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ИНСТИТУТ ЗА СРПСКОХРВАТСКИ ЈЕЗИК

# ЈУЖНОСЛОВЕНСКИ ФИЛОЛОГ

## XLIV

У р е ђ и в а ч к и о д б о р :

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## THE EVOLUTION OF THE IMPERFECT IN SERBOCROATIAN

1. Introduction. Like Bulgarian and Macedonian, Serbocroatian has preserved a verbal paradigm expressing past tense and imperfect aspect.<sup>1</sup> Historically, the grammatical portion of forms constituting this paradigm (i.e. the portion following the verbal stem) began with a segment realized as *ě*: or (*j*)*a*:<sup>2</sup>. In the standard literary language, this segment is consistently (*j*)*a*:, but it is no longer initial among the members of a small group comprised

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<sup>1</sup> Following tradition, we will refer to this formation as the *imperfect*. In addition to the imperfect, contemporary standard Serbocroatian has three other formations which express person and number: *present*, *imperative*, and *aorist*. Like the imperfect, the aorist expresses past tense and aspect, and is comparatively rare, especially in the spoken language.

Note the following: (1) Meaningful units are cited in Roman orthography. In the text and notes, *ñ* is used instead of *nj* to represent the palatal nasal. Pitch is unmarked. Unless noted, other suprasegmentals are assumed to be irrelevant, and therefore unmarked. When relevant, length is denoted with a colon (e.g., *ija*:), and ictus with a raised vertical bar preceding the initial segment of the appropriate syllable (e.g., *'tresija:h*, in which *e* is stressed). Contemporary forms are ekavian unless otherwise noted. (2) C = consonant, V = vowel, *ũ* = back jer. (3) Imperfect paradigms are cited with the first person singular form. (4) Historical statements with respect to verbal type are made in terms of Leskien's classification (1962:121—122), knowledge of which is assumed. (5) Verbs are cited with the infinitive and third person plural separated by a slash. The verbs which appear in this paper, with glosses, are: *biti|biju* 'strike', *biti|jesu* 'be', *boleti|bole* 'ache', *brati|beru* 'carry', *čitati|čitaju* 'read', *grepsti|grebu* 'scratch', *hteti|hoće* 'want', *imati|imaju* 'have', *kupovati|kupuju* 'buy', *nesti|nesu* 'carry', *nositi|nose* 'carry', *peći|peku* 'bake', *pisati|pišu* 'write', *prati|peru* 'wash', *tonuti|tomu* 'sink', *tresti|tresu* 'shake', *vesti|vedu* 'lead', and *videti|vide* 'see'. It should be noted that *prati|peru* is not included in Aleksić 1960. The source used for it is Meillet 1969:246.

<sup>2</sup> Both *ě*: and (*j*)*a*: are reflexes of Common Slavic vowels in sequence, which always yielded a long vowel. As a reminder of their origin, we mark length in them throughout this paper although it does not affect the argument. The notation (*j*)*a*: abbreviates *ja*: and *a*:. Among verbs with (*j*)*a*: in the imperfect, *a*: occurred preceded by a consonant (e.g. in *noša:h* from *nositi|nose*), and *ja*: occurred preceded by a vowel (e.g. in *bija:h* from *biti|biju*). The respective sequences sources of *ě*: and (*j*)*a*: were *ěa* (e.g., in *veděahũ* from *vesti|vedu*) and *aa* (e.g., in *čitaahũ* from *čitati|čitaju*), with which we are not concerned. For discussion of their evolution preceding contraction, which yielded *ě*: and *a*:, see Leskien 1914:534—537.

primarily by reflexes of Leskien Class I,<sup>3</sup> where it is preceded by *i* before which a dental (i.e., *c* or *z*) appears for stem final velar (e.g., *pečija:h* for *peča:h* from *pečí/peku*), but other segments remain unchanged (e.g., *tresija:h* for *tresě:h* from *tresti/tresu*). The origin of *i* in the imperfect of these verbs is disputed. At least four sources have been suggested:<sup>4</sup>

- H1: the ekavian imperfect, which had *e*: as the reflex of *ě*: (e.g., *trese:h* in the imperfect of *tresti/tresu*);
- H2: the jekavian imperfect, which had *ije* as the reflex of *ě*: (e.g., *tresijeh* in the imperfect of *tresti/tresu*);
- H3: the ikavian imperfect, which had *i*: as the reflex of *ě*: (e.g., *trési:h* in the imperfect of *tresti/tresu*); and
- H4: the ekavian imperative, which exhibited *i* immediately following the verbal stem (e.g., *trési* in the singular imperative of *tresti/tresu*).

