

Contrastive View Between Several English and Albanian Prepositions

Fridrik Dulaj¹, Petrit Duraj², Shemsi Haziri¹, & Senad Neziri¹

¹ Faculty of Philology, University “Fehmi Agani” – Gjakovë Kosovo

² Faculty of Education, University “Fehmi Agani” – Gjakovë Kosovo

Correspondence: Petrit Duraj, University “Fehmi Agani” – Gjakovë Kosovo.

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Abstract

This paper presents a contrastive view on use of several English and Albanian prepositions, with particular focus on several English prepositions, *in*, *on* and *at*, equivalent to Albanian preposition *n ë*. In English language, grammatically there are clearly defined uses of these prepositions. However, in Albanian language, all three English prepositions are translated with Albanian preposition *n ë* which shows that Albanian language is less developed when it comes to the use of prepositions. This is due to the development of cases system and word endings based on internal grammatical rules of Albanian language. Also, in this study there will be presented some other contrasts between English and Albanian prepositions, in regards to, classification of prepositions according to cases in Albanian language: prepositions in nominative, genitive, accusative and ablative (*Alb. rrjedhore*) case and lack of their classification in cases in English grammars; conversion of prepositions into conjunctions in some cases in English and lack of this occurrence in Albanian; use of prepositions in the end of sentence in English and lack of this occurrence in Albanian, since it is in contradiction with internal syntax rules of Albanian language.

Keywords: English prepositions, Albanian prepositions, analytical language, synthetic language, contrastive view

1. Introduction

In this study, initially we will treat several contrastive features between several English and Albanian prepositions. At first the differences do not seem substantial, but after analyzing the analytical grammatical system of English language, which differs from the synthetic grammatical system of Albanian language, we understand that the English prepositions, based on English grammars, are more developed and have wider use, due to numerous syntactic functions in discourse. Firstly, we will shortly present general knowledge on prepositions and then we will discuss some contrasts between English and Albanian prepositions. Albanian language belongs to the synthetic languages system, whereas English language belongs to the analytic one. We believe that the reason for this development lies in the lack of case word endings in English language, and this function of case word endings is performed by English prepositions, like *to*, *of*, *with*, *from*, *at*, etc. Preposition is closed part of speech which expresses syntactic relationships of dependence between a noun, a numeral (*Alb. num ërori*), or a pronoun in a certain situation and another word within a phrase, as for example, *luaj me top* (*words in bold are Albanian prepositions*), *e njoha nga t ëfolurit*, *rreshtohuni p ër dy*, *udh ëimi rreth bot ës*, *lapidari buz ë rrug ës*, *nj ë let ër p ër mua*, *i shpejt ën ë pun ë i dashur me t ë gjith ë dy prej nesh*, *larg nga qyteti*, etc. (ASHSH – group of authors, 1995: 381). From the phrasal examples above it can be seen that the word which depends on the sentence constituent with preposition may be a verb, noun, adjective, number, or adverb, but in most of the cases prepositions link a noun with a verb. Definition of prepositions is similar in English and Albanian language, but in the other parts of this paper there are presented some contrasts between them, which will be elaborated in more details in the first and second part of this study.

2. Theoretical Background

For having an appropriate insight into the topic and performing this contrastive study between English and Albanian prepositions, we have consulted several English and Albanian grammars books, different distinguished English and Albanian linguists, and also other materials relevant to this scientific research. Even though all the materials and authors are listed in the references at the end of this paper, here we will distinguish some of them, as following: *Albanian Grammar (Gramatika e gjuh ë shqipe I)*, by group of distinguished Albanian linguists (1995); Tom Cole (2006); Jashar Kabashi (2000); Seth Lindstromberg (2010); Shemsi Haziri (2019, 2020); Fridrik Dulaj (2016), Ali Jashari (2009), as well as other authors and publications relevant to this research.

3. Methods

For performing this scientific research, we have used two methods. The first is the *method of comparison* of English and Albanian prepositions, based on grammatical rules of these two languages. The second is the *method of analysis*, by which we have managed to reveal the contradictions and contrastive occurrences between the rules of usage of prepositions in English and Albanian language, which are evident and numerous.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Use of English Prepositions in Contrast to Use of Albanian Prepositions

Number of usages of Albanian prepositions is much smaller in contrast to English prepositions which have a defined system of usage for specific cases. They have a more dynamic and contrastive system compared to the Albanian language.

For example, for English prepositions **at**, **in** and **on**, in Albanian language it is used preposition **n ë**

Examples of usage of preposition **in**: **In** October; **In** winter; **In** the 20th century.

