

Non-initial falling tones in neo-štokavian dialects

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[Note on the 2009 version. This article appeared in *Zbornik za filologiju i lingvistiku* 27-28, 1984-85, 143-149. It expresses my conviction that the picture of the neo-štokavian prosodic system as presented in authoritative handbooks is misleading.

Minor matters having to do with lay-out apart, this version reproduces the printed text faithfully, but in one case (note 15) an unfortunate error in the original text was put right in square brackets, in two cases (notes 14 and 24) minor ambiguities have been clarified in the same way. Furthermore, a handful of typos and potentially confusing infelicities have been tacitly corrected and most of the scare quotes that disfigure my original text have been removed. The page numbers of the original edition have been added, as in the following example: “exactly [144] like”, meaning that “exactly” is the last word on p. 143 and “like” the first word on p. 144.]

1.

There is something perverse about the distribution of the units that make up the familiar neo-štokavian accentual inventory. Potentially the system is very rich, but a large part of this potential is not realized because three sweeping rules severely restrict the occurrence of stress and contrastive tone:

- (a) Rising accents are impossible in monosyllables.
- (b) Final syllables in polysyllabic word forms cannot receive the stress.
- (c) Falling accents are impossible in non-initial syllables of polysyllabic words.¹

The first restriction is reasonable enough. A tonal contrast more or less of the kind we find in neo-štokavian can have difficulty maintaining itself in final syllables, and consequently also in monosyllabic forms. To realize this, one only has to look at the numerous čakavian, kajkavian, and Slovene dialects that neutralize their tonal contrast in final position.² If secondary loss of a vowel in a final syllable causes a rising accent

¹ All systems mentioned in the present paper are neo-štokavian in a very narrow sense: (a) they have retracted the stress in all positions, (b) the retraction has consistently yielded a rising tone, and (c) the quantity of the vowel in the newly stressed syllable has not been changed. This is the system attested in most of the East Herzegovinian, Šumadija-Vojvodina and Younger ikavian dialects (in the terminology of Ivić, *Die serbokroatischen Dialekte I*, The Hague, 1958). Deviating systems will not be taken into account (e.g. Žumberak, East Bosnian ijekavian, Mljet, Dubrovnik, Belgrade, etc.).

² Compared with much of čak., kajk., and Sln., neo-štok. is even at a disadvantage, because in neo-štok. the first post-tonic syllable probably plays a more important role in the production and perception of the tonal contrast (cf., e.g., the data and conclusions in Lehiste and Ivić, *Accent in Serbocroatian* (= *Michigan Slavic Materials* 4), Ann Arbor, 1963). On neutralization of tone in final position in Sln. cf. now Rigler, *SlR* 28/2, 1980, 219-222.

to find itself in a final syllable, such a rising accent at least sometimes becomes falling, e.g. Bioska (west of Užice in western Serbia) *osamděst*,³ Subotica Bunjevački *deyděst*,⁴ cf. norm. *osamděsēt*, *deveděsēt*. More often, however, a rising accent simply remains rising (cf. section 2 (3)).

The second restriction is also reasonable. The evolution of Serbo-Croat and Slovene strongly suggests that in western South Slavonic there is something about final syllables that makes them prone to lose the stress. The neo-štokavian rule that forbids final stress can be understood (or at least provisionally accepted) as a synchronic manifestation of the tendency that causes the numerous partial stress retractions we find in Slovene and (non-neoštokavian) Serbo-Croat.

The third restriction, however, is more difficult to understand. In phonological terms it has to be interpreted as a neutralization of the tone contrast in non-initial syllables. But why is it that the product of the neutralization is realized exactly |144| like a neo-štokavian rising tone? (With all of its complex properties, which would seem to make sense only if they serve to keep the rising tone distinct from the falling tone.) Surely one would much sooner expect the result of neutralization in this case to be some kind of neutral or even falling tone.⁵ And why is there a neutralization at all? What is there about internal syllables that makes them unfit for carrying a falling tone? Clearly there is something to be explained here.