We can eliminate the first source from serious consideration since those who suggest it assume the prior existence of *e:ja:*, claiming that *ě*: preceding *j* was reinterpreted as *i* by regular sound change. Leskien (1914:534) notes, however, that *ě:ja:* — a reflex, presumably, of inherited *ě*: and the generalization of (*j*)*a:* — is not attested. The remaining hypotheses each claim an external source for *i* — either an ekavian formation other than the imperfect (i.e., the imperative), or a nonekavian formation (i.e. the ikavian and/or jekavian imperfect). The purpose of this paper is to argue that, although the details of the innovation(s) responsible for the *i* of *ija:* are likely to remain uncertain, it is probable on systemic grounds that *both* external sources were relevant. Consideration is also given to the universal assumption that *ja:* is a reflex of (*j*)*a:*.

<sup>3</sup> Structurally, these are the so-called unsuffixed verbs; i.e. verbs with *CVC* (e.g., *gřepsti/gřebu*), *CV* (e.g., *biti/biju*), or *CVC* alternating with *CV* (e.g., *vesti/vedu*) in the stem. Within this group, the occurrence of (*j*)*a:* versus *ě*: was determined by the final segment of the stem: *ja:* after a vowel (e.g., *bija:h* from *biti/biju*); *a:* after a palatal consonant (e.g., *peča:h* from *pečí/peku*); *ě*: after other consonants (e.g., *vedě:h* from *vesti/vedu*). It should be noted that: (1) We are assuming unsuffixed status for verbs like *biti/biju* although they were members of Leskien Class III, not. I. (2) The string *ija:* is attested not only by reflexes of Class I, but also by *hieti/hoće* and verbs like *imati/ınaju*, which may extend the stem with *d* in the present, imperative, and imperfect. (3) Verbs with *ija:* in the imperfect attest a less common alternative without *i* (e.g., *tresa:h*, a less common alternative to *tresija:h* in the imperfect of *tresti/tresu*).

The occurrence of (*j*)*a:* versus *ě*: in suffixed verbs other than those of Leskien Class IVA (e.g., *noša:h* from *nositi/nose*) is not clear since, in forms like *kupova:h* from *kupovati/kupuju* and *vidě:h* from *videti/vidě*, we could assume an allomorph of the verbal stem (i.e., *kupova:|kupova*, etc), which would mean the absence preceding *h* of a morpheme not belonging to the stem. This remains a topic for investigation, and is not relevant to the analysis or conclusions of this paper.

<sup>4</sup> See Samilov 1964:41—45 for brief commentary on, and references to, the work of some of those who propose the first, second, and third hypotheses. The fourth is proposed by Vaillant (1966:69—70). There are some, e.g., Kul'bakin (1917:92—94) and Belić (1965:61), who apparently interpret *ija:* as the direct descendant of *ěa*. This hypothesis is untenable. According to Leskien (1914:534—535), the attestations available to us leave no doubt that the verbs which evolved *ija:* attested *ě*: from original *ěa*.

2. Discussion. We begin with the assumption that a formation A is *potentially* relevant in the evolution of another formation B if:<sup>5</sup>

- (1) there is a grammatical meaning common to A and B;
- (2) there is a segment in A with a realization X and a segment in B with this realization, or one which differs from it only in a suprasegmental attribute; and
- (3) the position of the segment in A relative to the stem is identical to that of the segment in B.