Examples of usage of preposition **on**: **On** Easter Monday; **On** Christmas Day.

Examples of usage of preposition **at**: **At** four o'clock; **At** lunch (time); **At** the weekend; **At** the time. (Kabashi, 2000: 352).

Table 1. Prepositions in - n ë

English preposition – in	Albanian preposition – n ë
In October	<i>N ë</i> tetor
In winter	<i>N ë</i> dim ër
In the 20th century	<i>N ë</i> shekullin XX (e 20-t ë)

Table 2. Prepositions on - n ë

English preposition – on	Albanian preposition – n ë
On Easter Monday	<i>N ë</i> t ë H ën ën e Pashk ëve
On Christmas Day	<i>N ë</i> Dit ën e Krishtlindjeve

Table 3. Prepositions at - n ë

English preposition – at	Albanian preposition – n ë
At four o'clock	<i>N ë</i> or ën kat ër
At lunch (time)	<i>N ë</i> koh ën e drek ës
At the weekend	<i>N ë</i> fundjav ë
At the time	<i>N ë</i> koh ë

Based on tables 1, 2 and 3, all examples of English prepositions, like **in**, **on** and **at**, are equivalent to Albanian preposition **n ë**, which is used for all three English prepositions.

4.2 Use of Albanian Prepositions Based on Respective Cases

In Albanian language prepositions are classified according to their usage in nominative, genitive, accusative and ablative case (excluding dative case, in which there are no prepositions in Albanian language).

Prepositions in nominative case: **nga**, **te** (**tek**). *Ësht ënga* Prishtina. *U rr ëzua nga* lodhja. *Nga* darka do t ë dukemi. *Rrinte te* pragu i der ës dhe v ështronte avion ë q ë fluturonin. (Beci, 2004: 159).

Prepositions (prepositional phrases) in genitive case: **me an ë**, **me rastin**, **n ë sajë**, **n ë vend**, **n ë drejtim**, **n ë mes**, **p ër shkak**, etc. *Me an ë t ë* nj ë miku arrita ta kap ërcej kufirin. *Ekonomia e nj ë vendi mbahet n ë sajë* t ë kontributit q ë jep populli. *Sht ëpia mbeti p ër gjysm ë p ër shkak* t ë largimit t ënd. (Beci, 2004: 159).

Prepositions in accusative case: **n ë me**, **pa**, **p ër**, **m ë mbi**, **n ën**, **nd ër**, **n ëp ër**, **bashk ë me**, **tog me**, **me gjith ë**, **n ë krahasim me**, **n ë lidhje me**, **n ë pajtim me**, **n ëp ërshatje me**, etc. *Erdhi von ën ë sht ëpi*. *Nuk rrihet pa* pun ë *Mira u nis dje p ër* Bruksel. *M ë* 28 gusht kam dit ëndjen. (Beci, 2004: 159).

Prepositions in ablative case: **prej**, **ndaj**, **p ër**, etc. *Ishte prej* Prizreni. *Ndaj* tij u mor ën masa t ë rrepta sigurie. *E kapi p ër* gryke. (Beci, 2004: 159). Preposition **p ër** which is originally a preposition of accusative case, historically has constructed phrases which have syntactic use in ablative case. Such usages are present also in folk speech. For example: *E kapi p ër* hund ësh. *E kapi p ër* brish. (Dulaj, 2016 :279). Therefore, we can conclude that in this case there is flexibility.

Table 4. Prepositions in Albanian language classified according to cases

Cases in Albanian	Prepositions in Albanian
1. Nominative	<i>Nga, te, tek.</i>
2. Genitive	<i>Me an ë p ër shkak, n ë sajë</i> , etc.
3. Dative	No prepositions in dative case.
4. Accusative	<i>N ë me, pa, p ër, mbi, n ën</i> , etc.
5. Ablative	<i>Prej, ndaj, p ër</i> , etc.

In contrast to Albanian, in English language there is no classification of prepositions based on cases, as presented above in elaboration of use of prepositions based on cases.

4.3 Transformation of English Prepositions into Conjunctions and Adverbs in Certain Cases

As elaborated in English grammars, prepositions, except their transformation into conjunctions, in certain cases they may be also used in the function of adverbs. Here are some examples.

Preposition: *Let's have our meeting **after** lunch.*

Conjunction: *Let's have our meeting **after** we have had lunch.*

Adverb: *John came on Tuesday, and I arrived the day **after**.* (Kabashi, 2000: 352).

5. Use of English Prepositions at the End of Sentence

In the syntactic system of English language in some cases of direct and indirect interrogatory sentences the preposition is placed at the end of sentence: *Who shall I send it **to**? What train shall I go **by**? What are you laughing **at**? I wonder which team he plays **for**.* (ibidem).

