

English Prepositions of Time Translated into Albanian

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Abstract—The study of language as a form of communication includes the structure and rules under which words interrelate. Scholars are facing the need for research on difficult issues and comparisons at the global and local level. The theme of this research is prepositions of time. Its aim is to deepen the knowledge of distinct prepositions and their use. Several comparative studies of this nature exist regarding the English and Albanian languages; it is tried to update the studies to facilitate students' acquisition of English as a foreign language and the work of translators between English and Albanian. On the basis of this research, the question rises as: How English prepositions of time for and after are translated into Albanian? In order to clarify the research, it was studied the use of prepositions, particularly prepositional phrases with emphasis on prepositions of time (for and after), and compared them with prepositions in the Albanian language from selected novels in English and Albanian. The research is based on a corpus of four novels, two by English authors and two by an Albanian writer. This research looked into analytical and comparative nature with the aim of enhancing and improving the current state of learning and it resulted that our assumption was right as these prepositions were translated as it was expected in the dictionary.

Index Terms—preposition, time, for, after, analysis, language

I. INTRODUCTION

Languages as a mean of communication are used in order people could be understood with each other and express their ideas, opinions, meanings, feelings etc. During history some languages survived the time and made themselves as superior or more used ones.

Mastering the use of prepositions in English, in both speaking and writing, is one of the most difficult tasks that students face. Prepositions pose problems not only to lower-level learners but also to the more advanced ones. Beginners who start learning English face the same problem, needing to search the best way to use English prepositions, which are sometimes not easy due to their multiple meanings. Learners may encounter several challenges in using them properly, but the main problems are as follows:

- a) Which preposition should be used if required? And
- b) What prepositions are "a must"?

This paper specifies the use and translation of certain prepositions in English such as preposition *for* and *after*, as from the analysis, preposition *for* appeared to be the third most used preposition after the preposition *in* and *at*.

This research, besides prepositions, also included prepositional phrases, considered among the main elements of noun phrases in English grammar. In Albanian grammar prepositions are often expressed through the noun cases.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study will be based on a corpus of four novels, two by English authors and two by an Albanian writer. The first two novels translated from English into Albanian include:

"White Fang" by Jack London, translated by Mikaela Minga as "Dhëmbi i Bardhë" (hereinafter as W. F. and Dh. B.); and "Dubliners" by James Joyce, translated into Albanian by Ildir Azizi as "Dublinasit" (hereinafter used as D. and Dubl.).

The two Albanian novels are by the well-known Albanian writer Ismail Kadare: "Darka e gabuar" translated by John Hodgson as "The fall of the stone city" (hereinafter used as D.G. and FSC); and "Kronikë në gur" translated into English by Arshi Pipa as "Chronicle in Stone" (hereinafter used as K.G. and C.S).

The decision to base the study on the above-mentioned novels derived from the fact that both Jack London and James Joyce stand in high regard in both languages, and as such have been translated into the targeted language.

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The same stands for the Albanian corpus, as Ismail Kadare is one of the most translated Albanian writers, especially into French and English. Moreover, the two novels were translated directly from Albanian into English. There were other novels translated into English, but they were first translated from Albanian into French and then from French into English.

In the above-stated novels, prepositions of time are treated according to their grammatical function, namely to semantic nuances brought from one language to another, from English into Albanian and vice versa. As semantics is the study of meaning communicated through language, we will be looking into the meaning of prepositions in sentences.

Also this research looked into the possibility of other variables of translation or non-translation within different situations in both languages, respectively in the four novels as well as a research was conducted with students of secondary school to see how they translate and how close to the dictionary are the translations. As we expected, the students identified and knew how to translate the test given to them.

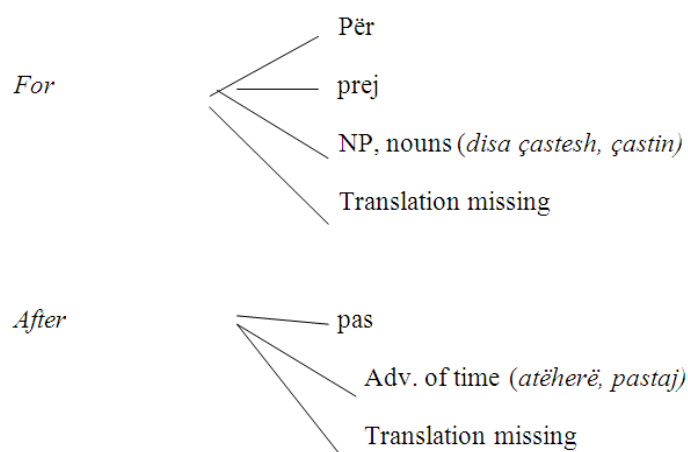
With the development of linguistics, prepositions have been targeted by many linguists of the modern world. A deep insight was made into the structure, which in some respects clarified features that were not present before. All this came as a result of the prevailing opinion on prepositions, being of a very questionable nature and bearing a dichotomy as both lexical and functional.