2.

The three distributional restrictions are all the outcome of the neo-štokavian stress retraction. They are the synchronic reflection of a historical process which took place quite some time ago. It is therefore necessary to face the possibility that one or more of the restrictions do not in fact exist as general synchronic rules and that they seem to be there merely because the greater part of the lexicon that is in use now, was in use already before the stress retraction took place. It is well-known that quite a bit of such evidence seems to be around. Some typical examples:

- (1) In interjections almost anything is possible, including rising accents on final syllables of polysyllabic words, e.g. Lještansko (north-west of Užice in western Serbia) *volújs*, *gúd*, *mã vójs*, *mã kavújs*, *ô ójč*, *přš*⁶; Uskoci (north-east of Nikšić in Montenegro) *aíg*, *aïg*, *óg*, *ig*, *jaóg* etc.⁷
- (2) In emotional speech the stress is often shifted to syllables where it does not belong, e.g. Bioska *sačúvaj bože*⁸ or the very frequent form *tamàn*⁹.

³ Ivić, *GFFNS* 4, 1959, 399.

⁴ Ivić and Mladenović, *ZbFL* 3, 1960, 190. I have simplified the transcription.

⁵ Carriers of a neo-štok. system seem almost invariably to perceive as falling the stressed vowels of foreign languages or toneless varieties of Serbo-Croat. If I believed in markedness I would no doubt argue that falling tone is the unmarked member of the opposition.

⁶ Tešić, *SDZb* 22, 1977, 266f., 277, 281, 286.

⁷ Stanić, *SDZb* 20, 1974, 88.

⁸ *GFFNS* 4: 399.

⁹ Even in Uskoci, *SDZb* 20: 250.

- (3) Imperatives that lose the ending *-i* often keep a rising accent, e.g. *Uskoci nòs, donès, pomòz, potřč, ćut, řit, mùč*.¹⁰
- (4) Some prepositions consisting of a preposition and a noun stem have a short falling accent on the noun stem, e.g. *Vuk posrèd, nasrèd, sasrèd, izvřh, povřh, uvřh*; *Divci* in the Valjevska Kolubara *povř sèbē*¹¹; *Uskoci posrèd nòsa, nasrè kòlibē*¹².
- (5) Some nominal compounds have a falling tone on the first syllable of the second component, e.g. *Vuk's bogobđjāzan* or the ubiquitous modern *poljopřivreda* and *Jugoslāvija*. |145|
- (6) Borrowings can have a falling tone on any syllable, e.g. *inteligèntan, lingvìst, televìzor, milicionēr*.
- (7) In at least two types of cases autonomous analogical processes have given rise to falling accents in internal syllables: (a) plural genitives like *Dalmatīnācā*, and (b) imperfects like *okopāvāše*.

The first four types of examples are all either marginal (1, 2) or in some way problematic (3, 4) and I shall have nothing to say about them here; the compounds, borrowings and cases of analogy require some discussion.¹³

3.

It is well-known that *Vuk's* second dictionary contains examples of compounds in which the only stress is a falling accent on the first syllable of the second component, e.g. *bogobđjāzan, zlomīřljenīk, zlopđglēda, jedīnodūřno, očevīdnī, očīglēdnī, ranorānilac, svojevđljno*.¹⁴ Although the particular examples given by *Vuk* do not seem to be very well attested in later material (at least in material that is not directly dependent on