Table 5. Placement of prepositions at the end of interrogatory sentences in English

Prepositions at the end of sentence in English	In Albanian prepositions are not placed at the end of sentence
<i>Who shall I send it to?</i>	<i>Kujt t'ia dërgoj?</i>
<i>What train shall I go by?</i>	<i>Me cilin tren do t'ëshkoj?</i>
<i>What are you laughing at?</i>	<i>Me çfarë po qesh?</i>
<i>I wonder which team he plays for?</i>	<i>Pyes veten për cilin ekip luan?</i>

Placement of preposition in English at the end of sentence, as shown in examples in Table 3, is never found in sentences in Albanian language, and this phenomenon is in contradiction with its syntax. Moreover, in certain cases, like in the first example of interrogatory sentence in Table 5, equivalent sentences in Albanian do not use a preposition at all.

6. Syntactic Functions of Prepositions in English and Albanian Grammars

As stated above, English prepositions are far more developed in English language rather than in Albanian. Therefore, in English grammar books the prepositions are described and systematized in detail based on provisions and functions, which will be presented below.

For time: *about, at, before, during, past, for, from, in, on, since, till, until.*

*I can see you **on** Monday/ **in** August/ **at** 8 p.m./ **for** half an hour/ **during** the holiday.*

For reason: *because of, for, out of.*

I did it *because of* my father/ *for* my father/ *out of* fear.

For purpose: *for, to, in order to, so as to, for purpose of.*

*A hammer is used **for** knocking nails.*

For manner: *in, with.*

*She spoke **with** a smile/ **in** a soft voice.*

For direction: *to, out, of, from.*

Jim has gone *to* a restaurant. We ran *from* the building.

For means: *by, on, in.*

*I came **by** bus/ **on** foot/ **in** a taxi.*

Preposition *by* can be used for time, place and means, as for example:

Time: *by next week*; Place: *by the windows*; Means: *by working hard.* (Kabashi, 2000: 350).

In English language the prepositions are used based on respective rules and at the same time there are evident synonyms of prepositions which have special usages in certain cases. Therefore, if these prepositions are not used when appropriately when speaking English, the speakers can be noticed that they do not speak the language fluently or even may not be understood properly.

The same phenomenon is noticed at the rules of usage of certain English prepositions, as: *for, since, ago* and *before*.

Preposition *for* is used for time: *for five years, for three months, forever, for my holidays,* etc.

Preposition *since* is used in present perfect and past perfect tenses: *He has been here since Sunday. (From Monday till now). He had not seen Jane since their quarrel.*

Preposition *ago* is to express something that happened in the past but is linked to present: *I passed my driving test six months ago. (six months before now). I wrote to the company weeks ago.*

Preposition *before* is used with verbs in past tenses: *I had passed my driving test months before. Michael finally received a reply to the letter he had written weeks before.*

In addition, there are also some English prepositions which have defined criteria of usage with proper grammatical rules and have important functions in defining grammatical or lexical meaning within a sentence

In Albanian language the use of prepositions is not clearly defined, in comparison with English, in which the prepositions have special functions of usage jointly with tenses of verbs in sentences. This is another verified contrast between the use of prepositions in Albanian language and English language, in which the differentiation is made by the use of prepositional values.

7. Albanian Prepositions and Their Syntactic Functions

The typological feature of the Albanian language is the use of prepositions that are part of the nominative case, which is not a feature of its sisters, i.e. other Indo-European languages. In general, oblique adverbs with the preposition from come to us in greater numbers than other types of adverbs with prepositions. This type of oblique opposition will be looked at in the context of verbal and adjectival phrases, in which opposing relations are expressed. Dealing with this phenomenon has presented difficulties, because it is typical of Albania and there was no model to follow. Therefore, its analysis will be done based on the criteria and requirements of other types of phrases. We learn to do this analysis based on the structural and semantic level. We will be interested in selecting only adversarial relations. Here we are interested in genuine adversarial relationships and not the interwoven ones. Albanian has only the prepositions *nga*, *te* (*tek*) in the nominative case. When the noun is after the prepositions of the nominative case and is not accompanied by any determiner, it is usually placed in the prominent form, while, in cases where it is accompanied by a determiner, we also find it in the non-prominent form. We have phrases of the verb type or preverbal adjective plus preposition from plus noun or pronoun in the nominative case. Different syntactic relations are expressed in the constructions of phrases, verb or adjective derived from the same verb plus preposition from plus noun or pronoun in the nominative case. Meanwhile, the relations of the agent are expressed in the constructions of the verb phrases in the active form plus the preposition from plus the noun or pronoun in the nominative case.

