Internal Structure of Phrasal Terms in Albanian as Compared with their Equivalents in English and Russian

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Abstract

The fundamental changes in post-totalitarian Albania, have introduced numerous concepts into every aspect of the society. As a result terms for these concepts have expanded and enriched the vocabulary of Standard Albanian. These lexical developments have also been reflected in changes within language layers reflected in addition of new words, created from the domestic lexicon and various word formation ways, as well as the creation of a "lexical fund"derived from foreign loans, particularly from English. The growing proportion of new termsreflected in the lexical layers of the language has created a need to use additional language ways,in order to deal with the endless stream of concepts that circulate from one linguistic area to another, which resulted in using collocationssuch as: state capture, hot line, functionally illiterateetc. Collocations by nature are more distinct and precise than single words. Collocationsare constructed on the basis of single-word terms already found in the language, and only rarely using loanwords from another language. This is a result of the fact that terms in one language, e.g. Albanian, correspond with terms in another language, for examplepushtet i katërt with fourth estate (English) and четвертаясила (Russian).

Large-scale changes in post-totalitarian Albanian society, particularly throughout the last two decades after the opening of Albania to the world, have introduced numerous concepts into every aspect of social life. Terms for these concepts have expanded and enriched the vocabulary of Standard Albanian. These lexical developments have also been reflected in changes within layers of the noun phrase inventory and changes in types of noun phrase. Thus, as distinct from the addition of words created from the domestic lexicon and morphology – e.g. *bashkëvuajtës* (co-suffering), *bashkëjetues* (cohabiting), or *bashkëpronar* (co-owner) – there has also been the creation of a set of words derived from foreign loans, in particular from English. As a result, "anglicisms have formed a layer of vocabulary in themselves which did not exist before 1990, more extensive than the existing layer of Italian loanwords[28]".

A considerable number of new terms fall within new fields of knowledge such as computer science, telecommunications, or genetics, e.g. *computer*, *monitor*, *mouse*, *chat*, *performance*. There have been fewer new terms formed from the language's internal resources, while many have been adopted from foreign languages, English in particular. The growing proportion of new concepts in the lexical layers of the language has increasingly caused its users to turn to additional strategies deal with the endless stream of concepts that circulate from one linguistic area to another. These strategies take the form of phrasal terms[29], which will be discussed here with respect to their structure and semantics. The terms in question are more distinct and precise than single words, yet one reason for their great quantity is that they are constructed on the basis of single-word terms already found in the language, and only rarely using newly-introduced words. This is a result of the fact that terms in one language, e.g. Albanian, correspond with terms in another language, for example *pushtet i katërt* with *fourth estate* (English) and *четвертая сила* (Russian).

The Albanian lexicon has gained new categories, conditioned by a variety of intra- and extralinguistic factors, such as the addition of new fields of knowledge and new distinctions in broad categories of subject matter and concepts. These are heavily dominated by phrasal structures, reflected primarily in the vocabularies of fields such as computer science, politics, and law. This is most apparent in certain sets of phrases. For instance, *kompjuter* (computer), *shtet* (state), and *politikë* (politics or policy) are accompanied by dozens of established phrasal terms which signify new concepts just as the single-word terms do. *Kompjuter* occurs in

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[28] Shehu, H., "*Rreth fjalëve angleze ose me prejardhje nga anglishtja në gjuhën e sotme shqipe*", në përmbledhjen "Seminar ndërkombëtar për gjuhën, letërsinë dhe kulturën shqiptare', 19, Prishtinë, 2001.
[29] Duro, A.,"*Togfjalëshat e qënrueshëm terminologjikë në shqipen e sotme",* Sf, 1982/4.

around twenty-five phrases[30], e.g. *kompjuter personal* (personal computer); *shtet*[31] (state) has twenty-eight, e.g. *shtet civil* (civil state), *shtet demokratik* (democratic state), *shtet juridik* (judicial state), *shtet ligjor* (legal state, i.e. rule of law), and *shtet mirëqenie sociale* (social welfare state); *politikë*[32] has twenty-seven, e.g. *politikë financiare* (financial policy), *politikë monetare* (monetary policy), *politikë fiskale* (fiscal policy), *politikë krediti* (credit policy), and *politikë dividenti* (dividend policy).

