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Regional connotations in the school environments in Deçan

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Abstract. This research belongs to the field of sociolinguistic, trying to bring linguistic changes in relation to society and emphasising the power of sociolinguistic factors in the appearance of these changes. The object of this study are the lectures of some teachers with special word stress, and some regional connotations which came out during this process. The gathering of material to conduct this research was made in the school environments in Deçan, during teaching hours while maintaining the adherence of the research, therefore this has brought out the real state of Albanian language in those environments. The work has been done drawing out only dialectal forms which we have noticed during the lecture of subjects, which we have analyzed in the phonetic aspect and in morphological aspect, comparing them with standardized forms. Phonetic analysis involve word review in the vowel and consonant system, vowel groups and consonant groups, and some more highlighted phonetic occurrences. The results have proved that the traditional speech does not disappear without leaving its trace despite the rise in the standard language level. The purpose of this research is to identify and analyze the regional connotations in the lectures of the teachers in the school environments in Deçan. Within this paperwork we will see some dialectal forms which remained in use. The identification and gathering of the material was done by participating as an observer in teaching hours of the teachers, always, not telling them the true purpose of our presence, so that we could get the material in the most natural way. While gathering the material we have used technical tools to record teachers voice. The collected material is used to highlight the regional connotations, on the other hand for their theoretical explanation we used the literature in the field of sociolinguistic.

Keywords. lecture, connotation (nuance), standardized form, phonetic analysis

Language as a social phenomenon

According to the “*Fjalori i termave dhe nocioneve linguistike*” (*The dictionary of linguistic terms and notions*) by the well known scholar Qemail Murati, with the term *connotation* we understand: a special meaning of the word, a thinner meaning that a word gets or an expression in a particular use or field, a shadow, a nuance, a meaningful coloration, a stylistic approach¹. Beyond this meaning of the word connotation, in this form, with provincial(regional) connotation we will show everything that comes out of the Albanian language standard, whether they are in the field of: phonetics, morphology, vocabulary or dialectology. Language as a sign system that is used for communication between people, is a social production. It is the main link between individual and society. This connection is so

¹ Q. Murati, *Fjalori të termave dhe nocioneve linguistike*, ITKSHSH, Shkup 2017, f. 121.

powerful that without it we can not even think about the birth and existence of the human society, also, we can not think of the life of language out of society. The language changes in three aspects: in the time aspect (diachronic), in the space aspect, in social aspect².

According to R. Memushaj, in the historical aspect the language is overlooked by historical language, which deals with the study of language development, with the explanation of the way how languages change from an era to another, as well as the internal and external causes of these changes³.

Dialectology deals with the study of language in the space aspect. Even the terms are known as: *linguistic geography*, *linguistic atlas*, *provincial(regional) dictionary*, etc. The well known dialectologists such as J. Gjinari and Gj. Shkurtaj while emphasising the role of knowledge about dialectology in linguistic developments would say: “ Just like in any other language, in Albanian language, too, from the changes that the language has undergone time after time in different regions, it happens that today exist two dialects, each of them with two sub-dialects and with speech groups of different scales⁴”.

The subjects that are the contemplation of this study are native speakers of gheg, respectively, they belong to the area of Deçan with its surroundings, who belong to the group of northeastern gheg speakers.

The change of language in social aspect

Apart from changing in time and space aspect, language changes in social aspect too. Sociolinguistics deals with the study of language changes in social aspect, which even though for us is a new discipline has managed to study interconnections between speech and society⁵. Recently under the direction of dialectologists many studies are being conducted in the field of sociolinguistic. Within the framework of these forms are coming out some social factors which affect in the change of language , such as : **gender** (sex) , which means males from one side and females from another , then the selection in groups by **age**⁶. Although, sociolinguistics was not yet defined as a discipline on its own, our scholars had noticed linguistic changes in sociolinguistic aspect. Here we can mention Eqrem Qabej with the study about *womanlike talks*, or Q. Haxhihasani for *hidden talks*. Early in sociolinguistics, then even in linguistics, linguistic differences between poor and rich people were discussed, or between high **elite classes** and **low classes**. The characteristics that individualize the classes can be of any kind, like: *fortune, education, schooling, profession or skill, involvement in political power and social elite classes*⁷. Some linguistic changes come out because of **religious beliefs** and **the place** were the lecture process is done. On this principle the first dialectological researches have begun in Europe. We can mention here, the research about “The Rosary of the Sunday”, as a correspondence survey conducted in France⁸.

