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**Spatial Reconfiguration and the Transformation of Conditions
for Cryptolectal Language Practices:
Re-reading the 1963 Commission on Itinerancy Report**

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Abstract

This paper re-examines the 1963 *Commission on Itinerancy Report* and analyzes how settlement policies affect Traveller language practices from the perspective of the reconfiguration of space and institutionalized patterns of contact. While conventional studies of minority languages have relied on visible indicators such as the number of speakers and rates of transmission, this paper instead focuses on the social conditions under which language practices are constituted.

The Report did not recognize Travellers as a cultural community; rather, it positioned them as subjects to be “absorbed” into settled society. The policy problem was framed not in terms of language, but in terms of “mobility” as an administratively governable way of life. Consequently, language does not appear in the foreground of policy discourse. However, this absence should not be understood as a mere omission, but as a policy choice to prioritize the governance of space and patterns of contact.

Following the Report, policies such as the clearance of camps, the development of halting sites, relocation into public housing, and incorporation into welfare systems were implemented. These measures fixed living space and normalized administrative contact. As a result, relations with the external society shifted from negotiation to administrative procedures, transforming the conditions of boundary maintenance and informational asymmetry. Since cryptolectal practices such as Shelta have operated under such conditions, their foundations were thereby subject to indirect structural reconfiguration.

Furthermore, when situated within the longer policy trajectory from the 1963 Report to the recognition of Travellers as an ethnic minority in 2017, it becomes clear that while policy discourse shifted from assimilation to recognition, the underlying structures of spatial fixation and administrative contact persisted. This paper therefore advances an analytical perspective that reconceptualizes language policy not as explicit intervention in language itself, but as a process of governance that reshapes the conditions of language practices through the reorganization of social structures.

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