

**THE SPECIFICS OF THE REDUCED /ǎ/ UNDER
ACCENT
OF THE CITY TETOVO'S SPEECH
(HISTORICAL AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC
APPROACHES)¹**

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ABSTRACT

The reduction of vowels under accent is not a common aspect in the Macedonian dialects. The specific of the city Tetovo's speech is exactly in the identification of the social phenomena reduction of the vowels under accent. It is a result of phonetic reasons (dynamic accent, fast speech) or imitation of pronouncement of a prestigious language. The reduction appears in the beginning of the word, in the middle of the word and at the end of the word. Under the influence of reduction, the vowel /a/ in the city Tetovo's speech in separate lexemes crosses in the semi-sound /ǎ/ in the syllable which is under accent. The object of this analysis will be the pronunciation of the reduced /ǎ/ under accent in certain lexemes of the city Tetovo's speech observed from a modern perspective with historical and sociolinguistic approach.

Key words: reduction, city Tetovo's speech, history, sociolinguistics, reduced /ǎ/.

INTRODUCTION

The sound system of Tetovo's speech is consisted of six vowels and twenty-six consonants. Besides the six vowels *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u* which are

¹ original scientific paper

characteristic for the standard language as well, and are pronounced in the same way as in the standard language, in Tetovo's speech, the dark vowel which is noted with the sign /ǎ/ is also distinguished:

и		у		
е		о	+	ñ
		ǎ		
		а		

In this speech all the vowels regarding the distribution can stand in all the positions of the word, in the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the word. Trajko Stamatovski (MJ, 1952), has written about the city Tetovo's speech in the fifties of the twentieth century; in the File cabinet of MDA, there are records about Tetovo made according to limited questions according to the Questionnaire for gathering dialectical material. The speeches in the Tetovo region, among which is Tetovo's speech as well, are processed by Bozidar Vidoeski in the paper "Towards the delimitation of the Polog speeches" (1998: 149–161), republished text form 1961, and in 2012 a Monograph of the Vratnica-Polog speeches was published as a result of a work on a certain project (Labroska and others, 2012). The first written data about Polog and the speeches in Polog we notice in the book „Полог и ево болгарское население“ from Afanasij Seliscev (1929: 281–437) from 1929. The reduction of the vowel /a/ in the city Tetovo's speech in stressed syllables was firstly noticed by N. Siljanov in the paperwork „Редукция на звука а въ охридския и тетовския говори“ even form the end of the 19th century.

Still, all of the previously mentioned studies and paperwork are either with old data, if we look through the sociolinguistic aspect, either they do not thoroughly deal with the issue of our research in this paperwork. Therefore, we will base our elaboration upon new field material and with sociolinguistic approach.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOUND /ǎ/ IN CITY TETOVO'S SPEECH

Koneski in the *History of the Macedonian language* appoints that in the vocal system of the Macedonian language as a new member appears the sound /ǎ/, in the northern speeches as a replacement for the eroes, and in our other speeches at first as a reflex of nasal form the back row (1967: 31). Vidoeski (1962: 40–46) notices that in the Northern part of Polog – Tetovo, and in the

regions of Skopska Crna Gora, Kumanovo, Kratovo and Kriva Palanka the continuant /ǎ/ appears in the stressed syllable. On the field in the mentioned line *ɔ and *ɔ̄ equaled in sound under the influence of the Southern and Eastern peripheral speeches of the Stokavian Serbian idiom and transformed into /ǎ/ in all the positions of the morpheme structure of the correspondent lexemes. Seliscev expresses an opinion that later, with the mixture of Shara's population, more words with /ǎ/ in the root of the word started to enter city Tetovo's speech (in the suffixes instead of the eroes in the Tetovo's speech different reflexes can be found: *т'анок, кр'оток, н'изок, св'атот, л'акот; 'остен, ј'арем, гл'аден, ж'еден* (v. Stamatovski 1956: 226–228).

According to the general dialect differentiation of the Macedonian speeches made by Bozidar Vidoevski, (1998: 157–161), Tetovo's speech belongs to the group of northern speeches. In the northern speeches the phoneme /ǎ/ historically is derived as a regular continuant of the strong *ɔ and *ɔ̄, in the secondary er ɔ₂, in several lexemes we find it instead of the vocal *ɔ̄ in the sequence /лǎ/, then in the Turkish lexemes instead of the vowel ɪ (Markovic 2001: 57).

Besides the characteristics of the northern speeches according to the historical derivation of the phoneme /ǎ/, which are related to the Tetovo's speech, in the city Tetovo's speech the phoneme /ǎ/ appears as a continuant of the nasal from the back row *ɛ̄ (just in certain positions), in the sequence /ǎp/ as well as continuant of the vocal *ɔ̄ and out of the phoneme /a/ in a stressed syllable.