According to Littlefield (2003) "statistically, in a corpus of one million English words, one in ten words is a preposition. Yet, despite their frequent occurrence, there is no generally accepted account of this category and its characteristics. At best, prepositions represent a problematic, contradictory category for theories of syntax." (pp.1-10)

III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Most simple prepositions in English are translated into Albanian with prepositions or with a single word, for example the prepositions *in*, *on*, *at*, *for*, *after*, etc. That word can be the preposition *në* (*in*, *at*, *on*), *for* (*për*) indicating time *after* (*pas*) adverbs of time (*atëherë*, *pastaj*), or by a noun phrase (*for-disa çastesh*, *çastin*).

Translated with prepositions:



According to the analyzed novels, preposition **for** is the third most used preposition denoting time, after prepositions *in* and *at*, as it was found to be used in *White Fang* 476 times in total and 65 denoting time; in *Dubliners* 508 times and 71 denoting time.

English For-Albanian Për

1. *Bill stopped for a moment, in order that his words might gain greater significance...* (W. F. p. 6); (Billi heshti për një çast, si për t'u dhënë rëndësi më të madhe fjalëve që do të shqiptonte... (Dh. B. p. 8)).

2. *...where it had remained for weeks, a rankling flame ...* (W. F. p. 42) (...më thellë se të tjerët dhe për javë të tëra i ishte dashur... (Dh. B. p. 47)).

3. *I sat staring at the clock for some time, and when its tickling...* (D. p. 25); (Pashë orën e murit për pak çaste dhe kur tik-taket e saj filluan... (Dubl., p. 50)).

4. *There was a pause for a few seconds; and a great deal of scuffling...* (D. p. 107); Heshtja kaloi për disa çaste, pastaj vrundull këmbëzvarrjesh... (Dubl., p. 135)

As seen from the above examples, preposition **for** was mainly translated with preposition *për* in Albanian denoting a fixed time (*for a moment*, *for a quarter of an hour*, *for five or ten munte*) but mostly showing duration of time (*for a week*, *for a little time*, *for some time*). Prepositional phrases with *for* may be simple containing P + N (*for weeks*) or they may be complex P + NP where the NP is preceded by modifiers (*for some time*, *for a few seconds*).

In Albanian they appear translated with P + NP preceded by modifiers (adverb, indefinite pronoun) as well (*për pak çaste*, *për disa çaste*). Therefore, the same structure is in both languages (P + NP).

English For - Albanian NP and Nouns

1. *For a week* she never left the cave, except for water, and then her movements were slow and painful. (W. F. p. 65); (Pastaj qëndroi një javë në shpellë; dilte vetëm sa për të pirë ujë, duke lëvizur ngadalë... (Dh. B. p. 70)).

2. *The moment* Mit-Sah gave his order for the start, that moment the whole ... (W. F. p. 111); (Kur Mit-sahu jepte sinjalin e nisjes, ai lëshohej përpara.... (Dh. B. p. 115)).

3. *For days* his manifestations of desire to lay hands on him had been... (W. F. p.123); (Kohët e fundit ai kishte qëndruar më shumë jashtë. (Dh. B. p. 127)).

4. ...*too many battles to be in doubt for a moment* what to do. (W. F. p. 35) (...shumë luftimeve dhe e dinte saktësisht çastin kur duhej tësulmonte.(Dh. B. p. 38)).

As in the above examples, PP's with HP *for* appear translated with NP into Albanian, and those NP's may have a modifier (*një, disa*) or may be just nouns (*e nisjes, kohët e fundit*). Nouns may have a front article *e* which makes the noun in genitive (*e nisjes*) and (*kohët*) a feminine noun, plural in accusative, whereas the noun *çastin* is masculine, singular in accusative.

English For-Albanian Prej

1. ..., he had been employed for thirteen years in a great Catholic wine-merchant's office... (D. p. 60) (... ai punonte prej trembëdhjetë vjetësh në një zyrë të madhe tregtarësh katolikë të verës,... (Dubl., p. 89)).

