

Argument Structure of the Verb in Albanian Linguistic

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Abstract

In this paper we attempt to address the argumentative structure of the verb in Albanian language. It is an almost common opinion that in the syntactic studies of Albanian language the way how they deal with phenomena, conceptions, ideas are logical. The verb forms the nucleus (core) of the sentence. It assigns to other components of the syntagm the semantic roles they will carry and their structure. In generative linguistics the necessary ingredients are called arguments, while the non-essentials are called adjuncts. As a corpus we will have the treatment of various authors on this issue, the most representative of Albanian language grammar. Different views of Albanian scholars are presented in this issue in the Albanian syntax.

Keywords: argument structure, argument, adjunct, Albanian syntax

Introduction

Verb and arguments

The verb plays an important role in the sentences. It is characterized as a lexical unit whose information has argument structure. Based on the Grammar of the Academy of Sciences (2002:259) the verb denotes an action as a process and has the grammatical categories of self, number, manner, time, and diathesis.

L. Haegeman (1994:40-42) states that in traditional grammar the requirement that the verb has to take or not a noun syntagm (SE) within the verbal phrase itself is recognized as characteristic of the verb itself.

In a metaphorical form, researcher L. Haegeman has described the argument structure by comparing it to the script of a drama. According to her (1994:44), predicates are like a drama defining a number of roles that must be played by actors; a predicate's arguments are like the roles defined in the drama script and for the best possible realization, each role must be assigned to an actor and there can be no missing script role but no actresses that have no definite role in the drama play.

Argument structure has attracted the attention of Albanian and foreign scholars due to different perspectives. Treatments on the argumentative structure in Albanian have been made by: L. Buxheli (2007, 2011), A. Kananaj (2015), F. Koleci (2011) and Th. Dhima (2007) in an article that had as its object of study the valence of names, which identifies valence with arguments, and the valence-like names can be covalent = one argumentative, divalent = two argumentative.

According to L. Buxheli (2007:187), arguments represent nothing but the participants necessary for the realization of the action or condition expressed by the predicate. In the linguistic literature, the term *actant* is used in this sense.

The term argument or topic was first used by N. Chomsky (1965, 1982) in his *Aspects of Syntactic Theory* and in *Lectures on the Theory of Direction and Relationship* as a synonym with the term valence¹ or actant used by the French linguist L. Tesnière (1959), who explained valence as the ability of syntax lexemes-atoms to connect a number of other elements to an argument structure. This term has been borrowed from philosophy to describe the function of different expressions in the semantic structure of the phrase (Koleci-Turano, 2011: 51).

¹ The concept of valence was introduced into linguistics in 1959 by the French linguist L. Tesnière according to a metaphor derived from the technical dictionary of chemistry. Just as the H₂O water formula shows that the oxygen atom's valence is double compared to the H₂ valence, therefore, to form H₂O there must be two H atoms and one O atom.

According to mathematical logic, language consists of linguistic structures, which are given symbolically by the formula $P(x, y)$, where the symbol P represents the predicate and the variables x and y representing the arguments join the two-sided predicate P (Buxheli, 2011: 93 -94).

So, in the logical aspect, the structure of the argument is a phenomenon of a predicate that refers to the number of participants necessary to complete the meaning of the predikate (Buxheli, 2011:94).

Thus, we illustrate with examples: the variables or arguments of the verb predicate “*shkruaj*” (write) in the sentence “*Unë shkruaj letren*” (I write the letter) are two arguments: *I, letter*; the verb “*hingellon*” (neigh) in the sentence “*Kali hingellon*” (Horse neighs) has only on variable-argument *horse* and the verb “*say*” in the sentence “*Ajo ia tha lajmin motrës*” (She told her sister the news) has 3 arguments: she, news, sister.

The number of arguments varies from one verb to another and depending on the number of arguments; the verbal argument structure in Albanian can be characterized as a one-argumentative, two-argumentative, three-argumentative structure (Buxheli, 2011: 96).

Along with this categorization in the contemporary foreign literature are also used the terms: verbs with monovalent, divalent or trivalent structures. We give the argument structure after the examples given in both variants for each sentence separately, eg:

1. **Beni** po noton. notoj : FOLJE (verb) [Beni] ose notoj: FOLJE [SE¹]

(in English: Ben is snowing.)