"Ishte e katërta herë që fshati i tyre digjej nga ushtritë e huaja." (Kadare, 2005, f. 71)

In addition to the indirect object with the preposition *nga*, the oblique object in the Albanian language is also formed with another noun preposition. It is the preposition *te*, respectively *tek* before nouns that begin with a vowel. The words to and to can also appear as conjunctions. In cases where we have a group that consists of a noun or pronoun and is preceded by a preposition, in most cases the place is presented to us as circumstantial. But there are many cases when oblique opposites are also expressed with prepositions. The cases when we have a noun or pronoun preceded by the prepositions to e and when there is an intransitive verb that expresses movement towards the opposite, such as: *vij*, *mbërrij*, *përfundoj*, *shkoj*, *fluturoj* etc., appear as oblique opposites with prepositions or even a transitive verb, such as: *sjell*, *paraqitem*, *shpie*, when in addition to spatial relations, they also express the opposite to which the action is directed, in the direction of which the action expressed by the verb is aimed.

"Ai ia përkëdheli flokët dhe me zë fare të ulët i murmuriti, pra, ishte tek ajo që dyshoja dhe mendove se nuk do ta kuptoja." (Kadare, 2009, f. 139)

Such an oblique opposition with the prepositions *te* and *tek* is expressed with proper names of spirits, especially people, in the nominative case or even with a personal pronoun, also in the nominative case. This oblique contrast, which is expressed with a noun or pronoun in the dative case, that is, without a preposition and marked by the verb with the short form of the personal pronoun in the dative case.

"Ne do të shkonim tek ato mysafirë për dy javë." (Kadare, 1999, f. 132)

Oblique opposites with prepositions also appear with expressions or prepositional locutions of the gender case. We will consider only the prepositional expressions which, together with the noun or pronoun, have opposite functions. Gender prepositions with adverbial functions are the prepositions: *me anën*, *me anën në vend*, *në sajë*. With the prepositional phrase *me anën* or *me anën*, the oblique opposite generally expresses itself, the person, rarely even the thing, by which the action expressed by the verb is completed.

"Ishte pikërisht njeriu me mbipetk të errët, që s'donte të njihej, kureshtia e fundit që përmendej me anë të errët të ngjarjes." (Kadare, 2009, f. 170)

With the prepositional phrase *në vend*, the oblique opposite expresses itself, the person or even the thing in whose place another person or even another thing acts.

"Ndjeu përsëri nevojën për ajër, mirëpo në vend të ajrit u mjaftua me hapësirën që gjeti." (Kadare, 2001, f. 130)

The oblique opposition with the prepositional phrase or locution *në sajë* reflects the self, the person or thing thanks to which the action expressed by the verb is completed.

"Ishte fjala për bisedimet e fshehta përpara pushtimit me ekipin shqiptar progjeran, që në sajë të marrëveshjes do të emërte në dorë qeverisjen e vendit." (Kadare, 2008, f. 156)

"The predicate is the case with which most simple prepositions are used. The prepositions with which the predicate is built are: *në me*, *për*, *pa*, *më mbi*, *nën*, *ndër*, *në për*." (ASH, 2002, p. 391). Among the most used prepositions with oblique opposites is the preposition *me*. This is due to the functions that this preposition fulfills. The preposition with is a multivalent preposition. The oblique contrast with the preposition with usually expresses the companion of the subject. Such adversarial relations are established especially in cases where the predicate is expressed by intransitive verbs that mark displacement, with a verb in the middle diathesis or even with a transitive verb that marks an action that must be performed together or alone.

"Do të ishte vërtet një katrahurë e pafund, me skifterë thëllës, lauresha, pëlumbesha e pulbardha, ndoshta mëkeq se ajo më e urrejtur republikane shiritash." (Kadare, 2010, f. 9)

When an indirect object is expressed with a preposition, the preposition *me* can be interchanged with the prepositional *bashk ëme*.

“Ndërsa e përftyroi sallonin **bashk ëme t ëftuarit**, ashtu si ç i kishte takuar kat ër jav ëm ëpar ë kur kishte qen ëp ër her ët ëfundit, ai psherëtiu.” (Kadare, 2003, f. 85)

We have many cases when the sentence has more than one oblique contrast with the preposition *me*, homogeneous contrasts coordinated with the conjunctions *e*, *dhe*, *edhe*.