2. He had been for many years cashier of a private bank. (D. p. 104); (Prej shumë vitesh punonte si arkëtar i një banke private. (Dubl., p. 139)).

3. They had been married for twenty two years and had lived happily... (D. p. 111); (Kishin qenë të martuar prej njëzet e dy vjetësh dhe martesa e tyre (Dubl., p. 146)).

The examples above, when English preposition *for* is translated with the Albanian preposition *prej*, were found only in *Dubliners* (8 times). The PP in Albanian is composed of P + NP where a noun is preceded by a numeral (*trembëdhjetë, njëzet e dy*) and an adverb as modifier (*shumë*) and the nouns (*vitesh, vjetësh*) are in ablative case.

English For -Translation Missing

1. *The circle of eyes to shift restlessly for a moment* and even to withdraw a bit... (W. F. p. 7); (Edhe në rrethet e syve të përfaktë u pa hutim. (Dh. B. p. 10)).

2. *For the time*, fear had been routed by growth, while growth (W. F. p. 54); (Frikën e kishte mposhtur kureshtja. (Dh. B. p. 59)).

3.*to break out of the eariness of school-life for one day* at least. (D. p. 13) (...vendosa ta thyjeja përditshmërinë e shkollës, të paktën një here. (Dubl., p. 36)).

4. *when she had been laid up for a day*.... (D. p. 32) (...kur ajo rastisi të zinte shtratin, ai i pati lexuar.... (Dubl., p.58)).

In *White Fang* more translations were found missing than in *Dubliners* (20-11). The underlined PP's were not translated or replaced by other words or phrases, although we think that they could have been translated with the preposition *për* (*for a moment* - *për njëçast*; *for one day* - *për një ditë*), adverb (*tani*), expression (*for the time* - *tani për tani*) or noun (*for a day* - *ditën*). Therefore, these cases show absence of translation and consequently the reader cannot have a clear picture of the time in the sentences. Let us see all these statistics in a tabular manner as follows:

TABLE 1.
WHITE FANG.

Translation used for analysis		Times	%
English PP with the head <i>for</i> used - in total		476	100%
<i>for</i> denoting time		66	100%
PP with the head <i>for</i> -translated into Albanian	- with prepositions of accusative-për	18	27.27%
	-other prepositions: në, pas, me, rreth	7	10.60%
	-with adverbs of time: (pak - 2; gjatë - 6; tani - 1)	9	13.63%
	-verb phrases - 4	4	6.06%
	-cases when translation missing	20	30.30%
	- nouns	3	4.54%
- noun phrases		5	7.57%

TABLE 2.
DUBLINERS

Translation used for analysis		Times	%
English PP with the head <i>for</i> used - in total		508	100%
<i>for</i> denoting time		71	100%
PP with the head <i>for</i> -translated into Albanian	- with prepositions of accusative - për	34	47.88%
	-other prepositions: në, nga, rreth	4	5.63%
	-with adverbs of time	3	4.22%
	-preposition: prej	8	11.26%
	- cases when translation missing	11	15.49%
	- conjunction (edhe)	3	4.22%
- noun phrases and nouns		8	11.26%

As seen from the tables, preposition *për* carries the burden of English translation *for* into Albanian. As for preposition *për* in Albanian, in both novels it appeared to be used in *The Fall of the Stone City* 382 times, and only 46

times denoting time, from 46 times only për - **for** (15); translation missing (13); prej - **for** (6); NP - **for** (një copëherë, një grime kohë, ca caste - 13); nouns - **for** (koha, ditë e netë - 2); VP - **for** (kaq shumë, kaq javë, kaq muaj), etc.

In *Chronicle in Stone* preposition **për** is used 426 times, 42 - denoting time; and other expressions translated into English preposition **for** such as: për - **for** (31); për - translation missing (9); prej - **for** (9); NP - **for** (një orë, orë të tëra, ca ditë - 27); VP - **for** (6); adverbs - **for** (pak, gjatë - 6), etc. All in all, approximately the same picture is gained as with preposition **for** in English.

Analysis of Preposition After

As stated above, preposition **after**, in regard to time relation, was used very often in the analysed novels in English; it was found in *White Fang* 104 times, 53 denoting time, and in *Dubliners*, out of 115, 88 denoting time.