With regard to the imperfect, both the imperative and the aorist meet all of these conditions. Grammatically, the imperfect has meaning in common with any formation which expresses time before the speech event (i.e., expresses [+past], representing the category of *tense*) or makes reference to the duration of the narrated event (i.e., expresses [+progressive], representing the category of *aspect*). Its grammatical link to the aorist is obvious: both express time before the speech event. Its link to the imperative is less obvious at first. The imperative makes reference to an event anticipated by the speaker in which he wishes the addressee to be a participant. Minimally, a sincere imperative requires only that the speaker want an action to be undertaken, and therefore to be in progress. It does not require him to be concerned with the outcome of the action, although this is frequently the case; e.g. in a minimal imperative like *read!*, with which the speaker directs, in explicit terms at least, only that the action be undertaken, and which therefore may be uttered *before* he has decided how much or how long the action is to proceed (cf. *read for three hours!*, in which the process and its extent are specified). We can therefore understand the semantic core of an imperative to be a *future event in progress*, which entails compatibility of the imperative with the category of *tense* represented by an appropriate feature (e.g., [-past]), and with the category of *aspect* represented by [+progressive], the feature defining the imperfect.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Despite decades of morphological investigation, primarily by Bloomfieldians and Praguians, we still have little knowledge of the strategies used by learners in the assignment of meaning to form. The assumptions we offer do nothing more than formalize the hypothesis, generally accepted, that identity in form and meaning is relevant. They do not offer speculation on the degree to which strings may differ realizationally but still be interpreted as representatives of a single morpheme (i.e., as allomorphs). It should be noted, however, that the second assumption includes the view adopted for this paper that suprasegmental differences do not preclude an allomorphic relationship between strings which are segmentally identical.

<sup>6</sup> See Forsyth 1970:195—196 for brief general commentary on the imperative. It should be noted that, unlike the imperfect, the imperative is regularly formed from perfective verbs as well as imperfective in the Slavic languages. This undoubtedly follows from a peculiarity of the imperative which opposes it to indicative forms. According to Forsyth (1970:195):

In the indicative the basic elements in the speech situation — the event (which is the subject matter, the speaker's utterance about this event, and the hearer's perception of the utterance — can all be seen as *independent* (emphasis mine, MJE) phenomena . . . Utterances in the imperative, however, express the will of the speaker,

Segmentally, both imperfect and aorist exhibited forms with *h* a single unit's distance from the verbal stem. Since *h* was restricted to forms which were [+past] and in the same relative position, it was available to represent their common meaning, and oppose them to forms of the present and imperative, in which *h* was absent. This was true of all verbs, regardless of pattern of conjugation. The segmental relationship between the imperfect and the imperative, however, was more complex. The imperative exhibited *i* or *j* following the verbal stem (e.g., *i* in *nesi* versus *j* in *čitaj*). The verbs which now attest *ija*: in the imperfect all attested *i* in the imperative. Although they inherited *e*: from *ě*: in the imperfect, we must assume that jekavian *ije* and ikavian *i*: were attested as well, in transitional areas at least, with the dominant reflex in the speech of an individual a function of his geographical and sociological history. It should be noted in this regard that ikavian and jekavian speakers had replaced *a*: in the imperfect of Leskien Class I with stem final velar by *i*:. This was accompanied by the replacement of stem-final palatal in the imperfect with dental (e.g., *peča:h* from *peći/peku* was replaced by *peći:h/pećijeh*; *moža:h* from *moći/mogu* was replaced by *mozi:h/mozijeh*).<sup>7</sup> Thus, for speakers exposed to ikavian and/or jekavian forms, there was not only a grammatical link between the imperative and the imperfect, but a segmental one as well, i.e., *i*(:) immediately following the verbal stem of

who intends to influence the behaviour of the hearer and cause him to perform the action denoted by the verb, which at the moment of speaking is no more than an idea in the speaker's mind . . . Thus the basic elements in the linguistic situation are interrelated *more closely* (emphasis mine, MJE) and in a more complex way: the subject-matter of the utterance is in fact the whole linguistic situation embracing speaker, hearer, and projected event.

Thus, the compatibility of the imperative with perfective aspect is not a contradiction in terms, but a reflection of its nature. The imperative *subsumes* the event, and may therefore refer simultaneously to its progression and its result. Indicative formations like the imperfect, however, do not subsume the event. Therefore, those expressing aspect normally focus either on the progression of the event or its result, but not both.