The small er *ɔ̄ in city Tetovo's speech, in some root syllables, changed into /ǎ/: *в'аздǎн, д'ǎн, д'ǎна, д'ǎнǎска, дǎн-д'ǎнǎске, дǎн'ǎинǎва (улица), Д'ǎница, д'ǎнгуби, д'ǎнов/-от/-он, д'ǎнојве, д'ǎноој, д'ǎнпладне, д'ǎнта, д'ǎнум, се разд'ǎнуе, л'ǎн, л'ǎнен/-а/-о/-и, л'ǎсен, л'ǎсна/-о, т'ǎмǎн, т'ǎмен д'ǎн, т'ǎмница, т'ǎмно, т'ǎнка/-о, т'ǎнк'и, т'ǎнкуљав, т'ǎнчина, се-ст'ǎмнуе, ут'ǎначи (работав), ц'ǎфти.*

In certain examples we notice it as a replacement of the big er *ɔ̄ with the inter-linguistic dark vowel /ǎ/ (v. Vidoevski 1998: 158). We noticed the following lexemes as well: *б'ǎцка, к'ǎнап, м'ǎкне, оп'ǎнце, оп'ǎнчари, с'ǎн, с'ǎњаав, с'ǎни.*

Typical mark for the city Tetovo's speech is the basic replacement of the nasal *ɛ̄ which in some lexemes changed into dark sound /ǎ/ which dues to the influence of the speech of the upper Polog villages. For example, *б'ǎботи (кумбето), г'ǎс, г'ǎзот/-ов/-он, г'ǎзар, г'ǎзечки, наг'ǎзечки, наз'ǎдгǎзум,*

пог'азечки (Stamatoski 1956: 225), *гн'аса, гн'асен, гн'асна/-о/-и, погн'асена, зг'абоса* (Stamatoski 1956: 225), *к'аде, к'ај, к'ај-годер, к'аса, к'асај, к'асажче, к'аснал/-а/-о/-е, к'аснаф, к'аснемо, (из)л'ачи* (Stamatoski 1956: 220), *с'а* (stsl. *сѣтъ*). According to the condition with the reflex of the old nasal from the back row in the northern Macedonian speeches we will highlight the following: in part of the Tetovo's speech the phoneme /ǎ/ appears as a continuant of the nasal *ǰ in the lexical morphemes (Markovic 2007: 58); in the narrow Skopje region – in the city and blatic speech the phoneme /ǎ/ appears in limited number of examples instead of the nasal *ǰ in the lexemes: *г'ас, г'азечки, к'асна* (Markovic 2007: 59); in the speech in Kratovo and Kriva Palanka a replacement of the nasal *ǰ in the dark sound /ǎ/ appears only in the examples: *гн'асно, г'ас* and in the forms of derived from this root: *г'азачки, г'азови*, and then *от'аде, едн'аи* (Markovic 2001: 168).

The dark vowel in this speech can be noticed, as we appointed previously above, instead of the secondary er ъ₂ in the root of the word. Example: *Б'адник, л'аже, л'ажго/-а, л'ажгојца, л'ајца/-е, л'ајче, л'ажичка, л'ајмарник* (Stamatoski 1956: 230), *м'агла, м'аглиште, м'аглив/-а/-о, м'аглио, м'аглиа, м'аска, м'аска, м'аскиче, т'анок*. This kind of development of the secondary er ъ₂, besides in the northern speeches we also notice in the Ohrid speech, Prespa speech and Sushko-Visecki speeches.

In northern speeches, as appointed from Vidoeski, the old vocal *ǰ had its own development. Behind the labial consonants on the total territory the old vocal *ǰ changed into /y/ while behind the dental consonants it changed into the sequence /лǎ/ (the consonant component was preserved, and behind it a dark vowel developed which took the syllable function). This expression is noted firstly at the end of the 14th century (Koneski 1967: 43). According to our material the old vocal *ǰ into the sequence /лǎ/ behind dental consonants in the following lexemes: *дл'абок/-а/-о, дл'абок'и, дл'абина, (по)дл'ак, (по)дл'ага/-о, дл'аг'и, дл'аг'иве/-не/-те, најдл'аг'иот, дл'ажина, сл'абина, сл'абинка 'јоргован', сл'абица/-е, сл'апка/-е, сл'аза/-е, сл'анце, сл'анчоглед, тл'аче, тл'ачемо, тл'ачник*. Replacement of the old vocal *ǰ in the sequence /лǎ/ is noticed in Dolnovardarski speeches.