Through the creation of numerous phrasal units, a host of new concepts have been created with specific and highly distinct contents, e.g. *kartë krediti* (credit card) or *para të pista* (dirty money), although sometimes semantically close, as in *shplarje truri* (brainwashing). Looking over how these units function in language, as well as how they are reflected in lexicons, especially sociopolitical lexicons – where we would take the example of the lexicon of legal terms as well as the political lexicon – we divide them into the following categories:

- Phrases which are new in both form and content: *avokat i popullit* (advocate of the people).
- Phrases in which the defining element is an existing term: *shtet* (state), *kod* (code), *bankë* (bank). These generally have equivalents in foreign languages, e.g. *shtet i së drejtës* (rule of law), *kod elektoral* (electoral code), *bankë kursimesh* (savings bank).
- Phrases in which a new word serves as the defining element.

Increased use of definitional elements such as *politik* (political), *demokratik* (democratic) or *partiak* (partisan) as specifier (i.e. terminological) units, and of everyday adjectives such as *i madh* (large), *i vogël* (small), *i lartë* (high), or *i ulët* (low). We might emphasize as another significant indicator that these units are found today not only in writing but in speech, even everyday speech: *komputer personal* (personal computer), *para të pista* (dirty money), *larje parash* (money-laundering) *bono thesari* (treasury bonds), *kartë identiteti* (identity card), or *kartë krediti* (credit card). These phrases are distinguishable for their semantic compactness, since as noun units they indicate concepts connected with particular objects, related to the words concerned. As such, they function as nouns just as the words themselves do. From this point of view, it has been correctly highlighted – albeit in a way that sees forms as ready-made units – that they are open structures, as in the example of *kartë identiteti*; their semantic compactness produces a dominant role for "the whole over the parts[33]", and as far as their function as terms is concerned, it makes them feel like words. Phrases comprise a particular problem from the perspective of the difficulties that are encountered in a language when their external forms come up against other languages being learned, translated, or used. These difficulties arise especially when the phrase does not completely match or does not have corresponding elements in the other language, as well as when the internal forms of the parts of the phrasal terms do not match. As such, they should be treated as the lexicon of a single language because of the particular form of expression in every language, but also as an inter-language lexicon because they express the same concepts. Due to shared conceptual forms, they become transferable from one language to another. They are created on the basis of concepts which enter into one language from another (e.g. Albanian *luftë e ftohtë* from English *cold war*). On this basis it becomes possible to compare both their internal and external forms in order to see how this conceptual interweaving is carried out from one language into the other by means of the particular forms in each language. The compactness of the phrases comes from the fact that

  (a) they are noun phrases and as such they function similarly to words,
  (b) they have single-word equivalents in the source language and other languages, or two-word equivalents in the source language,

[30] Caka, N., "*Fjalor i informatikës*", Prishtinë, 2005.

[31] Uka, Nj., "*Fjalor i Drejtësisë*", "Ilari", Tiranë, 2011

[32] Kokonozi, D., "*Fjalor enciklopedik i politikës*", "Logoreci", Tiranë, 2005.

[33] Pasho, H., "*Togfjalëshat e zgjeruar emërore në terminologjinë e ekonomisë*", "Studime Filologjike", 1986/3

(c) they have single- or two-word equivalents in another language: *këllëf jastëku* (Alb.), *pillowcase* (Eng.), *наволочка* (Rus.); *hekurudhë* (Alb.), *railway* (Eng.), *железная дорога* (Rus.); *dhomë gjumi* (Alb.), *bedroom* (Eng.), *спальня* (Rus.).

As persistent units, phrasal terms express concepts just as words do. These phrasal terms do not always fit into different languages, due to the ways in which they express a shared concept through external linguistic forms – which are unique to each language – but also because of their "internal forms[34]", which are also formed in more or less different ways. Nevertheless, at times they fit in by particular means, while at other times one may notice prominent distinctions which become objects of comparative study in different languages. This can be seen even within a language. Historical usage in Albanian yields examples such as *udhë e hekurt* (iron road) from author Sami Frashëri, vs. *hekurore* (iron), the first use of which is unattested, and *hekurudhë* (iron-road) from Luigj Gurakuqi. A consequence is the problem of word-phrase relationships from one language to another, as well as the structural and semantic relationships of phrasal units. When phrasal terms are compared with equivalent units in other languages, it often happens that a phrasal unit in language X has an equivalent phrasal unit in language Y, but in other cases it may be that a phrasal unit in language X has a single-word equivalent in language Y or vice versa, as in the many examples given so far. Study of these units from the perspective of how they are built structurally in relation to their shared functions would thus be particularly valuable. The study of the problem has to do fundamentally with phrasal terms, because it is precisely in phrasal units that we encounter the problem of how to shed light on their function when words in two or more languages are put side-by-side and compared for their semantic structures. This problem appears in the comparison of *hekurudhë* (Alb., railway) and *железная дорога* (Rus.): *hekurudhë* is a single-word unit, whereas *железная дорога* is a phrasal unit, even though both of these units refer to the same concept.

