losing its trill, the phoneme /“r”/ were phonologically identified with /“ž”/, /“š”/ accepting that /“ž”/ and /“š”/ have optional variants [“š”], [“ž”], we would expect to see among the continuants * [r] the optional palatalised realisations [“š”], [“ž”]. The original * [r], however, may not have such continuants. This means that [ʃ, ʒ] which do not alternate with [ʃ, ʒ], on the one hand, and [ʃ, ʒ] which alternate freely with [ʃ, ʒ], on the other, are – despite their phonetic identity – realisations of separate pairs of phonemes. The observation, attested by the data, may not be described in any other way. The idea of “optional phonemes” and “free phonological alternations,” which was realised in the phonological transcription of the texts analysed, is in fact a dead end. In the southern Cassubian Brzeźno, Topolińska (1967a: 138, 141) notes an identical situation to that of the younger generation who speak the northern Cassubian dialects. In lieu of * [r] there are only the non-palatal [ʃ, ʒ], while * [ʃ, ʒ] may have not only the non-palatal realisations [ʃ, ʒ], but also the palatalised [ʃ, ʒ]. In connection with the above, the author talks about the “partial disappearance of *r” in a given area. Also in the same article, the researcher (seemingly) solves the problem with the help of “optional phonemes.” In the phonological transcription, each “š”, “ž” is regarded as a realisation of the phonemes /š, ž/, regardless of whether it can, in a given morpheme, alternate freely with a palatalised consonant or not. The “optional” phonemes “š”, “ž” are only found in the phonological transcription of palatalised surface realisations. The phonological transcription of specific morphemes is, according to this view, secondary in relation to the surface realisations, instead of being an attempt to determine the deep structure behind specific (often diverse) phonetic realisations. For myself, this indicates a certain lack of abstract thought. For dialect speakers to “know” that in the word *mòrze* they can pronounce only [ʒ], yet in the word *mòże* either [ʒ] or [ʒ] can be used, there must be, from the very beginning, a deep, phonological difference between the two words. We can refer to optional allophones, but under no circumstances can we talk about optional phonemes.⁵ It should be reiterated that in the central Cassubian data analysed by Topolińska the situation is the same as in the northern Cassubian data. In the latter case, the older generation retains [r] (even though to a lesser extent [r] alternates freely with [ʃ, ʒ], but never with [ʃ, ʒ], while in the case of */ʃ, ʒ/ both the pronunciation [ʃ, ʒ] and the pronunciation [ʃ, ʒ] are possible. In the younger generation, the original * [r] has lost its vibrating nature and shows only the continuants [ʃ, ʒ]. * [ʃ, ʒ] still have the variants [ʃ, ʒ] and [ʃ, ʒ]. This overlaps with the general situation of the north-western group of southern Cassubian dialects. For reasons that are somewhat difficult to understand, Topolińska does not address this issue in her

⁵ If the problem concerned several words, its resolution with the help of a list of lexemes and a concept similar to optional phonemes would, perhaps, be acceptable. Yet, in the case under analysis such an avoidance strategy is, undoubtedly, unacceptable.

discussion of central Cassubian data. The only solution which actually allows one to create a working phonological model is the adoption, for Topolińska's dataset, of the opposition /ɾ/ [ɾ, (ɾ), s, z] ↔ /ʃ, ʒ/ [ʃ, ʒ, s, z] or /z/ [s, z] ↔ /ʃ, ʒ/ [ʃ, ʒ, s, z].

3. Results and conclusions

Before I discuss the current situation, I would like to provide figures that determine the extent to which [ɾ] has been retained as such and the level of the palatalisation * [ʃ, ʒ], based on the dialectal texts analysed by Topolińska (1967a, b, 1969). Of course, we should not forget that in a corpus consisting of short texts obtained from a relatively small number of informants, randomisation and idiolect may be significant factors. We should also note the dynamics of the system in a given case. The relation between the frequency of the features under discussion in the texts analysed and their frequency in the then current pronunciation does not have to be direct and is therefore difficult to define. Nevertheless, I believe that it can be assumed that the quoted figures reflect the general picture of the then current pronunciation, and it is sufficient for us to make comparisons with the present situation. In southern Cassubian dialects, [ɾ] – as I have already mentioned – has not been retained at all. In central Cassubian dialects it is found in approximately 8% of cases, but if we consider only the informants who still use [ɾ] in a general sense, the figure is 18%. In the northern Cassubian data, the figures are 18% and 32%, respectively. The correlation between the extent of the retention of [ɾ] and the year of birth is (collectively for northern and central Cassubian dialects, but only including informants with five or more relevant attestations) –0.63, which is significant. The boundary between the retention of [ɾ], at least to a certain extent, and its total absence in texts is marked by the year of birth falling in the period 1910–1920, even though in the older generation, we do find idiolects with zero attestation of [ɾ]. Based on the data, it can be assumed that [ɾ] as such has not been retained at all. We should note at this point, however, an interesting phenomenon. In the case of one northern Cassubian informant, apart from the responses to the questions in the questionnaire and a casual conversation, a dictated text was also recorded. In this instance, the frequency of [ɾ] rose from 13% in the first two texts to 100%, which was also recorded by Topolińska (1969: 74–77, 86). Even though the informant was born in 1985 and comes from the very north of the area in question, the occurrence of [ɾ] in contemporary data does not seem entirely improbable. As regards the palatalised [ʃ, ʒ], in the relevant southern Cassubian texts, they represent about 10% of the continuants * /ʃ, ʒ/, in central Cassubian about 11%, and in northern Cassubian about 14.5%. While it is true that there is no correlation between the extent of the retention of palatalisation of [ɾ] and the extent of the retention of [ɾ] itself and the year of birth, this system appears to be highly unstable and yet, in practice, it ultimately results in the phonological identification of * /ɾ/ with * /ʃ, ʒ/. In one of her later publications (based on her 1970 research), Topolińska links the optional palatalised pronunciation * /ʃ, ʒ/ in Mirachów only to the older generation and describes it as (phonologically) redundant (Topolińska 1982: 47).