The vocal *ǰ in city Tetovo's speech changed into the sequence /ǎp/ in limited number of lexemes. For example: *в'арже, в'арти, в'арчи* 'big carafe in which relish or grease is being kept', *в'арша, г'аркл'ан, д'арво* (и *д'во*), *д'арцаја, зав'аршуге, изд'аржавау, к'арбла* „a wooden jug for string wine“, *к'аркори, п'арслуче, п'арут, поц'арвенеф, т'арља, т'армкина*. Stamatoski

(1956: 231) lists several lexemes where the vowel /p/ appears in the beginning of the word and before it a certain vowel element is developed: 'ǎñж, 'ǎñ'a, 'ǎñm, 'ǎñmajица, 'ǎñбem etc. In our material, besides the noted lexemes, we've also noted the lexemes: 'ǎñскајца, 'ǎñжен. Seliscev gives examples when /ǎ/ is located behind /p/ in the following lexemes: нр'ǎстен, нр'ǎво, др'ǎу ce. But, we elicit that the examples given by Seliscev weren't met in our material about city Tetovo's speech. Replacement for the vocal *ǎ with the sequence /pǎ/ is noted in Dolnovardarski speeches.

REDUCTION OF THE /A/ IN CITY TETOVO'S SPEECH

Reduction or as some authors like to call it darkening, is a change in the pronunciation of the wide vowels *a, e, o* when with some degree they get closer to the pronunciation of the narrow vowels *ǎ, u, y* or totally transform into them. This phenomena is connected with the accent, to be more precise with the character of the accent – there is a reduction in the languages with a dynamic accent when while pronouncing of the sounds the voice organs are more relaxed. The presence of the dynamic accent usually does not signify a presence of reduction by all means. The general opinion of the linguistics related with the reduction of the vowels in the western Macedonian speeches and that this kind of phenomena wasn't a case for this speech. They call on the fact that there isn't a trace of reduction in the Slovenian linguistic borrowing in the Albanian language (Koneski 1967: 35). In the south-east Macedonian idiom the accent is not standing on a certain syllable but it usually occurs in one of the last three syllables of the word. Concerning the pronunciation of the non accented syllables, there are speeches in the north-east with temperately reduction, and speeches in the south-east in which the reduction is strongly expressed and even an often elision of the vowels. In Kostursko-Lerin speeches, as a transmit wire between these two idioms, a reduction was not done.

Still, reduction is an old phenomenon. The texts from the 13th century testify that reduction was a known thing even then. The reduction could have appeared after the change of the nasal $\varphi > \check{a} > a$. Large number of linguistics expressed their own opinion about the existence, the distribution and the degree of the reduction of the vowels in the Macedonian dialects, separately.

The reduction in the city Tetovo's speech is known as a phenomenon. When we talk about the reduction in city Tetovo's speech, there is a shortening of the duration of articulation of the vowel /a/, i.e. we are speaking about

quantitative reduction. It only contracts the low, open vowels. As a final result of the reduction there is a neutralization between the low vowel and its high correlate, which means that /a/ > /ǎ/.

The degree of reduction depends on various factors: from the character of the following syllable, to its morphological function, the rhythm of speaking, sometimes even from the stylistic stress of the relative vowel. From the material which we gathered from the field, according to the *Questionnaire for gathering material for the Macedonian dialectic atlas* by Bozidar Vidoeski, according to the stories of some old Tetovo inhabitants in their free speech, according to the two books of drama texts published by the old Tetovo inhabitant Jovan Damjanovski, the small booklet of Simeon Zlatev-Mone and according to the documentary TV show with a title *Old Tetovo's songs* which was aired in 2011 on the local TV station Kiss – Tetovo, we have noted various examples of reduction on which we are going to pay more attention further on in this paperwork.

In limited number of lexemes the vowel /a/ in a contact with a nasal gave a sound with semi-loud value which equaled with /ǎ/. The darkening which is noticeable in some lexemes is a result of nasalization in the group *vowel + nasal* as a system issue and their joined destiny in the replacement of /a/ in the inter-linguistic dark vowel /ǎ/. According to some linguistics the sound /ǎ/ should be considered as a characteristic of the Balkan's languages, i.e. as a sound which has developed in them not without mutual growth of their sound systems. This sound is present in the Albanian as well as in the Romanian language, same in the Bulgarian and south-east Serbian speeches (Koneski 1967: 31). Reduction of the vowel in city Tetovo's speech is happening in the syllable under the accent in the following lexemes: *з'нǎм, т'ǎмјан*. Under the influence of the nasal sonants /м, н/, the vowel /a/ was nasalized and in the last south-east speeches (Sushko-visocki, Lagadinski, Serski, Drama, Ziljahovski and Gocedelcev speech) which closely verge with Bulgarian-Rodopic dialects. Change in the vowel /a/ in the dark vowel /ǎ/ we notice in the group *nasal + vowel* as well. For example: *з'нǎш, кǎн'ǎвǎца 'постава', м'ǎцие, н'ǎпраев, петн'ǎесе, сам'ǎрцие, сн'ǎга/-е, Чǎн'ǎковци*.

