

**Socio-Linguistic Interpretation and Semantic-Grammatical Analysis of Macedonian – Albanian Idiomatic Concourses**

(Based on the “Macedonian – Albanian Idiomatic Dictionary” published in 2003 by the researcher Qemal Murati)



**Linguistics**

**Keywords:** idiomatic concourses; syntactic construction; morphological value; somatic content; linguistic transfers.

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**Abstract**

The “Macedonian – Albanian Idiomatic Dictionary” published in 2003 by the researcher Qemal Murati has come as an evidence of linguistic cross-influences between Albanian and Macedonian. Based on the linguistic material of the dictionary (around 900 units) the aim of this study is to analyze the phenomenon of linguistic cross-influences based on these perspectives: a) Socio-linguistic interpretation of the phenomenon of linguistic concourses treating them as a result/consequence of possible linguistic transfers that are inevitably related with the communicative competence of the speakers. b) Semantic and grammatical analysis of linguistic concourses to discuss/argument that grammatical features (morphological and syntactic) or semantic features of these syntactic units have served and may serve as factors that will condition the later linguistic transfers from a language to another. From the interpretation and analysis we have reached a conclusion that these transfers are extended in the semantic plane represented by phrase-logical units equivalent with a certain part of speech (verb, noun, adjective, adverb) and proverbs where the syntactic constructions (simple/plain sentences (subject-verb) and periods mainly subordinate) follow a certain grammatical pattern of the link of the parts or units. The latter have happened because of the acceptance by most of the speakers and are influenced by the speech registers as well as the socio-psychological context.

The “Macedonian – Albanian Idiomatic Dictionary” published in 2003 by the researcher Qemal Murati has come as an evidence of linguistic cross-influences between Albanian and Macedonian. The author of this book, as a good recognizer of the problems of languages in use/contact, (author of the books “Albanian elements in the Slavic southern languages” (1990); “Onomastic evidence for Albanian autochthony in their ethnic parts in Macedonia” (1993); “Albanian and Illyrian Balkan on the light of the nouns of places and families” (1999) not only has collected the same or nearly the same idioms from spoken speech/languages but has also noticed the birth of new Albanian-Macedonian calques which shows that we have to do with a phenomenon that continuously acts in the case of languages in use/contact. (In the north-west part of Macedonia, which is populated mainly by Albanians; the largest Albanian communities are in the regions of Tetovo (70% of general population); Gostivar (60%); Dibra (65%); Struga (52%); Kercovo (55%); Kumanovo (28%); and Skopje (35%).

In the last registration of 2002, time when the dictionary was prepared and published, Albanian population was 25,2% and ethnologists appreciated the 500.000 people who used to speak Albanian language in the Republic of Macedonia.<sup>1</sup> From the socio-linguistic viewpoint we can say that Albanian linguistic community is included in the Macedonian linguistic community and vice-versa, the speakers are good recognizers of the two different linguistic codes which lead us to the inevitable situation of linguistic transfers; which we think that in our case result in a part of Macedonian-Albanian phrasal concourses.

<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macedonian\\_language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macedonian_language)

The aim of this study is to analyze the phenomenon of linguistic concourses in the socio-linguistic viewpoint as well as to classify according to their structure (proverbs, curses, oaths) and morphological value and semantic criteria (phraseological units) in the response of the questions:

1. can facts such as: syntactic construction and the lexical-grammatical category of ph-units have influenced in the transfers from one language to another;
2. how and can the grammatical features of these syntactic units serve as factors which will condition/affect the latter transfers from one language to another.

### **I. Socio-Linguistic Interpretation of Idiomatic Concourses**

Taking in consideration the “Macedonian – Albanian Idiomatic Dictionary” we think that many idiomatic concourses<sup>2</sup> are consequence/result of linguistic transfers during the steady and frequent linguistic contacts between Albanian and Macedonian especially in the north-west part of Macedonia, within bilingualism. Naturally, these semantic-syntactic transfers have happened on the basis of a re-productive model<sup>3</sup> in a certain linguistic situation. We think that the phenomenon has happened in both directions.

Even the identification of linguistic (semantic) transfers can be done taking in consideration that ‘Analysis carried out up to now are applied in those languages where historical facts are at least partly known whereas lists of borrowings are defined firstly with the historical means’.<sup>4</sup>

Lacking such a basis, in our case we believe that we can argue from a socio-linguistic viewpoint that phrasal concourses with idiomatic substance/content<sup>5</sup> between Macedonian and Albanian are result of transfers. (Linguistic material of “Macedonian – Albanian Idiomatic Dictionary”, around 900 units makes possible the analysis of this phenomenon which reflects diachrony as well as synchrony).

