

On Some Aspects Of The Syntax Of The Period In Albanian Dialect Studies

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Abstract

It is known that the grammatical structure of today's literary Albanian, in general terms, reflects the grammatical structure of the vernacular, so in today's stage of the development of standard Albanian and with the demands that are posed to Albanian linguistics, the study of the vernacular takes special importance as a necessity to know better and more deeply the grammatical structure of the Albanian language, and its originality.

The oral creativity of our people has directly served linguistic studies and it is no coincidence that a large part of Albanian language researchers are among the most diligent collectors and publishers.

With such an aim, the object of our paper is precisely the study of the dialects of Albanian, trying to highlight some of the peculiarities of the syntax in the various dialects of Albanian, concentrating more on the subjunctive period.

Keywords: Albanian language, dialectal syntax, period with subordination, standard language.

1. Introduction

Based on a general overview, studies on the Albanian language can be divided into two major periods: the first period, which begins in 1716 with *Osservazioni gramaticali nella lingua Albanese* (Grammatical remarks on the Albanian language and its spelling), known as the first grammar of the Albanian language, written in Italian by Francesco M. da Leçe, in Rome, that extends up to the second half of the 20th century and, the second period that begins in the second half of the 20th century and up to today.

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Both these periods are inseparable parts of a single history, but they also have important distinctions between them.

2. The first period

In the first period, local and foreign researchers were involved in the study of the Albanian language, and in particular its grammatical structure. These are studies mainly on the morphology of the Albanian language, while the studies that dealt with the syntactic structure are fewer. However, they are of interest for the efforts made by their authors in *reflecting the vernacular*.

We can mention *De Rada's Grammar*³, which is mainly based on Arbëresh dialect with numerous examples from various Albanian and Arbëresh authors⁴; *The Grammar of J. Vreto*⁵, which reflects the speech of northeastern Tosk dialect, especially the area of Leskovik⁶; *The Grammar of Dozoni*⁷, which gives us information about some subordinating conjunctions, such as: *që, as, kur, si, posa, ndonëse, tek, tani që* (that, nor, when, as, as soon as, although, at, now that) etc.⁸

Other valuable assistance for the Albanian language, where syntactical issues are addressed, are the texts of Dh. Kamarda⁹, Z. Jubani¹⁰, Th.

³ See more: J. Kastrati, *De Rada's Albanian Grammar of 1870-71*, in the "Scientific Bulletin" of the Higher Pedagogical Institute of Shkodra, Pristina, 1978, p. 53-62.

⁴ *still there*, pg 73.

⁵ see for more: M. Domi, *Jani Vreto's Grammar of 1886 and his contribution to the elaboration of the linguistic terminology of the Renaissance*, in *Albanian Traces*, Prishtina, 1978..

⁶ M. Domi, *Jani Vreto's Grammar of 1886 and his contribution to the elaboration of the linguistic terminology of the Renaissance*, in *Albanian Traces*, Prishtinë, 1978, f. 53-63.

⁷ Auguste Dozon, *Manuel de la langue chkipe ou albanaise*, Paris, 1879.

⁸ See more: J. Kastrati, *History of Albanian Grammar (1635-1944)*, Pristina: Rilindja, 1980, p. 456..

⁹ Dh. Kamarda, *Appendice al sargie di grammatologia comparata sulla lingua albanese*, Prato, 1866.

¹⁰ Z. Jubani, *Raccolta di canti popolari e rapsodie di poemi albanese*, Trieste, 1987.

Mitko¹¹, S. Dine¹², S. Peci¹³, G. Mikeli¹⁴, I. D. Sheperi¹⁵, J. Rrota¹⁶, J. G. Hani¹⁷, K. Kristoforidhi¹⁸, S. Frashëri¹⁹, G. Majeri²⁰, H. Pedersen²¹, etc.

An important contribution to studies of Albanian syntax has been made by A. Xhuvani. In the drafting of his texts, he also relies on the vernacular. Xhuvani has seen the study of the syntax of the Albanian language as closely related to the problems of its purity, as well as to its development and enrichment according to the features and laws that characterize it. Xhuvani has constantly fought for a standard language well supported in the living language of the people, because this is where the constructions and grammatical tools of Albanian language²² are found.

Xhuvani's syntaxes mark a step forward, since previously published grammars, both by local and foreign authors, had mainly dealt with morphology and had touched very briefly, little, or not at all, on syntactic structure. In its entirety, syntax was treated for the first time in "*First knowledge of Albanian syntax. The first part*", published by A. Xhuvani in 1922.