<sup>7</sup> Leskien (1914:535) notes that dental for velar in the ikavian and jekavian imperfect is attested in the fifteenth century, i.e., before attestations of *ija*:. We therefore assume that speakers of ekavian were exposed to nonekavian imperfects with this substitution. In this regard, it should be noted that the occurrence of dental for velar before *ija*: in the contemporary literary language does not prove involvement of the imperative in the evolution of the imperfect, which seems to be the assumption made by Vaillant (1966:70). The reason is that we cannot be certain of the synchronic interpretation of the alternation. In conjugation and the declension of nouns, substitution of dental for velar appears to be automatic before desinence initial *i*. If this is true, stem final dental in the imperative and imperfect of verbs like *peći/peku* cannot be associated with these formations as such. We should also mention the possibility that the appearance of *i* in the imperative plural of ekavian dialects resulted not from generalization on the basis of verbs which inherited *i*, the traditional assumption, but from borrowing of imperative forms as well as imperfect — more precisely, from borrowing of the *relationship* we have claimed existed, not just imperfect forms.

Leskien rejects the imperative as the source of stem final dental, and suggests derived imperfectives. Although we cannot be certain of the source (i.e., automatic substitution before desinence initial *i* or the imperative) we can reject Leskien's argument, which is based on his failure to appreciate the grammatical meaning common to imperfect and imperative forms.

certain verbs, and stem-final dental in verbs like *peći/peku*.<sup>8</sup> Significantly, *i* in this position was *restricted* to these formations within the conjugational unit, and so was available to represent the meaning common to them (i.e., [+progressive]),<sup>9</sup> thereby opposing them most probably to the present, in which *e* was available to represent [—progressive] (i.e., unmarked for the aspectual distinction *progressive* versus *nonprogressive*).<sup>10</sup>

In the verbs which concern us, therefore, jekavian and ikavian forms of the imperfect, unlike ekavian, permitted representation of its grammatical relationship to the imperative as well as the aorist, and so were functionally superior to ekavian, which could reflect only the relationship to aorist forms. Thus, if we assume a general preference for analyses which maximize the morphological representation of grammatical meaning, there was ample motivation for the extension of nonekavian forms, and particularly jekavian in view of their geographical proximity, at the expense of ekavian among speakers exposed to more than one type. However, verbs which attest *ija*: in the standard literary language are not the only ones in which *i* is expected if we are correct in our assumption that its evolution was a function of *e* in the present opposed to *i* in the imperative and imperfect. Reflexes of Leskien Class II also exhibited this opposition. They do not, however, attest *ija*: in the imperfect, but *a*: preceded by *ñ*; thus, *toña:h* in the imperfect of *tonuti/tonu*, etc. The contemporary forms seem to suggest replacement of *ě*: by (*j*)*a*: but this innovation would presumably have left the dental point of articulation of stem-final nasal unchanged (cf. *veda:h*, a less common alternative to *vedija:h* in the imperfect of *vesti/vedu*, in which addition of *a*: to the verbal stem was not accompanied by a change in the point of articulation of the stem final segment). Following Leskien (1914:535), we can motivate the palatal nasal in Class II imperfects by assuming the verbs in question evolved *ija*: but lost *i* as the result of a sound change eliminating this segment when unstressed and preceding *j*, which was its status throughout Class II. As a result, stem-final *n* preceded *j*, and underwent *palatalization* followed by

<sup>8</sup> At an earlier stage of the language, reflexes of Leskien Classes I and II attested *ě* in plural forms of the imperative. New forms with *i* are attested early, in the fourteenth century (Leskien 1914:551—552). Since *ija*: in the imperfect is not attested until the sixteenth (Leskien 1914:534), we assume that, by the time of its appearance and before the period of its evolution, *ě* in the imperative plural had already been replaced by *i*. This assumption is significant because verbs which evolved *ija*: in the imperfect were those which inherited *ě* in the plural imperative. Thus, there was an *inherited* link between the imperfect and imperative, i.e., *ě*, in the segment immediately following the verbal stem. This link ceased to exist in ekavian dialects with the replacement of *ě* by *i*. It was reestablished, we have claimed, only in the speech of those who were exposed to jekavian imperfects, in which the segment immediately following the verbal stem in the verbs we are considering was *i*.