Looking at the concourses as transfers conditioned by the communicative competences in this dictionary we notice that transfers:

1. are extended in the semantic plane, represented by ph-units that are equivalent with a certain part of speech and proverbs where syntactic constructions follow a grammatical pattern of joining the parts. The latter have happened because of the acceptance for most of the native speakers because there is a structural similarity between these two languages.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language\\_transfer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language_transfer).

<sup>3</sup> Vesel Nuhju, “Ndikimet ndërgjuhësore”, Prishtinë, 1999, f.13.

<sup>4</sup> Po aty, f.123

<sup>5</sup> Qemal Murat, “Fjalori idiomatik maqedonisht – shqip”, Shkup, Maqedoni. f.12.

<sup>6</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macedonian\\_language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macedonian_language)

Roman Jakobson introduces the general/common law according to which languages accept only those elements of foreign structures that are in accordance with the developing tendency of those languages.<sup>7</sup>

2. Are conditioned by speech registers as well as the fact if the situations have been formal or informal. Qemal Murati writes “... Except from the great number of phrases of slang (informal language) which have created those languages under the direct influence of each-other, we encounter even a number of common phrases in the publicist, communicative language and in other planes which Albanian speakers have created by translating them from Macedonian.”<sup>8</sup>

3. Are conditioned by socio-psychological context where these transfers have happened, which is actually measurable. It consists of practice, thoughts which clearly speak even about the cultural cross-influences and which lead us to the inner structure/form of these languages, which appears in proverbs and ph-units.

4. Even though it is difficult to define the direction of transfers that is to say the source language for the possible transfers that have led in the phrasal concourses of both balkanic countries (Albanian & Macedonian), the fact that the phenomenon is dynamic offers us this possibility (synchronic plane).

## II. Semantic-Grammatical Analysis of Idiomatic Concourses

### 2.1 Syntactical Constructions of the Proverb

As far as its construction is concerned phrasal concourses appear as full affirmative units (proverbs) and as ready-made units that are used in speech that is to say phraseological units. We think that these structures have conditioned the phenomenon of possible transfers.

a. Proverbs are extended units consisting of two parts where the second part isn't necessary. Господ *да те чува* од лошо. Zoti të ruajttë (prej të këqijash). God protects you (from the bad). Subject + predicate + (second part). But even constructions where the second part is necessary. На волкот вратот му е дебел. Ujku e ka qafën të trashë. The wolf has thick neck. Никој учен не се родина. Asnjë s'ka lindur i mësuar. None is born learnt/taught.

b. But these constructions, although more rarely, can even appear non-extended: Subject + Predicate: Окото лаже. Syri të rren. Eyes lie. Зидот има уши. Muri ka veshë. Walls have ears.

c. The order is usually linear; for example: Свабда без месо не бидува. Dasma s'bëhet pa mish.

<sup>7</sup> Vesel Nuhui, “Ndikimet ndërgjuhësore”, Prishtinë, 1999, f. 232.

<sup>8</sup> Qemal Murat, “Fjalori idiomatik maqedonisht – shqip”, Shkup, Maqedoni, f.119.

The wedding can't be done without meat. But there are even cases when it is the inverse: Со едне цвеке лето не идит. Ме një lule nuk vjen pranvera. With a flower doesn't come the spring.

There are personal or impersonal where the active person is understood. For ex: По лошото и добро идет. Pas të keqes ka të mirë. After the storm there is sun.

d. Since we have to do with constructions of artistic value, it is used even ellipses. Бели пари за црни денови. Paraја e bardhë për ditë të zezë. –

e. In a considerable number of cases the concourses appear even as periods. The cases of constructions as concurrent periods are less because of their semantic character, order of actions. Во едно уво му влегува, во друго му излегува. Те njëri vesh i hyn, te tjetri i del. Go in one ear and out the other.

Whereas subordinate periods have a more extended usage because of the meanings they bring:

– **Defining (Determinant):** Тој што го меша медот, и пристите ги лиже. *Ai që e përzien mjaltin i lëpin edhe gishtërinjtë.* He who stirs the honey licks even the fingers. Послединот секогаш најслатко се смее. *Ai që qesh i fundit qesh më ëmbël.* He, who smiles the last, smiles the sweetest.

