

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE USE OF INFINITIVE IN ENGLISH AND ALBANIAN LANGUAGE. TEACHING ENGLISH GRAMMAR TO ALBANIAN LEARNERS BASED ON A COMPARISON.

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ABSTRACT

Today, interest in developing courses that provide interdisciplinary perspectives is increasing. In this way, we could obviously illustrate and give exact comparisons for our learners of English as a second language, in order to avoid their misconception and later incorrect usage of exact grammatical patterns. Thus a detailed study particularly upon the key patterns of each language, especially the correct usage of verbs, is necessary not even for the learner, but also for the teacher and especially for a linguist. The aim of this study is the correct usage and explanation of non-finite verbs for the learner of English as a second language. Teachers of all levels of English language have usually been confronted with this problem, while explaining grammar and trying to adjust the similarities and differences of English non-finites with the Albanian forms. This article focuses as well on the morphological and syntactical aspect and the structure of non-finite verbs within sentences in English and Albanian language, the problem of whether verbs are followed by the gerund or infinitive, especially in English but in a comparison to Albanian language and their

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INTRODUCTION

In linguistics, a non-finite verb, or a verbal, is a verb form that is not limited by a subject and more generally, is not fully inflected by categories that are marked inflectionally in language, such as tense, aspect, mood, number, gender, and person. As a result, a non-finite verb cannot serve as a predicate and can be used in an independent clause only when combined with an auxiliary verb. By some accounts, a non-finite verb acts simultaneously as a verb and as another part of speech such as gerunds combined with articles or the possessive case. It can take adverbs and certain kinds of verb arguments, producing a verbal phrase, the so-called non-finite clause and this phrase then plays a different role - usually noun, adjective, or adverb - in a greater clause. This is the reason for the term verbal; non-finite verbs have traditionally been classified as verbal nouns, verbal adjectives, or verbal adverbs.

English has three kinds of verbal, but we are concentrated only to one of these, we are going to analyze the role of infinitive in both languages.

Participles, which include past and present participles and function as adjectives

for example: burnt log, a betting man, etc.

Gerunds, which function as nouns and can be used with or without an article

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for example: studying French is a way to better understand Italian.

Infinitives, which have noun-like

for example: the question is to be or not to be, adjective-like: work to do, and adverb-like functions: she came over to talk.

If in order can precede the infinitive "she came over in order to talk", then it must be acting as an adverb. Each of these kinds of verbal is also used in various common constructs; for example, the past participle is used in forming the perfect in the case for example: to have done, etc. A special attention in this article is given to the use of infinitive. It is given a separate part of study only to this non-finite form, because of its importance and basic role on the comparative explanation of the Balkan languages.

Other kinds of verbal, such as supine and gerundives exist in other languages. Some languages, especially Native American languages, do not have any non-finite verbs.

The main types in English Language

After the straightforward rules for verbs like *manage* (infinitive) and *enjoy* (gerund) it can be quite difficult for students to grasp the difference in meaning between a verb like *try* which can be followed by both, but with different meanings. The article is concentrated on the similarities and differences that both languages demonstrate, but particularly it is analyzed the use, the lack and the comparison of the infinitive.

The basic definition stands for that form of the verb that does not show a distinction in tense and cannot stand alone as the main verb in a sentence.

The main types of non-finite verbs are infinitives and *-ing* forms as well as the other types mentioned. Auxiliaries are required with non-finite verbs. This is their role to mark non-finite verb forms for tense, aspect and voice, which non-finite verbs cannot express. Finite verbs mark these features on their own. A non-finite verb differs from a finite verb in that it cannot normally be used as the main verb of a clause. Typically, the non-finite verb lacks agreement for person, number and gender with its first argument or subject, is unmarked or reduced with respect to distinctions of tense, aspect, and mood, and has certain properties in common with adjectival or nominal predicates. Let us take in consideration some examples for a further study.

Infinitives

In English, the infinitive verb form is often introduced by the particle *to*, as in :

- *To eat or to run*. The resulting phrase can then function as a subject or object, or as a modifier.

- *To survive needs courage, patience, and luck.* Here *to survive* is the subject of needs.
- *I don't have patience to wait.* Here *to wait* acts as an adjective modifying time.
- *Chris was asked to help.* Here *to help* is the object of asked, comparable to Carol was asked a question.
- *Do not stop to try.* Here *to try* functions as an adverb-modifying stop.

An infinitive phrase consists of an infinitive and any related words.

- *Peter wanted to learn oil painting.* The infinitive phrase *to learn oil painting* is the object of wanted.

