



## INCLUSIVE OVERVIEW ON ISTOG'S LINGUISTIC AREAL

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### Abstract:

In this paper, I treated inclusive overview on Istog's linguistic areal. Observed linguistic areal, contains material of interest for inter-linguistic contemplation and comparison, because this speech, like many Albanian speeches, in the stream of time, in contact with Turkish, Serbian and other languages, has built borrowing reports with these languages. On the other hand, borrowings from Slavic and Turkish language, have offered the opportunity to benefit new lexical units, thanks to the presence of many word-forming tools, particularly suffixes. However, in the phonetic system, morphological and syntactic of the observed linguistic areal, the impact of these languages has not been powerful so much. Collecting dialectic materials from Istog with surroundings, systematization and their analyses represents a documentation that enables the reconstruction of the history of the Albanian language in these areas, so this activity is of particular importance.

**Keywords:** Istog with surroundings, phonetics, lingual borrowings, word formation, Podgur area, dialectology

### 1. Introduction

Istog's linguistic areal lies in the north-western Kosovo and the main administrative center (municipal center) is Istog, which in the northeast borders with the municipality of Zubin Potok, in the east with the municipality of Skenderaj, in the south with Klina, in the south west and west borders with the Municipality of Peja, while in the northern part with Montenegro (Municipality of Rozaje) and with Serbia (Sanxhak - Municipality of Tutin). The first authors who dealt with the study of folklore and language of Istog region is Vuk Karaxhiq, who in 1830 made the collection of some folk songs from Gurrakoc, where he made a linguistic summary study on this speech. Later, in 1912, the researcher Norbert Jokl, on the basis of Karaxhiq materials, published in Vienna his first

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study on the Albanian language of the residents of Gjurakovc - Gurrakoc (Group of authors 1973:702). Years later, Istog Territory, from different aspects and perspectives (geographical, historical, ethnographic, and onomastic) as well as any treatise on any particular habitat, is treated by these authors and on these publications: Gliša Elezović, *Rečnik kosovsko-metohijskog dijalekta*, Beograd, 1932; Halil Kajtazi, *Disa emra toponimesh në shqipet*, "Perparimi," 3/1965; Halil Kajtazi, *Disa emra toponimesh*, "Perparimi," 5/1968; Ismail Berisha, *Banja (Ilixha) afër Pejës*, 1972; Group of authors, *Kosova dikur e sot*, Beograd, 1973; Svetozar Stijević, *Onomastika jednog dela Metohijskog Podgora*, SANU, Onomatološki prilozi I, Beograd, 1979; Milovan Radovanović, *Varošica Istog u Metohijskom Podguru*, Zbornik radova Geografskog instituta, Beograd, 1979; Selami Pulaha, *Defteri i regjistrimit të Sanxhakut të Shkodrës*, vëll. I, "Mihal Duri Tiranë, 1974; Aleksandër Stipçeviq, *Ilirët-jeta-kultura*, Prishtinë, 1980; Zef Mirdita, *Antroponimia e Dardanisë në kohën romake*, "Rilindja", Prishtinë, 1981; Milica Grković, *Imena u Dečanskim hrisobuljama*, Novi Sad, 1983; Selami Pulaha, *Popullsia shqiptare e Kosovës gjatë shek. XV-XVI*, Tiranë, 1984; Svetozar Stijević, *Onomastika jednog dela porečja Kujevaće*, SANU, Onomatološki prilozi V, Beograd, 1984; Muhamet Tërnavë, *Popullsia e Kosovës gjatë shekujve XIV-XVI*, IAP., Prishtinë, 1995; Fejaz Drançolli, *Ndërtime kulturi të krishterë iliro-shqiptare*, Dardania Sacra, 2, Prishtinë, 2000; Sylë Dreshaj, *Fshtati Krye-Vrellë prej themelimit deri në vitin 1977*, Pejë, 2002; Sadik Bicaj, *Tipat dhe mënyrat e fjalëformimit në mikrotoponiminë e Istogut me disa fshatra*, në: Artikuj gjuhësorë praktikë, Prishtinë, 1996; Rrustem Rugova, *Varret e përbashkëta, Mizoritë serbe dhe qëndresa shqiptare në Rrethin e Istogut*, Prishtinë, 1997; Ukë Xhemaj, *Etnokultura shqiptare në Podgur (monografi etnologjike)*, Instituti Albanologjik, Prishtinë, 2003; Jusuf Osmani, *Vendbanimet e Kosovës- Burimi (Istogu)*, Vëll. 12, Prishtinë, 2004; Milovan Oradoviq, *Reforma agrare dhe kolonizimi në Kosovë (1918-1941)*, Instituti i Historisë, Prishtinë, 2005; Harta Arkeologjike e Kosovës II, Ministria e Kulturës, Rinisë dhe Sportit, Prishtinë, 2011; Sejdi Gashi- *Materiale leksikore nga Istogu me rrethinë (scientific project)*, Instituti Albanologjik, Prishtinë, 2014; Abdullah Zymbëri, *Fjalor popullor me rreth 20000 fjalë*, Prishtinë, 2015; Naim Berisha, *Vëzhgime në leksiko-frazeologjike në të folmet e Rrafshit të Dukagjinit*, Instituti Albanologjik, 2017.