Now, I will present my own findings. I have found traces of the consonant [ɹ̥]/[ɹ̥̥] in the additional data, e.g. *chòrza* [xwɛɹa] ‘she was ill’, *rzecz* [ɹɛɲ] ‘thing’, *kòrzenny* [kɔɹɛnni] ‘spicy’ (older generation, Puck/Wejherowo). Contrary to what might be expected, I have noted quite a few attestations of [ɹ̥]/[ɹ̥̥] in Jankowski (born in 1950 in Ręboszów, south-west of Kartuzy) in the *Remùs* text that he read, e.g. *dozdrzało* [dɔɹdzɹawɔ] ‘it ripened’, *zdrzàcégò* [zdɹuntsigwɛ] ‘looking’, *trzi-mało* [tɹimawɔ] ‘it was holding’, *pòtrzebny* [pwɛtɹɛbni] ‘needed’, *strzélbā* [stɹɛlbɔ] ‘rifle’ ʃ *wezdrzenim* [wɛzdʒɛnim] ‘with a look’, *przèzdrzòł* [pɹɛzdzɔw] ‘he saw through’, *ùzdrzòł* [wɹdzɔw] ‘he saw’, *trzeba* [tɹɛba] ‘one needs’, *trzè* [tɹɛ] ‘three’, *òstrzégā* [wɛstɹɛgɔ] ‘warning’, *pòtrzebny* [pwɛtɹɛbni] ‘needed’, *zdrzè* [zdʒɛ] ‘look!’, *wètrzimać* [vɛtɹimats] ‘to stand/put up with’, etc. However, pronunciation with * [ɹ̥] → [ɹ̥̥] is generally far more frequent. Of course, this is a text which is read aloud, and, what is more, by a professional actor, in whom we might expect a conscious, acquired and affective pronunciation. Attestations of [ɹ̥] should therefore perhaps be regarded as a curiosity rather than a reflection of the actual condition of the central Cassubian dialect. However, these attestations are, without any doubt, too numerous for us to dismiss as isolated. Attention should be drawn to the fact that in all the cases [ɹ̥]/[ɹ̥̥] is found in Jankowski in [SP] consonant combinations. As reported in the literature, this is a position, in which [ɹ̥] is consistently longer than in the other positions (Smoczyński 1954: 54).

I also heard articulations of the [ɹ̥] type twice, when talking to two Cassubians from the north. Unfortunately, I was not recording the conversations and, therefore, I cannot state with absolute certainty whether the acoustic impression in these two completely isolated cases was not attributable to some other factor. It is interesting that in both cases the utterances were in Polish (e.g. [pɹɛt] ‘before’ and [dvɔɹɛts] ‘station’). I noted a similar articulation in a young informant from Sierakowice in the word *wèzdrzi* ‘s/he/it looks’. After listening to the recording several times and following a spectrogram analysis, I have strengthened my belief that the reason for this acoustic impression was a short blockage of /d/, generating a sound similar to [ʃ], which, when combined, resulted in a sound similar to [ɹ̥]. In my central Cassubian dataset, there are no sure attestations of [ɹ̥].

However, in no sense can we talk about the phonological identification of */ɹ/ with */ʃ, ʒ/ in the greater majority of my informants. The continuants * [ɹ̥] are non-palatal (→ [ɹ̥, ʒ̥]; this refers also to the secondary * [ɹ̥], e.g. *zamiarżli* [zamjɹɹwɛ] ‘frozen’ (Sierakowice), *zmarznie* [zmazɹɹɛ] ‘s/he/it will get cold’ (Mezowo), *barzi* [bazɹ̥] ‘more’ (Łączki/Chmielno). The continuants * [ʃ, ʒ] have, on the other hand, optional palatalised realisations (→ [ʃ̥, ʒ̥], or even [ç, ʒ̥]). The frequency of such realisations depends on a given informant. In the case of some, the palatalised pronunciation is almost always consistent, in the case of others, it prevails, while in yet further cases, it is at best frequent.⁶ In addition, this opposition clearly affects the quality of the following /i/. After * [ɹ̥] the consonant /i/ is realised as the open variant [i̥]

⁶ As regards the distribution of palatalisation and velarisation, my dataset is consistent with Topolińska’s texts. Visible differences can, however, be found in the frequency of the palatalised variants /ʃ, ʒ/, see below.