The studies of the prominent albanologist M. Lamberc also provide valuable help. He is among the first to deal with the study of the spoken vernacular and especially with the "*Ciklin e Kreshnikeve*" (Cycle of the Kreshniks) noting the wealth and variety of expressive means of

¹¹ Th. Mitko, *Alvannici molica (Bëleta shqypëtare)*, Aleksandri, 1978; Th. Mitko, *Vepra*, Tiranë, 1981.

¹² S. Dino, *Sea waves*, Sofja, 1908.

¹³ S. Peci, *Grammar Promising Year*, Korça, 1912.

¹⁴ G. Mikeli, *Grammar of the Albanian language*, printing house "Nikaj", Shkodra, 1916.

¹⁵ I. D. Sheperi, *Grammar and Syntax of the Albanian language*, Vlore, 1927.

¹⁶ A. J. Rrota, *Syntax of the Albanian language (or Syntax of Albanian 1942)* for class II, III, IV of secondary schools, Shkodër, printing house A. Gj. Fishta, Shkodër, 1943.

¹⁷ Johan Georg von Hahn, *Albanesische studien, beitraege zu einer grammatik der toskischen dialektes* (Studies on Albanians, constructs for a grammar of Tosk dialect), 1854.

¹⁸ Kostandin Kristoforidhi, *Grammatiki tis albanikis glossis*, 1882.

¹⁹ Sami Frashëri, *Alphabet of the Albanian language*, 1886.

²⁰ Gustav Meyeri, *Kurzgefasste albanesische grammatik*, 1888.

²¹ Holger Pedersen, *Albaneische texte mit glosar*, 1895.

²² A. Xhuvani, *Vepra I*, 1980, p. 110-115; see also: E. Lafe, Views of Aleksandër Xhuvani on language culture, *Philological Studies*, Tirana, 1980, no. 1, p. 87-89.

our legendary epic. He is among the first to pay special attention to the study of the vernacular, relying on a rich subject, collected from old texts and folklore.

Lamberci's studies mark the first steps in the field of Albanian²³ syntax studies.

In conclusion, we can say that the research of the syntax of the vernacular in grammars and syntax studies in this period does not have a comprehensive and systemic presentation. A significant part of the grammars focusses more on dialectal features and not on general features of Albanian, thus not acquiring the features of a good Albanian grammar. A good part of the studies of this period, especially those of foreign linguists, are characterized by a schematic presentation, due to insufficient knowledge of the Albanian language. As J. Kastrati claims, some researchers have written about the grammatical structure of Albanian, taking linguistic data from others, without contact with the language of the people²⁴. Another important shortcoming of these studies is that they were not oriented towards the national language norm.

However, they relied on dialectal subjects and folklore, leaving a valuable heritage and simultaneously opening the way for more in-depth studies²⁵.

3. The second period

begins with the 40s of the 20th century. Like all linguistics, the syntax of the Albanian language was developed inseparably with the great issues of national culture and as part of social and cultural development. Thus begins the most in-depth and systematic study of the syntactic structure of Albanian. In 1952, *K. Cipo Syntax*²⁶ was published. The examples given during the treatment of syntactic issues are taken both from Albanian literature and from the vernacular.

²³ See: E. Lafe, Maksimilian Lamberci - Albanian language researcher, "Philological Studies", 1982, no. 4, p. 180-181.

M. Totoni, E. Hysa, *Results in the field of phonetics and grammar of today's Albanian during 25 years of Liberation*, "Philological Studies", 1969, no. 4, p. 30.

²⁴ J. Kastrati, *History of Albanian Grammatology (1635-1944)*, Prishtinë: Rilindja, 1980, f. 20-21

²⁵ Q. Haxhihasani, *Contribution of Maksimilian Lamberci in the field of Albanian folklore*, "Philological studies", 1982, no. 4, p. 187-191..

²⁶ K. Cipo, *Syntax* (Text for the Pedagogical Institute), Tiranë, 1951.

Cipo's work was followed by other texts, such as: M. Domi *Syntax*²⁷, where the language of popular prose found expression and was better reflected with the examples brought for illustration in the treatment of syntactic units: Mërzitet *me plasë* (very bored). (*Prralla Kombtare*)²⁸

Especially in the syntax of S. Prifti, a wide linguistic subject is analyzed not only from fiction, but also from the language of folklore. For example, in the treatment of derivative relations, the author uses examples both from fiction and folklore: Hingëllon gjogu, *qi a dridhë ashti*. (Legendary folk songs)²⁹.