In the aforementioned studies, where more where less, so in one form or another, has taken place observed speech, yet we think that this areal was not studied in proper way and measure.

### 1.1. On Istog and Podgur topics

The municipality of Istog is characterized by very ancient traces of residents. Archaeologists, according to research expeditions in this area, have generally asserted that this part of north-western Kosovo has been inhabited since ancient times. Regarding the etymology of Istog topic where given many opinions and many theories have been issued.

One of the researchers who has expressed his opinion on the origin of Istog topic is also linguist Qemal Murati, who says the word Istog "is derived from own name homonym" (Murati 2014: 41-42). We agree with this statement of the researcher and we

think that Istog topic is derived from an anthroponomy. Researcher Murati, name Istog compares with patronymic *Stoche* – trogirase family, *Romanus Stoche* 1259, *Marinus Stoche* 1270, *Maurus Stoche* 1272. These data researcher Murati extracts from notes of historian by Konstandin Jireček (Jireček 1962:343). So, Murati thinks that Istog toponym, by probability derives from an anthroponomy *Stoche*, who has given a patronymic with the same name, but in the case of Istog by para-installing an prosthetic – i, according to Turkish laws, like in Skopje – Yskup, Scodra-Iscodra etc. (Murati 2014: 42).

In written documents, for the first time Istog is mentioned in church Crisobule in 1314 at the time of king Stefan Uros III. In this document it is mentioned the road that leads from Istog to Bellopoje. Also, it is mentioned in the chards of king Dushan in 1348, in the sanctuary Monastery Mihail and Gabriel near Prizren.

Proof of the existence of today's topic Istog even during the Ottoman occupation in these areas is offered by The Registration Defter of Shkodra Sanxhak in 1485. In this defter, Istog appears with name *Istranmesh*, with 10 houses and 8 singles (Pulaha 1974: 300). Three centuries later, so in 1761, Istog is mentioned in the Monastery register of the Deviq (*Devički Katastig*) not as a place, but only as a river name, meanwhile as a village, Istog is mentioned in the Dictionary of Vuk Karagjiq (Elezović 1932: 343).

Meanwhile, regarding the region of Podgur, part of which is also Istog, viewed in the topographical aspect, name of Podgur appears in several forms such as: Podgora, Podgor, Metohijki Podgor (Filipović 1967: 48), Podgur of Peja and Podgur. I do not mind that the name of Podgur toponym, as geo-ethnographic area of Kosovo derives from Slavic language (pod-gora), which means the mountain range (near) region. So, Podgur means that geographical area that lies beneath the mountains. In addition, in the Istog and surrounding, regarding Podgur toponomy, there is also a folk etymology where, according to that, Podgur toponym means an area with several villages, in the land of which there is rock layer in the form of flooring. So, we have word (pod – borrowed from Slavic language – in alb. flooring) + stone = stone flooring. We believe that such an etymology has no sound scientific basis.

