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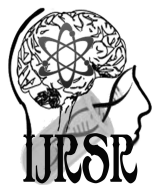
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RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE CONTRIBUTION OF PROF. J. GJINARI IN THE ALBANIAN DIALECTOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the contribution of prof. J. Gjinari in the field of dialectology. There are dialectal distinctions in the phonemic system of the parlanges in both dialects of Albanian language. The changes have occurred due to the linguistic and extra linguistic factors. Nasal vowels as a feature of Gheg dialect and the stressed vowel ě as a feature of Tosk dialect are analyzed together in this paper, because the vowel ě of the south dialect is historically connected with the nasal vowel system of the north dialect. In the Gheg dialect vocalization the contradistinctions between the nasal and non-nasal vowels are functionally important. In Tosk dialect, there is no nasalization correlation for the vowels. The language undergoes changes and enriches with the passing of time, but not to the same degree in all its spheres. Phonetics is one of the aspects that in general does not undergo changes quickly.

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INTRODUCTION

Prof. Jorgji Gjinari is one of the outstanding scholars of Albanian dialectology. His studies in this field contain everything valuable and rather helpful for the dialects of Albanian language. In his studies we can find scientific explanations, of a historical and comparative nature on various phonetic, morphologic, syntactic and lexical phenomena of Albanian dialects. This study mode of prof. Gjinari has helped us with the analysis performed in our paper, his scientific approach concerning the nasal vowels of Gheg dialect (spoken in the northern Albania) and the stressed vowel ě of the Tosk dialect (spoken in the southern Albania), observed in some aspects and with the combination of several factors. Dialects and the parlanges in Albanian language reflect the history of mankind in general and the social community in particular. Therefore, the thorough analysis and evaluation of dialect data produce benefits not only in the field of philology, but in other aspects, as well (J. Gjinari, Gj. Shkurtaj, 2003).

Dialects as a historical category have sprung up under certain circumstances of the society development and time after time have undergone changes. Even nowadays, dialect distinctions in the phonemic system of Albanian parlanges are the outcome of phonetic and phonological changes made in various territories where Albanian language is spread. The system of

vowels has been more open to changes. There, the phonetic processes have brought numerous distinctions into the dialects, some of which have affected the vowel system much more than the system of consonants (J. Gjinari, 1986). Among the first phonetic changes that caused a dialect distinction in Albanian language, was the one which led to the rise of nasal vowel series that are typical for the north group of parlanges.

Nasal vowels, as a characteristic of Gheg dialect and the stressed vowel-ě, as a characteristic of Tosk dialect have been treated simultaneously, because ě of the south dialect is historically connected with the system of nasal vowels in the north dialect. Vowel nasalisation and the reduction of a should be seen all together, because they mutually show dependency links and relationship cause-result (J. Gjinari, 1968). Even for prof. Çabej, nasalization is also linked with the situation where the Latin e has produced a in Gheg and ě in Tosk, such as: arena – ranë (Gheg) and rërë (Tosk) (E. Çabej, 1988). This link is nowadays evident in both dialects of Albanian language. In cases when Gheg has got a (nasal), all south Tosk parlanges have –ě, such as: za –zë; ban – bën etc. In cases when Gheg has e (nasal), south Tosk parlanges have ě, while the parlanges of Korça reply with e. Other parlanges of the north Tosk dialect reply with e and partly with ě: vënt, zëmër etc. The nasal correlation is not present in the Tosk vocalisation. It is characteristic only for the gheg vocalisation. In this dialect

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contradistinctions between the nasal vowels and non-nasal vowels are common, and consequently, they are significant from the functional point of view. In Gheg dialect there can be found word pairs that can have or not the nasal sound especially for the vowels as: a, e, i, u. In this dialect, nasalisation includes the vowels of all rises, as well as the intermediate degrees of opening. Rarely vowel o is encountered as nasalized, as in the position o + n. This sound historically underwent an evolution, resolving into a two-vowel sound (A. Dodi, 1967). This feature of the South dialect aligns Albanian language in the list of few European languages as French, Portuguese and Polish, in which nasalization is a typical characteristic of their vowel system (B. Beci, 1981).

In Gheg dialect vocalization and contradistinctions between nasal and non-nasal vowels, are important from the functional point of view. Also Gheg dialect, as a wholeness of parlanges does not appear itself as homogeneous entity concerning nasalization, for the reason that there are noticed distinctions between the groups of parlanges, not to the degree of bringing about a division of the phonemes system in this dialect. Prof. Gjinari differently from other scholars, properly states that there is not a common single scheme for all parlanges of the Gheg dialect. This is a positive step forward (B. Beci, 1990). In this dialect, the parlanges of Dibra and Ulqin have been separated from the common type. In these parlanges the non-nasalisation of the vowels separated the nasal vowels from the phonetic system, which led to the existence of single oral vowels. There is also any periphery parlanges, such as Llapi in Kosovo where nasalization is restored as a feature only to the vowels e and a (J. Gjinari, 1983). Eastern parlanges in the central Albania and transitory parlanges of Shpati and Polis are characterized by triangle system of five phonemes: the vowels î, ÿ, û of high rise, the vowels ê, ô of middle rise and the vowel â that is of the highest rise degree. Other parlanges of Gheg dialect, which compose its majority, have four nasal vowels. Nasal vowel o does not appear. It is replaced by a, that is back and liprounded (J. Gjinari, 1981). In the Gheg dialect of today, o appears in a small number of words as zoj, kulosje or in any other word. This low frequency of use is enough in not analyzing this unit as a separate one in the system of nasal vowels.