In this period, studies in the field of syntax become more and more systematic and deep through monographic works and various research articles. Studies increasingly aim to present the syntactic structure of Albanian in general and syntax of the vernacular in particular. In these studies, in contrast to the textbooks, the structure of the language of the people is studied in a more in-depth and scientific way. We mention here the studies on the periods with subordinate clauses, subject clauses, adverbial clauses, determinative clauses, derivative clauses, causal clauses, permissive clauses, comparative clauses, conditional clauses etc.

Let's look at them in detail.

In the work of Q. Haxhihasan "*Një vështrim mbi të folmen e krahinës së Sulovës*"³⁰ (A look at the speech of the province of Sulova) we note that the objective subordinate clauses are constructed in two ways either in the relative mode, or in the participle of the type *per te punuar* (to work).

(For example: *Vajç në pazar me të shes ca dridhë; Arç në pazar për të shitur ca drithë*. The participle accompanied by a noun has the value of a time clause, which expresses an action that is performed before the action of the main clause (*Ardhur Arapi n'sabah, prer kokën e atij djalit, kishte marrë cupën...*). *Si kishte ardhur arapi n'sabah e si kishte prerë kokën e atij djalit, kishte marrë çupën...*)³¹.

²⁷ M. Domi, *Syntax of the Albanian language*, Prishtinë, 1971.

²⁸ M. Domi, *Syntax of the Albanian language*, Prishtinë, 1971, Pg. 109.

²⁹ S. Prifti, *Syntax of the Albanian language*, 1971, Pg. 419.

³⁰ Q. Haxhihasani,, *A look at the speech of the province of Sulova*, BUSHT, 3, Tiranë, 1955.

³¹ Q. Haxhihasani,, *A look at the speech of the province of Sulova*, BUSHT, 3, Tiranë, 1955, Pg. 147-188

"In *Skrapari's speech*³², the absence of subordinating conjunctions is observed in the adversarial, causative and intentional subordinate clauses. (i.e.: *Mos shiko ç'far flasin bota*)³³. This speech is characterized by the use of adverbial conjunctions even before the actual speech or not using them at all.

*I tha gruas që, to t'vete n'kurbet; ky e mori dhe e hëngri atë patën edhe tha se unë e hëngra një; Ky vajti u tha shokëve; mua më gjeti...*³⁴

In *Berati's speech*³⁵, characteristic is the use of the conjunction, of the simple form of the type **për të punuar** (to work), of the negative form of the *pa*+participle type in conditional subordinate clauses (*pa dërguar aber ajo, s'e nis djalit*) and of the conjunction **që (that)** in the direct speech (*Gruaja jote më tha në pazar që mos shko më te...*)³⁶.

We also find that the conjunction **që** as well as the relative pronoun **që** in the *subordinate demonstrative, adverbial, local and temporal clauses*.

Of course, the studies on dialectal syntax go in-depth in Spiro Floqi's monograph "*Për të folmen e Dangëllisë*"³⁷ (For the Speech of Dangëllia). Here we notice some of the main peculiarities of the period with subordination, the most typical constructions of this speech. Sentences with subordination are ordered according to the nature of the connectives on the one hand, or to the connecting words: **që, se, kur, sikur, sa, gjersa, posa, ku, tek, si** (that, that, when, as, how long, as, where, to, as).

(i.e.: *Goditi që keshe mik këta të Korcës*). In the case when the period begins with the conjunction **që** (that) the connections between the sentences are made directly, by means of intonation. In the first sentence, the emphasis usually falls on the predicate; there is a pause between sentences. *I qeshë: që qeshe zotrote/është si tallje kundra meje. Ay zdinte fare se nga vinte, ku ke mjellë/s'ke thesnë. Në do gazin/ska kripën. Në të pëlqen/në mos të pëlqen/shëko punën. Sa të shkonc më këmbë/më mirë shko me kalë. Rrinin atje gjersa vinte ora e*

32 J. Gjinari, *Skrapar's speech*, BUSHT SSHSH, 1958/1.

33 J. Gjinari, *Skrapar's speech*, BUSHT SSHSH, 1958/1, Pg. 86-107.

34 J. Gjinari, *Skrapar's speech*, BUSHT SSHSH, 1958/1, Pg. 95-96.

35 J. Gjinari *The speech of the city of Berat*, Buletini Shkencor Shkodër, 1957/1.

36 J. Gjinari, *The speech of the city of Berat*, Buletini Shkencor Shkodër, 1957/1. Pg. 123-125.

37 S. Floqit, *Outline of Dangëllia's speech*, BUSHT, SSHSH, 3/1958. 189-169.

*drekës. Të vesh atje ku rron. Edhe ajo ngrihet e vjen atje/tek i shoqi. A e shihni tek është misri? Si më dhanë dhe urdhrin/shkova. Kush të mungojë më parë/e bluan.*³⁸

