

Consonants /ś/, /ź/ and /dz/ in Language of Serdars and Gubernators Radonjić

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Abstract

The consonant system in the letters of serdars and gubernators Radonjić contain all sonant and obstruent that today literary language has. However, there aren't particular graphic signs which would be adequate to denote specific consonants, and that fact designates the imperfection of the graphic system. Occurrence of soft consonants /ś/ and /ź/ as well as affricate /dz/ that still exist in today's speech of Njeguši (Ivić, Petrović 1981:539) cannot be disputed even graphic differentiation is missing for /ś/ and /š/ (/sj/ > /ś/ /), /z/ and /ź/ (/zj/ > /ź/), and probably for /dz/ and /c/, /dz/ and /z/, i.e. for /č/. Imperfection of the graphic system for writing in 18th and the first three decades of 19th century is reflected in the terms of phoneme /dž/. There is not any special graphic character for phoneme /dž/ either (it marks with /ž/), but examples confirm its existence in the letters of Radonjići. Consonants /ś/ and /ź/ that resulted from voice alternation (new and jekavian jotovanje), exist in Montenegrin and Hercegovian vernacular. These consonants belong to system of voices of modern Montenegrin language and still exist in Montenegrin vernacular. In old Montenegrin vernaculars as well as in other Montenegrin vernaculars, consonant group /-sj/ is changing and gives phonemes /ś/ while consonant group /-zj/ gives /ź/. Presence of soft consonants /ś/ and /ź/ in vernacular of Njeguši, birth place of serdars and gubernators Radonjić, has been confirmed in the researches of Pavle Ivić and Dragoljub Petrović. Soft consonants (/ś/, /ź/) in letters of Radonjić are not marked with any with special graphic characters, but soft consonant /s(ś)/ is marked with grapheme <c>, and soft consonant /z/ is marked with two phonemes (with <3> and <h>=/d/). Phoneme /dz/ is also found in the letters of Radonjić. It has been found in lexemes generals (zenerao/) and office (/kanzalerija/), which are not marked with traditional grapheme <7>, but with grapheme <3>. Phoneme /dz/ is found in letters of bishops Visarion and Danilo, but they use tradition graphemes <7> and sometimes <3>. In letters of Radonjić as well as in the letters of bishops Visarion and Danilo it is about loanwords from Italian language, precisely Venetian dialect.

Keywords: grapheme, phoneme, sonant, obstruent, vernacular, affricates, speech, jotovanje, lexeme, language

The consonant system in the letters of (serdars and gubernators) Radonjić contain all sonant and obstruent that today Montenegrin standard language has. Occurrence of soft consonants /ś/ and /ź/ as well as affricate /dz/ that still exist in today's speech of Njeguši (Ivić, Petrović 1981:539), cannot be disputed even graphic differentiation is missing for /ś/ and /š/ (/sj/ > /ś/), /z/ and /ź/ (/zj/ > /ź/), and probably for /dz/ and /c/, /dz/ and /z/, i.e. for /č/. Phoneme /dž/ was reflecting imperfection of the graphic system for writing in the time serdars and gubernators Radonjić lived and worked (18th and the first three decades of 19th century). Thus, special graphic character for phoneme /dž/ (marked with /ž/) was missing, but certain examples confirm its occurrence in the letters of Radonjić. Having in mind facts given above, consonant system in the letters of Radonjić could be presented as follows:

- a) sonant: /v/, /m/, /r/, /l/, /n/, /j/, /lj/, /nj/;
- b) obstruent: /b/, /g/, /d/, /đ/, /z/, /dž/, /p/, /k/, /ć/, /š/, /s/, /č/, /f/, /h/, /c/, /t/, /ś/, /ź/ and /dz/.

Consonants /ś/ and /ź/ that are resulted from voice alternation (new and jekavian jotovanje), even today exist in Montenegrin and Hercegovian ijekavian vernacular. These consonants "that are usually named as softened /s/, /z/ or soft /ś/, /ź/" (citation from Stevanović 1964:133) belong to the system of voices of modern Montenegrin language and exist in Montenegrin vernacular. Consonant group /-sj/ is changing (jotovanje) and gives phonemes /ś/ while consonant group /-zj/ gives /ź/ in the speeches of following areas Srednjokatunska area, Lješanska area, Crmnica, Njeguši and other areas researched for Montenegrin speeches (Pešikan 1965:110; Miletic 1940:344; Ivić, Petrović 1981:540). Researches of P. Ivić and D. Petrović (Ivić, Petrović 1981: 537-540) confirmed presence of softened phoneme /ś/, /ź/ in the speech of Njeguši area that is birthplace of Radonjić.