– **Subjective:** Кој многу зборит, многу греши. *Kush flet shumë, gabon shumë.* Who speaks a lot, makes many mistakes.

– **Objective:** Што ќе сееш, тоа ќе жнееш. *Ç'do të mbjellësh do të korrësh.* What you sow you will reap.

### f. Stylistic Benefits of Proverbs

For ex: periods where the parts are elliptic: Каква мајка, таква ќерка. Si e ëma, ashtu edhe e bija. like father, like son. Далеко од очите, далеку од срцето. Larg sysh, larg zemrës. out of mind, out of sight.

Or incomplete periods: there are constructions when only one part of the period functions (in our case the main part): Господ знае кога. Zoti e di kur. God knows when.

The time clause is missing. Or the inverse: \_\_\_\_\_ the word 'grozje' is missing. As well as the cases when the parts of the period are incomplete, because of the situation where it will be used the subject/content is understood. Како дошло, така и пошло. Si erdhi ashtu shko. As he came, he went.

## 2.2 The classification of ph-units according to their morphological value and criteria of somatic content

### 2.2.1 a) Classification of ph-units according to their morphological value

Even the concourse of ph-units comes as an evidence of the history of the history of a certain population and the way of understanding the surrounding world.<sup>9</sup> In these constructions it is weakened the specific meaning of the words giving a new meaning that isn't the sum of the meaning of its parts<sup>10</sup>: Игра со животот. Luan me jetën. For ex: Play with the life. Игра со оган. Luan me zjarr. Play with the fire. Ph-units are also classified according to which part of speech are equivalent putting them in the order according to the quantity they are represented in the dictionary which throws light on the frequency of their usage.(Since 1881 William Whitney draw a table where he put in order the different types based on how easily they are borrowed)<sup>11</sup>.

One of the main reasons of the dominance of verbal ph-units has to do with the frequency of the usage of verb as a part of speech. In these cases the verb may show an action for ex:

Ум си бере. Ка mbledhur mendjen. Made up his mind. Ги јаде парите. I hëngri paratë. Eat the money. **Си прави како да не ме гледа. Bëhet sikur nuk më sheh.** Make gossip.

The verb can show somebody's psycho-physiological state and can be used as a verbal core (group of words) in impersonal sentences. For ex: Умрев од студ. Vdiq nga të ftohtit. Die from coldness. Умрев за спиење. Vdiq për gjumë. Die for sleep. Ми се зеде здивот. Më merret fryma. Be out of breath. But they can show even state in general as well as feature of subject or object: Тој е лисица. Ai është dhëlpër. He is foxy.

Ph-units (noun + noun) come as a noun metaphor that is used in speech to characterize a **phenomenon** for ex: *Јаблока на раздор. Mollë sherri.* Apple of discord. **or person**: Душа човек. Shpirt njeriu. Rabbit heart.

**Even ph-units equivalent to adjectives have a wide extension but not such as verbs. They give the feature through similes/comparison where it is present:**

a) only the object with which the comparison with words as/like is performed. But there are even cases when in the group of words it is present a necessary part which helps to make the comparison for ex: Свети како месечина. Ndrit si hënë. Shines like a moon.

b) The comparison is done without the particle like: Прстите да ги излејш. Gishtërinjtë t'i lëpish. To lick the fingers.

<sup>9</sup> Mustafa Ibrahim, Frazemat somatike bazuar në gjeste dhe mimikë, si burim I frazeologjizmave të Jani Thomait, Konferenca Shkencore "Akademiku Jani Thomai në 75-vjetorin e lindjes (Përmbledhje materialesh, Korçë, 2010, f.165.

<sup>10</sup> [https://mk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Фразеологија\\_на\\_македонскиот\\_јазик](https://mk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Фразеологија_на_македонскиот_јазик)

<sup>11</sup> Vesel Nuhii, "Ndikimet ndërgjuhësore", Prishtinë, 1999, f.114.

c) In spoken speech the feature is given in the highest degree that is to say the superlative degree of an adjective is reached: Жлот како лимун. I verdhë si limon. Yellow like the lemon.