“Që nga tryeza kryesore, i ati i Migenës e kërkonte vaz ën **me sy dhe me v ënendje** midis pështjellimit.” (Kadare, 2009, f. 150)

Oblique opposites also appear with the preposition *p ër* the accusative case. These opposites express realized opposites, opposites to the benefit or detriment of which the action expressed by the verb is completed, and this opposite is expressed by a human noun or a personal pronoun.

“Në të vërtetë, **p ër shum ëk ënd** flamuri shqiptar ishte në ethe.” (Kadare, 2010, f. 11)

The other accusative preposition, the preposition *n ë* can also form oblique opposites with the preposition. These formations in most cases occur with some verbs that express change, such as: *kaloj*, *ndryshoj*, *p ërkthej*, *shnd ërroj*, *kthej*, etc.

“Ndikimi i Bardhyl B. kishte luajtur, pa dyshim, rolin e tij **n ëk ë ë** ngatërrim.” (Kadare, 2015, f. 78)

Even with the preposition *pa* the accusative, we get oblique opposites with the preposition. The opposites formed with this preposition express themselves, persons or things without which the action expressed by the verb is performed.

“Atë mbrëmje, për çudi, Diana kishte ardhur **pa Stel ën**.” (Kadare, 2001, f. 118)

Statistically, prepositions of the derivative case are more numerous than prepositions of other cases. Of the derivative prepositions that are used the most and from which we get the most opposition is the preposition *prej*. Oblique adverbs with this preposition, in most cases, express action.

“Së pari, nuk vinte **prej shtetit**, përkundrazi, zanafillën e kishte kundërshtetërore.” (Kadare, 2010, f. 12)

Another preposition of the derivative case which appears in the composition of the oblique contrast with the preposition is the preposition *p ërmes*. With this preposition, the indirect object expresses the object through which the action expressed by the verb is performed.

“Kaq shumë i kishte magjepsur ajo hartë, sa nisën të lëviznin pas saj, duke përsëritur kështu zhvendosje të vjetra, të një ushtrie tjetër; t ë kryera **p ërmes arsyesh** të tjera.” (Kadare, 2003, f. 48)

With the preposition *n ëp ërmet*, the oblique opposite with the preposition expresses the object through which the action expressed by the verb is performed.

“Ndërkohë, krahas valles së madhe epike të shtatoreve, një tjetër valle, me përmasa më të vogla, e një skenë tepër të ngushtë, zhvillohej **n ëp ërmet pantomim ë** së busteve.” (Kadare, 2010, f. 56)

Whereas, with the preposition *kund ër*, the indirect object expresses the object in harm's way or against which the action expressed by the verb is directed.

“Në këtë spital jeta do të luftojë **kund ër vdekjes**, drita **kund ër err ësir ë**, e mira **kund ër s ëkeqes**.” (Kadare, 1991, f. 73)

Oblique prepositions also appear with a number of other prepositions of the passive case. Thus, it comes to us with the prepositions: *kundërejt*, *p ërkundërejt*, *krah*, *p ërkrah*, *karshi*, *ndaj*, *pran ë para*, *p ërpara*, *rreth*, *pas*, *mbas*, *p ërball ë* and *drejt*.

8. Conclusions

During this scientific research and contrastive view of English and Albanian prepositions we have reached several conclusions, from which we will highlight several of them. From the presented examples we observe that English prepositions like *in*, *on* and *at*, are equivalent to Albanian preposition *n ë* which is used for all three English prepositions. Also, we concluded that in English there is no classification of prepositions based on cases, which is present in Albanian language. Moreover, we have elaborated the use of Albanian prepositions based on cases, which is another contrast between the prepositions of the two languages. In Albanian grammar it is not present transformation of some prepositions into conjunctions and adverbs in certain cases, as it is evident in English language, based on its internal grammatical rules. The phenomenon of placement of preposition at the end of sentence is never found in Albanian language, which is due to the Albanian syntax which differs from English one. Also, we noted that English prepositions are used based on certain rules, and at the same time there are synonymous prepositions which have special usages in certain situations. If these prepositions are not used appropriately, the speakers can be noticed that they are not English native speakers, or that they do not speak the language fluently and might even end up at not being understood properly. In the end there is another contrast between the prepositions of two languages. In Albanian the use of each preposition is not defined as it is the case with English prepositions, which have special functions of usage within sentences jointly with the verbs, as presented in this paper.

9. Recommendations

Based on contrastive analysis of use of English and Albanian prepositions we recommend that translations from English to Albanian language should take into consideration the situations (circumstances) of use of prepositions in order to manage to convey the message appropriately. If the context of use of prepositions is not considered, certain translations may convey a wrong message. Therefore, on all

occasions, the context is always important for realization of grammatical and lexical meaning.

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