

# An Unknown Model for Constructing the Negative Imperative in Bulgarian

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In the history of Bulgarian up to this point, several ways of constructing the negative imperative have been observed. Besides the usage of the particle *не* with the regular positive form in the imperative (*не стòй!* ‘don’t stay!’ [singular], *не стòйте!* ‘don’t stay!’ [plural]) or the negative form of the future tense (*няма да слизаиш!* ‘you won’t get off!’), various descriptive forms are used.<sup>1</sup> These forms are:

1. With *недèй(те)* ‘do not!’ and its variations (*нед’а̀й, нидèй, нид’а̀й, недè, н’д’èй*, etc.<sup>2</sup>), from the Old Bulgarian NE ДБН ‘do not do!’, and the shortened infinitive, the *da*-construction, or a finite verb form: *недèй прикàзва, недèй да прикàзваиш, недèй прикàзвай* ‘don’t talk!’—in Northeastern, Northwestern, and Southeastern Bulgaria;
2. With *немòй(те)* and its variations (*нѣмòй, нимò, нѣм, мòй, мò*, etc.<sup>3</sup>), from the Old Bulgarian NE МОЗИ ‘can’t’: *немòй прикàзва, немòй да прикàзваиш, немòй прикàзвай* ‘don’t talk!’; *мòй тѣ стрàх* ‘don’t be afraid’—in the Southwestern and Southeastern Bulgarian dialects;
3. With *н’алай(те)* and the variant *налѣй*, supposedly from the Old Bulgarian NE ДБЛАН ‘do not do!’: *н’алай ревà* ‘don’t cry!’—around Topolovgrad and Harmanli—*налѣй* specifically for the village of Glavan, in the area around Harmanli. In the Glavan dialects in Dobruzha (spoken by Bulgarians who fled from Glavan,

1 CHARALAMPIEV, Iv.: *Istorija na bǎlgarskija ezik*. Veliko Tǎrnovo: Universitetsko izdatelstvo, 1992, s. 187–188; STOJKOV, St.: *Bǎlgarska dialektologija*. Sofija: Izdatelstvo na BAN, 1993, s. 247–248.

2 Around Kazanlak, *dèy* is also used (personal observations).

3 Cf. also BOJADŽIEV, T.: *Bǎlgarskite govori v Zapadna (Belomorska) i Iztočna (Ordinska) Trakija*. Sofija: UI „Sv. Kliment Ochridski“, 1991, s. 94; TONČEVA, Chr., ILIEV, Iv. G.: *Govoràt na selo Pripek, Džebelsko*. Plovdiv: UI „P. Chilendarski“, 2016, s. 82.

near Harmanli, to Bessarabia in the 19th century, then settled in Dobrudzha), however, the particle is again *н'алай*: *н'алай пра̀ви така̀* 'don't do like this!',<sup>4</sup>) and the negative particle *нѣл'ѣи* is also used in the Thracian dialect in the village of Çöpköy, around Uzunköprü, Turkey;<sup>5</sup>

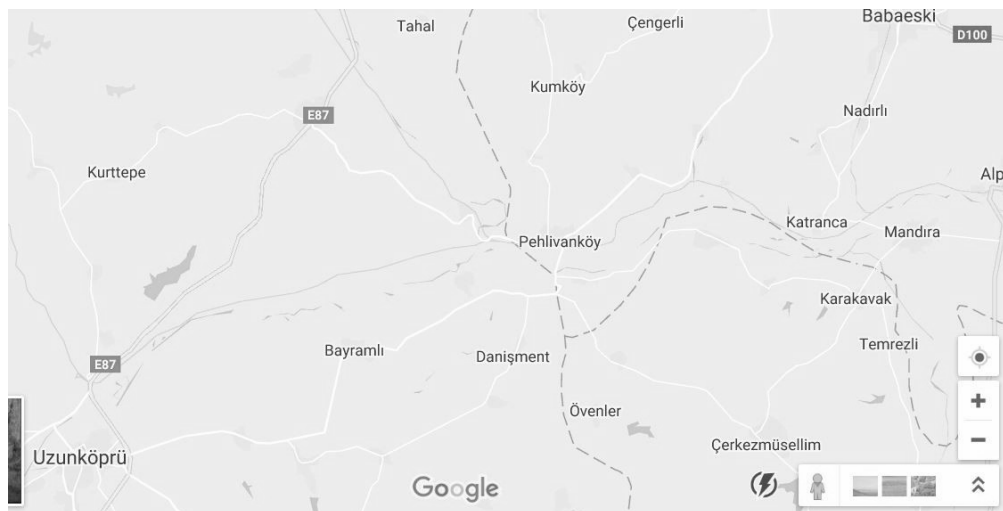
4. With *нека̀й*(*me*), from the Old Bulgarian NE КАЖИ 'don't tell!': *нека̀й рева̀* 'don't cry!'—around Belogradchik and Vidin;
5. With *м̀и*(*me*), from the Greek *μῆ*: *м̀и пл̀ака* 'don't cry!'—around Burgas, Malko Tarnovo, and in some Thracian dialects, including in Dobrudzha;<sup>6</sup>
6. With *м̀ица*, of the same origin: *м̀ица ба̀ра* 'don't touch!'—in Dolno Yabalkovo, Golyamo Bukovo, and other villages around Sredets (Grudovo).