<sup>9</sup> We are assuming that phonetic units restricted to marked forms within some domain — here, the domain constituted by forms of the present, imperative, and imperfect among verbs of a certain type — are available to represent this meaning. For discussion with respect to alternating segments in lexical morphemes, see Elson 1980.

<sup>10</sup> Opposition to the present is inferable from the fact that, among verbs of the *pisati/pišu* type, the imperative can be opposed only to the present since its morphological structure (i.e., *unsuffixed stem + ending*; e.g., *piši* in the imperative of *pisati/pišu*) makes it incompatible with other personal formations, which are built on the suffixed stem (e.g., *pisah* in the aorist of *pisati/pišu*).

deiotation, changes well attested in the evolution of Serbocroatian. Thus, we assume that *tonija:h* evolved in the imperfect of *tonuti/tonu* as part of the innovation which gave rise to *tresija:h* in the imperfect of *tresti/tresu*. In *'tonija:h*, *i* was unstressed and preceding *j*; it was therefore eliminated with concomitant palatalization of *n* and loss of *j*. In *tre'sija:h*, however, *i* was stressed, and so not vulnerable to these innovations. Leskien notes that there is support for this interpretation in *'ida:h*, the imperfect of *ići/idu*, and *'jeda:h*, the imperfect of *jesti/jedem*. Unlike other unsuffixed verbs which met the realizational prerequisites for the evolution of *'ija:*, they were stem stressed, which meant that *i* in the imperfect was unstressed and preceding *j*. It was therefore eliminated with concomitant palatalization and deiotation, yielding *'jeda:h* from *'jedija:h* and *'ida:h* from *'idija:h*. Verbs extended with *d* (e.g., *imati/imaju*) should also be mentioned in this regard. At least two such verbs, i.e., *imati/imaju* and *znati/znaju*, attest alternative imperfects: one with *'ija:*, in which *i* is stressed, the other with *a:* preceded by a palatal, in which the stem is stressed (e.g., *zna'dija:h* and *'znada:h*, both attested in the imperfect of *znati/znaju*).<sup>11</sup> The alternatives suggest a correlation between the occurrence of *i* and the location of the stress which is identical to the one suggested by Leskien. Finally, unstressed *i* preceding *j* in *'berija:h* and *'perija:h* — respectively the imperfects of *brati/beru* and *prati/peru* — need not be taken as counterevidence to Leskien's hypothesis. To accommodate them, we need only reformulate the innovation as elimination of unstressed *i* preceding *j* and following a palatal. Since *r* was not vulnerable to palatalization, *i* did not meet the conditions for elimination.

Remaining to be considered is the innovation responsible for *(j)a:* in *ija:*. It is tempting to assume that *(j)a:* was simply generalized at the expense of *e:* since the latter is no longer attested. But there is little doubt that, although *(j)a:* was in some sense generalized, the innovation responsible for its extension was more complex than unconditioned replacement of *ě:* by *(j)a:* in the segment following the verbal stem. First, among reflexes of Leskien Class IV, it was generalized with concomitant palatalization of the preceding segment, presumably on the pattern of verbs in this Class with the stem structure *CVC-i/CVC*, which inherited *(j)a:* preceded by a palatal in the imperfect (e.g., *vida:h*, which replaced *vidě:h* in the imperfect of *videti/vide* on the pattern of *noša:h*, the inherited imperfect of *nositi/nose*). The replacement of *ě:* by *(j)a:* among reflexes of the other classes was not accompanied by a change in point of articulation of the stem final segment (e.g., *veda:h*, which replaced *vedě:h* as an alternative to *vedija:h* in the imperfect of *vesti/vedu*). Thus, *(j)a:* was evidently extended within domains defined by the predominant realization of the segment following the stem in the present. Second,

<sup>11</sup> Aleksić 1960 cites *'imadija:h* as the *'ija:* imperfect of *imati/imaju*. This apparently reflects an innovation. Leskien 1914:533 and Meillet 1969:248 cite *i'madija:h*, implying *ima'dija:h* prior to the retraction of the ictus in štokavian dialects. In this regard, it should be noted that the štokavian retraction is attested in the fifteenth century, and therefore preceded the appearance of *'ija:* in the sixteenth. Leskien's hypothesis is nevertheless tenable because, regardless of the chronology of the retraction with respect to the appearance of *'ija:*, there was an accentual difference between forms which now attest *'ija:* and those like *ioña:h*, which Leskien claims attested it and subsequently lost *i*.