Table 1: Differences in English and Albanian

English	Albanian
I had my car <i>stolen</i> from the car-park.	E gjeta <i>te vjedhur</i> makinën time nga parkingu.
I've never known John (to) <i>be</i> so rude to anyone.	Nuk e kam njohur Xhonin kur <i>te ishte</i> kaq i pasjellshëm me dike.
We don't want it <i>rain</i> ing on your birthday.	Nuk duam <i>te bjere shi</i> ne ditelindjen tende.

Source: Author

The role of infinitive in a sentence

Albanian and English languages are members of the Indo-European language family, so descending from a family of a common source. The evolution of Indo-European languages has caused great changes, where all subgroups have diverged from each other. Some of them still survive as languages of special characteristics e.g. *Albanian* language. However, there are also language groups like Germanic languages, (English, German, Norwegian), which have derived from the old German language. Due to the historical evolution, Albanian language has been transformed from a language of synthetic-analytical type, which is far from the old type of Indo-European languages. Although English and Albanian are languages of two different types, they show similarities in many concepts and syntactic phenomena, which are generally universal and may be evident in various languages, even not falling under the same family group. Besides these differences and specifics that both languages show, relating the non-finite verbs (seen on different aspect), they also display similarities and linguistic contacts.

The -ing and infinitive forms of verbs are very common in English and can act as subjects, objects and complements of verbs. When used like nouns, -ing forms are often referred to as 'gerunds'. This article looks at the use of -ing forms and infinitives after certain verbs, determiners, adjectives and nouns and at the special use of infinitives to describe purpose and result. Let us give a brief presentation of the gerund and give more emphasis on the usage of the infinitive.

The use of Gerunds in English language.

We can use -ing forms of verbs in the same way that we use nouns - as the subject, object or complement of a verb. We often refer to -ing forms used in this way as gerunds:

- *Swimming* makes you fit.
- The whole family has taken up *cycling*.
- Her worst habit is *lying*.

Sometimes -ing forms can have their own subjects and objects:

- I'm looking forward **to my wife returning**. (subject + -ing form)

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- **Meeting new people** is one benefit of **taking evening classes**. (-ing form + object).

We can make a negative with + -ing:

- **Not getting** a refund on faulty goods is what really annoys me.

But we use no + -ing to explain that something is impossible or not allowed:

X There is **not smoking** in this office/There **isn't smoking** in this office.

- ✓ Could you go outside? There's **no smoking** in this office.
- There's no skiing here in the summer season. (= Skiing is impossible).
- No Parking = Parking is not allowed here.

We can use: determiners, e.g. *the, this*; possessives, e.g. *Peter's*; possessive adjectives, e.g. *his*; or object pronouns, e.g. *him*; before -ing forms.

Object pronouns are more common in informal English:

- All this complaining won't get you anywhere, you know.
- Peter's complaining didn't do him any good.

Exorbitant tax rates led to his leaving the country.

We often use an object + -ing form after verbs of the senses.

I heard Mary giving a marvellous rendition of « Nessun dorma».

We always use the object the object pronoun after sense verbs:

X. Have you seen our **performing** yet?

- ✓ Have you seen us **performing** yet?

When we use the + -ing form and we want to link it with an object, we use the prep. *of*:

X. The giving presents is a traditional part of the Christmas festivities

- ✓ The giving of presents is a traditional part of the Christmas festivities.

Infinitive in Balkan languages compared to English.

Albanian is among the Balkan languages showing the Balkan feature of the loss of the infinitive and its replacement by finite forms. There are many symptoms in Albanian which correspond to constructions with finite forms in other Balkan languages and to constructions with infinitival forms in other European languages. Among these constructions are the following, including a wide range of computer types; these constructions are classified in terms of their surface properties, in as much as their derivation (e.g. in transformational terms) is irrelevant to the question at hand (the Greek is given in transliteration and not transcription since these represent medieval Greek as well as Modern Greek syntagms).

Examples:

- Combination of verb, e.g. Alb. dua te punoj: Grk. thelo na dhulepso: Eng. I want to work.
- Combination of aspectual verbs, e.g. Alb. vazhdoj te punoj: Grk. sunekhizo na dhulevo: Eng. I continue to work.
- Combination of modal verbs, e.g. mund te eci, Grk. mporo na perpatiso: Eng. I can walk
- Combination of adjectives, e.g. eshte e bukur qe ta nisim keshtu: ine oreo na to arxisoume etsi: it is nice for us to start like this.

- Combination of nouns, e.g. propozimi te pranohet: to skedhio na dhehti: the plan for him to be accepted.
- Expression of purpose, e.g. vijme ne shkolle qe te mesojme: erkhomaste sto skolio gia na mathume: we come to school (in order) to learn.
- Deliberative indirect questions e.g. ai nuk dinte ku te vinte: aftos den ikser e pu na erthi he didn't know where to go.