Softened consonants (/ś/, /ź/) in the letters of Radonjić were not marked with a specific graphic signs, but softened /s(ś)/ was marked with grapheme <c>, and /z/ with two graphemes (with <3> and <h> = /d/). Having in mind that dialectological researches confirmed existence of softened consonants /ś/, /ź/ in the speech of Njeguši area, as well as fact that jotovanje of these consonants is remarkable dialect feature in both Montenegrin and Hercegovian speeches (Pešikan 1965:110; Miletic 1940:344; Vušović 1927:17) same as it is language of Bishop Danilo (Mladenović 1973:101), it can be concluded that the jotovanje took place in following jekavian forms:

šedočeno (SP24)¹, **šešet** (SP40), **šetovao** (SP41); **izeli** (VIP17), **užahao** (SP31). (meaning: witnessing (SP24), seating (SP40), advising (SP41), eaten (VIP 17), riding (SP31))

In the examples given above jotovanje has been done for /-sj/ > /š/, /-zj/ > /ž/ that is typical for southern type speeches. "As it is known, in the speeches of southern type, following voices are developed /š/ and /ž/, i.e. soft /s/ and /z/ which could be found in our voices /ć/ and /đ/ as their fricative part. Hence it came easy pronounce /ž/ as [dž] while its explosive part (high /d/) is very weak" (citation Belic 1999a: 357). Claims of well reputable linguist are in the direction that in the case /užahao/ (riding) pronunciation could be even with [dž] instead of [ž] that is again obtained by jotovanje of the group /-zj/. However, in this case of consonant jotovanje was in [ž], as it is registered in the dialectal basis. In the letters of Radonjić and Bishop Danilo as well, fluctuations in their scribe writing have been pointed out for same, but much wider geographical area.

In the letters of Radonjić, phoneme /dz/ in lexemes /zenerao/ and /kanzalerija/ have been registered that were not marked with traditional grapheme <7>, but with grapheme <3>. Phoneme /dz/ has been recorded in the letters of Bishops Visarion and Danilo, except in the cases they use traditional grapheme <7> and sometimes <3>. Also, in all letters of Radonjić and Bishops Visarion and Danilo registered phonemes are regarding foreign words from the Italian language (Mladenovic 1973:93-94; 1977:11-12).

Radonjić, as other Montenegrin Bishops, have been writing title of Venetian governor general for Dalmatia with <3> / zenerao / (venetian zenerale), while for office they sometimes used <3> kanzalerija, and more rare with <4> /kančelarijal that also proves following examples **e ćemo doć i učinit pismo po kandzaleriji** (JP8); **kako piše u kančelariju** (SP34) (meaning: because we'll come in and make letter throughout the office (JP8); as written in the office (SP34)).

Certainly, Radonjić have done writing /zenerao/ by Venetian influence. Pronunciation of the beginning part [dze-] of this word in Venetian speech has been undoubtedly known to Radonjić that regularly used it in writing. So, lexemes /zenerao/ and /kanzalerija/ apparently were pronounced in the spirit of Venetian dialect and had a value that is in pronunciation close to the [dz]. In the cases that register /kančelarijal, we can see the attempts of scribe writers of these letters to apply graphic sign for this phoneme that was, according to their linguistic sense, closest to the original pronunciation. In this case, the graphic sign was grapheme <4>. In the cases of this kind, where we can assume presence of affricates, use of lexemes could be included, as it is lexeme /spenza/ originally taken from the Italian language. In the letters of Bishop Danilo this lexeme has been registered in the form <3>, but also in our old monuments as <đ3> /spendza/, in the speeches of Dubrovnik and the Bay of Kotor (Mladenović 1973: 93-94; 1977: 11 -12; Brajković 1893: 6; Musić 1972: 224).

Adoption of these loanwords that are obviously "domesticated" in the language of Radonjić (and Njeguši area), because they recorded these words solely with phoneme /c/ (/spenca/) that was phonologically closest, from the aspect of people's speech, to the Venetian pronunciation [dz]. Radonjić, therefore, in this example, consistently implementing trans-phoneme-sation of /dz/ in /c/ in the writing: **toliko im ljudi šiljao s mojijem spencama** (SP20) (meaning: so many people sent with my financial means).

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¹All of the examples are from PhD thesis Krivokapić, Miloš (2009): *Jezik u pismima serdara i guvernadura Radonjića* (Language in the letters of serdars and guvernadours of Radonjić family), Univerzitet u Novom Sadu.

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