In the present paper, we will discuss another descriptive way of expressing a negative order, which was initially discovered in the dialects of Bulgarian settlers (refugees) in European Turkey, who left Bulgaria for Turkey after the Russo-Turkish War (1877–1878). We have in mind the so-called Lovech Pomaks (Bulgarian Muslims) who settled in and continue to inhabit villages like Galata, Glozhene, Gradeshnitsa, Turski Izvor (now Balgarski Izvor), and many other villages around Teteven, Byala Slatina, Lukovit, Pleven, and Lovech; according to Miletich, they speak a Lovech dialect, because of which he calls them *Lovech Pomaks*.<sup>7</sup>

Today the descendants of the aforementioned group of Bulgarian Muslims live in a number of villages around Uzunköprü and Babaeski (see below for further examples). There are more than 80 Pomak villages in European Turkey; some of them are quite large, such as (Büyük) Mandıra(köy), Çerkezmüsellim, or Pehlivan köy, while others are not so large, for instance, Hasanpınar and Başağıl (formerly Küçük Mandıra or Mandritsa). The largest portion of the population there are just the Lovech Pomaks.<sup>8</sup>

In his research devoted to the Bulgarian Muslims around Lovech, in the section on the imperative, V. Savov<sup>9</sup> mentions their use of classical forms of the type *нед'ѣи пис̀а* 'don't write!' and constructions with the verb *см̀уга* 'that's enough!', which were not listed above: *см̀уга сна̀* 'don't sleep!'; expressions such as *см̀уга си сна̀л* 'don't sleep!' are also used (Iv. Il., P. P.).

- 4 MLADENOV, M.: *Charakteristika na govorite (v Dobrudža)*. In: Dobrudža. Etnografski, folklorni i ezikovi proučvanija. Sofija: Izdatelstvo na BAN. 1974, s. 420.
- 5 BOJADŽIEV, T.: *Bălgarskite govori v Zapadna (Belomorska) i Iztočna (Ordinska) Trakija*. Sofija: UI „Sv. Kliment Ohridski“, 1991, s. 94.
- 6 Cf. also BOJADŽIEV, T.: *Bălgarskite govori v Zapadna (Belomorska) i Iztočna (Ordinska) Trakija*. Sofija: UI „Sv. Kliment Ohridski“, 1991, s. 94; MLADENOV, M.: *Charakteristika na govorite (v Dobrudža)*. In: Dobrudža. Etnografski, folklorni i ezikovi proučvanija. Sofija: Izdatelstvo na BAN. 1974, s. 420.
- 7 MILETIČ, L.: *Lovčanskite pomaci*. Bălgarski pregled, 5, 1899, s. 67–70.
- 8 Cf. also ZELENGORA, G.: *Pomacite v Turcii*. Elektronna kniga. Biblio.bg. 2012, s. 87–90.
- 9 SAVOV, V.: *Lovčanskite pomaci i tehniyat govor*. In: *Izvestija na Seminara po slavjanska filologija pri universiteta v Sofija*. VII. Sofija: Pečatnica „Grafika“, 1931, s. 30.



Map in which some of the mentioned Pomak villages in European Turkey (Pehlivanköy, Çerkezmüsellim, Mandıra) can be seen  
(Source: Google.maps)

In the course of three visits to the villages of the region in question in 2015–2017, we established that in the dialect spoken there, originating precisely from the aforementioned Lovech dialect (according to Miletich), the negative imperative forms exist in a manner unknown till now with the *mäu* particle (for the singular) and a shortened infinitive. To make a comparison between the dialects of the Bulgarian Muslims who had moved to Turkey and the ones who stayed in Bulgaria, we also visited the village of Galata, around Teteven, where to our surprise we also came across this construction, which has obviously remained unnoticed by researchers until now.