Between the Gheg parlanges there are noticed distinctions that are related with the different number of cases involved in nasalization. Despite the analogy as a grammatical phenomenon, phonetic factors have also operated in this parlanges, a thing which has generated differentiations in the number of cases with nasal vowels. In the parlanges of south and west Gheg dialect, the vowel a is usually realized as nasal and labialized, when it precedes a nasal consonant: aksham, nishan etc. Starting with Kruja, in the parlanges of central Albania the number of words with a nasal vowel is on the increase, because the vowels are nasalized there even in the cases where it has followed the nasal consonant nj, later being changed to j: jall, i, dyjaja etc. In the Tosk dialect the nasalization correlation for the vowels is missing. For this, it is characteristic the phoneme ë, that is missing in Gheg. Also, even the parlanges of Tosk dialect display distinctions between them about the vowel ë. In the parlanges of Berati, Myzeqe, Mallakstra, Tepelena, Vlora and Kurvelesh, it is noticed that

there is ë instead of a in words loaned from Turkish as: tamëmë, pishmën, Osmën etc. The parlanges of SouthTosk dialect have ë in all those cases, where the standard language has e followed by a nasal consonant such as: vënt, pëndë etc. In the parlanges of Korça, the vowel ë in such words is not generalized in all the cases. Some words have ë and some others e: zëmër, dhën, but also pe, e enjte etc. Prof. Gjinari has expressed his own opinion concerning the presence of nasal vowels in Tosk dialect; through the scientific arguments which are being juxtaposed with other scholars' scientific explanations.

According to prof. E. Çabej nasalization is hardly a preserved phenomenon, conservation and a wide process of the language. Accordingly, this phenomenon is an innovation, relatively new for the Gheg dialect occurring around the early middle age (E. Çabej, 1989). In the grammar of Ilia Dilo Sheperi it is portrayed some investigations of nasalizations even in Tosk dialect. According to him, vowels are called nasal in Tosk, when they precede the nasal consonants m, n, nj, such as: nëna, hëna etc.; in the end of masculine nouns and verbs ending in long vowels: i, e, y, u, in which the nasal nj is disappeared. Ex. ulli-ullinj, sy-syni, zë-zënë etc.; in words: një, më etc., (I. D. Sheperi, 2001). According to prof. Dodi, in the vocalization of Tosk, nasal correlation is absent. It is characteristic only for the vocalization of Gheg dialect (A. Dodi, 1967). The scholar B. Beci explains that traces of vowel nasalization are also noticed in the south dialect. In the parlanges of Gropa e Kucit, distinguished for the archaic elements, there are cases when the stressed vowels preceding the nasal consonants, especially in the language of old people, have a kind of nasal timbre. In the parlanges of Kurvelesh after the consonants nj, n, vowels either stressed or unstressed, are pronounced as nasals. Also, in the parlanges of low Bregdet the stressed vowels in the words of the type mulli, gju, tru etc., have a kind of nasalization (B. Beci, 1990). The scholar K. Topalli states that nasal vowels are not inherited, for as much as Indoeuropean language has not such types of sounds, and consequently they are created by the inner development of Albanian language. Accepting the existence of these vowels for the Albanian language, it derives by itself that during a certain stage of their development, the nasal vowels of Tosk dialect are non-nasalized. The linguists that have treated this problem have related the cause of this phenomenon to rhotacism in that dialect (K. Topalli, 2007).

According to prof. Gjinari it can not be assumed that, Albanian language has had nasalization at the first stages, but by a certain phase of its history, or even not being a phonological feature at least they have not existed for both dialects as a simple phonetic feature. This means that vowels under certain phonetic circumstances are phonetically realized as nasal i.e. phonetic variants of oral vowel phonemes and after that it is their derivation, leading to a series of nasal vowel phonemes in Gheg and also inducing such changes in the phonetic system of Tosk dialect. The stressed vowel ë appeared there. Nasal consonants did not influence anymore in the articulation of the following vowels, thus vowels preceding a nasal consonants were not pronounced as nasal (J. Gjinari, 1981). Nowadays, we do not encounter the series of nasals in none of the Tosk parlanges, even in any of its archaic parlanges. The conclusions of Ilia Dilo Sheperi and the opinions of M. Totoni about the

existence of vowels with nasal traces following the nasal consonants, do not demonstrate the preservation of an old state. Even if the series of nasal vowels might not have previously been a common thing for the language, we should consider *ë* as being existent in Tosk dialect during the phase when nasal vowels were realized as variants conditioned by the phonetic position. The nasal character of vowels in Tosk led to the move and change of the vowels *a* and *e*. They underwent a reduction, ending in *ë* of the undefined type that existed even in the system of unstressed vowels. This *ë* became a defined vowel and entered the system of the stressed vowels occupying a position in the middle class.