Taken together, these equivalences suggest that there certainly is some truth to the conventional wisdom regarding Albanian and the Balkan infinitive – loss. Moreover, the fact that Albanian shows two types of verbal particles that head the finite "infinitival replacements", namely *qe* or *se* with the indicative, and *te* with subjunctive, just like Greek *po:s* or *oti* and *na*, also brings it in line with what may be called the Balkan norm. Regarding the absence of the infinitive, before the place of Albanian in the Balkan infinitive – loss, some additional facts must be brought to light and some crucial questions must be addressed.

Additional facts

The most important observation that must be made concerning Albanian and its infinitive, is that some data may misrepresent the overall Albanian picture in two ways. First, they are representative of just one of the two main dialects of Albanian, namely Tosk < the Southern dialect which is now the basis of the standard, and are not from the Northern dialect, Geg.

Second, even within Tosk, these data do not give the whole picture regarding the distribution and use of finite and infinitival complementation.

The differences between Tosk and Geg with regard to the question of the infinitive and possible replacements for the infinitive are significant. Most important, Tosk has much wider use of the finite subjunctive forms (with the particle *te*) than does Geg. In many of the places in which Tosk can use the subjunctive, one finds in Geg a form consisting of *me*, which some have identified synchronically with the prepositions *me* in Albanian corresponding to 'with' in English.

But is probably best viewed simply as a particle (see below), plus the 'short' participial form, e.g. *me punue* - to work' the use of this form is illustrated below:

- Complement of verbs, e.g. in the Geg future with *kam* 'have'/*kam me punue* 'I will work, I have to work, and with other verbs, e.g. filluen me levise 'they began to move', *deshiroj me te pa* 'I wish to see (me pa) you'.
- Complement of nouns, e.g. "Sot eshte puna me e shue pergjithmone faren e kesaj politike" 'Today, the task is to wipe out forever the seed of this policy'.
- Expression of purpose, e.g. Gjergji shkoi perjashta me mesue filozofi ne universitet. 'George went to study philosophy at the university'.

Following many conjunctions in specialized clausal uses, including *aq.....sa* consecutive clauses e.g. *aq ishte dobsue sa mos me e njofte* 'He was so thin as to be unrecognizable (literally 'He was so thin for (one) not to recognize him')', *sado* in concessive clauses e.g. *sado me u kujdes, nuk ia mberrin qellimit* 'Despite the trying, he did not reach the goal' *para se* 'before' in temporal clauses, e.g. *Frida para se te nisej pershendeti shoqet* 'Before Frida left, she greeted her friends', among others.

The Geg use of the subjunctive, i.e. finite complementation, accordingly, is much more restricted than in Tosk. Its uses include:

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- Complement to verbs (on a limited basis), e.g. nuk na linte te luftonim kundra okupatorit 'It did not allow us to fight against the occupation'

Expression of purpose with *qe.....te*, e.g. *shtepit ndertohen me mure te trasha qe njerezit te ngrohen ne dimer ndaj te ftohtit* 'the houses are built with thick walls in order that one might be protected from the cold in the winter'. *Shkoj heret qe mos te me zej nata* 'I'll come early in the order that the night not overtake me.

However, the Tosk situation receives special prominence because of the apparent parallel with other Balkan languages. This focus obscures a second important difference between the dialects, namely that Tosk does have a correspondent to Geg type: *me punue*, but one with a different form. This Tosk form consists, from a descriptive standpoint of the particles *per* and *te* plus the participle, e.g. *per te punuar* 'to work, for working'. This form, *per te punuar*, appears to be composed of the preposition *per* 'for' followed by the neuter "isolating" particle *te*, that regularly accompanies participles used substantively, and indeed this collocation is analyzed in just this way in many accounts of Albanian grammar (Newmark et al. being an important exception).

However, such an analysis, even if historically correct, a possibility which is still open to question, may not be synchronically valid.

The Tosk *per te punuar* form can be used in many though not all, of the constructions in which the Tosk subjunctive is used, these are summed up and exemplified:

- Complement of verbs, e.g. in the Tosk future with *kam* 'have', *kam per te punuar* 'I will work'; I have to work; with some other verbs, e.g. *ato folje sherbejne per te emertuar nje veprim* 'these verbs serve to designate an action'.
- Complement to nouns, e.g. *une mbeshteta propozimin per te vene ne funksion artilerin*. 'I supported the plan to put the artillery into function'.
- Complement to adjectives, e.g. *eshte e veshtire per tu thene* 'It is difficult to say.'
- Purpose clauses, e.g. *Une shkova ne Petrograd per te raportuar mbi gjendjen* 'I went to Petrograd to report on the situation'.
- A certain type of emphatic construction in which a finite verb in a sentence is emphasized by the proposing of the corresponding infinitive to sentence – initial position, e.g. *Per tu njohur, e njoh* 'As for knowing (him), I do know him'.

