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The prosodic properties of *ne* in Bulgarian

1 Behavior of *ne* in standard Bulgarian

In standard Bulgarian a clitic pronoun or auxiliary/copula is stressed when following the negative particle *ne* (1), though otherwise these clitics are unstressed (2), as is *ne*, at least when negating a verb phrase (3):

1. (a) 
   
   *I haven't known it.*
   
   (1) a. *la* ne sâm go zrâva
       
       I NEG AUX.ISG it known
       
       *I haven't known it.*
   
   (b. *la* ne go zrâva
       
       I NEG il known.ISG
       
       *I don't know it.*

2. (2) a. *I have known it.*
   
   (2) a. *la* sâm go zrâva
       
       I AUX.ISG it known
       
       *I have known it.*
   
   (b. *la* go zrâva
       
       I il known.ISG
       
       *I know it.*

3. "I don't know."

   (3) *la* ne zrâva
       
       I NEG known.ISG
       
       *I don't know.*

Where does the stress on the clitics in (1) come from? Essentially two analyses have been offered in the literature so far, either that *ne* is the source, or that stress is a byproduct of the formation of a clitic cluster. On the first view, *ne* is inherently stressed, but within a verb phrase it shifts its stress onto the following element, whereby this shifted stress is only manifested if the element onto which it has been shifted has no lexical stress of its own (Hague 1976, Penčev 1984, Avgustinova 1997). On the second view (Halpern 1995), both elements are inherently unstressed, but that in combination they generate stress. *Ne* is specified as a proclitic while the other clitics are specified as enclitics when an enclitic follows a proclitic they behave like two halves of a whole, fusing and thereby yielding a viable prosodic word, which receives stress as a result of default phonological rules which require that every prosodic word bear stress. The fact that stress falls on the second element and not the first must simply be stipulated.

Each approach has its merits and flaws. The second has the advantage of economy: since stress is dependent on the context in which it is found, it is not necessary to posit underlying stresses where they are not found on the surface. The first approach on the other hand is predicated on an underlying prosodic structure which never corresponds to surface behavior. This would seem like a fatal flaw, but it does have the advantage of being applicable to the behavior of *ne* outside of verb phrases, where the assumed underlying stress does indeed manifest itself.

4. "Not everyone knows that."

   (4) *ne* vs. *ek* zrâva tərə
       
       NEG everyone knows that
       
       *Not everyone knows that.*

   (Tilkov et al. 1992)

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Ultimately the choice of interpretation is more a matter of taste than of fact. However, when one looks beyond the standard language, specifically at southern and western dialects, one finds varieties which offer further insight into the prosodic behavior of ne, and it is in these phenomena which this paper addresses. Section 2 deals with the distribution of stress with respect to ne, and section 3 deals with its apparent influence on clitic order, a phenomenon with no parallel in the standard language.2

2 Ne and stress in the dialects

As in the standard language, in all dialects ne is unstressed when immediately preceding a non-compound verb form, as in (5) above. Variation is correlated with the distinction between clitic pronouns and the auxiliary copula, between different forms of the auxiliary copula, and between non-compound verb forms and the participial component of compound verbs.

In the sequence ne = auxiliary/copula, it is the auxiliary/copula which is stressed (5a), but in the sequence ne = clitic pronoun, ne instead is stressed (5b):

\[(a) \quad \text{ti ni si} \quad \text{mi katu} \quad \text{b. te ri ti che} \quad \text{you NEG AUX2PL me told I NEG you hold 3SG}
\]
\[\quad \text{You haven't told me} \quad \text{I'm not holding you} \quad \text{(Vojnicjajivo)}
\]

The reverse situation is found in two Thracian villages (Dervent, Sicilani); that is, in the sequence ne = auxiliary/copula, ne is stressed, while in the sequence ne = clitic pronoun, the pronoun is stressed:

\[(6) \quad \text{a. no dede\textsuperscript{ge} nri ste to stefli yi} \quad \text{NEG do-2PL get-2PL final particle}
\]
\[\quad \text{You haven't been to Dedegaj, have you?}
\]
\[(b) \quad \text{ve ne gu stefli you NEG it AUX2PL did-2PL}
\]
\[\quad \text{You haven't done it} \quad \text{(Dervent)}
\]