To give the different circumstances in sentences there are used ph-units of adverbial value: Со сето срце; Me gjithë zemër; with all my heart. Очи ха очи; Sy ndër sy; eye to an eye; **Од врата до врата; Derë më derë**; Door to door; **До еден; Deri në një**; Up to one; **Од ден на ден; Ditë për ditë**; Day after day.

### 2.2.2 b) The Classification of Ph-Units According to the Criteria of the Content of Somatism

Ph-units are considered as universals of language due to the fact that "Especially it is rich that part of phraseology which has in its content the names of the senses such as: head; eye; ear; nose; tongue; heart etc that help people to know and taste the surrounding objects."<sup>12</sup>

In the dictionary we notice that concourses are mainly in the case of somatic ph-units which give a psycho-physic state of the person.

These phrases because of their content are more in number: **Отрови очи; Çili sytë**; Open your eyes; **Му трепери усната; I dridhet buza**; His lips tremble. **Му сврти плеките. Ia ktheu kurrizin shpinën**; Turn his back. **Му врије кртва. I zien gjaku**; His blood boils.

Also, if we analyze the ph-units in general, if they are semantically motivated or non-motivated, we have noticed ph-units that have motivated meaning prevail that is to say they are used as free structures in the everyday language/speech.

### III. Curses and Oaths

Within phrasal concourses there are distinguished even curses and oaths as sayings that date since a very long time ago: In the article "The curse as an issue of Balkan phraseology Martin Surovčák "emphasizes that "Anthropology defines it as a statement based on magic, by its pronouncement an object (person; society; animal; natural formation etc) is cursed – he/she will have bad luck or will be destroyed etc....<sup>13</sup> the essence of the curse is the faith in the magic influence of the word."<sup>14</sup> According to Surovčák's viewpoint these constructions have been classified in: curses that cause illnesses; loss of property; bad luck and those that affect members of a family.

<sup>12</sup> Universiteti "Fan Noli", 2010, Konferenca shkencore, (2011) "Akademiku Jani Thomai në 75-vjetorin e lindjes", Korçë, f.165.

<sup>13</sup> Martin Surovčák, Shqipja dhe gjuhët e Ballkanit - Albanian and Balkan Languages, "Mallkimi si çështje e frazeologjisë ballkanike", në [http://www.ashak.org/repository/docs/SHQIPJA\\_DHE\\_GJUHET\\_E\\_BALLKANIT\\_f.585](http://www.ashak.org/repository/docs/SHQIPJA_DHE_GJUHET_E_BALLKANIT_f.585).

<sup>14</sup> Martin Surovčák, Shqipja dhe gjuhët e Ballkanit - Albanian and Balkan Languages, "Mallkimi si çështje e frazeologjisë ballkanike", në [http://www.ashak.org/repository/docs/SHQIPJA\\_DHE\\_GJUHET\\_E\\_BALLKANIT\\_f.585](http://www.ashak.org/repository/docs/SHQIPJA_DHE_GJUHET_E_BALLKANIT_f.585).

*Curses that cause bad luck:* Аер да не видиш. Mos ia pash hajrin! Never be fine!

*Curses that cause illnesses:* Крши глава! Thyej kokën! Break your neck!

In the mentioned article as far as the linguistic features of these structures are concerned it is said: "The verb in the Albanian curse usually appears in the optative shape its usage in Albanian is limited almost only in phraseologisms. For Macedonian in this context there are the constructions with the particle 'da' but even in some Macedonian dialects it is given priority to the optative that is to say the active past participle which isn't accompanied with the auxiliary verb to be."<sup>15</sup>

Whereas oaths, as it is known from ethnology, have to do with the cult of the word. Beforehand we will focus especially on the idiom: Бера ја фатила; I zuri **besë**; Keep faith. In the ph-unit in Albanian language we encounter the word faith *besë*. "Faith, with the cult of honour it is linked even the cult of the given word or as it is known among Albanians 'the *cult of faith/honour*'. This is a word that doesn't exist in none of the languages. In the Balkan languages it exists as a borrowed word from the Albanian language."<sup>16</sup> During the oath in the Macedonian language we encounter the word *bepa. faith*. "Often in translations from Albanian language the word faith having no semantic equality or phraseology of any other language, is given in the shape of explanatory writings as albanism. The Albanian faith known by Bulgarians and Romanians just with the noun faith whereas by the Slavs of the south as 'Arbanska vjera' (word for word translation) that what Albanians believe, is our essential virtue inherited from our ancestors."<sup>17</sup> So, in this case we have the possibility to judge even the direction of transfer that we think has been from Albanian into Macedonian.