(less frequently as [i]; pronunciation like *trzymało* [tʃimawɔ] ‘it was holding’, *przidze* [pʃidzɛ] ‘s/he/it will come’, *sā nie òbezdrzi* [sɔ nɛwɛbezzɪ] ‘s/he/it will not look back’ (Mezowo) is possible, however, it is relatively rare), although after *[ʃ, ʒ], however, as the closed [i] (for more information on the allophony [i, i̯] see Jocz 2012). Below, I provide more extensive material:

- *grzib* [gzɨp] ‘mushroom’ × 2, *vėzdrzi* [vɛzdʒɨ] ‘s/he/it looks’, *dobrze* [dɔbzɛ] ‘good’, *ùzdrzisz* [wɥzdʒɨʃ] ‘you will see’, *vėzdrzi* [vɛzdʒɨ] ‘s/he/it looks’, *przińdā* [pʃindɔ] ‘I will come’, *patrzisz* [patʃɨʃ] ‘you are looking’, *patrzy* [patʃɨ] ‘s/he/it is looking’, *krziknie* [kʃiknɛ] ‘s/he/it will shout’, *przėsła* [pʃɛʃwa] ‘she passed by’ ↔ *barzi* [barʒɨ] ‘more’, *przėsła* [pʃɛʃwa] ‘she passed by’ (middle-aged generation, Mściszewice); *przėsłē* [pʃɛʃlɛ] ‘they passed by’, *rzec* [zɛts] ‘to say’, *zdrzq* [zdʒɔm] ‘they are looking’, *wėzdrzi* [vɛzdʒɨ] ‘s/he/it looks’ × 4, *zdrzi* [zdʒɨ] ‘s/he/it is looking’ ↔ *przėsłē* [pʃɛʃlɛ] ‘they came’, *mòże* [mweʒɛ] ‘may/perhaps’, *żęcym* [ʒɛtsim] ‘life’, *że* [ʒɛ] ‘that’, *nòbarzi* [nɔbarʒɨ] ‘most’ × 2, *zauważiwò* [zawuʋaʒivɨ] ‘s/he/it notices’, *starszi* [starʃɨ] ‘older’ (younger generation, Sierakowice); *wėzdrzi* [vɛzdʒɨ] ‘s/he/it looks’ × 4, *trzymie* [tʃimjɛ] ‘s/he/it is holding’ × 2, *bierzq* [bjɛʒɔm] ‘they are taking’, *przesła* [pʃɛʃwa] ‘she passed by’, *rzekła* [zɛkwa] ‘she said’, *krziża* [kʃɨʒa] ‘cross (Gen.)’, *krziż* [kʃɨʃ] ‘cross’ × 4, *rzekł* [zɛk] ‘he said’ × 6, *mòrze* [mweʒɛ] ‘sea’ × 2, *rzecz* [zɛʃ] ‘thing’, *nie przėszedł* [nɛpʃɛʃɛt] ‘he didn’t come’ ↔ *żebē* [ʒɛbɛ] ‘in order to’, *krótszi* [krufʃɨ] ‘shorter’, *szedł* [ʃɛt] ‘he was walking’, *zaziwò* [zazivɨ] ‘s/he/it is taking’, *przesła* [pʃɛʃwa] ‘she passed by’, *mòże* [mweʒɛ] ‘may/perhaps’ × 4, *zależi* [zaleʒɨ] ‘it depends’, *krziża* [kʃɨʒa] ‘cross (Gen.)’, *krziż* [kʃɨʃ] ‘cross’ × 4, *że* [ʒɛ] ‘that’, *barzi* [barʒɨ] ‘more’, *żid* [ʒit] ‘Jew’, *nie przėszedł* [nɛpʃɛʃɛt] ‘he didn’t come’ (younger generation, Sierakowice); *przėszedł* [pʃɛʃɛt] ‘he came’, *zazdrzòł* [zazdʒɨw] ‘he looked in’, *rzecze* [zɛʃɛ] ‘things’ × 2, *zetrzec* [zɛʃɛts] ‘to grind/grate’, *nie mierzimē* [nɛmjɛʒimɛ] ‘we are not measuring’ ↔ *przėszedł* [pʃɛʃɛt] ‘he came’, *żebē* [ʒɛbɛ] ‘in order to’, *że* [ʒɛ] ‘that’, *barzi* [barʒɨ] ‘more’, *mòzemē* [mweʒɛmɛ] ‘we can/may’ (middle-aged generation, Gowidlino); *przėszedł* [pʃɛʃɛt] ‘he came’, *trzē* [tʃɛ] ‘three’, *rzec* [zɛts] ‘to say’, *przeżēlē* [pʃɛʒɛlɛ] ‘they experienced’, *rzecze* [zɛʃɛ] ‘things’, *przińc* [pʃints] ‘to come’, *patrzimē* [patʃimɛ] ‘we are looking’, (*sā*) *twòrzi* [tfweʒɨ] ‘(sth.) is being created’, *mòrze* [mweʒɛ] ‘sea’ ↔ *przėszedł* [pʃɛʃɛt] ‘he came’, *że* [ʒɛ] ‘that’, *barzi* [barʒɨ] ‘more’, *przeżēlē* [pʃɛʒɛlɛ] ‘they experienced’, *zależi* [zaleʒɨ] ‘it depends’, *nie szużi* [nɛsɥʒɨ] ‘it doesn’t do any good’, *mòże* [mweʒɛ] ‘may/perhaps’, *żij* [ʒij] ‘live!’, *lepszi* [lɛpʃɨ] ‘better’ (older generation, Łączki/Chmielno); *przėszło* [pʃɛʃwɔ] ‘it came’, *trzymac* [tʃimats] ‘to hold’, *wėzdrzi* [vɛzdʒɨ] ‘s/he/it looks’, *rzòdkò* [zɔtkwɛ] ‘seldom’, *zdarzi* [zdazʒɨ] ‘it will happen’, *òdebierze* [wɛdɛbjɛzɛ] ‘s/he/it will receive’, *gòrzi* [gwɛʒɨ] ‘worse’ × 2, *rzecze* [zɛʃɛ] ‘things’ ↔ *przėszło* [pʃɛʃwɔ] ‘it passed by’, *mòżna* [mweʒna] ‘one may’, *starszi* [starʃɨ] ‘older’, *mòże* [mweʒɛ] ‘may/perhaps’, *sā pòrėszuac* [sɔ pwɛrɛʃivats] ‘to move’, *słabszi* [swapʃɨ] ‘weaker’ (middle-aged generation, Mezowo); *przińdze* [pʃiɨndzɛ] ‘s/he/it will come’, *krziż* [kʃɨʃ] ‘cross’, *krzyże* [kʃɨʒɛ] ‘crosses’ × 2, *przińdq* [pʃiɨndɔm] ‘they will come’, *trzeba* [tʃɛba] ‘one needs’, *bierzesz* [bjɛʒɛʃ] ‘you are taking’, *grzib* [gzɨb] ‘mushroom’, *rzeczi* [zɛʃʃɨ] ‘things’, *przińdze* [pʃiɨndzɛ] ‘s/he/it will come’, *wėzdrzi* [vɛzdʒɨ] ‘s/he/it looks’, *nògòrzi* [negwɛʒɨ] ‘worst’, *gòrzi* [gwɛʒɨ]