A dictionary user or a translator can easily find an appropriate equivalent for a word in another language when a single-word translation is available, but this is more difficult when the translation is a phrase – at least in cases where the translation is not well known, as it is with *thumb* (Eng.) and *gisht i madh* (Alb.). Apart from this, it is important that these phrases be seen from the perspective of the relationships that exist between their constituent elements in order to make it possible to "harmonize their internal forms[35]" – or the motivators of these forms[36], which means seeing if there are identical matches from a structural perspective in equivalents compared among many languages: e.g. noun + adjective, noun + noun. Seen from this perspective, it would be especially valuable to examine these phrasal noun units along the lines of two languages, or several languages connected with them. This examination would help in demonstrating "non-equivalences" and representing them in a dictionary, which would be especially helpful to translators in their work, or even to language learners. It is important to emphasize this last point, since in many cases these units are appropriated and learned as ready-made units in their connection with single-word terms. This difficulty appears when there is no structural match, e.g. *xhezve* [37](Alb.) and *coffee pot* (Eng.). One of these is a word and the other a phrase. The same difficulty occurs when both languages use a phrasal structure, e.g. *pastrim parash* (Alb.) and *money-laundering* (Eng.). In both of these cases it is difficult to identify equivalents in the target languages. The terms must be memorized like single-word units.

The value of this study also consists in the creation of a model for dictionary composition on the basis of which one might compose a dictionary of phrasal and single-word correspondences. The study of noun phrases in comparison between several languages also helps in the correction and differentiation of concept expression; it creates a basis for international standardization; and it contributes to the conservation of the principle of "single-

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[34] Wuster, E., "*Internationale Sprachnormung in der Technik*", UDI, Berlin, 1931
[35] Wuster, E., shih 7
[36] Zvegnicev, V., "*Semasiologia*", Moskva, 1957
[37] Qesku, P., "*Fjalor Shqip- Anglisht*", Tiranë, 1999

meaning precision". An example is the phrase *pushteti i katërt* (Alb., fourth estate). A further significant benefit of this comparison of single-word and phrasal noun terms among many languages consists in demonstrating cases of synonymity in order to make it possible to avoid synonymous terms so that, as far as possible, "among synonymous terms, one chooses the one considered by specialists to be the most correct." This comparison would also create a model of comparison by being based on the principles of terminology "one term, one concept" and "one concept, one term[38]". The comparison of equivalents among several languages (considering English as the primary language in this case) would help to bring attention to differences and errors between conceptual content and form as expressed through noun-formation, in order to make it possible to fully harmonize conceptual content and form, as well as to correct the internationalization of terms.

Another reason why English may be taken as a "source" or "lead" language is because terms from English often appear as "indicators of internationally acceptable concepts", so that their inclusion and integration into the relevant field supports its system in terminology, in form, and in content. Terminology is standardized through unification of concepts, by efforts to harmonize form (a term) with content (a concept) and bring them as close together as possible. The study of noun phrases by comparison among several languages helps generally to improve the quality of translations and the effective learning of foreign languages.

Below are some example phrases which refer to new concepts with international distribution from the period after 1990. The concepts are explained based on definitions taken from Wikipedia, and on the frequency of use of these concepts in the media by experts in the relevant fields, as well as their use in ordinary speech, especially from recent times. The naming of these concepts by noun phrases and single words has been studied by comparison among three languages: Albanian, English, and Russian. Although only major languages have been studied, since it has been proven that they are best for harmonization of form with content and are taken as a model for standardization, it could happen that even a minor language becomes a model for standardization with respect to one particular term or group of terms because this language might offer more effective standards than major languages. Single-word and especially phrasal noun units in Albanian, English, and Russian have been laid out for comparison below, taking into consideration three essential categories: I. Structural comparisons, II. Structural-semantic comparisons, III. Comparisons on the level of lexicon and grammar.

Also considered are the following cases:

- Single-word noun unit in a foreign language with an equivalent phrasal noun unit in Albanian.
- Single-word noun unit in Albanian with an equivalent phrasal noun unit in a foreign language.
- Phrasal unit in Albanian with an equivalent single-word noun phrase in a foreign language.
- Phrasal noun units in Albanian with equivalent phrasal noun units in a foreign language.