In our material in the group *liquid + vowel* we have noted the following lexemes in which the vowel /a/ transforms into /ǎ/: *дл'ǎнка, изл'ǎгаа, испр'ǎтеа, испр'ǎтеие, кондур'ǎција/е, к'ир'ǎцие, окл'ǎција, упл'ǎшено, упл'ǎшиле*.

In a nearby surrounding with explosive consonants, the vowel /a/ transforms into /ǎ/ in some lexemes, when the strong phonetic influence in the articulation of the explosive consonants causes reduction of the vowel. Examples: *Алб'ǎница* (Stamatoski 1956: 221), *б'ǎнна 'удри'*, *Буг'ǎриџа* (Stamatoski 1956: 221), *Гǎрнч'ǎровци*, *Д'ǎмњан* (Stamatoski 1956: 221), *к'ǎџка*, *г'-изисџ'ǎџка*, *изиск'ǎџкуе*, *кашк'ǎвали*, *клен'ǎлото*, *оглед'ǎлото*, *од'ǎнуеш*, *ок'ǎпаја (до ниедно време)*, *ост'ǎнуе*, *офтик'ǎџлија*, *пок'ǎзалец*, *пон'ǎруе*, *сп'ǎла*, *џеб'ǎница 'the front part of the leg'*, *Џамб'ǎзовци*.

The reduced /a/ under the accent has a pronunciation as the phoneme /ǎ/ in some lexemes in the nearby surrounding with the fricative/affricative consonants. Examples: *з'ǎмба 'bigger nails'*, *с'ǎвнем*, *изв'ǎдиџа*, *јуж'ǎрлокот*, *каз'ǎнција*, *раз'ǎпнати*, *с'ǎмо*, *стǎрз'ǎмǎнски*, *ч'ǎс*.

In the following examples a reduced /ǎ/ can be noticed in the accent intactments: *'ǎџен-лен*, *дост'ǎ-ми-е*, *ен-гл'ǎс*, *јар'ǎм-капут*, *к'ǎј-било* (Stamatoski 1957: 106), *к'ǎј-да-е* (Stamatoski 1957: 106), *к'ǎрс-ноге*, *крив'ǎ-ишија*, *мајчин'ǎ-куќа*, *мал'ǎ-душа*, *(преседа) н'ǎ-ноге*, *ов'ǎ-дете* (Stamatoski 1956: 220), *пост'ǎр-чоек*, *путн'ǎ-врата* (Stamatoski 1956: 220), *сагл'ǎм-чоек*, *Свет'ǎ-Петка*, *стар'ǎ-жена*, *старат'ǎ-куќа*.

Turkish language played an important part related to the usage of the reduced /ǎ/ in the system. The darkening of the reduced /ǎ/ was under Turkish influence in the beginnings of the 20th century. Large number of linguistic borrowings contain this sound, so the imitation of the Turkish pronunciation became a prestige which appeared in the speech of the city population in purpose to be distinguished from the village one. Therefore, in the Turkish borrowings of this speech, the dark sound is used in numerous examples: *б'ǎш*, *ј'ǎнлаш*, *к'ǎсканлок 'jealousy, envy'*, *к'ǎсмет*, *нал'ǎнцие*, *окл'ǎџија*, *с'ǎкǎлма*, *сǎнд'ǎлија 'chair'*, *с'ǎл*, *сар'ǎлија*, *с'ǎнким 'actually'*, *с'ǎрак 'stick for picking nuts'*, *т'ǎмǎм*, *куш'ǎџлио*, *ф'ǎстан*, *уџ'ǎриња* (it is different in the central speeches where the dark Turkish sound consistently subjects to a replacement with un-reduced vowel: *аџ'амилок*, *к'ана*, *ј'анлаш*, *окл'аџија*, *с'акалма*).