As a comparison, the Tosk subjunctive, is somewhat more restricted – in particular, it is not as widespread as a complement to verbs as is the subjunctive, and seems not to occur in the expression of purpose.

Up to this point, the parallel forms, Geg *me punue* and Tosk *per te punuar*, have not been labeled as to category. In the native Albanian grammatical tradition, they are called infinitives (Albanian *paskajore*, literally, "without limit"), even though, as noted above, they might be synchronically analyzable as a preposition – rather the type *per te*, together must be taken as verbal particles that mark an infinitive, not unlike it in English.

Primarily, these forms clearly are aligned within the verbal system and are not simply verbal nouns. Unlike nouns, they can attract critic pronoun objects (e.g. *per ta bere, me ta ba* 'to do it'), they can express voice distinctions with the particle *u* (e.g. *per tu bere, mos me ba* 'not do it').

These properties are all characteristics of verbs (e.g. e bejme 'we do it', u be 'it was done', ne mos gaboj 'if I am not mistaken') in Albania, and not of nouns. Moreover, they are distinct from other verbal forms, e.g. the indicative, subjunctive, and possibly the imperative, in not showing any marking for the person of their controlling subject. In this regard, they are aligned with the participle (e.g. Tosk ⇒ punuar, Geg ⇒ punuem 'worked/PPL') and other verbal formations which are morphologically related. And possibly even derived from the participle such as the gerund (e.g. Tosk duke punuar, Geg tue punuar 'while working/GER') and the privative formation with *pa* 'without' (e.g. Tosk ⇒ *pa* punuar 'without working, without havin worked'), so that they might be considered non-finite on morphological grounds. However, they are not simply participles with a preposition, for they differ semantically from simple participles - unlike a participle formed from a transitive verb, e.g. pyetur (Geg pyetun/pyetur).

Conclusion

Some of these questions, such as a clear definition of all the non-finite verbs and an exact number of their classification, have implications for general Linguistic Theory, while others such as the causation of the infinitive-loss, concern a general theory of language convergence and so touch on questions of importance to linguistics. In addition, since a part of this study is examination, analyses and where possible the explanation of the language development with the infinitive and other non-finite forms, in each of these languages, it is important and useful to all the teachers of English as a foreign language that are non-native speakers. The questions raised show the need for a reassessment of the status of other non-finite forms investigation for precise definitions. The results of this investigation, namely the criteria developed for identifying non-finite verbs, become especially important in the discussion to follow concerning the loss of the infinitive in the Balkan languages. The ability to identify infinitives is a prerequisite to being able to talk about the usage and explanation of the verbal in these two languages. Moreover, these criteria are crucial in allowing the students to identify the nature of the replacement for the etymological infinitives and to tell whether they are replaced by finite-verbs, as in Greek, or by other non-finite forms, as in certain dialects of Albanian. In addition, this investigation was done under the accurate conditions of a real study of the schools in the southern part of Albania. This is a region of Greek minority, mainly Greek speaking population, living in a state where the official national language is Albanian. Thus, in a comparison to their native language, their mother tongue and English, as a foreign language, teachers work under a situation of a three lingual environment. This kind of analyses is going to give a clear equivalence between the distinctive features of each language and their correct usage. From the analysis of the forms, meanings and of the syntactic functions, we come to the conclusion that the literary Albanian language has a full system of non finite forms and variants through which they express themselves. In our study, which is based mainly on the approach of the Dr. Prof. Mehmet Çeliku, we have raised problems which strive to classify as best as possible these forms. Respectively they are **paskajorja (infinitive)**, **gerund** and **participle**. **Verbals**, otherwise called non finite forms of the verb, have a practical definition about their function in the English language. They have been considered as words which express an action in a general way, without restricting the action in any kind of tense, or without qualifying it with any kind of subject. **Paskajorja**, otherwise called the infinitive in English, is the base form of the verb. The first

non-finite form of the verb, which presents the verb, and its form like the participle, does not have the category of tense but only the voice. In the passive voice, the infinitive serves to express an action done. As a result, it must be admitted that the logical sense of these forms is unique, otherwise in the usage of the both above-mentioned languages. The distinctive features of each language separately, are revealed in the grammatical aspect and with their equivalence of a correct theoretical and practical explanation for foreign learners of English language and their acquisition.

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