Therefore, we support the opinion that the Podgur toponym is labeled on the basis of Slavic language. On the other side we have to confirm the fact that all the authors who use the name Podgur, rightly have adopted this denomination even to geographical position of this region of Kosovo. Regarding Podgur toponomy in everyday life of the residents of this area, everywhere revives Podgur form, without other epithets. Equally, so Podgur, is named by the inhabitants of the surrounding regions. On the basis of Podgur topic were developed different microtoponyms as: *Lëma e Podgurit*, then *Podgur-Sokaku*, a street at the entrance of the town of Peja. As it is known, Podgur populations where given epithets, on the basis of their region, so those of other provinces, residents Podgur they call: *I podgursi, e podgursja*. eg. *I became friend with podgursit* etc.

Meanwhile, as regards other denominations that where put for Podgur region as: *Metohijski Podgor, Podgori, Peja Podgori, Peja Podguri*, I say that none of these should be used, because they are not built in the right form and there is no factual support. In the aspect of geographical and administrative definition, Podgur area extends beyond the

boundaries of the municipality of Istog, because there are included 4 more other villages, which administratively belong to the Municipality of Peja (Novosella, Radavc, Big Jabllanica and Small Jabllanica).

Podgur, according to the geographical configuration, generally is divided into two parts:

- a) plane – which includes the lower part of the valley, along the river flows and between-river fields, starting from Range and to the southern edge of the region;
- b) radius - which by the people is also known as Rranxa. This part (Rranxa) includes series of villages from Radavc to Suhogerllë at the border with the municipality of Skenderaj.

As I mentioned above, archaeological researches undertaken in this area, have provided evidence that this geographical area of Kosovo is inhabited at least since Dardan period. According to the researcher Jahja Drançolli Istog region "*preserves evidence and archaeological monuments from the early Neolithic (6000-2600 B.C.). By this time the first settlements arose as Rakosh ...*" (Drançolli 2008: 29).

Other sources that prove autochthony of the Albanians in today's Istog with surrounding are different archaeological localities that have been discovered and are being discovered meanwhile. Such "*with lineation of an ekumen important in ancient road, and inhabited by dardan population from antiquity, appears village Rakosh, mentioned in the written documentation of king Urosh I Nemanja, in 1253 - in which case he gives it to Ston Monastery near Dubrovnik*" (Xhemaj 2003: 65).

We do not see reasonable to widen further in the treatment of this theme, because it is more the duty of historians, but when dealing with the issue of being ancient and local residents of this area of Kosovo, without hesitation we can affirm that in this area of northwestern Kosovo, there is continuity (autochthony Illyrian- arbëror-Albanian) without interruption or with little interruption, from antiquity until today, because in these parts, even today are visible traces of ancient civilization proved to belong to the time of Dardan and Roma.

## **2. Some dialectal characteristics of the speech of Istog with surroundings**

Albanian spoken in Istog surrounding retains little old elements and more innovative ones, as in phonetic lexical level, as well as in morphologic level. New elements in this realm of northeast Gheg, we think are created as a result of long and continuous contact with neighboring speeches and compared with the past, we can say that this speech has undergone some dialectal changes.

Treated linguistic areal, gradually, in the course of time, has undergone some minor changes, which can be inquired. Factors such as: massive population education, attending cultural institutions, the use of literature in standard Albanian, media (newspapers, radio, TV and recently the Internet, movements of population, marriages with foreigners, the process of globalization and other factors of social and non-social nature, caused oscillation in the range of linguistic features of the district of Istog.

Every day more and more, within the region of our language, like everywhere else in Kosovo, are dying members of older generations, so, together with them are dying also linguistic wealth, which were not picked so far, however, the population of the new age, most with secondary school and university degree, considerable master and speak standard Albanian.

Their communication (youth) develop Istog speech more in informal situations and as such, this type of communication is diminished day by day, while older residents, mainly communicate in dialect (Istog idiom).