In some dialects stress regularly falls on all forms of the auxiliary/copula when following ne except for the third singular, in which case stress falls on ne:

\[(7) \quad \text{Yaka nri e seklo here NEG AUX3SG sat}
\]
\[\quad \text{He hasn't sat here.} \quad \text{(Gorno Pole)}
\]

This occurs in both dialects which behave like the standard language, where all clitics are stressed following ne, and those that behave like (5) above, where only the auxiliary/copula is stressed.

In some dialects ne is stressed when immediately preceding the participial component of a compound verb, namely in the perfect tense, which is formed from the so-called Participle

\[\text{plus the auxiliary (e.g., nataq in the following example) — though as expected ne is unstressed when preceding a non-compound verb form (8b).}^3
\]

\[(8) \quad \text{a. nato e nato, nri ste to nataq you NEG AUX2PL get-2PL AUX2PL}
\]
\[\quad \text{He AUX3SG plough NEG taken I you NEG saw 3SG}
\]
\[\quad \text{He hasn't taken the plough.} \quad \text{I didn't see you} \quad \text{(Sicillani)}
\]

This last example is especially telling, because it shows that the appearance of stress in association with ne is not contingent on the formation of a clitic cluster, which renders the approach of Halpern (1995) untenable here. Note however that the presence of a clitic remains an essential prerequisite in some sense; the

\[\text{Applicative is used without an auxiliary, namely in the third person of the so-called relaxed mood, ne is unstressed when preceding it. Compare the forms in the relaxed mood in (6a), where there is no auxiliary, with the perfect tense forms in (6e), as well as example (15) below, where an auxiliary is present—which are all taken from a single passage by a single informant.}
\]

\[(9) \quad \text{a. nafaj ni nafaj da xi pribati nobody NEG could that they count.}
\]
\[\quad \text{Nobody could count them.}
\]
\[(b) \quad \text{nafaj ni nafaj siki ot nali heh NEG could from nothing}
\]
\[\quad \text{He wasn't afraid of anything.}
\]
\[(c) \quad \text{nafaj da xi pribati NEG could-3PL that they recognize}
\]
\[\quad \text{She couldn't recognize them.}
\]
\[(d) \quad \text{d'ono ni spal day OFF NEG slept}
\]
\[\quad \text{One day, he didn't sleep.}
\]
\[(e) \quad \text{tali ko \text{"}ma sa xelili s god\text{"}ini how many people AUX2PL go with years}
\]
\[\quad \text{ta xi sa nri pribati and them AUX2PL NEG counted.}
\]
\[\quad \text{How many people have gone over the years and not counted them?} \quad \text{(Momelviiov)}
\]

I will argue however that the pertinent distinction is a syntactic one between a full verb and a component of a verb, the presence or absence of a clitic auxiliary is indicative of this status, but prosodically irrelevant.

The data outlined in this section lead me to the following interpretation, which is compatible with that of Hagle (1976), Peric\'ev (1984) and Asugina\'eva (1997), but has been expanded to take into consideration the material from the dialects:

- ne is inherently stressed,
- when followed by a stressed verb ne loses its stress,
- otherwise, ne may project its stress onto clitic components of the verb phrase.5

\[\text{Note that this contrast does not arise in standard Bulgarian, as when there is an auxiliary, it will always follow ne (cf. section 3).}
\]

\[\text{Outside of Bulgarian, in eastern and Aroman Macedonian dialects, and in Torlak Serbian dialects, stress never shifts onto a following clitic (cf. e.g., Stamen 1975, Rusev 1996, Videv 1982).}
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2 The data for this paper have been taken from dialect studies, which often do not address these phenomena directly, or if they do, not comprehensively, in clitic flipping, discussed in section 3, has not, to the best of my knowledge, been attested in print before; the studies I have taken my data from do not point it out as such, but it is apparent from the examples in the text. The sensitivity of the data supports for the syntactic nature of some of my proposals here. Nevertheless the material is sufficiently interesting to warrant its publication, even with hedges.