¹⁰ *SDZb* 20: 46, *SDZb* 22: 6, 15, 98. According to *Peco (Osnovi akcentologije srpskohrvatskog jezika, Beograd, 1970, 155, 167)* this phenomenon has been found in both East Herzegovinian and Šumadija-Vojvodina dialects. In most instances it seems to be restricted to the position before a clitic, so that the neo-řtok. distributional rules are not seriously disturbed. However, in some of the *Uskoci* examples given by *Stanić* no clitic is present, which is intriguing, because it suggests that at least some neo-řtok. systems no longer need a posttonic syllable to maintain the tonal contrast. A posttonic syllable is certainly no longer necessary in those dialects that have eliminated all posttonic instances of *i*. Such dialects have minimal pairs like *kòst* (nom. pl.) vs. *kòst* (loc. sg. or inf. 'kositi') according to *Kařić, ZbFL* 6, 1963, 151f., cf. also the remarkable minimal pair *fařřst* (nom. sg.) vs. *fařřst* (nom. pl.) reported by *Staneković, PPJ* 13-14, 1977-78, 82.

¹¹ *B. Nikolić, SDZb* 18, 1969, 10, cf. also *Osladić u srèd zīmē*, reported by *Ivić and Remetić* in *Ivić et al., Fonolořki opisi ... (= Posebna izdanja ANUBiH* 40), Sarajevo, 1981, 480 (I have simplified and normalized the transcription).

¹² *SDZb* 20: 27, *SDZb* 22: 96.

¹³ On (3) cf. note 10; as regards (4), it is very striking that forms like *posrèd* are quite normal in systems that otherwise consistently retract the stress onto prepositions (*Vuk, Uskoci*), so that we would expect **pòsred*.

¹⁴ The form *izđirřa* which *Stevanović* quotes in this context (*Savremeni srpskohrvatski jezik I, Beograd, 1964, 161*) is due to an oversight: *Vuk* has *izđirřa* (to be read as *izđirřa* [in accordance with nineteenth-century conventions for the use of accent marks, *WV* 2009.]).

Vuk)¹⁵, everybody knows that the type has persisted in the speech of carriers of the neo-štokavian accentual system, e.g. Šabac (north-western Serbia) *Austroùgarska, velikodùšan, verovàtan, Jugoslàvija, mnogopđštovani, novorđđen, rimokàtolik*¹⁶; Zmijanje near Banja Luka in western Bosnia *Jugoslàvija, kilomèter* (gen. pl. *kilomètērā*), *poljoprìvreda*¹⁷.

Most if not all of these words have a learned origin (the only exception is Vuk's playful *ranorànilac*), but it would be wrong for that reason to spurn the evidence they have to offer: carriers of neo-štokavian accentual systems clearly have no trouble pronouncing them. This is a fact that will have to be taken into account in a complete description of the neo-štokavian accentual system.

The traditional way of getting this type of examples to conform to the rigid demands of the neo-štokavian distributional rules (section 1) is by interpreting them as sequences of two full-fledged words, so that the falling tone in, say, *-prìvreda* or *-slàvija* is really initial. This explanation has on occasion been felt to be awkward: since the first element of these compounds would have to be interpreted as a clitic and since in Vuk's language and numerous neo-štokavian systems falling accents are more or less obligatorily shifted onto proclitics (*nè vidim* etc.), we would expect a stress shift here, too: **poljòprivreda* etc. I think this problem is less serious than it is sometimes made out to be. It should be recalled that in different neo-štokavian dialects different types of clitics behave differently with respect to the retraction, cf. the differences both within and between dialects with respect to conjunctions (*dà vidim, ì svitàlo, kàd nēmā*), prepositions (*nà njivi, ù stārā vremēna*), the negative particle *ne* (*nè vidim*) etc. (not to speak of numerals: *stò dinārā*). Since *poljo-*, *Jugo-*, *bogo-* etc. are evidently a special kind of clitics, it is not strange that they turn out [146] to behave in a special way. And systems do not cease being neo-štokavian for admitting *kad nēmā* or *u stārā vremēna*.¹⁸

¹⁵ But Maretić, in discussing Vuk's material, says explicitly: "Ti akcenti čuju se u narodnim govorima. U književnom jeziku nisu uvijek takvi" (*Gramatika hrvatskoga ili srpskoga književnog jezika*, Zagreb, 1963³, 133n.). [I fell victim to an embarrassing misunderstanding here. The observation was added by the editors of the 1963 edition (M. Hraste and P. Rogić). WV 2009.]