However, constant contact and relationships with other areas of Kosovo has made the linguistic realm of Istog with surroundings to have cases of mixing of linguistic codes and modification in phonetic and morphological plan, and less in syntactic plan. Such language situations are most easy visible in cases of marriages of Istog man with women who do not belong to the region of their language.

On the other hand, as it is known, modernization and changing of lifestyles, the development of means and methods on work performance in daily lives of residents of the Istog surrounding, have made that many words of the lexicon of this area to pass in inactivity, some others to undergo semantic transfer and some other, if necessary, to be borrowed or to create new words (neologisms). Therefore, today we can say that treated linguistic realm, dialectological researches, should immediately and without delay, extend more and more intensely, because once may be too late.

Below, I will briefly outline some of the phonetic features of our speech.

## 2.1. Vowels

As it is known "*phonetic units of language can be studied from various aspects and among these units, sounds occupy a special place*" (Doda 2004: 14). Since Albanian speech of the region of Istog is part of Northeastern Gheg, we can say that in general, its sound system coincides with that of these speeches.

One of the features of the phonetic system of Istog speech is nasalization (nasalization of vowels), but there are cases noted where a genuine nasal vowel is de-nasalized. Thus, in this plan, in our linguistic realm, are probed changes in nasal vowel pronunciation (*â*) and vowel (*ë*), as observed variations in the length of vowels, pronouncing the vowel clusters (diphthongs).

It should be noted that treated vowels of the linguistic areal, are the same or similar to other dialects of northern Albanian dialect (gegërishtja) exception of some cases where there are differences in the way of their pronunciation.

## 2.2. Vowel length

In linguistic areal of Istog, as in most Albanian speeches, we distinguish three vowel queues:

a) Short (e.g. *dësh, tërje:l, fërr,lög, shtëg, lăgt,măs* etc. )

In addition to these words, with short vowel we have also these forms and parts of speech:

- Front articles (*i, e, të*), e. g. *ĩ mi:r, ě mi:r, të (<të mirë)*;

- Some endings, integral part of verbal traits, such as: *lexonĩ, knojshã, hajshě, msovã, knofshĩ*;
- To some fixed part of the lecture:

Prepositions (*tě, mě,*)

Adverbs (*kãh, něr*)

Conjunctions (*dhě, ě*)

Particles (*sě, ů*)- (see also: Mulaku 2005:30).

b) Words with medium vowels (e.g. *těrjela, thěsi, fěrri, lõgu, shtõgu, lõgu, mãti* etc.)

c) Words with long vowels (e.g. *me a:rdh, me zba:rdh, sahi:, timi:t, allti:, me msu:, me knu:,* etc).

Regarding the long vowels, it is worth mentioning that in the linguistic realm of Istog, this type of vowels more commonly is found in those words which, during their historic development (evolution) has declined of any sound or syllable. Therefore, their today's form is different from the past e.g. *me tfillu:*; in some cases, *me ftillu* ( from: *met ftilluem*), *me shi:t* ( *me shitun*), *me knu:* ( *me këndumun/ me knumun/* etc.).

In this linguistic region, we have noticed that the words pronounced by stressed vowel are significantly more than those of unstressed vowel. A similar situation prevails throughout the greater part of Gheg, thus treated linguistic areal is not much different from other Gheg dialects.

### 2.3. Vowel clusters

Albanian speech in Istog and surroundings, for long time has been in contact and coexistence with Turkish and Serbian language. Therefore, such lingual contact has caused that our speech, in most cases, a diphthongs **ie**, **y**, **ae**, **oe**, and **ue** appear as monophthong.

### 2.4. Nasalization and de-nasalization of vowels

Gheg dialect, unlike Tosk, certainly contains, in addition to oral vowels also those nasal ones, so there are two rows of vowel phonemes. Such vowels (oral and nasal) enlive also in our linguistic region. As it is known, with the issue of the nasalization of vowels among Albanian speeches dealt lot of local and foreign scholars.