Sub-categories include:

- Full or partial semantic equivalence between one or both elements of the phrase.
- Lack of semantic equivalence.
- Broadening or narrowing of meaning in one of the languages, when the specified element is non-identical.
- Presence or absence of figurative meaning.
- Lexical and grammatical formation.
- Level of abstraction.

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[38] Wuster, E., "*Internationale Sprachnormung in der Technik*", UDI, Berlin, 1931

Comparisons of single-word, and in particular, phrasal units from the selected languages are given below.

I. Structural comparisons

1. Single-word noun units in a foreign language with phrasal equivalents in Albanian. E.g. *наволочка* (Rus.), *këllëf jastëku* (Alb.); *thumb* (Eng.), *gisht i madh* (Alb.); *coffee break* (Eng.), *pushim për kafe* (Alb.).

2. Single-word noun units in Albanian with phrasal equivalents in a foreign language. E.g. *xhezve* (Alb.), *coffee pot* (Eng.); *hekurudhë* (Alb.), *железная дорога* (Rus.); *aeroplanmbajtës* (Alb.), *aircraft carrier* (Eng.); *afat* (Alb.), *time limit* (Eng.).

3. Phrasal noun units in Albanian with single-word equivalents in a foreign language. E.g. *bono thesari* (Alb.), *treasury bond* (Eng.); *forca paqeruajtëse* (Alb.), *peacekeepers* (Eng.), *миротворцы* (Rus.); *punë në grup* (Alb.), *teamwork* (Eng.); *gur kilometrazhi* (Alb.), *milestone* (Eng.).

II. Structural and semantic comparisons

Phrasal noun units in Albanian with semantic equivalence or nonequivalence in a foreign language. Issues with internal forms.

Comparison of fixed phrases

1. Semantic equivalence, with identical internal forms in the defined and defining elements. In this case the phrasal units refer to the same concept in all the languages under study, and both the defined and defining elements have the same internal form. E.g.:

Albanian	English	Russian
mbledhje të hapura	open meetings	открытые собрания
ngrohje globale	global warming	глобальное потепление
faqet e verdha	yellow pages	желтые страницы
barazi ekonomike	economic equality	экономическое равенство
taksë mbi vlerën e shtuar (TVSh)	value-added tax (VAT)	налог на добавленную стоимость (НДС)
kapje shteti	state capture	захват государства

These examples show full equivalence between their defined and defining elements. In each language, both the defined elements (*meetings*, *warming*, *pages*, *equality*, *tax*, *capture*) and the defining elements (*open*, *global*, *economic*, *yellow*, *value-added*) refer to the same concepts. The phrases (*open meetings*, *global warming*, *economic equality*, *yellow pages*, *value-added tax*, *state capture*), as "emergent concepts" refer to the same concepts in all three selected languages.

All the aforementioned phrases show harmony of internal form. Semantic equivalence (full equivalence of the defined and defining elements) is also found in the following phrases:

Albanian	English	Russian
taksë e sheshtë	flat tax	единый налог
kartë krediti	credit card	кредитная карта
pronë intelektuale	intellectual property	интеллектуальная собственность
projekt ndërkufitar	cross-border project	трансграничная проект
larje parash	money-laundering	отмывание денег
krim i jakave të bardha	white-collar crime	беловоротничковое преступление
trafikim njerëzor	human trafficking	торговля людьми
industria e seksit	sex industry	секс-индустрия

2. Semantic non-equivalence of the constituent elements of one element. The defining elements have different meanings, e.g. *red line* and *hotline*, where *hot* and *red* have different meanings; *linjë e kuqe* and *linjë e nxehtë* (Alb.) have the same difference of meaning in this context.

The following phrases show non-equivalence in one of their elements:

Albanian	English	Russian
linjë e kuqe	hotline	служба горячей линии
shplarje truri	brainwashing	промывание мозгов
qendër tregtare	shopping center	торговый центр

In the first example, the defining elements of the English and Russian phrases ("hot") differ from that of the Albanian (*e kuqe*, "red"). Moreover, the Russian phrase is complex, and the defined element is *служба* ("service"), not "line". This case demonstrates a need for harmonization of internal forms, and in our opinion it is Albanian which ought to use *linjë e nxehtë* ("hot line") in order to be in harmony with the other languages and to enable precise standardization of the term.

a) Similar defined elements and internal forms.