¹⁶ B. Nikolić, *ZbFL* 4-5, 1961-62, 225-234.

¹⁷ Petrović, *O govoru Zmijanja*, Novi Sad, 1973, 15, cf. also the examples given by B. Nikolić, *SDZb* 18: 10 (Valjevska Kolubara) and M. Nikolić, *SDZb* 19, 1972, 741-744 (Gorobilje near Užice). Some more examples are given below, section 5.

¹⁸ The fact that no retraction takes place in *poljoprìvreda* etc. creates a real problem only for those who assume that the retraction is rooted in the phonemic structure of the language. Since in no known system the retraction has the regularity one expects in a phonological phenomenon (not even in the system described by Daničić, cf. his revealing remark in *Srpski akcenti*, Beograd, 1925, 58 in a study originally written in 1856), I think this view is untenable. By the way, there are several other types of examples in which retraction inexplicably fails to take place, e. g. (a) Vuk's *kojekàko* (and similar words compounded with *koje -*); (b) the forms *sasvīm* and *uđpšte*, which are quite normal in areas where otherwise retraction is common (and in any case obligatory in set expressions); (c) verbal compounds in which the prefix does not attract the stress, e. g. Osladić (north-western Serbia) *začvřsnuo, izljúbimo* (Ivić and Remetić, *Fonološki opisi*, 480), which is all the more remarkable because in the dialect "reči s proklitikom najčešće se vlada-

4.

International borrowings quite commonly have non-initial falling tones or stressed final syllables, e.g. *Bioska avsolütno*¹⁹; Šabac *ađutànt, analizovati, arhitèkt, galvanizovati, dijalek(a)t, dijamànt, egzàktan, epancipovati* (printer's error instead of **emancipovati*), *instrumènt/instrumènat, intelèkt/intelèkat, kolonizovati, komandànt, konsonànt, konstàntno, kontinènt, korèktno, laboratôrijum/laboratôrij/laboratôrija, parlamèn(a)t, pacijènt, pergamènt, referènt, recenzènt, sanatórijum, testamènt, horizònt*²⁰; Gorobilje (between Užice and Čačak in western Serbia) *televizore*²¹; Zmijanje *komuništa, komandànta, paradžjz, lazarèt-kàsàrna, signjalist, milicionêr*²². These forms are very widespread. Ivić, in a characteristic aside, writes that they occur “manje-više svud na novoštokavskom zemljištu”.²³

In this case postulating a word boundary will not do: there plainly is no boundary between *para* and *džjz* or between *avso* and *lütno*. The only way we can uphold the three restrictions of section 1 is by refusing to recognize these words as evidence on the ground that they are borrowings. Although this reaction is possible, I do not think that it can be proposed with a clear conscience: too many facts militate against it.²⁴ In section 1 it was argued that the alleged non-occurrence of falling accents in internal syllables is difficult to understand from a phonological standpoint. Now we find that falling accents are indeed attested in the relevant positions in many neo-štokavian systems. Moreover, forms like *televizor* and *fašisti* come quite naturally to many neo-štokavian speakers: it is a fact of common knowledge that even in purely neo-štokavian areas normative grammar is fighting an uphill battle against non-initial falling accents. “This state of affairs is understandable only if one concedes that the possibility of non-initial falling accents existed already, at least shortly before the time of borrowing, and the rising accents were at that time relevantly rising in non-initial position.”²⁵ |147|

ju kao akcenatske celine” (ibid.; in the jargon of the *Fonološki opisi* this means that prepositions in most cases attract the stress).

¹⁹ *GFFNS* 4: 399.

²⁰ *ZbFL* 4-5: 225-234.

²¹ *SDZb* 19: 746.

²² *O govoru Zmijanja*, 15.