English After -Albanian Pas

Preposition **after** is mostly translated with preposition **pas** into Albanian, showing a time after something, and in *Dubliners* out of 115 times it was found to be translated 51 times with **pas** into Albanian, whereas in *White Fang* out of 104 times, only 24 were translated with **pas**. This difference probably depends on the novel's content and the translator; *Dubliners* had a more correct translation than *White Fang*, whose translator several times produced sentences without translating them. Let us see some sentences in both novels:

1. *After a time the she-wolf began to grow restless.* (W. F. p. 35); (Pas disa sekondash ujkonja filloi të shfaqte një lloj shqetësimi. (Dh. B. p. 40)).
2. *After a long while his monologue paused.* (D. p. 18); (Pas një fare kohe monologu i tij rreshti. (Dubl., p. 42)).
3. *had gone away quietly in couples after a few minutes...* (D. p. 212) (...pas disa minutash u larguan qetë – qetë dy e nga dy. (Dubl., p. 233)).

As seen from the examples above, the preposition **after** is translated with preposition **pas** showing “a time after something”. We found that preposition **after** was followed by a simple noun or NP (*after dinner, after eight o'clock, after that evening*) or by a more complex NP (*after their first sleep*). In Albanian as well, as stated in the previous paragraph on Albanian prepositions, PP's with the preposition **pas** are followed by a simple or complex NP and may have a modifier before a noun (*pas darkës, pas një fare kohe, pas disa sekondash*, etc.).

As observed during the analysis of the novels, both prepositions have a free placement in the sentence; they can be found in initial, middle or final positions within the sentence.

As happens with the preposition **pas** being found in the construction N + P + N (*kohë pas kohe* - now and then, *herë pas here* - from time to time, *orë pas ore* - hour by hour), we found the same construction with the preposition **after** as well: N+P+N (*night after night-netëve me rradhë, morning after morning-çdo mëngjez, day after day-përnatë*). Here the constructions are the same; translation differs as **pas** is translated more often with expressions and **after** appears translated with NP's preceded or not preceded by a modifier.

English After -Translation Missing

1. *But after that he was afraid no more of the looming bulks of the tepees.* (W. F. p. 74) (...Sidoqoftë nuk kishte më frikë prej tyre ... (Dh. B. p. 80)).
2. *And after such classification he avoided the things that hurt.....* (W. F. p. 52); (Ai thjeshtë i ndante gjërat në dy kategori: ato që të shkaktonin dhimbje... (Dh. B. p. 57)).
3. *...said Gallahar, emerging after some time from the clouds of smoke...* (D. p. 73); (Tha Gallaheri duke dale prej reve të tymit ku ishte zhdukur. (Dubl., p. 104)).
4. *The people are in bed and after their first sleep now...* (D. p. 26); (Njerëzia kanë rënë për të fjetur tani, madje duhet ta kenë bërë gjumin e parë... (Dubl., p. 51)).
5. *The next morning after breakfast I went down to look at the little house...* (D. p. 3) (Të nesërmen në mëngjez vajta ta shihja në shtëpinë e vogël... (Dubl. p. 26)).

As seen from the examples above, PP with its head **after** may be simple (*after that*) or more complex (*after their first sleep*); nevertheless, the underlined PP's were not translated and they were not even replaced. Another fact to be mentioned, in comparison to other prepositions, is that there weren't many cases of non-translation especially in *Dubliners*, where the translator adapted somehow the translation as in the last two examples [although in the translation into Albanian it is not sure whether they ate breakfast or not, as it refers only to a part of the day (*the next morning after breakfast* - *Të nesërmen në mëngjez*)].

In *White Fang* there were 12 cases when PP was not translated or replaced. There were also cases when the whole sentence was missing in translation (*And after two or three painful adventures with the mothers of part grown puppies...*p.78). These are considered loss of translation.

Other translations found were: with *adverbs of time* such as: *atëherë* and *pastaj* (especially the PP *after that* - *pastaj*); *pak, gjatë* (*and sleeping through after that evening* - e të përgjumura gjatë gjithë mbrëmjes (D. p. 32:50)); with VP (*it was after eight o'clock* - kish kaluar teta...(D. p. 34; 51)); with NP, especially when there were expressions in English (*night after night* - netëve me rradhë; *morning after morning* - çdo mëngjez).

Apart from other discussed prepositions so far, the preposition **after** was found preceded by its complement and it appeared translated into Albanian with preposition **më**, followed by an adverb as complement of it (*më pas*), for example:

1. *Two nights after, his friends came to see him.* (D. p. 155); (Dy netë më pas erdhën miqtë për vizitë. (Dubl., p. 198)).

