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FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

PROGRAM: ENGLISH LANGUAGE

MASTER'S STUDIES

MASTER'S THESIS

**VERB PHRASES IN ENGLISH AND ALBANIAN WITH
SPECIAL REFERENCES TO SPECIFIC VERBS**

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Abstrakt

This master's thesis examines verb phrases in English and Albanian, with a particular emphasis on specific verbs, aiming to uncover structural and functional similarities and differences between the two languages. Adopting a comparative linguistic approach, the study analyzes a corpus of 56 verb phrase instances drawn from diverse sources, including literary texts, spoken language corpora, and academic publications. The methodology involves a detailed syntactic and semantic analysis, focusing on key grammatical features such as transitivity, modality, and aspect. Verbs like *to be*, *to have*, and *to go*, along with their Albanian counterparts, are analyzed to identify unique patterns of usage and construction, as well as shared linguistic principles. The findings highlight notable differences in the use of auxiliary verbs and modal constructions, while also revealing comparable syntactic structures in the treatment of verb phrases across both languages. These insights contribute to a more nuanced understanding of English and Albanian verb phrase typologies and hold implications for language teaching, translation, and further linguistic research. In conclusion, this thesis offers a comprehensive comparison of English and Albanian verb phrases, contributing to the fields of comparative linguistics and language pedagogy. Limitations of the study are acknowledged, and recommendations for future research are proposed to encourage more extensive cross-linguistic investigation.

Keywords: Verb Phrases, Comparative Linguistics, Syntax, Semantics, Language Pedagogy

Abstrakt

Kjo temë masteri shqyrton frazat foljore në gjuhën angleze dhe atë shqipe, me theks të veçantë te disa folje specifike, duke synuar të zbulojë ngjashmëritë dhe dallimet strukturore e funksionale midis këtyre dy gjuhëve. Duke përdorur një qasje krahasuese gjuhësore, studimi analizon një korpus prej 56 rasteve të frazave foljore, të mbledhura nga burime të ndryshme, përfshirë tekste letrare, korpusë të gjuhës së folur dhe botime akademike. Metodologjia përfshin një analizë të detajuar sintaksore dhe semantike, me fokus në veçori kyçe gramatikore si tranzitiviteti, modaliteti dhe aspekti. Foljet si *to be*, *to have* dhe *to go*, së bashku me ekuivalentët e tyre në gjuhën shqipe, analizohen për të identifikuar modele unike të përdorimit dhe ndërtimit, si dhe parime të përbashkëta gjuhësore. Gjetjet nxjerrin në pah dallime të dukshme në përdorimin e foljeve ndihmëse dhe konstrakteve modale, ndërkohë që tregojnë edhe ngjashmëri strukturore sintaksore në trajtimin e frazave foljore në të dyja gjuhët. Këto përfundime kontribuojnë në një kuptim më të thellë të tipologjive të frazave foljore në anglisht dhe shqip, dhe kanë rëndësi për mësimdhënien e gjuhëve, përkthimin dhe kërkime të mëtejshme gjuhësore. Në përfundim, kjo temë ofron një krahasim të gjithanshëm të frazave foljore në anglisht dhe shqip, duke sjellë kontribute të vlefshme në fushat e gjuhësisë krahasuese dhe pedagogjisë së gjuhës. Gjithashtu, diskutohen kufizimet e studimit dhe jepen sugjerime për kërkime të ardhshme në drejtim të analizave më të zgjeruara ndërgjuhësore.

Fjalë kyç: Fraza Foljore, Gjuhësi Krahasuese, Sintaksë, Semantikë, Pedagogji e gjuhës

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Introduction

Verb phrases are fundamental components of sentence structure, playing a crucial role in expressing actions, states, and events across all languages. As a core element of syntax, verb phrases contribute not only to the grammatical formation of sentences but also to their meaning and interpretation. In both English and Albanian, verb phrases typically consist of a main verb, which may be accompanied by auxiliary verbs, modal verbs, particles, and other syntactic elements. These constructions reveal the linguistic mechanisms through which languages convey tense, aspect, mood, voice, and other grammatical categories.

The study of verb phrases offers valuable insights into the syntactic and semantic organization of a language, with implications for fields such as theoretical linguistics, language education, and translation studies. While English verb phrase structures have been extensively analyzed due to the language's global significance and abundant linguistic resources, Albanian remains comparatively underexplored. This contrast presents both challenges and opportunities for linguistic inquiry. The differences in verb phrase structures between English and Albanian highlight distinct typological features and provide a meaningful basis for cross-linguistic comparison.

This research aims to conduct a detailed comparative analysis of verb phrases in English and Albanian, focusing on high-frequency and functionally significant verbs such as *to be*, *to have*, and *to go*, along with other auxiliary and modal verbs. By analyzing these verbs in diverse syntactic and semantic contexts, the study seeks to reveal how verb phrases are constructed and function in both languages, drawing on examples from everyday speech, formal writing, and media discourse.

The comparison will illuminate broader issues of linguistic typology and grammatical expression. For instance, English commonly relies on auxiliary verbs to express tense and aspect, whereas Albanian utilizes a combination of inflectional morphology, auxiliary verbs, and particles. These differences shed light on each language's grammatical flexibility and constraints. Understanding

these structures is essential not only for linguistic theory but also for practical applications in second language teaching, translation, and curriculum development.