‘worse’ ↔ *krżiż* [kʂiʃ] ‘cross’, *że* [ʒe] ‘that’, *nôbarżi* [nibarʒi] ‘most’, *barżi* [barʒi] ‘more’, *leżi* [leʒi] ‘s/he/it is lying’, *lżi* [lʒi] ‘more lightly’, *krzyże* [kʂiʒe] ‘crosses’ × 2 (middle-aged generation, Sierakowice); *przińdze* [pʂindʒe] ‘s/he/it will come’, *trżimie* [tʂʂimje] ‘s/he/it is holding’, *przeszedł* [pʂeʃet] ‘he passed by’ ↔ *przeszedł* [pʂeʃet] ‘he passed by’, *blężi* [blɛʒi] ‘closer’ (middle-aged generation, Sierakowice); *prześlę* [pʂɛʃlə] ‘they came’, *nie przindze* [nɛpʂindʒe] ‘s/he/it will not come’, *przeszło* [pʂeʃwɔ] ‘it passed by’, *patrzy* [patʂi] ‘s/he/it is looking’, *wierzi* [vjeʒi] ‘s/he/it believes’, *wędrzi* [vɛdzʒi] ‘s/he/it looks’, *przeszedł* [pʂeʃet] ‘he came’ ↔ *że* [ʒe] ‘that’, *prześlę* [pʂɛʃlə] ‘they came’, *przeszło* [pʂeʃwɔ] ‘it passed by’, *dłężi* [dweʒi] ‘longer’, *starszi* [starʂi] ‘older’, *barżi* [barʒi] ‘more’, *nôbarżi* [nibarʒi] ‘most’, *przeszedł* [pʂeʃet] ‘he came’ (older generation, Kożyczkowo); *trzeba* [tʂeba] ‘one needs’, *gòspòdarzi* [gwɛspɔdazʒi] ‘hosts’ ↔ *żebë* [ʒebɔ] ‘in order to’, *pierszi* [pjeʃi] ‘first’, *barżi* [barʒi] ‘more’ (older generation, Kożyczkowo); *wędrzi* [vɛdzʒi] ‘s/he/it looks’, *mòrze* [mwɛʒe] ‘sea’ × 2, *zdrzelë* [zdʒɛle] ‘they were looking’, *rzeczi* [zɛʃi] ‘things’, *krziwdë* [kʂivde] ‘harm’, *przińdze* [pʂindʒe] ‘s/he/it will come’, *zdrzimë* [zdʒime] ‘we are looking’ ↔ *że* [ʒe] ‘that’, *nôbarżi* [nibarʒi] ‘most’, *lepszi* [lepʂi] ‘better’, *żęcym* [ʒetsim] ‘life’, *wëzi* [vɛʒi] ‘higher’, *mòże* [mwɛʒe] ‘may/perhaps’ (middle-aged generation, Sierakowice/Paľubice); *zdrzi* [zdʒi] ‘s/he/it is looking’ × 4, *nie zdrzi* [nɛzdʒi] ‘s/he/it is not looking’, *przeżëła* [pʂɛʒɛwa] ‘she experienced’, *wędrzi* [vɛdzʒi] ‘s/he/it looks’, *rzec* [zɛts] ‘to say’, *gòrzi* [gwɛʒi] ‘worse’ ↔ *barżi* [barʒi] ‘more’, *zażił* [zaʒiw] ‘he took’, *przeżëła* [pʂɛʒɛwa] ‘she experienced’, *lepszi* [lepʂi] ‘better’ (middle-aged generation, Sierakowice/Paľubice); *sã zdarzi* [sɔ zdazʒi] ‘it will happen’, *rzekł* [zɛk] ‘he said’, *wrzeszczòł* [wʒɛʃʃiw] ‘he was shouting’, *gòrzi* [gwɛʒi] ‘worse’, *òrzel* [wɛʒew] ‘eagle’, *mòrzem* [mwɛʒem] ‘sea’, *przińdziesz* [pʂindʒeʃ] ‘you will come’, *wędrzi* [vɛstʂi] ‘s/he/it looks’, *przińdziesz* [pʂindʒeʃ] ‘you will come’ ↔ *wëzi* [vɛʒi] ‘higher’, *żebë* [ʒebɔ] ‘in order to’, *swięzi* [sfeʒi] ‘fresh’ (middle-aged generation, Widna Góra/Gowidlino); *rzeczach* [zɛʃax] ‘things’, *rzekłë* [zɛkle] ‘they said’, *przeszło* [pʂeʃwɔ] ‘it passed by’, *przeszedł* [pʂeʃet] ‘he passed by’, *nògòrzi* [nigɔʒi] ‘worst’, *przińdzemë* [pʂiɲdzema] ‘we will come’, *përnã* [pɛʒnɔ] ‘a little’, *gòrzi* [gwɛʒi] ‘worse’, *krzyż* [kʂiʃ] ‘cross’ ↔ *żebë* [ʒebɔ] ‘in order to’, *żił* [ʒiw] ‘he lived’, *mòże* [mwɛʒe] ‘may/perhaps’, *przeszło* [pʂeʃwɔ] ‘it passed by’, *przeszedł* [pʂeʃet] ‘he passed by’, *nôbarżi* [nibarʒi] ‘most’, *wëzi* [vɛʒi] ‘higher’, *leżi* [leʒi] ‘s/he/it is lying’, *mòżna* [mwɛʒna] ‘one may’ *krzyż* [kʂiʃ] ‘cross’ (middle-aged generation, Kawle/Gowidlino); *gòrzi* [gwɛʒi] ‘worse’, *rzecz* [zɛʃ] ‘thing’, *rzec* [zɛts] ‘to say’ ↔ *że* [ʒe] ‘that’, *zdązi* [zduʒi] ‘s/he/it will be on time’, *nôbarżi* [nibarʒi] ‘most’, *lżi* ‘more lightly’ (middle-aged generation, Lemany/Gowidlino); *trżimie* [tʂʂimje] ‘s/he/it is holding’, *gòspòdarzi* [gwɛspɛdazʒi] ‘hosts’ ↔ *barżi* [barʒi] ‘more’, *mòże* [mwɛʒe] ‘may/perhaps’, *swięzi* [sjiʒi] ‘fresh’ (older generation, Cieszenie); *trżimiq* [tʂʂimjom] ‘they are holding’ × 2, *gòrzi* [gwɛʒi] ‘worse’ ↔ *mòże* [mwɛʒe] ‘may/perhaps’, *że* [ʒe] ‘that’, *wëżilë* [vɛʒilɛ] ‘they lived on’, *dązi* [duʒi] ‘s/he/it is striving’ (older generation, Cieszenie); *gòspòdarzimë* [gwɛspɛdazʒime] ‘we are running our household’, *trzeba* [tʂeba] ‘one needs’, *rzecze* [zɛʃɛ] ‘things’, *përnã* [pɛʒnɔ] ‘a little’, *prześlę* [pʂɛʃwa] ‘she came’ ↔ *że* [ʒe] ‘that’, *prześlę* [pʂɛʃwa] ‘she came’ (middle-aged generation, Sznurki/Chmielno);