3 Note that in the dialect of Vojnicjajivo the negative particle takes the form ne both when stressed and when unstressed. In other dialects a stressed form ne typically alternates with unstressed ne.

4 Note that this contrast does not arise in standard Bulgarian, as when there is an auxiliary, it will always follow ne (cf. section 3).

5 Outside of Bulgarian, in eastern and Aroman Macedonian dialects, and in Torlak Serbian dialects, stress never shifts onto a following clitic (cf. e.g., Stamen 1975, Rusev 1996, Videv 1982).
Since the complete loss of stress on the one hand and projection of stress on the other are in complementary distribution depending on whether the following element bears lexical stress or not, they can be viewed as two realizations of the same underlying phenomenon, which for the sake of convenience I shall call simply “stress shift”. Most broadly speaking, stress shift occurs when ne precedes a verb phrase, but dialects differ as to how they discriminate between the members of the verb phrase. The standard language is the most generous, making no distinctions. But the dialects may be pickier, whereby stress shift is correlated with the degree of verbhood of the following element: the more verblike the element, the more likely stress shift is to occur. In the hierarchies shown below, the right-hand member of each pair is construed as being more verblike:

less verblike  <  <  <  more verblike

object portion of a verb phrase  <  auxiliary verb
cf. (5).

3rd < other person/number combinations
cf. (7).

participle  < auxiliary

cf. (6), (9).

The correlation with verbhood in the first hierarchy is obvious, and one can see parallels in, e.g., other South Slavic languages, where ne + clinic auxiliary/copula yield a new, stressed form e.g., Serbo-Croatian ne + sem, sti  moci, misi... (I'm not, you're not), while no such thing occurs with ne + clinic pronoun. In the second hierarchy we can suppose, following Tomić (1996), that the third singular is morphosyntactically defective. Tomić (1996), discussing Serbo-Croatian, proposes that third singular je is a pure tense marker, lacking specification for person, and uses this to account for its anomalous position in the clitic string. We can borrow this analysis and claim it as support for the notion that the third singular auxiliary/copula evokes a lesser degree of verbhood in general in South Slavic. It is also significant that, in Macedonian, the third singular auxiliary is simply zero. In the case of the third hierarchy, it would appear that, in compound verbs, the locus of verbhood is the auxiliary. The participial form is thus treated rather as a nominal.

The dialects represented in (6) remain unaccounted for on this analysis, since here it is the least verblike element of the verb phrase which induces stress shift. Either the analysis that has been offered so far is wrong, or there is some added complication in these dialects. Given that this stress pattern is by far the rarest of all examined here, I tend towards the latter view, but cannot claim to have a good account of what this added complication might be.

3 Order of clitics following ne

In some dialects clitic order is reversed when following ne. Before discussing this, I will provide some background on the default order of clitics. There are two major patterns. In the standard language, the third singular auxiliary/copula precede the other auxiliary/copula forms; this is typical of most of South Slavic (aux = auxiliary/copula, pro = clitic pronoun):

(10) AUX-PRO

a. ‘az slik go zrail ha b. tej go c zrail
I AUX-PRO go him AUX-PRO known
*I have known him.*
*He has known him.* (standard Bulgarian)

In the other pattern, found in many southern dialects (Ivanov 1972, map 133; Stjepić 1964–1981, map 186 (volume I), map 225 (volume III)), the position which characterizes the third singular auxiliary in the standard language is found with all auxiliary/copula forms:

6 The auxiliary component of a compound verb form is construed as more verblike than the participle component because the former exhibits more of the typically verbal grammatical features, namely tense and person marking.