²³ *Folia slavica* 3/1-2, 1979, 165.

²⁴ The refusal to take seriously the evidence of forms like *korèktno* has all the characteristics of a conventionalist stratagem: “Jedini način da se izbegne konvencionalizam jeste prihvatanje jedne *odluke*: odluke da se ne primenjuju njegove metode. Mi odlučujemo, ukoliko našem sistemu zapreti opasnost, da ga nikad nećemo spasavati bilo kakvom vrstom *konvencionalističkog lukavstva*” (K. Popper, *Logika naučnog otkrića*, Beograd, 1973, 114 [Popper's italics, WV 2009.]).

²⁵ Freely adapted from Ebeling, *Word* 23, 1967, 131, cf. also Kortlandt, *Modelling the phoneme* (The Hague/Paris, 1972, 133-135) on the problem of achieving descriptive adequacy in cases like this.

5.

The most spectacular evidence that purely neo-štokavian accentual systems do tolerate non-initial falling accents is provided by the fact that over large areas autonomous morphological processes have given rise to them. One type of cases is very widespread indeed: several dialects have carried over the tonal alternation of *vrābac* (nom. sg.) vs. *vrābācā* (gen. pl.) to polysyllabic stems where one would expect retraction: *Dalmàtinācā* has been replaced with *Dalmatīnācā*. Examples:

- (1) Ortiješ (south of Mostar in the central Herzegovina)²⁶ *bogomōljācā*, *ilegālācā*, forms which occur “u novije vrijeme” alongside the older accentuation *bogòmōljācā*, *ilègālācā* (19).
- (2) Imotska krajina and Bekija (roughly speaking halfway between Makarska and Mostar).²⁷ Although in some respects the accentual system is almost pathologically neo-štokavian (cf. below, note 28), the dialect tolerates non-initial falling tones in expressive language (*tamān ću dōć; etò, đāvle; pokòj mu dūši!*), compounds (the borrowing *gospodīčnā* is interpreted as a compound meaning ‘*gospa dīčnā*’), borrowings (*barekīnčād, vašīst, koma(n)dānt/koma(n)dānt, liverānt/liverānt*; the suffix *-ānt/-ānt* has become productive: *privarānt/privarānt, zavrkānt/zavrkānt*), and plural genitives: *Dalmatīnācā, domācīnstāvā, gospodārstāvā, jedīnācā, klubāšācā, Makārānācā* alongside the older forms *Dalmàtinācā, domācīnstāvā* (18), *prvēnācā* alongside *přvēnācā* (97f.), cf. also imperfects like *odobrāvāše, popisīvāše, privaljīvāše, zauzdāvāše* (18), *okopāvāše, zaminjīvāše, umotāvāše* (149), which are possible alongside forms like *okòpāvāše* and *okopāvāše*. The influence of normative grammar, though slight, is present: “Jedina tuđica *vašīst* biva i *vāšīst* zbog jačeg utjecaja knjiž. jezika” (18).²⁸

²⁶ Peco, *Građa Naučnog društva NR BiH* 10, 1961, 5-51.

²⁷ Šimundić, *Govor Imotske krajine i Bekije* (= *Djela Odjelenja društvenih nauka ANUBiH* 26), Sarajevo, 1971.