In the city Tetovo's speech we've met more closed pronunciation of the phoneme /a/ in non-accented syllables in the following examples: *Б'угǎрин* (Stamatoski 1956: 220), *клен'ǎло* (Stamatoski 1956: 220), *м'ǎгǎре* (Stamatoski 1956: 220), *мǎг'ǎрето*, *мǎг'ǎрица*, *н'ǎдимǎк*, *нǎд'имǎкот*, *'облǎџи* (Stamatoski 1956: 220), *огл'едǎло* (Stamatoski 1956: 220), *с'акǎш*. N.Siljanov gives examples of the kind: *к'укǎџа*, *р'укǎџа*, *'убǎџа* (according to Stamatoski 1956: 220).

SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROACH

From sociolinguistic aspect, it can be said that the reduced /ǎ/ is a characteristic of the city speeches, i.e. on a sociological level there is a distinction of the city speech from the village one. This phenomenon is expressed by Bozidar Vidoeski in his paperwork devoted to the *Social factor in the differentiation of the Macedonian speeches* where he points out: “The social differentiation as a factor for dialect differentiation in Macedonia can well be observed through two examples: a) in the relation of the speech between the city and the village and b) in the relations of the speech between the Macedonian orthodox population and the Islamized one... (Vidoeski 1998: 123). Let’s continue with the connotations of the old inhabitants of Tetovo who say for themselves that are stingy while interpreting the vowels and shorten them in their length. Macedonian language itself doesn’t have that kind of direction of development to reduce the vowels under accent. What is specific in the pronunciation of the city Tetovo’s speech is the exact reducing of /a/ under accent in the direction of /ǎ/. This kind of phenomenon can only be found in the city speeches of Tetovo and Ohrid and nowhere else. In both of the speeches the vowel /ǎ/ is a part of their vocal system and as a reflex to our old sounds (v. Vidoeski 1998: 158, 247) and as a result of a reduction, and to be precise for the city Tetovo’s speech many examples showed it through a large number of lexemes which we wrote down and which point out the vowel /ǎ/ is more usual in the colloquial conversations of the people from Tetovo.

The young people are a sociological group which is a subject to the impact of the use of literary lingual norm, on the one hand and on the other hand, in their friendly circle they nurture and use their native language or the dialect. Among them is reflected perhaps the most realistic picture of the situation today of the city Tetovo’s speech. Time has shown that it is the language, even as an idiom that is the element which is the hardest to sacrifice, because it stores and contains many historical, spiritual, ideological, emotional and other specificities and features of each one, whether a macro or a micro sociological group (Korubin 1980: 82). The reduction which has already been processed by famous linguists back in the fifties of the last century, now we review from the modern aspect in the language of young people from Tetovo and we notice treasuring the dialectal features, especially in terms of

preservation of the pronunciation of the reduced /ǎ/ under accent in certain lexemes in order to draw a distinction of the city from the rural speech.

The description of the city Tetovo's speech so far was based on source materials gathered for the last time around sixty years ago. Considering the time distance, the fact that there is a seventy year gap till the standardization of the Macedonian language, our purpose is to see the condition of the city Tetovo's speech today, in this situation of phonetic notch, but in our further researches on other language notches as well. Certainly, we have considered all the other changes which have occurred in this past period, the migration from the villages to the cities, the change of the ethnical and social structure in the city, the Macedonian-Albanian bilingualism, the influence which comes from the outside like the influence of the English language etc.

CONCLUSION

From our research we can conclude that, although the city Tetovo's speech suffered significant changes in its structure and its status in society, some phonetic features such as pronunciation of the reduced /ǎ/ under accent is still well kept. The changes that the Tetovo dialect endures today due to the influx of "rural" words with the intense migration village-city, with the surge of foreign words (mostly English) as well as interference with the Albanian language, has greatly reduced the number of speakers who use the typical city Tetovo's speech. However, our research has shown that young people from Tetovo who consider themselves as residents of the city Tetovo, nicely keep and nurture the pronunciation of the reduced /ǎ/ under accent. This means that the city Tetovo's speech persists with its essential features in this 21st century, and each new dialectological research only contributes to detect not only the characteristics of the Tetovo speech, but also to ascertain the reasons of its changes of sociolinguistic nature.

LIST OF INFORMANTS

Branka Gjorgjeska, born 1940
Verica Ivanovska, born 1941
Vladimir Bojadzieski, born 1936
Vukashin Anoski-Vuke, born 1937
Gordana Jancheska, born 1941

Darko Gavrovski-Gavro, born 1977
Dimitrija Gjorcheski, born 1934
Gjorgji Tevdoski, born 1931
Gjurgjica Manojlova, born 1939
Jovan Gjorgjeski-Karo born 1947
Menka Bozhinoska, born 1933
Mino Spiroski-Spiric, born 1945
Mira Kirovska, born 1956
Mirjana Siljanoska, born 1941
Mirjana Tevdoska, born 1935

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