The phrases *luftë klanesh* (Alb.), *conflict between clans* (Eng.), and *конфликт между кланами* (Rus.) have different defined elements. The English and Russian phrases are complex and have the word "conflict" as the defined element, whereas the Albanian defined element is *luftë* ("war"), which, by contrast to the term "conflict", reveals an increased level of intensity from "conflict" to "war". This is another case which shows the need for harmonization of the internal form of the term in Albanian with the other languages under study. The phrase *luftë klanesh* carries the connotation and appearance of the term *luftë klasash* ("class struggle"), which was used principally before 1990. It is perhaps also the "history" of the use of *luftë klasash* for a 50-year period which has made the element *luftë* so easy to use in place of *konflikt* ("conflict"). The phrases *pushteti i 4rt* (Alb. "Fourth Estate", lit. "Fourth Power"), *Fourth Estate* (Eng.), and *четвёртая власть* (Rus.) have metaphorical meanings and it is precisely the defined element "power" which is denoted in all three languages under consideration. In English the official variant is *Fourth Estate*, but the synonym *Fourth Power* is more widely accepted internationally, and it is a better term for the concept.

b) Semantic non-equivalence in both elements.

Semantic non-equivalence appears in the defining element. The phrases *prostitutë mbikëqyrëse* (Alb.), *bottom bitch* (Eng.), and *основная ложь* (Rus.) show semantic non-equivalence.

In the phrases *brain drain* (Eng.) and *rrjedhje truri* (Alb.), the defined element *rrjedhje* (flow, leakage) differs from the element *tharje* (drying). It can be seen that the defined elements in English and Russian are equivalent; both have the meaning "drying", while the defined element in Albanian means "flow". The same phenomenon can be seen in the phrase *prostitutë mbikëqyrëse* as compared to the other two languages. The defining element, *mbikëqyrëse*, is not equivalent to the defining elements in the other languages, namely *bottom* in English and *основная* (main, principal) in Russian. In this case as well, it is suggested that the internal form of the phrases be standardized across all three languages, although in this case the concept appears to be better named in Albanian and Russian. The base form should come from whichever language yields the best standardization.

III. Comparison on the lexical and grammatical level

Phrases from the perspective of lexical and grammatical formation:

1) Lexical and grammatical equivalence

- The combination *noun + adjective* in the three selected languages. The phrases *qendër tregtare* (shopping center), *punë vullnetare* (volunteer work or voluntary labor), *taksë e sheshtë* (flat tax), *taksë progresive* (progressive tax), etc., are comprised of the combination *noun + adjective* in the three languages studied.
- The combination *noun + noun* in the selected languages. The phrases *industria e seksit* (sex industry), *kapje shteti* (state capture), and *larje parash* (money-laundering) are comprised of the combination *noun + noun* in the three languages studied.

2) Lexical and grammatical non-equivalence

Lexical and grammatical combinations are not equivalent in the selected languages.

- The combination *noun + adjective* in Albanian and *adverb + adjective* in English and Russian. E.g. *analfabet funksional* (noun + adjective) in Albanian, *functionally illiterate* (adverb + adjective) in English, and *функционально неграмотный* (adverb + adjective) in Russian.
- A phrasal noun unit with two elements in Albanian and a phrasal noun unit comprised of three units in English and Russian, e.g. *luftë klanesh* in Albanian, which uses the combination *noun + noun*, and *conflict between clans* (Eng.) or *конфликт между кланами* (Rus.), which are complex phrases and feature the combination *noun + adverb + noun* in English and Russian; *linjë e kuqe* (red line) in Albanian vs. *служба горячей линии* (service hotline) in Russian, etc.

In conclusion, based on the foregoing presentation, in order to further the study we have undertaken regarding the issue dealt with here, we recommend: Deeper comparative study of phrasal terms in major languages (English, Russian, German, Italian, French, Spanish, etc.) in order to detect cases of consistency and inconsistency of internal form, to ensure accurate distinctions in the expression of concepts, and to create a basis for international standardization (e.g. *Fourth Estate* to be translated with equivalent internal forms). Creation of a systematic model for multi-language comparison of terms for new concepts, in order to make it possible to avoid unnecessary synonyms and to create a possibility for every concept to have a term in each language. Composition of a multi-language dictionary of phrasal terms for new concepts, indexed to their equivalents, to enable improvement of the quality of foreign-language learning and teaching, as well as to improve the quality of translations.

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