In this speech, special features are the subjunctive periods associated with the connecting words **kush** e **që** (who and that), which are also extremities of the corresponding subordinate clauses. *Pas zagushisë që bën/ thomi se do të ketë shi.*³⁹

From these types, where the subordinate clauses with the linking word **që** are further analyzed, we find that, the constructions of the type where the linking word **që** defines a noun with the meaning of place, then a nuance of the meaning of space, of place is superimposed upon the defining meaning: *Atje ishte një kafene që mbledheshin këta.* (There was a cafe that they used to gather).

In the speech of *Progrri and Hogishti*, a subordinate conditional sentence can also be built with a verb in the demonstrative case, in the present tense or in the exclamatory case (*njeriut po s'i ardhka vakti, se gjen gjë*).⁴⁰

In the speech of *Seman*⁴¹ we find some features of the period with *subject, adverbial, demonstrative, intentional, temporal, causative, consequent subordination*. As such, we mention, for example, the non-use of the conjunction **që** (indicative and intentional) before the subordinate clause; the absence of the noun part in subordinate deterministic sentences, the use of the verb in the second person singular of the imperative; the use of repeated participles to indicate an action that lasts and repeats; the repetition of the same verbs connected with the conjunctions **që** or **më qenë se**; the use of the word **aq** in the main sentence and, at the same time, the absence of the verb *jam* in this sentence, which has a nuance of cause for the second clause that emerges as a consequence of the first clause.

³⁸ J. Gjinari, *Outline of Dangallia's speech*, BUSHT, SSHSH, 3/1958. Pg. 160.

³⁹ J. Gjinari, *Outline of Dangallia's speech*, BUSHT, SSHSH, 3/1958. Pg. 162

⁴⁰ J. Gjinari, *The speech of Myzeqe*, Shkodra Scientific Bulletin, 1958/4. Pg. 93.

⁴¹ J. Thomai, *The speech of Seman Village*, Shkodra Scientific Bulletin, 1961/4. Pg. 134-159.

In the data collected for the *speech of Zagoria*⁴², we find the construction of the type *nji të ardhur*⁴³ in subordinate time clauses and its order in relation to the main clause.

In the notes by J. Gjinari regarding the *speech of Mallakastra*⁴⁴ region, causative subordinate clauses are connected with the conjunctions *tek, si, kur, na puna që*. For time subordinate clauses, in this speech, the use of the conjunction *tek* is characteristic. While the conditional subordinate clauses in this speech are connected to the main clause without subordinating conjunctions (with the relative mode) and can have as a predicate a verb in indicative present tense in co-use with the conjunction *kur*⁴⁵.

In *Mati*⁴⁶ speech, with the conjunction *që (çi)*, are used periods with subject subordinate causative clauses. With the conjunction *se*, object subordinate causative clauses are constructed.

A defining feature for the subordinating period for this speech are the constructions with the conjunctions *kur, masi (mbasi)* which help to express temporal, comparative and consequential relations), *sa* (to express temporal, comparative and consequential relations), with the conjunction *si* (to to express relationships of time interwoven with causative and conditional meanings), *kurse, porse*, with the conjunctive expressions *njer kur* to express relationships of time), as well as with the conjunctive word *kush*.

In *Mati's* speech, you can find constructions in the **relative mode**, with the simple present tense form of the verb *tuj punue*. With these modes, different adversarial, intentional, predicative, causal, consequent relationships are expressed in this speech.

In *Dumrea*⁴⁷ speech we notice the comparative conjunctions, *mu si*, the time conjunction *ke*, the conjunctive expression with derivative function *i sen qi* (which comes from the grammaticalization of the

⁴² ⁴² M. Totoni, *E folmja e Zagorisë*, BUSH, SSHSH / 1, 1962.

⁴³ Shih më tepër: M. Totoni, *The speech of Zagoria*, BUSH, SSHSH / 1, 1962, Pg. 205-206.

⁴⁴ 44J. Gjinari, *Remarks on the speech of the region of Mallakastra*, BUSHT, SSHSH, 1962/3, f. 148-180.

⁴⁵ See more: J. Gjinari, *Remarks on the speech of the region of Mallakastra*, BUSHT, SSHSH, 1962/3, Pg. 170-172.

⁴⁶ B. Beci, *Linguistic research in Mat*, BUSHT, SSHSH/3, 1963

⁴⁷ M. Çeliku, *Remarks on Dumre's speech*, BUSHT, SSHSH, 3, 1963.

word **send-** thing), the causative conjunctive expression **manan se** (because of).