In the case of the oath: "Жими очи!" "Per syte e ballit!" we have a concurrence, a partial one as far as the words and structure is concerned. There is an essential difference when it is about their structure because in Albanian language the construction appears incomplete (incomplete situational sentence) whereas in the Macedonian language the oath consists of the verb *Жими; Beto hem*. To swear.

#### IV. Negative Constructions – A Stylistic Benefit of Phrasal Concourses

We would focus especially on the negative constructions which have a great artistic value and have a considerable place in the dictionary.

The selection of the negative shape besides the positive one (when it is about synonymic constructions) is done on stylistic purpose, when it is known that in the spoken language it is needed emotional effect. These constructions are classified in structures where the negative shape:

<sup>15</sup> Martin Surovčák, Shqipja dhe gjuhët e Ballkanit - Albanian and Balkan Languages "Mallkimi si çështje e frazeologjisë ballkanike", [www.ashak.org/repository/docs/SHQIPJA\\_DHE\\_GJUHET\\_E\\_BALLKANIT](http://www.ashak.org/repository/docs/SHQIPJA_DHE_GJUHET_E_BALLKANIT), f.585.

<sup>16</sup> <https://sq.wikipedia.org/wiki/Besa>

<sup>17</sup> <https://sq.wikipedia.org/wiki/Besa>

a. in the case of proverbs fulfills a desire or a finding: *Никој учен не се родил. Аснјë s'ka lindur i mësuar.* None is born taught.

b. In the case of ph-units the negative shape gives the feature of somebody: *Ниту жив, ниту мртв; As i gjallë, as i vdekur;* Neither alive nor dead. *Ну сол, ну шецер. As kripë as sheqer;* Neither salt nor sugar or state. *Ну на небо ну на земја; As në tokë as në qiell;* Neither on earth nor in heaven.

Taking in consideration the place they occupy in the dictionary and the lexical-grammatical concourses we think that this construction has a great advantage in the linguistic transfer.

## Conclusions

1. We think that many idiomatic concourses (900 units) are result of linguistic transfer<sup>18</sup> (that are related to the embezzlement of the second language, but it might happen even a transfer in the opposite direction that is the influence of a new language on a previous language founded before) in the cases of steady and thick linguistic contacts between Albanian and Macedonian especially in the north-west part of Macedonia, in the point of bilingualism. Naturally, these semantic-syntactic transfers have happened on the basis of a model<sup>19</sup> which is reproduced in a specific linguistic situation.

2. Starting from the analysis of syntactic constructions of proverbs we can say that their structure is a factor that helps in the transfer. The structures that are distinguished as: two-parts non-extended sentences or extended with second necessary parts; one-part sentence; subordinate periods; incomplete periods most of them have in their content stylistic benefits/creations where the construction serves as a means; we think they might have had greater transfer possibility.

3. a) Based on the classification of ph-units according to their morphologic value we can say that they are a potential for transfer not only because of their content but even for their grammatical shape more concretely morphological values that is to say if they are equivalent to verbs, adjectives, nouns and adverbs. Also the level of frequency of their usage in speech can be defined even from the number of these concourses.

b) From the semantic analysis we notice that the concourses of ph-units are mainly the somatic ph-units.

c) Also, when it is about semantic plane, if we analyze if they are semantically motivated or non-motivated we have noticed that ph-units that have motivated meaning prevail, which can be used as an argument to position in time this phenomenon.

<sup>18</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language\\_transfer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language_transfer).

<sup>19</sup> Vesel Nuhiu, "Ndikimet ndërgjuhësore", Prishtinë, 1999, f.13

4. Since "Bilingualism is a universal phenomenon because none of the languages we know isn't spoken completely isolated for a long time", the importation which eventually happens when the system has 'vacancy' should be considered as a new, developing stage/phase in the receiving/borrowing language and one of the main factors for linguistic changes. In this aspect the linguistic material of the dictionary can serve for linguistic comparisons in both planes, the diachronic and synchronic ones.

5. Today the development of communicative needs has conditioned new transfers, which confirms that we have to do with a dynamic phenomenon, which allows us to define the direction of the transfer by looking closely at it.

6. What we suggest is that the materials of this dictionary as well as the concrete studies on this material can serve for a new Balkan phraseological dictionary.

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