2. ...out going a few days after. (D. p. 56) (... , ca ditë më pas. (Dubl., p. 85)).

During the analysis of the Albanian novels, approximately the same picture emerged from translation in English, so in *Darka e Gabuar* (The Fall of the Stone City) preposition pas - **after** (27), NP - **after** (2), më pas - **after** (1), nga - **after** (2), and in *Kronikë në Gur* (Chronicle in Stone) pas - **after** (15), Adv of time - **after** (2), NP - **after** (2).

Let us see statistics about the preposition **after** and its translation into Albanian.

TABLE 3.
WHITE FANG.

Translation used for analysis		Times	%
English PP with the head after used - in total		104-56	100%
after denoting time		56	100%
PP with the head after -translated into Albanian	- with preposition of ablative - pas	24	42. 85%
	- other prepositions: për, më, prej	6	10.71%
	- që	2	3. 57%
	-verb phrase	1	1.78%
	- cases when translation missing	12	21.42%
	- adverbs of time (pastaj, atëherë)	5	8. 92%
	- expressions	2	3.57%
- conjunction (pasi)		4	7. 14%

TABLE 4.
DUBLINERS

Translation used for analysis		times	%
English PP with the head after used - in total		105-88	100%
after denoting time		88	100%
PP with the head after -translated into Albanian	- with preposition of ablative - pas	51	57. 95%
	-other prepositions: më,	3	3.40%
	- verb phrase	3	3.40%
	- noun phrase	3	3. 40%
	- cases when translation missing	16	18.18%
	- adverbs of time (pastaj, gjatë, pak)	6	6. 81%
	-conjunction (pasi)	6	6.81%

IV. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In the Introduction part of our research it is stated that a test is conducted on prepositions of time Since this research is based on the comparison between two languages, English and Albanian, we expected that translation (without dictionaries) would be satisfactory, believing that students would identify and translate them properly. This assumption was based on research done in the secondary school by a particular test which included prepositions of time (*in, on, at, for, from, after, before*). The test contained 14 sentences, each preposition appearing in two sentences for translation.

The reason why it was chosen the high school is that such schools are supposed to be the best in Kosova, and one of them is the High School “Zenel Hajdini” in Gjilan, profile “Natural Sciences”, as they have the best students. As the Municipal Directorate for Education in Gjilan stated, the students of this profile showed great success in English in the last year graduation test (68%). The test was appropriate only for the Intermediate level, which fits the students’ experience of study; they started learning English as a second language at the age of 10 and so most of them were 17 at the time the test was given. Students translated without a dictionary; based on the above criteria, we believed and expected them to translate correctly.

The analysis of the test is shown on tables with the total number of respective prepositions, which were used 400 times each (*in, on, at, for, from, after, before*). All the prepositions were used twice, showing time relations in the sentences given in the test. Since the test was done with 200 students, there were a total of 400 prepositions per each preposition. The following tables illustrate in detail the translation of the above-mentioned prepositions and in this research prepositions *for* and *after*.

Table 5. Preposition **FOR**

FOR	400	%
for-për	395	98.75%
for-tr.miss	5	1.25%

Table 6. Preposition **AFTER**

AFTER	400	%
after - pas	392	98%
after -tr.miss	4	1%
after - para	2	0.5%
after - nga	1	0.25%
after - rreth	1	0.25%

According to the analyzed novels, the preposition *for* is the third most used preposition denoting time, after the prepositions *in* and *at*. Preposition **FOR** was the easiest preposition for the students to translate; they consistently translated it with the Albanian preposition *për* (98.75%). If we go back and see the Albanian preposition *për* translated

into English, there is about the same situation: *për - for* in C. S. (73.80%) and less in FSC (31.25%) as it depends on the content of the story and the translator.

The preposition **AFTER** showed no problem to students as it was found to be translated into the Albanian preposition *pas* (98%). Out of that percentage, it was translated only 5 times with *mbas*, which is an old form of the preposition *pas*.

In conclusion to this research, it is observed that students translated correctly all the above-mentioned prepositions. Therefore, according to their translations without dictionaries, it is believed that students better recognize prepositions of time than of place, and that they make more mistakes in translating prepositions of place than those of time. Prepositions of place may pose problems; they have idiomatic meanings while prepositions of time seem quite clear.

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