By an elaborate and detailed investigation of both dialects of Albanian language, Gjinari defines the importance of contradistinction of /*ë*/-/a/ dhe /*ë*/-/e/ in the phonologic system in these dialects. At this point dialects have been developed side by side. In cases where in Gheg one *a* followed by a nasal consonant is transformed into *â*, in Tosk there is *ë*: *hâ n-hënë*; *gjà -gjë* etc. In gheg *a* has remained an oral vowel, although it precedes a nasal consonant, also in Tosk it is preserved as *a*: *thân -thanë*, *ân-anë*. Thus, the Tosk vowel *ë* should always be viewed as connected with the wholeness of nasal vowels series and not in a separate way with *â* ose *ê*. These two phonemes as units of nasal series establish certain relationships with other units of these series and other respective units of the system of oral vowel phonemes. With a high scientific competence, prof Gjinari has explained the transformations that have occurred with the nasal vowels in both dialects of Albanian language. As a social phenomenon, the language is connected with the ethnopolitical communities and consequently it appears as different in various communities and it changes and develops with them. It changes at slow rates due to the tendency of its inner development dependent on the social and extralinguistic factors. The influence of these factors has brought about the birth and distinction of dialects which have not been developed in a straight line (J. Gjinari, 1976).

The changes that occurred in the phonetic system were of the phonological character for the Gheg dialect and of the phonetic character for the Tosk dialect. In the group of Gheg parlances, the nasal vowels after the reduction of *n* (at the end position) were also in positions where they were not phonetically conditioned anymore. Nasalized vowels from variants were transformed into phonemes and creating the series of nasals. In the group of Tosk parlances the majority of nasal vowels were changed again into oral vowels. The changes that occurred were simply phonetic, whereas two from the vowels *â*- and *ê*- led to the birth of *ë* as a new phenomenon that stimulated changes in the vowel phonemes of this group of parlances. Today, the phoneme *ë* from the geographical view is used with the parlances composing the Tosk dialect. According to prof. Gjinari, the present space of *ë* in Albanian language is possible to be a remnant of a larger territory and not located in the South, but southwest- northeast, i.e. from the present Tosk territory towards Ohrid, Dibra, Skopje. This idea of Gjinari is based on: a. The findings by musicology, according to which, in the area of northern west Macedonia and that of Opoja, between Dibra and Skopje, today part of Gheg territory, resides the so-called Gheg polyphony close to the characteristic polyphony of the area where the Tosk dialect is spoken. b.

Existence of *ë* even in other languages of Balkan, as Macedonian, Bulgarian, Rumanian.

In all studies of prof. J. Gjinari, it is noted a thorough and elaborated investigation of all the topics related to the relevant field of study. He is noted for carrying out full and extensive studies on different issues even in phonetics. Special attention he has also given to the chronology of this phenomenon, by stating his original opinion in line with the opinions of other scholars that have treated nasalization. According to him, the period when the process of vowel nasalization placed before a nasal consonants, is relatively ancient in the history of Albanian language and till the formation of the nasal vowel phoneme. This should have continued the phonemic norm of vowel nasalization before a nasal consonant for a long time. This is demonstrated by the fact that Gheg nasals and *ë* of Tosk are present in the autochthonous word lexicon of, in old Greek loans, Latin loans and in some old Slavic elements. They have entered the Slavic loans in general, Italian loans, Greek, middle age or modern, Turkish and others at later periods. The period of first contacts of Albanian with the Slavic may be considered approximately as the final limit of the creation of this distinctive feature for both dialects (J. Gjinari, 1981). According to prof. Çabej, Gheg has got nasalization along with the absence of rotachism. This complex phenomenon is not casual, but it is connected with the phonetic structure of Albanian language.

A of the gheg is not always older than *ë* of the Tosk, because both may derive from an older *e* (E. Çabej, 1988). According to prof. K. Topalli, nasalization is an old phenomenon, that has involved the whole linguistic territory of Albanian language, and consequently its start is older than the dialectal division in Gheg and Tosk. As a phenomenon of inner development of Albanian language, it belongs to the historical period of the language (K. Topalli, 2007). As a conclusion we express our conviction that the activity and contribution of prof. J. Gjinari in the field of dialectology composes a valuable help, which we have based our study on and also will refer in the future studies.

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