

BRIAN JOSEPH

Old Albanian

Morphosyntactic Structures – Part 3: The Verb Phrase

Roadmap

- Reminder: Modalities for Viewing Albanian Historically
- Morphosyntax of the Verb Phrase
 - Future tense
 - Infinitive

Modalities for Viewing Albanian Historically

- Albanian viewed genetically/genealogically: Albanian as an Indo-European Language, as a member of the Indo-European language family
- Albanian viewed areally: Albanian as a Balkan language, as a member of the Balkan Sprachbund (along with Balkan Romance, Balkan Slavic, Greek, Romani, and Western Rumelian Turkish)

Morphosyntax of the Verb Phrase

- Two main sets of developments within the verb phrase to consider here:
 - Future tense
 - Infinitive

Future Tense

- Albanian future tense
 - a periphrastic form, consisting of an auxiliary verb and a form of the main verb, presumably replacing a synthetic future inherited from Proto-Indo-European
 - there is a dialect division (with some rough edges) in the nature of the periphrasis, with Geg and Tosk differing in the choice of auxiliary and the nature of the main verb form

Future Tense

- Albanian future tense (for the most part):
 - Geg: *kam* ‘have’ + Infinitive (= *me* + Participle)
 - i. *kam* – inflected for person/number of subject
 - ii. thus: *kam me shkue(m)* ‘I will go’
ke me shkue(m) ‘you will go’, etc.
 - Tosk: *do* (based on *dua* ‘want’) + *të* + Subjunctive (finite)
 - i. *do* – invariant, equivalent to 3sg of *dua*
 - ii. subjunctive marker *të* can be absent (especially colloquially)
 - iii. thus: *do të shkoj / do shkoj* ‘I will go’
do të shkosh / do shkosh ‘you will go’, etc.

Future Tense

- 'have'-based vs. 'want'-based future tense in Balkan context
- Both types of future are found, but 'want'-based type is more definitively "Balkan", thus:

- Balkan Romance:

Aromanian	<i>va (s) cântu</i> 'I will sing'
Romanian	<i>o să scriu</i> 'I will write'

- Balkan Slavic: 'have' (+ *da* + finite verb) when NEGATED; otherwise, 'want'-based, with invariant form based on 3sg

Bulgarian	<i>šte otida</i> 'I will go'
Macedonian	<i>ké (da) napišam</i> 'I will write'

Future Tense

Bulgarian

njama da otida 'I won't go'

Macedonian

nema da napišam 'I won't write'

Greek: 'want'-based, with invariant form based on 3sg with subjunctive marker (*na*) incorporated into 'want' form

ða γrapso 'I will write'

Future Tense

Romani: like Balkan Slavic, with ‘have’-like type (no verb ‘have’, thus ‘not.exist to.me’) when NEGATED; otherwise, ‘want’-based, with invariant form based on 3sg

ka (te) džav ‘I will go’

nae man te džav ‘I won’t go’

Future Tense

- Western Rumelian Turkish: like Romani, with ‘have’-like type (‘not.exist.to.me’) when NEGATED (otherwise a different type altogether), but with a modal finite verb, in line with Balkan type

<i>yoktur</i>	<i>gidelim</i> ‘I won’t go’
not.exist.PRS	go.OPT.1SG

- Thus, Albanian future developments may have been influenced by contact with other Balkan languages with ‘want’-based future (especially Aromanian, Greek, Macedonian), especially in Tosk

The (lost) infinitive

- Unclear if Proto-Indo-European had an infinitive per se, but virtually all the branches show specialized forms of deverbal nouns in complementation and related functions.
- Albanian has an infinitive but the forms are dialectally restricted and Tosk shows an innovative replacement of the infinitive by finite forms.

The (lost) infinitive

- Infinitive in Proto-Albanian: *me + (past passive) participle, e.g. *me bân ‘to do’
- Continued in Geg, e.g. *me bâ* ‘to do’
- Lexicalized traces in Tosk, e.g. *domethënë* ‘that is to say’ (lit. “it-wants/means to say”)
- Found in 18th century Tosk of southern Italy (Arbëresh)

The (lost) infinitive

- Tosk: a relatively recent innovation replacing older *me* infinitive, giving infinitive consisting ostensibly of preposition *për* + nominalizing particle *të* + (past passive) participle, e.g. *për të bërë* ‘to do’
- Used mostly in purpose expressions but in some contexts of complementation
- Synchronically part of verbal system, as nonactive marker *u* and weak object pronouns are possible (*për ta bërë* ‘to do it’ / *për t’u bërë* ‘to be done’)

The (lost) infinitive

- Ostensible analysis = historical source, cf.:
 - Buzuku (12, 55) *për të lutunit* ‘in order to pray’, with definite case form of nominalized participle (thus “for the-praying”)
 - Buzuku (196, 43-44) *për të liruom të kuatëvet* ‘for the forgiving (*liruom*) of sins (*të kuatëvet*)’, with nominal syntax (object in genitive case)

Tosk finite complement innovation

- Person/number-marked finite verb with modal marker *të* occurs in place of Proto-Albanian infinitive, e.g.:

do të vazhdo-jmë të ul-e-mi atje
FUT MOD continue-1PL MOD sit-NACT-1PL here
'We will continue to sit here'
(literally: "We will continue that we sit here")

Tosk finite complement innovation

Historical interpretation

- Tosk inherited infinitive in *me*
- Tosk underwent period of loss of infinitive and replacement by finite forms with *të*
- Tosk innovated a new infinitive out of a Preposition (*për*) + Nominalized Participle

Albanian infinitive in Balkan context

Historical interpretation

- All the languages in the Balkan Sprachbund show reduction in use of infinitive and complete or near-complete loss of infinitival forms and infinitive as a category in verbal system
- All of the languages in the Balkan Sprachbund show replacement of earlier infinitive by finite forms introduced by a modal marker

Albanian infinitive in Balkan context

Examples of Balkan absence of infinitive

- Greek: *θελουμε na pame eki*
want.1PL MOD go.1PL there
'We want to go there' (literally: "We.want that we.go")
- Romani: *Mangav te džav khere*
want.1SG MOD go.1SG homeward
'I want to go home'

Albanian infinitive in Balkan context

- Macedonian: *nie planira-me da odi-me*
we.NOM plan-1PL MOD go-1PL
'We are planning to go'
- Aromanian: *acătsărăm s- cântăm*
began.1PL MOD sing.1PL
'We began to sing'

Albanian infinitive in Balkan context

Thus Tosk Albanian, which shows greater affinities to Balkan Sprachbund than Geg, underwent two innovations regarding the infinitive — loss of the infinitive outright and its replacement by finite modal verbal forms — arguably during period of intense contact with other Balkan languages.

Later Tosk innovation of a new infinitival type (*për të bërë*) does not change that historical fact of Balkan-influenced developments.

Faleminderit për vëmendjen tuaj!

Thank you for your attention!