In *Lura's*⁴⁸ speech, a characteristic feature is the use of the forms **një të ardhur, me të ardhur** in subordinate time clauses, as well as the use of the infinitive form of the verb, **me punue** especially in subordinate conditional⁴⁹ clauses.

In the data provided for the *speech of Bytyq from the district of Tropoja*⁵⁰, characteristic is the use of the infinitive form of the verb **me punue**, to express subject, adverbial, conditional and *intentional*⁵¹ relations.

From the *speech of Nika_Mërturi*⁵², we single out the hypothetical period. As the author also claims, the protaza is connected to the apodosis accidentally and has as a predicate a verb in the past participle, for example: *me ardh senia/ba boll; me kon dhia e smund/edhe dhi le i smund*. But, we also have cases of using the conjunctions *n'koft,n (e), n'rast se*, i.e.; *n'koft gjykue m'pre harapi/lot për mue ti mos me derdhun; ne m, begenisi mue per mik/ma ep (vajzën) n'rast se nuk e begenisem u atij/m'thot s'maj me ta dhan*.⁵³

In the dialectical work "*Some constructions of the period in the speech of Elbasan*"⁵⁴, "special use have the periods with subordinate clauses with the conjunctions *që, sa, posa, derisa, saqë, si, sikur, posi, kur, masi, meqenëse, po, më qoftë se, në asht se, megjithëse, sado që, megjithqë*, as well as periods with subordinate clauses with linking words *që, kush, ç, çfar, kushdo që, sado...që, çfarëdo...që, çdo...që, sido...që*.⁵⁵

⁴⁸ Q. Haxhihasani, *Linguistic observations in the province of Lura*, BUSHT, SSHSH, 1963/4

⁴⁹ Q. Haxhihasani, *Linguistic observations in the province of Lura*, BUSHT, SSHSH, 1963/4, Pg. 137-138

⁵⁰ J. Gjinari, *Remarks on the speech of Krasniqe, Gash and Butyç provinces of Tropoja district*, BUSHT SSHSH, 1962/4.

⁵¹ J. Gjinari, *Remarks on the speech of Krasniqe, Gash and Butyç provinces of Tropoja district*, BUSHT SSHSH, 1962/4, 192-193.

⁵² E. Lafe, *Nika Merturi's speech*, SF, Tiranë, 1964/3.

⁵³ E. Lafe, *Nika Merturi's speech*, SF, Tiranë, 1964/3, Pg. 132-134.

⁵⁴ Xh. Gosturani, *Some constructions of the period in the dialect of Elbasan*, SF, 1986/1

⁵⁵ Xh. Gosturani, *Some constructions of the period in the dialect of Elbasan*, SF, 1986/1, Pg. 87.

In the "Albanian Dialectology"⁵⁶ some general features of dialectal syntax related to the geographical spread of subordinating conjunctions are reflected.

4. Conclusions

From this brief look at the studies of Albanian dialects, we can say that, just like syntax, even the syntax of the subjunctive period is the least studied field in our dialect studies. The remarks that have been presented in these studies, with some exceptions, are isolated and do not give a complete picture of the syntax of any speech.

Rightly, in the study of the syntax of the period, attention should be paid to the conjunctive periods, as well as to the *asyndetic periods*, the place that each type occupies in the syntactic structure of the dialect, not leaving aside other features, such as: *the temporal connection of the verbs of the parts of the compound sentence, the correlates, the order of the parts, which characterize the structure of the compound sentence*, because differences are also observed in these features.

As M. Totoni notes, the complete and comprehensive study of the syntactic structure, as an ideal in the study of speech, is neither possible nor necessary for every speech, because, in the field of syntax compared to other fields the changes are fewer, therefore the study of special dialectal phenomena (or several of them) will be one of the most common ways, especially for the members of the core of dialectologists⁵⁷.

In conclusion, we can say that in the field of dialectal syntax we find a great wealth of diverse constructions, with special expressive abilities, many original values, which have not been exploited sufficiently or properly or which are not used at all in the written and spoken literary⁵⁸ language. There are constructions and syntactic connections that deserve to become the common norm of today's literary language.

Knowing the wealth of its expressive means will expand and deepen the general knowledge of the language, highlighting valuable means and ways that deserve to be generalized in the standard language.

⁵⁶J. Gjinari, *Albanian dialectology (dispensation)*, 1989.

⁵⁷M. Totoni, *Issues in the study of dialectal syntax*, SF, 1978, Pg. 94.

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