among reflexes of the other classes, it is not clear that  $(j)a:$  was generalized at all in the usual sense. Looking at the domain defined by  $e$  in the present, we note that  $ja:$  was restricted to verbs with a vocalic stem-final segment (e.g., *bija:h* in the imperfect of *biti/biju*). Thus, *ije* in the jekavian imperfect, to the extent it was used by speakers of skavian, was an anomaly within this class because it exhibited a vowel (i.e.,  $i$ ) followed by  $je$ , not  $ja:$ . It is reasonable to hypothesize, therefore, that  $ja:$  replaced  $je$ , with *ija:* as the result and a distribution without anomaly (i.e.,  $ja:$  after a vowel;  $\acute{e}$ : elsewhere). This leaves us with new forms in  $(j)a:$  (e.g., *veda:h*), which are less common alternatives to the new forms in *ija:*. It is traditionally assumed that  $\acute{e}$ : in the inherited forms (e.g., *vedě:h* from *vesti/vedu*) was simply replaced by  $(j)a:$ . But this interpretation leaves unexplained (1) the preference for  $(j)a:$  rather than  $\acute{e}$ :, and (2) the failure of reflexes of Leskien Class II to evolve alternatives. Why was  $\acute{e}$ : susceptible to replacement? And, if *veda:h* arose as an alternative to *vedija:h*, why do we not find *tona:h* as an alternative to *toña:h* from *tonija:h*? The answer is probably reflexes of Leskien Class I with final velar (e.g., *peći/peku*), which, after the evolution of *ija:*, attested two imperfect forms with  $(j)a:$  (e.g., *pecija:h* and *peča:h* from *peći/peku*) since they inherited  $(j)a:$ , not  $\acute{e}$ :. We need only suppose that, among these verbs, *ija:* and  $(j)a:$  were related morphophonemically as *long* (i.e., *ija:*) versus *short* (i.e.,  $(j)a:$ , with  $i$  absent).<sup>12</sup> This morphophonemic relationship was extended to other unsuffixed verbs, yielding forms like *veda:h* replacing *vedě:h* as alternatives to *vedija:h*.<sup>13</sup> Since reflexes of Leskien Class II were not unsuffixed, they were not vulnerable to the innovation. The verb *moći/mogu*, however, poses a problem. This verb should exhibit *mozija:h* in the contemporary imperfect, with *moža:h* as an alternative. Instead of the expected forms, however, we find *moga:h*, which Leskien (1914:534) notes is attested in the fifteenth century, prior to *ija:*. Nevertheless, it does not follow that *moga:h* in the standard language is old. In this regard, it may be significant that, unlike other verbs of its type, standard *moći/mogu* lacks the expected imperative forms *mozi* and *mozite*, apparently for semantic reasons. If, synchronically, the remade imperfect in *ija:* is built on what may be termed the *imperative stem* (i.e., *CVC-i*), and if the short imperfect is derived from the long via deletion of  $i$  and, when appropriate, mutation of *palatal* to *dental* (e.g., in the derivation of *peča:h* from *pecija:h*), we must conclude that *mozija:h* and, therefore, *moža:h* are systematically unmotivated as a result of the absence of an imperative. Historically, this situation may have given rise to *moga:h*, a new imperfect built on the basic stem of the verb, leaving other reflexes of Leskien Class I unaffected (e.g., *peći/peku*, which does not attest *peka:h* in the standard language).

<sup>12</sup> The relationship *full/reduced* is well attested in Serbocroatian adjectival, pronominal, and verbal morphology (e.g., *-om/-ome* in adjectival and pronominal declension; *jesam/sam* from *biti/jesu*, etc. in the verbal system). Such a relationship could have been imposed between *ija:* and  $(j)a:$  on the basis of already existing patterns.