In the process of investigating the Pomaks in Turkey, alongside examples recorded in a free conversation, the interlocutors were also deliberately asked how the Turkish negative imperative would be translated, for instance, *uturma!* ‘don’t sit down!’. As a result, the following correspondences of the Turkish form in “the Pomak” were noted:

- mäu cedè!* (Kestanbul, formerly Yamurca);
- mäu cedè!* (Sazlımalkoç);
- mäu cèda!* (Hasanpınar);
- mäu cedà!* (Başağıl);
- mäu ced’â!* [(Büyük) Mandıra(köy)], etc.

Besides these, other uses of this construction were registered, which are as follows:

*мàй стàйа!* ‘don’t stand up!’ (Hasanpınar);

*мàй мь идусвà!* ‘don’t make me angry!’ (Hasanpınar);

*мàй прикàзва (Pomak)!* ‘don’t talk (in Pomak)’ (Pehlivanköy), etc.

In Galata, around Teteven, when we asked how the form ‘don’t sit down!’ would appear, we encountered the following examples:

*Мàй с’àдà ..., мàй, че ша пàннеш* ‘don’t sit (on the chair), don’t, because you will fall’;

*Мàй с’àдà, заштòто шь пàннеш ... мàй с’òдà ... и сь пребìеш!* ‘don’t sit (on the chair), don’t, because you will fall and get hurt’;

In the dialects of the indicated Pomak villages in Turkey, cases of usage such as the following occur:

*мàй чàнтатà!* ‘put the bag away!’ (Hasanpınar);

*мàй го!* ‘leave him alone!’ (Pehlivanköy);

*мàй го!* ‘leave him alone!’ (Büyük Mandıra(köy);

*мàй оттýка!* ‘go away!’, *мàй гу!* ‘leave him alone!’;

*мàй ùа!* ‘leave her alone!’ (Sazlımalkoç).

At this stage of our work, we don’t have information available regarding the plural negative imperative forms, but most probably they are made with the \* *мàйте* particle.

From the examples at the end, it becomes clear that most probably the particle *мàй*, with which the descriptive negative imperative is made into the singular, comes from the Old Bulgarian verb МАХАТН ‘take away’, and the form *мàхай* was shortened to *мàай* and later to *мàй*. Supporting this opinion is the usage of the verb ‘take away’ in the sense of ‘stop doing something, dealing with somebody or something; decline, leave’.<sup>10</sup> In context, after the same source, the following is relevant:

*От утре махам цигарите* ‘starting tomorrow, I quit (smoking) cigarettes’;

*Махай я тази неблагоприятница и не ù обръщай повече никакво внимание* ‘Leave this ungrateful woman alone and don’t pay any attention to her anymore.’<sup>11</sup> Or:

*мàйни гу тòа! Мьхнù гу, уткьчєн е!* ‘Leave this one alone, let him be, he’s crazy.’ Malomirovo, around Elhovo.<sup>12</sup>

In colloquial Bulgarian speech, variants like *мàни го* ‘leave him alone!’, *мàни, мàни!* ‘skip this, don’t pay attention!’ are also to be found. The archaic character of such uses of the verb ‘take away’ is indicated by their occurrence in old optative

10 KJUBLIEVA-MIŠAJKOVA, V., ČOROLEEVA, M. (eds): *Rečnik na bālgarskija ezik. T. 9.* Sofija: AI „Profesor Marin Drinov“, 1998, s. 234

11 Ibid.

12 Private data.

constructions—*Махнала го земята!* ‘let the earth take him away!’<sup>13</sup>—compared with *Убил те бог!* ‘may God kill you!’ and others of the kind.

The newly discovered forbidding constructions with *màŭ* are another proof of the wealth of grammatical forms that are to be found in Bulgarian dialects and expand the inventory of the means of expressing the negative imperative in Bulgarian. In the near future, we will publish an article devoted to the other features of the Bulgarian settler dialects around Uzunkyopryu and Baba Eski.

### Informants:

- Abdurman Cuskun—Çerkezmüsellim, TURKEY;
- Aysha Asanova, born in 1937—Galata, BULGARIA;
- Atif Dođru (mayor)—Hasanpınar, TURKEY;
- Cavat Yuncu, 68 years old—Pehlivan köy, TURKEY;
- Hadır Avcı—Hasanpınar, TURKEY;
- İbrahim Sevinç, 48 years old—(Büyük) Mandıra(köy), TURKEY;
- Sezay Zengin (mayor)—Çerkezmüsellim, TURKEY;
- Türkyan Avcı—Hasanpınar, TURKEY;
- Şaban Atik, born 1931—Çerkezmüsellim, TURKEY;
- Other anonymous informants.

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13 GEROV, N.: *Rečnik na bălgarskija ezik. Čast treta. L–O*. Sofija: „Bălgarski pisatel“, 1977, s. 54.

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