In bilingual contexts such as Albania and Kosovo, where English is widely taught as a second language, a clear understanding of verb phrase structures in both languages can enhance pedagogical strategies. Such insights can assist learners in mastering complex features like auxiliary usage, modals, and phrasal verbs—areas where direct equivalents between English and Albanian are often lacking.

From a translation perspective, a precise understanding of verb phrases is essential to ensure accurate and idiomatic equivalence between English and Albanian. Even subtle variations in tense, aspect, or modality can lead to significant differences in meaning, making this area critical for both academic and professional translators. This study aims to contribute to the field of comparative linguistics while offering practical recommendations for language educators and translators.

In summary, this thesis provides a comprehensive comparative analysis of verb phrases in English and Albanian, with attention to their structural, functional, and pedagogical dimensions. The findings are expected to support linguists, teachers, and translators in navigating the complexities of verb phrase construction in both languages.

Objectives

1. To identify and describe the structure and components of verb phrases in English and Albanian

This includes analyzing auxiliary verbs, modal verbs, particles, and prefixes.

2. To compare the use of key verbs such as *to be*, *to have*, and *to go* in both languages
The focus is on grammatical rules and semantic roles across English and Albanian.

3. To analyze the main challenges faced by learners and translators when working with verb phrases

This involves identifying common difficulties and proposing practical solutions.

4. To propose recommendations for improving teaching materials and methods related to verb phrases

These suggestions aim to enhance comprehension and usage among learners.

Research Questions

1. What are the main syntactic components of verb phrases in English and Albanian? This question investigates the structural elements that form verb phrases, including auxiliary verbs, modals, prefixes, and inflections.
2. How do the key verbs *to be*, *to have*, and *to go* function differently in English and Albanian? It explores both syntactic construction and semantic interpretation, focusing on tense, aspect, and modality.
3. What are the main challenges learners and translators encounter with verb phrases in both languages, and how can these be addressed? This question targets issues such as non-equivalent structures and proposes strategies for better comprehension and application.
4. How can educational materials and teaching strategies be improved to facilitate the learning of verb phrases in English and Albanian? This involves analyzing current textbook content and curricula to identify gaps and offer actionable improvements.

CONCLUSIONS

This research has provided an in-depth comparative analysis of verb phrases in English and Albanian, with particular attention to high-frequency verbs such as *to be*, *to have*, and *to go*. By examining the syntactic and semantic structures of verb phrases in both languages, the study contributes to the broader field of comparative linguistics while addressing practical challenges in language learning, teaching, and translation.

Verb phrases are fundamental to sentence structure and meaning, expressing tense, aspect, modality, and voice. The contrast between English—a global lingua franca—and Albanian—a language with distinct grammatical features—has revealed both universal linguistic principles and language-specific characteristics.

The analysis, which draws on corpora, textbooks, media, and native speaker input, highlights several key differences. One significant finding is that structural differences between English and Albanian verb phrases contribute to frequent learner errors, especially in the use of auxiliary verbs, modal verbs, phrasal verbs, the progressive and perfect aspects, and the passive voice.

Phrasal verbs, in particular, present notable difficulties for Albanian learners due to their idiomatic nature and the lack of direct equivalents in Albanian. Learners often resort to literal translations, leading to errors in usage. Similarly, challenges arise in the omission or misplacement of auxiliary verbs—common in forming continuous and perfect tenses—since Albanian does not use auxiliaries in the same way.

Modal verbs also pose problems because, unlike in English, Albanian modals inflect based on subject and tense. This results in the misuse of modal structures and confusion in their placement. Additionally, the passive voice is used less frequently in Albanian, often replaced by active constructions, which causes learners to avoid or misuse the passive in English.

Syntactic and semantic mismatches between the two languages further complicate verb phrase acquisition. Differences in word order, the absence of a progressive aspect in Albanian, and native-language interference often result in incorrect sentence formation.

Despite these challenges, the study affirms that targeted teaching strategies can significantly improve Albanian learners' mastery of English verb phrases. Contrastive grammar instruction, increased exposure to authentic English content, and interactive language activities all play a key role in helping students bridge the gap between the two languages.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed for educators, curriculum developers, and language professionals:

1. Integrate Contrastive Grammar Instruction

Teaching should emphasize the structural differences between English and Albanian verb phrases, particularly in the use of auxiliaries, modals, and aspects. Lessons should include exercises that explicitly contrast the two systems to help learners internalize English-specific rules.

2. Prioritize Systematic Instruction of Phrasal Verbs

Given their idiomatic nature, phrasal verbs require targeted instruction. Teachers should present them in categorized groups based on meaning and function, alongside context-rich examples that demonstrate their usage.

3. Use Authentic Materials and Contextual Learning

Incorporating real-world texts—such as films, podcasts, dialogues, and news articles—can expose learners to natural verb phrase usage. These materials support the development of listening and reading skills while reinforcing grammar and vocabulary in context.

4. Implement Task-Based and Communicative Activities

Activities such as role-plays, discussions, storytelling, and problem-solving tasks should require students to use verb phrases actively. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) methods can foster fluency and accuracy through meaningful interaction.

5. Provide Personalized Feedback and Error Correction

Continuous, individualized feedback on verb phrase usage helps learners identify patterns of error and refine their skills. Teachers should focus on corrective strategies that are supportive and constructive.

By applying these recommendations, educators can help Albanian learners overcome the structural and semantic barriers associated with English verb phrases. Improved teaching practices will ultimately enhance learners' grammatical accuracy, communicative competence, and overall language fluency.

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