sā òbezdrzi [sɔ wɛbɛzdʑɪ] 's/he/it will look back', *przińdze* [pʂɪndʑɛ] 's/he/it will come' × 2, *przińdze* [pʂɪndʑɛ] 's/he/it will come', *rzec* [zɛts] 'to say', *òrze* [wɛzɛ] 's/he/it is ploughing', *gòrzi* [gweʑɪ] 'worse', *ùderzi* [wudɛʑɪ] 's/he/it will hit', *mòrze* [mwɛzɛ] 'sea' ↔ *mòże* [mwɛʑɛ] 'may/perhaps', *lepszi* [lɛpʂɪ] 'better', *barzi* [barʑɪ] 'more', *dłēzi* [dwɛʑɪ] 'longer' (middle-aged generation, Koźyczkowo); *trzim* [tʂɪm] 'hold it!', *gòrzi* [gweʑɪ] 'worse', *bierze* [bjɛzɛ] 's/he/it is taking' ↔ *zalezi* [zaleʑɪ] 'it depends', *nòlepszi* [nɔlɛpʂɪ] 'best', *żid* [ʑid] 'Jew' (middle-aged generation, Bačka Huta/Koźyczkowo).

At this point, I would like to pay special attention to the minimal pair noted in four informants: *mòrze* [mwɛzɛ] 'sea' ↔ *mòże* [mwɛʑɛ] 'may/perhaps' (younger generation, Sierakowice; older generation, Łączki/Chmielno, middle-aged generation Sierakowice/Paľubice, middle-aged generation, Koźyczkowo).⁷ In some informants, who have an undeniable retention of the opposition with frequent attestations, we may find single attestations of the palatalisation *[ɹ]. These are so rare (one or two words in a one-hour interview) that we may perhaps consider it merely a slip of the tongue. In the case of certain persons, the original opposition may be regarded as somewhat unstable due to a rather strong trend toward depalatalisation *[ʃ, ʒ], e.g. *gòrzi* [gweʑɪ] 'worse', *wèzdrzi* [vɛzdʑɪ] 's/he/it looks' × 2, [pʂɪnts] 'to come', ↔ *nòbarzi* [nɔbarʑɪ] 'most', *młodzi* [mwɔʂɪ] 'younger', but also *przeszedł* [pʂɛʂɛt] 'he passed by' ʃ *przészędł* [pʂɛʂɛd] 'he passed by', *przészłē* [pʂɛʂɛlɛ] 'they passed by' (younger generation, Gowidłino). This phenomenon is mostly idiosyncratic, even though we may recognise a general trend towards velarisation in the younger users of the dialect. In single informants (to be precise, in three of them), the data are so chaotic that we can view it at least as a frequent, or even absolute, identification of */ɹ/ with */ʃ, ʒ/, e.g. *przińdā* [pʂɪnda] 'I will come', *wrzeszcza* [wzɛʂʂɪʂa] 'she was shouting', *krzɪkac* [kʂɪkats] 'to shout' ↔ *lezi* [lɛʑɪ] 's/he/it is lying' × 2, but also *przińdā* [pʂɪnda] 'I will come', *przēbiegł* [pʂɛbʲɛk] 'he ran' (middle-aged generation, Leszczynki/Lisie Jamy); *sā trzimiā* [sɔ tʂɪmjɔ] 'they are holding up', *krziwda* [kʂɪvda] 'harm', *przińdze* [pʂɪndʑɛ] 's/he/it will come', *gòrzi* [gweʑɪ] 'worse' ↔ *młodzi* [mwɔʂɪ] 'younger', *sā nòlezi* [sɔ nɔlɛʑɪ] '(sth.) is due' × 2, but also *przińdā* [pʂɪndum] 'they will come', *przeziwelē* [pʂɛʑɪvelɛ] 'they were experiencing', *przińdze* [pʂɪndʑɛ] 's/he/it will come', *przińc* [pʂɪnts] 'to come' (middle-aged generation, Glińcz/Mezowo); *przewróca* [pʂɛvrutsa] 'she turned (it) over', *przészłē* [pʂɛʂɛlɛ] 'they came', *przed* [pʂɛd] 'before', *przińc* [pʂɪnts] 'to come', but also *zdrzi* [zdʑɪ] 's/he/it is looking' (middle-aged generation, Mezowo/Lisie Jamy). Such advanced instability or the disappearance of the opposition is not strictly age-related. In the three cases analysed above, who were (late) middle-aged women, the results are clear, yet the opposition is retained by all the younger informants. However, I did not observe any territorial or dialectal influences. We can thus suspect a stronger-than-average transmission of Cassubian

⁷ Because of the optionality of the palatalisation /ʃ, ʒ/, the minimal pairs for this opposition are, in a sense, weaker than in the case of phoneme pairs with obligatory phonetic opposition. We may suspect that the context plays here a greater-than-usual role, which creates favourable conditions for the disappearance of the opposition.

in the families of these informants during their childhood. In some of the cases, the absence of the opposition is related to the fact that the speakers actively acquired Cassubian when they were adults, despite the fact that they, undoubtedly, had been exposed to it since their childhood. This could, therefore, be considered as hyper-correction resulting from a mistaken generalisation. One such person consistently follows the pronunciations: *grzėbė* [gʒeβe] ‘mushrooms’, *grzeczno* [gʒeʧno] ‘politely’, *krzax* [kʃax] ‘bushes’, *dobrze* [dɔβʒe] ‘good’, *zdrzisz* [zɔʧiʃ] ‘you are looking’, *wėzdrzi* [vəzɔʧi] ‘s/he/it looks’, even though her mother consistently retains the non-palatal pronunciation */ʎ/ (→ [ʂ, ʐ]) and the palatalised pronunciation */ʃ, ʒ/ (this is interesting, because I have a recording of a dialogue in which the relevant examples are repeated in the responses).