When we talk about such division of language after the place and circumstances, we surely remember the theory of sociolinguistic research by J. Fishman. *Who talks? What variant?*

² R. Memushaj, *Hyrje në gjuhësi të përgjithshme*, Toena, Tiranë, 2008 f. 289

³ R. Memushaj, *Hyrje në gjuhësi të përgjithshme* f. 14

⁴ J.Gjinari, Gj. Shkurtaj, *Dialektologji*, Tiranë, 2003 f. 151

⁵ Gj. Shkurtaj, *Sociolinguistikë e gjuhës shqipe*, Morava, Tiranë, 2009 f. 18

⁶ Gj. Shkurtaj, *Sociolinguistikë e gjuhës shqipe*, f. 115

⁷ Gj. Shkurtaj, *po aty*, f. 122

⁸ J.Gjinari, Gj. Shkurtaj, *Dialektologjia*, SHBLU, Tiranë 2003, f. 79

*Of which language? When? For what? To whom?*⁹, which makes us think about the language separated in varieties. The term variety is explained by Q. Murati, as a noticeable difference in the way of the use of language in society. He thinks that a language is not used in the same way even inside of a homogeneous group¹⁰. A language is nothing else but a variety of varieties in which it appears. A *low variety* of language was distinguished, which belongs to certain regions and which is implemented in informal situations, for example: in conversations with friends and relatives, within the family and kinship, whereas a *high variety*, is the one which extends to the entire territory of linguistic community and is used in formal situations, for example: in public institutions, in TV and radio news, in literature, in political conversations, etc. Therefore, having in mind that the refined variety has a higher prestige, the individual himself, whenever is found in formal situations tries to pull over the low variety, that makes him go from one language code to another. However, he will be a little discernible and will show regional nuances when he tries to speak in the standard language, because the traditional local language, as Gj. Shkurtaç would say, does not disappear without any trace. The scale of the acquisition of the literary language, practically, becomes an indicator that proves the level of our culture in general¹¹. The beginning of the formation of the linguistic culture starts with the beginning of the school. There one meets for the first time the standard language. The teacher should own standard language as an educated person, or because he/she is in an institution where standard language has to be used, and except these he or she is a model to his/her students.

Going on with this approach, we are about to bring on some evidences that traditional speech does not disappear without trace, during school measurements, respectively in the speech of five teachers of that school that we observed, the regional connotations in their speech in the field of phonetics have been evidenced.

Dialectal forms that have been noticed in the phonetic field in the subjects we have observed are listed below.

Vowel a. While in standard language we can only have one vowel **a**, in the lecturing of the teachers we have noticed the nuances from the region which they are from. This causes the vowel **a** to appear in different variants depending on the sounds that surround it. So, vowel **a** comes out as long, short and nasal vowel. We have noticed regional nuance in the words: *dhâ°n, kâ°m, â°nt, bâ°ni, zâ°, çâ°nt, â°ndërr* (give, have, side, did, voice, bad, dream) for standardized forms *dhënë, kam, anët, bëri, zë, çantë, ëndërr*. In all these cases the vowel **a** has such a large measure of buzz timbre, and gives you an impression that is pronounced as **o**¹².

In the area which those subjects belong, just as in the speech of northwestern gheg, short **a**, comes out as **æ** (closed front **a**, which comes close to an open **e**¹³, as in the word “*span*” in English), this variant has been noticed to the subjects in words: *nælt* “*lart*”, *asæj* “*asaj*” (up, hers). If we compare them with the evidence of DAAL (Dialectological atlas of Albanian language), the results presented for this point 32 are in line with the findings on that location¹⁴.

Vowel e. According to phonetic rules, vowel **e** is pronounced with an average opening of mouth. Lips do not participate in the knot, nor do they stretch, nor are they rounded up, nor do they turn aside. The tongue body moves forward, just like at vowel **i**, so that the faring space

⁹Gj. Shkurtaç, *Sociolinguistikë e gjuhës shqipe*, f. 22

¹⁰Q. Murati, *po aty*, f. 176

¹¹Gj. Shkurtaç, *Kultura e gjuhës*, SHBLU, Tiranë, 2006

¹²J. Gjinari, Gj. Shkurtaç, *Dialektologji*, Tiranë, 2003 f. 187

¹³J. Gjinari, Gj. Shkurtaç, *po aty*, f. 187

¹⁴ADGJSH, Napoli 2007, f. 85

is expanded. The top of the tongue is lowered and touches the lower teeth. The middle part of the back of the tongue rises moderately to the strongest palate¹⁵. During the research, we have noticed that there are nuances in pronunciation of this phoneme. When it is in front of nasal consonants it takes nasal timbre and is pronounced as the most open one, for example: *rêni, shênull, zêmër, i dêndur, dhêmbje, êmri, nxêrri, lêni, e êjte, nêrvi, mêsm, çêni, vêni etj. // merne ni shêmbull*// (order, example, heart, thick, pain, name, take it out, leave it, Thursday, nerve, lesson, dog, place, etc.). We have checked the map 1.b of DAAL for this vowel too, and the resulting data on that map are the same with the findings in this research.