²⁸ In Šimundić’s dialect the stress retraction onto proclitics is carried through as consistently as in the most classical of ijekavian dialects. The texts (208-213) show that the stress is consistently retracted from attributive adjectives and pronouns (e.g. *krāj svakē smōkvē; òt sinošnjēg píca; nà drugō žēnsko* etc.) and almost consistently onto *i* (*ūtō pāla ò nōć; vīđi řibu u brāzdi ò jōknū* etc.). The existence of Šimundić’s dialect is difficult to reconcile with Gvozdanić’s view according to which there are only two neo-štok. systems: (a) (the north-eastern variety) systems that tolerate internal falling accents at least in compounds (*poljoprīvreda*) and have retraction onto prepositions only in set expressions, and (b) (the south-western and western varieties) systems that consistently retract the stress onto prepositions (except when a contrastive interpretation is intended) and do not tolerate internal falling accents even in compounds (*Tone and accent in Standard Serbo-Croatian*, Vienna, 1980, 40f., cf. also 96f.). Reality is much more complex. (In order to make Vuk’s language conform to her ideas Gvozdanić has to assume that Vuk’s accentuation of forms like *bogobđjāzan* is unreliable, p. 41.) In carrying through the experiment her book reports on, Gvozdanić let her informants decide who was a carrier of which system: “Subjects who were classified by themselves and/or their colleagues as ‘Bosnian’ were taken as representatives of the (south)-western variety. The others were classified as representatives of the northeastern variety” (66). I find this difficult to accept for several reasons. Gvozdanić made her informants do the work that should be done by the investigator; she did not even take any measures to ensure that the informants

- (3) The ijekavian dialects of western Bosnia.²⁹ Non-initial falling accents are tolerated in expressive language (*zaklînjâm te bðgom!*, *jadân ti sam jâ*), compounds [148] (*kilomëtar/kilomëtârâ/kilomëtërâ*, *Jugoslâvija/Jugoslâvijê/u Jugoslâvi/Jugoslâviju*, *poljoprîvredê/poljoprîvredi/poljoprîvredu*), and plural genitives: *bjegûnâcâ*, *Dalmatînâcâ/Damlatînâcâ*, *dobrovôljâcâ*, *dragovôljâcâ*, *zadâtâkâ*, *komârâcâ*, *Makedônâcâ*, *omladînâcâ*, *pravoslâvâcâ*, *Slovênâcâ*, *Srbijânâcâ*, *Crnogôrâcâ*, *domaçînstâvâ*, “vrlo rijetko” in one village also *oglêdâlâ*; the older accentuation (*Dalmâtînâcâ*) also occurs, though presumably less often because Dešić gives far fewer examples; loss of the alternation (*Dalmatînâcâ*) is also attested (208f.).
- (4) Obadi, on the “srednji tok rijeke Drine” in the extreme east of Bosnia.³⁰ Non-initial falling accents occur in expressive language (*tamâm*), compound prepositions (*uspřkos*), nominal compounds (*zemljojâdnîk*, *Jugoslâvia*), borrowings (*Aleksândar*), and plural genitives: *Crnogôrâcâ*, *Dalmatînâcâ*, *Makedônâcâ* (17, 23). The younger generation is undergoing the influence of normative grammar: “Kod mlađih je *Jugòslâvia*; *Alèksândar*; *Crnògôrâcâ*” (23).

There is no reason to question the reliability of these descriptions. Indeed, it is striking that in all four cases the investigators are themselves carriers of the dialect involved: Peco is from Ortiješ (5), Šimundić from Lovreć “na zapadnom dijelu Imotske krajine” (7), Dešić from Trninić-Brijeg near Drvar (27), and Simić from Obadi (11). And as we have seen, the most comprehensive collection of exceptions of the types *poljoprîvreda* (along with Vuk) and *komandânt* is to be found in B. Nikolić’s remarkable “Akcenatski rečnik šabačkoga govora” (Nikolić, needless to say, came from Šabac).³¹ This is very instructive. It is likely that investigators engaged on describing a (to them) unfamiliar dialect are sooner inclined to distrust their own observations and to weed out forms that conflict with theory.³²

The dialects described by Peco, Šimundić, Dešić and Simić delimit a vast area which includes nearly all of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.³³ It is not unlikely that forms like *Dalmatînâcâ* will turn up elsewhere, too. For Kovilj (in the area

based their choices on accentuation (rather than place of birth, or more superficial linguistic traits like the reflex of the *ě). Speakers from Bosnia cannot be counted on to be carriers of Gvozdanović’s southern/south-western variety, as she herself points out in another context (40), cf. also the non-initial falling accents reported by M. Simić (*SDZb* 24: 17, 23), to mention a Bosnian dialect that is spoken relatively close to Loznica, the town where the experiment was carried out.