To sum up, in the majority of the idiolects which I analysed the opposition */ʎ/ ↔ */ʃ, ʒ/ has been, without any doubt, retained. This applies to the position before vowels (e.g. *mòrze* [mweʒe] ↔ *mòže* [mweʒe]), the position before consonants (e.g. *pėrznā* [pəʒnɔ] ↔ *mòžna* [mweʒna] ‘may/perhaps’) and to word-final positions (e.g. *pòcerz* [pɔʧeʐ] ↔ *krziz* [kʃiʃ]). Also related to this position is the almost obligatory allophony /i/: *łzi* [lʒi] ↔ *gòrzi* [gweʒi]. Synchronically, we may show this opposition as /z/ ↔ /ʃ, ʒ/. The phoneme /z/ has the surface realisation [z ʂ], while /ʃ, ʒ/ has the free palatalised allophones [ʃ, ʒ], [ç, ʐ] and the non-palatal [ʂ, ʐ]. Fluctuations in the palatalisation (or places of articulation) of the continuants */ʃ, ʒ/ are of an allophonic nature only; it is by no means a deep phonological substitution. To illustrate this phonetic opposition and to offer a certain compensation for the absence of an acoustic analysis, I would like to include one spectrogram, in which the proverb *kòždi őrze jak mòže* is pronounced by a middle-aged female informant from Kożyczkowo (Chmielno district). The segments corresponding to *rz* and *ż* are highlighted. Both the obvious difference between the frequency structure of the segments under analysis and the stronger formant transition of the neighbouring vowels in the segment [ʒ] clearly show the opposition between the non-palatal [z] and the palatalised [ʒ]. In the material which I investigated, the difference is usually so clear that the quality of the consonant rarely gives rise to doubt in an auditory analysis.