We have also encountered some shifts from vowel **e** to vowel **i**, for example to the sentences: *p.sh s'ki gabu, kini qef, a ini tuj kuptu, viç pak ma çetsi, n'kit rast* (you didn't do it wrong, you wish, do you understand, just be more quiet, in this case).

Vowel i. In the standard language we have only one vowel **i**. This vowel in Deçan's speech as in many northeastern speeches is nasal and verbal and is heard in two series: long and short, vowel **i** comes out long just like in Rahovec's speech¹⁶, in the case when it replaces vowel **y**, for example: we have heard the word *hi "hyj"*. Vowel **i** in some cases has come out replaced with vowel **e**, for example to the words: *gjethmon, gjethkush* instead of *gjithmonë, gjithkush* (forever, anyone).

Vowel y. This one is pronounced with a small opening of the mouth. Lips here participate in nodding, they stretch and round off more than all buzzed vowels. The tongue body moves forward, so that the faring space is expanded. The front and the middle of the back of the tongue rise to the strongest palate¹⁷. Here we are pointing out the nuances we have observed in turning this vowel into the vowel **u**, for example to the word *musafir "mysafir" // sod kemi musafir*// (guest).

Vowel ë. (Which is the 8th letter of the Albanian alphabet and represents the vowel /ɛ/. It is the most commonly used letter of the language comprising 10 percent of all writings). Vowel **ë** has not been heard in any position during the teaching of the teachers we have studied. For example to the words: *msimi, popullsis, çetsi, matmatik, smundje, Kosovs, blegtoris, mnyr /mësimi, popullsisë, qetësi, matematikë, sëmundje, Kosovës, blegtorisë, mënyrë/*, (teaching, population, silence, math, illness, of Kosovo, of farming, way).

Vowels group ue, ye, ie, and je. In the area of Deçan with surroundings as in other speeches of northern gheg the groups of vowels **ue, ye, ie**, have become monophthongs, saving the only element of the first vowel. This distinct regional connotation is preserved in the lectures of the teachers at the institution we did the research. The **Group ue** respectively **group ua** of standard language have become monophthongs in all the cases of its use that we have heard. For example to the words: *kalut, janë lajmru, shenum, kuptum, kemi msu, msus etj. //si kaluat, janë lajmëruar, shenuam, kuptuam, kemi mësuar, mësuës*// (passed, are notified, mark, understand, we have learned, teacher, etc). **Group ye** in the words like: *kemi kryer, pyes, kryerresht*, group **ye** has become monophthong in their first vowel ex: *kemi kry, pys, kryerresht // delni n'kryerresht*// (have done, ask, headline).

Group ie and je. Even this group of vowels has been heard as **i**, for example: *// dhet prind // nxerrni librat*// (ten parents, get the book out).

Even the data of DAAL in maps : 51.a , 51.b , 51.c ,52 , 53.a , 53.b , 54.a ,54.c|1 , 54.c|2 , 55.a , 55.b , 56 , are in line with their situation today in Deçan s speech.

¹⁵ A. Dodi, *Fonetika dhe fonologjia e gjuhës shqipe*, ASHSH, Tiranë, 2004 f. 44

¹⁶ F. Dulaj, Shih: F.Dulaj, *E folmja e Rahovecit me rrethinë*, IAP, 2016 f. 90

¹⁷ A. Dodi , *poaty*, f. 41

The system of consonants

In the speech of Deçan with its surroundings as in the whole gheg dialect, in the consonants system dialectal differences are less than in the vowels system. Most variations appear in phonetic composition of words, whereas differences in phonetic variants of consonant phonemes almost don't exist at all. Some differences have also emerged in the lectures of the teachers in the study.