(11) PRO-AUX

a. nico va sma khlili b. Tonu gu je utlavl v
we you AUX-PRO, invitedPL. Tonu him AUX-PRO saved
*We've invited you.*
*Tonu saved him.*
(Mončićević)

Reversal of clitic order following ne is attested in the dialects of two villages. In one, the default clitic order is as in the standard language, so that after ne the pronouns follow the third singular auxiliary/copula but precede the other forms:

(12) PRO-AUX

a. pljuli sie gu b. ve ne gu ste sekhlili
paidPL. AUX-2PL. if you NEG it AUX-2PL. didPL.
“You've paid for it.”
*You haven't done it.*

b. nčti j j getal d. d’čud t’dur ne c gu včid
TAG you1DAT COPULA3SING sin uncle Todur NEG AUX-3SING him seen
*Are you ashamed of yourself?*
*Uncle Todur hasn't seen him.*
(Orjevar)

In the other dialect the default order is as in (11), where clitic pronouns precede all auxiliary/copula forms. After ne the clitic order is reversed with non third singular auxiliary/copula forms, but remains unchanged with the third singular:

(13) PRO-AUX

a. je va sam nčr včidvel b. c ni šmr va včidvel
I you AUX-1SING NEG seen I NEG AUX-1SING you seen
*I haven't seen you.
*I haven't seen you.

b. Tonu gu je utlavl
Tonu him AUX-PRO saved
*Tonu saved him.*

c. Srdonu ni gu je porčka na gleda
Srdonu NEG him AUX-1SING asked to guests
*... Srdonu didn't invite him over.*
(Mončićević)

Thus the distinction between the third singular auxiliary and other auxiliary forms is found under negation, but not otherwise. The “clitic flipping” seen in (12) and (13) cannot be readily accounted for using the sorts of models of clitics order that have been suggested till now, since all define the position of clitics in directional terms:

- Template (Haug 1976); clitic order is simply defined as a static template, as I have done in the examples above. This is by far the most common approach.
- Alignment constraints (Legendre 1996); clitics are subject to directional alignment constraints, whose ranking determines the actual clitic order.
- Morphological subcategorization (Hale 1997); each clitic carries part of its lexical specification an indication of what clitic may follow it.
That is, in each case the order of clitics is determined by specifying which is to the left and which is to the right. But clitic clipping suggests that the relative position of clitics with respect to each other is distinct from their left-to-right orientation, whereby the former remains constant and the latter may vary depending on whether or not ne proceeds. How then could ne affect this change? Does it rely on what is otherwise attached leftwards? I will in fact argue that ne is a red herring, and that the reason for the clitic clipping lies elsewhere. In order to do so, some additional evidence must first be added.

In the standard language the clitic pronouns and the auxiliary are invariably verb-adjacent; preverbal position is preferred unless this would put them in absolute initial position, in which case they follow the verb instead. In many dialects, though — including those represented in (12) and (13) — verb adjacency is not so strictly observed, leaving the clitics to occupy second position. Although the exact conditions under which one or the other position may be exploited are not fully apparent, one thing is clear: when the clitics follow ne they must be immediately preverbal (14), but when they precede, they are in second position (15).

(14) aš ašiša Sausina ni gni je porašal na glosė
but once Sausina NEG him AUX:Imp asked to guess

(15) pok šūnu ašiša čišk sa dūgštav iš dūgštali
but AUX:Imp one person with 2 heads NEG:Imp

"But I haven't seen a person with two heads." (Momilovići)

It is the distinction between preverbal and second position, I believe, which accounts for clitic clipping, the crucial point being that the preverbal position is defined in morphological terms, while second position is defined in essentially phonological terms. My proposal is that clitic order is determined by an invariant set of alignment constraints, with the target of alignment varying according to the domain the clitics occupy: in the phonological domain, they are aligned to the left edge, and in the morphological domain, they are aligned to the morphological head, i.e., the verb. The relevant constraints for Derwent (example (12)) would thus be:

\[ x = \text{target of alignment} \]
\[ a. \text{ AUX} \rightarrow \text{PRO-ADJ} \rightarrow \text{AUX:Imp} \]
\[ b. \text{ x = Verb} \rightarrow x = \text{left} \]

That is, a non third singular auxiliary/copula is closer to the target of alignment than a clitic pronoun, and a clitic pronoun is closer to the target of alignment than the third singular auxiliary/copula. The default target of alignment is phonological, namely to the left edge (taking into consideration non-initiality), but the preferred target is the verb. However, the verb is only visible to the clitics when they fall in the morphological domain. When the clitics fall outside of this domain, the verb is not available as a target and so default leftward alignment occurs.