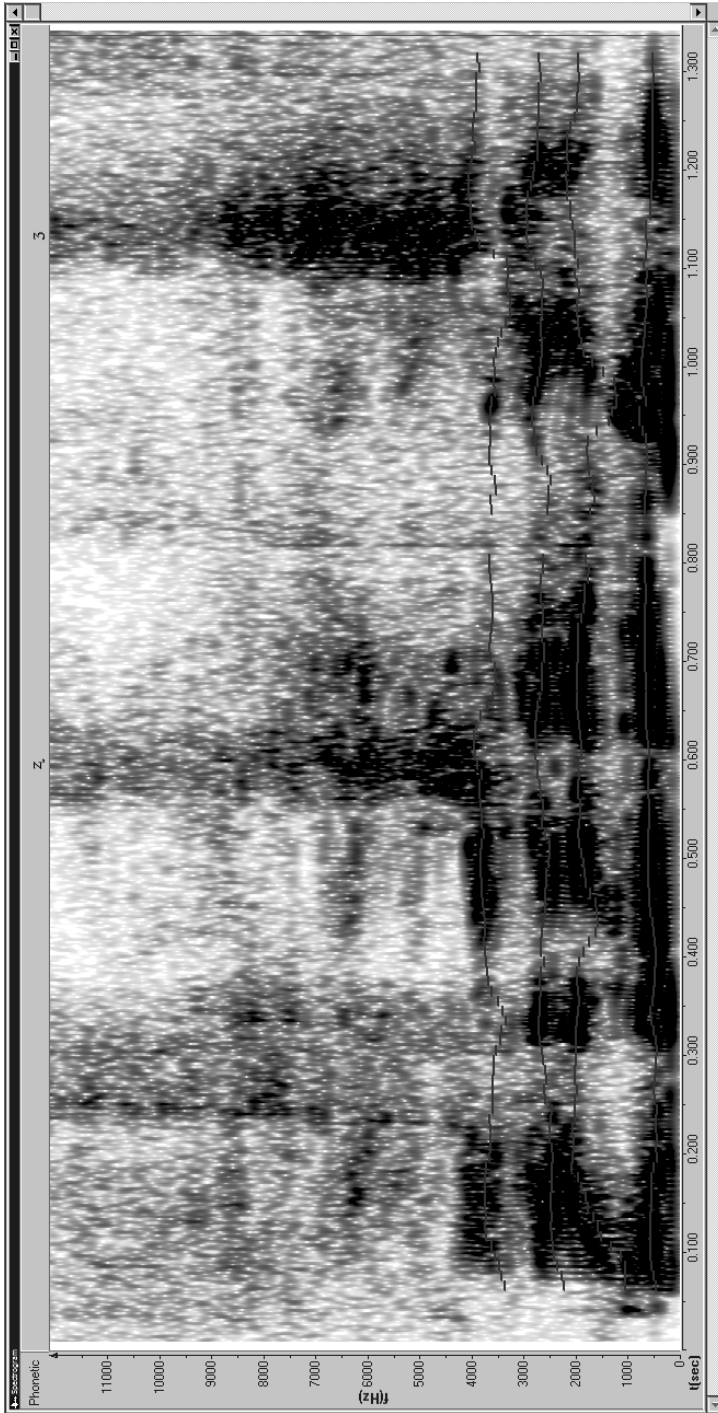


Figure 1. *Kòzdi òrze jak mòże*

Finally, I would like to briefly discuss one further issue. The difference between the frequency of the palatalised continuants */ʃ, ʒ/ in Topolińska's dataset and the contemporary pronunciation identified in this analysis is significant. The central Cassubian texts analysed by Topolińska contain about 10% of the total number of realisations */ʃ, ʒ/. In Mirachów, representing central Cassubian in the *General Slavic Linguistic Atlas*, this was supposed to be, even at the beginning of the 1970s, typical only of the older generation (see above). Lorentz describes many times – as I have already mentioned – a general velarisation */ʃ, ʒ/ across almost the whole of the area in which Cassubian dialects are spoken. In my dataset, the palatalised realisations are, however, frequent and in some of the idiolects they are dominant. Thus, a question arises as to how to explain this difference. Let us assume that it is neither a matter of different perceptions, nor a result of the fact that different populations were examined, coupled with the effect of randomisation. If this is the case, we would have to identify a restitution of the palatalisation, which perhaps would not be the first in the history of Cassubian (Popowska-Taborska 1961: 36). Before I discuss a possible mechanism, I should highlight a certain important fact. The more or less obligatory or optional palatalisation not only concerns */ʃ, ʒ/, but also the affricates */tʃ, dʒ/. In the above literature review, I failed to address this fact, because it is immaterial in the context of the phonological opposition under analysis. However, in all the aforementioned publications, the palatalisation */ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ/ is, in principle, approached collectively (only occasionally are certain assumed historical differences stressed). The phonological opposition */ɹ/ ↔ */ʃ, ʒ/ is, without doubt, retained in Topolińska's data, regardless of its debatable, or possibly even incorrect, interpretation by the scholar. In this situation, two factors could have been relevant in the restitution of the palatalisation */ʃ, ʒ/. As long as */ɹ/ was realised as [ɹ], the palatalisation of the continuants */ʃ, ʒ/ was phonologically redundant (it was the manner of the articulation of the opposition under analysis that was phonologically significant). When [ɹ] as such was no longer pronounced and when it was replaced by [ʃ, ʒ], to stress and to retain the opposition */ɹ/ ↔ */ʃ, ʒ/, which was still alive in the consciousness of the dialect users (but whose surface realisation was less and less frequent), a preference for the