Phonemes d and t. These two consonants are well preserved in the speech of Deçan with its surroundings and as such don't show any difference to the standard language. However, in some cases happens the sonorization of the consonant **t**, for example in the adverb *sot-sod // sod e kem ata me e msu//* (today, today we have to learn that)

Phonemes ç and xh. The phonemes **ç** and **xh** are also stored and are different from each other. During the measurements we have noticed that regional connotations appear in some cases of their joining, instead of the consonant **ç** comes out the consonant **xh**, ex: *xhdo- çdo*, or **sh**, ex: *çka- shka, dishka- diçka* (every, what, something).

Phonemes gj and q. In the area where these subjects belong, not even these consonants are heard. Instead of them there come out the consonants **ç** and **xh**. So, this dialectal pattern has emerged in all cases of their use by the speakers in question, for phoneme **gj**, for example to the words: *xhethi, xhithshka*, while for phoneme **q**, ex: *bujçsi, liçej, ushçyse, çeni, çymyri* (everything, leaf, agriculture, lake, feed, dog, coal).

Phoneme nj. It appears in all the words that have in their phonemic composition this consonant, for example: *njohuri, njesi* (knowledge, unit). In some cases we have heard reduced consonant **nj** in **j**, for example: *shej "shenj", e ejte "e enjte"* (sign, Thursday). To the words *një, njëfar, njëherë, asnjë* (one, a kind of, once, none,) the consonant **nj** has given the group **ni**, for example: *ni, nifar, niher, asni*.

Phonemes s and z. These two phonemes follow the nodding path as well as the Albanian standard language, they are different on the basis of opposing of loudness. Particle **s** when is in the front of a loud consonant is converted to **z** for example: *z'don, z'duhet* (don't want, shouldn't happened). In some words instead of the consonant **z** we have heard the consonant **x** for example: *xerro, kallxoj, nxâ°* (zero, tell, catch).

Phoneme h. In the speech of Deçan with its surroundings, just like in the whole northeastern gheg, **h** is poorly heard. In some cases, especially in the beginning of the word, but even in the middle is not heard at all. Even in the speakers' lecture in the study, we have encountered connotations from the regions they belong to. The consonant **h** wasn't heard in these words: *ma let, nxet, Fari, m'u shpre, ktheu* (easier, hot, Fahri, to express, come back). While, in some cases ground **h** has passed to a **f** for example: *ftoft, shofim, shifne* (cold, we will see, look at it).

Consonants group mb, nd, ng

In the area which the subjects in question are concerned, the consonants group **mb, nd, ng** have been assimilated into the first consonant. They gave **m, ñ** and **ŋ**, this form has not disappeared even in the discourse of the speakers in the treatment. We noticed that these groups have been reduced in all the cases of their use, for example: *muñsi "mundësi", perëñia "perëndia", reñi "rendi", ñâ°n "nëntë", meñ "mend", ñrroni "ndërroni", pranaj "prandaj", nashta "ndoshta", shtatmdhet "shtatëmbëdhjet", kishte mytur "kishte mbytur", n'kom "në këmbë", po metni "po mbeteni", buñi "bungu"* (opportunity, God, order, nine, mind, change, therefore, maybe, seventeen, killed, in your feet).

Therefore seeing the data of DAAL, we can conclude that the consonant groups have followed the reduction path as in other northeastern gheg.

Conclusion

All at the end of this presentation I must re-emphasize that man, despite growing up, attends school, tries to speak in standard language, however, in their speech you can hear a lot of regional connotations, whether in vowels system or in consonants system, for example vowel *ë* is not heard to the words: *msimi*, *popullsis*, *çetsi*, *matmatik*, *smundje*, *Kosovs*, *blegtoris*, *mnyr* (teaching, population, silence, math, illness, of Kosovo, of farming, way). The subjects in question, the consonant groups **mb**, **nd**, and **ng** have been assimilated in the first consonant, giving **m**, **ñ** and **ŋ** this form has not disappeared even in the discourse of the speakers in the treatment. These groups have been found to be reduced in all cases of their use, for example: *muñsi* “*mundësi*”, *perëñia* “*perëndia*”, *reñi* “*rendi*”, *ñâ`n* “*nëntë*”, *meñ* “*mend*”, *ñrroni* “*ndërroni*”, *pranaj* “*prandaj*”, *nashta* “*ndoshta*”, *shtatmdhet* “*shtatëmbëdhjet*”, *kishte mytur* “*kishte mbytur*”, *n'kom* “*në këmbë*”, *po metni* “*po mbeteni*”, *buñi* “*bungu*” (opportunity, God, order, nine, mind, change, therefore, maybe, seventeen, killed, in your feet)

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