The dialect of Momilovići requires a somewhat different analysis. The constraint hierarchy \[
\text{AUX:Imp} \rightarrow \text{PRO-ADJ} \rightarrow \text{AUX:Imp}\]
would account for the behavior of non third singular auxiliaries, but what of the third singular, whose order does not change after ne (cf. 13a)? A plausible interpretation would be — following the claims offered above as to the morphological
defectiveness of the third singular auxiliary/copula — that the third singular auxiliary/copula is morphologically invisible. Thus, given the constraint hierarchy \[
\text{AUX:Imp} \rightarrow \text{PRO-ADJ} \rightarrow \text{AUX:Imp}\]
auxiliary forms behave identically in the phonological domain. The morphological domain, however, is relevant only for the non third singular forms. The thesis singular continues to align by phonological principles: the fact that the auxiliary in (13a) intervenes between the clitic pronoun and the pronoun's morphological target of alignment, the verb, is irrelevant, because the auxiliary is invisible in this morphological domain.

Thus on the interpretation being advanced here ne itself does not determine the order of the clitics following it. Rather, the position of ne is diagnostic of which domain the clitics are occupying. However, one problem with this interpretation is that there is no independent evidence for the existence of this morphological alignment domain with non-negative verbs. Much of the data is ambiguous; the examples in the sources are too short that second position and preverbal position coincide. Still, none of the unambiguous instances of clitics in preverbal position provide any evidence of a distinct clitic order, so that the cause-effect relationship of ne and clitic order remains speculative.

4 Conclusion

In this paper I have examined two phenomena. First, discussing the distribution of stress in con-junction with ne, I have sided with those who have claimed that ne is inherently stressed, but shifts its stress onto a following verb. In support of this I have offered evidence from dialects which are less generous than the standard language in what they will construe as a verb for the purposes of stress shift. At this point I should also mention that, in the context of Bulgarian dialects, ne is not the only word to shift its stress onto a following word. Similar behavior is found with ko “what” in Gorno Polje (Kotova 1962) and with der “that” and ku “it”, whether in Kozlino/Zhelezno (Beamn forthcoming).

(16) je što s'am bral jahove
i what AUX:Imp

“What trouble I’ve gotten myself into!” (Gorno Polje)

(17) ku gnu xaršašt iši ku je ot plo xobmu simfajnše...
if him likecast or if COPULA:Imp from more-good family

“If they like him or if he’s from a better family…” (Kozlino/Zhelezno)

These are all words which, at least in their dictionary citations, are construed as stressed in the standard language (ko, der, ku).

Second, I have looked at the reversal of clitic order following ne found in two dialects, which might be thought to be another instance of the unusual prosodic qualities of ne. I have instead advanced an interpretation whereby the different clitic orders are characteristic of the phonological versus morphological domain. However, this interpretation is not without its problems.

References


Hauger, Kjetil Ri. 1976. The word order of predicate clitics in Bulgarian. Oslo: University of Oslo.

7 They are transitional between the sort of system found in Serbo-Croatian and that of standard Bulgarian. Since the dialects under examination here are not adjacent to Serbo-Croatian speech territory, it is likely that second position is here an amalgam and not due to contact.

8 From the expository section of the study from which this example has been taken, we should expect to find stress on gnu. The example is from a running text and although no stress is shown on gnu, the vowel reduction seen in ne (13a) when unstressed, shows at any rate that ne itself is not stressed.
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