optional, but until that point statistically insignificant, palatalised variants */ʃ, ʒ/ became beneficial. It cannot be ruled out that the secondary palatalisation was supported from elsewhere. In her publication on dialectal texts, Topolińska transcribes the continuants /k, g/ before front vowels as [tɕ, dʒ] and regards them synchronically as the allophones /k, g/. In her data, such an interpretation is difficult to defend. Topolińska herself observes that the allophonic rule she defined fails with regard to borrowings as well as before the ending *-em* in the instrumental case. It should be added that the rule also did not hold at that time in other domestic forms, e.g. before the verbal suffix *-iw(a)-* and in forms like *někelě* 'they were rushing'. Nor should we forget the Cassubian equivalent of the Polish literary form *giać*, in which the continuant */[g]/ before a non-front vowel has been attested in Cassubian at least since the nineteenth century. For the then contemporary [tɕ, dʒ], no purely phonetic-phonological rule, nor a convincing morphologically-oriented one could be defined, as their phonologisation was, at

that stage, already a fact. Of course, in many cases the affricates still behaved like the allophones /k, g/, which is typical of relatively new and still “weak” phonologisation.⁸ A system distinguishing four places of articulation among sibilants with partly overlapping allophones in two contiguous series, i.e. /s, z, ts, dʒ/ [s, z, ts, dʒ] ↔ /z/ [ʒ, z] ↔ /ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ/ [ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ, ʂ, z, tʂ, dz] ↔ /tʃ, dʒ/ [tʃ, dʒ] is very complicated and potentially unstable. For this reason, it was simplified, that is /tʃ, dʒ/ [tʃ, dʒ] were “taken over” by /tʃ, dʒ/ [tʃ, dʒ, tʂ, dz] (today, in central Cassubian dialects the original *[kʲ, gʲ] do not differ in any way from *[tʃ, dʒ]). During this process, the allophones /tʃ, dʒ/ shifted towards a palatalised post-alveolar articulation, closer to the alveolo-palatal affricates [tʃ, dʒ] included in the “new” resources /tʃ, dʒ/. Such a change in the most common allophones of affricates, without doubt, supported the analogous shift of the typical variants /ʃ, ʒ/, which were already “escaping” from their identification with /z/. It is possible that the two processes simultaneously support each other.

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⁸ I will discuss in greater detail the phonological status of *[kʲ, gʲ] versus the historical data in my habilitation dissertation which has the working title: *Studien zum obersorbischen und kaschubischen Konsonantismus*.

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