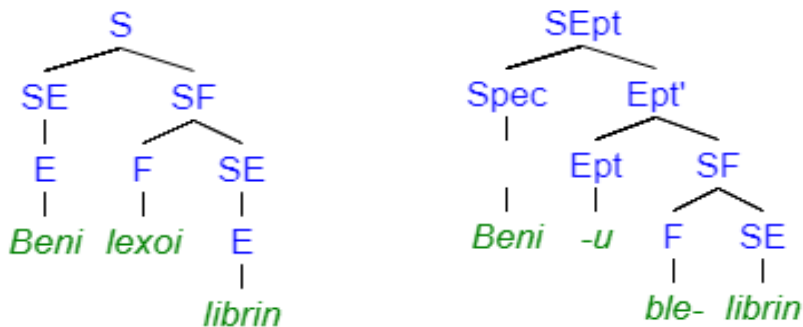
2. **Beni** lexoi **librin**. lexoj: FOLJE (verb) [Beni, libri] ose lexoj: FOLJE [SE, SE]

(in English: Ben reads the book.)

3. **Beni** ia dha **librin motrës**. jap: FOLJE (verb) [Beni, libri, motra] ose jap: FOLJE [SE, SE, SE]

(in English: Ben gave his sister the book.)

The sentence *Beni lexoi librin* (in english: Ben reads the bosk) and *Beni bleu librin* (in English: Ben bought the bosk), we also give it through the structural tree, which shows the syntactic positions of these arguments.



(1) [S [SE[E Beni]] [SF[F lexoi] [SE[E librin]]];

(1') [SEpt [Spec[Beni]] [Ept'[Ept -u] [SF[F ble-] [SE librin]]];

¹ Structurally, the verbal arguments expressed by NP in the role of the headword or object are not equivalent in their dependence on the verb, which is why in some cases the verbal argument is not given with an underlying noun phrase (NP).

Arguments are indispensable elements for the realization of the meaning of the verb. In the surface structure, elements of the verbal argument structure may be not necessarily phonetically projected into syntagms. Consequently, the lack of projection of an argument into the surface structure does not mean that it is lacking in the deep structure, because the number of arguments is determined in the deep structure through lexical information of the verb.

The thematic role that the verb denotes to the syntagm, which serves as a complement to the verb is called the internal thematic role, and the argument that is assigned to this role is called the *internal argument*, that is, the verb *I hear* in the sentence *Ana listens to music* marks the internal thematic role of the music argument, whereas the role assigned to the subject is called the external thematic role and the argument that it takes is called the *external argument* (Koleci-Turano, 2011: 52).

The structure of the argument in Albanian is closely related to the semantic structure of the verb. This means that each argument has a certain semantic role. The number of thematic roles described varies across authors, but the following thematic roles are generally accepted (hence the arguments): *agent, actor, receiver, theme, perceiver, beneficiary, locator, target* (Kananaj, 2015:40-41). According to Buxheli (2007: 193), every argument has only one semantic role and each semantic role is given only one sentence argument.

Argument structure is represented by the valence of the verb. A. Kananaj (2015) claims that valence can be a semantic, grammatical concept or a combination of the two. According to her (2015: 47), valence as a semantic concept refers to the number of participants in the world of discourse, conventionally expressed by the predicate, for example she (the author) takes for example the verb *eat*, which has two semantic valences after the verb requires two participants to be realized, one actioner and one receiver: someone eating and someone eating something, while grammatical valence (syntactic valence) refers to the number of deep arguments present in a sentence, such as the headword, the direct and indirect object. Take the sentence as an example:

Unë tashmë **kisha ngrënë**. (I had already **eaten**)

The verb *eat* has two semantic valences, although only one is grammatically expressed, but it is implied that *bread* is concerned, the semantic valence of the receiver while eating is implied even though it is not expressed by lexical-grammatical means in the sentence, not realized, but it is easily understood, and at the same time depends on the desire of the speaker himself to make it feasible, to express it phonetically in sentences. As far as grammatical (or syntactic) valence is concerned, the verb *eat* in this sentence only has a grammatical valence expressed through the subject, whose role is the thematic role of the actor. In linguistics, also speaks for so-called small clauses or verbless clauses, in which one NP serves as the predicate subject predominantly expressed by NP, AP, PP (Haegeman, 1994:51).

Conclusions

At the end of this, paper the main conclusions that can be drawn from this study of the argumentative structure of the verb in Albanian language:

- 1.The concept of verbal argument structure replaces the traditional concept of Albanian grammar about classification of verbs into transitive and intransitive or double objects verbs.
- 2.Each argument has only one semantic role and each semantic role is given only one sentence argument.
- 3.Argument structure and semantic roles indicate that lexical categories play a special role in the structural and syntactic presentation of sentences. The lexical categories not only serve as the head of the respective phrases, but also with the semantic roles they assume from the predicate serve as indispensable components of sentence structure. The lexical information they provide is reflected and syntactically.

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