²⁹ Dešić, *SDZb* 21, 1976.

³⁰ M. Simić, *SDZb* 24, 1978, 1-124.

³¹ According to M. Ivić, *JF* 32, 1976, 259.

³² Ivić has always been very much aware of this, no doubt in part because since he is not himself a carrier of a village dialect he had to learn how to cope with unfamiliar systems right at the start of his activities. He explicitly mentions the dangers of “letting theory decide” in his praise of B. Nikolić’s early remarks on the Srem dialect: “Za kvalitet iznesene građe karakteristični su slučajevi sigurnog zapisivanja stvarnog izgovora koje se ne da zbuniti teorijom” (*ZbFL* 1, 1957, 195).

³³ According to J. Kalsbeek (personal communication) forms like *muškârâcâ* are the rule in the speech of the well-known Croat author Ivan Slamnig (from Metković in Dalmatia).

called “Šajkaška”, immediately east of Novi Sad) the forms *arištânaca* and *novovêraca* have been reported; the older forms are however much better attested: *bègûnaca*, *Dalmâtînaca*, *Crndôgôraca* etc. (and *novovêraca* may have a falling accent because it is a compound).³⁴

6.

In this article I have tried to give reasons for adopting a sceptical attitude towards the traditional idea that neo-štokavian does not tolerate falling accents in non-initial syllables. I think that the easy acceptance by many neo-štokavian speakers of forms like *korèktno* or *televîzor*, and the spontaneous rise of falling accents in plural genitives like *Dalmatîncâ* make that the burden of proof is on the shoulders of those who maintain that non-initial falling accents are an impossibility. For the time being it is more rational to assume that the traditional picture is oversimplified and misses part of reality. |149|

One wonders whether authentic carriers of the system presupposed by normative grammar exist at all, i.e. speakers whose system for phonological reasons does not tolerate non-initial falling accents. The stress is on ‘authentic’: we shall have to exclude speakers who have (consciously or unconsciously) modified their speech habits under normative influence, because in their case non-initial falling tones, even if no longer represented in the lexicon, are still to be counted as phonological possibilities.³⁵ Such authentic speakers are most likely to be found in the neo-štokavian part of Montenegro. The matter would however have to be investigated: it would be wrong to assume beforehand that Montenegrin neo-štokavian conforms in all respects to the normative ideal; we have seen that the Uskoci dialect admits falling accents in prepositions like *posrêd* and rising accents in imperatives like *mûč*. Both phenomena will have to be accounted for.

It is at least conceivable that authentic carriers of the uneconomical and lopsided system required by normative grammar will turn out not to exist. Vuk himself may not have been a carrier of such a system. If this is true, experimental investigations of “Standard Serbo-Croat accentuation” are a physical impossibility as long as Standard Serbo-Croat is equated with the prescriptions of normative grammar.³⁶

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³⁴ Godić, *PPJ* 11, 1975, 153f.

³⁵ Such unauthentic normative speakers, if they exist at all, are probably extremely rare outside a narrow circle of linguists, actors, radio announcers, bigots, and similar unreliable informants. The difficulty of acquiring a correct accentuation later in life is a fact of common knowledge, illustrated by Lehiste and Ivić’s notes on informants D1 and D6 in *Accent in Serbocroatian*, pp. 35f.

³⁶ It was only after I finished the present article that I first saw Milija Stanić’s description of Uskoci accentuation (*SDZb* 18, 1982, 63-191). It turns out that even the Uskoci dialect admits forms like *šutrûj jutro*, *prvobrâtučed*, *kupoprôdaja* etc. (73). The chances that the system presupposed by traditional normative grammar exists in the speech of at least some people are becoming very slim indeed.