Albanian language of Istog, is part of northeastern Gheg and so far has maintained four nasal vowels (*â, ê, î, û* ). Nasalization in this speech is of primary and secondary type. Here are some examples: **Nâna, bâna, sâna, thâna, rrfâna, dhâmi, hû**, etc. In the given examples and others of this type, nasal vowel *â*, is presented with labialization nuance and therefore we have written it like this (*â°*).; *nâ°na, bâ°na, sâ°na, thâ°na*.

Even other nasal vowel *ê*, is pronounced with an average intensity of nasalization e.g. *flêj, těrshan, gěrshan* etc., while nasal vowel *î*, in treated speech can be observed in these words: *hî* (*hîn*), *fî*, *sinî* etc.

## 2.5. Accent movement

When it comes to the movement of accent in our treated speech, we can say that such phenomenon is expressed more in the number of words of Oriental origin (mainly Turkish) and Slavic borrowings. So, the accent is shifted from its usual place in another place in the body of the word, being adapted to the nature of the Albanian language. Such phenomenon, the movement of accent has also affected the field of toponymy and such microtoponymy e.g. *Starase:ll* (microtoponym in the mountains above the village Mojstir), *Studeni:c*, *Kashi:c* ect.

In our speech, the movement of accent from the last syllable in the penultimate is noted also in a range of words of Turkish origin, so they are paroxetine words e.g. (*híse, penxhére, dájre, xhenáze,, káfe, páre* etc.) but this does not happen in some other Albanian speeches, particularly in Tosk, in which case these words emerge with accent at the end e.g. (*hisé, penxheré, dajré, xhenazé, kafé,* etc.). In addition, some names of people, of items, etc., have undergone accent movement, so from the end accent to the penultimate accent (paroxetine), e. g. *njerí< njéri, qirí<çíri* etc. Thus, in these cases except movement of accent we have also morphological changes, so we have to do with changing of the noun from the second to the first one. On this principle, we hear syntagms: *njéri i mi:r, prej/pej njérit t' mi:r* etc. Even the personal pronoun of the third person singular (*ai*) in our speech is presented with paroxetine accent *aí<aj*, in this case the accent does not fall at the vowel (*i*), but to the vowel (*a*).

## 2.6. Consonants

Regarding consonatic system (consonantal), Istog with surroundings linguistic realm, generally corresponds to that of the entire Gheg, especially Northeastern Gheg. In this plan, the treated realm, as well as other Kosovo speeches, is distinguished by flattening palatal sounds **q** and **gj**, in affricate consonant (**ç, xh**), hereupon in palatal sounds, (middle-tongue consonants **q** and **gj**), tend to pass to front-tongue consonants **ç** and **xh** respectively in sounds: *ć* and *ğ*.

In our language area, so very clearly we distinguished sound **ŋ**, the sound that does not exist neither in standard Albanian or in Tosk realm. Phoneme **ŋ**, is obtained as a result of contraction of consonantic group **ng**. So, the sound **ŋ**, as well as in other Kosovo speeches is found to be used quite dense: *lëng< loŋ, opingë, opingë,< opân, mëngë< mâŋ, kam ngrënë< kam hânjër, jam ngujuar< jam ŋuju* etc.

## 3. Conclusions

Regarding the etymology of Istog topic where given many opinions and many theories have been issued. One of the researchers who has expressed his opinion on the origin of Istog topic is also linguist Qemal Murati, who says the word Istog "is derived from own name homonym" (Murati 2014: 41-42). We agree with this statement of the researcher and we think that Istog topic is derived from an anthroponomy. Researcher Murati, name Istog compares with patronymic *Stoche* – trogirase family, *Romanus Stoche* 1259, *Marinus Stoche* 1270, *Maurus Stochs* 1272. These data researcher Murati extracts from

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Regarding the long vowels, it is worth mentioning that in the linguistic realm of Istog, this type of vowels more commonly is found in those words which, during their historic development (evolution) has declined of any sound or syllable. Therefore, their today's form is different from the past e.g. *me tfillu;* in some cases, *me ftillu* ( from: *met ffilluem*), *me shi:t* ( *me shitun*), *me knu:* ( *me këndumun/ me knumun/ etc.*).

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