<sup>13</sup> This interpretation explains the existence of *jeda:h* and *ida:h* as alternatives to *jeđa:h* and *idja:h* in the imperfect of *jesti/jedu* and *ići/idu* if we assume that the evolution of short forms preceded the loss of unstressed  $i$  before  $j$ . Thus, for *jesti/jedu*, we assume that *jedija:h* gave rise to the short form *jeda:h* before the loss of  $i$ , and to *jeđa:h* after it. It should be noted that *ida:h* is not cited in Aleksić 1960. The source for it is Meillet 1969:249.



3. Conclusion. It may well be that, previously, scholars have distinguished too sharply between *external* and *internal* sources in their attempts to motivate *ija*: in the imperfect of contemporary standard Serbocroatian. In commenting on the extreme position of some that „morphologies cannot be mixed,” Weinreich (1968:44) states his opinion, supported by evidence, that „the transfer of individual morphemes of all types is definitely possible under certain favorable structural conditions . . . (although) not every conjuncture of favorable structural conditions results in permanent grammatical interference of the type one might predict.” We have speculated that certain structural conditions (i.e., identity in realization of the segment immediately following the verbal stem, and a grammatical meaning in common) favored interaction between the ekavian imperative and jekavian forms of the imperfect, which we must assume were both present in the speech of at least some natives. Within this framework, the evolution of *ija*: was a function of both external factors (i.e., the existence of imperfect forms not native to speakers of ekavian) as well as internal (i.e., the existence of a grammatical link between the imperative and imperfect which opposed them to the present). After its appearance, we have assumed, following Leskien, that *i* was eliminated if unstressed and preceded by a nonpalatal consonant, a change which affected all reflexes of Class II. We have also assumed that *ja*: of *ija*: did not arise as part of a generalization of this string, but as a consequence of the condition for its occurrence (i.e., following a vowel) within the class constituted by verbs exhibiting *e* in the present. Finally, we have attributed the existence of alternatives to *ija*: in (*j*)*a*: (e.g. *veda:h*, an alternative to *vedija:h*) to extension of the pattern exhibited by the imperfect of verbs like *peći/peku*, which, after the appearance of *ija*:, opposed a long imperfect with this string to a short one with *a*: (e.g., *pečija:h* versus *peča:h* in the imperfect of *peći/peku*, extended to the imperfect of *vesti/vedu*, yielding *vedija:h* versus *veda:h* instead of *vedija:h* versus *vedě:h*).

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## Резиме

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### O RAZVOJU IMPERFEKTA U SRPSKOHrvatSKOM

У овом се раду преиспитује настанак имперфекатског обличког форманта *ија:|а:* у оним глаголима стандардног српскохрватског који нису изведени помоћу суфикса (*ӣресија:х | ӣреса:х* и сл.). Аутор сматра да је елемент *и* у том обличком форманту потекао из старе јекавске верзије имперфекатског облика датих глагола (*ӣресијех* и сл.), којом су се, највероватније, служили и многи екавци. Она је имала ту предност над екавском верзијом са *е:* (*ӣресе:х* и сл.) или *а:* (*ӣеча:х* и сл.) да је чинила могућим приказивање граматичког значења заједничког не само имперфекту и аористу, него и имперфекту и императиву. Међутим, јекавску форму имперфекта одликовала је својеврсна аномалија — иза *и* се није појављивало *ја*, што би иначе, с обзиром да претходи вокал, требало очекивати (уп. *бија:х* и сл.), него *је*. Аномалија је уклоњена тиме што је *је* замењено са *ја*, тако да се формант преобликовао у *ија:* и у том морфолошком виду почео употребљавати напоредо с екавским формантима *е:* и *а:* (*ӣресија:х | ӣресе:х* и сл.; *ӣеција:х | ӣеча:х* и сл.). Накнадно је, међутим, однос између *ија:* и *а:* протумачен као однос између дуже и краће верзије истог обличког форманта, што је утицало на даљу судбину релације *ија: | е:*. Пошто се, наиме, за ту релацију није нашла одговарајућа интерпретација, она је ликвидирана у корист оне претходно поменуте. Друкчије речено, алтернација коју егземплификују облици као *ӣресија:х | ӣресе:х* и сл. заменила је алтернација коју егземплификују облици као *ӣресија:х | ӣреса:х* и сл.